West Virginia COVID-19 2020:
From Outbreak to Recovery Advisory Council

Pre-K through Grade 5
Instruction and Learning Considerations
and Supports for Re-Entry

August 24, 2020

Table of Contents

Introduction

As indicated in the joint strategic plan of the West Virginia Board of Education (WVBE) and West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE), it is the intent of both entities to provide resources and supports to ensure all children have the opportunity to achieve college- and career- readiness. In West Virginia, content and processes learned during the early and elementary learning years establish the dispositions and skills children need for later achievement in one or more of the "3E's": Educational Pathways, Employment, and/or Enlistment (WVDE, 2020). Through this model, all children will have opportunities during and after high school to earn industry-recognized credentials and opportunities to engage in rigorous college-level coursework. When strong foundations for learning are established early in a child's career, achievement of one or more of the "3E's" become an attainable goal.

Purpose

This document is designed to assist districts, administrators, and educators with all phases of the West Virginia COVID-19 2020 reentry planning process. Please note that this is a living document that is updated regularly to best benefit those associated with the pre-k through grade five education community in West Virginia.

Section 1: Equity, Structure, and Logistics

Equity

Equity is a process or set of strategies and supports to help students achieve equal outcomes. Achieving equal outcomes and implementing equitable practices are complex problems impacted by many interconnected school- and community-based factors. In Pre-K-12 education settings, the following gaps often demonstrate results of inequities throughout a district (Hanover Research, 2020a).

Achievement Gaps	*Persistent unequal academic and educational outcomes among students in one or more areas*
Opportunity Gaps	*Differences in access to educational resources, programs, and supports among student groups*
Excellence Gaps	*Differences in advanced academic performance or "high-level" outcomes among student groups*
Discipline Gaps	*Differences in behavioral outcomes and types of disciplinary resolutions among student groups*
Attendance Gaps	*Differences in school attendance rates and chronic absenteeism among student groups*

What evidence of any of these gaps do we observe in the data?

What further exploration should we consider in assessing the extent of these gaps?

The 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has required educators to rethink how to ensure children have access to equitable learning opportunities. One recommendation (Reich et.al., 2020) places emphasis on equity as a critical consideration when designing remote learning opportunities, with increased guidance for special populations such as children with special needs, children in foster care, and homeless children. Reich, et.al. also notes the following:

> *While online learning will undoubtedly play an essential role in remote learning during the coronavirus pandemic, there are several reasons to be seriously concerned about the equity implications of a pivot to online instruction.*
>
> *Many families with school-aged children lack access to computing devices and broadband. Existing research only partially characterizes these obstacles. A survey of high school students taking the ACT found that one in seven lived in homes with only one computing device for the whole family (Moore et al., 2018). Pew Research (2019) shows that only 56% of adults living in households earning less that $30,000 per year have access to broadband. To our knowledge, there is no survey data that would allow us to more precisely measure readiness for distance learning in a pandemic; we do not know what fraction of households with school-aged children have broadband access and a device for each child. By all indications, however, many school-aged children and their families, especially in rural and urban areas, face serious limits to accessing online learning.*

Another consideration is that developmentally, we know that young learners in particular are less likely to be able to manage their own learning, either online or through non-digital means, than their older peers. The importance of the home to school connection will be pivotal as we continue through this pandemic. More information about the home to school connection is provided later in this document.

Structure and Logistics: Considerations for Establishing Routines and Classroom Schedules

The following should be considered as districts and schools prepare for reentry:
» Keeping children with their core group throughout the school day. Contact with other core groups of children must be minimized throughout the school day (in hallways, restrooms, libraries etc.).
» Eating meals in the classroom; this time can be counted as instructional time due to the learning that takes place during the meal process.
» Avoiding family-style meals, which will avoid children utilizing shared utensils.
» Ensuring increased outdoor recess and/or class (instructional) time as playground/outdoor area space allows to ensure classroom core groups remain separate from other classrooms of children.
» Providing related arts integration and opportunities that take place in the classroom or outside to minimize contact with other groups of children.
» Leveraging family engagement in the provision of remote learning opportunities for children to help ensure all young learners are successful.
» Using of digital and non-digital tools (even for those families with adequate internet and connectivity) to ensure children have a balance of screen and non-screen related learning opportunities during times of remote learning.
» Pulling related arts educators into the classroom or allowing them to provide instruction virtually while the classroom teacher facilitates.

- » Using the school counselor as a partner with the classroom educator to help ensure the WV Dispositions and Standards for Student Success are integrated into classroom practices throughout the entire school day.
- » Ensuring that counselors provide lessons virtually or be available to provide mental health support/counseling on an individual basis to high-risk children (while maintaining social distancing).
- » Not utilizing communal supplies such as tissues, pencils, crayons, paper supplies, scissors, markers, or manipulatives, etc. Communal supplies that are utilized must be adequately sanitized regularly.
- » Focusing on the importance of small group and one-on-one instruction.
- » Staggering arrival and drop off times and/or have educators come outside the facility to pick up the children as they arrive. Your plan for curb side drop off and pick up should limit direct contact between parents and staff members and adhere to social distancing recommendations.
- » For general music and elementary visual art: plan games and activities that require no physical contact and do not require students to be in physical proximity to each other. For fifth grade classrooms housed in middle schools, please also see guidance for the arts developed by the WVDE Office of Middle & Secondary Learning by visiting *https://wvde.us/school-system-re-entry/instruction-and-learning/*.
- » Considerations for West Virginia Universal Pre-K Programs:
  - › *The number and length of in-person instructional days is a decision county collaborative early childhood core teams must make with their counties to best accommodate capacity issues and disinfecting of the school facilities. This may be accomplished during a traditional school day schedule or blended school day schedule.   Plans for blended instruction must engage all students in learning four or five days per week based on the county's verified universal pre-k program data. Any changes of substance must be submitted as an addendum (Ex. change from five to four days per week of instruction).*
  - › *Re-entry plans for community partners may include variations of in-person and/or blended instruction as long as they are within boundaries and partners are in agreement of re-entry scenarios.*
  - › *If possible, during rest time, ensure that children's naptime mats are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. Consider placing children head to toe in order to further reduce the potential for viral spread. Ensure that bedding and blankets are stored separately.*
  - › *To limit nonessential visitors and activities involving external groups or organizations, classroom observations, including the WV Universal Pre-K Health and Safety Checklists, may be delayed until visitors are able to safely return to classrooms.*
  - › *Consider suspending toothbrushing during in-person instruction until risks related to COVID-19 are lowered. Provide information and resources to families to promote good oral health habits during this time.*

