



TOOLKIT

TOOLS FOR SUCCESS IN DISRUPTIONS

Immediate Recovery and an Opportunity for Change

Julie Corbett
Jan Donley
Jill Feldman
Allison Layland
Melly Wilson

 **CCNETWORK**
National Center

STAT  Systemic Technical
Assistance Team

Tools for Success in Disruptions: Immediate Recovery and an Opportunity for Change

The National Comprehensive Center

The National Comprehensive Center (NCC) is one of 20 technical assistance centers supported under the U.S. Department of Education’s Comprehensive Centers program from 2019 to 2024. The NCC focuses on helping the 19 Regional Comprehensive Centers and state, regional, and local education agencies throughout the country to meet the daunting challenge of improving student performance with equitable resources.

Acknowledgements

We want to acknowledge the expertise of those who contributed to the creation of this document, including:

- » Nyla Bell, Senior Education Equity Specialist, Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC)
 - » Rorie Fitzpatrick, Director, National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI)
 - » Jamie Wong, Technical Assistance Specialist, National Center for Systemic Improvement (NCSI)
 - » Jill Feldman, Senior Study Director, Westat
 - » Matt Finster, Senior Study Director, Westat
 - » Julie Corbett, President, Corbett Education Consulting LLC
 - » Jan Donley, Educational Research Consultant, Academic Development Institute
 - » George Hancock, Executive Director, SERVE Center/National Center for Homeless Education
 - » Allison Layland, Chief Education Strategist, Academic Development Institute
 - » Nanmathi Manian, Senior Study Director, Westat
 - » Chase Nordengren, Senior Research Scientist, NWEA
 - » Emerson Odango, Director, Region 18 Comprehensive Center, Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
 - » Sam Redding, Chief Learning Scientist, Academic Development Institute
 - » Janet Twyman, Chief Learning Scientist, blast
 - » Bi Vuong, Managing Director, Project Evident
 - » Wesley Williams, Senior Project Director, Westat
 - » Melly Wilson, Director, Region 18 Comprehensive Center, Pacific Resources for Education and Learning
- A special thank you to Emily Sheley, Lori Thompson, and Kerri Wills for their support editing and formatting.

This publication is in the public domain. While permission to reprint is not necessary, reproductions should be cited as:

Corbett, J., Donley, J., Feldman, J., Layland, A., Wilson, M. (2020). *Tools for Success in Disruption: Immediate recover and an opportunity to change*. Rockville, MD: National Comprehensive Center at Westat.

The contents of this publication were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, the contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal government.

A copy of this publication can be downloaded from www.nationalcompcenter.org

Quick Reference Guide

This suite of tools/resources can assist a state education agency (SEA), local education agency (LEA), or a school deal with disruptions and address the needs of staff, students, and families, including the reopening of schools. The Quick Reference Guide below lists the tools in the suite for easy and quick access; these tools are also highlighted with a toolbar icon throughout the document. The guidance provided in this document is focused on helping SEAs, LEAs, and schools address the complex challenges or unknowns that come next as most schools prepare to reopen in the fall.

Tool/resources	Description	Targeted audience
Planning		
Guide to After-Action Reviews	Guide to facilitate an After-Action Review with an SEA, LEA, or school	SEA, LEA, School
Foundations of Scenario Planning Slide Deck	PowerPoint on how to do scenario planning	SEA, LEA, School
Strategic Budgeting: Using Evidence to Mitigate the COVID Slide and Move Toward Improvement	Budgeting tool to assist in planning and revising budgets	SEA, LEA, School
Vulnerable Populations		
Rapid Response: Informational Resources on Improving Social and Emotional Learning and Outcomes	Curated resources and information related to Improving Social and Emotional Learning and Outcomes	SEA, LEA, School
Considerations for Supporting a Successful Start to the 2020-2021 School Year for Students With Disabilities	Key concepts and questions SEA leaders should consider to support local school systems in successfully reopening school, with a focus on students with disabilities.	SEA
School Support		
Better Together: A Coordinated Response for Principals and District Leaders	Discussion of care for the principal and school staff, suggestions on assembling crisis response and plan ahead teams at the school level, and resources for addressing the SEL needs of students and their families.	SEA, LEA, School
Return to School: A Toolkit for Principals	Toolkit to guide the reopening of schools	School



Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Quick Reference Guide	ii
Introduction	1
Using a Continuous Improvement Cycle for Disruption Planning and Response	2
Setting Direction, Taking Stock, and Assessing Needs	4
Preparing for Disruptions	4
After Action Review	6
Using System-Level Considerations to Guide Planning and Response	7
Strategic Planning & Strategic Performance Management	7
Strategic Communications	9
Financial Implications & Procurement	11
Labor Relations & Human Resources	13
Coordination and Collaboration Amongst and Within Agencies	15
Compliance and Accountability	16
Assessment Cycles	17
Mitigating Harm and Enabling Effective Teaching and Learning	19
Mitigating Harm	19
Social Emotional Learning (SEL) & Trauma-Informed Work	19
Wraparound Services	21
Teaching and Learning	22
Technology	23
Distance Learning	25
Support Services and Interventions	27
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)	28
Monitoring Work and Adjusting Course	29
Resetting the Direction	30
Looking to the Future: Redesigning/Reimagining Education	30



References	31
Appendix A: Reopening School Resources	32
Appendix B: Strategic Performance Management Resources	34
Appendix C: Strategic Communications Resources	35
Appendix D: Financial Implications & Procurement Resources	36
Appendix E: Coordination and Collaboration Within and Amongst Agencies Resources	37
Appendix F: Compliance and Accountability Resources	38
Appendix G: Assessment Cycle Resources	39
Appendix H: Social Emotional Learning & Trauma-Informed Work Resources	40
Appendix I: Wraparound Services Resources	41
Appendix J: Technology Resources	42
Appendix K: Distance Learning Resources	43
Appendix L: Student Support Services and Interventions Resources	44
Appendix M: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Resources	45
Appendix N: Redesigning/Reimagining Education Resources	46



Introduction

COVID-19 has had a profound impact on all aspects of our lives, including how to teach our students. It is clear that the K-12 education system as we have known it has changed. The pandemic has stressed each level of the education system: the state education agency (SEA), regional education agencies (REA), local education agencies (LEA), tribal education agencies (TEA), and schools. There are immediate needs such as reopening schools, however there are also opportunities to rethink the way we have been doing things and make the schools that students return to even better than when they left. There are also unprecedented challenges associated with the uncertainties caused by the pandemic. This suite of resources is designed to help SEAs, LEAs, and schools think through their immediate needs as they address issues related to COVID-19. Specific icons are used throughout the document to call attention to tools, examples, and ideas. Discussion questions follow each section and resources to address gaps identified through the discussion questions are included in the Appendices.



Tools



Resources



Examples

While the tools and resources in this document address issues related to the pandemic, they can also be applied to any complex problem or disruption. The document guides education leaders as they revamp education systems by highlighting decision points in key operational areas; and providing relevant resources, tools, and discussion questions to be considered to support the successful reopening of schools in the fall. We encourage leaders to simultaneously start thinking about the pandemic's longer-term effects and needs (12-18 months out) as they work in the short-term to revamp education systems to serve the needs of all students. For a broad and comprehensive list of links to resources to address these complex issues, see Appendix A, *Reopening School Resources*.

While the tools and resources in this document address issues related to the pandemic, they can also be applied to any complex problem or disruption.

Embedded throughout this work is the recognition that any systemic disruption affects both students and adults, imposes financial constraints that may hamper learning design considerations (though those very financial constraints may also encourage innovation), and can expose increased needs for at-risk individuals who require additional supports.



During the COVID-19 pandemic, some educators and community members have advocated for “getting back to normal” as quickly as possible, while others realize that this widespread systemic disruption unveiled aspects of our education system that are not working well and highlighted the vast inequities that still exist. We encourage leaders to think about working with entities and organizations outside education sector to address underlying issues that affect schools, while also planning for future uncertainty in the workforce and economy. While this may be a daunting prospect, we now have a chance to reimagine what schools could and should be, envision what enhanced and meaningful collaboration could and should look like, and explore how to build more effective and efficient systems and structures to better support schools and students. Linda Darling-Hammond offers several thoughts on reimagining schools, such as A New “New Deal” for Education. We address the topic later in this guide.

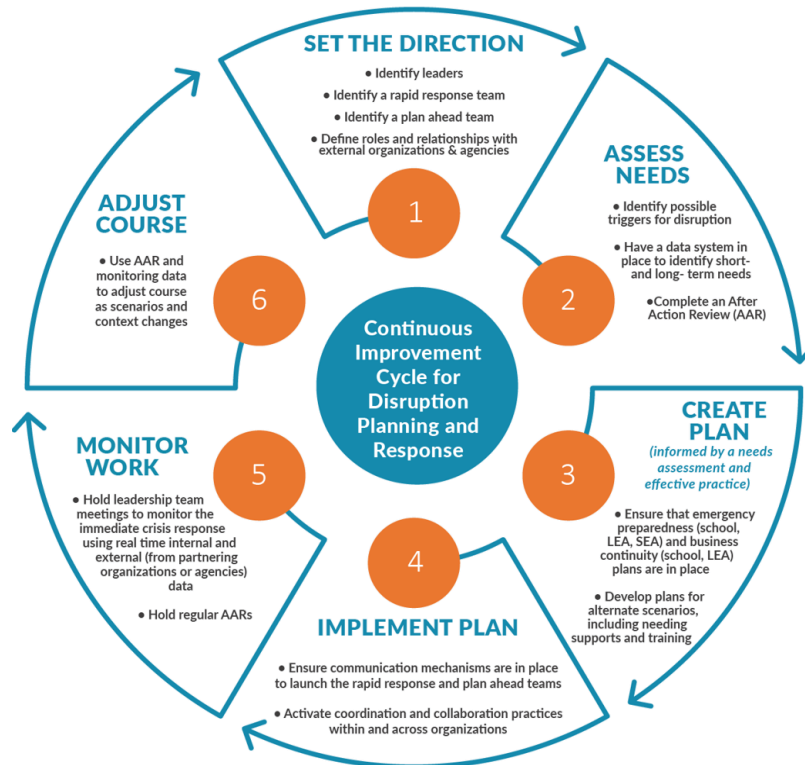
As you continue planning for the return to school (whatever that may look like), the Continuous Improvement Cycle for Disruption Planning and Response framework can help ground and organize your work. The cycle includes planning for and responding to complex issues or disruptions, which can help you structure your internal and external conversations. In this document we will walk you through different topics of concern aligned with this framework, and help you to think about important processes, questions, and tools to address key areas critical to a successful return to school.

Using a Continuous Improvement Cycle for Disruption Planning and Response

The Continuous Improvement Cycle can help guide your work recovering from a complex issue or disruption and anticipating needs moving forward. The cycle shown in Figure 2 is iterative, and an organization can move forward or backward based on its individual context and needs.



Figure 1: The Continuous Improvement Cycle for Disruption Planning and Response



Source: Adapted from Corbett and Redding (2017) and Layland and Corbett (2017).

