

GUIDANCE ON PHASE 2 COVID-19 SCHOOL PLANNING

A CURATED RESOURCE OF
TOP RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR EDUCATORS

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In times of uncertainty, Flinn understands that clear communication and easy access to facts and recommendations is key—and we are ready to help.

There is an overwhelming amount of information available on returning to school safely and we know your time is limited.

The education and safety professionals at Flinn have created this guide curating the key pieces of information designed to help as you plan for what lies ahead.

Pulling from the guidelines provided by the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development](#) (OECD), [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), and [North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response](#) (NACTATR)* and more, we have organized this document into four sections that reflect the categories outlined by top physical and mental health organizations.

Section One: Summary of Global Results from Educational COVID-19 Survey

Section Two: 15 Suggestions for School Re-entry Planning from a Global Perspective

“Many countries are well on their way to establishing strategies for the reopening of schools, with half of the responding countries being able to offer a specific date for reopening. However, strategies to reopen schools require a difficult balance between the obvious educational benefits to students and the health and well-being of students, their families as well as educational leaders and professionals.”

- OECD 2020

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Summary of Findings from the OECD Education Report on Teaching & Learning

In their framework to guide an education response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020, the OECD defines what most educators know—absent an intentional and effective education response, the COVID-19 Pandemic is likely to generate the greatest disruption in educational opportunity worldwide in a generation.

Limitations in the ability to meet during a protracted pandemic will likely limit opportunities for students to learn during the period of social distancing. It is well known that time spent learning, or learning time, is one of the most reliable predictors of opportunity to learn...extended interruption of one's studies causes not only a suspension of learning time, but causes a loss of knowledge and skills gained.¹

In this sense, this period of learning at home has made evident the many benefits that students draw from being able to attend school regularly and learn in close contact with their teachers and peers and with full access to the wide variety of services that schools offer, including meals, and psychological and health support. **Those benefits are likely of greater value to the most marginalized children and in societies with greater levels of social inequality.**

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)

Benefits to Re-Opening Schools

The benefits of reopening, to continue to develop students' knowledge and skills, are of unquestionable value to students and to society as a whole. In fact, the learning loss that has already occurred will, if left unremedied, likely take an economic toll on societies in the form of diminished productivity and growth. **As a rough guide, a lost school year can be considered equivalent to a loss of between 7% and 10% of lifetime income.**

Added to this are the economic benefits to families: **reopened schools would allow parents to return to work, once public health authorities deem that this is feasible.**



1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Balance The Benefits Of Opening Schools With The Health And Social/Emotional Risks

Those benefits, however, must be carefully weighed against the health risks and requirements in order to mitigate the toll of the pandemic.

Evidence from previous epidemics suggests that school closures can prevent up to 15% of infections. While this proportion is modest compared with other public policy measures (e.g. workplace social distancing, which can reduce transmission by up to 73%, case isolation, with an effect around 45% or household quarantine, with an effect of around 40%), **it is not negligible, and in some countries there is extensive interaction between the youngest children and the older generation most at risk from the virus.**

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)

Together
Everyone
Achieves
More

Collaboration is Key to Mitigate Concerns

The need to consider such tradeoffs calls for sustained and effective co-ordination between education and public health authorities at different levels of government. Such collaboration should be enhanced with forms of local participation and autonomy that enable the contextualization of responses. **Many survey respondents indicated that school re-openings are planned to be progressive, beginning in areas with the lowest rates of transmission and lowest localized risk.**

However, several steps can be taken to manage the risks and trade-offs. It is important to develop clear protocols on physical distancing, including banning activities that require large gatherings, staggering the start and close of the school day, staggering meal times, moving classes to temporary spaces or outdoors, and having school in shifts to reduce class size.

Equally important are protocols and practice on hygiene, including handwashing, respiratory etiquette, use of protective equipment, cleaning procedures for facilities and safe food-preparation practices.¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Value of Professional Training

Similarly, administrative staff and teachers need training on how to cope with the virus, to recognize risks and to implement appropriate measures. This includes implementing physical distancing and school hygiene practices. Cleaning staff need to be trained on disinfection and be equipped with personal protective equipment to the extent possible. Behavior change is needed to increase both the intensity and frequency of cleaning and disinfection activities and improve waste management practices.