Structure and Logistics: Considerations for Classroom Environments, Including Developmentally Appropriate Practices, Materials, and Classroom Design

Early and elementary learning classroom face unprecedented challenges with the upcoming school year. For decades, early learning educators in particular have worked diligently with our youngest learners to promote turn taking and hands-on experiences because both processes are foundational in how children learn and grow. In the early grades, it is also imperative to note that developmentally inappropriate expectations or practices (such as isolation from peers, limited to no hands-on

experiences, and seat work) are detrimental to children's overall development. Today, educators and counties must work to blend developmentally appropriate practices with strategies to maintain safety and wellness in response to COVID-19.

To assist educators and counties as they balance developmentally appropriate environments and materials with health and safety for children, families, and educators, the following considerations are provided:

» Daily Transitions and Routines (such as arrival time and departure)
  › *Stagger arrival and departure time when parents transport.*
  › *Include provisions for handwashing upon arrival.*
  › *Limit materials that can be brought to school from home.*
  › *Provide individual spaces or units in cubbies to ensure that children's personal items that must be brought from home are stored separately.*
  › *Stagger transitions (ex: going to the restroom) from one activity to another throughout the day to avoid long wait times (ex: associated with standing in line in close proximity to each other).*
» Social and Emotional Well-being
  › *Prioritize social and emotional development.*
  › *Use social stories and developmentally appropriate tools to explore and practice routines and schedules.*
  › *Check in regularly with families to see how child is doing at home.*
  › *Utilize resources to support trauma-informed care.*
» Schedules
  › *Provide small group and individual elements in the daily schedule.*
  › *Avoid large group times.*
  › *Minimize time spent in line.*
  › *Increase outdoor time in areas that are not shared with or cleaned between groups.*
  › *Read with children individually.*
  › *Work with small groups.*
» Materials*
  › *Select and provide safe materials that can be sanitized or discarded regularly.*
  › *Remove items that cannot be sanitized regularly.*
  › *Provide individually labelled materials for children when possible and when the materials cannot be sanitized regularly (playdoh, art supplies, sensory items).*
  › *Ensure that children's items are stored in individual cubbies and do not have contact with others.*
  *Children's books, like other paper-based materials such as mail or envelopes, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning or disinfection procedures. These can be used by various children throughout the day.
» Cleaning and disinfecting
  › *Have a process for removing materials for regular sanitizing (EPA has approved sanitizers).*
  › *Designate bins for items that need cleaning each day.*
  › *Have a daily sanitizing routine for frequently touched items (door knobs, light switches, faucets, table tops, chairs, cubbies).*

Information from this section was synthesized from American Academy of Pediatrics, 2020; Center for Disease Control, 2020.

Considerations Regarding Classroom Environmental Design

As addressed in guidance documents provided to support implementation of WVBE Policy 2510, Assuring the Quality of Education Programs: Regulations for Students, high-quality early and elementary programs (Grades Pre-K through Grade 5) are designed with responsive environments that include time, space, and developmentally appropriate materials necessary to create print- and language-rich environments conducive for learning and integration of standards. They are designed and equipped in a manner that supports discovery, small group and individual learning, exploration, and problem solving (WVDE, 2020).

The following considerations are applicable for Grades pre-k through five environments:

» Ensure that the classroom does not include unnecessary items to free up space for children to work, as every square foot of the classroom environment matters:
  › *Consider things that children can't use and think about how you can repurpose or remove items that take up extra space such as filing cabinets, computer stations, carpet areas (because whole groups are not recommended), and decorations.*
  › *Reclaim space, improve flow, and increase usable floor area by moving or removing furniture.*
  › *If you're worried about not having enough storage space because of getting rid of shelving units, try incorporating medium-sized wipeable baskets and bins. These sized bins are easy to move so teachers have the flexibility to space children out around the classroom.*

» Use painters tape and or other visual markers arrange classroom centers/stations six feet apart and traffic flow in the classroom.

» Mark off squares around each seating area to help children visualize space for standing, stretching, and to keep chairs and desks/tables in place.

» All learning centers should not be of equal size. Some areas require more space because of the type of center and how children work within the confines of that space.

» When possible, open windows and doors as much as possible for constant air circulation.

» Consider alternate uses for larger rooms in the building such as gymnasiums, art/music rooms, cafeterias, and libraries.

» Express a positive, welcoming tone with all signage and directions provided.

» Minimize community materials.
  › *Keep personal materials at each child's space when possible.*
  › *Avoid shared art and writing materials. Consider providing individual materials (paintbrush, writing utensil, crayons, etc.) in baskets labeled with each child's name.*

» Consider how children line up for entering and leaving the classroom. Think about ordering children so that they enter the classroom in a way that allows for them to get to their assigned seat or area without getting in each other's way.

» Make sure there are multiple accessible hand washing/sanitizing stations and provide explicit instruction on handwashing.

