



# **SEA Resource Guide: Supporting LEAs during COVID-19**

August 2020

# Introduction to this document

## ✓ What it is

The purpose of this document is to consider the potential roles for state education agencies (SEAs) in supporting local education agencies (LEAs) as they operate during the COVID-19 pandemic

The audience for this document is state education leaders and team members

## ✗ What it is not

This document is not proprietary information, and does not express a political, medical or policy recommendation on how to respond to COVID-19

It does not cover the full range of issues to consider in deciding how school systems respond to the COVID-19 pandemic

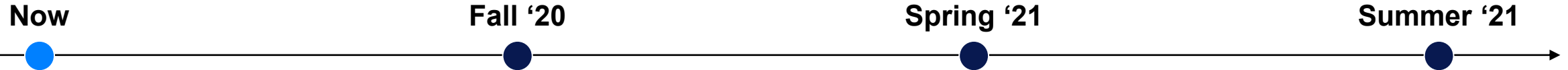
SEAs will choose how they want to support their LEAs; this document provides a **range of options** for how SEAs could support LEAs on a number of topics

Any information or case studies included here are up-to-date **as of the time illustrated**

Identified approaches and case studies are based on public sources

# This document describes strategies SEAs can use to support LEAs during the COVID-19 crisis

■ Focus of this document



Strategies SEAs can consider...

① Support LEAs in ongoing decision-making

② Work with LEAs to determine areas in which the State could support implementation more heavily

③ [Plan ahead in the context of COVID-19](#)

# What is included in this document

Section	Description
<a href="#">1. Support LEAs in ongoing decision-making</a>	<p>Overview of potential SEA role in three main elements of revisiting and refining plans throughout the school year:</p> <p><b><a href="#">A) How do you set and monitor ‘gating’ criteria – or support LEAs in setting and monitoring gating criteria – to determine whether LEAs should be operating in remote, hybrid, or in-person models?:</a></b> Deep dive on how SEAs / LEAs have approached key thresholds (for school closing)</p> <p><b><a href="#">B) What operational elements must be in place for in-person and / or remote elements of school models?:</a></b> <a href="#">Key questions to ask and answer</a> to determine readiness for different school modes, and links to external resources</p> <p><b><a href="#">C) Beyond guidance, how can SEAs continue to support LEAs on updates to plans?:</a></b> Examples of ways SEAs can collaborate with LEAs including providing resources with implementation guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Toolkits by topic</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Planning templates</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Simulation resources</a>: Full resources document <a href="#">here</a></li></ul>
<a href="#">2. Work with LEAs to determine areas in which the State could support implementation more heavily</a>	<p>Detail on how SEAs can support LEA implementation more heavily moving forward:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Coordination with other agencies</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Data, assessment, and accountability</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Best practice sharing</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Centralized resource provision</a></li></ul>

# Contents

## **Support LEAs in ongoing decision-making**

Work with LEAs to determine areas in which the State could support implementation more heavily

# SEAs can revisit and modify guidance throughout the year as state / local conditions change

Summer 2020

Fall 2020 and beyond

**All SEAs have released guidance for LEAs on the 2020-21 school year related to COVID-19**



**Moving forward, SEAs may revise or update guidance throughout the school year in 3 ways**

**Modify existing guidance as new information emerges** (e.g., updating health / safety requirements as understanding of virus transmission advances)

**Modify existing guidance as conditions related to COVID-19 change on the ground in the state** (e.g., recommending different scheduling concepts if there is a sustained change in virus transmission)

**Provide detail in specific areas where LEAs request additional direction** (e.g., providing more specific guidance on health & safety requirements on buses)

**Potential ways for SEAs to revisit guidance**

**Reconvene planning working groups** – including LEA leaders – to assess different elements of guidance at a regular cadence (e.g., 1x / month)

**Staff a team** to work with LEAs to understand major challenges and what's working well to inform any SEA updates to guidance

**Ensure strong stakeholder engagement and response capabilities** and good progress monitoring

# Across elements of guidance, SEAs can consider whether to provide mandates or recommendations to LEAs

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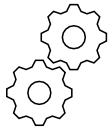
## Considerations for which elements to leave up to LEAs



**Existing precedent for local control** in the state (e.g., legal codification of or culture of local decision-making vs. state decision-making)



**Relative LEA capabilities** (e.g., subject-matter expertise, ability to partner with local agencies)



**Relative SEA capabilities** (e.g., operations expertise, staff capacity)



**Level of evidence available** (e.g., expert consensus on an approach as best chance of mitigating virus transmission)



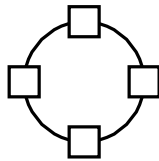
**Relative importance for student outcomes** (e.g., impact of the decision on students, especially students furthest from educational justice)

**So far, SEAs have taken a range of approaches to guidance** – with some explicitly stating that all guidance is suggestive, and others providing a mix of mandates and recommendations

# SEAs may play an ongoing role in supporting LEAs as they revisit and refine their plans for the school year



**A. How do you set and monitor ‘gating’ criteria** – or support LEAs in setting and monitoring gating criteria – to determine whether LEAs should be operating in remote, hybrid, or in-person models?



**B. What operational elements must be in place** for in-person and / or remote elements of school models?



**C. Beyond guidance, how can SEAs continue to support LEAs on updates to plans?**



# A: There are a range of ways SEAs could engage with LEAs in deciding when to move between school models throughout the year

## **Primary decision maker: SEA**

*Likely a joint decision involving SEA, Governor's office and state-health authorities*

### **1 State-mandated**

**SEA works with other state** agencies to form internal decision-making processes around when LEA school models should change

**State government mandates LEAs** move between school models

**LEAs implement** the decision

## **Primary decision maker: LEAs**

*Likely in conjunction with local health authorities*

### **2 Follow externally defined phases (e.g., county health agency phases)**

**LEAs use external guidance to define school model choices** they will make during the school year

For instance, **LEAs could tie their decision-making to State, county, or local reopening plans' phases** (e.g., the district can say it will go fully remote if the county moves to Phase 1 of reopening)

**LEAs implement** their own decision

### **3 Define your own phases**

**LEAs define thresholds to guide their school model decisions** throughout the year, and what happens at those thresholds

**LEAs monitor data**, and determine when those thresholds have been met. Relevant data might include both:

- Health and epidemiological metrics (e.g., case counts, positive test rate)
- System readiness and resilience factors (e.g., Staff and educators' preference for a particular model)

**LEAs implement** their own decision

# A: Examples of different models for school model decision-making

NOT EXHAUSTIVE

CURRENT AS OF JULY 17, 2020

## 1 State-mandated

California has announced that schools cannot reopen for in-person instruction until the county meets 5 criteria:

- Over 150 tests per day per 100,000 population (7 day average, with 7 day lag)
- Case rate under 100 per 100,000 (14 days)
- Positivity rate under 8%
- COVID-19 Hospitalization not increasing faster than 10% over previous 3-days
- At least 20% ICU beds and 25% of ventilators available

Additional criteria that may lead to recommended or required closure:

- “A superintendent should close a school district if 25% or more of schools in a district have closed due to COVID-19 within 14 days, and in consultation with the local public health department.”