- » **Step 1** of the cycle involves Direction Setting through the identification of leaders, defining the members of working teams, and clarifying the roles and responsibilities of individuals and all collaborating agencies and organizations.
- » **Step 2** includes an [After Action Review \(AAR\)](#) of what happened so far, a Needs Assessment, and the identification of additional triggers for disruption. A data-system must also be in place to identify short- and long-term needs.
- » **Step 3** includes the Creation of Plans (i.e., emergency, continuity of learning, continuity of business operations, etc.) that are informed by the data reviewed and needs identified in Step 2. This step further includes planning for [alternate scenarios](#) that may affect those plans.
- » **Step 4** involves Implementing the Plan with transparent communication to stakeholders and in coordination and collaboration with internal and external stakeholders.
- » **Step 5** includes Monitoring the Work, an often-missed step, along with regular leadership team meetings and After Action Reviews to monitor implementation, determine what is working well, and identify opportunities for improvement.
- » **Step 6** involves Adjusting Course when data indicate that course corrections are needed.

Application of the steps in the cycle in daily practice requires strong *strategic performance management*, and encourages *planning for various scenarios*, in response to complex problems, natural disasters, and pandemics just to name a few, so that normal operations can continue with minimal disruption (Hirt, et al., 2020). “The



aim isn't to debate which scenarios are more likely but rather to explore what is possible—and to ready yourself for anything that looks plausible” (Hirt, et al., 2020, p. 5) (see [Foundations of Scenario Planning Slide Deck](#)). When dealing with a disruption, the continuous improvement cycle can be used to identify and address the immediate needs and, with a few additional steps, plan for the long term impact of the disruption. COVID-19 provides an opportunity to apply the cycle, tools, and resources developed to address complex issues or disruptions.

Setting Direction, Taking Stock, and Assessing Needs

While a majority of the nation's schools have a written plan for certain emergency events, such as natural disasters, active shooters, and bomb threats, *fewer than half of those schools have a written plan for a pandemic disease* (NCES Blog Editor, April 7, 2020). At the district level, a 2016-17 analysis by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 73.6 percent of districts have procedures for responding to pandemic influenza (flu) or other infectious disease outbreaks (School Health Policies and Practices Study, 2016). Constant changes to technology and increased access to broadband internet also underscore the need for *regular revisions to both individual and systemwide readiness and emergency plans, and their corresponding continuity of learning plans*. COVID-19 provides an opportunity to examine and update existing emergency preparedness plans to respond to systemic disruptions and reflect current technological advancements to ensure the continuity of learning.

Effective leaders dealing with significant disruptions set the organization's direction and “ensure that someone else is managing the present well while focusing their attention on leading beyond the crisis toward a more promising future” (McNulty & Marcus, 2020, p. 7). These leaders plan for what is likely to come next and consider various scenarios and potential obstacles to implementing strategies and solutions. Many education leaders have assembled Rapid Response Teams to deal with day-to-day management, and Plan Ahead Teams engaging in [scenario planning](#). We encourage education leaders to think about using these two team structures to address the immediate response to a disruption, and plan for what comes next in the future.

SEAs, LEAs, and schools must also carefully consider what happened during the “chaotic” phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, as schools prepared to close buildings and then ultimately finished out the school year remotely. Readiness and Emergency Management plans were activated at the state, local, and school levels. A clear understanding of how these plans were implemented, and what needs have emerged as schools and districts have grappled with this highly complex situation, is critical moving forward.

Preparing for Disruptions

As a disruption occurs, a readiness and emergency preparedness plan should be used to guide management of that disruption. Sometimes, an emergency preparedness plan might not include all types of disruptions (i.e., a pandemic), all types of scenarios (i.e., need for prolonged social distancing), or all types of mitigation responses (i.e. significantly revamping how services are provided). *Emergency Preparedness Plans may require revision to reflect a recent disruption and plan for future ones.*

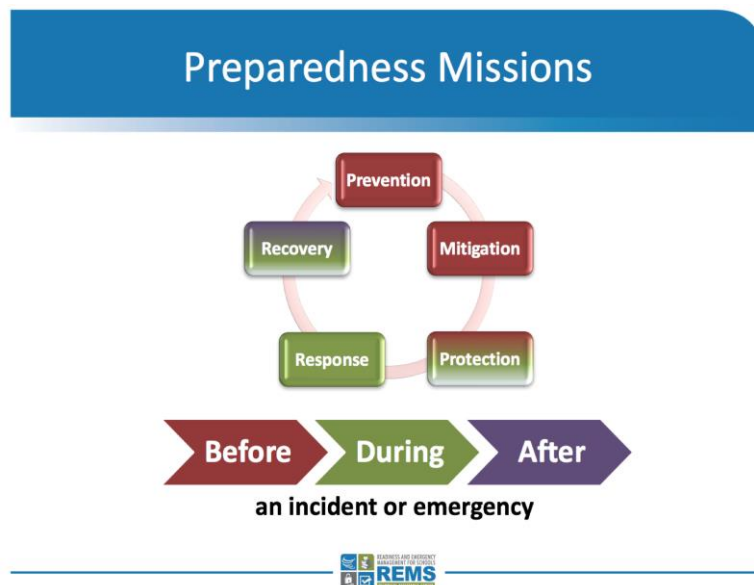
The role of readiness and emergency management was enhanced in 2011, under [Presidential Policy Directive \(PPD\) 8](#), which describes the nation's approach to preparedness and describes five mission areas: prevention, mitigation, protection, response, and recovery (Figure 3). Federal agencies developed their own implementation plans to address those mission areas appropriately; the Readiness and Emergency



Management for Schools Technical Assistance ([REMS TA](#)) Center provides a variety of resources for educational institutions.

As you reflect on what you could have done better in your initial response to the disruption, and what needs to be done moving forward, consider the different preparedness missions of school preparedness to help you recover and plan for future disruptions. Aspects of the missions are embedded within this document. The REMS TA Center advocates for a number of K-12 Planning Principles that are aligned to the Continuous Improvement Cycle framework (Figure 1), including the importance of leadership support, needs assessments, and scenario creation (Sullivan, M., Slide 11)

Figure 2: Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools Preparedness



Source: Sullivan, M. Collaborating for School Safety, Security, Emergency Management and Preparedness, PowerPoint Slide Deck. REMS TA Center, Slide 8.



Do your districts/schools have pandemic-specific Emergency Management Plans in place? The following resources may be useful from the REMS TA Center for both developing and revising these plans:

- » *Searchable database* with resources: [COVID-19 Information](#)
- » *School Guide: Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans*: Access an [At-A-Glance version of the School Guide](#) and/or download the [Section 508 compliant PDF](#)
- » *District Guide: The Role of Districts in Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans*: A Companion to the School Guide. Download the [Section 508 compliant PDF of the District Guide](#)

As school leaders set the direction for schools moving forward and take stock of what happened, they must be clear on what is needed for schools to reopen effectively, using data systems to identify both short- and long-term needs, and monitoring local and state health data that may trigger further disruption. Tools such as an After Action Review, described below, can be useful toward this end.



After Action Review

An *After Action Review* (AAR) is a crucial, but often neglected activity that can help determine what worked with the initial response to the disruption, assess areas of need, and inform plans for moving forward. Often used by the military after combat missions, AARs offer a structured approach to reflect on the work of a group, while identifying strengths, weaknesses, and most importantly, areas for improvement. AARs can be helpful in transitioning from the initial rapid response to recovery and long-term planning. The lessons learned through the initial response can be used to inform future actions during recovery and reform. AARs can be comprehensive (i.e., examining the entire organization or “big picture”), or they can also be used to look at a specific area or segment of a response.

The AAR helps users address key questions, such as:

1. What was expected to happen?
2. What actually happened?
3. What went well and what didn't work?
4. What will we sustain or improve?
5. What will we do to adapt or refine our executions for a better outcome?

A report is created from this data, providing a clear summary of concrete and actionable recommendations that will improve the process, followed by an action plan that takes the lessons learned and applies them to an upcoming event or project. An AAR provides an opportunity to experiment and continually improve by sustaining those actions that work and applying variations to get even better results. Evidence gathered through AARs can add to a body of evidence related to best practices to use in the future.

While many organizations perform post-mortems or AARs as routine procedures, true improvement is realized when the learnings from the AAR become feedback into the organization's strategic direction, daily operations, and implementation process. AARs are especially important when a problem or situation lingers (such as the current pandemic), because there is an opportunity to make mid-course corrections, and lessons learned can be incorporated into planning for the current and future crises.



The [Guide to After-Action Reviews](#) provides a guide to facilitate an AAR. The following discussion questions can be used to guide SEAs and LEAs as they examine a state/district emergency response, and any results arising from an AAR.

Discussion Questions

1. How can we update our requirements/standards for emergency preparedness plans to include additional types of disruptions to learning (e.g., pandemics and/or isolated cases of an infectious disease) that had not been previously included?
2. What policies may need to be created or revised to ensure continuity of learning for students and disaster management responses are appropriate?
3. What other agencies, branches of an agency, or organizations need to be included in revising the emergency preparedness plans?
4. What level and training and for whom does training need to be completed to ensure appropriate staff have the capacity they need to enact a plan in emergency situations?



Using System-Level Considerations to Guide Planning and Response

Once leadership teams have carefully reviewed what went right and wrong with their emergency response to the disruption and identified anticipated needs based on data and AARs, they must develop and/or revise emergency preparedness and business continuity plans at each level of the system. The list of system-level considerations is lengthy and complex, and may include financial implications, labor relations, assessment, and accountability/compliance. Systems must also ready themselves for a variety of scenarios in planning a return to schools. SEAs, LEAs, and schools will be better positioned to address these areas for consideration and planning by developing or activating strong strategic planning and performance management processes.

The following sections of this document include a discussion of strategic planning and performance management, followed by a discussion of key areas for consideration at the system level to ensure a successful return to schools. Of note, specific areas of expertise may be required to address one or more of the sections depending on the disruption, i.e., a natural disaster may require representatives from construction/facility experts while an infectious disease may require health experts.

Strategic Planning & Strategic Performance Management

High-performing organizations have several things in common, including a strong, clear strategic direction and an actionable plan to achieve that direction. The leadership team has developed and operationalized a blueprint that goes beyond the basic elements of vision, mission, values, goals, and strategies to include careful analysis of the functions performed by the agency, its units, and its positions (roles) to facilitate effective placement, assignment, and training of personnel (Layland & Redding, 2020). Charon (2001) noted that “an edge in execution comes from having the right people in the right jobs, synchronizing their efforts, and releasing and channeling their energy toward the right set of business priorities” (p. 86).

Education organizations are no different. Those that wed *strategic planning* with *performance management* in a living system that provides direction for people’s work while allowing for innovation and adjustment in course to produce better results will be more efficient and effective, and in a better position to respond to complex issues or disruptions. Implementation of planned strategies, milestones, and actions followed by frequent progress monitoring informs needed adjustments to ensure results and positive effect on each and every student, family, and staff member.

When the result of the unknown is a “new normal,” as with COVID-19, we need to rethink the way education is provided. The short-term effect on reopening schools coupled with the long-term impact on school funding calls for an even stronger focus on strategic planning and performance. SEAs, LEAs, and schools need to begin with the foundation—the vision, mission, values, and goals that are the non-negotiables of doing business. This is followed by scenario planning to identify plausible possibilities that may require revised strategies and milestones. Plans must be clear, yet nimble, to address the changing financial context.





[The Foundations of Scenario Planning Slide Deck](#) explains what scenario planning is and offers an eight step process to create and use scenarios for planning now and in the future.

