

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Resource Center for K-12 School Districts

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Hanover Research is closely monitoring developments surrounding the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and how it has and may continue to impact K-12 schools and districts. This resource center provides you with key facts, resources, and potential responses to this rapidly evolving situation.

We have a dedicated COVID-19 support email (<u>covid19-support@hanoverresearch.com</u>) where you may ask any questions related to COVID-19. In addition, and as always, your dedicated Content Director and Relationship Director also are ready to help with custom research solutions to the challenges you are facing.

Table of Contents

HANOVER RESEARCH SUPPORT	2
Custom Research Solutions	2
Syndicated Research Library	3
OVERVIEW OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)	5
Key Facts	
CDC Guidelines	5
GUIDANCE FOR K-12 ORGANIZATIONS	6
Follow Guidance Issued by the U.S. Department of Education and Select State Education Agencies	6
Review and Update Emergency Operations Plans	10
Communicate Actively with Stakeholders	10
Plan For and Communicate Large Increases in Absenteeism	
School Closure Logistics	12
Continue to Stay Informed	13
BIBLIOGRAPHY	14

HANOVER RESEARCH SUPPORT

Hanover is committed to assisting its K-12 schools and districts during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. This section provides an overview of projects that can provide insight into the current and rapidly evolving situation and help plan for future public health and other emergencies that may disrupt normal school schedules and functions.

CUSTOM RESEARCH SOLUTIONS

Strategic Priority: Managing School Closures

Stakeholder Pulse Survey

Hanover can administer a survey to assess the effectiveness of district services during school closures. The survey can be administered on a weekly basis, and findings can be tracked over multiple iterations. Key questions the survey can answer include:

- To what extent is the district meeting the **academic needs** of students and their families (e.g., online learning support, other educational resources, access to teachers and staff)?
- To what extent is the district meeting the **social-emotional needs** of students and their families (e.g., mental health services, connectedness)?
- To what extent is the district **supporting staff** (e.g., frequent and effective communication, professional development, mental health services)?
- To what extent is the district **supporting families** (e.g., frequent and effective communication, food services, childcare)?

Blackboard Focus Groups

Hanover can run virtual focus groups to assess the effectiveness of professional development districts have provided to support teachers' online instruction during school closures. Key questions virtual focus groups can answer include:

- How are teachers applying what they learned in the professional development?
- What additional training or resources do teachers need to effectively support their students?

Benchmarking Study of End-of-Year Practices and Planning

Hanover can review publicly-available information to understand how peer districts have adjusted end-of-year procedures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Key questions the benchmarking study can answer include:

- How are peer districts managing grading practices through the end of the school year?
- How are peer districts planning for graduation?
- What impact will school closures have on peer districts' summer school programming?
- How are peer districts communicating these plans and practices to their stakeholders?

Infographics

Hanover can create educational infographics to help districts manage "information overload" among parents and the broader community. Key questions the infographics can answer include:

- Which information is crucial for the district to communicate to various stakeholder groups?
- How can the district synthesize messages to parents, in particular?

Strategic Priority: Assessing and Addressing the Impact of School Closures

Stakeholder Perceptions Survey

Hanover can administer a survey to assess stakeholder reactions to school closures. Survey findings will enable districts to direct supports toward the most impacted students and prepare for future school closures. Key questions the survey can answer include:

- How do students, parents, and staff view the district's handling of school closures?
- How do students, parents, and staff perceive their experience with distance learning?
- Which students and parents have found school closures, in general, and distance learning, in particular, most challenging?
- How can the district manage school closures more effectively in the future?

Student Learning Loss Analysis

Using student-level data, Hanover can analyze the extent to which academic outcomes in fall 2020 differ from fall 2019. The results will assist districts in planning instruction and academic interventions during 2020-21 to compensate for any learning loss associated with school closures, as well as summer learning loss. Key questions the data analysis can answer include:

- How do fall 2020 academic outcomes compare with fall 2019 at the district, school, and grade levels?
- How do any observed differences in academic outcomes vary across student groups (e.g., by gender, race/ethnicity, language proficiency)?

SYNDICATED RESEARCH LIBRARY

Our online Research Library contains numerous reports that can help inform your district's response to COVID-19.

