

News Release

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DPI issues guidance on a safe return to in-person instruction

Education Forward contains scenarios and considerations for safely and successfully reopening Wisconsin schools

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction today issued [Education Forward](#), a guidance document for Wisconsin district and school leaders to use as they plan for a safe, efficient, and equitable return to school for the 2020-21 school year amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The next school year will likely be different from the learning environment students and teachers have grown accustomed to,” State Superintendent Carolyn Stanford Taylor said. “Education Forward is meant to provide information for educators and school officials as they make decisions regarding their school operations to keep all students and staff safe while learning.”

DPI specialists from content areas across the department developed Education Forward in close collaboration with officials from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and education stakeholders throughout the state. The primary consideration of all involved was the health and safety of students and staff.

“COVID-19 remains highly contagious, and people in Wisconsin are still at risk,” DHS Secretary-designee Andrea Palm said. “We want to keep Wisconsin’s students and school staff as safe and healthy as possible. This guidance is designed to be used in consultation with local and tribal health departments, and we encourage school districts to work with them closely to make the best decisions for their communities.”

Education Forward provides health information, resources, and possible action steps aligned to closing out the current school year and preparing for and implementing provisions in the next school year. This guidance document is a starting point as schools consider the decisions they need to make and the conversations they need to have with local health authorities and their communities. The document includes information on infection control and mitigation, lays out sample learning scenarios, and provides specific considerations for special education students, English language learning students, gifted and

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talented students, school libraries, teaching and learning staff, school safety/mental health, and out-of-school time programs. Resources such as a risk assessment tool and a school nurse toolkit are also included.

While Education Forward is aimed at supporting schools through reopening, this will be a fluid document. It will be regularly updated in consultation with education stakeholders and the DHS to provide new information and address changing conditions to support school operations and the learning environment.

Education Forward can be found in its entirety [on the DPI's website](#).

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NOTE: For the latest information on Wisconsin schools and COVID-19, [visit the DPI's webpage](#). This news release is available electronically at <https://dpi.wi.gov/news/releases/2020/dpi-education-forward>.