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REOPENING AND REINVENTING SCHOOLS IN THE TIME OF COVID-19: A COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK FOR POLICYMAKERS AND EDUCATORS

The disruption to education presents an opportunity for policymakers and educator to seize the moment to reimagine schooling using safe, equitable, and student-centered approaches

[Restarting and Reinventing School: Learning in the Time of COVID and Beyond](#)

As the coronavirus pandemic continues, states and school districts are wrestling with plans for re-opening schools while addressing urgent safety and logistical demands. Amid this unprecedented disruption, returning to business as usual is not possible for our nation's schools, nor is it the right thing to do. Researchers and educators say it is imperative that we transform our ideas of schooling to match the demands of this historic moment. There is a heightened social awareness of the need to achieve greater equity and a broad body of research on human development and learning that can inform a new vision for pre-k–12 education—one that helps all children reach their potential and gain the knowledge and skills they need to thrive in a complex and rapidly evolving world.

A new, comprehensive framework by the Learning Policy Institute outlines how policymakers and education leaders can address the pressing question of how to reopen schools safely, effectively, and equitably to serve the needs of the whole child. The framework, [Restarting and Reinventing School: Learning in the Time of COVID and Beyond](#), offers thoughtful, research-based recommendations that focus on how policymakers as well as educators can support equitable, effective teaching and learning whether in-person or online. It also curates and organizes a wealth of other resources that can help achieve these goals.

“Federal, state, and district leaders face an unprecedented challenge in determining ways to continue education for the country’s 56 million-plus students. In this time of upheaval and uncertainty, they also have a historic opportunity to reinvent an antiquated and deeply inequitable system,” said LPI President and CEO Linda Darling-Hammond, who co-authored the framework with LPI Senior Researchers Abby Schachner, Adam K. Edgerton, and a team of LPI researchers. “Schools have not been working well for all children, but we are now at a moment when circumstances require us to take an entirely different approach—one that champions equity, authentic learning, and stronger relationships among educators, children, and families.”

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The framework provides research, state and local examples, and policy recommendations in 10 key areas that speak both to transforming learning and to closing opportunity and achievement gaps. It illustrates how policymakers and educators can:

1. Close the digital divide
2. Strengthen distance and blended learning
3. Assess what students need
4. Ensure supports for social and emotional learning
5. Redesign schools for stronger relationships
6. Emphasize authentic, culturally responsive learning
7. Provide expanded learning time
8. Establish community schools and wraparound supports
9. Prepare educators for reinventing school
10. Leverage more adequate and equitable school funding

The recommendations underscore the importance of instituting approaches and systems that ensure all children, regardless of income or zip code, can participate in supportive and meaningful learning experiences, in classrooms or virtually.

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About the Learning Policy Institute: The Learning Policy Institute conducts and communicates independent, high-quality research to improve education policy and practice. Working with policymakers, researchers, educators, community groups, and others, the Institute seeks to advance evidence-based policies that support empowering and equitable learning for each and every child. Nonprofit and nonpartisan, the Institute connects policymakers and stakeholders at the local, state, and federal levels with the evidence, ideas, and actions needed to strengthen the education system from preschool through college and career readiness. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org> @LPI_learning