

**School Practitioner Community of Practice**  
(A network for sharing & exchange)  
Special Edition (3/21/20)

**>Sharing Information about Resources and Actions**

**>>National School Boards Association guidance on the crisis**

**>>In times of crisis:**

**>>>Taking care of ourselves and our families and friends**

**>>>Continuing to support students and their families**

**>>>Strengthening our communities**

**>>What state departments of education are doing/suggesting**

**>Links to a few other relevant resources**

Note: See <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu> for links to other Center resources.

This resource is from the  
Center for MH in Schools & Student/Learning Supports, UCLA

**Given education budgets, we have been asked to increase our outreach to make our free resources more available (e.g., for planning, professional development, etc.).**

*So please feel free to share with anyone you think might benefit (e.g., forward our resources to individuals and share on listservs and websites).*

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**For those who have been forwarded this and want to receive resources directly, send an email to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)**

**For previous postings of community of practice discussions, see**

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/practitioner.htm>

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**Special Edition:**

**Sharing Information about Resources and Actions**

**>National School Boards Association guidance on the crisis**

<https://www.nsba.org/Resources/coronavirus/legal-guide>

Excerpt from *section on COVID-19: Preparing For Widespread Illness in Your School Community: A Legal Guide for School Leaders* (with special thanks to the National Association of School Nurses (NASN) for its input and collaboration)

Your communities are likely paying attention to media reports of the rising numbers of cases of respiratory illness and deaths caused by a new coronavirus that is now present in the U.S. This guide is intended to inform school district leaders about the federally identified risks associated with this

particular virus and to provide a checklist of issues school leaders should consider as you plan for any such crisis in your community....

- >Determine when school closures are indicated based on a set percentage of staff and student absenteeism as recommended by local and state public health authorities.
- >Establish virtual education options for students if available for extended school closures.
- >Address how staff will be informed about expectations for student home-based academic work.
- >Coordinate with the state educational agency about the possibility of school closings. How will attendance days and/or virtual class time be counted?
- >Explore deploying visiting teachers to monitor or ensure education remains on track in case of school closings; recruit parents to assist in the delivery of educational services to their children.
- >Coordinate with local health and welfare agencies to ensure children receiving free and reduced-price meals continue to receive nutrition usually supplied at schools.
- >Address how the school district can provide information and support to families in need of childcare when schools are closed.
- >Determine under what conditions schools will re-open....”

## >In times of crisis:

### (1) Taking care of ourselves and our families and friends

From CDC <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp>

It is natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry during and after a disaster. Everyone reacts differently, and your own feelings will change over time. Notice and accept how you feel. Taking care of your emotional health during an emergency will help you think clearly and react to the urgent needs to protect yourself and your family. Self-care during an emergency will help your long-term healing....

Take the following steps to cope with a disaster:

- >Take care of your body– Try to eat healthy well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep....
- >Connect with others– Share your concerns and how you are feeling with a friend or family member. Maintain healthy relationships, and build a strong support system.

Take breaks– Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. ...Try to do activities you usually enjoy....”

### (2) Continuing to support students and their families

#### (A) *What one district is doing*

During a typical school day, our students have access to a variety of Student Services professionals (counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses) and military-connected resources such as the Military Family and Youth Liaison, Military Student Transition

Counselors, and Military Family Life Counselors. This staff assists students with social-emotional concerns. We anticipate that some students may experience difficulty as a result of anxiety or stress related to the illness or school closure. Our district now has a Student Services Hotline. This phone number should only be used by district students. A representative from our district's Student Services Department (counselor or social worker), will be available Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. for at least the next two weeks.

**(B) From Edweek – Maintaining Ties When School Closes**

[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/inside-school-research/2020/03/school\\_closures\\_a\\_critical\\_time\\_for\\_dropout\\_prevention\\_efforts.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/inside-school-research/2020/03/school_closures_a_critical_time_for_dropout_prevention_efforts.html)

**Excerpt:**

After Robbinsdale Armstrong High School, outside Minneapolis, shut down abruptly last Friday in response to a potential case of COVID-19, teachers and staff met one last time in person—while keeping six feet apart—to brainstorm ways to keep their students connected.

"The idea is to try to find ways that, once a week at the minimum, you're doing some sort of face-to-face where the students can hear you talking and they can respond to you in conversation," said Anne Beaton, an Advanced Placement teacher and coordinator of the school's Building Assets, Reducing Risks program, which creates teams of teachers and staff to support students. "We're using [online tools] to get kids to be able to video themselves and put their voice out into the world.

