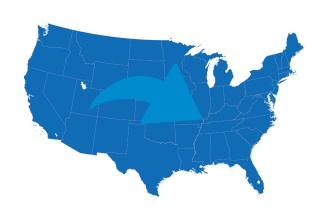# A Review of State Plans for School Reopening: How to Maximize Afterschool and Community Partners as Key Allies in Enhanced Learning and Supports

September 2020

Overview: Planning in a Pandemic

Back to school season is in full swing. Some schools are already underway and others are making day-to-day policy decisions about when and how they might re-open. This will surely be one of the most unpredictable fall seasons on record for our students and all of us.

States started releasing school reopening plans months ago, or worlds ago, depending on how you look at it. Many of the plans presented themselves as drafts and part of an on-going and iterative process. Plans have ranged from a few pages specifically targeted to safety measures to 100-page comprehensive documents on the broad range of policies and supports needed to operate and to protect and educate all of the stakeholders in the school community, and from recommendations to requirements to guidance spanning state policies to local district control. Included in plans was information about what factors and metrics to consider depending on the amount of COVID transmission in the community. And, similar to the plans we saw for summer programs, these school reopening plans included a variety of recommendations on who should wear masks and when, the physical distance to keep between desks and between students, types of allowable activities, meals options, staff protections and training, and more.

A number of plans have since undergone rounds of additions, alterations, and re-writes, especially around details of how and when to safely reopen, which has created a challenge to stay on top of the most recent policy. Most states recommend that districts prepare for contingencies, knowing that even a school open in-person today, due to the changing winds of the pandemic, may have to operate virtually tomorrow.

Partnership as a Stable Perspective

Some areas of the plans have seen much less revision. This includes areas focused on meeting the needs of students and teachers for social and emotional supports (see the American Institutes for Research Reopening Update brief on COVID-19 and Whole Child Efforts), as well as areas on engaging stakeholders and the community, and ensuring the availability of afterschool programs both for their regular programming and also for their ability to expand to operate as safe spaces for the children of teachers and other working parents during virtual and hybrid school hours. It is worth noting that there are a few cases where these sections on afterschool learning and supports have been added to plans as the iterative process continues and awareness grows of the need for safe, supervised spaces for children of working parents to complete their virtual learning.

In a time where we are seeing ever more schools that had originally intended to be operating on-site switching to more hybrid or virtual models or postponing start dates for the beginning of this year, the consideration for where students will be during those off-site hours is more important than ever. Afterschool programs, just as they did in the spring while operating full-day emergency child care, comprehensive on-site programs, and virtual supports for youth and families such as wellness check-ins, meals delivery and technology aid will remain at the nexus of schools, communities, and families and are poised to work with schools this fall to add their expertise and leverage resources to help navigate this unchartered terrain.

Highlighting Afterschool Partnership Across State Plans

In this Brief, A Review of State Plans for School Reopening: How to Maximize Afterschool and Community Partners as Key Allies in Enhanced Learning and Supports, we take a look at state reopening plans and identify areas where at least some states highlighted strategies for including afterschool and community partners as allies in meeting the needs of students and families. We know that reopening plans are constantly evolving and hope this brief provides insight and allows states and districts to learn from each other to see how they can adapt their plans to maximize community assets as we tackle a school year like no other together.

As we reviewed state plans, we identified a few exemplars who are including community partners, afterschool programming, and family engagement more thoroughly throughout the plan. Those include California, Connecticut, Oregon, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. Some states included their Statewide Afterschool Networks at their state planning tables as well.

In the sections that follow, we identify themes from across plans and highlight language used by states and overall takeaways. The accompanying appendix includes links to state plans, as well as excerpted and paraphrased text from individual plans.

Key areas in state plans

Needs and Asset Assessments

One of the first steps for many schools and districts as they plan their reopening is identifying the needs of parents, students, staff, and other partners as the fall begins in whatever setting(s) learning takes place. Needs assessments often expand in scope beyond the academic or operational to include health, nutrition, economic, and child care needs, among others. Research shows that meeting basic needs is foundational to learning. Students and families can focus best and achieve more when they have well-rounded supports. Asset and resource maps look broadly at the partners and services available throughout the community that can jointly be coordinated to meet those needs.

