

Planning for the Next Normal at School

Keeping students, staff, teachers, and families safe and healthy

Playbook version 3.0

Updated July 23, 2021



Introduction and purpose

The COVID-19 pandemic laid bare how much children and families depend on schools, not just as sites for quality education and supervision, but also as community anchors for social interaction, emotional support, nutritious meals, and health care.

Schools have consistently faced disproportionate resource allocation depending on how affluent their neighborhoods are, and these challenges have only been exacerbated by COVID-19. School communities are facing unprecedented financial, emotional, and psychological turmoil. We have an opportunity and a responsibility to address these issues head-on as we support schools in preparing for the next normal — to ensure that teachers can do their best teaching and students can do their best learning.

At Kaiser Permanente, we're committed to serving as a valuable partner for health in schools, either in person or through continued virtual learning. We've curated the best thinking and guidance from national experts, and we're dedicated to helping you meet the unique health needs of your schools and communities.



Contributing partners

We are grateful to the following organizations for informing the **Planning for the Next Normal at School** playbook:































































Framework overview

Health dimensions to support healthy learning in your schools

COVID-19 had significant impacts on physical, mental, and social health. Kaiser Permanente has developed this framework to help you think about and address the various health dimensions for students, staff, teachers, and families as you embark on the "next normal" at school.

In this playbook, you'll find guidance for healthy in-person learning environments:



Mental health and well-being

Understand how to assess and improve social-emotional health.



COVID-19 prevention

Make changes that help create a safe teaching and learning environment when school buildings reopen.



Social drivers of health

Manage nonmedical health needs and provide resources to address food security, economic opportunity, housing, transportation, and more.



Physical activity, physical education, and health education

Implement strategies to safely provide physical and health education and activities.



Staff and teacher well-being

Address health considerations specific to adults working in your schools.



Family well-being

Strengthen communication between families and school staff to ensure everyone remains safe and healthy.

This playbook prioritizes considerations of policy, equity, family and community engagement, which can all contribute to a safe and healthy learning strategy.





Enhancing mental health and well-being

As we settle into learning in the new normal, students, staff, teachers, and families need ways to process and respond to the impact of this pandemic.

Content developed in partnership with:





Introduction | ENHANCING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

COVID-19 had a significant impact on the mental health and well-being of students, educators, and families. Disruptions in social connections, increased stress, and reduced access to learning supports, meals and safe environments all contribute to poor social-emotional health. Because of this, mental health and well-being should be a top priority for school leaders. With the right preparation, a healthy, supportive school environment for students, teachers and staff is attainable and sustainable.

This Planning for the Next Normal at School checklist focuses on Mental Health and Well-being, including:

- Guidance on the mental health challenges your students might be facing
- Recommendations on how to address the mental health and well-being of staff and teachers
- A framework to support the mental health of your students, staff, and teachers

Use these 5 starter plays to lay the groundwork for supportive school spaces for students, staff, teachers and families.

5 starter plays for enhancing mental health and well-being



1. Communitybuilding activities

- Conduct daily morning meetings.
- Find time for staff, student, and family check-ins.
- Identify opportunities for peer learning (for example, lessons designed to provide ways for students to learn and work together).



2. Trauma-informed training

- Provide staff and teachers with professional learning opportunities.
- Review and revise school policies and procedures to be more trauma-informed.
- Create opportunities for staff to observe each other and provide feedback.



3. Open discussions on environmental stressors

- Build in time to practice new routines (for example, teaching handwashing, no-touch practices, and virtual high-fives).
- Build in time during the day to allow students to express and process emotions.
- Engage in <u>curricular</u>
 <u>opportunities</u> that promote
 equity, diversity, and
 inclusion.



4. Social-emotional skill building

- Build in time during the day for connecting and building relationships.
- Introduce <u>coping strategies</u> that students can apply to those experiences.
- Integrate practices that promote social-emotional skills (for example, "mindful minutes" in between activities).
- Provide a <u>calming space</u> or set of strategies for students to de-stress.



