

Summer Planning: Reopening Schools and Addressing COVID Slide

Schools have been closed across the nation, interrupting learning for millions of students. Schools have begun to recognize and address what is being defined as the “COVID Slide”. Summer Slide is known as the loss of academic learning during summer months when school is not in session. Similarly, educators are looking at COVID Slide in the same way, a result of the variation in distance learning during the Coronavirus pandemic. According to an [NWEA Collaborative brief](#), it is predicted that students will return to school in the fall with roughly 70% of learning gains in reading relative to a typical school year. The prediction for math is 50%, with even greater loss in some grades.¹ Since the delivery of learning and the degree of access varies not only across school systems, but also within a school, educators must prepare to support students with gaps in their learning, as well as possible loss of learning. As new information is emerging just about daily, this document will be updated as relevant information surfaces.

In this guide, you will find:

- **Short- and Long-term planning guidelines** to help with planning in the short-term for distance learning while at the same time planning to address needs for the summer and fall to address student learning loss.
- **Data resources** to assess student learning gaps and loss due to distance learning
- **Ideas to address learning loss** due to COVID Slide.
- **Funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act** which details information about allowable uses and spending waivers addressed in this stimulus bill.
- **NEW 2020-2021 Considerations** for planning for the reopening of schools, including operational and academic contingencies ([go to new section](#)).
- **NEW Released on May 4, [A blueprint for back-to-school](#)** is a resource that looks at six areas to address when reopening schools.

Audience: Administrators, Leadership Teams, District Administrators

Short- and Long-Term Planning

There are many things to consider when planning past the end of the 19-20 school year for summer and fall, from operations to academics to the social and emotional wellbeing of individuals in the system. When educators are planning for the return of students in the fall, they should keep in mind factors that may lead to student learning loss, including instruction

¹ Kuhfeld, M. & Tarasawa, B. (2020). The COVID-19 slide: What summer learning loss can tell us about the potential impact of school closures on student academic achievement. NWEA.

that was planned but unable to be delivered, access or lack of access to instruction provided, and traditional summer loss compounded by distance learning. To address some planning needs, two sources have given recommendations for long and short term planning:

The authors of the [NWEA Collaborative brief](#) recommend the following to address the lowered rates of academic gains.

- Plan for both the short term and long term at the same time
- Provide resources during and after the disruption, especially in mathematics
- Address the digital gap first, then address academic and instructional challenges
- Utilize data - figure out how to use formative and interim data to guide curriculum and instruction; engage various stakeholders in this process

Schools are continuing to work through providing instruction during the disruption and now are moving on to planning for summer and fall and supporting students when they return. Carnegie Learning has looked at what schools and districts are doing to prevent student learning loss during distance learning while schools are closed. A framework has emerged that includes a needs assessment of the current situation and planning to address those needs. This framework can be accessed in [A District's Guide to Preventing the COVID-19 Slide](#) and is outlined below.

Short- and Long-Term Planning Framework

- **Phase 1: Foundational Readiness**
 - Needs assessment and analysis of district resources.
- **Phase 2: Instructional design**
 - Plan an instructional model for during distance learning and beyond
- **Phase 3: Professional Learning & Ongoing Support**
 - Provide support and learning for teachers to create supports for at-home learning.
- **Phase 4: Long-term Planning**
 - Determine how you can minimize COVID Slide by providing instructional continuity and interventions for students.

Utilizing a planning process that includes data and planning for short and long-term needs can help schools address student learning loss as a result of the disruption caused by the COVID-19 outbreak and school closures.

Data: How to assess student learning loss due to COVID Slide?

As end of year summative assessments have been cancelled for most schools for 2020, using formative, interim and implementation data to guide curriculum and instruction is important. Data can also be used to determine the program or programs to use to address student learning loss. Looking at both year end student progress and curriculum implementation

progress, as well as beginning of the year diagnostic data can help inform teaching and learning.

- **Data on end of year progress** - An emphasis should be put on analyzing data already available to make decisions.
 - **Student Progress** - Data from online learning management systems ([Blackboard](#), [Canvas](#), [Google Classroom](#)) learning programs ([IXL](#), [Lexia Core 5, ST Math](#)) and personal learning platforms ([Summit Learning Platform](#)) can be informative at the student level, aggregate class and grade level and can also help with determining school wide learning focuses for next year.
 - **Screening and Benchmark Data** - Schools may have progress monitoring, benchmarking and screening data available from mid-to-end of year. In many states, universal screening and benchmarks are no longer required, yet some schools continue to collect data for reporting coherence. This data can help determine the level of progress, maintenance or regression of student learning at the end of this school year. For additional information on progress monitoring, see [Virtual Progress Monitoring](#).
 - **Scope and Sequence Progress** - With the disruption of teaching in a classroom, it's important to determine what was and wasn't taught. This data can be helpful for vertical alignment and to support students moving to the next grade level or course. Teachers should note the standards they had planned to teach during the 2020 school year, those they fully or partially taught and those they didn't teach. Including student progress can also be helpful. Here is a sample table that could be used to support tracking this data.

