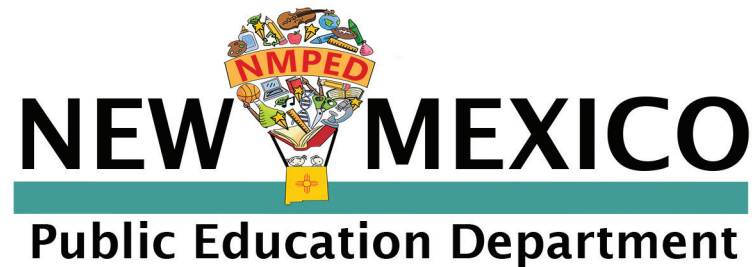




RELEASED NOVEMBER 24, 2020



# NEW MEXICO PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT Reentry Guidance



# Requirements & Recommendations for New Mexico's Schools

The New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) is providing the following guidance to support the state's districts, charter schools, and communities in determining their plans and strategies for reopening schools in 2020–2021.

Our approach is built upon the guidance and recommendations of the New Mexico School Reentry Task Force, New Mexico Medical Advisory Team, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and other research. It is designed to help districts and charter schools prioritize the health and safety of students and educators as they open school buildings and deliver instruction.

Guidance in this report is subject to change given developments and recommendations from federal and state entities. Please visit the websites for the [CDC](#), [State of New Mexico](#) and [New Mexico Department of Health](#) for updates.



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# Introduction

**WE FACE A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS** that has fundamentally changed our lives and our communities in unprecedented ways. For many New Mexican students, educators, and families, the start of the 2020–2021 school year is marked by profound uncertainty and a sense of loss brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the fear and hardship the virus has caused, New Mexicans from all walks of life and all areas of the state have come together in amazing ways and through noteworthy sacrifice to contain the spread of the virus in our state to an incredible degree. This collective effort has “flattened the curve” to initiate the process of reentering our school buildings.

As we move toward welcoming our students back to our campuses, it is critical that all educators, family members, and community members recognize that the need for prudent and proactive measures to prevent the spread of the virus will become more important—not less—to keep our students and communities healthy and safe. It is impossible to avoid all risks of virus transmission in the return to school, but we have the power to greatly minimize the potential for illness if we commit to taking reasonable precautions to contain the virus. This commitment requires steadfast leadership, hard decisions, adaptability and a willingness to challenge notions about how schools function. Reopening schools will require temporary sacrifices of some of

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the events, traditions, and ways of being that we have often taken for granted. This will not be easy, but it will be worth it. While this year will undoubtedly look and feel different than any that has come before, the brilliance, curiosity and resilience of our children will serve as beacons of hope amid ongoing turbulence.

To our indomitable and amazing educators, thank you for all that you have done and continue to do in service of our students. To our critical school staff—including food service workers, bus drivers and bus attendants, custodians, counselors, therapists, nurses, social workers, secretaries, educational assistants, and so many others—welcoming our students back

to campus would not be possible without your daily contributions to ensuring their safety, health, and wellbeing. To our parents, caregivers, and families—our commitment to you is that we will do everything in our power to ensure that your students have a safe, welcoming, and inspiring school experience.

When we look back at the 2020–2021 school year, we will remember this as year zero of the new normal that we created together. May we continue to learn, innovate, and support one another as we boldly forge our path forward. We’re all in this together.

**Ryan Stewart, Ed.L.D.**

*Secretary of Education, State of New Mexico*

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Reentry Guidance is rooted in the following principles:

- Prioritize the health and safety of our students, staff, and communities
- Maximize the amount of safe, in-person learning opportunities
- Make decisions based on science and data



# Requirements for Reentry

NMPED's Reentry Guidance provides requirements, recommendations, and best practices to encourage a safe and successful school year. The following are important minimum requirements for all reentry.

## The following minimum requirements for reentry are:

- 1 To begin, all districts and schools across the state are permitted to operate strictly according to the hybrid model and COVID-Safe Practices if the county meets NMPED and DOH established public health criteria.
- 2 Schools must participate in a surveillance and rapid response testing program for all staff.
- 3 Schools must adhere to the social distancing requirements of their designated category.
- 4 Schools must restrict large group gatherings.
- 5 All PreK and elementary schools must cohort or pod students into distinct small groups that stay together throughout an entire school day during in-person learning. All middle and high schools students may return at a 10:1 or lower ratio.
- 6 Face coverings are required for all students and staff except while eating and drinking, with limited exceptions for students or staff who have been instructed otherwise by a healthcare provider (see [NMPED's COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#)).
- 7 All staff must be screened on a daily basis, including a temperature check and review of COVID-19 symptoms. While not required, this is also recommended for students.
- 8 All sites must work with state and local health officials to create a plan for contact tracing.
- 9 Bus transportation requirements:
  - a. All staff and students must wear face masks
  - b. A maximum of two students may sit together on a bus seat.
  - c. Schools in the yellow category must take all reasonable steps to limit bus seats to one student to the best of their ability.
- 10 Meals must be provided to students during in-person instruction and remote learning.

# Using Data to Drive Decisions



In partnership with Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), the state is utilizing the most up-to-date epidemiological models to assess the current virus threat level.

The state will continually collect and analyze data regarding the spread of the virus, which is essential to ensuring that we can move safely toward in-person learning for all children.



## DEFINITIONS

### FACE COVERINGS



The requirement to wear a mask except while eating and drinking could change as additional data emerges or as the threat of the virus recedes. Information must be provided to staff, students, and families on proper use, removal, and washing of face coverings.