» Pre-K and Kindergarten Considerations:

  › *The classroom layout should allow learning centers to break free from the traditional gridded constraints by (1) opening the face of the center so the front of it is free from shelving units; (2) repositioning popular centers in opposite corners; and, (3) reclaiming space, which will result in more opportunities to create distancing between children.*

  › *Divide the room into work areas that encourage individual and small groups.*

  › *Arrange the room to easily support social distancing during rest time.*

  › *Reclaim space from walkways and fuse this square footage into children's play areas. For example, the floor area in front of the cubbies is many times used only at arrival and dismissal times or perhaps when children retrieve their jackets to go outside. By reorienting adjacent learning centers, children can utilize this same floor area throughout the entire day.*

  › *It's tempting to use cabinets to enclose the learning center spaces. This often results in excessive reliance on large pieces of furniture in an already crowded classroom. Another consequence of too many cabinets is that children will have difficulty social distancing.*

  › *Avoid whole group instruction (such as a large group morning meeting for all children). Provide opportunities for core groups of children to rotate through centers throughout the instructional day so educators can provide small group and individualized instruction.*

Considerations for Transitions into School

First time enterers:

To support school readiness efforts and assure the use of developmentally effective methods for children prior to entering first grade, the Ready, Set, Go! West Virginia Comprehensive Framework for School Readiness is utilized in West Virginia. This comprehensive framework includes an approach that focuses on how the state and local communities, schools, and programs can offer support and resources for families and children prior to and during their transition into school. Programs serving children in Early Learning Readiness grades (WV Pre-K and Kindergarten) also provide opportunities for children to build solid foundations and positive dispositions to learning. Home visits and parent conferences are often conducted to support children and families as they enter school; however, programs may choose to conduct virtual visits, conferences, and orientation activities to ensure health and safety. For more information, visit the *Ready, Set, Go! West Virginia Toolkit for Supporting School Readiness*.

Grade level to grade level

Before jumping straight into curriculum-based activities, educators will best serve students by helping them to make sense of what happened during the COVID-19 pandemic which can minimize the risk of associated trauma. One way a teacher can do this is by having open-ended, optional conversations with the whole group, small groups, or individual children where students share their feelings, questions, and coping strategies with others. To be prepared for these conversations, educators should be informed and ready to use accurate information that is appropriate for the age of their students. These conversations also provide time for teachers to learn about the social and emotional needs of their students through the use of surveys and other tools.

Section 2: Pre-K through Grade 5 Instruction, Interventions, and Assessments

Whether instruction is delivered face-to-face, virtually, remotely, or through a combination of formats, it is necessary to conduct a close examination of the content standards for each grade level in order to determine how to best provide instruction for all children. A recent study forecasts that children will enter school in fall 2020 with approximately 30% learning loss in literacy and 50% learning loss in mathematics. Left unchecked, this academic setback could derail the futures of children who were previously performing on grade level, and would be disastrous for children who were already performing behind grade level. This anomaly provides a new and unique challenge for educators that will require new solutions and mindsets. The typical approach to remediation—providing children with work aligned to standards from previous grades—will not come close to catching all children up and will likely compound the situation. The following considerations for instruction, intervention, and assessment address the critical need for addressing the achievement gap to ensure all children are successful.

Partnering With Families

It is clear that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to rapid changes in typical school and family interactions and relationships. We see our schools and families shifting and reframing their connections with educators now reaching into each family's home to help guide children's learning through a variety of available mediums. Engaging all families will require true partnerships and the building of mutual trust and respect. While counties, administrators, and educators may be faced with a number of barriers to this work, it is also important to acknowledge and build on opportunities the current health crisis brings to strengthen relationships with families and engage them in their children's learning. Following are some opportunities that can occur during this time of increased family communication and engagement:

» Strengthening Relationships: The opportunity to establish more personalized, two-way communication between schools and families, building mutual trust, and providing families an authentic sense of engagement in their children's learning;

» Building Capacity: The opportunity to build each family's capacity and confidence in their ability to support their child's learning by modeling practices and sharing resources and tools;

» Focusing on Learning: The opportunity to leverage available resources from school and home, inquiring about student and family interests and creating meaningful distance learning experiences;

» Connecting Communities: The opportunity to engage the greater community to help meet the basic needs of families through a response that is compassionate and culturally responsive.

(Adapted from the Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2020).

How to Succeed in with Virtual, Blended, or Remote Learning Scenarios:
5 Tips for Families

(Refer to *https://wvde.us/school-system-re-entry/* for definitions regarding in-person and/or blended learning, virtual learning, and remote learning.)

» *Attend to your child's health and well-being.* The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in adults and children alike experiencing stress and anxiety to uncertainty, health concerns, social isolation, and economic shocks. Therefore, the family's most important role is to ensure your child remains physically and mentally healthy while addressing concerns that they may have with honest and accurate information communicated in a calm and reassuring manner.

» *Understand your role.* Families should recognize that they are not meant to replace or substitute their child's regular teachers. Instead, families should provide support and encouragement to children—to the extent possible—to help keep them engaged in the learning process. It is important that families try to relax their own expectations of what can feasibly be done to support their children while balancing other obligations (with multiple siblings, job expectations, health concerns, etc.).

» *Clarify school and educator expectations.* Schools and individual educators may have specific requirements or guidance for children during times of remote learning, including set (or synchronous) times for live learning or directions for individualized (or asynchronous) times for assignments. Schools and educators should clearly articulate these expectations to families to ensure transparent communication and clear expectations are established.

» *Set up a designated learning space at home.* Children will learn better in a space free from distractions and clutter. In an ideal world, this space will not be the same as where they spend free time. If families don't have the ability to create a separate learning space, it is encouraged that they try to make existing spaces as conducive for learning opportunities as possible.

» *Establish rules and routines for learning time.* Children will be more successful with learning at home when basic routines are developed to indicate designated times for school work versus free time. Similarly, it is important to schedule breaks throughout the day to reduce screen time and to ensure that your children are not consumed by learning to the detriment of recreation and relaxation.

(Adapted from Hanover Research, 2020b).

Student Engagement Timeline Considerations

The following recommendations and guidelines are presented as suggestions for counties to consider regarding minimum and maximum times of engagement by each student during blended or virtual learning models.