Plan Takeaways: Include Community Partners in Planning

State plans show how community partners, when included at the table for needs and asset assessment planning, can help connect families to community resources and supports, including child care and learning support needs during hybrid school models. Partner and program involvement also can support cultural representation, strengthen community relationships, and deepen access to student and family voice. In addition to afterschool partners, the community school model is also mentioned as a means to help connect across silos. Plans remind districts that this process of assessing and serving needs should be ongoing with regular monitoring throughout the year (Washington, Illinois, Maryland, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Alabama, Virginia).

Understanding the Needs of Working Parents

The 2020-2021 school year offers no guarantees for fully on-site school. Even for districts planning to operate a regular year, most state plans ask them to have a contingency for a switch to virtual learning in case of increased COVID-19 transmission in their community. A number of plans specifically ask that districts show awareness of the needs of teachers and families for safe places for their children while parents return to work, given the various scheduling scenarios. These plans recognize that orchestrating and paying for supervision and learning support during school-day hours is a new challenge facing families and is creating a new level of demand for afterschool providers who are expanding to cover these additional hours. The Bipartisan Policy Center estimates that more than 23 million working families will have no at home care option this fall.

Plan Takeaways: Identify how many students will need supervision during virtual learning hours

State plans hone in on the specific needs of working parents in various reopening scenarios and in some cases ask that districts offer supervision and child care options across each model. There is also recognition that teachers are often parents themselves and may need child care and supervision, whether trying to teach at home virtually with a child, or on site for hybrid schedules. Without options in place, Arizona's plan noted, older children may be assigned to watch younger siblings, affecting the older child's learning as well. Plans mention that surveying and informing parents on options is important as needs may have increased from prior years given the COVID emergency, and the additional needs and additional costs can be a burden on families. (Alabama, Virginia, Arizona, Utah)

Scenarios for Full Day Learning – School and Afterschool

Although identifying needs for working parents can be a powerful first step, some states actually began the process of thinking through what full-day care models would look like and how to coordinate with partners to fill out schedules, keep students enriched and engaged, and support learning across the work day.

Plan takeaways: Coordinate to think across the full day with afterschool partners for every scenario

A number of states designed thoughtful plan sections specifically around how afterschool and the school day can support one another during the COVID response and recovery. California has one of the most comprehensive descriptions outlining the importance of and roles for afterschool in hybrid, virtual, and on-site models. Plans mention the opportunity for afterschool programs to offer safe spaces for students during hybrid or virtual models on the school's campus or in alternative settings such as parks, churches, and libraries, and to provide them with access to internet and essential tools in their virtual learning. Coordinated models can also help students stay in cohort style groups similar to the school day to reduce additional exposure. There is also great emphasis in some states on the important role of afterschool programs and partners in going beyond child supervision to support a wide range of youth development, learning, and enrichment opportunities, which will be especially important in response to student recovery. (California, Oregon, Michigan, Connecticut, North Carolina, Wisconsin)

Caring Adults and Interpersonal Connections to Home

One of the most critical responsibilities of schools at this time of uncertainty is the ability to connect with students and families in meaningful and effective ways. When students and families are no longer in the school building, the ability to check in one-on-one often requires an expanded range of partners. Necessary two-way communication and trust must be established to put any operational plans into action. Education Week reported that by the end of spring 2 out of 3 teachers felt their largest challenge was students not logging on or connecting. Afterschool programs often have staff that have direct connections with students and families. For example, Partnership for Children in California reported that 78% of afterschool program staff in their state come from the communities they serve, 70% are people of color, and 63% are between the ages of 20-29, which helps students relate to near-peer mentors. These types of connections and relationships can help break down barriers and target communication to households that may benefit from additional attention and support.

Plan takeaways: Trusted adults to re-engage every student can be sourced from schools and partners

A number of plans discuss the importance of students having a secure, caring adult from the school ecosystem that they connect with on a regular basis. Some plans look to community partners to help support these connections. Community partners like afterschool providers, as California's plan notes, often have staff with similar backgrounds to students and families and can help engender trust and re-engage hard to reach families. Programs that interact with working parents more regularly because they see them at the end of the work day, can provide both a sense of belonging and also help support the confidence of the learner toward their academic progress. (California, New Jersey, Idaho, North Carolina, West Virginia)

Supporting the Whole Child, Including Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellness

While concerns about academic learning loss have made headlines over the spring and summer months, most states in their reopening plans have recognized that the time their students spent out of school has impacted them, and their teachers and parents, emotionally and socially as well. Any return to education requires seeing and addressing those needs, and any other basic unmet needs, as a foundation to the ability to reconnect with school and refocus on academic learning.