New Additions

- Learning Loss Through Traumatic Events
- Best Practices in Online Professional Learning
- Summer Learning Loss Annotated Bibliography
- Summer Learning Loss Literature Review: Lessons for 2020-2021 Academic Planning
- Research Brief: Implementing Online Professional Development
- Checklist: District Closure Logistics
- Infobrief: Supporting Families' Social-Emotional Needs During a Pandemic (COVID-19)
- Infobrief: Sustaining Non-Educational Services During COVID-19 School Closures
- Infobrief: Supporting Students' Social-Emotional Needs During a Pandemic (COVID-19)
- Infobrief: Self-Regulation for Online Learning
- Infobrief: Personalized Learning Online
- Parent's Guide to Helping Your Child Succeed in Reading and Writing at Home
- Planning and Delivering Online Instruction During COVID-19 School Closures
- Resources on Online Learning

Other Reports

- Best Practices for Implementing Flexible Instructional Days
- Best Practices in Building a Digital Learning Environment
- Best Practices in K-12 Online and Hybrid Courses
- Effective Models for K-12 Virtual Schools

Coming Soon

- Academic Planning for 2020-21: Addressing Learning Loss
- In-Depth Interview Study: Preparing for Additional School Closures

OVERVIEW OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)

KEY FACTS

According to Johns Hopkins:

- Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) is the disease caused by the new coronavirus.
- COVID-19 first appeared in China in December 2019.
- Symptoms include **cough, fever, and shortness of breath**; the virus can be spread from person-to-person. Some cases have resulted in death.
- COVID-19 is diagnosed via a laboratory test. There is no coronavirus vaccine yet.
- Prevention includes frequent and thorough handwashing, coughing into a tissue or the bend of your elbow, and staying home if you are ill.
- Global map of locations with confirmed COVID-19 cases
- <u>U.S. map</u> of reported cases of COVID-19 by state and jurisdiction

CDC GUIDELINES

According to the CDC, districts and schools should take the following steps (verbatim):

At all times...

- Encourage your staff or community members to <u>protect their personal health</u>;
- Post the signs and symptoms of COVID-19: fever, cough, shortness of breath;
- Encourage people to stay home when sick;
- Clean surfaces that are frequently touched things such as shared desks, countertops, kitchen areas, electronics, and doorknobs;
- Limit events and meetings that require close contact;
- Stay up to date on developments in your community;
- Create an emergency plan for possible outbreak; and
- Assess if community members are at higher risk and plan accordingly.

During an outbreak in your area:

- Send home or separate anyone who becomes sick;
- If you identify a case, inform people who might have been exposed;
- Continue to safely clean and disinfect the person's area;
- Connect with your local health departments;
- Cancel large meetings or events; and
- Put your infectious disease outbreak plan into action.

GUIDANCE FOR K-12 ORGANIZATIONS

FOLLOW GUIDANCE ISSUED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND SELECT STATE EDUCATION AGENCIES

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) and various state education agencies have issued explicit directives and guidance to support K-12 schools and districts during the COVID-19 outbreak. This guidance should be the first reference point when making decisions or implementing responsive actions. Referring to these agencies will be especially important as emergency and other measures to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 are implemented at the federal and state levels, including items related to K-12 education in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Education Stabilization Fund it establishes. School districts should also review any recommendations or mandated actions from their state departments of education related to the Guidelines for Opening Up America Again. Example guidance from several states and the U.S. ED is provided below.

Agency	Sample of Available Information
U.S. Department of Education	 Fact Sheet for Transferring State-and Local-Level Funds under Section 5103 of the ESEA Fact Sheet for Repurposing Federal Equipment and Supplies to Combat COVID-19 Information on the Education Stabilization Fund Fact Sheet: Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Schools While Protecting the Civil Rights of Students OCR Short Webinar on Online Education and Website Accessibility Protecting Student Privacy: FERPA and the Coronavirus Questions and Answers on Providing Services to Children with Disabilities During the COVID-19 Outbreak Supplemental Fact Sheet Addressing Serving Children with Disabilities During COVID-19 National Emergency Fact Sheet: Impact of COVID-19 on Assessments and Accountability Under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Invitation to Waiver of Fiscal Requirements Due to COVID-19 for the 2019-2020 School Year
Arizona Department of Education	 Clarification and Guidance: School Closures Emergency Legislation on School Closures Emergency Procurement Procedures School Finance Guidance for COVID-19 Special Education Guidance for COVID-19 Pandemic Preparedness Guidance March 25 Webinar for School Leaders: Legislative and Budgets Updates (link here for full slide deck and here for guidance on special education) March 17 Webinar for School Leaders: School Guidance (link here for full slide deck) Frequently Asked Questions Meal Delivery, Home Delivery, and Distance Learning

Agency	Sample of Available Information
California Department of Education	 Coronavirus (COVID-19) Webinars Local Control and Accountability Plan Executive Order - Frequently Asked Questions Framework for Labor-Management Collaboration: Serving Local Communities During the COVID-19 Emergency SB 117 COVID-19 LEA Response Funds COVID-19 and the Suspension of Statewide Testing Official Message from the State Director of Special Education Questions and Answers on Providing Services to Children with Disabilities During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak Resources that Support Distance Learning Additional CDE Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources
Florida Department of Education	 Device Distribution - Memo to Superintendents FLVS Extends 100 Courses to Districts Florida Department of Education Announces Additional Guidance for the 2019-20 School Year CDC's recommendations for implementation of mitigation strategies for Florida Department of Education (FDOE) Q&A Guidance Regarding COVID-19 Florida Virtual School® Offering School Districts Teacher Training to Prepare for Online Learning Environment in the Event of School Closures Cyber Security Best Practices & FBI Warning Following Several Reports of Video, Teleconference Hacks
Georgia Department of Education	 Pandemic Planning Guidance for School GaDOE Guidance: Grades/course completion, promotion/retention, graduation requirements, SBOE waivers for districts Georgia Home Classroom Graduating Seniors Public WiFi locations Testing Guidance Serving Students with Disabilities Online COVID-19 Emotional Support Resources
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	 Adult Education CCTE COVID-19 Q&A Emergency Planning English Learners Finance and HR Licensure Learning at Home MCAS Information On the Desktop Messages School Meals Special Education 180 Day School Year Requirement

Agency	Sample of Available Information
Maryland Department of Education	 Updates from the State Superintendent Updates on School Closure School Meal Site Locator Overall Planning and Guidance Documents ESSA Waivers Press Releases Educational Resources Local Continuity of Learning (Distance Learning) Plans Child Care Resources
Michigan Department of Education	 Learning at a Distance Guidance Memos Press Releases and Communications School Nutrition Resources Online Instructional Resources Professional Learning Social-Emotional Learning Special Education Career and Technical Education Family Engagement
New York State Education Department	 Guidance for P-12 Schools Continuity of Learning NYSED Issues Guidance on Graduation and Course Requirement Changes Regents Act on Emergency Regulations to Ease the Burdens on Educators, Students and Professionals Memo: Suspension of the New York State Elementary- and Intermediate-Level State Assessments for the Remainder of the School Year in Response to COVID-19 Related School and District Closures NYSED and New York's Public Television Stations Announce Expanded Remote Learning During Statewide School Closure Additional Guidance on Statewide School Closures Due to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak in New York State Webinar: Providing Services to Students with Disabilities During the 2019 Coronavirus Outbreak Questions and Answers on Providing Services to Children with Disabilities During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak
Ohio Department of Education	 School Building Closure FAQ Remote Learning Resources and Guide Third Grade Reading Guarantee Supporting Whole-Child Nutrition Students with Disabilities English Learners Support for Homeless Students Supporting Children's Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Health Educator Evaluation System Educator Licensure

Agency	Sample of Available Information
Pennsylvania Department of Education	 Messages from the Secretary All-Hazards School Safety Planning Toolkit School Guidance/Answers to FAQs Meal Distribution Info by County Resources for Instruction Talking to Children About COVID-19 Waivers Mental Health and Well-Being Resources Youth in Foster Care
Texas Education Agency	 Closure Guidance and Communication General Support Instructional Continuity Planning Special Education Special Populations Academics Waivers, Finance, and Grants Reporting and Data Student Assessment Texas Educators Public Health Resources Child Nutrition
Virginia Department of Education	 Virginia Learns Anywhere Guidance on Graduation Requirements, Awarding of Credits, and Continuity of Learning Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Public Notice, Waivers, and Special COVID-19 Internet and Mobile Carrier Offerings Governor Northam Orders Statewide Closure of Certain Non-Essential Businesses, K-12 Schools COVID-19: A Parent Guide for School-Age Children VDOE Frequently Asked Questions
Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction	 Guidance for School Closures Continuous Learning 2020 School Days and Instructional Hours Emergency Waivers and District Reporting Requirements: Frequently Asked Questions Student Learning and Grading Guidance Supporting Multilingual Students/English Learners Supporting Graduating Seniors Special Education Guidance for COVID-19 School Closures Q&A Nutrition and Meals Guidance Meal Service During School Closures: Parent & Student Q&A School District Accounting for COVID-19 Expenditures Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in K-12 Schools: A Parent Guide

REVIEW AND UPDATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLANS

Districts and schools should examine, update, and utilize existing emergency plans for infectious disease outbreaks. Importantly, these plans should emphasize strategies to limit the spread of COVID-19 infections such as appropriate personal hygiene procedures (e.g., handwashing), staff and students remaining at home when sick, and sanitation of frequently touched surfaces in school buildings.

The CDC also recommends collaboration with local boards of education and childcare licensing organizations to review current plans and update and implement the provisions of those plans as necessary. Likewise, districts and schools should share emergency plans with students, staff, and families to raise awareness.

To support development of effective emergency plans during the COVID-19 outbreak and beyond, the Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools (REMS) Technical Assistance (TA) Center provides two guidance documents:

- For District Leaders Role of Districts Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans
- For Individual Schools Guide for Developing High-Quality School Emergency Operations Plans

To support immediate preventive actions outlined by existing plans or within updated ones, the CDC publishes recommendations for:

- Cleaning and disinfecting facilities (<u>link here</u>)
- Guidance for businesses and employers on suggested action items (<u>link here</u>)

COMMUNICATE ACTIVELY WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Districts and schools should establish communication strategies to share resources and information about COVID-19 and their responses to it with students, families, staff, and community partners. Effective communication will help to limit the spread of misinformation, and many organizations already have documentation that educational leaders can model their communications after instead of creating new materials.

Importantly, communications with students and other stakeholders should be honest, calm, and reassuring and avoid language or connotations of blaming any racial or ethnic group for the outbreak, particularly Chinese American and other Asian students.

A number of educational agencies and public health organizations have materials that districts and schools can model or use directly in their communications with stakeholders. These include:

- Model materials from the New York City Public Schools such as:
 - o Letters to families about the transition to remote and digital learning in multiple languages (link here),
 - o Guidance and safety tips document (link here), and
 - o An informational poster on preventive measures (<u>link here</u>);
- Sample resources from school districts and public health agencies collected by the Association of California School Administrators such as school closure and reopening letters, informational fliers, and guidance for staff (link here); and
- Multilingual resources gathered by Colorín Colorado (<u>link here</u>).

Ensure wide dissemination of emergency operations plans and responses

Communications should emphasize any existing emergency operations plans and procedures and recent updates made to those plans due to the COVD-19 outbreak. As the situation develops, districts and schools should use rapid communications tools—such as text messaging, emails, mass automated calling, social media, and websites—to outline emergency procedures and to answer questions that students, staff, and families may have.

Sample websites and social media tools dedicated to COVID-19 emergency operations plans and procedures that districts and schools may model include:

Webpage	Notable Features
Boston Public Schools (MA)	 Free breakfast and lunch locations listing Chromebook request form and usage information Digital learning resources for students and families Technology resources Mental health resources
Cleveland Metropolitan School District (OH)	 Learning opportunities Academic enrichment Food and basic needs Health and government resources Record of past messages to community Social emotional wellness Family engagement Internet access assistance
Fairfax County Public Schools (VA)	 Summary of the current situation Daily updates from the district Fact sheets and video resources about COVID-19 Distance learning plan Mental health and community resources Food resources Record of superintendent's messages to the community Links to third-party COVID-19 resources
San Francisco Unified School District (CA)	 Family and Staff News Digests SFUSD distance learning plan Family and student supports Technology resources for families Frequently asked questions

PLAN FOR AND COMMUNICATE LARGE INCREASES IN ABSENTEEISM

Make accommodations for students who fall ill, such as submitting assignments electronically or extended due dates, and alert local health officials about significant increases in student, staff, and faculty respiratory illness. Individuals who are ill should be sent to/remain in their place of residence and avoid contact with others.

SCHOOL CLOSURE LOGISTICS

After consultation with local health officials, district and school leaders may be faced with the decision to close schools, presenting an additional set of challenges to navigate. This challenge has become more prominent due to statewide school closures—some of which are set to extend through what would have been the end of the 2019-20 school year—and with explicit guidance from the executive branch and CDC to "[w]ork or engage in schooling from home whenever possible." Reflecting on solutions to these challenges and planning ahead will help limit disruptions to students, staff, and families resulting from COVID-19. The CDC advises districts and schools to consult with local health officials about the need to close schools, and if a need is identified, how long those closures should last.

Importantly, as the number of states extending school closures, possibly through the end of the 2019-20 school year, increases, districts also should seek to learn from other districts' experiences. Specifically, districts that closed schools first have had additional time to draft policies and procedures to address the COVID-19 pandemic's effects on academic programs and district operations. To support districts' efforts to share knowledge and information, the Center for Reinventing Public Education has created a database of district plans to address COVID-19 closures (available here).

Two key questions to consider in the event of school closures include:

How do we ensure continuity of education?

District and schools should take steps to ensure the continuity of teaching and learning when school campuses are closed, likely through the use of digital e-learning or distance learning plans. This means that educational leaders will need to prepare teachers with resources and training to convert in-person lessons to online or distance learning while also ensuring that students have access to the appropriate resources and technologies to complete online or distance learning tasks.

The U.S. ED provides recommendations to maintain continuity of education during extended periods of student absence or school closures that districts and schools can reference (link here). The department's What Works Clearinghouse has also begun compiling studies of the effectiveness of different distance education practices (link here).

However, districts and schools may need to consult with the U.S. ED and their state education agency to discuss possible exemptions from requirements related to minimum instructional hours and/or state testing. Regarding state testing, the U.S. ED has commenced a process by which state education agencies can request waivers for mandated testing for the 2019-20 school year due to closures resulting from the COVID-19 outbreak.

How do we maintain student access to meal programs and essential medical and social services?

Districts and schools should develop a plan to distribute food to students who need it while avoiding strategies involving large gatherings. The CDC highlights "grab-and-go" lunches and delivered meals as alternatives. Likewise, the CDC notes that districts and schools, in collaboration with their state's Title V Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) Program, should continue to provide essential services and support to students with specialized health needs. Information on feeding children during school closures is available via the U.S. Department of Agriculture (link here).

It is important to remember that the current outbreak of COVID-19 is an evolving situation, and guidance from national, state, and local health and educational agencies may change as the pandemic develops and the number of confirmed cases rises. Consequently, some of the resources and guidance in this document may be revised to reflect new developments, and hyperlinks to third-party resources may become non-functional as new versions are published. As such, Hanover Research will be updating this document every weekday to ensure timeliness and accuracy of information.

CONTINUE TO STAY INFORMED

Use reputable resources to stay abreast of recent developments in the COVID-19 situation.

Public Health Organizations		
World Health Organization	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	
Global News Media		
The New York TimesBBCReuters	 U.S. News and World Report Live Science Healthline 	
K-12 Education News Sources		
Education WeekDistrict AdministrationChalkbeat	 Education Dive U.S. Department of Education 	

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- "Coronavirus Update." Fairfax County Public Schools (VA). https://www.fcps.edu/news/coronavirus-update
- "Coronavirus Updates." Boston Public Schools (MA). https://www.bostonpublicschools.org/coronavirus
- "COVID-19 Coronavirus." Cleveland Metropolitan School District (OH).
- "COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Resources for Families and Students." San Francisco Unified School District (CA). https://www.sfusd.edu/services/health-wellness/covid-19-coronavirus-resources-families-students
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