Grade Level	Minimum	Maximum	Recommended Length of Sustained Attention
Pre-K	20 minutes/day	60 minutes/day	3-5 minutes
K	30 minutes/day	90 minutes/day	3-5 minutes
1-2	45 minutes/day	90 minutes/day	5-10 minutes
3-5	60 minutes/day	120 minutes/day	10-15 minutes
6-8	Class: 15 minutes/day Total: 90 minutes/day	Class: 25 minutes/day Total: 150 minutes/day	1 subject area or class*
9-12	Class: 20 minutes/day Total: 120 minutes/day	Class: 30 minutes/day Total: 180 minutes/day	1 subject area or class*

*In grades 6-12, rather than dividing daily minutes between courses or subjects, consider dedicating the minutes to a specific subject area or class per day such as mathematics on Mondays or social studies on Thursdays.

Considerations Regarding Screen Time

Technology tools are important for all learners; however, types and usage should vary based on ages and developmental levels of students. Young children learn best through active engagement and supports from adults, including times when technology tools are utilized. The use of technology in a developmentally appropriate way provides educators with additional tools to further supports learning. Technology tools include a broad range of tools including hardware such as digital cameras, laptops, and digital media devices, as well as software. Digital media devices provide a platform for passive and active media. Passive media flows in a single direction. An informational video about a topic is an example of passive media because it does not require action by the user. On the other hand, active media includes opportunities for interaction. It is important for educators to prioritize active media when using digital media devices. Passive media can sometime be confused with active media when children have the opportunity for limited interaction.

According to the joint position statement from the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media regarding technology and interactive media as tools in Early Childhood Programs, "The distinction among the devices, the content, and the user experience has been blurred by multitouch screens and movement-activated technologies that detect and respond to the child's movements. With guidance, these various technology tools can be harnessed for learning and development; without guidance, usage can be inappropriate and/or interfere with learning and development" (NAEYC, 2012).

If technology and screen time are used as learning tools, engagement related to topics of study and learning content should be utilized. It is imperative that early and elementary educators incorporate screen time and technology tools as one of a variety of teaching tools. Further, the American Academy of Pediatrics provides recommendations for children's daily media use, including screentime. (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2016)

» For children ages 2 to 5 years, limit screen use to 1 hour per day of high-quality programs. Media should be co-viewed to help children understand what they are seeing and apply it to the world around them.

» For children ages 6 and older, place consistent limits on the time spent using media, and the types of media, and make sure media does not take the place of adequate sleep, physical activity and other behaviors essential to health.

» Have ongoing communication about online citizenship and safety, including treating others with respect online and offline.

Instruction and Intervention Supports

An integrated approach to ensuring developmentally appropriate practices

Developmentally appropriate foundations are anchored in knowledge of how children learn, along with cognizance of individual needs, and cultural relevance (NAEYC, 2020). Developmentally appropriate practice for children in the early and elementary grades must balance academic, health, safety, social and emotional needs of children. This balance is vitally important as children, families and educators face reentry to school in the fall amidst ever-present stressors. Research shows that children in the early and elementary grades learn best through a social and content-integrated approach that includes scaffolding by adults who are aware of individual rates of development through a whole child approach (ASCD, 2020).

Reentry planning must be guided by the health, safety, and welfare of each member of the school community. When considering reentry for students, it is important to that plans for instruction include assessment of the whole child and adaptations that protect the health and safety of children, foster supports for resiliency and incorporate academic growth. Key elements include ongoing connections to important adults in their lives, consistent schedules and routines that encompass health and safety practices, and opportunities for children to integrate learning throughout the day (Child Trends, 2020). Consider the following during reentry planning:

Ongoing connections to important adults: Even if children have to be physically distant from their teacher more often than they are used to, they should still receive social support through some form of daily check-ins with a caring adult.

Consistent schedules: Although schedules may be drastically different from what children are traditionally used to, it is still important that the new schedules remain consistent. Children should know what to expect when it comes to arrival, transitions, and dismissal procedures. Try to keep schedules as reliable as possible. For example, schedule a mid-morning exercise break at the same time each day so children know to expect it.

Safety routines: Set clear guidelines for entering the school building prior to the start of school. For example, set norms that children must wash their hands for at least 20 seconds before entering the classroom at any time.

Integrate learning throughout the day: In order for students to acquire mastery and memory of new skills, lessons should be integrated as much as possible. For example, provide opportunities for children to encounter a new spelling feature when learning about topic in science or physical education. Children should have multiple exposures to new concepts in authentic settings in order to fully grasp them.

The challenges that schools face in balancing academic, social and emotional needs are elevated during reentry, as buildings have been closed since late winter through summer of the 2019-2020 school year. Successful reentry depends on systems of support for educators and students. School administrators and specialists, in collaboration with community experts, must work with school staff to establish healthy and safe routines as a part of the instructional day. Finally, schools should implement a multi-tiered system of support to meet the instructional needs of children, as well as to determine appropriate interventions (The Wing Institute, 2020).

WVBE Policy 2510 Early & Elementary-Focused Best Practice Documents
The West Virginia Board of Education's Policy 2510, Assuring the Quality of Education Programs: Regulations for Students, provides guidance for the early and elementary grade levels that promotes a focus on whole-child well-being. The following documents outline best practices for each programmatic level:
  » Click on the hyperlinks below to access the WVBE Policy 2510 Early & Elementary-Focused Best Practice Documents:
    › *Pre-K and Kindergarten Best Practices link: 2510 Pre-K and K Best Practices June 2020*
    › *Grades One and Two Best Practices link: 2510 Grades One and Two Best Practices June 2020*
    › *Grades Three-Five Best Practices link: 2510 Grades Three-Five Best Practices June 2020*

West Virginia Content Standards
West Virginia's college and career readiness standards build on foundations established through a comprehensive approach to high-quality early and elementary learning programming. All West Virginia teachers are responsible for classroom instruction that integrates content standards, learning skills and technology tools. Standards ensure better accountability – holding teachers and schools responsible for what is taught during instruction remotely or in the classroom. Standards based instruction helps guide the planning, implementation, and assessment of student learning.