Plan Takeaways: Holistic student needs extend after the school day; Coordinated support and training are necessary

The importance of mental health is highlighted in plans like Wisconsin's, which encourages mental health collaboratives designed for integrating afterschool partners with child welfare agencies, businesses, mental and physical health providers, faith-based providers, and libraries with the school district's efforts. States consider that as the depth of social and emotional and other wraparound supports does not limit itself to a school day, neither should the response and coordination. Working across a range of partners, times, and settings can best complement traditional school based services. Additionally in thinking about coordination, specific attention is given to the availability of staff, training, and appropriate funding that can extend to out of school time partners. For example, school day staff, including mental health professionals, can communicate with and serve in afterschool programs, and afterschool program staff can attend and train with school day staff to provide consistency and quality to students at all the hours they may need emotional support. This level of coordination requires an investment in strong communication and adequate staffing. (Wisconsin, New Jersey, West Virginia)

Supporting Student Interest and Engagement

Students will be returning to classrooms after engaging in a wide range of learning experiences at home, some positive, some negative; some that advanced their learning, and some that interfered with it. And they will return to irregular school days where staff and personnel are also trying to adjust to new methods of teaching and learning while making up for lost time. Many states recognize that students need to feel connected to, valued in, and empowered by their education in order to learn and specifically include in their plans sections around extra-curricular activities, well-rounded curriculum such as the arts, opportunities for student voice, and afterschool programs to help them re-engage and re-connect with school-day learning.

Plan takeaways: Afterschool and extracurricular activities are essential to supporting student interest and passions

One plan, Missouri, explicitly credits afterschool programs with the ability to "provide positive opportunities for enriched and personalized academic support" and "offer renewed hope for those who have problems learning." Plans also note the power of afterschool and extracurricular activities to support students' passions and interests, and to help cultivate student voice, including helping to capture students' strengths, needs, and aspirations that lead to deeper engagement. (Missouri, North Carolina, New York, Iowa)

Supporting Students in Recovery From Learning Loss

As educational institutions with learning goals, it is no surprise that state school reopening plans dedicated a good amount of thought to the learning loss resulting from the extra time out of school last spring; loss that is projected to be significantly greater than the typical summer learning loss experienced between school years. Studies such as the NWEA April 2020 report, The COVID-19 Slide, predicted learning loss could put some students up to a year behind. State recommendations vary greatly on how to deal with these concerns, including widely varied policies on testing, targeting teaching, and learning to key principles needed from year to year, rather than approaching the usual breadth covered in the standard curriculum; separating students out vs keeping them together; applying remediation principles; providing positive experiences with learning for at least a few weeks after reopening; and more. This brief does not detail those policies. What we do recognize is where states acknowledge out-of-school time as a way to help support students' academics, as they return with what is expected to be much wider ranges of readiness to learn during the coming school year.

Plan Takeaways: Expanded learning opportunities, like those offered by afterschool and summer programs, can help make up for lost learning time

A large number of state plans mention addressing learning loss with expanded learning opportunities such as before and afterschool programs, summer programs, and Saturday programs. Wisconsin approaches learning loss through the creation of Return to Instruction working groups including students, families, staff, and other stakeholders to think about ways to provide student support. Working group coordination enables additional areas such as shared technology opportunities to support learning between schools and partners to be considered as well. Additionally, states are looking at not just the measureable losses students may return with, but also what they may have gained as a result of their experience. States are looking to build on the experiences of students and staff during the school closures, and in some cases even looking to learning outside the school building as a source of credit bearing opportunities. (Idaho, Iowa, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, Tennessee, West Virginia, Wisconsin, Virginia)

Importance of Financing Priorities

While many states recommend including afterschool partnerships in planning, a few also recognize that programs that continue to operate, and incorporate new safety requirements, smaller ratios, and additional hours that broaden from the traditional 3 to 6 p.m. afterschool model to full-day models, will require financial coordination as well.

