

Draft Guiding Principles for COVID Reentry Planning

Guiding Principles can facilitate leadership framing of different design options and enable discussion with a broader set of stakeholders. We're also learning that such principles help narrow the choices as well and get to quicker action and consensus. Below are ERS' sample guiding principles for creating school designs in the fall amidst the coronavirus crisis.

People first: School design models for COVID reentry must organize resources to address the needs and challenges of the people who are directly affected - students, families and educators - with input and guidance directly from members of these groups. In developing, refining and implementing reentry school design models, leaders should:

1. **Start with students.** Organize people, time and technology to include the increased support related to COVID in the areas of learning recovery, relationships and social, emotional support.
2. **Design for equity.** Address the learning needs of those students most disadvantaged by the COVID crisis including students with disabilities, English language learners and students who have experienced economic, social, physical or psychological stressors.
3. **Solve for the needs of educators.** Think through how new school designs meet the expanded set of logistical, collaborative, technology, professional learning and social-emotional needs for educators in light of this pandemic.
4. **Ask your families about their employment, logistical and educational needs.** Keep in mind that the childcare function of school enables return to work, and design predictable routines for all students that fit with family work schedules make it easier for families to manage and support their children.

Design for "do-ability:" Re-entry and recovery are massive challenges without trying to "re-invent the wheel" or add unnecessary complexity. Therefore, in developing and refining reentry school design models, leaders should:

5. **Leverage what works.** Design to incorporate research-based strategies. Actively incorporate emerging lessons from pandemic-driven remote learning efforts.
6. **Keep it simple.** Aim for practical, easily communicated solutions that account for speed of implementation and the many actors involved.
7. **Build for long-term, sustainable change in how we "do school."** Look for transformative opportunities to better serve students that this "new normal" enable, including changes to who plays what roles, where and when learning happens, and how we partner with families and communities.

Plan for change: If we have learned anything in the first few months of the pandemic, it's that healthcare guidance and community needs change. We also know that the economic impact of the pandemic will include reduced K-12 budgets. Therefore, leaders should:

8. **Be budget-aware.** Ensure that models work with limited and likely declining resources by testing ideas against realistic school budgets and specifying the resources it takes to implement each model.
9. **Assume customization and evolution.** Set up models as foundations that will require tailoring based on local context, feedback from students, staff and families, and an evolving understanding of what works.
10. **Design for adaptability.** Expect that all or some students will need to move between remote, hybrid and in-person models fluidly based on individual needs or community circumstances. Design models to enable continuity for students, families and teachers.