6th Grade Reading Standard Scope Tracking				
Essential Standard	Taught	Partially Taught	Not Taught	Aggregate Student Outcomes
RI.6.1	x			80% of students mastered at 80%
RI 6.2	x			92% of students mastered at 79%
RI 6.3		x		Not assessed
RI 6.6			x	Not assessed

- **Data at the beginning of 2020-2021 school year** - Placing an emphasis on collecting individual, school and districtwide data on student levels upon return to school in the fall will support instructional planning and responsive interventions.

- **Universal Screeners** - School and district baseline data collected at the start of the school year to assess student entry levels. Tools like [MAP testing](#), [DIBELS](#), [EasyCBM](#), [Achieve3000](#) or [Lexile Levels](#) can collect school and district level data to inform where students are performing academically entering the start of the school year. Data can also be analyzed comparatively from previous school year data to determine the level of individual, subgroup and grade level students and the amount of progress or regression reflected in the data.
- **Diagnostic Assessments** - Teacher or content level assessments aimed at collecting additional baseline data of student readiness for content are used to guide instructional planning. Diagnostic assessments might include reading running records (fluency and comprehension), writing on-demands and math pre-assessments.
- **Targeted Data Collection** - Students with IEPs or in specific interventions may require collection of targeted data in one or more academic areas to update baselines on progress and current functioning. Assessments for targeted data collection should closely align with the IEP goal or intervention skill area, such as [decoding assessment tools](#), [reading benchmark](#) measures or [math computation probes](#).
- **Student Observations** - For select students, particularly students with social emotional and behavioral or adaptive skill needs, observations may need to be conducted to collect student performance data in one or more settings. Teams might already have tools for collecting data used in previous school years, or may need to use common observation tools like [Behavioral ABC Charts](#) or [Time Elapse Behavior Observation Forms](#) to collect student data.

Utilizing data will help determine specific needs for students in order to support the planning process and make determinations on what programs or processes the school will use to address learning gaps. The document on [Data Tools for Virtual Learning](#) that can help determine other data to use for planning.

Ideas to Address Gaps in Learning Due to COVID Slide

Research has shown lower-income students, students with disabilities, English Language Learners and other special populations have greater educational loss during summer months, especially with reading and math skills. Although academic loss due to distance learning will affect most students, it is expected to compound the effects for Diverse Learners. Below are some ideas to address academic loss and learning.

Programs to Address Learning Gaps and Loss

- **Summer Bridge Program** - This is a targeted approach to provide interventions for students who had challenges accessing the remote learning resources, including students who did not have technology access, students who did not participate in

distance learning, and students who struggled gaining understanding of the skills and concepts during distance learning. This model brings identified students back to school several weeks before their peers to get essential instruction they may have missed during distance learning. The American Federation of Teachers supports bridging gaps in learning and has proposed a nationwide, four week summer school program. [Building an Effective High School Summer Bridge Program](#) gives information including bridging the academic gap and providing emotional support for high school transition. These can be adapted for other grade levels.

- ❑ **Summer School** - Summer school has been shown to improve learning outcomes for students who regularly attend free, five to six week summer programs. Traditional summer programs include enrichment and academics. They could also include day camps and field trips. With the uncertainty of when schools will open their doors, schools are in the process of contingency planning for summer and fall. Schools are looking at online models similar to distance learning. There is also a hybrid model specifically targeting students with the greatest need that would include online learning followed by in person learning in August if schools open back up. This could also be combined with a summer bridge program. Los Angeles Unified School District Superintendent Austin Beutner announced the district will hold virtual summer school sessions for all students in four week blocks to make up for the “breaks in learning.”²

- ❑ **Online Summer Learning Programs** - Several organizations offer courses for online summer learning. Most of these have a cost. [K-12 online Summer School Program](#) and [Connections Academy Online Summer School](#) include courses to catch up, get ahead and get credit recovery. [Pearson](#) also has an online summer school program. [CommonSense Educations’ Wide Open School](#) has a list of free resources for educators and families.