5. Mental health support services

- Create a <u>process</u> to identify students who are struggling with mental health.
- Ensure all staff understand how to <u>refer</u> students for additional resources and support.
- Create easy <u>pathways</u> for accessing mental health resources (such as regular classroom visits by mental health staff or passes to access counseling).
- Create a process for families and school staff to collaborate on and share <u>student support plans</u> and resources.





Additional district and school administrator resources

The resources below can help schools and districts strengthen and expand their approach to supporting mental health and well-being.

- Kaiser Permanente
 - Resilience in School Environments: Understanding and Practice (RISE UP) virtual workshop for teachers, staff, and administrators
 - Ready, Set, RISE: Building Resilient School Communities
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation
 - Me Moments Hub
 - Building a Caring School Community
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
 - SEL in Homes and Communities
 - CASEL Resource Center for School Districts
 - CASEL Resource Center for Schools

- National Conference of State Legislators
 - Boosting Social and Emotional Development In and Out of School
- ChangeLab Solutions
 - Blueprint for Changemakers Achieving Health Equity Through Law & Policy
- School Based Health Alliance
 - Tips and Tools for Leveraging Trauma-informed Care Techniques to Reduce Stress for Students, Teachers and Providers
 - Building Trauma-Sensitive Environments



Enhancing your COVID-19 prevention strategy

As schools reopen and continue learning, developing a COVID-19 prevention strategy is essential to keeping your students, staff, teachers, and families healthy and safe.

Content developed in partnership with:

HEALTHY SCHOOLSCAMPAIGN



Introduction | ENHANCING YOUR COVID-19 PREVENTION STRATEGY

Districts and schools — as well as the staff, teachers, and students who attend them —play a critical role in COVID-19 prevention. Guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides recommendations for schools across the country to operate safely through consistent use of prevention strategies. Key to the successful implementation of these strategies is the development and implementation of plans that involve teachers, staff, and families. By engaging these key individuals in your decision-making related to developing your prevention plan, you'll help promote better health across your school environments.

This playbook is intended to serve as a companion guide that builds upon, and doesn't duplicate, the guidance offered by the CDC and other departments of public health for reopening schools and providing in-person instruction safely.

This Planning for the Next Normal at School checklist focuses on Covid-19 Prevention Strategies, including:

- Insights on the social and economic challenges brought about by COVID-19
- Recommendations on how to enhance a COVID-19 prevention strategy
- A framework to help mitigate the spread of the coronavirus

These 5 starter plays to build on <u>CDC guidance</u> and implement an enhanced prevention strategy that's continually supported by students, staff, teachers, and families.



5 starter plays for enhancing your COVID-19 prevention strategy



1. Provide staff and teachers with training opportunities

- Train staff and teachers on policies and procedures and how to discuss them with students and families.
- Educate yourself, and then your staff, <u>about COVID-19</u> <u>transmission</u>, symptoms, and effects on local communities.
- Speak with staff and teachers about employee sanitation and train them on how to establish physical space in classrooms and hallways.
- Use <u>data on attendance</u>, student engagement, student health records, and public health data to identify student support opportunities.
- Establish a process for raising questions and sharing feedback about COVID-19 policy changes.



2. Take advantage of your staff's expertise in health and wellness

- Plan and implement COVID-19 prevention strategies in partnership with school staff, such as nurses and other specialized instructional support personnel (SISP) health and physical education teachers, and custodial staff.
- Develop plans for supporting populations at high risk for COVID-19.
- Work with facility and maintenance staff to make sure proper air ventilation, filtration, and cleaning and disinfecting procedures are in place.



3. Engage students' families to help develop and implement your prevention strategy

- Seek family input in your school's reopening and operating plans and conduct surveys and virtual town halls to collect ongoing feedback.
- Inform families about when to send their children to school, safety protocols, and who to contact with questions or concerns.
- Communicate what's required for students to return to school, like well-child visits, immunizations, screenings, and testing.
- Share resources to help families speak with their children about COVID-19 and inform them about available school programs and services.