The survey results highlight how central teachers have been to the delivery of alternative learning opportunities. Two-thirds of respondents indicated that students were accessing the curriculum directly from their teachers. Data from OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) show that, in many countries, teachers' familiarity with integrating technology into instructional practice is still limited. **This finding highlights the need for timely training for staff on remote learning, and opportunities for knowledge sharing and mobilization amongst teachers, well beyond what is currently offered.**¹

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Messaging and Involvement

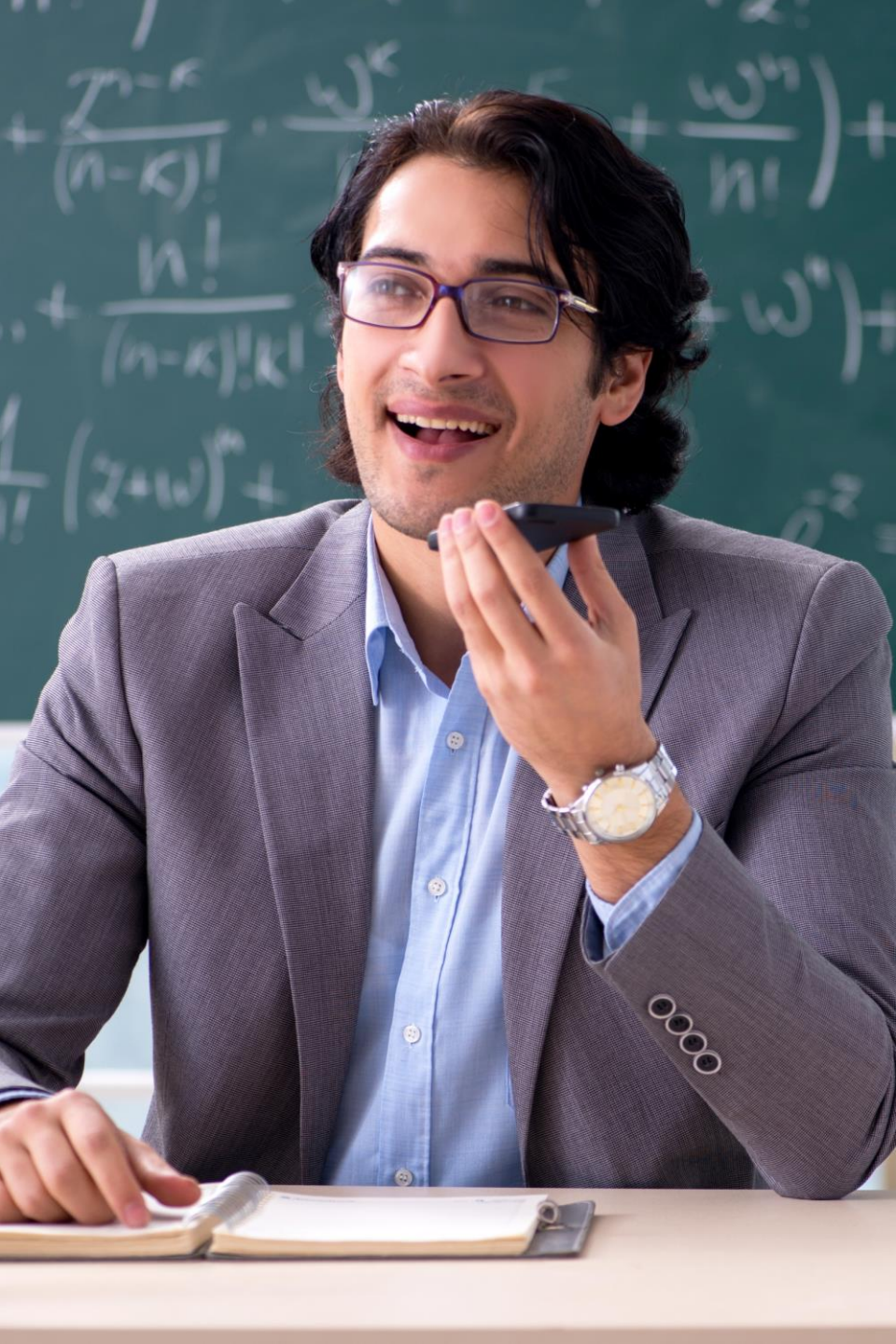
Schools need to prepare themselves, engage parents and teachers, and build trust in the community that they are handling the situation well and wisely.

Schools should reopen when the necessary conditions are in place and when school teams feel sufficiently capable of coping with the situation and parents are ready to send their children to school. **This may imply that not all schools will reopen at the same time.**

Respecting the autonomy of schools in different circumstances is important. Failing to do so – for example, because governments opt for highly prescriptive approaches – may lead to confusion and feelings disempowerment, which will ultimately harm the reopening strategy.

