

# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 GUIDANCE FOR SAFE SCHOOLS

The 2020-21 school year has looked far different than previous school years. With COVID-19 infection rates fluctuating across the country, schools have chosen between in-person learning, hybrid schedules, and fully remote learning instructional models. State government officials in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Washington DC have released considerations to safely operate schools. In general, these considerations are non-mandated guidance, though many include mandated requirements for all students and staff. All state guidance documents acknowledge that local school districts should have flexibility to make decisions to accommodate local needs and some school districts may have rules that are more stringent than the state guidance.

The [AAP COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools](#) recommends all policy considerations for school COVID-19 plans should start with a goal of having students physically present in school and calls for universal mask-wearing in schools considering that a significant number of school age children are not eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. In addition, the AAP COVID-19 Guidance for Safe Schools notes that all school COVID-19 policies should consider the following key principles:

- To be able to keep schools safe, it is vitally important that communities take all necessary measures to limit the spread broadly of SARS-CoV-2 throughout the community.
  - All students and staff who are eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine should get vaccinated
  - It is critical to use science and data to guide decisions about the pandemic and school COVID-19 plans. School transmission mirrors but does not drive community transmission.
  - Community-wide approaches to mitigation are needed for schools to open and remain open.
- School policies should be adjusted to align with new information about the pandemic; administrators should refine approaches when specific policies are not working.
- Schools must continue to take a multi-pronged, layered approach to protect students, teachers, and staff. By using different approaches, these layers of protection will make in-person learning safe and possible.
- It is critically important to develop strategies that can be revised and adapted depending on the level of viral transmission and test positivity rate throughout the community and in the schools, recognizing the differences between school districts, including urban, suburban, and rural districts.
- School districts must be in close communication and coordinate with state and/or local public health authorities, school nurses, local pediatric practitioners, and other medical experts.
- School COVID-19 policies should be practical, feasible, and appropriate for child and adolescent's developmental stage and address teacher and staff safety.
  - Special considerations and accommodations to account for the diversity of youth should be made, especially for populations facing inequities, including those who are medically fragile or complex, have developmental challenges, or have disabilities. Children and adolescents who need customized considerations should not be automatically excluded from school unless required in order to adhere to local public health mandates or because their unique medical needs would put them at increased risk for contracting COVID-19 during current conditions in their community.

# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 MANDATES

- School policies should be guided by supporting the overall health and well-being of all children, adolescents, their families, and their communities but should also look to create safe working environments for educators and school staff. This focus on overall health and well-being includes addressing the behavioral/mental health needs of students and staff.
- These policies should be consistently communicated in languages other than English, if needed, based on the languages spoken in the community, to avoid marginalization of parents/guardians who are of limited English proficiency or do not speak English at all.
- Federal, state, and local funding should be provided for all schools so they can provide all the safety measures required for students and staff. The CDC estimates costs for mitigation strategies are between \$55 and \$442 per student, depending on type of strategy implemented. “These estimates, although not exhaustive, highlight the level of resources needed to ensure that schools reopen and remain open in the safest possible manner and offer administrators at schools and school districts and other decision makers the cost information necessary to budget and prioritize school resources during the COVID-19 pandemic.”<sup>11</sup> Funding to support virtual learning and provide needed resources must be available for communities, schools, and children facing limitations implementing these learning modalities in their home (eg, socioeconomic disadvantages) or in the event of school re-closure because of resurgence of SARS-CoV-2 in the community or a school outbreak.  
AAP also urges families to call their pediatrician and have children caught up on all vaccines they may have missed during the pandemic. This includes getting a vaccine to protect against influenza, which, like COVID-19, can cause severe illness and death.

AAP chapters can work with state (and local) education and health officials to ensure that pediatricians are at the table as decisions about COVID-19 safety measures in schools are made and to advocate for the overall health and well-being of children and adolescents in their communities. The charts below break down state guidance addressing face masks, physical distancing, health screening, and alternative school schedules and instructional models. It is not meant to be fully exhaustive of the policies addressed in school reopening. For more information about your state’s school reopening plan, please see the links to state guidance included in the appendix or contact the AAP State Advocacy Team at [stgov@aap.org](mailto:stgov@aap.org).



# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 MANDATES

State	Face Masks Required for All Students/Staff	Face Mask Required for Only Unvaccinated Students/Staff	Face Mask Policies Left to the LEAs	States Prohibit LEAs from Requiring Masks	Face Mask Required on School Buses for All Students/Staff
Alabama			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Alaska			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Arizona				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Arkansas				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
California			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Colorado			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Connecticut	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Delaware	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Dist of Columbia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Florida			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Georgia			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Hawaii	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Idaho			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Illinois		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Indiana			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Iowa				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Kansas			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Kentucky			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Louisiana			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Maine			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Maryland			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Massachusetts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Michigan		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Minnesota			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Mississippi			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Missouri			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

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State	Face Masks Required for All Students/Staff	Face Mask Required for Only Unvaccinated Students/Staff	Face Mask Policies Left to the LEAs	States Prohibit LEAs from Requiring Masks	Face Mask Required on School Buses for All Students/Staff
Montana			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Nebraska			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Nevada			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
New Hampshire			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
New Jersey			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
New Mexico	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
New York	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
North Carolina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
North Dakota			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Ohio			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Oklahoma				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Oregon			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Pennsylvania			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Puerto Rico			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Rhode Island			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
South Carolina				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
South Dakota			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Tennessee			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Texas				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Utah				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Vermont				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Virginia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Washington	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
West Virginia		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Wisconsin			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Wyoming			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 GUIDANCE

State	Reduced Class Size	Temperature Checks	Desks 3 Feet Apart	Student Class Grouping/Cohorts	Hallway Directions/Capacity Limits	School Bus Consideration	Alternate Schedules/Redesign School Day	Opt-in Virtual Learning	Non-Communal Meal Periods
Alabama		School				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Alaska		School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Arizona	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Arkansas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Home	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
California	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Colorado	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Home/School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Connecticut	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Delaware	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Home	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Dist of Columbia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Florida	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Georgia		Home			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hawaii			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Idaho		School		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Illinois		Home/School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Indiana		Home		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Iowa								<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Kansas			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kentucky	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Louisiana	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Maine		School		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Maryland	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Home/School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Massachusetts	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Michigan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Home	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Minnesota	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mississippi		School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Missouri		Home	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



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State	Reduced Class Size	Temperature Checks	Desks 3 Feet Apart	Student Class Grouping/Cohorts	Hallway Directions/Capacity Limits	School Bus Consideration	Alternate Schedules/Redesign School Day	Opt-in Virtual Learning	Non-Communal Meal Periods
Montana			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nebraska	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Home/School		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nevada		Home/School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
New Hampshire	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
New Jersey		Home/School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
New Mexico		School		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
New York		School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
North Carolina		School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
North Dakota	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ohio		School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Oklahoma	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Home	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Oregon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Home	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pennsylvania	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Puerto Rico									
Rhode Island	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Home		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
South Carolina	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
South Dakota	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Home/School		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Tennessee		School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Texas		Home	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Utah			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Vermont		School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Virginia	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Washington		School							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
West Virginia						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wisconsin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	School	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Wyoming		Home	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	

# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 GUIDANCE

## Alabama

- August 3, 2020: The Alabama Department of Public Health released an [85-page school reopening toolkit](#). It contains recommendations and guidelines for school districts to incorporate into their reopening plans
- June 2020: Department of Education released [Roadmap for Reopening Schools](#), an informational summary of ideas, research, experience, and expertise of dozens of educators, healthcare professionals, and logistics specialists.

## Alaska

- June 4, 2020: The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development released the [Alaska Smart Start 2020](#) guidance. The guidance offers instructions for schools operating in low-risk, medium-risk, and high-risk environments.

## Arizona

- August 17, 2020: Schools in Arizona were officially allowed to reopen to in-person instruction if they meet metrics the state Department of Health released the week of Aug. 3. For a district to reopen, its county must have a two-week drop in the number of COVID-19 cases, a two-week period where the percent of positive cases is below 7%, and less than 10% of hospital visits must be COVID-19 related. Some school districts that did not meet these criteria also reopened to in-person instruction.
- June 1, 2020: The Arizona Department of Education released [Arizona Roadmap for Reopening Schools](#) for the 2020-2021 school year. The guidance includes screening students before entry, face covering requirements, smaller class sizes, and the elimination of communal dining halls.

## Arkansas

- August 13, 2020: Governor Asa Hutchinson released the [Arkansas Ready to Learn Healthy School Guide](#). The document is a support guide for teachers and administrators created in partnership with Arkansas Children's Hospital and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. The guide outlines best practices for in-person learning.
- June 24, 2020: Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner Johnny Key released updated [guidance for schools](#). The new guidance recommends that students older than 10 wear face coverings while riding on the bus and that younger students wear face coverings whenever practical.
- June 5, 2020: The Arkansas Department of Education released its 26-page Arkansas Ready for Learning plan. The plan requires face coverings for staff and students older than 10, physical distancing requirements, and staggered mealtimes to limit cafeteria capacity.