- [CDC Guidance](#)

### HAND SANITIZER



Hand sanitizers must be available and contain at least 60% alcohol and should only be used by staff and older children who can safely apply it. Hand soap should be readily available for use by all children.

- [CDC Hand Hygiene Recommendations](#)

### CLEAN/DISINFECT



Maintain a stringent schedule of daily cleaning and sanitizing. Schools must ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep out of reach of children.

- [CDC Guidance for Cleaning & Disinfecting](#)



# Social Emotional Learning

The Public Education Department prioritizes the safety and social emotional wellbeing of ALL students, staff, and families of New Mexico.

Social emotional wellness, behavioral health, and culturally responsive trauma-informed care need to be front and center and embedded across all of our work. When both students and staff are physically and psychologically safe, they are able to engage in formal, rigorous teaching and learning.

## District/School Considerations:

### Cultural Relevance

- Honor identity and cultural nuances by communicating in multiple, appropriate languages.
- Include curricula that teaches students about diversity and antiracism.

### Relationships

- Create and maintain healthy, caring relationships among and between students and staff by creating a sense of belonging and connection.
- Instruct teachers, educators, and other school staff to set up video calls with students and families during remote learning to conduct interviews and/or do regular check-ins, as well as email students and families.
- Offer opportunities for students to share and process their emotions.
- Support students and staff in adapting to a new normal and in understanding change in traditional school structures.





### Real-time Support

- Recognize and attend to trauma and grief.
- Build infrastructure that allows for screening, care, and connectivity with wraparound services or partners.
- Establish robust, site-based behavioral health support systems and frameworks for check-ins that focus on building healthy coping skills.
- Create systems to monitor students, staff, and families in order to support those who are struggling.



### Remote Learning Integration

- Focus on the sequence and flow of the remote learning content, incorporating pauses and allowing time for students to gather their thoughts and share out.
- Use social emotional programs, groups, and individualized supports to engage students and connect them to tools and resources for remote learning.
- Adopt social emotional learning curriculum that is comprehensive and embedded across instruction, whether in-person instruction, hybrid, or in full remote settings.
- Provide consistency in daily routines to reduce stress and promote positive learning conditions.