Communication on the parameters for deciding when to reopen schools in order to ensure coherence and limit confusion in both the education sector and the general public is critical. **At the same time, local conditions vary significantly making it inconsistent across regions.**¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Collaboration is Critical for Successful School Re-entry Planning

The crisis has also shown how important it is to secure ownership and buy-in of the reopening strategies from parents, teachers, school leaders and communities.

Even the best regulation will achieve its goals only if schools implement them proactively. For example, schools will need to implement effective measures to ensure personal hygiene and social distancing between children, ensure clean and disinfected infrastructure, furniture, equipment and classrooms.

Some of this may require creative solutions adapted to local environments, such classes in outside and open spaces.¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Overcoming Opposition to Re-opening

Opposition to change can signal that the public has not been sufficiently briefed or prepared or that there is a lack of social acceptance of policy measures.

Individuals and groups are more likely to accept changes that are not necessarily in their own immediate individual interest if they and society at large understand the reasons for these changes and can see the role they should play. This will be an issue particularly when further school closures are local.

To achieve this, the evidence base of the underlying diagnosis, the policy options and their likely impact, and information on the costs of the measures versus inaction should be disseminated widely in a language that is accessible to all. ¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Balancing Needs of Various Grade Levels

The strategies for reopening schools are often progressive. This involves choices and trade-offs that are often not easy to make.

For instance, **maintaining minimum standards of physical distance in schools is more feasible for older students who can understand the concept of social distance and who have the cognitive abilities to self-monitor and follow such rules.**

At the same time, the need for structured site-based learning and personal interaction with educators is highest amongst the youngest children, for whom social distancing is more difficult to achieve – and for whose working parents, the reopening of school is most urgent. ¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Consideration for Student Learning Models

Where schools have to make choices, on-site learning should give priority to struggling students who lack supportive infrastructure at home, while other students can benefit from e-learning and home-schooling; to students in critically important stages of their schooling trajectory; and to classes with a significant share of practical training. ¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Remediation / Review of Instructional Content

Large-scale remedial programs to mitigate learning loss and compensate for school closures. **The specific strategies developed to recover learning loss should vary depending on whether the school closures took place at the end of the school year vs. the places where the closures happened at the beginning of the school year.**

In countries where the school year was ending there is more likely to be information on what students had learned up to the point of the closures. The lessons to recover learning can be organized on days that schools are normally closed, as well as in the evenings or on weekends.

They can also take the form of summer classes, combined with sports and recreational activities. An extension of the school year into the vacation period could also be considered, or the start of the school year can be advanced by one or two weeks. In addition, where the availability of infrastructure allows this, it may be possible to extend the duration of the school day for the purpose of recovering learning loss.¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Lost Days of Instruction

On average across the participating countries, students had spent about 30 instructional days at home, and were, at the time the survey was conducted, expected to remain an additional 15 instructional days outside of school, **for a total of about 40-45 instructional days.**

This represents about two months of school work, a considerable proportion of the expected learning time, which on average across OECD countries amounts to 799 compulsory instruction hours per year at the primary level, and 919 compulsory instruction hours per year at the lower secondary level.

Education outcomes are shaped by the amount of instructional time that is available times the instructional quality of how this time is used. Almost all countries have statutory or regulatory requirements regarding the number of hours of instruction that must be delivered in an academic year. **These are most often stipulated as the minimum number of hours of instruction a school must offer.** Matching resources with students' needs and making optimal use of time are central objectives of sound education policy.¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Student Enrollment Considerations

For the school year 2020-21, a contingency plan should be developed, both at the level of the government and the level of the individual school, aimed at ensuring optimal learning opportunities for all students, in case school closures disrupt the school year.

Temporary school closures seem very likely to occur in the 2020-21 school year, at least locally. Schools need to be better prepared for similar circumstances in the future. ¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)

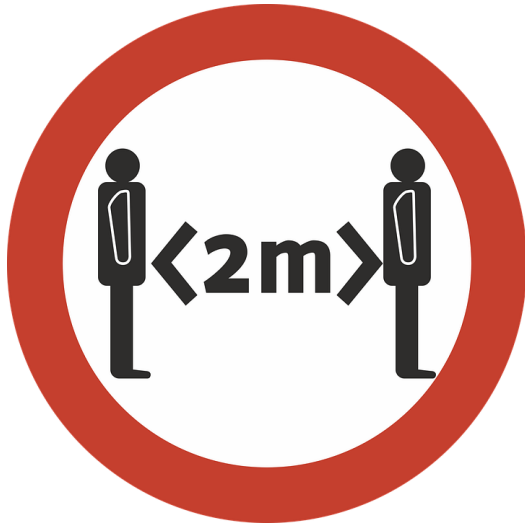
Core Learning vs Engagement

Some countries and schools have opted to prioritize core curriculum content that is essential for student progression and examinations, often focusing on literacy and numeracy; other countries consider that the crisis has shown the need to foster a wider range of cognitive, social and emotional competencies, and focus on student well-being.