## California

- June 8, 2020: The California Department of Education released [Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California's Public Schools](#). The guidance includes temperature checks before entering schools or buses, face coverings for staff and students, and physical distancing requirements.



# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 GUIDANCE

## Colorado

- July 20, 2020: The Colorado Department of Education released [Planning for the 2020-21 School Year: A Framework and Toolkit for School and District Leaders for Feedback](#). The guidelines contain separate criteria for elementary schools and secondary schools.

## Connecticut

- June 29, 2020: Connecticut Department of Education released [Adapt. Advance. Achieve: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together](#), guidance for school reopening.

## Delaware

- July 15, 2020 The Delaware Department of Education released [Returning to School: Planning a Safe, Efficient, and Equitable Return to School for Students and Staff](#), guidance for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Districts will use the guidance to create reopening plans that account for in-person, hybrid, and distance learning models

## District of Columbia

- May 21, 2020: ReOpen DC announced the release of the [Education and Childcare Committee Recommendations to the ReOpen DC Advisory Group Steering Committee](#). These recommendations provide strategies the city can implement to identify new tools or resources needed for reopening all aspects of education across DC, close the digital divide, reimagine physical learning environments, and improve distance learning practices.

## Florida

- June 11, 2020: Governor Ron DeSantis announced that he expected schools to reopen at full capacity in August. The Florida Department of Education released [Reopening Florida's Schools and the CARES Act](#) which included physical distancing guidelines, the conversion of common spaces (such as libraries, gyms, and auditoriums) into classroom areas, and disinfection protocols.

## Georgia

- July 9, 2020: The Georgia Department of Education in collaboration with the Georgia Department of Health released [Georgia's Path to Recovery for K-12 Schools](#) which provides considerations, recommendations, and best practices to ensure a safe and successful 2020-2021 school year. This guidance is not mandated, and local school districts have the authority and flexibility to meet their individual needs and be responsive to their communities.





# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 GUIDANCE

## Hawaii

- October 19, 2020: The Department of Health released [updated guidance](#) for school reopening. When the requirements were published, the previous two weeks of data made every island in the state eligible for blended learning or full-time, in-person instruction. The state also said it would consider schools' and districts' abilities to implement mitigation measures before it would allow reopening.
- June 28, 2020: The Hawaii Department of Education released [Return to Learn: State School Reopening Plan](#) which public schools are using to prepare safe and healthy learning environments and worksites for the upcoming 2020-21 school year.

## Idaho

- July 10, 2020: The Idaho Board of Education in conjunction with the Department of Health and Welfare released the state's reopening guidelines [Back to School Framework:2020](#).

## Illinois

- June 23, 2020: Governor J.B. Pritzker released [Starting the 20-21 School Year](#) guidance which outlines recommendations for reopening Illinois schools.

## Indiana

- June 5, 2020: Indiana released [Indiana's Considerations for Learning and Safe Schools](#). The guidelines include requiring face coverings and physical distancing rules. Schools in Indiana can reopen for in-person instruction beginning July 1.

## Iowa

- October 7, 2020: The Iowa Department of Education released [COVID Guidance and Information](#).
- June 25, 2020: The Iowa Department of Education released [Reopening Guidance for Schools](#) as a resource for school administrators reopening schools and announced that schools would be allowed to reopen beginning July 1. Officials announced that there would be no requirement for students or staff to wear face coverings, undergo health checks, or physical distance.

## Kansas

- July 15, 2020: The Kansas Department of Education released [Navigating Change: Kansas' Guide to Learning and School Safety Operations](#).

## Kentucky

- January 4, 2021: Kentucky's Healthy at School guidelines became mandatory and middle and high schools were allowed to reopen for in-person instruction.



# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 GUIDANCE

- May 15, 2020: The Kentucky Department of Education released [Guidance on Safety Expectations and Best Practices for Kentucky Schools](#) for schools to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year. Before opening, schools would be required to identify a Healthy at Work officer, create a Healthy at Work communications plan, educate and train employees, establish contact tracing procedures, establish calendar, enrollment, and attendance guidelines, and create a plan for sudden closures or extended periods of remote learning.

## Louisiana

- June 26, 2020: Louisiana Department of Education released [Start Strong 2020 Louisiana's Plan: A Planning Guide for School Systems in Implementing Priorities and Aligning Funding](#).

## Maine

- June 29, 2020: Maine Department of Education released [Framework for Return to Classroom Instruction](#) which provides options, ideas, and considerations for organizing the work of reintegrating back to in-person, classroom instruction

## Maryland

- June 25, 2020: Maryland Department of Education released [Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education](#) which presents a number of strategies and considerations for school systems as communities move forward together to embrace the new normal of conducting school operations during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Massachusetts

- June 24, 2020: Governor Charlie Baker released [Initial Fall School Reopening Guidance](#). The guidance requires all staff and students in second grade or higher to wear masks, physical distancing of desks in classrooms, and students to eat breakfast and lunch in their classrooms.