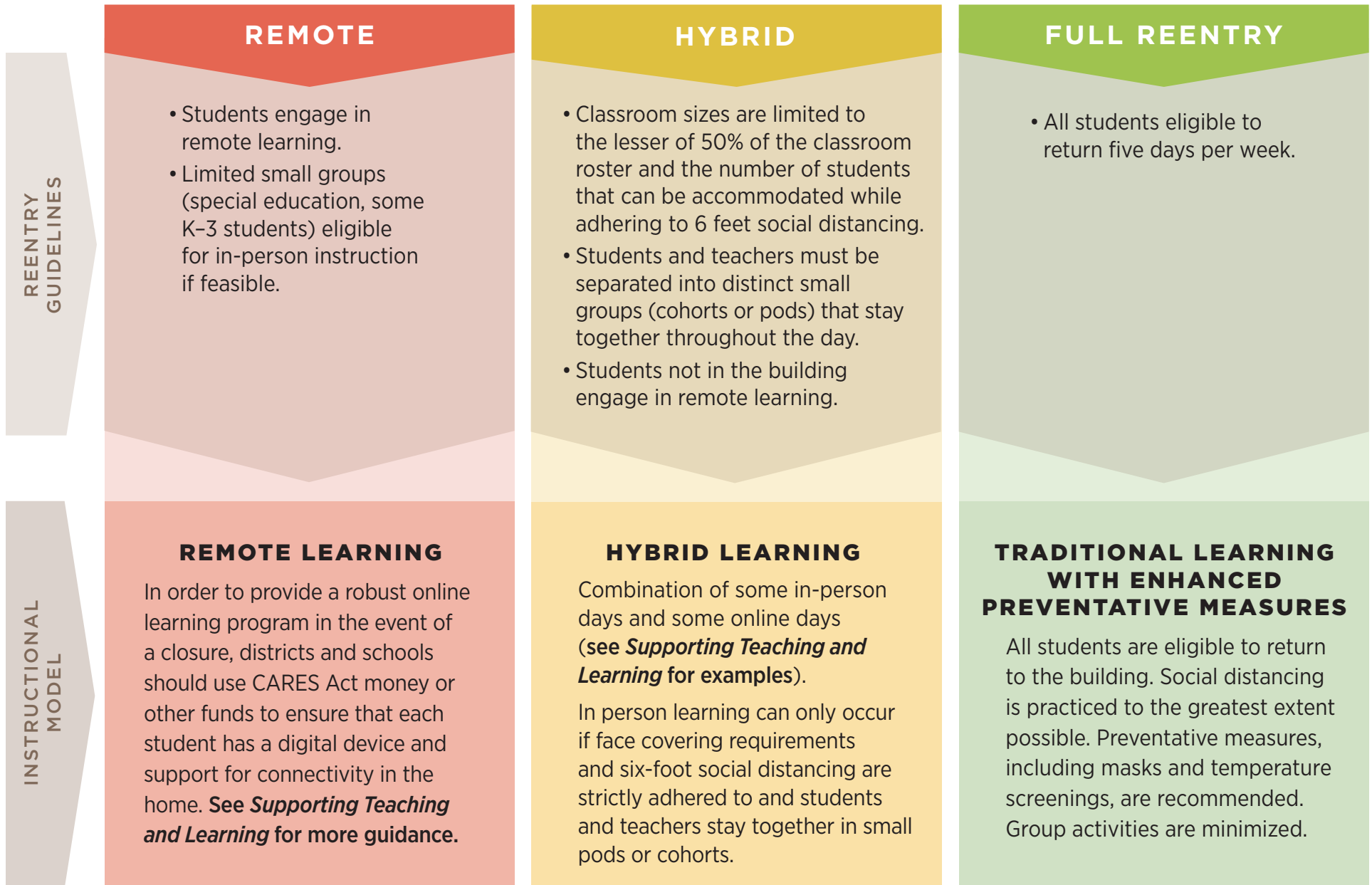


## SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING RESOURCES:

- [School Reentry Considerations: Supporting Student Social and Emotional Learning and Mental and Behavioral Health Amidst COVID-19](#) from the National Association of School Psychologists
- [Social Emotional Learning Guidance to Reopen and Renew your School Community](#) from CASEL
- [Planning for Transitioning Back to School](#) from the Center for Mental Health in Schools at UCLA
- [Building Positive Conditions for Learning at Home](#) from the American Institute of Research
- [Resources for Supporting Children During Crisis](#) from Turnaround for Children
- [Trauma-Informed School Strategies](#) from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network
- [Culturally Sensitive Trauma-Informed Care](#) from the Health Care Toolbox
- [Strategies for Trauma-Informed Distance Learning](#) from WestEd
- [Supporting Mindfulness in Learning](#) from WestEd
- [Supporting Families with PBIS at Home](#) from the Center on Positive Behavior Intervention
- [School Counseling During COVID-19](#) from the American School Counselor Association
- [Resources to Support Social Emotional Learning](#) from the Comprehensive Center Network

# COVID-19 Safe Operating Categories

Each school district and charter school shall follow guidelines for reentry based on the public health conditions.





# General COVID-Safe Practices in K-12 Schools

## REMOTE

- Implement distance/remote learning (see *Serving Meals and Supporting Teaching and Learning*).
- Teachers may enter the building to conduct remote learning if they practice social distancing and need to access materials.
- If feasible, school buildings may remain open for a limited set of students and staff in order to continue in-person educational services for students in PreK–3rd grade and students with special needs at a maximum 5:1 student to teacher ratio.
- Establish and maintain communication with local and state Department of Health (DOH) officials.
- Participate in contact tracing efforts and specimen collection efforts as directed by state and local health officials.
- Close off affected areas and if possible, wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting.

For additional guidance on addressing community spread, see the [CDC's Considerations for Schools](#).

## HYBRID

- Operate with at least six feet of social distancing at all times (see *Transitioning, Group Gatherings, and Supporting Teaching and Learning*).
- Identify small groups and keep them together throughout the day (cohorting or podding)
- Establish and maintain communication with local and state DOH health officials.
- Adhere to face covering and hygiene requirements.
- Participate in contact tracing and specimen collection efforts as directed by local health officials.
- Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Screen all students for COVID-19 symptoms to the greatest extent feasible.
- Educate parents to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep the children home when they are sick.
- Establish a protocol for students/staff who feel ill/experience symptoms when they come to school (see *When a Child, Staff Member, or Visitor Becomes Sick at School*).
- Isolate and deep clean impacted classrooms and spaces.
- Accommodate needs of children, teachers/staff, and families at higher risk for severe illness (see *Protecting High Risk Populations and Supporting At-Risk Students: English Learners, Students who are Economically Disadvantaged, Native American Students, Students with Disabilities, Highly Mobile Students*).

### CDC Guidance:

- [Interim Guidance for Administrators of US K-12 Schools](#)
- [Potential Methods for Screening of Children](#)
- [Potential Methods for Screening of Employees](#)

## FULL REENTRY

- Practice social distancing to the greatest extent possible.
- Adhere to face covering and hygiene requirements.
- Establish and maintain communication with local and state DOH health officials.
- Participate in contact tracing and specimen collection efforts as directed by local health officials.
- Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Establish a protocol for students/staff who feel ill/experience symptoms when they come to school (see *When a Child, Staff Member, or Visitor Becomes Sick at School*).
- Accommodate needs of children, teachers/staff, and families at higher risk for severe illness (see *Protecting High Risk Populations*).





# PRACTICING PREVENTION

## REMOTE

### District/School Considerations:

- Use social media and other communications to inform parents, students, and staff about COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures, good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols.
- Encourage COVID-19 testing and COVID-Safe Practices outside the school.

### CDC Guidance:

- [How to Protect Yourself and Others](#)
- [COVID-19 Symptoms](#)
- [Talking with Children about COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 Self-Checker](#)

### State of New Mexico Guidance:

- [NM Department of Health \(NMDOH\)](#)
- [NM COVID-19 Screening and Testing Sites](#)

### Resources:

- [Emergency Supply Sourcing and Manufacturing](#)
- [Children and COVID FAQs](#)

### New Mexico's COVID-19 Hotline

- Call: 1-855-600-3453

### Non-Health Related COVID-19 Questions

- Call: 1-833-551-0518

### [New Mexico's Crisis and Access Line](#)

- Call: 1-855-662-7474

### New Mexico's Department of Workforce Solutions

- [Information for Workers Affected by COVID-19](#)
- [General contact information](#)

## HYBRID

### District/School Requirements:

- Teach and reinforce good hygiene measures such as handwashing, covering coughs, and appropriate use of face coverings.
- Provide hand soap and hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, paper towels, and no-touch trash cans in all bathrooms, classrooms, and frequently trafficked areas. Ensure hand sanitizer has no methanol.
- Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Clean/disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily and shared objects after each use.
- Provide face masks and face shields and other appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) to staff. Require the wearing of a face covering for all staff and students, unless otherwise instructed by a healthcare provider.
- Allow students and staff to bring hand sanitizer and face masks/coverings to use from home.
- Restrict the use of drinking water fountains and provide bottled water or allow students and staff to bring water bottles from home.
- Ensure ventilation systems operate properly and receive regular maintenance. Increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible. Take immediate actions to assess cooling and heating systems, procure filters with the highest MERV rating compatible with existing school systems, and install the recommended filters as soon as they are delivered to the school site. Take all necessary measures to optimize filtration systems and augment air flow according to the [CDC guidance](#).
- Deep cleaning of schools must occur in between cohort groups and on weekends and school breaks.