- ❑ **Extended School Day or Year** - Giving students additional time to learn concepts they have missed could help boost students to catch up. This could include starting the school year a few weeks early or holding sessions in the summer a couple of days a week after schools are opened back up. Schools could also extend the school day to add in time to learn concepts students missed during distance learning. This could also be a time to provide missed services or address outstanding evaluations for students with disabilities (more detail in [Planning Support and Transitions](#)). Additional opportunities to extend the school year could be vacation academies, where targeted interventions are provided for students during a time when school is dismissed, such as during a fall break.

² Michael Burke, [Los Angeles plans for virtual summer school as district officially ends in-person classes for the rest of school year](#), EdSource, April 13, 2020

- ❑ **Extra Tutoring** - Small group focused tutoring has been shown to increase skills and outcomes for students. It's been most successful when there is one tutor for a small group of two or three students.
- ❑ **Looping Teachers With the Same Group of Students** - This is typically done with elementary students. In this case, students would keep the same teacher they had during the 2019-2020 school year. This would give teachers an opportunity to start where they left off and build in skills and concepts that were missed during distance learning. American Association of School Administrators, [In the Loop](#) discusses looping and its benefits.
- ❑ **Increase or at Least Minimize the Loss of Adults Able to Support Students' Mental Health Needs** - Students may be coming back to school with social, emotional and mental health needs due to the disruption and stress distance learning and the pandemic have caused. Students will need to readjust to typical school routines and expectations. School support personnel, such as counselors, social workers and school psychologists could teach classes on managing stress and anxiety. Schools may also need to provide support and professional development to school faculty and staff members to address these needs and new classroom management needs that may arise.
- ❑ **Vertical Alignment Collaboration to Address Missing Skills** - Teachers could spend time this summer in collaboration over skills missed. This would allow teachers to plan prerequisite concepts and skills into their lessons that may not have been learned during distance learning.
- ❑ **End 2020 School Year Early, Start 2021 Early** - This option would end the school year in the next few weeks and plan to open next school year 4-6 weeks sooner. Schools would then use that time to teach skills and concepts that were missed in 2019-2020 in order to complete the outstanding grade or course, then move on to the new grade level or course.

Resources

The ideas listed here are just a few ways to address student learning gaps and losses. As schools move into planning for next year, these resources can be helpful.

- [Students will go back to school eventually. Here are 5 concrete ideas for helping them catch up, readjust](#)- Matt Barnum and Kalyn Belsha give ideas based on research of strategies that have shown gains for students in other contexts.
- [How Can We Use Summer to Keep Students Learning?](#) - FutureEd interviewed Aaron Dworkin, Chief Executive Officer of the National Summer Learning Association to gain some insights on utilizing summer to support student learning.

- [Los Angeles plans for virtual summer school as district officially ends in-person classes for the rest of school year](#) - Michael Burke gives information about LAUSD's plan for supporting students after deciding to end in-person classes for the year.

Funding through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act

The ideas to address COVID Slide listed above heavily rely on human capital and time to make them happen. These ideas may require additional funding for additional educator time to plan and implement the programs. Congress included an aid package that set aside \$13.2 billion of the \$2 trillion stimulus package for K-12 funding. There are some conditions that must be met in order to receive a piece of this funding. States must agree to provide education funding in fiscal years 2021 and 2022 that is at least equal to the average of the last three fiscal year funding for education. In addition, states or school districts that receive money from this fund, "shall to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to coronavirus."³ Below are a few guidelines for spending under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

- **Allowable uses under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act** - The CARES act has some specific allowable uses that would help fund the activities listed above to address student needs due to COVID Slide and specifically call out uses for students in special populations. Below are a few of the uses.
 - **Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs**, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, students with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care.
 - **Activities to address the unique needs** of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.
 - **Planning for and coordinating during long-term closures**, including how to provide meals to eligible students, how to provide technology for online learning to all students, how to provide guidance for carrying out requirements under IDEA and how to ensure other educational services can continue to be provided consistent with all Federal, State, and local requirements.
 - [What Congressional Covid Funding Means for K-12 Schools](#) gives additional information on the allowable uses under the CARES Act.
- **Spending Waivers under the CARES Act** - several states, including Colorado, Louisiana and New York have received spending waivers of rules that limit the use of federal education funding. Some of the waivers include:
 - **Waiving of the 15% limit of Title I carryover**, Districts may carry over as much as they want from the 2019-2020 school year.