Plan Takeaways: Planning financial support for afterschool programs helps them to fully engage as partners

In a few instances state plans had sections for fiscal considerations. Surprisingly few state plans thought through the process of budgeting for out-of-school time programs, especially given the number of plans that focused on the importance of supplementary learning and afterschool to help students recover from learning loss. When additional budget needs for afterschool were acknowledged, they referenced the need for enhanced staff, supplies, and equipment that programs will need to operate as safely as possible and provide for student social, emotional and academic learning and other wraparound supports. (Connecticut, Wisconsin)

Continuing Services for Vulnerable Students

State plans recognize that the emergency responses of the spring and alternative schedules of the fall are more likely to place a greater burden on some families than others. State plans often explicitly mention vulnerable populations of students and help districts think through how to provide additional support. The Every Student Succeeds Act funding (ESSA), also includes specific Title funding for, and attention to, certain vulnerable groups such as low-income, English Language Learner, neglected and delinquent students, students in foster care, migrant students, and homeless students. The IDEA law also includes a focus on special education students. Providing extra support for these communities, and other communities disproportionately affected by the COVID crisis, is a key piece in reopening schools in an equitable manner.

Plan Takeaways: Special attention to and programming for vulnerable groups should be continued while the definition of who is vulnerable might be expanded.

A few state plans hone in on the specific needs of groups such as those identified in the ESSA law and traditionally seen as vulnerable, recognizing that the opportunity for additional supports such as afterschool programs can be critical for their learning and development; these plans therefore established a priority to serve these groups first, where possible. Oregon's plan expands on the definition of vulnerable students in response to the past few months and focuses on the academic as well as the social and emotional experiences of groups more likely adversely affected by COVID. The plan asks schools to identify who had limited access to instruction during the spring closures and provide differentiated learning opportunities for those groups including supplemental leaning supports, additional check-ins and mentors and coaches. For all students, Oregon's plan, (see excerpts in the appendix), hones in a focus on cultural competency and racial equity that can extend across settings. (Kentucky, South Carolina, Oregon)

Safety and Uses of Space

Many states recognized that for local communities, the schools have traditionally been not only sites for students to be safely under teachers' supervision from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. for on-site learning, but also full-day hubs for a number of partners and activities. As states move to more virtual and hybrid plans, and create detailed safety standards for those who are physically at the school, use of

space by community partners is under careful consideration. State plans that considered the use of the school space for purposes other than traditional teacher-led classroom learning varied from trying to eliminate outside partners, to allowing only those partners with functions essential to the school's educational purposes, to inviting back the broader community with stipulations to operate under the same health and safety guidance policies set for school operations. Where school space is limited, many plans also offered ideas about how to coordinate with partners in other locations across the community to provide safe locations for students during school and afterschool hours.

Plan Takeaways: Sharing and extending safety protocols can support important school usage by community partners

A number of plans asked districts to carefully consider how afterschool programs could continue to have after-hours access to school spaces and school resources, such as staffing and technology, while following careful safety standards. That consideration often meant looking at the safety policies and procedures of the school day and, through coordination and communication, maintaining as many as are applicable to the afterschool programs and community partners—including social distancing policies, group sizes, face covering requirements, health and hygiene protocols, and even grouping of the same classrooms and cohorts of students across providers when possible. Plans also considered off-site programs and recommended coordination across schools and partners to maintain cohorting and support any contact tracing efforts designed to minimize disruptions to learning. At least one state distinguished between what it considered critical child care programming, which it determined should absolutely be made accessible under all the infection control measures of the school day, and leisure or more optional programming, which it recommended remain virtual during the first phases of reopening. (Maryland, Connecticut, Oregon, Florida, Wisconsin, Illinois)

Working Across Silos – Education and Child Care

In the past, working parents of school-age children relied on schools for their children's safety and development during the school day and used a separate set of supports during hours outside the traditional school day, such as afterschool and child care programs. Today, from a parent's perspective at least, these two worlds are quickly merging. Working parents, and those reentering the workforce, will need supervised learning settings from at least 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., regardless of school reopening plans. As a result some states are encouraging more coordination between the education and child care sectors to see a continuum of support for parents. Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) federal funds can be used to provide child care for children up to age 13, and for school-age children can include enriching and engaging youth development programming that supplements the learning of the school-day.

Plan Takeaways: Coordination with providers of subsidized and expanded child care is important for reopening models to meet increased need.

The state agency that administers child care funding and policies is rarely the state education agency. Therefore, a number of state education reopening plans took pains to explicitly list that districts should coordinate with their state and local child care entities to ensure coordinated planning for and provision of child care. State and local child care agencies can help eligible parents access

subsidized child care and schools can help to identify and inform new families that are now in need as a result of COVID related impacts on finances and new school and work schedules. Plans suggested additional areas of coordination between education and child care might include: sliding scale fees and scholarships, establishing new programming where possible and needed, providing transportation, and consideration for the child care needs of teachers. New Jersey's plan mentions the statewide afterschool network, NJSACC as a collaborator between agencies as well. (Maryland, New Jersey, Illinois, Minnesota)

On-going Community, Parent and Student Voices as Key to Successful Planning and Implementation:

Communication is emphasized in many of the state reopening plans. While some plans talk about how to communicate to parents and partners, others take it a step further and focus on how to truly collaborate with parents and partners. These states seeing the planning process as a way to generate the sustained investment and buy-in needed for plan success.