Similarly, the survey has exposed a gap between the responses from government representatives, which tend to prioritize academic learning, and the responses from teachers, which highlight the need to bolster student engagement. ¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)

Health, Physical Distancing, Remote Learning



The public health requirements for safe attendance at school need to be assimilated into the educational requirements for learning and instruction.

If physical distancing at school limits the possibility of collaborative work, or project-based learning, for example, the instructional activities that take place in school, such as teacher-centred whole-class instruction, may need to be balanced with online activities that engage students in collaboration with peers and that provide opportunities for student directed learning.

Countries may need to increase their investments in digital learning opportunities not just to prepare for future school closures, but also to enhance blended learning and innovative learning environments.¹

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Supporting Student and Staff Well-being

An essential focus, teachers need to be supported to address not just the academic needs of students, but also students' mental health, and social and emotional needs.

Some of this can be accomplished through innovative teacher support methods, such as online professional development, coaching or mentoring to build capacity at scale.¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Student Individualized Learning Capacity

Clearly, effective learning out of school placed greater demands on autonomy, capacity for independent learning, executive functioning, self-monitoring, and the capacity to learn on-line.

These are all essential skills for now and for the future. It is likely that some students were more proficient than others and that, as a result, they were able to learn more than their peers while not in school.

The plans to return to school should therefore focus on more intentional efforts to cultivate these essential skills amongst all students.

This exercise in student assessment should focus not just on the extent to which students gained the knowledge and skills intended in the curriculum, but also on what skills and competencies they demonstrated, or failed to demonstrate, during the period of remote learning. ¹

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Use the Momentum from Recent Online/ Blended Learning Models

It is equally important to continue the already ongoing efforts to build an infrastructure for online and remote learning, and to develop the capacity of students and teachers to learn and to teach in that way, including augmenting the capacity of students to learn independently. This is essential because there is a possibility that, until a vaccine is widely available, any return to school may have to be interrupted as a result of future outbreaks, at least locally.

But beyond the Covid-19 pandemic, there are evident benefits to students in expanding their learning time and learning opportunities beyond the walls of the school through distance learning. The plans for school reopening could consider blended modalities to access the curriculum for all students. Access to online learning and to independent learning using technology can facilitate the acquisition of essential 21st century competencies such as collaboration, communication, independent research and higher order cognitive skills.¹

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Technology disruption and educational benefit

There is a long history of introducing new tools in education – such as television, video, digital whiteboards or computers – in the hope of radically improving teaching and the effectiveness of schooling, only to end up with Incremental change achieved at a higher cost and greater complexity.

This highlights the need for a more intentional and strategic approach to innovation, supported by well funded and methodologically sound research.

Part of the problem lies in the comparatively weak and fragmented education innovation and research sector: public health-research budgets in OECD countries are 17 times larger than education-research budgets which results in a thin knowledge base about innovation and improvement.

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)

Technology should be at the
point of instruction and be as
accessible in learning as a
pencil; it shouldn't be an event.
How many pencil labs do you
have in your school?

- George Couros 'Inequity and BYOD'

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Mitigating Inequity in Education

While this crisis has exposed the many inadequacies and inequities in our education systems, this moment also holds the possibility that we won't return to the status quo when things return to "normal". It is the nature of our collective and systemic responses to the disruptions that will determine how we are affected by them.

We have agency, and real change often takes place in deep crises. When school closures are needed again, we can mitigate their impact on learners, families and educators, particularly on those in the most disadvantaged groups we can rapidly enhance digital learning opportunities for teachers and encourage teacher collaboration beyond borders.

Perhaps most important, we can seize the moment to make curricula and learning environments more relevant to the needs of the 21st century.

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)

SECTION 2

15 SUGGESTIONS FOR SCHOOL RE-ENTRY PLANNING FROM A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE





1. Prepare

Challenging as providing educational continuity during the first phase of the COVID-19 pandemic has been, the coming years may be even more challenging. Educational leaders need to prepare their institutions for more rapid change and even greater volatility.

Schools, school districts, municipalities, states, and nations, will need to develop dynamic strategies of educational continuity that adjust rapidly and have close feedback loops with learners, educators and the societies around them.



**LESSONS
LEARNED**

2. Learn from the First Phase of the Pandemic

A rapid exercise of stock taking can codify the lessons learned during the first phase of the pandemic. These should make visible shortcomings, challenges, needs as well as silver linings. Until there is a vaccine there is a possibility that further school closures may be necessary.