4. Work with community partners and agencies to develop and implement your prevention strategy

- Designate a point of contact on school staff to be a liaison with local public health agencies and ensure up-to-date COVID-19 information is available to share.
- Work with local public health agencies, health care providers, and community-based organizations to provide resources and support.
- Engage with local and state decision-making authorities to share successes and challenges that can inform future policymaking.
- Partner with culturally specific organizations to develop outreach materials for families.



5. Destigmatize COVID-19

- Uphold your <u>students'</u> <u>civil rights</u> by preventing bullying, harassment, and racist behavior.
- Implement <u>absenteeism</u>
 <u>strategies</u> to ensure students and families feel supported and engaged in the school community.
- Implement strategies that recognize the different lived experiences of families and how COVID-19 has affected their lives.
- Disseminate information on COVID vaccines for families and school staff.



Additional district and school administrator resources

- <u>Guidance for Schools and Child Care Programs</u> (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention): Guidance and resources on how to plan, prepare and respond to COVID-19.
- <u>ED COVID-19 Handbook: Strategies for Safely Reopening</u>
 <u>Elementary and Secondary Schools</u> (Volume 1) (U.S. Department of Education): The first volume of a series intended to support the education community as schools reopen and in implementing CDC's Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools Through Phased Prevention by addressing common challenges and providing practical examples.
- <u>ED COVID-19 Handbook: Roadmap to Reopening Safely and Meeting All Students' Needs</u> (Volume 2) (U.S. Department of Education): The second volume of a series intended to support the education community as schools reopen. This handbook offers initial strategies for providing equitable and adequate education opportunities that address the impact of COVID-19 on students, educators and staff.
- <u>Safer Schools and Campuses Best Practices Clearinghouse</u> (U.S. Department of Education): The clearinghouse provides resources for communities, schools, educators, and families to support reopening for in-person learning and support the needs of all students, particularly historically underserved students and those who have been impacted greatest by the pandemic.

- <u>COVID-19 Planning Considerations: Guidance for School Reentry</u> (American Academy of Pediatrics): Guidance on reopening schools after COVID-19, including considerations for instructional time, physical and mental health, special populations, and more.
- <u>COVID-19 Resource Hub</u> (American Federation of Teachers): A curated list of COVID-19 resources.
- <u>California COVID-19 Toolkit</u> (State of California): Includes videos and other tools in multiple languages about state and local resources available to support the health, safety, and well-being of all Californians.
- <u>Coronavirus Disease 2019 Resources</u> (National Association of School Nurses): A variety of valuable resources from the CDC and other groups for school nurses.
- <u>COVID-19 Resources</u> (School-Based Health Alliance): A curated list of COVID-19 resources.



Affecting the social drivers of health

Understanding the social drivers that impact the health of your students, staff, teachers, and families will play a crucial role in supporting your community this school year.

Content developed in partnership with:





Introduction | AFFECTING THE SOCIAL DRIVERS OF HEALTH

Social drivers of health are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, learn, work and age. The COVID-19 pandemic reinforced how difficult it is for many community members to get what they need to be healthy. Disruptions in housing, food security, economic stability and healthcare access increased during the pandemic. This is particularly true for communities of color, where existing disparities widened due to the impact of structural racism on living conditions, economic factors and health access.

School systems can serve as a safe and trusted partner to connect students, staff, and families to resources, ensuring they have enough food to eat, safe places to live, and connections to other community services. By identifying and addressing social drivers of health for students and families, schools can help their communities rebuild with even greater strength, resiliency, and unity.

This Planning for the Next Normal at School checklist focuses on Covid-19's effect on the social drivers of health, including:

- · Identification and understanding of the social drivers of health in your school community
- Cultivation of a network of support so your students, staff, teachers and families can connect to vital resources

Use these 5 starter plays to lay the groundwork for supportive school spaces for students, staff, teachers and families.

Social drivers of health are the conditions in which people are:

- Born
- Grow
- Live
- Learn
- Work
- Age

5 starter plays for affecting the social drivers of health



1. Begin to address the impact of institutional racism on education and health

- Seek out partners in equity, diversity, and inclusion to provide resources and training for all school staff.
- Build authentic relationships with formal and informal leaders of color from your community.