## Michigan

- August 20, 2020: Governor Gretchen Whitmer signed an education package consisting of three bills that guide how school districts can reopen for the school year. The bills stipulate that although school districts are not required to offer in-person education, school boards must review their district's instructional plans each month. Schools that do reopen to in-person instruction must prioritize that option for K-12 students.
- June 30, 2020: Governor Gretchen Whitmer released [MI Safe Schools: Michigan's 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap](#), a set of guidelines by which local districts can draft their own reopening plans for the fall. The guidelines, which include both requirements and recommendations, are tiered to the phases of the state's broader reopening plan.



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## Minnesota

- June 18, 2020: Minnesota Department of Health has released [2020-2021 Planning Guide for Schools: Health Considerations for Navigating COVID-19](#) which provides guidance on required and recommended practices to safely reopen schools.

## Mississippi

- June 10, 2020: The Mississippi Department of Education released [Considerations for Reopening Schools](#), optional guidance for schools reopening in the fall. It contained recommendations for school districts to choose and implement one of three learning schedules: traditional, hybrid, or online.

## Missouri

- July 14, 2020: The Department of Education released [Initial Planning for the 2020-21 PANDEMIC RECOVERY CONSIDERATIONS: Re-Entry and Reopening of Schools](#). Recommendations include screening students and faculty for symptoms, limiting students and faculty to the same group of people every day (cohorting), and requesting students and faculty wear masks.

## Montana

- July 3, 2020: Montana Governor Steve Bullock and LT Governor Mike Cooley released the [Governor's Plan for Reopening Safe and Healthy Schools for Montana](#) to provide guidance for public schools to prepare to offer in-person instruction in the fall.

## Nebraska

- June 2020: The Nebraska Department of Education released [Launch Nebraska](#), a collection of tools, actions, opportunities, and resources to support the complex planning and preparation needed by Nebraska schools as they work to restart schools and transition students back to school buildings.

## Nevada

- June 24, 2020: The Nevada Department of Education released [Nevada's Path Forward: A Framework for a Safe, Efficient, and Equitable Return to School Buildings](#). The guidance includes requirements for frequency of teacher-student contact, calendar changes, and implementing hybrid learning systems.

## New Hampshire

- July 15, 2020: New Hampshire Department of Education has released [New Hampshire K-12 Back to School Guidance](#).



# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 GUIDANCE

## New Jersey

- June 26, 2020: The New Jersey Department of Education released [The Roadback-Restart and Recovery Plan for Education](#) that includes physical distancing guidelines and a face-covering requirement for teachers and staff.

## New Mexico

- June 23, 2020: The New Mexico Department of Public Education released [New Mexico Public Education Department Reentry Guidance](#). The guidance requires students and staff to wear masks and eliminates large gatherings like pep rallies and assemblies.

## New York

- July 13, 2020: The New York Department of Education released [Recovering, Rebuilding, and Renewing: the Spirit of New York's Schools Reopening Guidance](#) and the New York Department of Health issued [Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#).
- The Board of Regents and the New York State Education Department have formed the [School Reopening Task Force](#) to help guide schools as they continue to educate our students – whether in person, remotely, or some combination of the two. Four regional Task Force meetings will be comprised of parents, teachers, school and district leaders, non-instructional staff, school board members, health experts and other interested parties from every region of the state.

## North Carolina

- June 30, 2020: The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services released [Strong Schools NC: Public Health Toolkit-Interim Guidance](#)-In for reopening schools to in-person instruction. The guidance includes more frequent cleanings, a temperature check for all individuals entering buildings or buses, and physical distancing guidelines.

## North Dakota

- May 11, 2020: North Dakota released [North Dakota K-12 Smart Restart Guidance](#) which provides general guidelines for reopening schools. .

## Ohio

- July 2, 2020: Governor Mike DeWine released [Health & Safety Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools](#) for reopening schools in the state. The guidelines include a requirement that all staff wear masks and a recommendation that students in third grade or higher wear masks.



# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 GUIDANCE

## Oklahoma

- June 3, 2020: Oklahoma released [Return to Learn Oklahoma: A Framework for Reopening Schools](#) which includes a host of considerations for how districts can plan for a variety of contingencies that may impact the upcoming school year amid continued incidence of COVID-19.

