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Colorado Department of Education News Release

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News Release

Draft guidance for how schools can safely open in the fall

Initial guidance will be adjusted over the summer as CDE receives feedback and the COVID-19 situation evolves

DENVER - As schools plan for the 2020-21 school year under the extraordinary circumstances brought on by COVID-19, the Colorado Department of Education working alongside school district leaders and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has developed initial and draft guidance for reopening schools in the fall.

The 2020-21 school year will look different with new protocols for schools to minimize the spread of COVID-19. The [Planning the 2020-21 School Year: Framework and Toolkit for School and District Leaders](#) provides initial guidelines and ideas to help schools effectively manage all the new protocols and priorities this fall.

“I am amazed and grateful to our teachers and administrators for all they are doing to ensure that even during this historic pandemic, Colorado’s kids are still learning,” said Colorado Gov. Jared Polis. “These guidelines are an important first step on the path of ensuring districts, families, and of course kids are prepared to the greatest extent possible for this fall.”

The toolkit is a working document and will be updated to reflect any new public health orders, the status of our COVID-19 cases in communities across Colorado and any progress our medical community makes on treatment.

The toolkit will also be adjusted based on feedback from district and school leaders, teachers, students, other education staff, education organizations, the State Board of Education and advocates. In addition, an advisory committee with multiple stakeholders has been formed to provide extensive feedback on planning for the 2020-21 School Year. CDE is also requesting public feedback on the toolkit [through this feedback form](#).

The top priority of the toolkit is to keep students and educators healthy. At the same time, children must continue to keep learning.

“Our first and foremost concern is the health and safety of students and staff,” said Colorado Education Commissioner Katy Anthes. “We are doing everything we can to make sure schools can safely open in the fall. I’m incredibly grateful to our teachers for their tremendous work transforming their lessons for remote instruction, but I think we can all agree that in-person learning at schools provides important structure for our children, and it also supports working parents in their need to return to their jobs.”

The toolkit includes sections on operational issues like health screenings, passing periods, cafeteria operations, and buses, as well as suggestions on supporting a blended approach to learning through both in-person and online instruction.

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