### CDC Guidance:

- [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Schools](#)
- [Guidance for Reopening Buildings After Prolonged Shutdown](#)

### EPA Guidance:

- [Disinfecting, Cleaning, and Addressing Water Quality Challenges Related to COVID-19](#)





# PROTECTING HIGH-RISK POPULATIONS<sup>1</sup>

## REMOTE

### District/School Considerations:

- Ensure students, families, teachers and staff are supported while in remote learning.

### Resources:

- [What to Do When Scared Workers Don't Report to Work Due to COVID-19](#)
- [Where can I find government and other reliable resources for workplace issues related to the coronavirus?](#)
- [Role of school nurses, providing care, and participating in return to school planning](#) (National Association for School Nurses)



## HYBRID

- When possible, employ additional nurses, health care aides, and full-time substitute employees.
- Survey high-risk staff members to gauge their intentions in returning to work while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.
- Survey families with high-risk children to gauge their intentions in returning to a traditional school setting, while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the ADA and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.
- Provide remote/distance teaching and learning opportunities for high-risk teacher and student populations in consultation with parents and public health officials. **See the section on Staffing** for further guidance on supporting high-risk staff.
- Allow high-risk students and students choosing a remote learning assignment to complete their coursework virtually.
- Ensure students who opt for a virtual option for the school year have the opportunity to re-enroll in the school that they attended at the onset of the pandemic.
- Adhere to FERPA and HIPPA requirements.
- Adhere to state and federal employment law and extended leave allowances.

## FULL REENTRY

### District/School Requirements:

Implement standard operating procedures while taking preventative measures, such as:

- Establish a Point Person with the local health department.
- Identify local COVID-19 testing sites.
- Provide hand sanitizer for students and staff.
- Allow high-risk students and students choosing a remote learning assignment to complete their coursework virtually.
- Ensure students who opt for a virtual option for the school year have the opportunity to re-enroll in the school that they attended at the onset of the pandemic.

### District/School Considerations:

- Establish a process for regular check-ins with high-risk students and staff.
- Allow an early transition and careful planning for high-risk students to go to classes.
- Avoid large group gatherings/interactions.

<sup>1</sup> As defined by [CDC guidelines](#)







# TRANSPORTING STUDENTS

## REMOTE

While school buildings are closed, buses should be used to deliver meals to students and families.

### **District/School Considerations:**

- If feasible, transport students with disabilities and PreK–3rd grade students who still may be attending on a limited basis.
- Reduce contact by delivering a week's worth of meals during a designated time (ex: delivering a week's worth of meals every Monday).
- Install Wireless Access Points (WAPs) or Hotspots on school buses to provide internet in rural and remote areas for students and families during extended closures.



## HYBRID

### **District/School Requirements:**

- While transporting students to and from schools, require students to sit in spaced and assigned seating according to the following:
  - A maximum of two students may sit together on a bus seat. Align assigned seats to family members or students in pods.
  - Schools in the yellow category must take all reasonable steps to skip rows between students and limit bus seats to one student to the best of their ability, including encouraging parents to drive their children if possible, staggering bus routes, and expanding the minimum radius of eligibility for bus services.
- Assign bus attendants or other additional staff to support with safety and screening of students to the greatest extent possible.
- Provide hand sanitizer for students, bus drivers, and bus attendants.
- Provide face masks for bus drivers and bus attendants.
- Require bus drivers, bus attendants, and students to wear face masks, unless otherwise instructed by a healthcare provider. Face shields may be worn if face masks are medically contraindicated.
- Screen students, bus drivers, and bus attendants for symptoms of illness. Conducting temperature checks on students before they get on the bus is recommended but not required.
- Eliminate field trips and non-essential travel except travel conducted under [NMAA guidelines](#) for sports and extra-curricular activities.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on the bus at least daily.
- Establish protocols for bus stops and loading/unloading students to minimize congregation of children from different households and ensure that students and staff remain at least six feet apart while waiting for transportation.
- Air out buses when not in use.
- Restrict group transportation including carpooling.

### **CDC Guidance:**

- [What Bus Operators Need to Know](#)

## FULL REENTRY



# ENTERING SCHOOL BUILDINGS<sup>2</sup>

## REMOTE

While school buildings are closed, districts/schools should limit in-person staff to those performing functions that are absolutely necessary, such as food service preparation and delivery, cleaning, and sanitation.

### District/School Considerations:

- If feasible, school buildings may remain open for a limited set of students and staff in order to continue in-person educational services for students in grades PreK–3 and students with special needs at a maximum 5:1 student to teacher ratio.
- District/school leaders must remain vigilant and purposeful as they determine roles, responsibilities, and reporting requirements for staff, refraining from blanket reporting requirements.
- District/school leaders should leverage virtual tools and platforms wherever possible to conduct essential business and keep in-person reporting to an absolute minimum during school closures.