## Oregon

- June 10, 2020: The Oregon Department of Education released [Ready Schools. Safe Learners](#) which provides guidance to the schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Under the plan, individual public and private schools will need to submit an Operational Blueprint for Reentry to their local public health authority before they reopen.

## Pennsylvania

- June 24, 2020: The Pennsylvania Department of Education released [Considerations for Reopening Pennsylvania Schools](#). This report summarizes existing research on COVID-19 and generates a Pennsylvania-specific body of research - both qualitative and quantitative - that can inform decision making around completion of local health and safety plans, preparations for resumption of in-person teaching and learning, and development of supports for student and staff wellness.

## Puerto Rico

- July 22, 2020: The Puerto Rico Department of Education has announced a [plan to return to school](#). The opening of schools has been postponed a month to September 17, 2020.

## Rhode Island

- June 19, 2020: Rhode Island Department of Health and Rhode Island Department of Education released [Back to School RI: Health and Safety Guidance to Reopen Rhode Island's Elementary and Secondary Schools](#). This guidance will be updated regularly as more evidence emerges about COVID-19 and how to keep students and teachers safe.

## South Carolina

- June 22, 2020: South Carolina Superintendent of Education Molly Mitchell Spearman released [DRAFT: AccelerateED Task Force Guidance and Recommendations for 2020-21 School Year](#). The recommendations included required face coverings for all students and staff, physical distancing protocols, one-way hallways, staggered arrivals and dismissals, and buses operating at 50 percent capacity.

## South Dakota

- June 10, 2020: South Dakota Department of Education and Department of Health released [Starting Well](#) to provide guidance for reopening and daily operations in SY 2020-21, recognizing that schools will need to be flexible and adjust to changing conditions.



# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 GUIDANCE

## Tennessee

- June 8, 2020: The Tennessee Department of Education released [Reopening Schools: Overview Guide for Local Education Authorities \(LEAs\)](#). The document does not require Tennessee school districts to adopt any approach but provides suggestions and best practices for safely reopening, including requiring students and staff to wear masks and setting staggered schedules.

## Texas

- July 7, 2020: Texas Education Commissioner Mike Morath released [SY 20-21 Public Health Planning Guidance](#). Parents will be able to choose between on-campus and distance learning options. Masks will also be required in school buildings.
- June 18, 2020: Education Commissioner Mike Morath said that the state's schools would open to students in the fall.

## Utah

- June 29, 2020: Utah State Board of Education issued [Planning Requirements and Recommendations for K-12 School Reopening- Addendum to Utah Leads Together Color-coded Guidelines](#). The plan allows for local districts to make decisions based on state recommendations, although it does include specific mandates that all districts must follow. Local districts must post public reopening plans online by August 1.

## Vermont

- June 17, 2020: The Vermont Agency of Education and Vermont Department of Health released [A Strong and Healthy Start- Safety and Health Guidance for Reopening Schools](#). The guidance includes health checks on entry, staggered drop-off and pickup times, and hand sanitizing stations at entrances.

## Virginia

- June 9, 2020: Governor Ralph Northam announced that schools would reopen to in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. The state released [Phase Guidance for Virginia Schools](#) for a three-phase reopening. Phase One has remote learning as the dominant teaching strategy, while Phase Two allows in-person instruction for preschool through third grade, and Phase Three allows in-person instruction for all students.

## Washington

- June 11, 2020: Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal released [Reopening Washington Schools 2020 District Planning Guide](#). The guidelines require face coverings for all students and staff and the development of alternate instruction plans for each school. Reykdal said that his expectation was for schools to reopen to in-person instruction in the fall.

## West Virginia

- July 2020: The State Department of Education issues [West Virginia Schools: Re-entry Toolkit](#).



# STATE SCHOOL COVID-19 GUIDANCE

- June 2020: The West Virginia Department of Education has created a [School System Re-Entry & Recovery Guidance](#) Web page. The West Virginia Department of Education has worked closely with the COVID-19 Outbreak to Recovery Advisory Council to vet, review and inform guidance for school re-entry in the fall and to serve as a framework for counties to consider when making local-level decisions

## Wisconsin

- June 22, 2020: The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction released [Education Forward: Safely and Successfully Reopening Wisconsin Schools](#). The guidance outlined several scenarios for physical distancing, including four-day school weeks, a two-day rotation, an a/b week rotation, and virtual learning.

## Wyoming

- July 1, 2020: The Wyoming Department of Education released [Smart Start Wyoming](#). The state's 48 school districts are responsible for developing reopening plans in accordance with the guidance and submitting those plans for approval by the state. Each plan must account for three scenarios: traditional learning, hybrid learning (a mix of in-person and distance learning), and distance-only learning.