## 2 Follow externally defined phases (e.g., county health agency phases)

Lakewood schools (Ohio) released a plan on July 15th, tying its school model decisions to its county reopening phases<sup>1</sup>:

- **Level 4: “Remote”** – 100% remote
- **Levels 2, 3: “Partial”** – half the students in school at a time, with safety protocols in place<sup>1</sup>
- **Level 1: “All in”** – all students in school 5 days per week, with safety protocols in place<sup>1</sup>

**Cleveland schools said they would tie re-opening to statewide reopening phases,** expecting to make a final decision on starting model by late July

## 3 Define your own phases

On July 13th, Miami-Dade County Public Schools released eight criteria that must be met for any kind of physical schooling by the first day of school on August 24th

Sample criteria are<sup>2</sup>:

- A sustained COVID-19 positivity rate of less than 10%, trending toward 5%, for 14 days
- A steady reduction in number of individuals hospitalized
- A sustained reduction in ICU bed occupancy
- A continuous reduced viral burden for 14 days with a decrease of virus-positive individuals.

1. For both “partial” and “all in,” safety protocols include: health checks at home – including temperature check – prior to entering school; face coverings required for staff and students; physical distancing of 6’ at all times for partial, 3’ for “all in,” and more  
2. Remaining criteria: increase in viral specific COVID-19 test availability with decreased wait time; turnaround time for test results less than 48 hours; increase in quantity and quality of contact tracing; ensuring vaccinations for school-aged children

# A: Both health metrics and system readiness factors could be included in gating criteria

## Health and epidemiological metrics

In general, public health officials and other experts are coalescing around a broad set of health indicators for guiding COVID-19-related decision-making. These could include:

- **Case count and prevalence** - *new cases, % change in total cases, cumulative cases*
- **Deaths** – *new deaths, cumulative deaths*
- **Tests** – *tests per day, tests per last X days, positive test rate, tests per capita*
- **Hospitalizations** – *new hospitalizations, cumulative hospitalizations*
- **Hospital capacity** – *ICU beds, ventilators, floor beds, PPE*
- **Contact tracing capabilities**

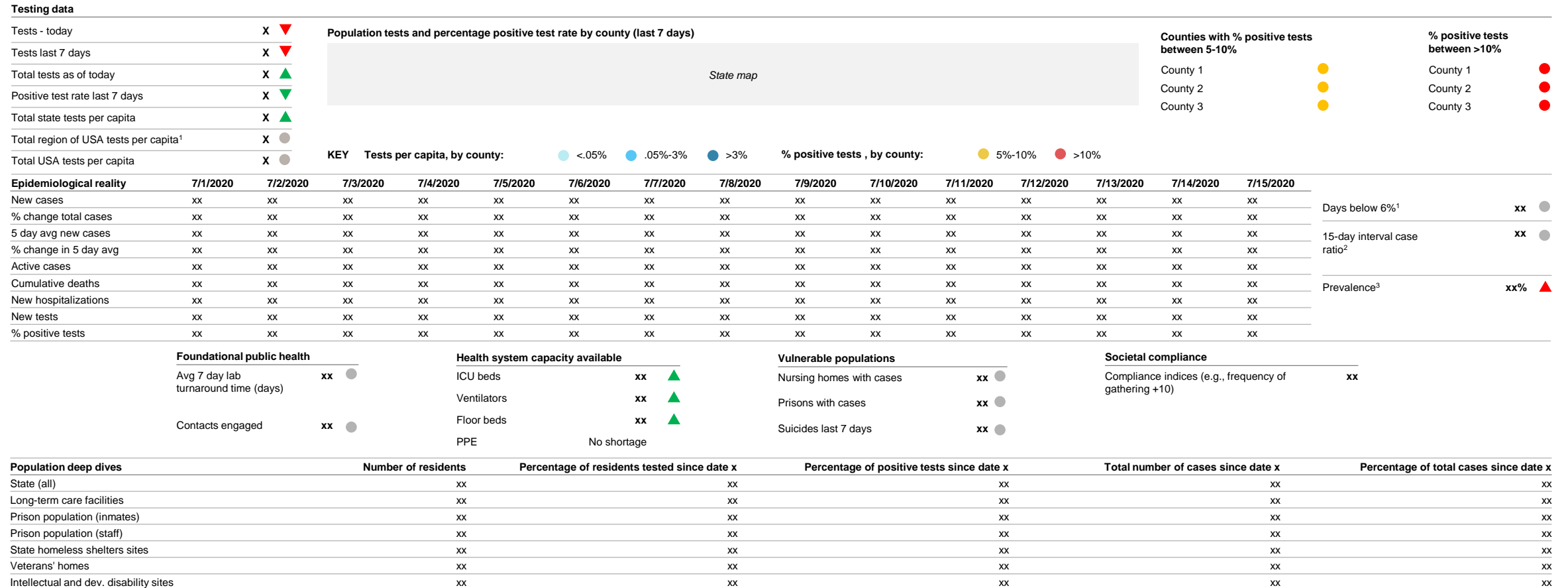
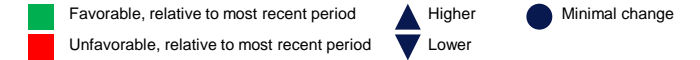
## System readiness and resilience factors

In addition, school systems are considering their own readiness to support various school models safely and effectively. These factors could include:

- **Infrastructure in place to transition between models** - % of equipment acquired for health/safety protocols, % of students that can be transported with reduced bus capacity
- **LEA administrators' preparedness** to transition between models – enrollment forecasts mapped to capacity limits defined in operating model
- **Staff and educators' preference / demand** for a particular model - % of teachers, other staff who say they are comfortable with in-person working
- **Students', families' preference / demand** for a particular model - % of students, families who say they are comfortable with in-person learning, % who feel safe with in-person safety protocols
- **Student academic performance** under current model - assignment completions / submissions, gap between previous years' test scores and current cohort

# A: Example health agency dashboard with metrics that could inform gating criteria

## ILLUSTRATIVE – SAMPLE DASHBOARD FROM A STATE HEALTH AGENCY



1. Number of days in a period with the rate of new infections <6% day-over-day
2. Internal case ratio (ICR) is a measure to assess persistent trend over past 15 days, calculated by current 5-day average divided by preceding 5, 10, and 15 day averages
3. Prevalence is measured as current active cases / state population