³ Evie Blad, [Here's What the Coronavirus Stimulus Bill Means for K-12 Education](#), Education Week, March 27, 2020

- **Extending the amount of time schools have to spend funds** allocated for a range of federal education grant programs.
- **Lifting caps on spending for different priority areas under Title IV Part A**, which funds student well-being programs.
- **[Coronavirus Relief: These States Have Received Education Spending Waivers](#)** gives a list of states that have received the waivers, as well as additional information on spending waivers under the CARES Act.
- Edunomics Lab has webinars for additional information on funding. The series [What Will The Financial Turmoil Mean For Public Education?](#) Looks at the rapidly changing financial outlook for public education. The Webinar from April 16, specifically addresses the CARES Act.
- [Next Year Planning 2020-2021: Funding Contingency Plans](#) has additional information gathered by Marshall on funding for next year.

NEW 2020-2021 School Year Planning

Planning for Reopening

Many schools are beginning to think about what to do when school reopens. Transcend has published a learning note with ideas for [Responding, Recovering and Reinventing, Three Jobs That Matter for School communities Navigating a COVID World](#). They have identified the following things to consider as schools plan for students to return.

- **Students** have experienced varying degrees of trauma
- **Everyone** has experienced loss and grief in their own way
- **Students** have had inconsistent access to peers, teachers and services and will be in various places academically
- **Educators** have experienced steep learning curves and have possibly experienced trauma
- **Families** will be in different places due to the process

The article also suggests school systems think about reimagining their system and use the following to guide their design.

- **Bring together a diverse “recovery coalition”** - stakeholders with diverse perspectives
- **Take stock of what happened** - gather evidence of consequences of decisions made
- **Attend to trauma and loss** - make the space welcoming and healing for children and adults
- **Prioritize key design choices** - choose systems and programs with high impact
- **Plan for implementation and iteration** - set up structures to continually assess and adapt solutions over time

Using these ideas can help schools plan for various contingencies of reopening schools and navigate through the uncertainty of the 2020-2021 school year.

Contingency Planning - Operations

Schools are beginning the planning process for next school year with several unknowns. Due to forecasts of budget cuts, budgets are not set, building reentry dates cannot be clearly determined, and the degree of social distancing requirements are not clear. School systems should plan for various contingencies. Here are a few operational scenarios to consider:

Scenario/Contingency Planning

Scenario	Environment / Norms	Schedule	Technology
1: Schools open with all students returning to school building	<p>Sanitized buildings</p> <p>New cleaning policies & protocols</p> <p>Safety protocols in place for those working in close proximity to students</p>	<p>Master Schedule includes time for COVID Slide/catch up & social emotional learning (note: this should be included in all scenarios)</p>	<p>Technology collected and refreshed for new school year</p>
2: Schools open with Social distancing restrictions	<p>Sanitized buildings</p> <p>New cleaning policies & protocols</p> <p>Multiple entry and exit points into building</p> <p>6 ft Distance: Student lines, Desks, Cafeteria</p> <p>Limited number of students at recess or lunch at the same time</p> <p>No or limited assemblies, sports or extracurricular activities</p>	<p>Master Schedule set up to include procedures for Social Distancing</p> <p>Handwashing times</p> <p>Staggered start times, some students in the morning, some in the afternoon</p>	<p>Shared technology is cleaned in between the use of each student</p>
3: Schools begin the year with remote learning	<p>Teachers create online learning spaces</p>	<p>Master schedule provides equitable student access to learning (Consider small group tier I instruction)</p> <p>Set up schedule for IEPs, evaluations, and services for SWD</p>	<p>Collect, refresh and redistribute technology</p> <p>Virtual PD for teachers on technology use and teaching remotely</p>
4: Schools open using a hybrid model of on campus with social distancing and remote learning	<p>Space Setup and Norms as from Scenarios 3 & 4</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Classes are split in half so there are less students in the building at a time</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Classes stay the same size, half classes attend on different days</p>	<p>Master schedule provides equitable student access to learning in-person and remotely</p> <p>Students attend school two days a week in person, two days distance learning online or independent work</p> <p>Day 5 is teacher PD, office hours, prep, collaborative planning</p>	<p>Technology distribution and protocols from Scenario 3</p>
5: Schools Begin school in buildings, ready to make sudden switch to remote learning	<p>Transition plan is in place for moving instruction online quickly</p>	<p>Master schedule quickly adjusted for distance learning</p>	<p>Technology distribution plan established with minimal time-off for students</p>

Contingency Planning - Academics

In addition to operational contingency planning, various considerations should be taken throughout planning for academics. When planning for next year, include strategies to mitigate student academic loss like those [listed above](#). There should also be social emotional support set up for students and faculty. [Screening and diagnostic data](#) (as listed above) should be used to determine instructional supports.