Plan Takeaways: Partners help raise up important voices that may be hard to reach but are critical to engage

Afterschool and community partners play an important role in not only reaching out to communities to connect parents and students with resources directly in their homes and neighborhoods, but also in bringing back from those homes and neighborhoods insights, needs, and perspectives that the district relies on to appropriately plan and support its learners and staff. Plans mention that this process of feedback is best when schools are proactive about seeking it, and see it as an ongoing and iterative process. Wyoming mentioned that, especially for families in crisis, it often takes multiple touchpoints from a number of different parties including schools, afterschool, and health partners such as pediatricians to re-engage families with the school community. Afterschool programs were referenced as partners who have insights to share based on experiences with families during the spring and summer, and who can support family and school connections in the fall. Ohio suggested envisioning walking a full day in a student's shoes and noted that afterschool partners could help fill in the out-of-school pieces of the full-day puzzle. The Wisconsin plan specifically offered a number of probing questions for districts to ask concerning involvement, including:

- *What inequities has the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted?*
- *How are you addressing these inequities; who is at the table when you are planning and making decisions?*
- *How are you ensuring those who are most impacted are an integral part of the planning and decision making process?*
- *How are decisions and decision-making processes made transparent to those they affect;*
- *Does everyone know how to make a suggestion or raise an issue?*
- *What are the assets of under-served and under-resourced communities that you work with or belong to?*

Conclusions:

With school reopening plans in such a state of flux, there really are no definitive recommendations that apply across the reopening scenarios. But, there are takeaways to help all schools better engage with afterschool and community partners to meet the needs of all young people, families, and communities.

Many states are seeing the value in engaging afterschool partners early, regularly, and meaningfully in their plans to serve students and families and make up for inequities in learning, enrichment, connection, and resources that have been exacerbated by the COVID crisis. Yet, experience tells us that in order for these state level visions to translate into real policies and programs on the ground, districts will need to implement these recommendations with fidelity. Afterschool programs can help, using tools like the Afterschool Blueprint, to identify where their programs can best offer support to district and school goals. And, district leaders must help identify the community partners, afterschool programs, administrative flexibilities, communication systems, and financial resources that can make these supports a reality.

It's helpful to keep in mind that community resources — whether schools, social services, afterschool programs, or others — all serve the same youth and families, many of whom are facing systemic inequities. With everyone coordinating and leveraging their skills on behalf these children and families, the grand task for any one entity becomes more manageable and all are empowered to contribute their share efficiently and effectively. Maximizing all the assets of a community will better enable all our young people to emerge from this crisis strong, resilient, hopeful, and better prepared for learning.

Appendix:
State Plan Language by Category

Find links to most state plans here: http://afterschoolalliance.org/covid/reopening-programs.cfm
(Note: The state excerpts include some paraphrased sections and some verbatim language from the plans and supplementary documents).

Need and Asset Assessments	
Arkansas, Alabama	Arkansas recommends that schools think about partners for learning support before they open. "Assess the capacity of structures outside of the regular school day for PK-12 programs, such as summer learning options, extended day, and after-school programming, to potentially be leveraged to support students in need of learning recovery. These structures may be remote, hybrid, or in-person." Alabama's plan has similar language.
Virginia	Virginia's plan suggests districts ask, "Have you discussed overall parent child care needs with your community partners and involved libraries, recreation centers, local higher education, independent providers and other partners in planning?"
Washington	Washington's plan includes a section on completing an asset map to identify the already existing foundational assets within school districts and community-based organizations, and build upon them. "This crisis provides an opportunity to strengthen relationships with community organizations and bring broad community and cultural representation to the decision-making table. Use asset mapping to identify how community-based organizations can partner with the district to address student and family needs. Include community leaders in the planning process for identification of supports."