# A: Examples: Some states have set gaing criteria for school reopening

NOT EXHAUSTIVE

CURRENT AS OF JULY 30, 2020



On July 13th, Governor Cuomo announced a plan for New York State schools to reopen. Schools in a region can reopen if:

- The region is in Phase IV of statewide reopening
- The region's daily infection rate remains below 5%, for a 14-day rolling average

Schools will immediately close if their **region's infection rate hits 9% over a seven-day average**

LEAs / schools will create specific plans that follows those parameters, & broader health guidance released by the DOE

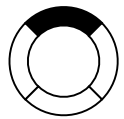


On July 30th, Governor Waltz announced a localized, data-driven plan for Minnesota schools. Schools in a county can reopen if:

- There are <10 COVID-10 cases per 10,000 residents over a 14-day period

Schools with higher case counts can open on a more limited basis (e.g., for younger students only), but must be fully remote if the county has **>50 cases per 10,000 residents**

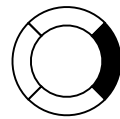
# B: LEA readiness to safely and effectively operate schools in-person in some capacity depends on four key elements



What could be the **Health, safety, and operations** considerations?

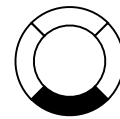
**Key safeguards to be put in place with respect to the following categories**

- Physical infrastructure
- Transportation and food service
- Scheduling and staffing
- Health and behavioral norms



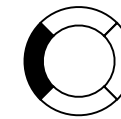
How do we think about **Stakeholder engagement and readiness?**

**Engaging stakeholders long-term** to ensure understanding of and comfort with new guidelines  
Engaging **teachers, staff, and unions** throughout the year  
Supporting re-enrollment and persistence, especially for students at a **higher risk of dropping out**



How do we think about **Learning loss?**

Planning required to fill **academic and non-academic gaps** created during school closure leading to loss of learning or other socio-emotional disadvantages



What **Resurgence preparation & planning** may be needed?

Advanced preparation for schools to be able to continue education for students **in case there is a virus resurgence**; readiness for hybrid or remote learning for all students



# B: SEAs can work with LEAs to ensure they address these elements as they shift between operating models throughout the school year

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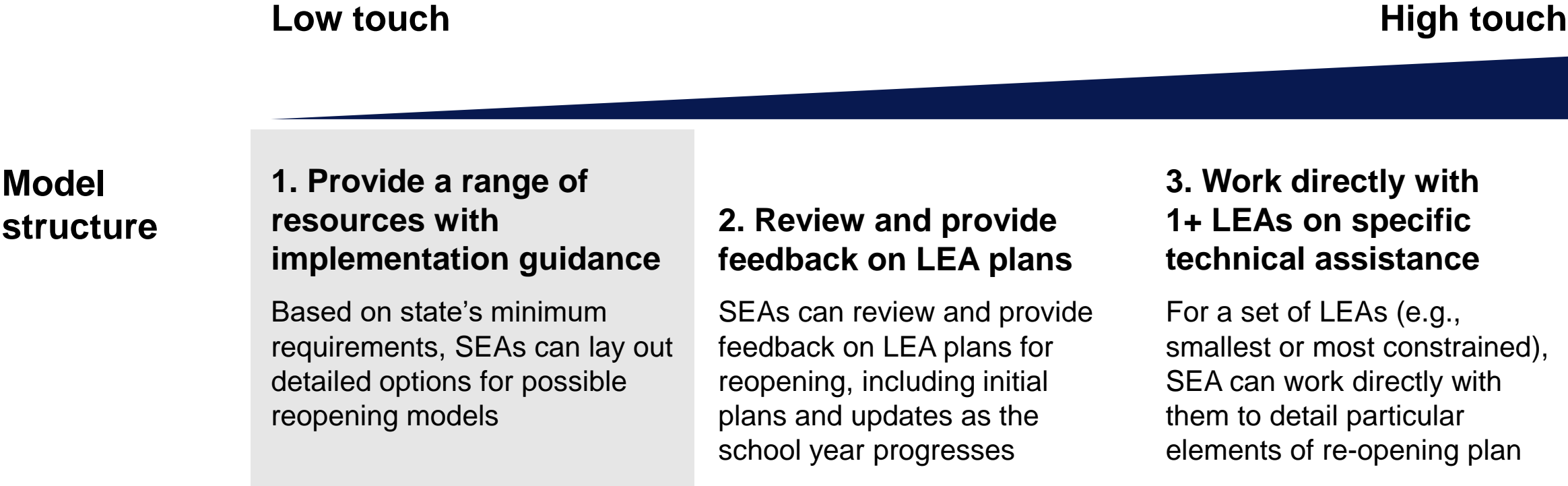
Select detail follows

Health, safety, and operations	Stakeholder engagement and readiness	Learning loss	Resurgence planning
<p><b>B1: Scheduling:</b> What scheduling options can be considered to minimize transmission risk?</p> <p><b>B2: PPE:</b> Will PPE be provided in schools, and if so, which type(s), to whom, and what will the use guidelines be?</p> <p><b>B3: Physical infrastructure:</b> What type of physical infrastructure could we put into place in existing schools?</p> <p><b>B4: Transportation:</b> How could school transportation routes, scheduling, and bus capacity be reorganized?</p> <p><b>B5: Building capacity:</b> What are potential options for securing additional building capacity?</p> <p><b>B6: Staffing:</b> How can we manage for additional staffing demand?</p> <p><b>B7: Food:</b> How will we approach food at school?</p> <p><b>B8: Activities:</b> What restrictions will be placed on activities (e.g., extracurriculars, class types, recess)?</p> <p><b>B9: Sanitization:</b> What will sanitization and disinfecting protocols look like?</p> <p><b>B10: Health monitoring:</b> How will student health be monitored (e.g., testing, temperature checks)?</p> <p><b>B11: At-risk populations:</b> What policies/procedures are we going to put in place to protect grandparents, home care providers, immunocompromised individuals, etc.?</p> <p><b>B12: Adoption planning:</b> What change management practices can we implement to influence adoption of practices needed?</p>	<p><b>B13: Vulnerable populations:</b> How do we support high-priority learners (e.g., students with <a href="#">disabilities</a>, <a href="#">ELL</a>) so they return to and persist in school?</p> <p><b>B14: Parent engagement:</b> How are we engaging parents to encourage and effectively plan for different school opening models throughout the year (e.g., shift from hybrid to <a href="#">remote</a>)?</p> <p><b>B15: Teacher, Staff, and Union engagement:</b> How are we engaging with teachers, staff, and unions to effectively plan for different school operating models throughout the year?</p> <p><b>B16: Contingency plans:</b> What are our contingency plans in case of unexpectedly high or low enrollment?</p> <p><b>B17: Enrollment choice:</b> Will the return of students be mandatory or at the choice of parents? If it is at the choice of parents, for how long will their choice persist?</p> <p><b>B18: Training:</b> How will we design and implement training programs for parents, teachers, and other staff to ensure understanding of new protocols and guidelines?</p>	<p><b>B19: Remote learning &amp; resource access:</b> Are LEAs <a href="#">prepared for remote learning</a>? Are students, teachers, and families appropriately supported with training and technology for remote learning (e.g., in a hybrid or 100% remote model)? How do we ensure <a href="#">high-quality instruction</a> in a remote environment?</p> <p><b>B20: Assessments:</b> (including standardized testing): How could assessments and standardized testing be organized and executed?</p> <p><b>B21: Student support:</b> What measures could we implement to support the success of all students (e.g., special education, guidance counselling, meal services)?</p> <p><b>B22: Mental &amp; physical health:</b> What measures can be put into place to support students' mental health during the crisis? <a href="#">Emotional wellbeing</a>? To ensure <a href="#">continuity of school-provided health services</a>?</p> <p><b>B23: Vocational training:</b> What measures are required to reopen vocational training programs and classes?</p> <p><b>B24: Academic achievement:</b> How will academic progress be monitored?</p>	<p><b>B25: Resurgence management plan:</b> Do we have a resurgence plan on how school closures will be handled?</p> <p><b>B26: Outbreak protocols:</b> What are the health and safety protocols that will be followed in event of an outbreak?</p> <p><b>B27: Contact tracing:</b> How will track-and-trace be implemented?</p> <p><b>B28: Communication:</b> What is the step-by-step communication plan to parents, teachers and the public in event of an outbreak?</p> <p><b>B29: Governance:</b> What team within the government will be responsible to lead resurgence response management?</p>