2. Connect your community to resources for food security

- Widely distribute food access information to families.
- Consider working directly with a local food pantry.
- Help ensure that eligible families receive Pandemic EBT.
- Work with local health and human services agencies to support applications for SNAP and WIC.
- Coordinate applications for free or reduced-cost meals or universal meal programs.
- Identify resources for families who may be ineligible for federal assistance due to immigration status or other factors.



3. Work with local health and human services agencies to support families enrolling in Medicaid or CHIP

- Check to see if your state is eligible for Medicaid reimbursement for school-based health services.
- Educate families about who qualifies for Medicaid's free or low-cost medical benefits: eligible adults with a low income, children, pregnant women, people who are 65 or over, and people with disabilities.
- Inform families that if income is too high for Medicaid, a child may still qualify for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). It covers medical and dental care for uninsured children and teens up to age 19.



4. Connect families or staff experiencing homelessness to housing resources

- Identify local opportunities for students and families experiencing homelessness and housing instability, like your local HUD office, the local Public Housing Authority, or an affordable housing locator.
- Create opportunities for your McKinney-Vento liaison to educate parents, staff, and students.



5. Connect families and staff to programs and organizations that support financial security

- Encourage families to take
 the benefits.gov survey to find
 government benefits they may
 be eligible to receive.
- Work with job development, skills training, and employment programs, such as the U.S.

 Department of Labor and Goodwill Industries.
- Co-host interview skill building, ESOL classes, or other workshops to support families and staff in achieving living-wage employment.

Additional district and school administrator resources

- Advancing Health Equity: Addressing the Role of Structural Racism
- McKinney-Vento Act
- Blueprint for Changemakers: Achieving health equity through law & policy
- School-Based Health Alliance
 - Youth Safety Net Project
 - A Conversation on Racial Inequalities and the Youth Perspective
 - Addressing Challenges for Youth Experiencing Homelessness During COVID
- American Academy of Pediatrics
 - The EveryONE Project Toolkit

Implementing physical activity, physical education, and health education

With schools in session, continuing physical activity, physical education, and health education will be essential in providing a well-rounded program.

Content developed in partnership with:





Introduction IMPLEMENTING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, PHYSICAL EDUCATION, AND **HEALTH EDUCATION**

As school communities prepare for a new school year, education leaders are tasked with supporting students' mental, social, emotional, and physical health and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their health and well-being. While educational environments shift towards a focus on recovery, physical activity, physical education, and health education must remain vital components to a well-rounded education and a student's whole health.

Physical activity, physical education, and health education should continue to hold a place in any models of learning that school leaders build as they rethink their educational environment. With the right context and guidance, school staff and teachers can provide students with the physical activity and physical education they need to stay active and healthy in our next normal. The need for students to develop the skills necessary to engage in healthy behaviors, which are taught through comprehensive health education, also takes on a whole new meaning as school's work to recover from this global health crisis.

This Planning for the Next Normal at School checklist focuses on physical activity, physical education, and health education, including:

- Guidance on the physical activity, physical education, and health education challenges your students might be facing
- Recommendations on how to provide physical activity, physical education, and health education for all students, families, and staff

Use these 5 starter plays to lay the groundwork for developing a safer physical activity, physical education, and health education program.





5 starter plays for implementing physical activity, physical education, and health education



1. Require physical education and health education instruction

- Ensure inclusion of health education (HE) and physical education (PE) instruction time in the master school schedule. Don't allow waivers for either.
- PE and HE teachers should conduct student surveys to understand students' experiences during COVID-19 and to design equitable and appropriate learning experiences that build meaningful relationships with students and families.
- Include students with disabilities in both in-person and virtual PE instruction. Adapt teaching strategies, equipment, environments, and assessments to meet the needs of all students.



2. Make necessary adaptations to instruction

- Focus on reconnecting with students, building relationships, and setting expectations for the school year as both teachers and students return to in-person learning.
- Ensure proper cleaning and disinfecting protocols are followed when using physical activity equipment or other classroom materials.
- Use a <u>skills-based framework</u> for health education instruction with a focus on health decisions, health information, and coping skills.
- Provide opportunities for meaningful physical activity by utilizing the assets of your community, offering student choice, and providing modifications as needed.



3. Provide professional development

- Train HE and PE teachers in equity, racial justice trauma-informed practices, social and emotional learning, and other schoolwide priorities.
- Train HE and PE teachers in best practices, curriculum, appropriate instruction, and student assessment in health education and physical education.
- Ensure that HE and PE teachers receive sufficient support, funding, and professional development to make necessary adaptations to their curriculums.
- Train all teachers on the benefits of integrating physical activity into class periods and throughout the school day.



4. Offer recess for all grade levels

- Utilize multiple locations for recess throughout the school and outside to allow maximum opportunities for recess periods for all students.
- Ensure sufficient adult supervision by trained recess supervisors.
- Ensure regular inspection of play structures or play equipment for safety and cleanliness and provide adequate equipment for all students to participate.
- All teachers should incorporate physical activity within their class time to allow breaks from seat and screen time.



5. Offer physical activity throughout the school day

- Provide all teachers with guidance, resources, and examples of classroombased physical activities that can be used to safely increase student engagement, build community within the classroom, and reestablish rapport between students and teachers.
- Increase the emphasis on incorporating physical activity during transitions, the beginning of the school day, and the closing of the school day.
- Provide students and caregivers with daily <u>activities</u> to stay physically active and mentally healthy at home.
- Don't withhold physical activity breaks or require physical activities as disciplinary actions for students.





Additional district and school administrator resources

- SHAPE America
 - School Reentry Considerations: K-12 Physical Education, Health Education, and Physical Activity
 - Essential Components of Physical Education
 - Essential Components of Health Education
 - Physical Education Program Checklist
 - Health Education Program Checklist
 - Strategies for Recess
 - Appropriate Practices in School-Based Health Education
- Global Recess Alliance
 - Statement on Recess

- Springboard for Active Schools
 - Strategies for Classroom Physical Activity
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
 - An Initial Guide to Leveraging the Power of Social and Emotional Learning
- Playworks
 - The Playworks School Reopening Workbook



Enhancing teacher and staff well-being

Supporting your staff's well-being is an essential component to your strategy.

Content developed in partnership with:





Introduction | ENHANCING TEACHER AND STAFF WELL-BEING

Staff and teachers play a critical role in the lives of our nation's youth. For school and district staff to do their best work, it's important to support their health and well-being — and to do it in a way that honors their unique identities, promotes diversity of thought, and encourages collaboration.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further compounded many challenges of today's educational system both directly and indirectly. In many ways, COVID-19 heaped more stress on an already stressed workforce. In a recent <u>study</u>, one out of four teachers said the planned to leave the profession after the 2020-2021 school year, and 57% reported being seriously concerned about burnout. And since school climate and teaching effectiveness are key drivers of student learning, it's critical to start the school year by considering the working conditions within your school environment and prioritize staff and teacher well-being.

This Planning for the Next Normal at School checklist focuses on Staff and Teacher Well-being, including:

- Guidance on how to support staff and teachers with the various stressors in today's environment.
- Recommendations on how to provide a foundation of support for individuals and groups.
- A framework to help ensure your staff and teachers have the training and resources they need to maintain and support their own well-being.

Use these five starter plays to lay the groundwork for a well-being strategy that prioritizes the health of your staff and teachers.





5 starter plays for enhancing teacher and staff well-being



1. Promote equity and collaboration

- Collaborate with staff, teachers, and local bargaining units on your plans and work duties to ease anxiety and uncertainty.
- Provide professional learning on COVID-19's impact on your school, particularly equity, racial justice, and health access.
- Gather, review, and address feedback on the effectiveness of your plans.



2. Prepare staff

- Provide opportunities for job-specific changes based on what has been learned since the onset of COVID-19.
- Create a caring
 community that helps
 staff and teachers
 express emotions,
 collaborate on solutions,
 and process their
 experiences.
- Develop clear and consistent messages to use throughout your school community.