Understanding the Needs of Working Parents	
Alabama	Alabama mentions the need to develop flexible scheduling with options to meet needs of varied situations (parents who work during school hours or parents/staff who may need to work from home and support their own children, etc.)
Arizona	Arizona's plan includes a supplementary document on "Considerations for Families," suggesting districts communicate to families the conditions for how child care and before/after school care will be offered on campuses moving forward; assess what the child care needs would be of families (including staff) based on the four scenarios and keep in mind that some families may rely on older siblings for child care and this could impact their learning.
Utah	Utah asks states to consider financial hardships and alternative child care arrangements for single parent families or for families in which both parents must work outside the home and strain on child care capacity, when considering strategies that attempt physical distancing by reducing the number of students on-campus
Virginia	Virginia's set of questions for districts includes whether they have surveyed their workforce to identify their concerns related to child care for their own family and if there be an increased need for before school and after school programs under various operating scenarios.

Coordinating Across Scheduling Scenarios for Full Day Care	
California	California outlined the role of afterschool partners in schools in each scenario of staggered learning, some on-site learning, episodic learning, and fully in-person learning. For staggered schedules, afterschool partnership benefits included offering that programs to work with the group not currently in class, developing and implementing innovative and engaging activities that build on the lessons taught in class, supporting students in completing projects assigned in class, or doing computer science activities, theatre, visual arts, or science to enrich students' learning experiences. For schools prioritizing younger grades in their on-site schedules, the plan says afterschool could provide in-person activities for the older students so that they have opportunities to be with peers, practice social and emotional skills, get support with their school work, and have enriching activities to keep them engaged and active. For episodic learning, suggestions included that programs could ensure students and families remain connected to meals, technology, and supportive adults in their communities. And for returns to fully in-person learning, the plan showcased the role of afterschool in continuing to be "essential partners in helping students readjust to the school environment and re-engage with learning."
Connecticut	Connecticut's plan stated explicitly that "traditional after-school programs do not need to operate only after school dismissal and can support families on days when students are not scheduled for classroom instruction. As schools reopen and parents return to working outside the home, after-school programs can assist in providing safe places to provide care for students while simultaneously providing support and assistance to enhance remote learning."
Illinois	Illinois recommends "Districts should consider, for example, whether their plan for serving students in person in smaller groups may lead to many children needing to be in other settings -- with other groups of children -- for parts of their day and/or week. Such mixing of children between groups may substantially lessen the effectiveness of districts' strategies for limiting children's contacts to minimize potential virus transmission. Accounting for children's entire days and weeks outside of the home when developing plans is advised. Districts are encouraged to work with partners in their communities, including child care centers, other before- and after-school child care providers, park districts, churches, and other community-based organizations, to develop plans that comprehensively address families' need for care before, during, and after school hours and on any days that children will not be able to attend school in person."
Michigan	Michigan mentioned if a staggered school schedule is adopted, schools should partner with community organizations to identify safe spaces where children can engage virtually, especially if family members work and children cannot be home alone.
North Carolina	North Carolina got pretty specific, stating: In order to support families, it is important to maintain before- and after-school programs as much as possible. These programs not only provide a service for working families to have students in safe locations, they also provide enriching opportunities for students to grow and develop. Before- and after-school programming will follow the same NCDHHS guidance as the regular school day. All requirements and recommendations will still apply. While moving between Reopening Plans, consider how before- and after-school programming may continue effectively, especially during Plan A and Plan B. Work to respond to student and family needs during this particularly challenging year.
Oregon	Out-of-school time services may be provided during the time in which students are not scheduled for in-person instruction in a Hybrid or On-Site instructional model. They may also assist in providing care for students while simultaneously providing accommodations to supplement Comprehensive Distance Learning.
Wisconsin	Wisconsin is thinking through how schools can create an on-site opportunity four days each week by working across settings, mentioning "in a modified physical distancing scenario - Each student level (elementary, middle, and high school) reports to school, outdoor learning spaces, or community-based organizations four full days a week. In a plan where elementary is face to face and secondary is virtual: Secondary students continue to engage in virtual learning at home or in community-based centers." The plan also recommends that schools communicate "with community-based organizations (such as a local nature center or Boys and Girls Club) who could provide space and extended community-based learning opportunities for a cohort-based learning model for students not in the school building during the school day due to social-distancing guidelines…"