**Additional resources:**  
 See [here](#) for an ongoing report on how school systems are responding to COVID-19  
 See [here](#) for international case examples  
 See [here](#) for CFC COVID-19 resources  
 See [here](#) for CCSO COVID-19 resources

# C: Beyond planning guidance, SEAs can also offer LEAs additional support for modifying plans throughout the year

Detail follows





# C: SEAs can provide a range of resources with implementation guidance

NOT EXHAUSTIVE

DETAIL FOLLOWS

Resource type	Description
<a href="#"><u>1. Toolkits by topic</u></a>	Best practices and planning tools (e.g., checklists, decision trees) across a wide range of topics (e.g., CTE, health and safety practices, continuous learning)
<a href="#"><u>2. Planning templates</u></a>	Templates for LEAs to use when filling out and submitting reopening plans; support creating reopening plans at the right level of detail and streamline submission to the SEA
<a href="#"><u>3. Simulation resources</u></a>	Resources for ‘Day in the life of’ simulation – an activity to help districts test details of reopening plans and identify gaps, test ‘what if’ scenarios, assign owners, and communicate with key stakeholders See full resources document <a href="#"><u>here</u></a>

# C1: Many SEAs have released toolkits to support planning across critical areas

ILLUSTRATIVE

CURRENT AS OF JULY 17, 2020

## Illustrative examples

- 1 Tennessee** released a suite of **20+ toolkits** to support LEAs on a wide range of topics (e.g., CTE, special populations, transportation, finance, postsecondary transitions)

[Link](#)

Toolkits include recommendations and best practices, planning checklists, sample schedules, sample metrics to monitor progress, etc.

Metrics	Frequency of measure	Date Source
The percentage of students engaging with reminders and nudges	Weekly	Response rates
The percentage of students with sufficient technology, internet, and transportation		
The number of students that have attended orientation		
The number of students with missing documents		
The number of students fully enrolled in postsecondary		
The number of students that have secured time employment or military enlistment		

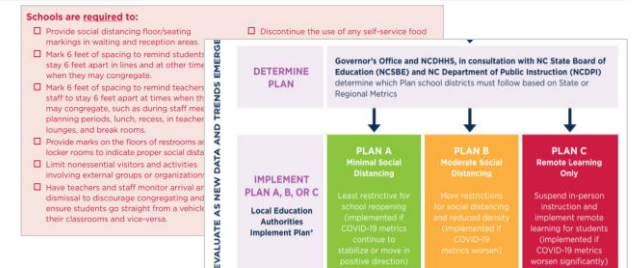
  

Action Items
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure all students taking EPSO courses have access to internet and technology to continue coursework virtually or in a hybrid school model</li> <li>Ensure all students at-risk of not graduating on time have access to internet and technology to continue coursework virtually or in a hybrid school model</li> <li>Identify students who are at-risk for failing courses needed for graduation and assign teachers and other staff to support the coursework of these students through texting and/or scheduled video conference calls with the student and their families</li> <li>Create yearlong calendar with key dates and milestones</li> <li>Assign staff to ensure students have tools and structured plans to prepare for the college entrance exam (ACT/SAT) in October (goal score, identifying potential second testing opportunity, determining if postsecondary schools require ACT/SAT or not) and career assessments (industry certification, ASVAB, etc.) as school scheduling allows</li> <li>Ensure students' course schedule for their senior year aligns with their college and career plan (exceeding minimum requirements)</li> </ul>

- 2 North Carolina** released a **Public Health toolkit** to detail both required and recommended health practices

[Link](#)

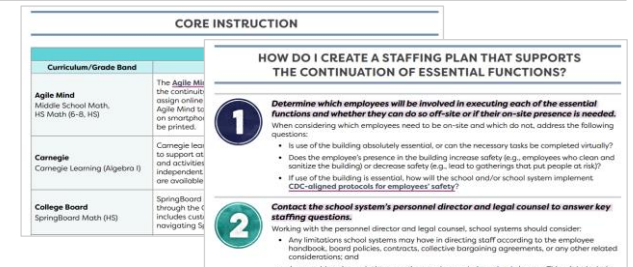
Toolkit includes checklists, links to additional resources, and a reopening K-12 schools decision tree



- 3 Louisiana** released a **Continuous Learning Toolkit** series including three toolkit documents: academic resources, guidance and tools, and staffing

[Link](#)

Materials are designed to support school systems in creating continuous learning plans that align with their current instruction; provide guidance on how to assess capacity, analyze available instructional and technology resources, develop an approach to providing distance learning opportunities, and implement a distance learning plan; and prioritizing essential functions during school closures and creating a staffing plan to support those essential functions



# C2: Some SEAs have released planning templates for LEAs to detail different operational models

ILLUSTRATIVE

CURRENT AS OF JULY 17, 2020

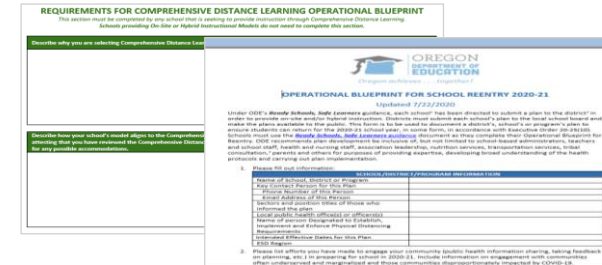
## Illustrative examples

- 1 **Oregon** provided LEAs and schools with a **Microsoft Word template** to use to create their reopening plans

[Link](#)

Template includes a checklist of requirements for each section, coupled with blank space for LEAs to describe how plans will specifically meet requirements

All LEAs are required to submit the template to the SEA prior to the start of the fall semester, as well as make plans available to the public

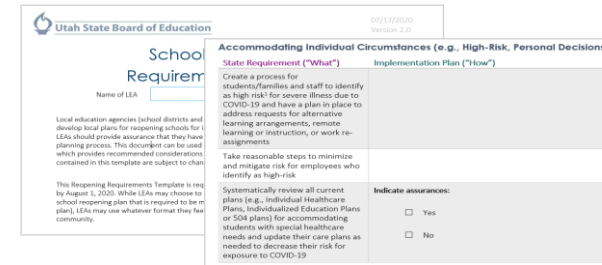


- 2 **Utah** provided LEAs with a **Microsoft Word template** to use to create their reopening plans

[Link](#)

Template includes a description of requirements for each section, coupled with both blank space to detail plans, and yes / no checkboxes to indicate assurances

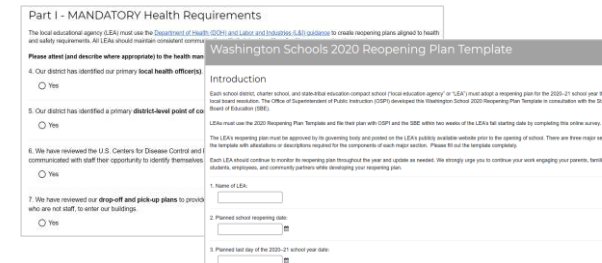
All LEAs are required to submit the template to the SEA by August 1, as well as make plans available to the public



- 3 **Washington** provided LEAs with a **checklist** that requires LEAs confirm they have completed core planning tasks (e.g., “We have a daily health screening plan in place for students and staff”)

[Link](#)

LEAs are required to submit to the state 2 weeks prior to the start of the school year



As LEAs move between operating models throughout the school year (e.g., transitioning from 100% remote to a hybrid model), they may use planning templates to detail and communicate new plans

# C3: SEAs can support LEAs in running ‘Day in the life of’ (DILO) simulations to pressure test plans throughout the year



**What it is:** A simulation process tool grounded in the typical ‘day in the life of’ (DILO) for key stakeholders in the K-12 system (e.g., students, teachers, families, staff)



**What it’s for:** The tool can be used at any phase of the reopening planning process to pose key questions, identify gaps, test plans, ensure coherence across aspects of the plan, and develop communications for a wide audience



**How it works:** DILO simulations are typically held as 2-4 hour sessions with 8-12 key decision-makers. The group uses the tool for each selected stakeholder, going through a typical day<sup>1</sup> in detail



**Who is involved:** DILO simulations typically involve key decision-makers within a school district (e.g., Superintendents, Deputy Superintendents, department leaders). Sessions can also involve students, families, teachers, staff, school administrators, community members, and / or other stakeholders depending on the context and goals

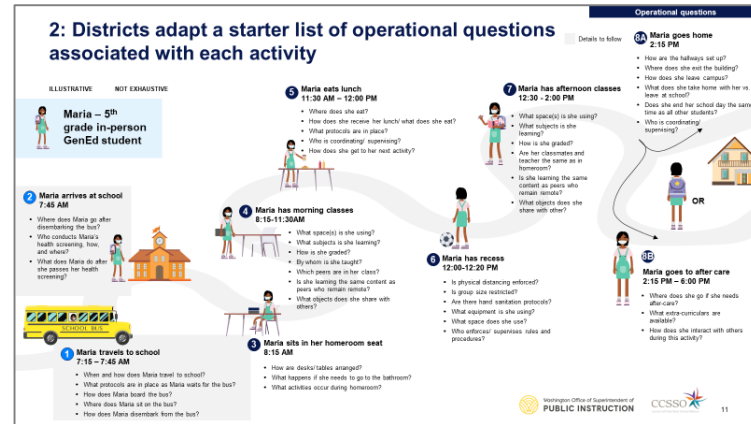
1. Can also be used to detail a longer time period (e.g., a ‘week in the life of’ for a student in a hybrid model)

# C3: DILO can be a powerful resource for districts across phases of planning

## Preliminary planning

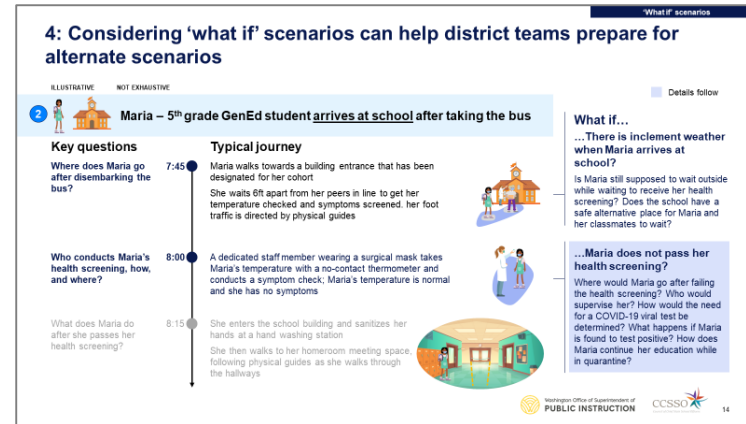
**Understand key questions** to address across dimensions of planning (e.g., transportation, sanitation, technology)