A contingency plan to continue learning remotely should be developed, building on what was learned from the plan advanced during the first phase.



3. Protocols for Physical Distancing and Increased Hygiene & Capacity in Schools

There are significant demands to operate schools safely following guidelines of public health authorities, implementing those effectively will require a process of design which needs to be responsive to the conditions of each school.

This process of school-based design needs to include professional development for all staff, and for students and parents.

Stop Germs! Wash Your Hands.

When?

- After using the bathroom
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage

How?





Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.



Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.



Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.



Rinse hands well under clean, running water.



Dry hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important things we can do to stop the spread of germs and stay healthy.

LIFE IS BETTER WITH CLEAN HANDS

www.cdc.gov/handwashing



1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)
2. [CDC When and How to Wash Your Hands](#)



4. Creation of Effective Remote Learning Systems

The strategies for education continuity implemented in many jurisdictions revealed significant shortcomings and inequities in access to technology and skills to use them. Addressing these shortcomings should be a priority not only because it is indispensable to execute a possible 'Plan B' over a protracted period, but also because it is essential to help students develop the skills they need to thrive and participate in tomorrow's world.

Reimagining the education delivery system requires to rethink roles. Teachers and school staff should be declared 'first responders' and their need for professional development, emotional support and protection are critical. The role of families in supporting the education of their children has changed considerably and they need professional support to play a more direct role as learning coaches of their children.

Students themselves should be seen as agents of their own learning, and their roles in learning should be reimagined to leverage and cultivate their agency, purpose, self-direction and independent learning.

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



5. Strengthen and Expand the Learning Ecosystem

Education during the first phase of the pandemic was possible to the extent that remote learning was possible and home environments were ready to serve as learning environments.

Enabling this required new alliances and partnerships, for example with technology and telecommunications companies, with television and radio stations. This ecosystem should be maintained and strengthened.

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



6. Sustain and Deepen Teacher Professional Development

Educational continuity was possible because systems of teacher support and collaboration were quickly developed to provide just in time knowledge and skills for teachers to embrace new pedagogies but also to assume new functions beyond teaching in order to support students and their families. Ongoing professional development needs to become a much more integral part of the work organization in education, and ensure that teachers have a deep understanding not only of the curriculum as a product, but also of the process of designing a curriculum and the pedagogies that will best communicate the ideas behind the curriculum.

Finding out which pedagogical approaches work best in which contexts takes time, an investment in research, and collaboration so that good ideas spread and are scaled across the school system. Achieving that will require a major shift from the current industrial work organization to a truly professional work organization for teachers and school leaders, in which professional norms of control replace bureaucratic and administrative forms of control.



7. Develop the Capacity For Blended Learning Including Valuable Face-to-face Teaching

The reopening of schools should not be understood as merely resuming the operation of schools, but to creatively integrate the spaces, time, people and technologies into an ecosystem of learning. These approaches need to achieve an adequate balance between standards and guidelines and responsiveness to local conditions in schools and communities.

It is likely that an important proportion of learning time will remain online, increasingly depending on and cultivating student agency and independent learning.



8. Assessment of Student Needs and Outcomes

It is essential to assess where students are academically, and what their emotional needs are. Many of them will have experienced trauma as a result of the impact of the pandemic on them or their families. This assessment should especially take note of students who do not reengage with school, who don't return, or who return but were very minimally engaged with school work during the pandemic.

Plans for school reopening also include provisions to address the well-being of students, particularly with counseling, supporting students in psychological distress, those who have been victims of violence at home and students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds

It will be essential to develop individualized strategies to retain the engagement of those students and their families.

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)

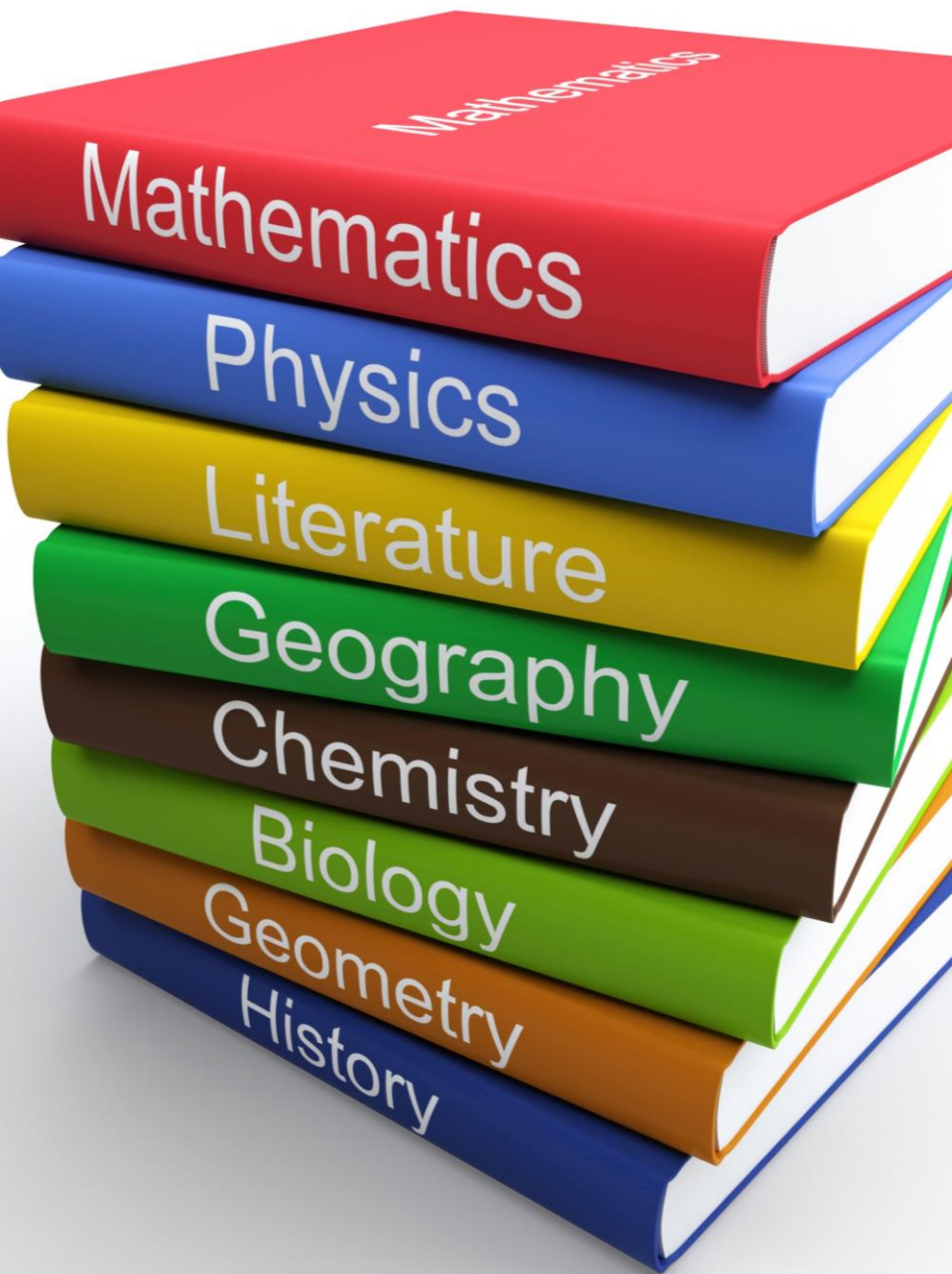


9. Recovery of Learning Loss

The majority of students were unable to learn what the curriculum expected them to learn during the first phase of the pandemic. Additional learning time will be necessary to minimize the long-term impact of those losses.

Creating expanded learning opportunities might involve extending the duration of the school day, extending the number of days of instruction per week, or work during the summer and other school holidays.

It is encouraging that plans for school reopening generally include arrangements to assess and remediate learning gaps for all students, for disadvantaged students, for students who were unable to access e-learning during the confinement period, for students at risk of dropping out or repeating a grade and for students transitioning from one level to the next. Some 89% of government respondents and administrators reported that their plans would include remedial measures to reduce students' learning gaps.



10.Re-Balancing the Curriculum (1)

The instructional priorities for the coming year must respond to the needs of students and to the different conditions in which it will be necessary to teach, in the modified school environments that health guidelines will create, and at home and the expanded learning ecosystem that will be essential to sustain education. In most cases, schools will be more restricted environments than they normally are, increasing the amount of time necessary for handwashing and hygiene, for instance, reducing the possibility of collaborative work, sports or other extracurricular activities which require close physical contact in others.

This will require redesigning learning and teaching in order to provide students the best opportunities possible to learn, making optimal use of each of the elements of the new blended learning ecosystems. Those plans should balance the constraints that will be inevitable in the use of physical spaces, with the possibilities offered by collaborative and independent work remotely and at home.

Ensuring an effective infrastructure to allow collaboration online should be a priority because of the possibility of interactivity it enables. The exercise of rebalancing the curriculum should begin with a whole child view of the essential competencies students need, including cognitive, social and emotional domains.



10.Re-Balancing the Curriculum (2)

It should identify opportunities created by the new conditions, for example, the need to foster greater student agency as a significant portion of their learning will require these. This will require greater attention to executive functioning, time management and self-monitoring and self-direction and the curriculum should explicitly cultivate these essential intrapersonal skills.

At the same time, learning under the conditions created by the pandemic has created new emotional needs which must be addressed. Similarly, essential social skills which are ordinarily cultivated as students collaborate with peers in schools, will now require imagination and design in order to develop them through a variety of blended approaches.

This work in curriculum rebalancing is an opportunity not just to respond to the immediate conditions which the public health crisis has created, but to address the important task of building 21st century schools accelerating progress in addressing gaps which learning during the first phase of the pandemic has now made more visible.

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



11. Develop Effective Communication Systems

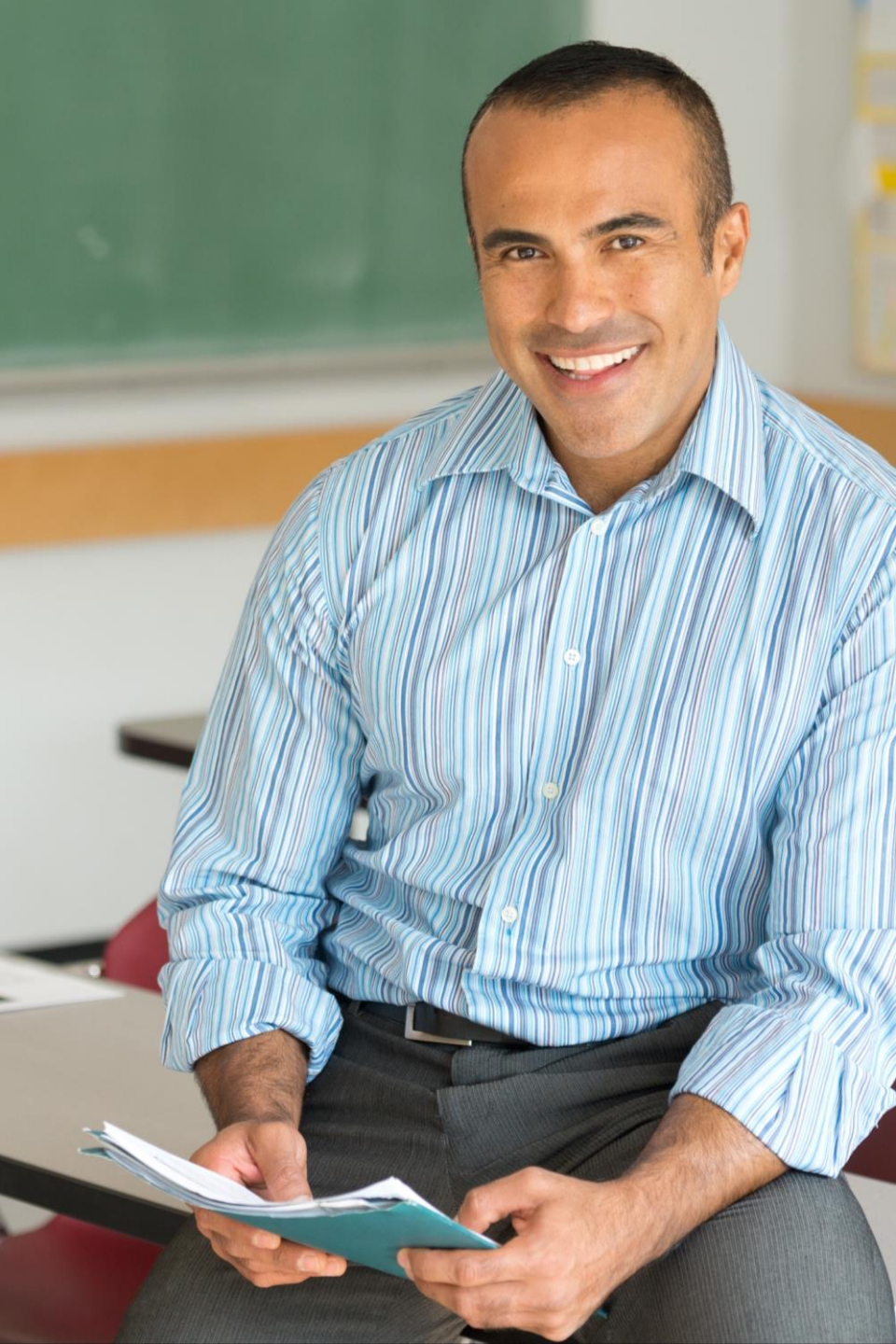
Communication of the strategy among all stakeholders in schools, always important, has now become critical to ensure the coherence of an expanded blended learning eco-system that includes not just students, teachers and staff, but also parents and other members of the community. An effective communication system, which includes opportunities for feedback from multiple constituencies, is a key pillar of the implementation of an education continuity strategy.

Communication should not be confused with broadcasting of messages from leadership. If messages are not received, if they are not processed, if they are not understood or accepted, communication remains ineffective.

Technology affords extraordinary possibilities for more inclusive, participatory and interactive forms of communication than are normally deployed in schools and systems.

Learning to use them effectively should be integral to the essential leadership development to manage the current adaptive crisis. It is imperative to create more opportunities to listen to the voice of students, in assessing their experience, in taking stock of how schools have adjusted to the pandemic, in including their views in the design of a new expanded blended ecosystem for learning, and in providing them more agency and autonomy in directing their learning going forward.

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



12. Build Capacity to Lead Adaptively and Support Innovation.

Sustaining education during the pandemic brought to the surface new leadership, from those in formal positions or authority and beyond. It also revealed the limitations of existing leadership.

Those who were able to create alliances, to build collaborations across stakeholders in the public and private sector, to use rapid feedback cycles to guide their work with knowledge of conditions on the ground, to engage with peers to rapidly mobilize knowledge, and to revise and adjust regulations to quickly support essential adaptations to new conditions were able to foster the necessary innovation, collaboration and flexibility to sustain educational opportunity.

Associations of principals, of school superintendents, schools of education in universities, and organizations that focus on professional development can play a critical role in creating the future leadership development infrastructure.

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



13. Differentiate Autonomy to Reflect Individual School Needs

An appropriate balance is essential between autonomy and support to schools in mobilizing the capacity for an effective educational continuity. Capacities in schools should be fostered to the greatest possible extent, providing support as requested and needed by the schools.

Some schools, however, have very limited institutional and financial capacity and will require more guidance and support from education authorities. There are also actions which are beyond the reach of schools, for example, establishing partnerships with technology or telecommunication companies, where government can play an important facilitating role.

There are actions, such as deciding whether it is safe for students to all attend school every day or how to use school transportation where those leaders and teachers in the school are best positioned to make the decisions in the best interest of students.

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



14. Unleash Innovation in Education (1)

Educational continuity during the first phase of the pandemic was the result of sometimes extraordinary levels of innovation resulting from broad based participation of students, teachers, parents, civil society, and education leaders. Innovation and creativity will remain critical assets to face the daunting challenges that sustaining education in the coming year will require. Leadership and organization, at all levels of the education system, can and should support ongoing innovation.

Leadership to foster innovation should depend on strategic clarity on goals and great flexibility on means. Regulations, norms, graduation requirements, exams, timetables, class sizes, school schedule and curriculum should all be understood for what they are, as means to an end and not an end in themselves. Looking forward, the strategic clarity on ends should begin with what competencies should be gained by students, then thinking creatively and flexibly to devise means that are fit for purpose, given the financial, institutional and human constraints of schools.



14. Unleash Innovation in Education (2)

Education leaders must make decisions in an expeditious and timely manner on options for next year early, for the sake of having the necessary time to develop education approaches which are developed as offline and online, rather than attempts to translate the face to face model in a distant model. It should be clear that most past efforts have been a stop gap measure using remote resources, not efforts designed to fully leverage what quality online instruction can deliver.

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



15. Mobilize Resources

The pandemic has exerted a significant financial toll on societies and a period of financial austerity is to be expected in the immediate aftermath, to absorb the costs incurred to address the health emergency.

Education must be a priority as an investment during the immediate aftermath to the pandemic.

In particular, if the education responses to the pandemic involve redesigning a more capacious and effective education delivery system in preparing students with the full breath of skills essential to invent the future, financial resources will be essential.

1. [OECD: A Framework to Guide an Education Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020](#)



Summary of Findings from the OECD Education Report on Teaching & Learning: Making Decisions

The learning that has taken place during this period when schools were closed is at best only a proportion of what students would have learned in school.

In this sense, this period of learning at home has made evident the many benefits that students draw from being able to attend school regularly and learn in close contact with their teachers and peers, and with full access to the wide variety of services that schools offer, including meals, and psychological and health support.

Those benefits are likely of greater value to the most marginalized children and in societies with greater levels of social inequality.

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Ask about our custom district solutions designed to support a safe return to school:

- Custom safety and professional development/learning proposals to ensure full school safety
- Full PPE for students, faculty, and support staff
- Blended science learning solutions that provide continuity of lab instruction for both onsite & remote learners