Caring Adults and Interpersonal Connections	
California	California's plan focuses on the role of afterschool programs in helping schools establish these relationship bridges: Expanded learning programs are an untapped resource that not only complement academic skill-building, but more importantly, specialize in building positive relationships with young people and their families. Staff in these programs often have had similar experiences of the student population and can quickly form authentic relationships with students. And, because family members sign their children out with staff at the end of the afterschool program, expanded learning staff are more likely to have relationships with families, often acting as a bridge to school-day teachers through the ongoing communication that naturally takes place. In fact, during distance learning, some districts have relied on their expanded learning partners to find and re-engage families that they could not reach remotely. Expanded learning programs also focus on creating safe, supportive learning environments that foster a sense of belonging for all students, reinforce high expectations for behavior, and inspire engagement, skill development, and mastery—all of which are enhanced and deepened through the trust built between students and expanded learning staff. In this time of dysregulation and readjustment, expanded learning providers are key allies in reaching students and rebalancing their equilibrium for learning.
New Jersey	Establish systems that promote supportive staff-student relationships to ensure that all students have at least one caring staff member who checks in regularly with them and their family and is able to connect with them for any needed supports. In addition to in-school structures (i.e., mentors, advisory classes), schools may want to consider community partners who may be able to connect with students and families and supplement the services already being provided by the school.

Supporting the Whole Child Including Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellness	
New Jersey	New Jersey- Wraparound services differ from traditional school-based services in their comprehensive approach to addressing the academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of students with interventions both inside and outside of the school environment. These include mental health support, primary health and dental care, family engagement, expanded before-school and after-school and summer learning time, and mentoring programs, food service distribution, and quality child care.
West Virginia	West Virginia on Social and Emotional Learning - Expedite resource mapping to identify available resources and needs. Collaborate closely with the West Virginia Department of Education, the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (WV DHHR), the local health department, community partners and child care providers (including before/afterschool care) to assess resources, determine a need for additional support and develop/continue safe and supportive practices and procedures.
Wisconsin	Wisconsin- Ensure there are processes in place to facilitate communication between school-day and OST staff, particularly related to student needs and school goals. Support OST leadership efforts to recruit school day staff to work in the OST program and ensure alignment of academic services, mental health supports, and social and emotional learning (SEL) strategies during OST hours. Provide OST staff with training that will prepare them to address COVID-19-related issues they may encounter, including trauma-informed teaching practices, SEL strategies, and virtual learning strategies. Consider the types of materials and services that are required to provide OST program participants and their families with the support they need (academic and otherwise), and create an OST program budget that includes those materials and services. Include OST staff in any relevant district- and school-sponsored trainings. Support and encourage OST-specific training and professional development. Determine which groups of students are most in need of OST services and establish a process for identifying and recruiting those students. Consider students who do not have stable housing and may not be in a safe environment outside of school… Create a mental health collaborative that includes community stakeholders such as community mental health and physical health care providers, out-of-school time programs and youth-serving organizations, child welfare agencies, non-profits, businesses, faith-based organizations, institutions of higher education, technical colleges, local libraries and any other relevant community members. School level: Identify stakeholders in the local school community and engage them in collaborative planning and supports for students, extending mental health and wellness supports across the community. Partners could include parents and family members, out-of-school time programs and community learning centers (CLC), youth serving organizations, public libraries, businesses and employers, colleges or technical schools, community mental health, physical health providers, transportation providers and law enforcement

Supporting Student Interest and Engagement	
Iowa	Iowa's plan reads: Establish supplemental methods to supporting at-risk learners in accessing and engaging in learning opportunities. – Create opportunities that increase connection with families and learners. Consider the following: Checking in with students more frequently, providing more opportunities for teacher feedback, providing continued opportunities for extra-curricular connections, engaging in school-community collaborations that support access and engagement. The plan aslo includes an additional section to establish that "Educators should seek information from students on what can make instruction more effective for them (student voice)."
Missouri	Missouri's plan mentions "Attractive before- school activities bring students to the campus early and reduce tardies. Those offered at lunch can reduce the incidence of harassment and other negative interactions. After school programs provide positive opportunities for enriched and personalized academic support, they offer renewed hope for those who have problems learning."
New York	New York - Collaborate with community partners such as afterschool program providers, tapping into the expertise to provide additional support services, to increase the school's capacity to meet student needs and know students and families, including their strengths, needs, and aspirations.
North Carolina	North Carolina - Extracurricular activities: In order to support the whole child and develop a student's passions and interests, it is important to consider maintaining extracurricular activities during the various reopening plans, as much as possible.
West Virginia	West Virginia - Prioritize strategies to ensure students are connected to at least one caring adult in the school … The re-entry plan home page includes a link for extracurricular and extended activities (https://wvde.us/school-system-re-entry/extracurricular-and-extended-activities/). We all recognize and agree that extracurricular and after school activities play an important role in a student's educational journey. In an effort to allow them to continue, special and focused attention will remain on these activities and programs to ensure student safety as the pandemic evolves.