**Identify core personas, instructional environments, and scenarios** to consider while developing plans



**Integrate discrete plans** across departments

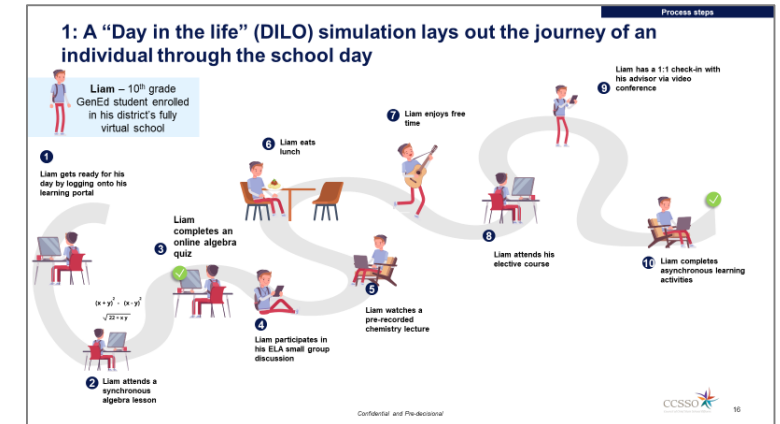
**Surface issues** for attention



## Advanced planning

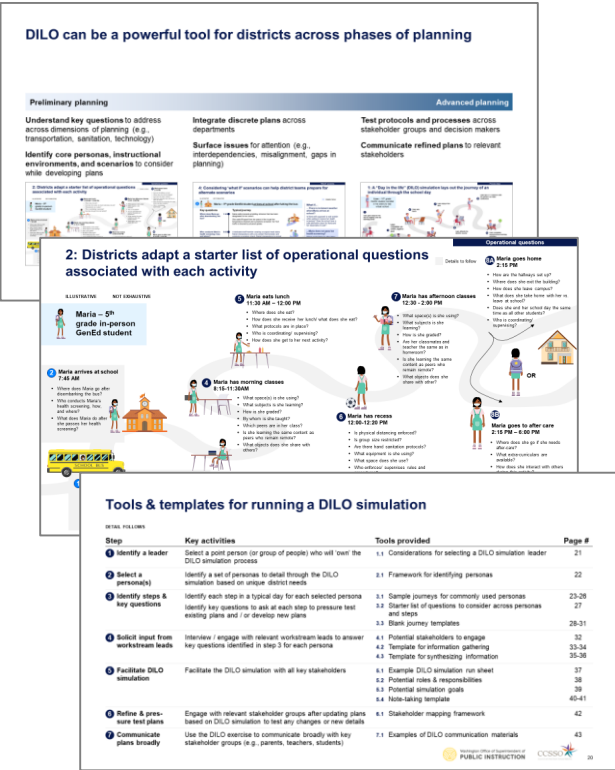
**Test protocols and processes** across stakeholder groups and decision makers

**Communicate refined plans** to relevant stakeholders



# C3: What is included in the DILO Resources document

Section	Description
Introduction to DILO resources	Definition of a ‘day in the life of’ (DILO) simulation Potential ways to use DILO simulations
Illustrative DILO simulation output	Example DILO for Maria, a 5th grade GenEd student attending school in-person Example DILO for Liam, a 10 <sup>th</sup> grade GenEd student attending school remotely
Tools & templates to support running a DILO simulation	7-step guide to preparing for and executing a DILO simulation Sample workplan for completing each of the 7 steps Additional tools and templates to support each step of the process (e.g., samples agenda, interview guides, sample questions)



See full resources document [here](#)

# Contents

Support LEAs in ongoing decision-making

**Work with LEAs to determine areas in which the  
State could support implementation more heavily**



# SEAs may have responsibilities this academic year that differ from past years

Potential changes to SEAs' areas of responsibility – illustrative examples

■ Deep dive to follow

Least different  
from today's  
responsibilities



Most different  
from today's  
responsibilities






1 <u>Coordination with other agencies</u>	2 <u>Data, assessment, and accountability</u>	3 <u>Best practice sharing</u>	4 <u>Centralized resource provision</u>	5 <u>Funding</u>
<p>Liaise with Governor's office, legislature, and other agencies to shape COVID-19 education policy response</p> <p>Form joint guidance and resources with State and County health departments, for LEA use</p> <p>Convene stakeholders for LEA decision-making (LEAs, local health departments); mediate if necessary</p> <p>Work closely with State and County health departments to monitor health indicators; assist with COVID-19 mitigation where possible (e.g. contact tracing in schools)</p>	<p>Provide LEAs with new methods for tracking important regulatory metrics (e.g., attendance – won't just be "seat time" in remote environments) and their relationship to funding</p> <p>Support collection and monitoring of new types of data (e.g., access to remote learning)</p>	<p>Identify best practices in LEAs and share across the state</p> <p>Convene communities of practice to facilitate learning and share best practices over time</p> <p>Bring together expert networks to support LEAs</p> <p>Continuously monitor select learning outcomes and provide support to LEAs where needed</p>	<p>Assist LEAs in equipment procurement, especially for mitigation of COVID-19 transmission (e.g., PPE, sanitizing products)</p> <p>Significantly expand access to technology and tools that support hybrid / remote learning (e.g., increase connectivity, provide laptops, platform, digital curricula)</p> <p>Create state-wide platforms for ongoing stakeholder engagement (e.g., state hotlines, chat bots, planning committees involving parents)</p>	<p>Work with LEAs to support re-allocation of resources in the face of potential budget gaps</p> <p>Ensure fiscal transparency in COVID-19 funding allocations</p> <p>Drive funding to new strategic priorities that have resulted from COVID-19 (e.g., increasing connectivity) – encourage LEAs to do the same</p> <p>Establish procedures to allocate future COVID-19 funding / grants (e.g., similar to CARES)</p>

**Some of these potential changes would be modifications to or expansions of existing SEA responsibilities, while other responsibilities would be entirely new**