## HYBRID

### District/School Requirements:

- Face coverings are required for all students and staff except while eating and drinking, unless otherwise instructed by a healthcare provider.
- All staff must be screened on a daily basis before entering buildings, including a temperature check and review of potential symptoms.
  - Isolate and send home if internal temperature over 100.4°F (38°C).
  - Consider safety and privacy concerns (confidentiality should be maintained).
- All districts/schools must work with state and local health officials to have a plan for contact tracing.
- Screen all students to the extent practicable:
  - Take temperatures ideally before entering buildings.
  - Isolate and send home if internal temperature over 100.4°F (38°C).
  - Consider safety and privacy concerns (confidentiality should be maintained).
- Restrict nonessential visitors and volunteers.
- Establish a protocol for essential visitors: calling front office before entering, screening visitors, requiring use of face coverings/masks, etc.
- Avoid large group gatherings.
- Mark spaced lines to enter the building and designate entrance and exit flow paths.
- Establish a protocol for student pickup/drop-off, such as staggered entry and release (by grade, class, or bus numbers) with marked spacing for pickup.
- Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread of COVID-19.
- Establish a protocol for students/staff who feel ill/experience symptoms when they come to school (see *When a Child, Staff Member, or Visitor Becomes Sick at School*).

### Resources:

- [COVID-19 Screening Checklist for Visitors](#) from the American Health Care Association
- [Coronavirus Warning Poster for Entrances](#) from the Society for Human Resources Management (SHRM)



## FULL REENTRY

<sup>2</sup> School Calendars: Local school districts have authority over school calendars—meaning they have full authority to set start and end dates, holidays/breaks, and school hours, provided instructional requirements are met and provided that the in-person start date occurs per the guidance in this document.



# SERVING MEALS

## REMOTE

### District/School Requirements:

- Establish food distribution sites both at district buildings and at particular bus stops/routes, to the greatest extent practicable.
- Practice established social distancing protocols to the greatest extent practicable.
- Provide PPE to participating staff.

### District/School Considerations:

- Reduce contact by delivering a week's worth of meals during a designated time (ex: delivering a week's worth of meals every Monday).
- Distribute supplemental instructional materials and printed district/school communications along with meals.

### NMPED Guidance:

- [Employee Safety Guidance for School Nutrition Programs](#)

## HYBRID

### District/School Requirements:

- Provide meals to students per remote guidelines for those students who are doing remote learning on any given day.
- Use disposable plates, utensils, etc.

### If serving meals in cafeteria:

- Mark spaced lines to enter the cafeteria and serving lines; designate entrances and exit flow paths.
- Schedule longer meal periods for more staggered meal delivery.
- Maximize social distancing to space seating and utilize outdoor seating as practical and appropriate.
- Ensure that students and staff remain at least 6 feet apart while waiting in line and keep students with their cohort or pod.
- Conduct cleaning of cafeterias and high-touch surfaces throughout the school day.

### If serving meals in classrooms:

- Consider pre-packaged boxes or bags for each student instead of traditional serving lines.
- Avoid sharing of foods and utensils.

## FULL REENTRY







# TRANSITIONING

## REMOTE

### **School buildings are closed.**

- If small groups are meeting, keep cohorts together and minimize transitions.

## HYBRID

### **District/School Requirements:**

- Limit mixing between groups to the greatest extent practicable. Students should stay in cohorts or pods.
- For class changes and other transitions throughout the school day:
  - Provide additional time for transitions.
  - Designate areas of the hallway (i.e. lanes) as flow paths to keep students separated and to minimize congregation of students.
  - Plan staggered class changes (ex: by hall, odd/even room numbers, grade/discipline) to decrease number of students in hallways at one time.
  - Have the same group of students stay with the same staff (all day for young children and as much as feasible for older children).
- Provide supervised mask breaks for small groups of students outdoors, while maintaining more than 6 feet social distancing between individuals.

## FULL REENTRY





# GROUP GATHERINGS

## REMOTE

### School buildings are closed.

- Abide by the maximum number of people allowed to congregate as defined by the current [statewide public health orders](#).

## HYBRID

### District/School Requirements:

- Avoid large group gatherings. Abide by the maximum number of people allowed to congregate as defined by the current [statewide public health orders](#) applicable to your area.
- Discourage the congregation of students in parking lots and common areas.
- Stagger the schedule for group gatherings (i.e. recess and school meals).
- Identify and utilize large spaces (i.e. gymnasiums, auditoriums, outside spaces—as weather permits) for social distancing.
- Work with local officials and partners to identify other community spaces (e.g. rec centers, libraries, unused municipal office spaces, or conferences rooms, churches) in which classes can be convened with maximum social distancing.
- Follow the current [NMAA guidelines](#) for extra-curricular activities and similar congregate events to the greatest extent possible.
- Test all coaches and student athletes for COVID-19 before the competitive season to the greatest extent possible.
- Where possible, hold professional development sessions and staff meetings virtually or in small groups with maximum social distancing.

## FULL REENTRY







# SUPPORTING TEACHING & LEARNING

## REMOTE

## HYBRID

## FULL REENTRY

**Regardless of Category, all districts and charter schools should work to establish an academic baseline:**

- In teams, determine what information staff is most interested in gleaned regarding student skills at the start of the year.
- Determine appropriate formative assessments (provided by district and/or NMPED) to make strategic instructional choices on what content or skills to prioritize.

**NMPED Suggests:**

- [ISIP \(K-2 Math; K-2 ELA/SLA\)](#)
- [iMSSA \(3-8 math & ELA Formative Item Sets math/ELA/science\)](#)
- [iMSSA \(3-8 Interims: BOY math & ELA\)](#)
- [SAT Khan Academy](#) & [SAT Educator SSQB](#) (High School Math and ELA).
- Conduct meetings with teachers to identify where students are academically.
- Use ongoing progress monitoring tools (e.g., formative strategies, High Quality Instructional Materials resources, interim assessments) to inform curricular decision making in the classroom. NMPED guidance and tools are forthcoming and will be posted on the website.