For access to West Virginia Content Standards, visit *http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/*.

For access to resources that are based on West Virginia Content Standards, visit *https://wvde.us/tree/*.

For access to resources specific to the COVID-19 pandemic that are focused on West Virginia Content Standards, visit *https://wvde.us/covid19/resources/*.

Innovative ideas from P-5 Instruction and Learning Reentry Work Group members and evidence-based research/best practices will be included in this section in the near future.

Identifying Prioritized Skills and Concepts: Vertical Teaming/Self-Reflection Exercises for Educators Serving Children in Grades Pre-K through Five

The following exercises provide educators serving children in Grades pre-k through five with opportunities to engage in both self-reflection and vertical teaming with their peers. Counties, schools, and educators are encouraged to consider use of one or both of these documents to help determine the critical prerequisite standards that are needed for children as they enter the next grade level. Should these documents be utilized, it may be helpful to engage in the Vertical Teaming, Horizontal Learning educator exercise first, followed by the Supporting the Whole Child: Identifying Prioritized Skills and Concepts vertical teaming and reflective exercise.

Vertical Teaming, Horizontal Learning Educator Exercise
Vertical teaming occurs when educators across a progression of grade levels engage in open, consistent communication to ensure that children receive an intentionally designed, step-by-step curriculum that scaffolds their mastery of content standards (Scholsser, 2015). While it is always best practice to communicate and collaborate vertically, the absence of face-to-face instruction at the end of the 2019-2020 school year makes it imperative that educators in a school or county engage in conversations through which they compile a listing of skills and corresponding content standards that were not sufficiently addressed before students moved to remote learning in March 2020. As schedules and calendars are designed, time for vertical teaming should be purposefully provided.

Click on the link to access this resource: *Vertical Teaming, Horizontal Learning Educator Exercise*

Supporting the Whole Child: Identifying Prioritized Skills and Concepts Vertical Teaming and Reflective Exercise
The West Virginia College- and Career-Readiness Standards (WVCCRS) support a vertical progression of learning that is comprehensive and rigorous. The skills targeted in each standard are developed over the course of a child's education with each year's skill development building upon prior years. This vertical progression means that every standard plays a role in the development of critical prerequisite skills for future years.

Click on the link to access this resource: *Supporting the Whole Child: Identifying Prioritized Skills and Concepts Vertical Teaming and Reflective Exercise*

West Virginia Tiered System of Support
West Virginia Tiered System of Support (WVTSS)
The West Virginia Tiered System of Support (WVTSS) is a framework which suggests flexible use of resources to provide relevant and appropriate academic, behavioral, and mental health support to enhance learning for all children.

Click on the link to access this resource: *West Virginia Tiered System of Support (WVTSS)*

Physical Education and Physical Activity

Recess/ Informal Physical Activity Considerations
- » Evaluate available indoor and outdoor spaces on school property that can be used for recess.
- » Consult with local health department guidance on allowable space approved for offering physical activity.
- » Select a location for physical activity where children and staff can respect physical distancing guidelines.
- » Classes should not be combined during recess. Consider implementing a recess schedule to address overcrowding and maintain physical distancing requirements.
- » Identify multiple areas where recess can be held for different cohorts of children to minimize crowding. Whenever possible, use outdoor spaces for recess.
- » Give children guidance on how to safely transition between areas while still maintaining physical distancing. Plan time to practice these transitions with children.
- » Provide adequate adult supervision for recess.
- » Ensure recess supervisors are trained in strategies to assist children in maintaining physical distancing and student conflict resolution, especially considering the impact of potential student trauma caused by COVID-19.
- » Significantly limit or eliminate the use of playground equipment or play structures.
- » If playground equipment must be used, it requires normal, routine cleaning. Targeted disinfection may be appropriate for high-touch surfaces like railings.
- » Have children and staff wash or sanitize hands before and after recess.
- » Designate zones to help children identify how to safely comply with physical distancing guidelines and to provide sufficient opportunities for free choice during recess.
- » Provide recess or free time to engage in safe physical activity daily for elementary children.
- » Recess should provide opportunities for all children to be active and allow for free choice by children.
- » Encourage recess games and activities that do not require physical contact or for children to be in close physical proximity with each other.
- » Limit the use of recess play equipment and eliminate the use of equipment that would be passed between or shared by multiple children.
- » Do not withhold recess as punishment for a child.

Classroom Based Physical Activity Considerations.
While maintaining physical distancing measures is critical in mitigating the spread of COVID-19, classroom teachers can still provide opportunities for children to be active throughout the school day (in addition to physical education and recess). Incorporating activity breaks or brain boosts during classroom learning can increase the amount of time children are physically active throughout the day and limit the amount of time they are sedentary.

Classroom-based physical activity improves children' concentration and attention, behavior, motivation and engagement in the learning process, and academic performance. Providing opportunities for classroom-based physical activity can be used as a strategy to mitigate feelings of stress and anxiety brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- » Evaluate available classroom space and outdoor spaces on school property that can be used for physical activity and physically active academic integration.
- » Give children guidance on how to safely participate in classroom based physical activity while still maintaining physical distancing. Plan time to practice these transitions with children.

- » Promote mindfulness activities to support student abilities to cope with stress and anxiety.
- » Encourage activities that do not require physical contact or for children to be in close physical proximity with each other.
- » Eliminate the use of equipment/manipulatives that would be passed between or shared by multiple children.

Considerations regarding physical education

As school districts create new instructional models for the 2020-2021 academic year, administrators and educators must consider children's physical, mental, and social-emotional health above all else. And, an important part of the solution must be physical education.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic does not change the goal of physical education; however, there are considerations that apply in implementing early and elementary learning programming. (Note: for fifth grade classes housed in middle schools, please also see the guidance surrounding physical education developed by the WVDE Office of Middle & Secondary Learning at *https://wvde.us/school-system-re-entry/instruction-and-learning/*).