... One of the things that the teachers have been talking about is how do we maintain just that relationship piece."

...Districts that have systems in place to flag early academic, behavior, health, or other problems in students can prioritize which students to check on, and those that have systems for rapid email or text communications with parents can adapt these to provide personal messages, home activities, and other morale boosters to students and parents stuck at home. ...

**(3) Strengthening our communities**

Over the next few months, we can strengthen our communities to provide support.

**(A) Community resilience**

<https://www.phe.gov/Preparedness/planning/abc/Pages/community-resilience.aspx>

...Strategies to build resilient communities: Some considerations, adapted from the National Preparedness and Response Science Board's Community Health Resilience

Recommendations are:

- > Strengthen—and promote access to—public health, healthcare, and social services: Strong day-to-day systems can be better leveraged to support health resilience during disasters and emergencies. In capable systems people know how to access care and are not limited by real or perceived barriers to services.
- > Promote health and wellness alongside disaster preparedness: Information and education that involve public health, behavioral health, emergency preparedness, and community health resilience interventions can help people face everyday challenges as well as major disruptions or disasters. Optimal levels of physical and psychological health and well-being within the population facilitate the community's rapid recovery.
- > Expand communication and collaboration: Build networks that include social services, behavioral health, community organizations, businesses, academia, at-risk individuals, and faith-based stakeholders in addition to traditional public health, healthcare, and emergency management partners.
- > Engage at-risk individuals and the programs that serve them: Engaging individuals with potential vulnerabilities to take an active part in protecting their health and aiding their community's resilience strengthens the community as a whole. Assist programs that serve at-risk individuals to develop robust disaster and continuity of operations plans.
- > Build social connectedness: People are more empowered to help one another after a major disturbance in communities in which members are regularly involved in each other's lives. Building social connectedness can be an important emergency preparedness action...."

**(B) from a mayor**

We are seeking members for a COVID-19 Kindness Task Force whose volunteers will help other residents, including senior citizens and the most vulnerable, amid the new coronavirus pandemic. We're going to be looking at ways, virtually and safely, to help the most vulnerable among us meet their everyday needs and to make the isolation brought on by social distancing more bearable," the Mayor. "It's time we made kindness, not COVID-19, contagious." Anyone with ideas to help residents who are feeling isolated feel part of the community or knowing residents who need help are asked to contact the Community Services Department.

## >What state departments of education are doing/suggesting

### (1) Kentucky state department of education

<https://www.kentuckyteacher.org/news/2020/03/new-kde-task-force-will-aid-districts-during-covid-19-closure-period/>

Excerpt: The Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) has formed the Education Continuation Task Force, a group that will serve as a guiding coalition to help facilitate the delivery of services to Kentucky students during the current period of school closure....

This task force will focus on providing timely information, research and instructional resources to school districts as they deal with a potentially unprecedented length of school closure. It also will provide information and feedback to schools and district on at least a weekly basis....

The task force will include representatives of Kentucky's educational cooperatives, educational partner organizations, Kentucky Educational Television, the Southern Regional Education Board and other relevant partners. KDE's eight associate commissioners will lead subgroups that will coordinate their offices' responsibilities.

"I appreciate the willingness of our partners to step up and help us assist our districts and students during this time," Brown said. "Just like a family, Kentucky's education community always rallies to do what's best for kids...."

### (2) Louisiana state department of education

[https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/louisiana-believes/covid-19-faq-k-12-schools.pdf?sfvrsn=91d39b1f\\_2](https://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/louisiana-believes/covid-19-faq-k-12-schools.pdf?sfvrsn=91d39b1f_2)

Excerpt:

"... Q: Can our school system transition to an online learning platform or other distance education modality for the remainder of the school year?

A: Yes, instructional minute requirements have also been suspended for distance education courses and curriculum delivery via the Governor's proclamation.

Q: Is there a state approval process for general online providers?

A: There is not a state approval process for general online education providers. School systems have the choice and autonomy to approve and use any online provider that delivers instruction within the provisions of Bulletin 741 Section 2326. School systems also have an option to utilize online providers that have been vetted and approved as Course Choice providers by BESE. Supplemental Course Allocation (SCA) funds can continue to be used to pay associated course costs with these providers through June 30, 2020.

Q: Will the Department provide distance and homeschool learning tools to support school systems during this time?

A: Yes. In partnership with Louisiana Public Broadcasting (LPB), the Department will provide distance and home learning tools for educators, students, and caregivers. This will include:

>An online hub for distance learning supports....

>Broadcasted educational programming through LPB and YouTube Channels, which will launch within the next two weeks.

The Department will announce the availability of these resources through all upcoming school system planning calls and newsletters.

Q: Are school systems required to offer distance learning, or is this optional? Will a school system be penalized for not providing formal distance education and instead providing access to materials and resources? Will days or minutes need to be made up?

A: School systems are not required to offer distance learning. Schools may offer complete distance learning, as capabilities exist. The required 63,720 instructional minute requirement per year shall also be suspended and minutes will not have to be made up...."

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## Please let us hear from you

**We are trying to share good information, ideas, and lessons learned about what state/district/school/community are doing to support students/families/community during this challenging time.**

Also, if there is anything we can help with (e.g., finding online resources for specific concerns), let us know.

Send to [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)

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## Links to a few other relevant resources

> *During a pandemic: Take Action* (from the American Association for School Superintendents) – <https://www.aasa.org/coronavirus.aspx>

As schools shutdown, the focus on providing student/learning supports requires immediate attention. Virtual/distance planning and implementation becomes the order of the day for a network-team of an administrator, student support staff, key teachers, school-based health center staff, and other concerned school and community stakeholders.

Besides providing information and ideas, consideration should be given to how to maintain two-way communication and providing links for students/families who need supports. The special skills of school psychologists, counselors, nurses, special educators, etc. will be invaluable resources in the coming months. It also has been suggested that family resources centers establish online connections and that schools with school-based health centers should try to keep them open (with appropriate safeguards) or to use the telehealth approach to support students, families, and staff.

> *Resources for Home* (from CDC)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/home/index.html>

(CDC's various classroom resources for teachers, parents, and kids at home resources for home can also be useful at this time, e.g., *BAM! Body and Mind Classroom Resources for Teachers.*)

> *How to stop closures from derailing students* (from Education Week)

<http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/moqYCNzxBksbALlofEabiAfCcoiv?format=multipart>

> *Schools plan for transition to remote learning* (from EdSurge)

<http://r.smartbrief.com/resp/moqYCNzxBksbALngfEabiAfCUTWF?format=multipart>

> *Ed Department Offers More Special Education Guidance Amid COVID 19* (Disability Scoop)

<https://www.disabilityscoop.com/2020/03/18/ed-department-offers-more-special-education-guidance-amid-covid-19/28000/>

> *Supporting Individuals with Autism through Uncertain Times*

<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/supporting-individuals-autism-through-uncertain-times>

(Also on this, see the article in the Washington Post

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2020/03/17/parenting-autistic-kids-coronavirus/> )

### Resources for Home Study Topics Related to MH Topics

Over the school year, our Center resources are used by university students, middle and high school students and others who are doing projects related to mental health topics. So we thought we might mention that our online clearinghouse Quick Finds may be helpful as student pursue their learning from home. See the dropdown menu at

<http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/quicksearch.htm>

What's wrong now?



I'm not sure,  
but you'll be the first to hear when I figure it out!

*Equity of opportunity is fundamental to enabling civil rights;  
transforming student and learning supports is fundamental to  
enabling equity of opportunity, promoting whole child development,  
and enhancing school climate.*

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For information about the

**National Initiative for Transforming Student and Learning Supports**

go to <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newinitiative.html>

Also online are two related free books

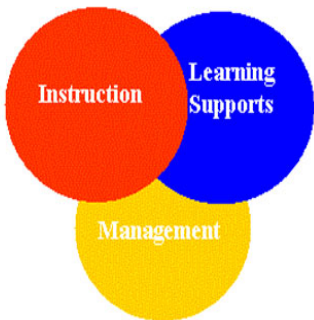
***Improving School Improvement***

[http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving\\_school\\_improvement.html](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html)

***Addressing Barriers to Learning: In the Classroom and Schoolwide***

[http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving\\_school\\_improvement.html](http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/improving_school_improvement.html)

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***THE MORE FOLKS SHARE, THE MORE USEFUL AND  
INTERESTING THIS RESOURCE BECOMES!***

***For new sign-ups – email [Ltaylor@ucla.edu](mailto:Ltaylor@ucla.edu)***

***Also send resources ideas, requests, comments, and experiences for sharing.***

***We post a broad range of issues and responses to the Net Exchange  
on our website at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/newnetexchange.htm>  
and on Facebook (access from the Center's home page <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/>)***