# 1: SEAs may be engaging more regularly and deeply with other agencies than in the past

NOT EXHAUSTIVE

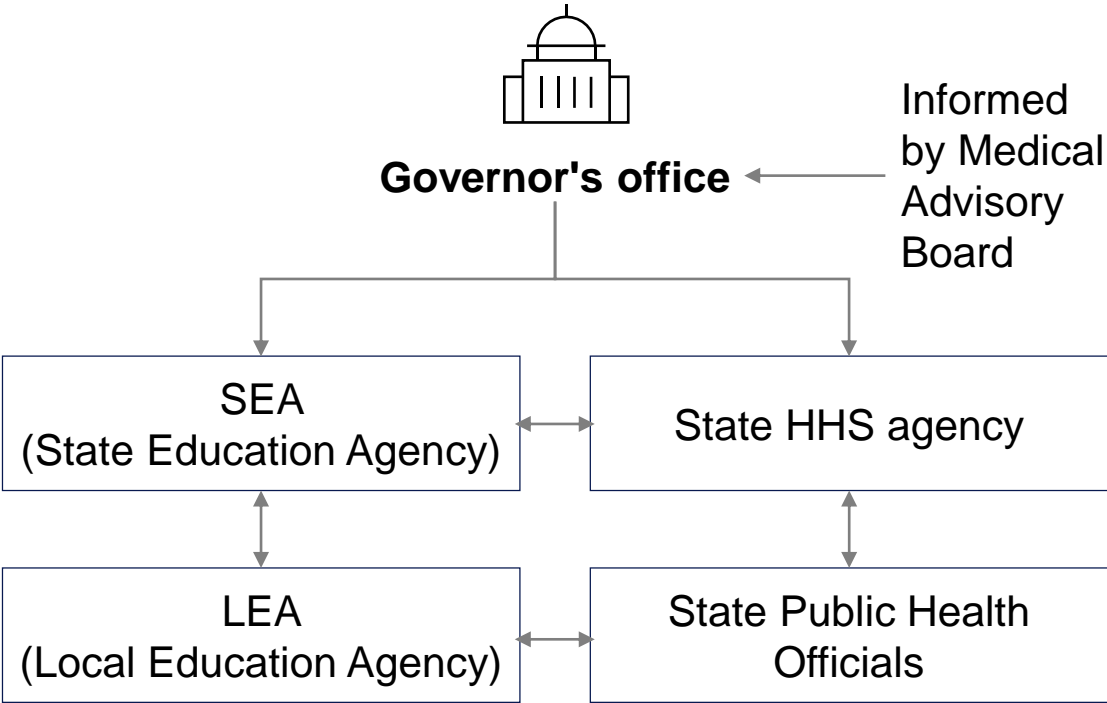
Key constituencies that an SEA may be responsible for working with		Questions for consideration
	<b>Governor's office</b> Liaising with Governor's office to shape COVID-19 education policy and mediate between districts and Governor's office	How do we set up our teams to collaborate with the various constituencies?
	<b>State health agency</b> Working closely with State and County health departments to monitor local health conditions and make determinations on whether changes to districts' health metrics should affect school model  Collaborating with State health department to ensure local health officers are prepared to support routine testing programs for teachers and staff	How do we set up channels of communication and feedback?  How do we deal with conflicting guidance between two or more of these bodies?
	<b>Legislature</b> Working with the legislature to implement budget changes and compliance monitoring	How do we work with the legislature and Governor's office to optimize resources and funds?
	<b>U.S. Dept of Education</b> Working together on drafting, receiving, and implementing updated guidance from the U.S. Department of Education on school models and other core policies	How do we adapt education policies based on Governor's strategic priorities, esp. during this dynamic time?
	<b>Other Cabinet agencies</b> Partnering with other agencies like the Department of Agriculture to assist with providing meals to students in a remote model	

“Many decisions are outside our reach - for instance, working with Department of Health on sanitizing and Department of Agriculture to help provide school meals”  
**Deputy Secretary for the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education**

# 1: For example, SEAs could play a role in supporting contact tracing efforts in partnership with other state agencies and LEAs

ILLUSTRATIVE

## Example structure



Note: Illustrative only; summarized from an example U.S. state

## Example of cross-functional support from a U.S. state

**State’s role:** One U.S. state has made contact tracing a state-wide public health priority, and has set up a COVID-19 “central team” that is managing the implementation of a contact tracing program, among other things

**SEA responsibilities:** SEA developed a broader “stop-start” protocol, with clear guidance for LEAs and schools on how to deal with the instance of a confirmed COVID-19 case in the school

**LEA involvement:** Pre-release, the protocol was tested with superintendents and other LEA staff (in confidential groups), to ensure it was practical and relevant for different districts

**Contact tracing program:** Local health agencies are notified if a member of their state tests positive, and with the individual’s support, reach out to anyone with whom they’ve been in contact

## 2: SEAs can model new metrics for schools and districts

NOT EXHAUSTIVE

CURRENT AS OF JULY 21, 2020

Areas to measure	Example activities	Questions for consideration
<b>Attendance / engagement data</b>	<b>Focus on tracking engagement metrics beyond standard attendance</b> , e.g., Hours of online engagement, hours of face-to-face and virtual instruction Participation in virtual class interactions – polls, quizzes	How do SEAs design technology tools to support collection of engagement metrics? How do SEAs support LEAs in designing SEL assessments? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How do SEAs monitor and act when SEL assessments raise concerns?</li> </ul>
<b>Social and emotional well being data</b>	<b>Assess semester closure impact on social and emotional learning</b> , e.g., Leverage existing virtual assessments or build system wide surveys for students, parents, and teachers Provide resources for LEA staff to do individual check-ins with their staff, students	How do SEAs design academic metrics that compare online and virtual assessments?
<b>Academic data</b>	<b>Develop new policies and guidelines for standardized assessments</b> to establish a new baseline to measure effectiveness of new virtual models, e.g., Determine new timelines for academic assessments to accommodate gradual student return Develop or modify virtual standardized assessments Create platforms for teachers to submit surveys on student development	How do SEAs remain flexible in assessment while complying with ESSA? How might SEAs equitably address the differences in access, when it comes to virtual assessments? How do SEAs address academic integrity in online assessments?



**In Egypt, exams were replaced with research projects** for grades 3-7; 10-11 grades received electronic exams on Tablets, and for grades K-2, parents were required to make sure students completed the online curriculum



“We’re positioning our education community to meet students right where they are... This is a shift from merely compliance lens because now we have to shape assessment around the tools we can give to teachers”

**Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction**

# 3: SEAs can share best practices from LEAs widely

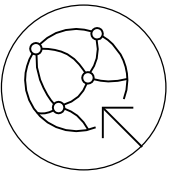
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CURRENT AS OF JULY 31, 2020

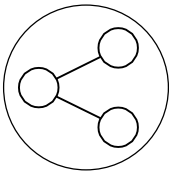
## SEAs can identify best practices in LEAs by...

1. **Soliciting submissions** for best practice examples from LEAs
2. **Reviewing LEA reopening plans** and selecting best practices from submissions
3. **Tracking metrics to identify high-performing districts**, and highlighting associated practices

## SEAs may share best practices through...



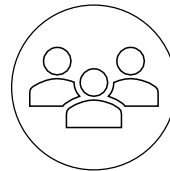
Websites



Social  
media



Webinars



Existing stakeholder groups  
(e.g., planning committees)



The **CT Department of Education** is [sharing best practices from LEAs](#) across Connecticut in the areas of distance learning, early childhood, English learners, food distribution, and special education

LEAs can share innovative ideas utilizing **5-15 minute videos** or **webinars**

Best practices are shared through the SEA **social media** and are posted on the SEA's **COVID-19 Resources for Families and Educators page**



The **FL Department of Education** is sharing **best practices from LEAs in [distance learning](#)**. The Department of Education website highlights district practices – such as an interactive virtual school experience and an online forum with student activities – and includes links to district websites for more information

# 3: SEAs can convene Communities of Practice to facilitate information-sharing across LEAs

CURRENT AS OF JULY 31, 2020

**Definition:** A Community of Practice (CoP) is a group of LEAs (typically of a similar archetype) that convene to share best practices, discuss challenges, and participate in peer-to-peer activities; CoPs are typically run by an intermediary with a clearly defined role