**Maintain High Expectations for all Students:**

- Address skill deficits in context of current grade-level work.
- Identify priority standards to accelerate student learning.
- Use [High Quality, Evidence-based Instructional Materials](#).
- Use [Culturally Responsive Instructional Practices](#).
- Guidance from NMPED on academics including identifying priority standards, continuing grading, and maintaining stronger instructional hours in remote learning given improved systems can be accessed [here](#).





## SUPPORTING TEACHING & LEARNING (CONTINUED)

### REMOTE

- Implement contingency plan for remote learning that encompasses online instruction, distance learning, and/or printed material that is distributed as instructional packets, materials or kits.
- For families with limited at home connections, consider internet accessible areas to download information and assignments (e.g., school parking lot).

#### Resources:

- [New Mexico Broadband Map](#)
- [Digital Learning Plan template \(MDE\)](#)
- [Educator's Guide to Safe and Effective Video Conferencing \(Education Week\)](#)
- [Guidance on Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Remote Education \(NYU\)](#)
- [UNESCO Distance Learning Solutions](#)
- [Standards for Quality Online Teaching \(NSQ\)](#)

#### Professional Learning for Teachers:

- [Guide to Teaching Online Courses \(NEA\)](#)
- [Supporting Students with Disabilities in K-12 Online and Blended Learning \(Michigan Virtual\)](#)

### HYBRID

**Survey families to gauge which students may wish to conduct their schooling remotely in full or in part for the 2020–2021 school year.**

#### Hybrid Instructional Models:

- Local considerations of hybrid model implementation may include:
  - Additional logistical requirements/costs,
  - Day care requirements placed on working families, and
  - Prioritization of students with disabilities, who are at-risk, or PreK–3rd grade. Design staffing models around this prioritization.
- Ensure that students in bilingual programs continue to receive high-quality instruction in both languages.
- Consider leveraging Webex or other broadcasting so that on remote days, students might continue to participate with their peers who are in the building.

#### Possible Hybrid Schedules to Consider:

- A/B schedules.
  - Alternating Days: Group A Students—Monday/Tuesday and Group B Students—Thursday/Friday. Wednesday is remote/distance learning for all students, professional learning for staff, and a day to clean the building. Use certification flexibility to relocate teachers as needed and allowable.
  - Alternating Weeks: Group A Students—Week One and Group B Students—Week Two; using certification flexibility to relocate teachers as needed and allowable.
- Targeted distance/remote learning.
  - Prioritize in-person learning for elementary students by spreading them out across all school buildings. Have secondary students engage in remote learning.
- Schools shall have cohorts attend on consecutive days rather than morning/afternoon or every other day configurations in order to limit group mixing and maximize cleaning between groups.

### FULL REENTRY

#### Target Interventions and Supports:

- Provide additional instructional supports to:
  - Students at risk of not graduating on time.
  - Students with disabilities (compensatory services).
  - Students who struggled in the prior distance/remote learning environment (i.e. early grades, English Learners, etc.).
  - Other students identified as being behind academically by teachers and parents.
- Identify concepts/skills grade levels and provide access to enrichment (fine arts, music, world language, CTE, computer science, AP/IB, dual enrollment, physical education/play, STEM/STEAM, etc.)

#### Extended Learning Opportunities:

- Provide extended learning opportunities through before/after school programs, Saturday school, etc.
- Prepare for potential future distance/remote learning by increasing current blended learning.
- Develop a digital learning plan to integrate virtual learning practices.
  - Digitize lessons.
  - Require a certain number of online assignments for each grading period.
  - Provide virtual learning-specific professional learning for educators.
  - What a [Simple Daily Routine](#) schedule might look like for remote teaching

#### Resources:

- [Return to School Roadmap School Operations](#)
- [Return to School Roadmap Instruction](#)



# SUPPORTING AT-RISK STUDENTS

ENGLISH LEARNERS, STUDENTS WHO ARE ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED,  
NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS, STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, HIGHLY MOBILE STUDENTS

## REMOTE

- Develop learning opportunities that are culturally and linguistically relevant.
- Record online instruction so that students may rewatch.
- Implement small group instruction in order to meet students' individual learning needs.
- Identify and implement relevant formative assessments that may be specific to at-risk student groups to accelerate student learning.
- Ensure synchronous remote learning that includes explicit language practice for English Learners (ELs).
- Provide support at the word, sentence, and discourse levels.
- ELD instruction should continue to be appropriate to the grade level and the English language proficiency level of the students.
- Maintain MOE for Special Education students.
- Consider bringing Special Education students to school for services that are unable to be implemented during distance learning.
- Provide communication in a language families can understand (language assistance must be free).

## HYBRID

- Develop learning opportunities that are culturally and linguistically relevant.
- Prioritize scheduling for ELs, Native American Students and Students with Disabilities.
- Consider Native American Tribes, Pueblos, Nations, and urban Native American organizations' reopening plans, which may differ from state of NM and NMPED guidance.

### **For hybrid learning, consider everything in remote learning, plus:**

- When scheduling, consider length of commute time some rural students have (e.g., full days may be better than half days when distance is an issue).
- Stock extra PPE for students who cannot afford to bring their own face coverings or who forget or lose them.
- Consider allowing special education students to continue in-person instruction as students often rely on daily routines and social interactions to address their individual learning needs.

## FULL REENTRY

- Consider all the regular aspects of schooling, such as designated ELD time and maintenance of effort for special education students.
- Develop learning opportunities that are culturally and linguistically relevant.
- Identify and implement relevant formative assessments that may be specific to at-risk student groups to accelerate student learning.
- Implement small group instruction in order to meet students' individual learning needs.
- Provide high-quality academic language instruction throughout the day; ELD instruction should continue to be appropriate to the grade level and the English language proficiency level of the students ([ELD Instructional Framework](#)).



### **English Learner Resources:**

- [NMPED's Serving ELs Guidance](#)
- [EL Identification in NM](#)
- [Screening and Assessing ELs](#)
- [WIDA Educator Exchange Facebook Group](#)

### **Special Education Resources:**

- [NMPED's Special Education Bureau COVID-19 information and updates](#)
- [NMPED FAQs](#)
- [Q&A, Providing Special Education Services During COVID-19](#)

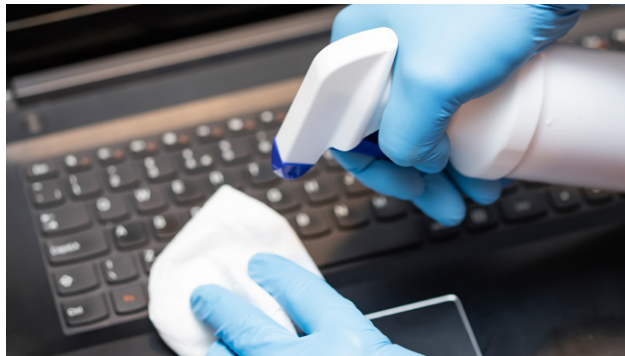
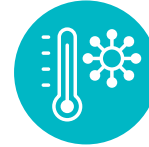
### **Indian Education Resources:**

- [NMPED's guidance document for internet access on Tribal lands](#)
- [NMPED Martinez/Yazzie Readiness Assessment](#)

# When a Child, Staff Member, or Visitor Becomes Sick at School

## District/School Requirements:

- Please see the [NMPED Toolkit for Safety Protocols](#).
- Work with school administrators, school nurses, and other healthcare providers to identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms.
- School nurses and other healthcare providers must use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions when caring for sick people. See [What Healthcare Personnel Should Know About Caring for Patients with Confirmed or Possible COVID-19 Infection](#).
- Establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick home or to a healthcare facility.
- Notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws.
- Close off areas of the school building used by a COVID-19 positive sick person and do not use before cleaning and disinfection. See the [NMPED Toolkit for Safety Protocols](#) that support decisions for closure.
- Wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.
- Advise sick staff members and children not to return until they have met NMDOH criteria to discontinue home isolation.
- Inform those who have had close contact to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and follow NMDOH guidance if symptoms develop. If a person does not have symptoms, follow appropriate NMDOH guidance for home quarantine.
- Contact the NMPED Rapid Response team immediately.



## CDC Guidance

- [Strategies for Protecting K-12 School Staff from COVID-19](#)
- [Symptoms of Coronavirus](#)
- [What Healthcare Personnel Should Know About Caring for Patients with Confirmed or Possible COVID-19 Infection](#)
- [Standard Precautions](#)
- [Transmission-based Precautions](#)





# Partnership

## District/School Considerations:

- School boards and governing councils should review and update policies to ensure they align with reentry requirements. Further, school boards and governing councils should communicate policy changes to families and community stakeholders.
- Communicate plans, options, and changes with families and partners in multiple languages as soon as possible via multiple methods including websites, telephone, radio announcements, smartphone applications, television announcements, email, social media, and text messages.
- Provide families and partners a hotline number to call for consistent and accurate information.
- Ensure organizations that share or use school facilities follow the same considerations and receive the same training as school staff.
- Engage community partners in social distancing, health monitoring practices, and information dissemination.



# Tribal Collaboration

## District/School Considerations:

- Honor sovereignty of Native American Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations.
- Consult with local Tribal and Pueblo leaders, and Tribal Education Departments, on how to best communicate and collaborate with their communities.
- Use relevant, local data with and from Native American Tribes, Pueblos, Nations, and urban Native American organizations when considering reentry and closure plans.
- Collaborate with Tribal governments to address school reopening or school closure decisions.
- Identify a point of contact for each Native American Tribe, Pueblo, Nation, and urban Native American organization to share school information.
- Work with Tribal and Pueblo leaders on unique issues they are faced with in their schools and communities.
- Collaborate with Tribal Education Departments as resources to the education community.
- Follow NMPED guidance on [New Mexico Public Schools on Tribal Lands](#).

## NMPED Resources

- [NMPED's guidance document for internet access on Tribal lands](#)
- [NMPED Martinez/Yazzie Readiness Assessment](#)

# Staffing



## Staff Safety

Employees are expected to follow guidelines in the current [statewide public health order](#). Staff must be trained in local and state rules regarding health and safety procedures such as appropriate use of PPE and what to do if a student or staff member is exhibiting symptoms. The CDC's [How to Protect Yourself and Others](#) may be a useful resource. Please see pages 9–11 for more information on staff safety.

## Staff in High Risk Categories

Schools will need to take into consideration that some teachers and staff will fall into high risk categories because of their age or other health risks. Staff who are considered to be in a high risk group as defined by [CDC guidelines](#) and who request an alternative assignment shall be granted an accommodation in line with NMPED guidelines. All districts and schools must provide notice that alternate work is available to staff who are in the high risk group. In addition, districts and schools should establish a process that includes formal requests to continue working from home. The process should be aligned with the district's or school's Human Resources Department. Because NMPED recommends prioritizing younger children for in-person attendance, high risk educators who work from home may need to teach upper grades and a licensing waiver may be required. **(See the *Educator Licensure* section on the following page for details).** For staff who live with someone who is in a high risk group as defined by [CDC guidelines](#), local board policy should be established and will dictate procedures.