Physical Education Physical Environment Considerations:
- » Consult with local health department guidance on allowable instructional space approved for delivering physical education.
- » Select a location for physical education instruction where children and staff can respect physical distancing guidelines.

Instructional Considerations:
- » Classes should not be combined, and class size should not be increased for physical education instruction. More space for instruction may be required for physical education class due to increased respiration of children when participating in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity.
- » Evaluate available outdoor spaces on school property. When possible, use outdoor spaces for physical education instruction. When outdoors, avoid the use of playground equipment, benches, or other permanent structures unless they can be properly sanitized.
- » Ensure that physical education teachers are familiar with the classrooms and spaces where instruction will be delivered so they may adjust their lessons and activities appropriately based on the space available.
- » If the use of a gymnasium or multipurpose room is permitted for instruction, keep the doors and windows open if possible, to maximize circulation and air flow to accommodate for increased respiration by children while participating in physical activity.
- » Consider allowing children to come to school dressed in clothes that are appropriate for participation in physical education, whether indoors or outdoors.
- » Plan to incorporate marked off areas (e.g., poly spots, cones, visual aids, signs) to ensure physical distancing among children and reduce cross contamination

Physical Education Equipment and Sanitization Considerations:
- » Consult with local health department guidance on proper physical education equipment sanitation procedures.
- » Inventory physical education equipment at the school to identify which pieces of equipment can be easily and effectively sanitized.

- » If there is not equitable access to equipment for all children or if equipment cannot be properly cleaned and disinfected between classes, avoid the use of equipment altogether.
- » Encourage children and staff to use individual water bottles in lieu of water fountains.

Physical Education Face to Face Instructional Considerations:
- » Continue to address the WVBE Wellness Education standards for K-12 (and WV Pre-K Standards for the pre-k grade). Educators may need to prioritize standards and shift the focus of their curriculum to address physical fitness standards, responsible, personal, and social behaviors standards and physical activity standards and incorporate activities for development of movement forms/motor skills that are safe and appropriate.
- » Use games and activities that require no physical contact and do not require children to be in close physical proximity to each other.
- » Focus more on individual pursuits or skills rather than traditional team sports or activities.
- » Include opportunities for children's choice and incorporate child-suggested activities when appropriate.
- » Ensure lessons are planned around the available space for instruction.

Physical Education Blended Model Instructional Considerations:
- » Consider assigning tasks for at-home completion and then have children apply the knowledge gained in the school setting.
- » Consider a flipped classroom approach where children first learn about a topic at home and then come prepared to learn more about it in class.
- » Allow for optimal children's choice and provide opportunities for children to engage with teachers directly and often. This will be crucial to keep children motivated. Additionally, children are more interested in seeing videos created by their own teachers than shared videos created by other teachers.
- » Consider the use of fitness/activity logs to allow children to track engagement in physical activity pursuits and set fitness goals (in partnership with a family member).
- » Provide opportunities for children to design, monitor, and evaluate their own physical activity preferences (in partnership with a family member).

Assessment of Children's Current Knowledge

Formative Assessment Process
Formative Assessment Process Toolkit
Decision Makers' Guide to the Formative Assessment Process (with Administrator Observational Rubrics)

County-selected Interim and Diagnostic Assessment Tools and Resources to Support Reentry
Counties may purchase a variety of assessment tools available from outside vendors. These assessment tools may provide data that educators can use to make informed decisions about instructional practices and to improve student achievement.

State-level Assessment Tools and Resources to Support Reentry
When the next school year begins, schools that serve students in Grades 3-8 will have available to them many assessment tools and resources to assist them in determining students' strengths and weakness relative to the WVCCRS in English language arts, math and science. Furthermore, these tools can help identify any gaps in learning that may have occurred because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Below is a brief listing and description of assessment tools that will be available beginning in August to assist with plans for reentry. These resources not only prepare students for the West Virginia General Summative Assessment in spring 2021 but also provide information and reporting that educators can use to make informed decisions about instructional practices during the school year

English Language Arts and Math Computer Adaptive Comprehensive Interim Assessments (CA-CIAs)
» Computer adaptive, quasi-secure comprehensive interim assessments that replace the computer adaptive, highly secure (Policy 2340 training required) Classroom Benchmark Assessments (CBAs), have the same test blueprint as the WVGSA, and report group and individual student data on content standard mastery. Fixed Form Comprehensive Interim Assessments (FF-CIAs)
» Fixed form, quasi-secure comprehensive interim assessments that have the same test blueprint as the WVGSA and report group and individual student data on content standard mastery. While the fixed form test does not provide the preferred level of student performance data as the CA-CIA, it can be accessed in the Teacher Item Previewer and offers item-level data.

Interim Module Assessments (IMAs)
» Short module tests that assess clusters of related content standards and measure student progress throughout the year. Diagnostic Assessments (DIAs)
» Short tests, written by West Virginia educators, that assess clusters of related content standards and measure student progress throughout the year written.

Science Interim Assessments (SIAs)
» Grade-band, cluster tests that assess clusters of related content standards in Elementary and Middle School Science and measure student progress throughout the year.

Additional Assessment Resources

Teacher Item Previewer
- » Allows teachers to preview and review the FF-CIA, IMAs, DIAs, and SIAs using a computer and/or projector

Interim Resources Website
- » Provides resources for teachers, including documents, guides, and information related to the WVGSA and interim assessments

WV PEAKS Team site
- » Provides PowerPoints, videos and quick guides that can be used for professional learning related to assessment tools

MetaMetrics Lexile and Quantile Hub
- » Provides resources available to assist educators, students and parents/guardians to address differing instructional needs of students

For more information about state tools for assessment, contact Dr. Vaughn Rhudy, Executive Director, Office of Assessment, at *vrhudy@k12.wv.us* .

Section 3: Pre-K through Grade 5 Professional Learning

Training for Families

"Families and Students" COVID-19 Resources
https://wvde.us/covid19/resources/
Families can use these digital and screen-free resources to support their children while at home during the response to the coronavirus.