If a strong foundation does not exist, now is the time to set one. Leaders should engage all staff in Strategic Performance Management (SPM) to create a plan or move from a static plan to a reiterative process using an adaptive performance management system with measures for goals and strategies, milestones for strategies, and action plans to meet milestones. This sets in motion ongoing mechanisms for feedback and course corrections to reach better outcomes for all students (Figure 2). For a complete guide to SPM, click [Managing Performance Strategically in Education Agencies](#).

The discussion questions below are designed to assist SEA and LEA leaders as they consider SPM. The resources in Appendix B can then be used to address the gaps identified through the discussion.

Discussion Questions

1. Does the SEA/LEA regularly conduct a comprehensive needs assessment? How do findings drive priority setting? If not, how are priorities determined?
2. What is the process for priority setting? Is priority setting collaborative? Who participates in priority setting?
3. Has the SEA/LEA conducted a structural and functional analysis to identify gaps and redundancies in the organization's structure?
4. How are priorities communicated to stakeholders?
5. What does the SEA's/LEA's performance management process/system look like? Does the SEA/LEA have a Chief Performance Officer? If not, who champions this work?
6. How well did a strategic plan guide the SEA/LEA through the COVID-19 emergency?
7. How was the strategic plan modified to respond to COVID-19 and new fiscal realities? If the strategic plan was not modified post-COVID-19, will it be?
8. Is the SEA/LEA engaged in scenario planning? If yes, does the scenario planning include financial modeling to address budget considerations and implications?



Examples from the field:

- » [Arkansas Out Front With Every Student's Success](#), BSCP Center & South Central Comprehensive Center
- » [Strategic Planning and Performance Management: Delivery](#), Office of Planning & Research, Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Education



Strategic Communications

Communication is critical to any organization. Lewis (2019) notes that “organizations are socially constructed largely through the communicative interactions of internal and external stakeholders” (p. 6). A centralized approach to communication provides an opportunity to create a strong agency-wide commitment to well-planned, clear, and aligned communication processes to support effective communication practices. It also provides a central means of communication during crises.

A strong strategic communications plan:

1. Identifies various roles and responsibilities for members of a managing communication team,
2. Creates a set of processes to communicate effectively to internal and external audiences, and
3. Outlines a continuous review and refinement process to ensure agency communication yields desired clarity for stakeholders to implement and support SEA or LEA strategies toward its stated goals (Zavadsky et al., 2017).

Communication during complex problems or disruptions needs to be clear, concise, and frequent. Not all answers will be known. However, it is important to be honest and open, admitting the unknowns along with the knowns. Organizations that have robust communication processes and plans in place will be positioned well to react when needed. Paul Argenti (2020) offers the following steps to follow during a crisis:

1. Create a Team for Centralized Communication if one does not already exist. Meet regularly to monitor the situation, give frequent updates, and be the main source of credible information.
2. Communicate with employees to demystify the situation, put everyone’s mind at ease, and provide hope for the future.
3. Communicate with clients—students and families, focusing on their needs and efforts of relief.
4. Reassure stakeholders and the community to reinforce values, commitments, and what is being done to address the needs of students, families, and staff.
5. Be proactive—anticipate needs, resources, and supports and communicate what is being done to provide them to address the needs.

The questions below are designed to assist SEA/LEA leaders as they consider Strategic Communications. The resources in Appendix C can then be used to address any identified issues.



Discussion Questions

1. How is the existing communications infrastructure supporting the response to the disruption, including the following specific questions:
 - a. Does the SEA/LEA have a Communication Plan? Who is aware of the plan?
 - b. Does the SEA/LEA have: A Communications Director? A Public Information Officer? A Communications Team? If not, who leads the communications response?
 - c. Does the Communications Plan provide guidance on both internal and external communications?
 - d. Does the SEA/LEA have an Implementation Plan for its Communications Plan? Does the plan translate SEA/LEA goals into specific actions with milestones and measures? Does the plan detail staff responsibilities? How does the SEA/LEA refine its communication plan through stakeholder engagement, partnerships, and the continuous improvement process?
 - e. How does the Communications Plan integrate/align with the Emergency Management Plan?
2. How do SEAs/LEAs effectively communicate to students, families, and communities that schools will be different, what expectations exist, and why these changes are necessary?
3. How do SEAs/LEAs communicate with and best support educators as their professional and home lives are dramatically altered?
4. How do SEAs/LEAs message stability and hope when people are keenly aware of the sacrifices they and their children will be making?
5. How does the Communications Plan provide guidance for addressing false information on social media during disasters or emergencies?
6. How does the Communications Plan provide resources for developing and maintaining effective relationships with media representatives? How often is the list of media contacts updated?
7. What are the specific roles and responsibilities (e.g., Communications Director/Officer, Public Information Officer) related to communication? How has the disruption required new or different skill sets of communications staff? What gaps in capacity exist?
8. How is equipment used to communicate up-to date? Does an inventory of school safety technology exist? How frequently is it updated?
9. How does the Communications Plan include best practices for communicating with people with disabilities before, during, and after an emergency?
10. How does the plan detail how to reach and effectively communicate with non-English speakers?



Financial Implications & Procurement

As states and districts navigate the wide-ranging repercussions of a disruption like the COVID-19 pandemic, they will be forced to make the kinds of difficult trade-off decisions that are the inevitable as a consequence of an increase in demand for services in the face of declining revenues.

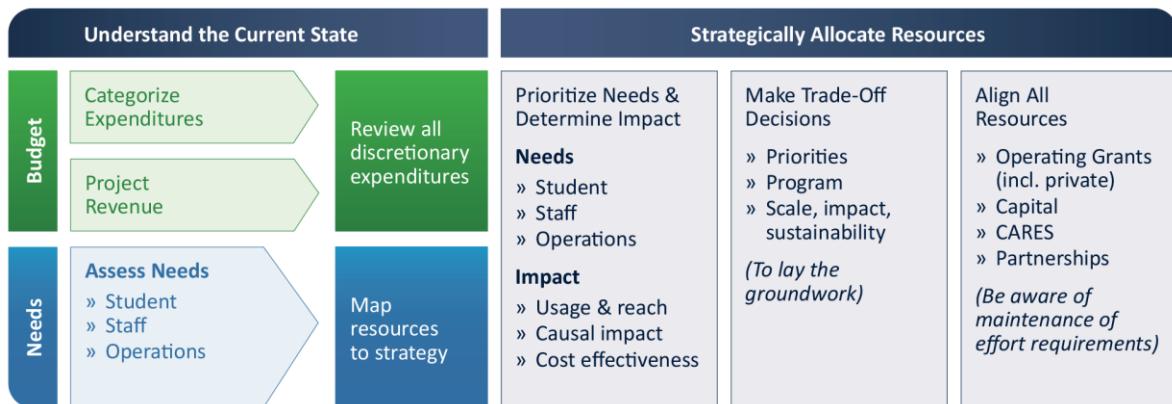


Strategic Budgeting: Using Evidence to Mitigate the COVID Slide and Move Toward Improvement, is designed to assist SEAs and LEAs in making the best decisions possible under difficult circumstances, and proposes a budgeting process (as shown in Figure 3) and series of guiding questions designed to help them address critical short-term issues while planning for long-term recovery.

SEA, LEA, and school leaders must engage in careful analysis of what dollars are available, how dollars could be creatively used, which expenditures are required by law, which expenditures are priorities, and what changes to procurement practices may be in order. The implications for students and staff must also be examined as dollars shift.

Figure 3. Budgeting Process

Strategic Budgeting Process



SEA/LEA leaders may also wish to consider the questions below to address Financial Implications and Procurement issues. Appendix D provides further resources on this topic.



Discussion Questions

1. In the 2020–21 school year, how will budgeting decisions at the state level and district levels be made? What about the 2021–22 school year?
 - a. For SEAs – What flexibilities has the SEA provided to LEAs on the use of federal funds? If the flexibility is time-limited, is it long enough to ensure sufficient time for LEA recovery?
 - b. For LEAs – What flexibilities has the LEA provided to its schools on the use of resources (operating and grants) to ensure alignment with school needs and priorities?
2. Reflecting on prior systemic disruptions, or based on the current disruption to date, where were/are there anticipated and unanticipated cost savings and new expenditures (i.e., costs associated with virtual learning, summer school, etc.)? How have these savings and costs been incorporated in your SY2021 budget? The SY21–22 budget?
3. How is the procurement process, and by extension, existing contracts, set up to ensure flexibility owing to disruptions (i.e., transportation contracts, out of district special education placements, food services/nutrition, equipment maintenance, technical assistance supports, waste management, etc.)? Can and should existing contracts be renegotiated to allow for this flexibility? Do existing contracts allow for any refunds for services not rendered due to the disruption?
4. If required by the state or local governments, or existing contracts, what are the financial implications of keeping non-certified staff on payroll who are not performing any work duties due to the disruption?
5. If required by the state or local governments, or existing contracts, what are the financial implications of continuing to pay vendors who are not performing any work duties due to the disruption?
6. Have you created alternative budgeting scenarios in response to disruptions and assessed the implications for different student populations? With each funding decision (cut or shift), what are the implications of that decision, especially on the most underserved at-risk student populations?
7. What does your agency’s decision-making framework for re-investment/recovery after a disruption look like and include?
8. Does your agency have a multi-year financial plan to allow for the alignment of funding with strategic priorities?
9. What kinds of plans are being made if state/local revenue drops significantly, which affects education funding? What kind of drop is forecasted?



Labor Relations & Human Resources

Systemic disruptions also affect staff at the state, district, and school levels. State-level proclamations may affect collective bargaining and the requirement to maintain employment of staff during a disruption. Careful consideration of changes to work responsibilities, coaching/mentoring, hiring and induction practices, support mechanisms, evaluation plans, and other adult-related issues are necessary. The effects on both certified and non-certified staff must be examined. The adults also undergo the stresses of a disruption and minimizing additional stress and confusion will result in employees who are more ready to conquer the challenges and potential opportunities of such massive shifts to work environments and instructional practices.



Examples from the field:

- » Governor ordered hourly school staff paid during school building closures. ([Connecticut](#); [Minnesota](#))
- » [Instructional Continuity of Learning Plan](#), Miami-Dade County Public Schools (FL)
- » Meals delivered via bus routes and delivery tents at school locations ([Minnesota](#); [Norwalk, CT](#); [Oregon](#))
- » State suspending teacher testing requirements ([California](#))

The questions below are designed to assist SEA and LEA leaders as they consider Labor Relations and Human Resources. For more information, check out the following two articles:

- » [Hiring Teachers in a Remote Setting, Part 1 -- Active Recruitment and Selection](#)
- » [School Closures Changing Districts' Methods, Terms for Bargaining With Unions](#)

Discussion Questions	Audience
Collective Bargaining/Unions	
1. If an emergency proclamation is declared by the Governor, is collective bargaining still in place?	SEA, LEA
2. How is it best to engage unions during disruptions?	LEA
3. How might teacher/staff contracts be revised to further support distance/virtual/blended learning or crisis protocols to ensure continuity of learning?	LEA
Hiring/Placement	
1. What are the implications for hiring new staff in a “remote” environment? What adjustments to hiring practices are necessary?	SEA, LEA
2. How could non-core instructional staff be used to support students and staff in a distance learning environment or in another type of disruption?	LEA
Induction	
1. How will new teachers and staff be supported if they begin work in a distance or blended working environment?	LEA



Discussion Questions	Audience
Support	
1. How will coaching supports and mentorship be provided to staff in a distance or blended learning environment?	SEA, LEA
2. What additional professional development or supports are required to ensure staff have the appropriate training to work in a new post-disruption environment (i.e., distance or blended learning)?	LEA
Evaluation	
1. How will teacher, principal, and other staff evaluations be adjusted to reflect distance or blended learning?	SEA, LEA
2. How will teacher, principal, and other staff evaluations be adjusted to reflect a lack of summative student assessments?	SEA, LEA
Compensation	
1. What types of staffing salary/ wage differentials might be implemented to support stabilization of hard-to-staff areas?	SEA, LEA
Non-Certified Staff	
1. What happens with non-certified LEA staff during a crisis? Can they be used to fill other needs of the system? (Examples: bus drivers, food service workers, paraprofessionals, special education interventionists, administrative school supports.)	LEA
2. What are the local financial implications of keeping non-certified staff on payroll who are not performing any work duties due to the disruption?	SEA, LEA
Physical and Mental Health	
1. What social-emotional, trauma-informed, mental health, or other supports (i.e., childcare) will be required to ensure staff are able to work effectively?	SEA, LEA
2. If a disruption results in increased physical or health risks to staff, are there options to support early retirements?	LEA



Coordination and Collaboration Amongst and Within Agencies

During large-scale disruptions or emergencies, often a statewide or regional task force is created to manage the crisis. Task forces include experts from a variety of agencies and organizations, both internal and external to government offices. Installing similar structures at the local or regional level may help manage an existing plan or plan for future crises.

The questions below are designed to assist SEA/LEA leaders as they consider Coordination and Collaboration issues, and Appendix E provides further resources to address this topic.

Discussion Questions

1. Who within the agency/department has relevant experience/expertise dealing with a disruption(s)?
2. Which other agencies or districts within your state have dealt with a similar disruption(s)?
3. In what other states and districts have agencies faced a similar disruption(s)?
4. How was work distributed across agencies/offices/organizations in response to the disruption? Who did what?
5. What have you learned about coordinating and collaborating across agencies that can help your state be better prepared when future disruptions occur?
6. What do you wish you knew then that you know now about coordination and collaboration?



Examples from the field:

- » [Case Examples of Interagency Collaboration](#), DHHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation
- » [Federal Role in Distressed Cities Interagency Collaboration and Local Partnerships](#), study by Abt Associates prepared for DHHS Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation
- » [Memorandum of Understanding for School-Based Partnerships](#), Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
- » [Disaster-Specific Memorandum of Understanding](#), Federal Emergency Management Agency
- » [A Coordinated Response to Multiple Deaths in a School Community Helps the Healing Begin \(Lessons Learned Volume 1, Issue 2\)](#), REMS TA Center
- » [Managing an Infectious Disease Outbreak in a School \(Lessons Learned Volume 2, Issue 3\)](#), REMS TA Center
- » [Responding to Infectious Disease: Multiple Cases of Staph Infections in a Rural School District \(Lessons Learned Volume 3, Issue 3\)](#), REMS TA Center



Compliance and Accountability

Systemic disruptions may require minor or significant adjustments or waivers to compliance requirements and accountability mechanisms. While high expectations for an SEA, LEA, and/or schools should continue, it may be unrealistic for schools and districts to achieve existing requirements (e.g., distance learning or blended education models may not count towards attendance or number of school day requirements) without some level of adjustment. Waivers or

adjustments may be made at the federal, state, or local levels. Solutions to compliance and accountability questions and issues may vary based on the local context, as well as the severity and duration of a disruption.

The questions below are designed to assist SEA/LEA leaders as they consider Compliance/Accountability issues, and Appendix F provides further resources on this topic.



Examples from the field:

- » [Colorado: Accountability Pause for the 2020-2021 School Year](#)
- » California [State information: The 74 Million](#)
- » Washington, DC: [Impact of COVID-19 on Accountability](#)

Discussion Questions	Audience
1. Will the compliance requirements for districts relative to special education services and based on Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), be adjusted to account for districts' inability to comply with current requirements due to the disruption? If not, how will services be provided remotely and/or retroactively?	SEA, LEA
2. How have educational services for students experiencing homelessness been affected? What are the implications for McKinney-Vento ¹ compliance?	SEA, LEA
3. What are the implications for state performance ratings of schools and LEAs (i.e., Are existing performance ratings/status carried forward for another year? Are different metrics used to reassess performance during or immediately following a disruption?)?	SEA
4. How will existing accountability ratings/metrics be modified to adjust for the lack of some data points (i.e., summative assessment data)?	SEA
5. What are the implications for state accountability indexes and low-performance identification metrics?	SEA
6. How will the disruption affect the state's/LEA's ability to support LEA/school improvement efforts? Will the same supports resume that were provided before the disruption, or will different supports be necessary/available? What funds exist to provide such supports?	SEA, LEA
7. Will any other federal- or state-level accountability requirements be waived or delayed due to the disruption? If so, what are they, and what are the implications of that change?	SEA, LEA

¹ The **McKinney-Vento** Act is a federal law that ensures the right of students to go to school even when they are homeless or don't have a permanent address.



Discussion Questions	Audience
<p>8. What is the effect of the disruption on any other components of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), such as the More Rigorous Options timeline for low-performing schools or Evidence-Based Practice requirements? (Note: This may vary based on the duration of a disruption.)</p>	SEA
<p>9. Based on the severity and duration of the disruption and the continuity of learning plan(s), how will student promotions to the next grade level be determined?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>10. Based on the severity and duration of the disruption and the continuity of learning plan(s), what are the implications for student graduation requirements?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>11. What, if any, are the financial implications of compliance requirements or accountability mechanisms due to the disruption?</p>	SEA, LEA

Assessment Cycles

Many districts and states across the country did not administer statewide summative assessments in the spring of 2020 due to summative testing waivers granted to all U.S. states and territories by the U.S. Department of Education, along with the cancellation of other state/district testing requirements by states/districts themselves. Lack of information from these assessments may affect several systematic and individual student processes, such as: grade promotion or summer school requirements; teacher, principal, and district leader evaluations (see also the previously discussed Labor Relations/Human Resources section); and state accountability ratings. School closures may also produce substantial learning losses for students. After a disruption, teachers should administer additional interim and/or formative assessments to determine the level of learning loss resulting from interrupted instruction to create a plan for future instruction.

The questions below are designed to assist SEA/LEA leaders as they consider Assessment Cycles, and Appendix G provides further resources to address issues on this topic.



Examples from the field:

- » The U.S. Department of Education and President Donald Trump [announced](#) March 20 that schools can apply to [waive assessments](#) for the rest of the 2020 school year. Waivers have been approved for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The approval letters can be found at [ESSA State Plans Assessment Waivers](#).
- » New York: On April 7, the New York State Education Department [announced](#) the cancellation of the June 2020 administration of the New York State Regents Examinations.
- » Massachusetts: On April 10, Gov. Charlie Baker signed [H. 4616](#) which, among other things, charges the commissioner of elementary and secondary education to modify or waive “the requirement for a comprehensive diagnostic assessment of individual students ... in order to address disruptions caused by the [COVID-19] outbreak.”
- » College Board: The College Board has made several adjustments to allow students to take Advanced Placement exams from home, including a [backup process](#) for students who were unable to submit some documents through their browser-based exam platform.



Discussion Questions	Audience
<p>1. What are the implications for not having assessment data from spring 2020? What programmatic decisions do we usually make based on summative testing information – and how can we make those decisions for the 2020-21 school year?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>2. After this year’s disruption of the assessment cycle, how can we rethink which assessments are needed and for what purposes? How can we make programmatic decisions based on the data available to us?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>3. How can other assessments used in our district and state (e.g., interim or benchmark assessments) supplement or supplant the traditional role of state summative assessments? How might the role of these assessments change starting in fall 2020?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>4. How might assessments be provided in a virtual environment? What supports should we provide families to sustain virtual testing? How might concerns about engagement with virtual testing change how we approach interpretation of assessment scores?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>5. What formative assessments are needed after a disruption to identify the needs of students? How can teachers use both formal formative assessments and regular formative instructional practices to monitor student learning moving forward?</p>	LEA
<p>6. What supports might students need to virtually take the College Board’s Advanced Placement exams, college entrance exams (SAT, ACT), or International Baccalaureate (IB) exams?</p>	LEA
<p>7. How is student readiness for the subsequent content area being assessed (i.e., foundational algebra skills in preparation for geometry) to plan for and provide appropriate remediation?</p>	SEA, LEA



Mitigating Harm and Enabling Effective Teaching and Learning

Significant disruptions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, all too often result in significant disruptions to teaching and learning, and unfortunately may also cause or contribute to social-emotional problems and trauma for many students and staff. In addition to engaging SPM processes to enable personnel at the system level to effectively communicate and plan for the variety of adjustments necessary to accommodate a wide range of scenarios for a return to school, states, districts, and schools need to incorporate plans to mitigate harm that may have occurred to students and staff, and put in place the conditions that allow teaching and learning to resume effectively and equitably.

Mitigating Harm

Schools can begin the work of mitigating harm to students and staff by carefully planning, identifying, and addressing the social-emotional needs of students and staff and any trauma that has resulted from the disruption, and by ensuring that wraparound supports are in place for students and their families.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) & Trauma-Informed Work

Addressing the social-emotional needs of students and staff is crucial so that staff can teach and students learn. Any type of disruption may result in increased supports needed for SEL and trauma-informed practices. While the focus is often on the needs of students, it is also important to look at the needs of staff, who have also experienced the disruption and possible trauma.

Several tools are provided here to assist leaders as they seek to mitigate, as much as possible, any harms experienced by students and staff during the period when school buildings were closed. Rapid Response Teams addressing social-emotional learning and delivering trauma-informed care will find there are seemingly endless resources available that may be difficult to sift through and prioritize.



[*Rapid Response: Informational Resources on Improving Social and Emotional Learning and Outcomes*](#) organizes resources into SEL categories (e.g., Identification of SEL Classroom Level Resources, District Initiatives to Improve SEL) and includes a brief annotated guide so readers can choose an area of focus for review.

Vulnerable populations of students are especially at risk of experiencing harm and toxic stress due to the pandemic. School leaders must carefully consider the needs of these students, including those who are homeless or who have become newly displaced, English learners, students with disabilities, students newly arriving to schools, and students living in rural and remote areas.

Last but not least, efforts must be made to manage the social-emotional well-being of the adults working in school buildings and the families that may have been adversely affected by the crisis.

The guide, [*Better Together: A Coordinated Response for Principals and District Leaders*](#), includes a discussion of care for the principal and school staff who are assembling crisis response and plan-ahead teams at the school level, and addressing the SEL needs of students and their families.



The questions below are designed to assist SEA/LEA leaders as they consider ways to mitigate harm and address social-emotional needs, and Appendix H provides further resources to address this topic.



Discussion Questions	Audience
<p>1. What supports might students who have experienced additional trauma (e.g. domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health issues, etc.) while at home due to emergency stay-at-home/safer-at-home orders or quarantine (i.e., known households of risk)? What training does staff need to support these students after the disruption?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>2. What supports might families need to recover from the additional stresses (mental, physical, sickness, grief/death, or financial) caused during the disruption?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>3. What supports might teachers and staff need to recover from the additional stresses (mental, physical, sickness, grief/death, or financial) caused during the disruption?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>4. How are schools prepared to help students manage their fears and anxieties about the pandemic, of the uncertainty of the “new normal,” and of the worry of losing/lost employment, food, shelter, and other insecurities of their families?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>5. How are vulnerable students and families defined and identified? After a disruption, what additional circumstances might affect students and families (e.g., students without primary caregivers, loss of or restricted access to grandparents, families with substance abuse histories or relapse, increased domestic violence)?</p>	LEA
<p>6. What systems and resources need to be in place to help vulnerable students and families? How can specialists be recruited and what funds can be used to pay for them?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>7. How might traditional milestones (end of school year, beginning of school year, graduations) be celebrated to build a sense of school community?</p>	LEA
<p>8. How can services be provided to students in a remote environment? Are additional policies needed, or do existing ones require revision, to provide such services (such as Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act [HIPAA]) in an equitable manner?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>9. What government agencies, private, and non-profit partnerships need to be established to meet the needs of students and their families?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>10. How can SEAs and LEAs provide additional training (e.g., a disruption-specific trauma training) prior to reopening school?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>11. How can LEAs mobilize technical assistance and resources to the school counselors so they can proactively provide support and guidance to their staff and students?</p>	LEA
<p>12. If masks are required, how will staff best demonstrate their emotion to their students, especially for the youngest learners (i.e., inability to see smiles and facial cues)?</p>	LEA



Wraparound Services

Student success requires attention to the needs of the whole child, including the academic, physical, mental, social, and emotional development of students, their families, and even their broader communities. Often, schools are used as an access point for students to obtain needed nutrition, primary health, mental health, dental care, academic and non-academic enrichment, before- and after-school care, summer learning and enrichment, and mentoring. In addition, schools may serve children in the birth-preschool age range, provide opportunities for adult learning, or include family and community engagement mechanisms. When a disruption occurs, the need for these services may increase, and determining alternate means of providing access to those services may be necessary.



Examples from the field:

- » Meals delivered via bus routes and delivery tents at school locations ([Minnesota: Norwalk, CT: Oregon](#))
- » In Texas, a system of charter schools, *Texans Can Academies*, is providing a [counseling service](#) that students can use 24-7. *Texans Can* covers the costs of these services.
- » [Falls Church City Public Schools](#) has created an online system to offer students wraparound services, including mental health services.
- » State guidance on summer food programs ([Iowa](#))

The questions below are designed to assist SEA/LEA leaders as they consider how to support students and families with wraparound services that address their needs, and Appendix I provides further resources on this topic.

Discussion Questions	Audience
1. What SEA and regional supports are available to assist LEAs and schools in delivering wraparound services?	SEA
2. How are students and families able to access wraparound services during school building closures? What types of services are available?	LEA
3. How are the continuation, cancellation, or adjustments to services communicated to students/families before, during, and after the disruption?	LEA
4. How can LEAs build family and community capacity to solve challenges encountered by students during times of disruption?	LEA
5. How will budget cuts and resulting resource reallocations affect wraparound services?	SEA, LEA
6. How can new or existing partnerships between schools and community partners be leveraged to support students during times of disruption?	SEA, LEA
7. How might school turnaround, school improvement, and innovation grant programs provide an additional state and/or federal funding option for wraparound services or community school approaches during school closures?	SEA
8. What wraparound services, allowable under Title I, can be tapped to support students, families, and communities during school closures?	SEA, LEA
9. Are there any privacy or legal requirements/policies that must be addressed to provide wraparound services in an alternate way, i.e., virtually?	LEA



Discussion Questions	Audience
<p>10. How might the SEA/LEA pool wraparound supports and resources at the LEA, level and reallocate them to support students/families/communities according to greatest need (rather than by school attendance zone, etc.)? How can we ensure equity based on level of need?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>11. How could community partners provide additional supports to families during disruptions?</p>	SEA, LEA

Teaching and Learning

Addressing students’ social-emotional needs in remote or in-person school settings during the pandemic must be combined with processes that target the significant learning loss likely experienced by many students. Schools must make preparations to provide comprehensive and equitable remote learning as the health situation warrants. Many students were either unable to or did not choose to engage with instruction during the period of remote learning in spring 2020. Equity issues regarding internet access and technology resources that are necessary for high-quality distance education have been brought to the forefront (Herold, 2020), and educators must review what happened with remote instruction and learning for all students, but particularly for those most vulnerable, including students with disabilities, English learners, and homeless students, who likely were at greater risk for learning loss. Education leaders must plan to ensure that high-quality remote instruction is available to meet the learning needs of every student moving forward, but also consider how instruction can be modified to help students “catch up” as needed when they return to school. These planning processes also provide an opportunity to identify how teaching and learning can become more inclusive to meet the needs of diverse learners and their families.

At the school level, principals are on the front lines as they consider and plan for the significant changes needed regarding teaching and learning as students and staff return to schools.



[*Return to School: A Toolkit for Principals*](#) provides a comprehensive guide to assist principals in reopening school.



Technology

During a disruption of school-based instruction, the use of digital and internet-based technologies will help increase the likelihood that students can continue their learning remotely. But large percentages of students (and staff), especially our most vulnerable, may have inadequate or no access to the internet or hardware to benefit from online learning. Addressing the digital divide is an equity issue and necessary to avoid further exacerbation of existing achievement gaps. Technology needs of teachers and other staff should also be addressed in short- and long-term planning.

The questions below are designed to assist SEA/LEA/school leaders as they consider the technologies needed to move forward to reopen schools, and Appendix J provides further resources on this topic.



Examples from the field:

- » Curbside equipment pick-ups – drive-thru lines to pick up equipment, or via busses to drop off.
- » Philanthropic dollars have been used to cover the costs of laptops for students in high poverty communities. [Philadelphia](#); [Connecticut](#)
- » Wi-Fi Hotspots on school busses to park in neighborhoods of families who don't have access to internet ([Austin](#) (TX); [South Carolina](#))
- » Developing partnerships with internet providers to access affordable internet and creating maps to access free Wi-Fi. [Rhode Island](#); [Midland Texas](#)
- » IT hotlines and live messaging. ([Los Angeles](#); [New York City](#))
- » Central repair services ([Webster Central](#) [NY])
- » Students running IT help desks, which also provides students hands on (virtual) experience ([Miami Dade](#))
- » Instructional content via radio and television; pre-loaded tablets; Raspberry Pi

Discussion Questions

Audience

Technology Resource Audit

1. Student Connectivity

- a. How is the district determining which students/families have laptops/computers at home and who would need hardware (i.e., screening tool, needs assessment, or intake information)?
- b. How is this information updated and maintained?

LEA

2. Educator Connectivity:

- a. How is the district determining which teachers have adequate technology and connectivity at home and who would need new hardware or software?
- b. How is the district offsetting home internet costs?
- c. How is the educator connectivity information updated and maintained?

LEA

3. How might the state or district gain information and maintain a database of digital learning availability and access (across students/families, staff, and community resources) and use the findings to plan and deliver remote or virtual instruction? How are the following areas of technology and learning needs addressed via information gathering?

- » Availability of connectivity and devices for both students and educators
- » Rating of internet connection/signal strength throughout day (high, medium, low)
- » Student access to devices and estimate of hours per day of device availability.

SEA, LEA



Discussion Questions	Audience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Parental/household familiarity with digital devices (to assist/troubleshoot if necessary) » Comfort level w/remote instruction » Professional Development needs 	
<p>4. What distance learning tools and products are used most frequently?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>5. How widespread is internet connectivity and high-speed broadband service in the state, region, city for students, teachers, and other staff?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. What steps could be taken to develop the long-term infrastructure for broadband internet? b. How might the SEA/LEA partner with local service providers to increase accessibility? 	SEA, LEA
<p>6. What infrastructure might the school provide to improve connectivity (e.g., cell towers to increase access from parking lot or other common areas, mobile buses, solar-powered options, secure access to city-provided Wi-Fi, Wi-Fi hubs, renting/borrowing hotspots from the district, opening schools for teachers use, etc.)?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>7. Are there steps that could be taken to develop the long-term infrastructure for broadband internet?</p>	LEA
<p>Technology Planning</p>	
<p>8. Does the SEA/LEA have a Distance Learning Plan that includes the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Access: Connectivity & Devices (How can students obtain access to 1:1 technology, as age appropriate? How can schools close the digital divide and resource gap?) b. Educator training and support for new Distance Learning technologies, including resources and guidance (How is the district building staff capacity and supporting the use of digital education technologies?) c. Student training and support for Distance Learning technologies that will be used, including resources and guidance (including learning about safe internet practices with increased access to technology, as appropriate by grade level) d. A variety of delivery options that may be used separately or in conjunction to support synchronous, asynchronous, and independent learning, including expectations or limitations on total daily screen-time by grade level. e. Hardware Issues [How is IT support being provided to the increased number of users? If equipment repairs are needed, what's the process for repairing and replacing equipment in a timely manner (including for those families with limited transportation or ability to travel to a central location)?] 	SEA, LEA
<p>9. How could financial savings be incurred by negotiating large contracts with software or hardware providers?</p>	SEA, LEA
<p>10. How can the various platforms be streamlined to limit the number of logins and increase capacity building for families (i.e., parents noting dozens of different platforms, passwords, etc. for several students in different schools and grade levels)? What Learning Management System (LMS) and student data systems are being used? Is a "Single Sign On" option available?</p>	LEA



Distance Learning

Distance learning uses various tools and technologies to continue learning despite the physical separation of teachers and students. Learning may continue via student-teacher, student-student, or student-led communication, and may take place live, offline, recorded, or through a combination of all of the above. Other terms frequently used are distance education, remote learning, e-learning, online learning, or even remote emergency learning. Distance learning can be fully remote or can be blended (a combination of distance and face-to-face) to allow “the strategic integration of in-person learning with technology to enable real-time data use, personalized instruction, and mastery-based progression” ([Learning Accelerator](#)). During a prolonged disruption, learning may shift back and forth between distance learning and blended learning.

The questions below are designed to assist SEA/LEA/school leaders as they consider what distance learning should look like optimally, and plan for situations in which students must learn remotely; Appendix K provides further resources on this topic.



Examples from the field:

- » Ohio’s [remote learning resource guide](#)
- » Massachusetts’s [remote learning guidance](#)
- » [Florida Virtual School \(FLVS\)](#)

Distance Learning Tips & Strategies for Teachers

- » Be [present for students \(office hours, video, phone, messaging\)](#)
- » [Engage students and invite participation \(with the instructor and with each other\)](#)
- » [Prioritize active learning](#)
- » [Let go of perfectionism](#)
- » [Consider students’ equity of access](#)
- » [Great teaching skills translate to a virtual environment](#)
- » [Fuel conversations and connections in a variety of ways](#)
- » [Clearly communicate](#) expectations

References: [7 Tips for Being a Great Virtual Teacher](#), Teach for America, March 24, 2020; Husain, N. [Learn from Home: 20 Best Practices for Remote Learning in K-12](#), Ring Central, March 26, 2020.