## Adaptive, Flexible Staffing Plans

In order to ensure a strong start to 2020–2021, school leaders should develop adaptive and flexible staffing plans that maximize learning time and enable teachers and students to move seamlessly between in-person and distance learning. We suggest prioritizing in-person education for PreK and elementary students, as these age groups may require childcare and may require more help from family during online learning.

### Some considerations for flexible staffing include:

- Consider assigning elementary school teachers with the same group of students from 2019–2020 so that students experience increased emotional security and educators can maximize instructional time by starting with established relationships and knowledge of students' learning needs.
- Consider learning opportunities that include daily check-ins with students.
- Consider master schedule adjustments for additional instructional time in identified content areas. Consider which content areas most need in-person instruction and which may be better suited to remote learning.
- Some schools may wish to have larger class size during online learning. [Guidance on virtual classroom considerations and class size waivers](#) may be found online. In unionized schools and districts, unions should be consulted.
- Provide centers, such as socially distanced places in the school building, for teachers who don't have a place to work from home.
- Consider how the responsibilities of individual personnel will be covered in the event of illness in order to maintain services and learning opportunities for students.

## Educator Licensing

While there are no changes to educator certification requirements, waivers may be requested in the case that educators in a high risk category may need to work from home and therefore teach in a grade level or subject area for which they are not currently licensed. To request a waiver please send an email to [licensureunit@state.nm.us](mailto:licensureunit@state.nm.us).

## Substitutes

NMPED recommends cross training all Educational Assistants to be licensed Substitutes and all Substitutes to be licensed Education Assistants. The Licensure Bureau will waive the fee for an Educational Assistant to add a Substitute license and for Substitutes to add an Educational Assistant license. If your district has educators who would like to pursue this option, please contact [licensureunit@state.nm.us](mailto:licensureunit@state.nm.us) for next steps. Consider contacting the educator preparation program in your community to see if the program might identify students who could fill these roles while earning credit towards their programs.

## Student Teachers

Student teachers may provide additional support during this time. NMPED suggests partnering with the educator preparation program in your community to think differently about the scope of responsibility of student teachers with their mentor teachers. These student teachers could help their mentor teachers with virtual learning. NMPED also suggests having these student teachers apply for an EA license so they may earn a paycheck while providing these additional supports, per local agreements with the educator preparation programs in your community.

## Leave Policies

Districts/schools are advised to update their leave policies in consideration of the public health emergency. For guidance, please consult with your human resources staff and district/school attorneys, and please see [Families First Coronavirus Response Act and Paid Leave](#) and related [FAQs](#); COVID-19 and the [Family Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#).

## Professional Development/Learning

Remote teaching may be new for some educators, and they will need to be trained on how to deliver instruction via the web. Professional learning should be provided to teachers and educators on designing equitable instruction regardless of whether it is delivered in a virtual or in-person environment. Administrators will need professional learning on assisting, observing, and providing feedback to teachers in an online environment. Induction programs must consider how school closures impact professional learning, mentoring, and coaching for non-tenured teachers. Consider partnering with institutions of higher education to offer courses related to teaching and learning through various delivery models, including teaching in a virtual environment. Link to this webpage for a list of [professional development opportunities](#).

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- [New Mexico Department of Health](#)
- [New Mexico Public Education Department](#)
- [NMPED FAQs](#)



# CHANGES TO THIS DOCUMENT

In general, the Main Reentry Guidance Document 2.0 updates guidance to be requirements and not considerations.

The following are specific areas of change to note.

## **In updating Requirements for Reentry, we have:**

- Noted the importance of specific counties.
- Added requirements around maintaining cohorts for all students.
- Added requirement around contact tracing and rapid response, including direct links to the Toolkit.
- Eliminated the use of face shields as stand-alone options for face coverings.

## **For COVID-19 Safe Operating Categories, we have:**

- Changed requirements for the allowable number of students in an elementary building in the hybrid model.
- Added requirements around maintaining cohorts.

## **Under General COVID-Safe Practices in K-12 Schools, we have:**

- Added requirements around maintaining cohorts.
- Clarified face mask requirements.

## **Under Practicing Prevention, we have:**

- Updated ventilation/air filtration requirements.

## **Under Protecting High Risk Populations, we have:**

- Updated elements under the hybrid and full reentry models to be requirements as opposed to considerations.
- Included requirements for the mandatory provision of online options.
- Included requirements for students to be able to re-enroll in the school that they attended at the onset of the pandemic.

## **Under Transporting Students, we have:**

- Asked districts/schools to skip rows on buses where possible.
- Asked districts/schools to assign bus seats in consideration of student cohorts.
- Required face masks on buses.

## **Under Entering School Buildings we have:**

- Updated face mask guidance.

## **Under Serving Meals, we have:**

- Provided requirements for serving meals in the cafeteria.

## **Under Transitioning, we have:**

- Updated hybrid/full reentry guidance to be requirements and not considerations.
- Added requirements around maintaining cohorts.
- Added consideration for allowing students to take supervised mask breaks.

## **Under Supporting Teaching and Learning, we have:**

- Removed the traditional instructional model option in the hybrid model.
- Linked to existing guidance for using priority standards and accelerated learning models.



The New Mexico Public Education Department would like to thank the Georgia Department of Education for their state exemplar and kind sharing of resources.

### **For more information contact:**

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