PBS Education Station
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2q3Wbz7wKWU2NZ3WoLFHiPdB_6IF-KJ2
Thanks to a partnership with the WVDE and PBS, families can tune in Monday through Friday at 9:00 AM to watch Education Station which is filled with informative segments from educators across the state. Periodic parent editions provide specific support to parents working with their children at home. Previous episodes can be viewed at the website above.

West Virginia Blue Ribbon Book Club
https://wvde.us/wv-blue-ribbon-book-club/
To assist with children's emerging literacy development and in response to the COVID-19 emergency, the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) has established the West Virginia Blue Ribbon Book Club. This project is the result of a collaboration between the WVDE, Marshall University's June Harless Center, and The Dollywood Foundation to provide a small library of high-quality children's books to all children in the first and second grades for the 2020-2021 school year. First and second grade educators will receive the same books to supplement their classroom libraries.

Visit the link above for more family resources including videos of the books read aloud by educators from West Virginia; a PDF guide for conversation starters, activities and related texts; a "Read and Discuss" video with text-related questions; and speech and language activities to do as a family.

Educator Professional Learning Opportunities

Re-entry into school during the 2020-2021 school year is a challenging prospect because there are more variables affecting how to provide the most sustainable plan for an optimum education. As the start date of the new school year gets closer, superintendents around the state are convening committees to plan for the new academic year. Given the unprecedented nature of the pandemic, superintendents are seeking resources and guidance for developing re-entry plans. Developing intentional options will help ensure children are served in the safest and most meaningful ways possible. This year will not look like any other year. County school districts will have to re-think and retool the workforce to meet the rapidly changing landscape of the COVID-19 Crisis.

Best practices for professional learning do not change regardless of how school re-entry in the fall looks, however what professional learning opportunities county school systems offer will look very different than a traditional school year. In order to move forward, leaders must determine the capacity of their educators and staffs and begin to prioritize where professional learning must focus. The following information can be used as a guide when outlining the structure of future professional learning efforts.

The West Virginia Department of Education is providing the following resources to help instructional leaders as they plan for preparing educators for reentry into school during the 2020-2021 academic school year.

English-Language Arts

Leaders of Literacy Podcast *https://wvde.us/leaders-of-literacy-podcasts/*

» This podcast is available on many platforms including Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, Stitcher, and many more! In this podcast, early literacy specialists from the June Harless Center along with coordinators from the Office of Early and Elementary Learning talk with each other and guests about the four components of the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading: school readiness, attendance, extended learning, and high-quality instruction. Special educator episodes responding to COVID-19 are now available.

Campaign for Grade-Level Reading Professional Learning Request
https://wvde.us/early-and-elementary-learning/wv-leaders-of-literacy-campaign-for-grade-level-reading/campaign-for-grade-level-reading-professional-learning-request/

» The June Harless Center's early literacy specialists provide a menu of services to districts and schools in West Virginia. The request form can be used to begin a conversation about planning professional learning experiences for teachers on relevant topics for that audience. Topics include the science of reading, developmentally appropriate kindergarten practices, and differentiated instruction.

West Virginia Blue Ribbon Book Club Educator Resources
https://wvde.us/wv-blue-ribbon-book-club/

» To assist with children's emerging literacy development and in response to the COVID-19 emergency, the West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE) has established the West Virginia Blue Ribbon Book Club. This project is the result of a collaboration between the WVDE, Marshall University's June Harless Center, and The Dollywood Foundation to provide a small library of high-quality children's books to all children in the first and second grades for the 2020-2021 school year. First and second grade educators will receive the same books to supplement their classroom libraries.

Visit the link above to view resources educators can use to engage students during the next school year with the familiar texts they read over the summer.

Mathematics

math4life Virtual Summit

» The math4life Virtual Summit was delivered through the Microsoft Teams platform in July 2020. All sessions were recorded and available on the WV math4life website. Topics included, but were not limited to:
  › *math4life updates for counties*
  › *Discussions regarding reentry*
  › *Writing in Math*
  › *SREB Modules*
  › *Math Assessment Updates*
  › *Number Talks Fractions, Decimals, and Percentages*

Resources for Mathematics and more information about *math4life*: *https://wvde.us/math4life/*

ASSET

» Radford University's ASSET program provides FREE self-paced, competency-based, online professional development to help rural teachers meet the needs of all students in today's increasingly challenging classrooms. *https://www.radford.edu/content/impact/asset.html*

Other professional learning options

WV Learns Resources

» WVLearns Information: *https://wvde.state.wv.us/elearning/*
» WVDE registration page: *https://wveis.k12.wv.us/registration/*
» WVLearns course location: *http://wvlearns.k12.wv.us*

West Virginia Instructional Support Professional Learning Forum

» The WVDE Division of Teaching and Learning and collaborative partners provided the West Virginia Instructional Support Professional Learning Forum in early August 2020 for West Virginia educators and administrators. These sessions were recorded and are available on the WVDE website. Many sessions were geared toward grades pre-k through 5. Topics included, but were not limited to:
   › *Creating a Warm, Engaging Remote Classroom*
   › *Virtual Professional Learning Communities*
   › *Learning to Read Remotely*
   › *Conducting Effective Number Talks in the Classroom Remotely*

Supporting the Whole Child for Grades Pre-K—5: Vertical Teaming Exercises and Reflections to Identify and Focus on Prerequisite Skills and Concepts

» This vertical teaming exercise allows teachers to review the prerequisite skills and concepts students need to be successful in the next grade level. This tool contains questions to consider that can be used as a conversation guide for the sending and receiving teachers as students transition back into schools after the school closure related to COVID-19. Click on the link to access this resource: *Supporting the Whole Child: Identifying Prioritized Skills and Concepts Vertical Teaming and Reflective Exercise*

West Virginia Tiered System of Support (WVTSS)

» Resources including an overview document and a website hub are currently being developed to support teachers with academic, behavioral, and mental health supports for all learners. Click on the link to access this resource: *West Virginia Tiered System of Support (WVTSS)*

WVDE Educator Hub *https://wvde.us/covid19/wv-educators-hub/*

» West Virginia educators have shared resources that were helpful during their response to the coronavirus outbreak. The Office of Early and Elementary Learning have vetted and then shared these resources on the website above.

WVDE Curated Professional Resources for Educators
https://wvde.us/wvde-curated-resources-for-educators-elementary/

» This collection of professional learning resources can be used by educators on-demand. Resources were collected by the Office of Early and Elementary Learning and are hosted by many different organizations including NAEYC, PALS, Stanford, SREB and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. Links on the website above will take you directly to the professional resource.

Educator Chats *https://wvde.us/early-and-elementary-learning/educator-chats-through-teams/*
- » The Office of Early and Elementary Learning held weekly chats with preschool through fifth grade educators across the state using Microsoft Teams. The chats provided teachers with WVDE updates, messages from the superintendent, interviews with educators, technology tips and tutorials, and information about how to get involved and share ideas. All chats have been recorded and are available to view on the website above.

Virtual Office 365 Trainings *http://wvde.us/office365*
- » Brief recorded video tutorials and updates on all things Office 365 including Microsoft Teams, Sway, OneDrive, OneNote, and many more. Requests for specific Office 365 classes can be made at the website above.

Section 4: Extended Learning Opportunities and Partnerships

Research suggests that regular participation in programs that provide academic and social activities contributes positively to children's academic and social development. A meta-analysis of afterschool programs that focused on personal and social development found that the programs did, in fact, have a positive impact on students' grades, academic achievement, and self-esteem (Durlack & Weissberg, 2007). Extended learning programs are more likely to exhibit high quality when they effectively develop, utilize, and leverage partnerships with a variety of stakeholders like families, schools, and communities (Little, Wimer & Weiss, 2008).

Work with Communities to Provide Supports Outside the Classroom Setting

» Public libraries
» Mobile feed and reads: Grants are available to create mobile feed and reads, particularly for students who attend high-poverty and low-performing schools. Learning and literacy programs and other educational services are provided to families through the mobile unit. Mobile feed and reads also serve children lunch and may offer non-perishables for families to take home and prepare for meals after visiting the mobile feed and read site.

Work with Other Agencies to Provide Supports Outside the Classroom Setting

» *Read Aloud WV* believes that schools cannot bear the sole responsibility for raising readers. This organization can help to raise awareness about the importance of reading to children from infancy into adolescence. Read Aloud WV also helps to put books and magazines in the hands of students through a variety of programs.
» *WVU Extension Service* experts are located in every county in West Virginia, ready to offer research-based knowledge, tips and education to support communities.

References

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). (October 2016). AAP announces new recommendations for children's media use. Retrieved on June 4, 2020 from *https://www.healthychildren.org/English/news/Pages/AAP-Announces-New-Recommendations-for-Childrens-Media-Use.aspx*.

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). (June 2020). COVID-19 Planning Considerations for School Reentry. Retrieved on July 7, 2020 from *https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/clinical-guidance/covid-19-planning-considerations-return-to-in-person-education-in-schools/*.

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) (2020). *The learning compact renewed: whole child for the whole world.* Accessed on June 4, 2020 from *file:///C:/Users/jbock/Desktop/2020-whole-child-network-learning-compact-renewed.pdf*.

Bartlett, J.D. & Vivrette, R. (April 3, 2020). *Ways to promote children's resilience to the COVID-19 pandemic.* Retrieved June 4, 2020 from *https://www.childtrends.org/publications/ways-to-promote-childrens-resilience-to-the-covid-19-pandemic*.

Center for Disease Control. (2020). Childcare, schools, and youth programs. Retrieved July 16, 2020 from *https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/guidance-for-schools.html*.

Center for Disease Control. (2020). Schools and childcare programs: Plan, prepare, and respond. Retrieved July 27, 2020 from *https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html*.

Durlak, R., & Weissberg, R. (2007). *The impact of after-school programs that promote personal and social skills.* Chicago: CASEL.

Hanover Research. (2020a, June 11). Academic Equity Workbook.

Hanover Research. (2020b, June 22). How to succeed in distance learning: 5 tips for families.

Little, P. M.D., Wimer, C. , & Weiss, H. B. (2008, February). *After school programs in the 21st century: Their potential and what it takes to achieve it. Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation Brief* No. 10. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). (2020). *3 core considerations of DAP.* Retrieved June 3, 2020 from *https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/dap/3-core-considerations*.

National Association for the Education of Young Children & Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at St. Vincent College. (2012). *Joint position statement: technology in early Childhood Programs Service children from birth through age 8.* Retrieved June 4, 2020 from *http://www.naeyc.org/files/naeyc/file/positions/PS_technology_WEB2.pdf*

Oklahoma State Department of Education. (2020). Engaging families to support distance learning during COVID-19 school closures. Retrieved June 5, 2020 from *https://sde.ok.gov/sites/default/files/Engaging-Families-to-Support-Distance-Learning.pdf*.

Reich, J., et.al. (2020). Remote learning guidance from state education agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic: A first look. Accessed June 2, 2020 from osf.io/k6zxy/

Schlosser, L. (2015). *Transition by design: The power of vertical teams*. Association for Middle Level Education. *https://www.amle.org/Browsebytopic/whatsnew/wndet/tabld/270/artMID/888/articleID/501/Transition-by-design-the-power-of-vertical-teams.aspx*.

Tennessee Department of Education. (2020). Early Childhood School Reopening Kit. Accessed July 21, 2020 from *https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/health-&-safety/Early%20Childhood.pdf*

The Wing Institute. (2020). Multitiered system of support. Accessed June 4, 2020 from *https://winginstitute.org/school-programs-multi-tiered-systems*.

West Virginia Board of Education. (2020). Policy 2510: Assuring the quality of education programs. Accessed June 5, 2020 from *http://wvde.state.wv.us/policies/*.