Additional options to consider when planning for the [contingencies listed above](#) include:

Contingency Planning for Academics
<p>Modify Student Supports - determine where modifications can be made to academic plans to give students who had limited or no access to distance learning in the spring 2020 additional support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Altered School Day<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Extended school day can support students with greater need for interventions or additional direct instruction.○ Various split day scenarios can utilize an adjusted schedule, such as a 70/30 split. Students who don't have access to technology at home would be on campus 70% of the time, while others may only be on campus 50% of the time.○ Individualized instruction can allow students to move at their own pace with a competency model.● Differentiated Instruction<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Remediation supports can be put in place to scaffold student learning. Tier I modifications, such as (insert clarification), can simplify instructional priorities for students who are behind on academic skills due to missed classroom instruction. Implement strategies from distance learning as a supplemental support when appropriate.○ Compensatory services should be planned for students who missed services during distance learning according to district and LEA guidelines.
<p>Social emotional wellbeing - Creating a plan for social emotional wellbeing to help students transition back to school will help support student learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Connect to COVID experience to mark the shared experience students and faculty went through in the spring.● Reform culture and connections to include the shared experience.● SEL curriculum and support should be determined for the school year for each of the various contingencies anticipated for the 2020-2021 school year.● Mental Health needs should be analyzed to determine hiring priorities for the 2020-2021 school year.
<p>Distance learning - use information learned from the experience with remote learning to build contingency plans. Analyze and reflect on 2020 Distance Learning to determine what strategies worked and what needs to be changed in this structure. Include educators determining the professional development teaching staff need to improve the experience and learning for students.</p>

- [A Roadmap for Schools and Systems](#) is a tool that provides support for navigating planning during the COVID disruption. There are specific roadmaps for [Academics and Student Support](#) and [Social and Emotional Student and Family Support](#). In addition, the tool includes roadmaps for Talent, Finance and Development, Operations and IT and Resilient Leadership that can be downloaded.

Additional Articles

- [Loudoun superintendent discusses possible contingency plans for next school year](#)
- [There's Always Next Year: 3 Ideas To Recover Lost Educational Opportunities](#)
- [Social distancing in a classroom? Newsom suggests changes when schools reopen](#)
- [American Schools May Look Radically Different As They Reopen After Coronavirus](#)
- [Getting schools back open could take distancing, disinfecting and a lot of handwashing](#)

Additional Information

Equity Considerations

Equity should be at the center of plans for reopening schools. An article published on April 29, 2020 written by Eric Tucker, Co-founder of Brooklyn Laboratory Charter Schools and Tom Vander Ark, Co-founder of Getting Smart and Learn Capital gives [A 10-Point Plan](#) for reopening school with equity as a focus.

The points include:

- **Organize and mobilize** - Create cross-functional teams
- **Develop reopening scenarios** - Create plans for situations, from full on campus learning to full remote learning
- **Embrace financial stewardship in the face of uncertainty** - Prepare for declines in revenue and how to best meet the needs of students in different scenarios
- **Staff and schedule for flexibility and differentiation** - Plan for social distance hygiene protocols, sudden move to distance learning, health requirements and restrictions and leave policies, etc.
- **Reconnect and reassess** - Plan time for students and faculty to reconnect; this is also a time to reassess where things are, including student academic needs, staff and student social emotional needs
- **Practice agency and prioritize engagement** - Establish norms and strategies to support students ownership and engagement of their learning, including self-advocacy.
- **Make use of data and systems to improve educational continuity** - Modernize data systems to improve data interoperability

- **Reimagine approaches to core school systems** - Look at the models and systems you are using and determine changes to prioritize learner voice, competency of learning, professional learning systems to build diverse and talented educators and transform school board governance to ensure equity
- **Iterate and communicate** - Update plans building on what is working and creating space for continuous improvement and communicate changes frequently to stakeholders
- **Consider the worst but model the best** - Plan for a resurgence of the virus with strong re-entry plans

Educators are in the midst of uncertainty and yet must plan to reopen schools with plans to support students who have had various degrees of access to learning during the COVID shutdown. Creating contingency plans that include specific supports to address the needs of students are needed to reopen schools as smoothly as possible.



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