3. Foster collective resilience

- Build in time during meetings for staff, parents, and caregivers to reconnect.
- Provide opportunities for collaboration and shared decision-making about employee well-being.
- Engage staff and teachers during the workday with well-being activities.



4. Empower personal well-being

- Provide learning opportunities on burnout and stress reduction.
- Allow staff and teachers to schedule breaks to care for their well-being.
- Set clear and realistic expectations for in-person and virtual working hours.
- Promote healthy work routines.



5. Provide resources

- Promote district-sponsored health offerings.
- Review and revise your human resource policies.
- Connect employees to community and financial-planning resources.



Additional district and school administrator resources

- Kaiser Permanente
 - Thriving Schools
 - Thrive at Work
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation
 - Filling Your Cup: Comprehensive Self-Care Strategies
 - RISE Foundational Professional Development
- Kaiser Permanente and Alliance for a Healthier Generation
 - Reset for Readiness Spring '21 Webinar Series:
 - Fostering Individual and Collective Well-Being Through Boundaries
 - Modeling the Path to Self-Regulation for Students Through Me Moments

- Education Week
 - Teachers Are More Likely to Experience Depression Symptoms Than Other Adults
- WestEd
 - Self-Care Strategies for Educators During the Coronavirus Crisis:
 Supporting Personal Social and Emotional Well-Being
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
 - CASEL: SEL Guidance for Reopening (see section about adults)
- School-Based Health Alliance
 - Race, Equity and Inclusion in School-Based Health Care School-Based Health Alliance
 - Tips and Tools for Leveraging Trauma-informed Care Techniques to Reduce Stress for Students, Teachers and Providers – School-Based Health Alliance





Supporting family well-being

Consistent communication between families and school staff is important for building trusted relationships and ensuring that everyone remains safe and healthy.

Content developed in partnership with:





Introduction | SUPPORTING FAMILY WELL-BEING

As families and schools move into the recovery phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, transitioning to in-person learning poses new and significant challenges.

Whether you are a parent, guardian, or caregiver to school-age children, you play a critical role in their health.

Communicating with school leaders and staff is important while navigating the unknowns of this transition. This checklist will help you strengthen communication and relationships with school staff and work together to make sure your children are safe and healthy as schools return to in-person learning.

5 starter plays for supporting family well-being



1. Connect with teachers and staff

- Acknowledge the shared struggle and challenge that this year has been everyone has been doing a ton and we all have the best interests of our kids at heart.
- Find out what your school is doing to ensure student health and safety and engage with families.
- Talk with school staff about your needs and how they can communicate effectively with you.
- Share concerns with staff <u>in a</u> spirit of collaboration.
- If you don't feel comfortable sharing your questions and concerns with school leaders, talk with a trusted teacher, staff member or family liaison



2. Support mental well-being

- Talk with your kids about school as well as their emotional well-being.
- Find out how your school is supporting mental health and collaborate with them on student mental health support plans.
- Share these <u>additional</u> resources on resilience with them.
- Give yourself <u>a break</u> (even if it's just 5 minutes)!



3. Keep your family safe

- Talk to your kids about COVID-19 and their safety.
- Participate in forums about reopening and setting priorities for the new year, as you're able. Your voice matters.
- Prepare for safely restarting school with this helpful checklist.



4. Find support for fundamental needs

- COVID-19 has made it hard for many families to meet basic needs. Take this survey to see if you qualify for assistance.
- Communicate your employment, housing, food, or other needs to school staff or other parents.
 Having a support system is key.
- Talk with other parents and caregivers share resources with them and invite them to share their needs with school staff too.



5. Make time for physical activity

- Advocate for your school to include physical activity in the school day.
- Try these <u>fun activities</u> after school and on the weekends to supplement your school's physical education program.

This playbook is provided for informational purposes and should not be considered comprehensive or definitive instructions for safely reopening your school or school district. As the environment continues to quickly evolve, we encourage you to stay up to date with the guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), your local department of health, and any relevant national and local regulations.

Kaiser Permanente does not necessarily endorse the services mentioned. Any organizations listed are for easy identification only.

