

Continuity of Learning – Planning Questions

Assemble a team consisting of school district stakeholders including teachers, principals, technology leaders, other school staff, administrators, and parent representatives. The questions below should serve as a starting point for your team conversations as you plan for learning to continue during extended school absences or temporary school closures.

General/Policy

For what length of absence should students receive at-home instruction?

In the case of contagious illnesses, what is the threshold of affected people before you must close your school?

How will you practice and review your learning continuity plan regularly?

What is the role of the teacher during a school closing? Administrator? Other school personnel?

What determines when a disaster ends? Who determines that?

Technology

Do you know which teachers have home computers? internet access?

Do you know which students have home computers? internet access?

What will you do for students who have no computer or internet access?

How might you get computers to students who do not have home access?

How can quarantined students be given access to computers without contaminating them?

Communication

Do teachers have all home and cell numbers for every parent and student?

Do you have a plan and mechanism in place for communication with teachers, parents, students?

Do you have an emergency call tree and have you tested it?

Do you have contact data for all employees in hard copy?

How will you deal with keeping parents and media informed? Who will deal with media questions?

If your school is not functional, who will inform the community about the changed communication methods? Who will change your website? Who will change your school phone message? Who will push a broadcast message to parents? Are parent cell phones included in broadcast messaging if landlines are down?

Staffing

How will you track employees who are affected and make sure there is coverage?

What will you do if a significant number of instructors are affected and coverage cannot be easily arranged?

Can quarantined employees work from home?

What is the return-to-work or return-to-class policy for sick employees or those caring for sick family members?

What are the pay policies for people preparing for or affected by a natural disaster?

What are the pay policies for a sick or quarantined employee or one caring for a family member?

How will you maintain payroll?

Instructional Resource

What content is available in a digital format to provide to students from a distance?

Do or should you have an online repository of all district curriculum offerings?

Do or should you have emergency lessons prepared for students for short-term absences? How will students receive the lessons?

How is digital content/curriculum created or selected?

How is the digital content/curriculum managed, housed, updated, and delivered?

What happens if a student is absent during mandatory testing periods?

What tools will be needed to deliver instruction in the short term? Long term?

Should online curriculum mirror what is being taught in the face-to-face classroom?

Should educational activities be sustained for all courses or limited to core courses?

Are any of your textbooks available online?

Are teachers aware of what their team members are teaching in the event that they must temporarily take over a class?

How will you deliver instruction to a student who is quarantined?

How will teachers deliver and collect student work?

How will you decide what lessons to make available for an immediate continuity need since you will not know where you are in your teaching plans if a disaster strikes?

Training

Do your teachers currently incorporate online instruction in their face-to-face classrooms so that teachers and students become comfortable with this type of content delivery?

Do teachers know how to deliver a lesson online and collect student work online?

Have teachers received at least basic training in the creation and delivery of online content?

Do your teachers have access and training relating to web conferencing tools?

What professional learning and training will be needed for teachers? Administrators? Other school personnel?

What tools do you provide to teachers to support online learning (such as a course management system like Blackboard or Moodle)?