Supporting Students in Recovery from Learning Loss	
Idaho, Iowa, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, Tennessee	Idaho recommends looking to afterschool once transmission is low enough for on-site programs and recognizes that learning loss might be greater among certain vulnerable groups. "Address learning loss with extended learning opportunities before/after school programs, Saturday school; and provide additional instructional supports to: • Students at risk of not graduating on time • Students with disabilities • Students who struggled in the prior distance/remote learning environments • Students who are English Learners • students identified by teachers and parents as being behind academically; for moderate mentions" Iowa, Illinois, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Mexico, Tennessee, and other states also refer to the importance of extended learning and individualized supports to stem learning loss.
West Virginia	West Virginia - Anticipate significant academic, emotional, and social regression, while at the same time build upon the unique experiences of each student and staff member…
Wisconsin	Wisconsin - Build a Return to Instruction working group, potentially led by the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and composed of diverse and representative stakeholders including community-based organizations, education directors from Nations, families, students, district-level staff, and school-level… District and School - Evaluate opportunities for partnerships with community-based organizations (such as a local nature center or Boys and Girls Club) who could provide space and extended community-based learning opportunities for a cohort-based learning model for students not in the school building during the school day due to social-distancing guidelines… Assess the capacity of (district)/collaborate with the district to use (school) structures outside of the regular school day, such as an extended school year, summer learning options, extended day, afterschool programming, work-based learning opportunities (Youth Apprenticeship), and state certified co-op programs to potentially be leveraged to support students.

Financing for Afterschool	
Connecticut	Connecticut's plan details items for fiscal consideration during school reopening, including "Ensure fiscal and budgetary planning includes support for education recovery, including but not limited to funding for staffing for extended day/afterschool remedial programming; summer school or extension of the school year; and additional instructional supplies/equipment."
Wisconsin	Consider the types of materials and services that are required to provide OST program participants and their families with the support they need (academic and otherwise), and create an OST program budget that includes those materials and services.

Services for Vulnerable Students	
Kentucky	Kentucky asks, "How will schools and districts ensure that continuity of services will be provided through federal programs for students most at-risk, including the following groups: low-achievement, homeless students, English learners, neglected and delinquent students, 21st Century Community Learning Center participants, migrant students and students in foster care?"
Oregon	Secure partners and resources to respond to the basic needs of students and families (e.g., food, shelter, clothing, mental/social/emotional health supports) and the needs of students and families to access online learning (e.g., digital devices, hot spots, technology support… Provide differentiated learning opportunities for students who had limited or no access to instruction during the spring 2020 school closure. This may look like assigning a learning mentor or coach, additional check-ins, supplemental learning supports, and instructional support for emergent bilingual students… Provide counter narratives to biased representations of race, culture, gender, abilities, and poverty…. Replace deficit language (e.g., needs, struggles, gaps) with asset-based language (e.g., strengths, opportunities, talents). … Create healing and relationship-building norms… Develop students' abilities to connect across cultures by affirming racial and cultural identities and creating opportunities for students to learn from each other and with each other. … Prioritize supporting and retaining educators from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; specifically educators who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color and educators who are trained in areas of culturally sustaining content.
South Carolina	South Carolina - Instead of extending the school day for all students, districts could also provide before or after school learning opportunities to targeted groups of students. Districts should prioritize these activities to meet the needs of learners from populations of focus, including (but not limited to) literacy for students in grades 1-3, students with demonstrated learning loss or limited engagement during the spring 2020 school closure period, English learners, migrant or homeless students, and students with Individual Education Plans. (Extended day, double academic blocks, and Saturday classes, looping also recommended.)

Safety, Space, and Shared Use

Connecticut	Connecticut's plan requires that districts have a plan for other individuals that enter the school building, including "Develop consistent policies to address when clubs, before- and after-school programs, or other voluntary groups may be allowed to use school space. Include ways to safely allow access for before- and after-school and child care programs." Consider utilization of classrooms for on-site after-school programming that minimizes students' exposure to other students and common areas. For example: staff participating in the after-school program use the same classroom that students are in during the school day and provide afterschool care from the end of the school day until 5 p.m. