The Education Trust–West
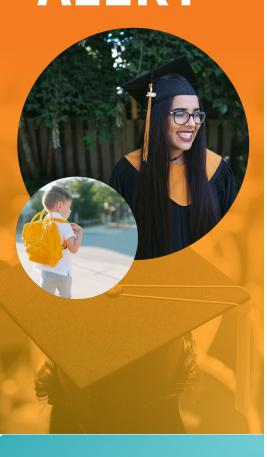
EQUITY ALERT

"**[Learning Continuity and Attendance] plans present an opportunity for LEA leaders to center equity in their decision making this school year.**"

FROM CRISIS TO OPPORTUNITY: LEARNING CONTINUITY AND ATTENDANCE PLAN CHECKLIST

Local education agencies (LEAs) are currently working hard to provide academic support to students in unprecedented circumstances. To be responsive to the situation created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor and Legislature have modified the Local Control and Accountability Plan process for the 2020-21 school year. This year LEAs, including districts, charter schools, and county offices of education, will complete a Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan (LCP) that focuses on planning for a distance learning environment and addressing the learning loss resulting from school closures last year.

These plans present an opportunity for LEA leaders to center equity in their decision making this school year. The checklist below provides considerations for LEA leaders to better serve the needs of historically marginalized students who have been most affected by the pandemic. LEA leaders can use this checklist to evaluate whether their LCPs adequately address the needs of these students. For more detailed information on these considerations, see The Education Trust–West's more comprehensive resource on returning to school: *From Crisis to Opportunity: Recovering California's Commitment to Equity*.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

❑ Did the LEA use multiple modes of communication to collect input from multiple stakeholders to develop the plan?

❑ Students

❑ Parents/care-givers

❑ Educators

❑ Have school and LEA staff established regular individual and larger-group check-ins with students and families? Did LEA LCAP leads use these touch-points to solicit feedback for the learning continuity plan?

❑ Did the LEA leaders solicit family feedback in the primary language spoken in students' homes?

❑ Did LEA LCAP leads leverage members of parent advisory committees or community organizations to contact other parents for input?

IN-PERSON INSTRUCTIONAL OFFERINGS

❑ Did LEA leaders consider how to prioritize the students most deeply affected by school closures for in-person learning while respecting family preferences for attending school in person?

DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM

Continuity of Instruction

Does the LEA's Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan:

- ❑ Identify a robust minimum of synchronous instruction that prioritizes social-emotional learning?

- ❑ Has the LEA described what synchronous instruction means to students and families?

- ❑ Have they communicated to students and families how much synchronous instruction students will receive?

- ❑ Address how to make instruction accessible to students who are not able to access synchronous learning opportunities?

- ❑ Support school-level planning that prioritizes focus standards through quality grade-level instruction with supports rather than over-remediation?

- ❑ Include continuous outreach to students, parents, and families to understand their experiences with distance learning to ensure students are accessing quality instruction and supports? Does the plan address how the LEA will adjust instruction delivery as leaders receive input from families?

- ❑ Address how schools and districts will streamline learning resources, so assignments, schedules, and other learning resources are all available in one place?

- ❑ Describe the supports the LEA will provide to parents and families to navigate distance learning technology to facilitate student learning at home?

Access to Devices and Connectivity

Does the LEA's Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan:

- ❑ Describe how school and LEA staff will periodically conduct technology needs assessments with families to ensure access?

- ❑ Address the partnerships the LEA has established to ensure 1:1 device access for students and reliable broadband internet access?

Pupil Participation and Progress

Does the LEA's Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan:

- ❑ Define participation in a way that ensures meaningful student engagement in learning?

- ❑ Identify systems the LEA will implement to track participation and allow educators to intervene quickly when students are not accessing instruction?

- ❑ Support innovative ways teachers can continuously assess students' mastery of concepts in a distance learning environment?

- ❑ Invest in surveying teachers to understand their readiness to assess student progress through distance learning?

Distance Learning Professional Development

Does the LEA's Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan:

❑ Ensure educators receive professional development specific to engaging particularly vulnerable student groups in distance learning, like English learners, students of color, low-income students, unhoused students, and students with disabilities?

❑ Invest in professional development that equips teachers to provide designated and integrated English language development for English learners in a distance learning setting.

❑ Provide teachers and administrators collaborative planning time to analyze student assessments and develop grade-level instructional plans accordingly?

Supports for Students with Unique Needs

Does the LEA's Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan:

❑ Describe actions to ensure students with unique needs, English learners, students with disabilities, students in foster care and students experiencing homelessness have access to the full curriculum?

❑ Make investments in technology and software supports that will make learning accessible to English learners?

❑ Identify specific staff members to act as technology liaisons to particularly vulnerable student groups, like English learners, unhoused students, and students with disabilities?

❑ Identify specific instructional accommodations for students with disabilities, for example, adapting IEPs to reflect the distance learning environment?

❑ Identify specific instructional accommodations for English learners, for example, expanding the use of assistive technology and language development apps?

❑ Invest in developing individualized learning plans for English learners and recently reclassified students as a strategy for ensuring students gaining proficiency in English are accessing quality learning?

STUDENT LEARNING LOSS

Student Learning Loss Strategies

Does the LEA's Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan:

❑ Include strategies for accelerating learning?

❑ Incorporate the use of high-quality diagnostic assessments to determine a baseline for students' collective and individual academic needs?

❑ Identify various data sources available from the 2019-20 school year so teachers can use to assess the academic needs of students for the current school year?

❑ Incorporate extended learning opportunities and targeted intervention strategies that can work in different contexts?

Effectiveness of Learning Loss Strategies

Does the LEA's Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan:

❑ Include ways in which teachers will periodically assess student learning?

❑ Ensure that teachers will receive results as quickly as possible so they can adjust planning and instruction accordingly?

MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Does the LEA's Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan:

❏ Incorporate opportunities for community healing related to the pandemic and the national call for a commitment to racial justice? Is the focus of this healing, acknowledging and addressing the trauma students face to establish a safe and supportive learning environment?

❏ Incorporate opportunities for LEA and school leaders to hear the social-emotional needs of members of the school community, including students, parents, families, and educators? Do these plans prioritize historically marginalized community members? Does the plan also indicate how the LEA will use feedback to support the social emotional and mental health of school community members?

❏ Invest in mental health support resources and provide a streamlined process for school community members to report a need for these resources and receive support?

❏ Identify ways for all students, especially the ones deeply affected by school closures, to remain connected to at least one adult on campus to develop a supportive and meaningful relationship?

❏ Establish educator supports like affinity groups for educators of color to foster mutual support and improve retention?

❏ Identify partnerships with community-based organizations to provide social-emotional and mental health support, particularly for historically marginalized students?

STUDENT AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Does the LEA's Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan:

❏ Describe how LEA and school staff will implement regular check-ins with students and families to facilitate student and family connectedness to the school?

❏ Invest in parent liaisons to support families for whom it is particularly difficult to maintain engagement with the school?

❏ Identify partnerships with community-based organizations, including those establishing leaning hubs, that specialize in student and family engagement to facilitate connectedness to the school and to ensure the LEA is meeting student and family learning needs?

❏ Ensure that all outreach – whether written of verbal – to students and families is done in primary languages spoken at home?

The decisions LEAs reflect in their LCPs are critical to ensuring that students who are the most affected by the pandemic are a priority, especially in light of school closures, learning loss, and this new era of distance learning. For more information about how to center equity during the return to school this fall, please refer to *From Crisis to Opportunity: Recovering California's Commitment to Equity*.