Discussion Questions

Audience

1. What does distance learning mean in your setting?	SEA, LEA
2. What standards or expectations for distance learning should be defined?	SEA, LEA
3. How can traditional in-building instruction be redesigned to create more seamless transitions with distance learning?	LEA
4. What different instructional strategies can be used in distance learning? Which students would thrive with each instructional model/option?	LEA
5. How much screen-based learning is appropriate for each age range/grade level?	SEA, LEA
6. How can some of the positive aspects of distance learning transition into a traditional or blended model of schooling (especially for students who thrive with distance learning)? What data can be collected to determine which students and which aspects of distance learning were/are effective for students?	LEA
7. How can districts be better prepared to transition to distance learning and provide supports for families about how to support distance learning (i.e., using videotaped lessons, developing protocols for online lessons, and local TV channels may not be viable options for communication as increasing numbers of families “cut the cord”)?	SEA, LEA



Discussion Questions	Audience
8. What level of personal contact is needed to cultivate and maintain teacher/student relationships? What about creating new relationships if beginning a new school year virtually?	LEA
9. How is distance learning personalized to meet student’s needs?	LEA
10. Policy changes – do state or district policies need to change to allow normal credit accumulation for online or distance learning?	SEA, LEA
11. How is schoolwork evaluated with distance learning?	LEA
12. How are “specials” addressed in distance learning (e.g., art, music, physical education)?	LEA
13. What’s the effect of distance learning on magnet, theme-based schools (e.g., dual language, STEAM, project-based, etc.)?	LEA
14. How can in-school practices be improved to better prepare students for autonomous distance learning with limited parental support (may vary by grade level)?	LEA
15. How can a positive school culture be created or maintained via distance learning?	LEA
16. What’s the effect of an in-building disruption on student internships or community-based learning? Is there a way to continue that learning?	LEA
17. How can learning in vocational schools or required career-tech education (CTE) internships continue during a disruption?	SEA, LEA
18. What guidelines are being issued regarding the selection of various hybrid learning models appropriate for various scenarios of disruption?	SEA, LEA
19. What plans have been made to implement hybrid learning models given various scenarios? What feedback has been collected from students, staff, and their families regarding the models that best meet their needs?	LEA



Support Services and Interventions

During and after a disruption, individual students may require increased academic Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports and interventions. How to provide services during a disruption, as well as how to make up for the increased need after a disruption should be key considerations. Particular attention should be paid to underserved student subgroups (students receiving special education services, English learners, students living in poverty, students experiencing homelessness, etc.) who may be more likely to require increasingly intensive supports over time.



[*Considerations for Supporting a Successful Start to the 2020-2021 School Year for Students with Disabilities*](#), is a guidance tool

provided by the National Center for Systemic Improvement which addresses how SEA leaders can effectively plan to address both the learning and legal considerations of programming for students with disabilities upon their return to schools.

The following discussion questions can also be used to guide LEA and SEA leaders as they address support services/intervention programming with the return to schools. Appendix L contains a table of additional resources to address support services and interventions.



Examples from the field:

- » Differentiated instructional programs: [Ieffco Public Schools \(CO\)](#)
- » Freedberg, F. [With masks and social distance, these special ed students have already returned to school](#). EdSource, May 27, 2020.
- » State-created website with resources for administrators, teachers, and families: [Maine](#)

Discussion Questions	Audience
1. What LEA/SEA policy decisions might have implications for students who require additional supports and/or interventions (e.g., attendance, grading, etc.)?	SEA, LEA
2. How do the current LEA/SEA policy and practices enable or restrict the delivery of student supports and interventions in a remote or blended learning environment?	SEA, LEA
3. What additional services could be offered to students to make up for lack of progress or a lapse in needed services? In what ways could these services be provided (e.g., in person, virtually, etc.)?	LEA
4. What is the process for amending, revising, and documenting Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)?	SEA, LEA
5. How is a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) affected by a disruption? What changes are necessary to maintain or improve its efficacy?	LEA
6. What additional supports might educators need to better meet the needs of their students, especially those underserved, during and after a disruption?	SEA, LEA
7. What varying teaching models might be used to better support students who require additional supports or interventions during or post a disruption (e.g., virtual co-teaching)?	LEA
8. In a remote environment, what accommodations can be made to instruction, so that it is accessible for all students (e.g., blended supports that include printouts and online learning, one-on-one and self-directed, etc.)? Are all domains emphasized including reading, writing, listening, and speaking?	LEA
9. In a remote environment, how is learning being differentiated and personalized to meet individual student needs?	LEA

Discussion Questions	Audience
10. In a remote environment, what supports are given to parents and families to provide supports and/or interventions?	LEA
11. How can needed supports and interventions be provided under tightened budget constraints, especially if interventionists or specialists might be cut if they are non-contractual staff?	LEA

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

Underlying systemic inequities may be exacerbated by both the severity and tenure of a disruption—especially for the most vulnerable student populations. Special attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices should be made during and recovering from a disruption. Education leaders should also go one step further and take the opportunity to reimagine schools from these students’ perspectives by creating systems that promote DEI in all aspects of schooling and include a culture where all students thrive together and embrace differences as critical assets. Advancing DEI goes beyond providing equitable access to opportunities to learn. It also very often necessitates: 1) engaging in critical reflection on personal attitudes and beliefs about race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and national origin, 2) advancing policies and practices that break down structural inequities based on race, gender, religion, and national origin, and 3) expanding the ways that the voices, perspectives, and experiences of communities and individuals served by schools are integrated into decision-making.

The questions below are designed to assist SEA/LEA/school leaders as they consider how systems can better promote equity, diversity, and inclusion; Appendix M provides further resources on this topic.

Discussion Questions	Audience
1. How is equitable access to educational opportunities being provided, especially to our most underserved populations, such as new arrivals, those who don’t/can’t have access to resources, etc.?	SEA, LEA
2. How are opportunity gaps and resource inequities identified and countered?	SEA, LEA
3. How can SEAs/LEAs build equitable learning environments for all students during disruptions/school closures? What additional information/knowledge, if any, is needed? Where and how can we get this information? Who else needs to be represented when decisions are made?	SEA, LEA
4. What can SEAs do to promote culturally responsive and sustaining practices at the LEA level? What policies and practices reinforce existing gaps and inequities?	SEA
5. How can SEAs/LEAs support teachers in developing and implementing equitable practices for online learning? What are the teacher working conditions that support and/or hinder equitable online instructional practices? What do teachers need to do to develop and implement equitable online learning practices?	SEA, LEA
6. How can SEAs/LEAs address the digital divide (connectivity, infrastructure, devices) for students, families, and staff?	SEA, LEA
7. How can parents/caregivers be better included in education in the future to be able to better support their students during a disruption? In what language(s) are materials/communications sent home?	LEA



Discussion Questions	Audience
8. What are the needs of English Learners and Dual Language Learners during school closures/disruptions? How are those needs supported during disruptions/school closures?	SEA, LEA
9. Who leads this work? Is there a DEI position, championed by the chief or the governor? If so, what are the opportunities and limitations of their ability to advance DEI?	SEA
10. What agencies need to work together to advance DEI?	SEA, LEA
11. What will be done to repair the harm (including academic, social-emotional, physical and mental health, etc.) caused by the school closures/disruptions, particularly to underserved populations?	SEA, LEA

Monitoring Work and Adjusting Course

As SEAs and LEAs engage in continuous improvement planning to address a disruption, leaders will need to monitor their work regularly through ongoing data analysis, assessing needs and adjusting course based on these data and changing scenarios and contexts. Leadership teams will want to meet to regularly monitor the immediate crisis response and evaluate the response as internal and external data is collected. Disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic require *shorter-cycle planning than normal*. Holding regular AARs as plans are implemented to address various scenarios can provide leaders with timely information to allow for course changes as needed.

The questions below are designed to assist SEA/LEA/school leaders as they monitor their work and make course corrections to address a disruption.

Discussion Questions	Audience
1. How often are your various Leadership Teams meeting to assess data? Are these teams able to engage in short-cycle planning? What additional training may be necessary?	SEA, LEA
2. What, if any, additional data is needed for these teams to monitor implementation and gauge outcomes?	SEA, LEA
3. What AARs are needed to inform the planning and response once school resumes? What is appropriate timing for these AARs and who will conduct them?	SEA, LEA
4. Are communication processes being implemented as planned?	SEA
5. Is data from external partner organizations or agencies being collected and regularly reviewed to ensure leaders fully understand the effect of the disruption response?	SEA, LEA
6. As scenarios and conditions change, how will leadership teams respond by making course corrections?	SEA, LEA



Resetting the Direction

Engaging in continuous improvement for disruption planning and response further allows leaders to come full circle, with the opportunity to evaluate what worked and what didn't, and reset (if necessary) the organization's direction to better meet the needs of students, staff, and their families moving forward.

Looking to the Future: Redesigning/Reimagining Education

Systemic disruptions may result in a number of negative effects, but they also give educators an opportunity to rethink and redesign the education system. Large scale and sustained disruptions may also expose broader systemic issues that schools have been working to address indirectly for decades (such as inequitable outcomes for specific student populations), and provide the opportunity to directly address those issues via the educational system, and with partnerships with other governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations.

The questions below are designed to assist SEA/LEA/school leaders as they evaluate their organization's success with planning and response to a disruption and consider how changes can be made to improve the system moving forward; Appendix N provides further resources on this topic.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the ideal vision of a “new normal”?
2. How does this disruption provide an opportunity to rethink how the educational system serves students?
3. What has this disruption revealed regarding vulnerable areas that are most in need of improvement or change? What non-educational services are being met by or via schools? Who is best positioned to provide those services? What funding sources exist to provide those services?
4. How can the resources that are being developed on-the-spot be used in the long run to create more practical learning experiences and lifelong learning opportunities, such as virtual field trips to museums, national parks, and zoos?
5. How can SEAs/LEAs foster engaging and meaningful learning environments in the new era of a post-pandemic education?
6. How does the shift to increased technology-based home learning create new opportunities to connect with students and their families?
7. How can we ensure our most vulnerable populations are better protected in the future? How can we grow kind, individualized, and humane learning spaces?
8. How could partnerships with other agencies be used to develop plans for workforce development, local/regional/national community service corps, etc.?
9. How might sustainable design strategies drive system change?
10. How can education systems better position students at the center of determining what, when, and how they learn?



References

- Argenti, P. (2020). Communicating through coronavirus crisis. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2020/03/communicating-through-the-coronavirus-crisis>
- Bailey & Hess. (May 1, 2020). A Blueprint for Reopening This Fall: What Will It Take to Get Schools Ready? *Education Week*.
- Charon, R. (2001). *What the CEO wants you to know: How your company really works*. Crown Business
- Corbett, J. & S. Redding. (2017). [Using Needs Assessments for School and District Improvement: A Tactical Guide](#). Center on School Turnaround at WestEd and Council of Chief State School Officers.
- Herold, B. (2020, April 10). The disparities in remote learning under Coronavirus (in charts). <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/04/10/the-disparities-in-remote-learning-under-coronavirus.html>
- Hirt, M., Smit, S., Bradley, C. Uhlaner, R., Mysore, M., Atsmon, Y., & N. Northcote. (April 2020). [Getting ahead of the next stage of the coronavirus crisis](#). McKinsey & Company.
- Layland, A. & J. Corbett. (2017). [Utilizing Integrated Resources to Implement the School and District Improvement Cycle and Supports Guidance for Schools, Districts, and State Education Agencies](#). Council of Chief State School Officers.
- Layland, A., & Redding, S. (2020). Managing performance strategically in education organizations. Academic Development Institute.
- Learning Accelerator. (2020). What is Blended Learning?
- Lewis, L. K. (2019). Organizational change: Creating change through strategic communication. John Wiley & Sons.
- McNulty, E. J., & Marcus, L. (2020). Are you leading through the crisis...or managing the response? Harvard Business Review. <https://hbr.org/2020/03/are-you-leading-through-the-crisis-or-managing-the-response>
- NCES Blog Editor. (April 7, 2020). [The Prevalence of Written Plans for a Pandemic Disease Scenario in Public Schools](#). National Center for Education Statistics.
- School Health Policies and Practices Study. (2016). [Results from the School Health Policies and Practices Study](#). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Snowden, D. J., & Boone, M. E. (2007). A leader's framework for decision making. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2007/11/a-leaders-framework-for-decision-making>
- Sullivan, M. (n.d.). Collaborating for School Safety, Security, Emergency Management and Preparedness, PowerPoint Slide Deck. REMS TA Center.
- Zavadsky, H., Berry, T., & Savage, T. (2017). BSCP Center Strategic Communications Toolbox. San Antonio, TX: Building State Capacity and Productivity Center at Westat.



Appendix A: Reopening School Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title / Source
Education Week	Special Report Website	Includes numerous articles and reports on school reopening suggestions and considerations	Special Report: How We Go Back to School
Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings Institution	Webinar	Highlights key issues and suggestions for how to address them for reopening in the fall by a panel of education experts	Reopening Schools in the Fall Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic - Additional follow-up questions
American Enterprise Institute (AEI)	Document	Sketches a blueprint for reopening schools	Blueprint for Back to School
National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)	Document	Document with selected news and federal guidance, resources, and independent school strategies and trends	Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance for Schools
National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET)	Planning Guide	Includes scenarios and considerations for 2020-2021	School Year Planning Guide
American Federation of Teachers (AFT)	Report	Guidance for imagining a new normal for public education, public health, and our economy in the age of COVID-19	A Plan to Safely Reopen America's Schools and Communities
National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)	Document	Short working document that provides an overview of state COVID policies and resources	Initial Ideas and Resources on Planning for Reopening Following COVID-19 School Closures
Spaces4Learning	Article	Outlines how opening schools will be different and summarizes how other countries have reopened schools	Living (and Learning) with COVID-19: Best Practices for Reopening Schools
Spaces4Learning	Article	Outlines social distancing suggestions for school spaces	Rethinking School Spaces and Structures to Maintain Proper Distancing Amid COVID-19
American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)	News article	Provides links to CDC recommendations	AAP guidance on school reopening addresses physical and mental health, instructional time
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	Document	Provides a general framework for cleaning and disinfection practices	Reopening Guidance
United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)	Tool	Guidelines aim to inform the decision-making process regarding school reopening, supporting national preparations, and guiding the implementation process as part of overall public health and education planning processes	Framework for Reopening Schools
World Health Organization (WHO)	Guidelines	Guidelines for schools, workplaces, and institutions related to COVID-19	Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) technical guidance: Guidance for schools, workplaces, & institutions

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title / Source
Education International (EI)	Article	Includes a set of five dimensions that should be considered by governments, in dialogue with educators and their unions, when planning this next phase of the response to the COVID-19 crisis in education	Guidance on Reopening Schools and Education Institutions
National School Boards Association (NSBA)	Guide	Planning and resources for districts related to COVID-19	COVID-19: Preparing for Widespread Illness in Your School Community
Getting Smart	Article	Provides 10 tips for reopening schools, with a focus on equity and serving underserved populations	How to Reopen Schools: a 10 Point Plan Putting Equity at the Center
Vox	Article	Highlights information about how other countries are opening schools	Germany, Vietnam, and New Zealand have reopened schools. Here's what the US can learn.
Learning Policy Institute (Melnick and Darling-Hammond)	Blog	Highlights information on the health and safety guidelines from other countries	Reopening Schools in the Context of COVID-19: Health and Safety Guidelines from Other Countries
Chiefs for Change	Document	Includes suggestions for reopening and for reimagining traditional school structures and practices	How Education Leaders Prepare for Reentry and Beyond?
Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)	Framework	Presents a framework for SEAs that includes continuity of learning, conditions for learning, leadership & planning, and policy & funding	Framework to Assist State Education Leaders in Planning for Restart of Schools
State Examples	State guidance	State-specific examples for returning to school	Iowa - Return to Learn Plan Guidance for LEAs Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education Missouri School Boards Plan for Reopening New Hampshire School Reopening and Redesign Taskforce Structure



Appendix B. Strategic Performance Management Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title / Source
Center on School Turnaround (Corbett & Redding)	Document w/ tools	Provides SEAs and LEAs with information about how the Needs Assessment (NA) connects to a broader theory of action for improvement and includes specific guidance and questions for NA development	Using Needs Assessments for School and District Improvement
Building State Capacity and Productivity (BSCP) Center (Layland & Redding)	Manual	Describes Strategic Performance Management (SPM), including lessons learned through its implementation in several education organizations	Managing performance strategically in education agencies
Building State Capacity and Productivity (BSCP) Center and Center on School Turnaround (Layland & Redding)	Document	Describes Strategic Performance Measurement (SPM) and how it's structured and how to implement it at various levels	Casting a Statewide Strategic Performance Net: Interlaced Data and Responsive Supports
Building State Capacity and Productivity (BSCP) Center and Center on School Turnaround (Layland & Redding)	Document	Guidebook about applying SPM to a single division within an organization or a strand of work across an organization	Strategic Performance for Your Branch
Harvard University's Strategic Data Project (Peres, et al.)	Report	Provides practitioners with guidance on how to develop and implement performance management tools for K-12 education	Tools for Performance Management in Education
Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) (Layland & Corbett)	Document	Draws from and integrates five resources into a concise and practical guide for constructing a "Strategic Performance Network"	Utilizing Integrated Resources to Implement the School and District Improvement Cycle and Supports
Reform Support Network	Tool	Helps State Education Agencies assess their current efforts to sustain reform strategies to meet student achievement goals	Sustainability Rubric for State Education Agencies (pdf)
Reform Support Network	Brief	Profiles how Delaware and Hawaii are collecting and using data to inform continuous improvement	Performance Management: Collecting and Using Data to Measure Progress, Improve Results



Appendix C: Strategic Communications Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
REMS TA Center	Article	Describes lessons learned from wildfires and provides a case study from a school	Communication and Collaboration During Natural Disasters (Lessons Learned Volume 3, Issue 2) , Spanish Version
REMS TA Center	Article	Suggestions to consider when developing and maintaining positive working relationships with the media	Establishing and Developing Strategic Partnerships with Media Representatives (Helpful Hints Volume 2, Issue 8)
American Red Cross	Video	Includes some examples of how an alert and notification system doesn't have to be expensive. A whistle or boat "foghorn" can do the job. The key is to make sure that the technique covers every part of the facility	Communicating During a Crisis
U.S. Department of Homeland Security	Document	Examines motivations people may have for sharing false information, discusses underlying issues that cause false information, and offers case studies from recent disasters to illustrate the problem	Countering False Information on Social Media in Disasters and Emergencies
National Council on Disability	Document	Identifies barriers, facilitators, and successful practices to providing effective emergency-related communications; examines the current state of affairs of the accessibility of emergency-related communications; reviews the enforcement of disability laws and regulations as they pertain to effective communications before, during, and after emergencies	Effective Communications for People with Disabilities: Before, During, and After Emergencies
Homeland Security	Document	Details how to maximize the use of all communications capabilities available to emergency responders — voice, video, and data — as well as ensure the security of data and information	National Emergency Communications Plan
Building State Capacity & Productivity (BSCP)	Tool	Six modules designed to provide guidance, examples from the field, and tools for SEAs to use no matter where they are in their communication planning process	Strategic Communications Toolbox
National Comprehensive Center	Document	Outlines four modules of SPM and how to implement each one	Strategic Performance Management: A Communication Lens



Appendix D: Financial Implications & Procurement Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
Bellwether Education Partners	Policy Briefs	Series of briefs on CARES Act funding to help state and local policymakers make informed decisions about how to use the funds	Education Funding in Federal Coronavirus Response Legislation
Education Week (Burnette)	Article	Estimates how COVID-19 will increase district costs during the upcoming school year	How COVID-19 Will Balloon District Costs This Coming School Year
Education Week	Tool	Calculator where you can select your state and see how much COVID-19 will cost schools	Calculator: How much will COVID-19 cost schools?
The 74 Million (Schoales)	Article	Article with budgeting suggestions - Kerri update	7 Principles for School District Budgeting in a Time of Financial Armageddon
Education Resource Strategies (ERS)	Blog and Webinar	Describes financial challenges from COVID-19	The Financial Implications of COVID-19 on School Districts
Education Resource Strategies (ERS)	Blog and Webinar	Explores the key decisions districts faced during their COVID-19 response and how subsequent areas of spending and saving affected systems' end-of-year financial position.	Capturing FY20 Savings (or Not) in School Districts
Education Resource Strategies (ERS)	Report	Describes four new realities school district leaders should plan for and four questions and starter answers	Managing Through Uncertainty 4 New Realities and 4 Questions to Help School District Leaders Act on the Imperative to Transform Schools and Districts
Education Commission of the States (ECS)	Blog	Identifies potential implications of a disruption on school funding, and includes strategies for addressing issues and using additional federal dollars	COVID-19 and School Funding: What to Expect and What States Can Do
National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL)	Webpage	Includes links to federal guidance, state policy search engines, and guidance on key topics	Public Education Response to Coronavirus



Appendix E: Coordination and Collaboration Within and Amongst Agencies Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
Collective Mind Global	Guide	Provides advice for designing online activities and events	A how-to guide for virtual facilitation and collaboration with remote groups
FSG	Document	Suggestions to include holistic view of social determinants of education, and who to involve in national conversations	Aligning Systems to Support Student Achievement
University of Massachusetts (Woodland)	Rubric	A short version of a rubric to assess the efficacy of team collaboration	Team Collaboration Assessment Rubric
The Yale School of Management Education Leadership Conference (ELC)	Blog	Describes conditions of collective impact that are considered success factors	Collaboration in Education: Lessons from the Field
Teachers College, Columbia University for the Wallace Foundation	Report	Describes developments in the new generation of cross-sector collaborations for education and presents findings from a scan of such initiatives across the U.S.	Collective Impact and the New Generation of Cross-Sector Collaborations for Education
REMS TA Center	Article	Describes lessons learned from wildfires and provides a case study from Live Oak Elementary School	Communication and Collaboration During National Disasters: The Lessons Learned from Past Experience (Lessons Learned Volume 3, Issue 2)
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)	Web links	Provides information on resource typing, credentialing, inventorying, and the National Mutual Aid System (NIMS), and includes a link to the Resource Typing Library Tool	Resource Management and Mutual Aid



Appendix F: Compliance and Accountability Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
U.S. Department of Education	Fact Sheet	Discusses the potential implications of novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) on State assessment and accountability systems. This fact sheet also addresses other considerations regarding the use of federal funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA)	Fact Sheet: Impact of COVID-19 on Assessments and Accountability under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act
The Hunt Institute	Playbook	Includes policy options and considerations for SEAs, LEAs, and schools	COVID-19 Policy Considerations: Accountability How to Deal with Cancelled Assessments
Center on Reinventing Public Education (CRPE)	Blog	Discusses three opportunities that SEAs can leverage from ESSA to reopen and recover	Three Ways States Can Tap ESSA to Better Navigate the COVID-19 Crisis
The Hunt Institute	Panel	Includes discussion on the existing inequities seen in assessments and accountability, how these inequities are highlighted during a disruption, and suggestions for moving forward	Homeroom with Education Leaders: Equity in Accountability & Learning



Appendix G: Assessment Cycle Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
NBC News (Fichtel and Ciechalski)	News Article	Discusses problems associated with taking AP tests	AP test-takers report problems submitting online exams, fear they'll have to retake
National Center for Intensive Intervention	Tools Charts	Resources to support the selection and evaluation of screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessments.	https://intensiveintervention.org/tools-charts/identifying-assessments
Education Week	News Article	5 Tips for Measuring and Responding to COVID-19 Learning Loss	https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/06/12/5-tips-for-measuring-and-responding-to.html?cmp=enl-eu-news2&M=59595509&U=553060&UUID=9bc4fda5086bf85fdf82fb5f1a2a674c



Appendix H: Social Emotional Learning & Trauma-Informed Work Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)	Document	Includes a roadmap for educators to plan for and implement critical SEL practice areas in their COVID-19 reopening plans	Reunite, Renew, and Thrive: Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Roadmap for Reopening School
EdSurge	Webpage	Highlights suggestions and questions to keep in mind to support parents during a disruption	Supporting Students Means Taking Care of Parents Too
Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress	Article	Includes tips and strategies for supporting homebound children and communicating with their families	Helping Homebound Children During the COVID-19 Outbreak
California Surgeon General	Playbook	Includes strategies, tips, and tools for caregivers and students	California Surgeon General's Playbook: Stress Relief for Caregivers and Kids during COVID-19
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	Article	Includes tips for social distancing, quarantine, and isolation during an infectious disease outbreak	Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health: Tips for Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation During an Infectious Disease Outbreak
The Coalition to Support Grieving Students	Article	Includes background information on grief and links to tips and tools to support students	Supporting Grieving Students During a Pandemic
National Comprehensive Center	Webpage	Resources, including supporting students through the pandemic, trauma-informed practices during COVID-19, wellness resources, a SEL resource, and take-home activities and professional development for SEL	Continuity of Learning: Resources to Support Social Emotional Learning
The Aspen Institute	Webinar	Includes suggestions, promising practices, and strategies to maintain social connections during a disruption that requires isolation	How Schools Ensure Social Connections During Physical Isolation
The Aspen Institute	Document	Includes ten actions that states can take to advance policy solutions that develop, maintain, and strengthen connections and relationships students need to recover from a disruption and move forward in a post-pandemic environment	Fostering Connectedness in the Pandemic Era: Policy Recommendations to Support Social, Emotional, and Academic Development
REL Pacific	Blog	Includes considerations for how to ensure that SEL strategies are culturally relevant and address needs across diverse student bodies	Key Considerations for Promoting Culturally Relevant SEL During COVID-19



Appendix I: Wraparound Services Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
Coalition for Community Schools	Webpage	“Resources” section of the Coalition for Community Schools website features toolkits for the field, capacity building guides on scaling up local partnerships and financing community schools, information on technical assistance providers, webinars, and other coalition resources	Coalition for Community Schools
Oregon Department of Education	Document	Includes suggestions for organizing cases in three tiers of support, and ways to provide supports remotely	Mental Health Guidance for School Counselors, Other Mental Health Professionals and Administrators
National Wraparound Initiative (NWI) and the National Wraparound Implementation Center (NWIC)	Document	Includes key elements of the wraparound practices, potential modifications that may be necessary to effectively support students and families during a disruption, and aligned federal guidance	National Wraparound Implementation Center Special Guidance Report: Managing and Responding to Coronavirus (COVID-19)
Afterschool Alliance		Includes FAQs and resources about how the afterschool field can support communities during a disruption, including supporting essential workers with childcare and providing free meals and food support	Afterschool & Summer in the time of COVID-19



Appendix J: Technology Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
Education Drive (Modan)	Article	Describes four strategies to keep tech support rolling through COVID-19 shutdowns	4 strategies to keep tech support rolling through COVID-19 shutdowns
Education Week (Will)	Article	Explains that in conditions with weak or unstable internet, teachers are going to school parking lots to access their Wi-Fi to teach and give their own children remote access	Teachers Without Internet Work in Parking Lots
National Center for Education Statistics	Data Report	Illustrates percentages in 2018 of 3- to 18-year-olds with home internet access and the percentage with home internet access only through a smartphone	Children's Access to and Use of the Internet: The Condition of Education
THE Journal (Srba)	Article	Includes resources and tips to provide remote education during school building closures	THE Journal: Resources & Tips for Remote Education During School Closures
North American Council for Online Learning (NACOL) (Watson)		Acts as a comprehensive report on K-12 online learning, clarifying common misconceptions of parents and educators, includes success stories & tips, and provides concrete evidence that K-12 online learning outcomes can be as good if not better than face-to-face courses	A National Primer on K-12 Online Learning



Appendix K: Distance Learning Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
What Works Clearinghouse (WWC)	Database	A searchable database of rigorous research that evaluates the effectiveness of distance learning practices	Studies of Distance Learning
Office of Educational Technology	Report	The 2020 NETP will incorporate new developments in education technology and will share a vision for how schools and districts across the country can continue to use technology to improve equity and opportunity for all students. It will also address infrastructure needs for the vision to become a reality	National Education Technology Plan
Office of Educational Technology	Toolkit	Provides leaders with a multi-step decision-making process, practical tools, and numerous examples for setting a trajectory of positive change, moving assertively toward achievement of student learning and improvement goals	Empowering Educators through Professional Learning Toolkit
Medium, Office of Ed Tech	Blog		Keep Calm and Connect All Students
The Learning Accelerator (Dávila)	Blog	Resources and tips on how to connect with students virtually “in-person” via scheduled time together and how to connect with them on their own time via recorded videos and audio posted on different platforms	Building Connections
The Learning Accelerator (Dávila)	Blog	Addresses how to assess learning to inform and improve instruction remotely	Assessing for Learning
The Learning Accelerator (Dávila)	Blog	Addresses how to differentiate remote instruction	Differentiating Instruction in a Virtual Setting
The Learning Accelerator (Finegan)	Blog	Addresses ways to provide effective professional development (PD) remotely	Professional development strategies to support teachers during the shift to remote learning
Education Endowment Foundation	Report	Summarizes the findings from 60 systematic reviews and meta-analyses answers under five key topic areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » General remote teaching and learning » Blended learning » Computer-supported collaborative learning » Computer-assisted instruction » Educational games 	Remote Learning: Rapid Evidence Assessment
North Carolina Digital Learning Initiative	Tool/Rubric	The checklist and rubric identify four domains and twelve key indicators for assessing the quality of digital learning resources	Quality Review Tools for Digital Learning Resources
Next Generation Learning (Szot)	Topics	Three ways Distinctive Schools teachers and students remain deeply connected to each other during the COVID-19 pandemic	New Designs for School: Learning at Home Starts with Human Connection

Appendix L: Student Support Services and Interventions Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
National Center for Systemic Improvement	Website	Includes both legal and learning considerations for SEAs to make regarding how to best support students with disabilities in fall 2020	NCSI
Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)	Document	Map of technical assistance and dissemination projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education	OSEP Placemat
Collaborative for Student Growth, NWEA	Report	Provides possible academic growth as a result of school closings due to COVID-19, and recommendations to counteract decline in student achievement growth	The COVID-19 Slide: What summer learning loss can tell us about the potential impact of school closures on student academic achievement.
Education Week	Article, Promising Practices	Describes the steps taken and barriers addressed by a small rural community when schools close.	Serving Special Needs Students During COVID-19: A Rural Educator's Story
Edutopia	Promising Practices	Describes barriers and strategies for special education teachers when setting up home-based learning	New Strategies in Special Education as Kids Learn from Home
Michigan Virtual Learning Institute (Deschaine)	Article	This report focuses on supporting students with disabilities in online and blended environments, but much of the information here may help all students	Supporting Students with Disabilities in K-12 Online and Blended Learning
REL Midwest (Marx)	Blog	Focused on the unique needs of students with disabilities in a remote learning setting	Plan and deliver: Educating students with disabilities in remote settings



Appendix M: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
Colorin Colorado	Webpage	Includes a variety of resources to support ELLs and immigrant students and their families through COVID-19 and distance learning	School Responses to COVID-19: Serving ELLs and Immigrant Students
National Comprehensive Center	Webpage	Provides resources such as a resource hub for supporting students with disabilities, strategies for COVID-19 and homelessness, access and distance education, and ELL and multilingual resources for schools	Continuity of Learning: Resources to Ensure Equity
Midwest & Plains Equity Center	Document	Describes process for designing distance learning opportunities in 5 stages	Five Big Equity Ideas for Designing Distance Learning Opportunities Equity Considerations for Online & Distance Learning
The Aspen Institute - Roundtable on Community Change	Glossary	Includes definitions of key phrases that are helpful when promoting DEI	Glossary for Understanding the Dismantling Structural Racism/Promoting Racial Equity Analysis
The Aspen Institute	Document	Includes five actions that states and districts can take to advance culturally and linguistically responsive education in a post-pandemic environment	Supporting Students to be Independent Learners: State and District Actions for the Pandemic Era
Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC)	Toolkit	Collection of tools that may be useful in developing an equity lens in professional learning, organizational growth, and school design	Designing for Equity in Next Gen Learning



Appendix N: Redesigning/Reimagining Education Resources

Publisher/Author	Type	Summary	Title/Source
Future of School	Webpage	Future of School is dedicated to mobilizing change in American K-12 education so all students reach their unbounded potential no matter where their learning is taking place via a collective effort of stakeholders - discussing important topics of current education issues and reimagining the education system	https://www.futureof.school/
Harvard University series	Series of Briefs	A series of convenings that highlights new knowledge and fosters stimulating and constructive conversation about the most important issues in education	The Future of Education
The Harvard Gazette (Mineo)	Interview	Reflections with education leader, Paul Reville, discussing how COVID-19 school closures have turned a spotlight on inequities and other shortcomings	Time to fix American education with race-for-space resolve
Building State Capacity and Productivity Center (BSCP) Center	Series	SEA of the Future Series includes reports on ways to reform and redesign the State Education Agency with a variety of focus areas, including evidence-based policymaking, rural education, infrastructure, productivity, leveraging performance management, and maximizing opportunities under ESSA	http://www.bsccenter.org/interviews/#documents
Education Reimagined	Report	Results of a group of education leaders coming together to reimagine education for all children, with the learner at the center	A transformational vision for education in the U.S.
Center for Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) (Dusseault, Gill, & Chu)	Blog	Provides reflections on approaches to summer school and prompts discussion on ways to rethink summer school options; evolving database of summer/fall district plans	Districts Are Missing an Opportunity to Innovate as Most Take Traditional Approaches to Summer School Summer/Fall District Plan Database