## Potential roles for SEAs in CoPs



**Identify CoPs** by analyzing LEAs and grouping by common characteristics (e.g., size, rural vs. urban, learner demographics)



**Design schedule for engagement** over time (e.g., calendar for engagement throughout school year, sample meeting agendas)



**Develop frameworks to structure discussions** based on key LEA pain points (e.g., content to start a conversation or facilitate knowledge sharing tied to schedule for engagement)



**Act as an intermediary** for CoPs including structuring and facilitating conversations, providing expertise



The Texas Education Agency funds [statewide technical assistance networks](#) focused on critical, thematic topics related to **special student populations**

**During COVID-19, these networks are disseminating best practices tailored to the current context.** For example, the **Texas Complex Access Network** – which focuses on students with significant cognitive disabilities – released **remote learning guidance** for educators to “identify ways they can continue to provide supports to students with complex needs during at home learning”

The guidance includes a **4 step guide to implementing a remote learning plan** for these special student populations, including examples, links to external resources, and templates

# 4: Some international governments are procuring PPE for school teachers and staff, students, and / or child care staff













NOT EXHAUSTIVE

CURRENT AS OF MAY 24, 2020

 Child care

 K-12

Government centralized PPE supply

Population sizes <sup>1</sup>		Example PPE usage guidelines	Supplied by
	 2.5M children 87K educators	Teachers and staff required to wear masks whenever physical distancing is not possible  Regional policies on masks for high school students	Ministry of Education will be supplying masks to all teachers  Parents must supply masks for high school students
	 9.9M students 187K teachers		
	 704K children 53K educators	Teachers and students required to wear masks at all times, except during meal times	Ministry of Education will be supplying medical masks to all teachers and students
	 5.5M students 432K teachers		
	 108K children 60K educators	Recommended use of PPE for child care educators, but not mandatory	Masks, visors and gloves supplied by Family Ministry
	 960K students 73K teachers		
	 820K children 82K educators	State specific policies on masks requirements  Students should only wear masks in the hallways and during breaks	State specific; most teachers and students who are required to wear masks will have to supply their own
	 8.3M students 683K teachers		

**Few governments have decided to provide masks to their K-12 students**

**Alignment between key stakeholders (e.g., SEAs, LEAs, educators) on the recommended usage of PPE in schools and childcare centers can promote adoption and acceptability from parents, teachers and students**

1. Approximate population sizes based on various education levels and structures across jurisdictions



# 4: SEAs can leverage their relative scale to support LEAs in operationalizing remote learning

NOT EXHAUSTIVE      CURRENT AS OF JULY 31, 2020

## Example SEA tools for intervention

Leveraging state scale / influence



### Remote learning: potential interventions

Bring in stakeholders from across state government (e.g., health personnel, operations personnel) to **assist with remote learning implementation**

Bulk purchasing

**Bulk purchase hardware** (e.g., computers for students, cameras for classrooms)

**Bulk purchase software** (e.g., learning management platforms)

Forming partnerships with private companies, other organizations

**Explore whether online teachers and / or source class material** from ed-tech platforms may be able to meet state education standards

Resource sharing & content support

**Design specialized training** (e.g., how to use digital tools, how to build virtual lesson plans)

**Facilitate community learning platforms** (e.g., pair strong districts with districts who need support to share best practices)

**Develop new, optional digital content for LEAs to adopt** (e.g., STEM learning modules and self assessment worksheets)

**Support LEAs in providing extra learning time for students who need it most** over summer / winter break, through grants or other support for teacher and staff time

Policy changes

**Make adjustments to school funding models** to accommodate different schedules



### Connecticut

\$43.5M program to close the digital divide for students, including a purchase of 50k laptops, at-home internet access for 60k students, and creation of 200 public hot spots



### Egypt

Partnership to roll out remote education instruction and services to 22+ million students and 1+ million teachers



### U.K.

Dept. of Ed funding & partnering with an organization to release content from best teachers, for all schools & grades

Note: interventions are only illustrative; will depend on capacity and operational reality of SEAs

Source for case examples: MAKO, Bloomberg news; CT.gov

Confidential and Pre-decisional

# 4: SEAs can provide centralized platforms for community engagement throughout this academic year

NOT EXHAUSTIVE      CURRENT AS OF JULY 21, 2020

## Involve community stakeholders in decision-making processes

### Examples to consider

- Survey stakeholders to inform decision-making
- Meet and correspond regularly with stakeholder representative groups (e.g., teacher unions, PTAs)
- Ensure that stakeholders are involved in formal bodies (e.g., oversight committees, operations committees)
- Create forums for stakeholders to raise issues, and have opportunities for Q&A
- Vet decisions with key stakeholders before releasing more broadly

### Region of Saskatchewan



**Set up a centralized Response Planning Team dedicated to the educational response that includes representatives from**

- The Saskatchewan School Boards Association
- The Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators Directors and Superintendents
- The Saskatchewan Association of School Business Officials
- The Ministry of Education



“We established a roundtable a couple of years ago for family and community engagement in education – [during this crisis] we’ve been continuing to use this group to gather information and have them to inform our policies; we also have them help us communicate back to our communities.”

– SEA Deputy Commissioner

## Establish clear lines of communication for disseminating information more broadly

### Examples to consider

- Establish regular communication cadence (e.g., scheduled town halls, news blasts)
- Use multiple channels, both digital (e.g., Zoom meetings / phone calls) and otherwise (e.g., mailings) to push out decisions
- Provide opportunities for follow up questions and further feedback (e.g., FAQs pages, hotlines, community forums)

### Denmark



Instituted a State hotline to answer questions about the virus and health measures, by phone or chat in 25 languages

### Singapore



Provided chat bot to address queries related to COVID-19 for parents and citizens

Provided detailed guidelines and FAQs for all K-12 levels protocols



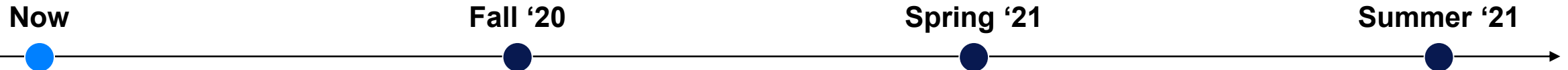
“We have a weekly meeting with all Superintendents – this is an opportunity to listen to challenges they are facing or needs they have, and discuss recent events and decisions.”

– SEA Deputy Commissioner



# SEAs may also help LEAs plan ahead in the context of COVID-19

■ See Link for external resources



Strategies SEAs can consider...

① Support LEAs in ongoing decision-making

② Work with LEAs to determine areas in which the State could support implementation more heavily

③ Plan ahead in the context of COVID-19

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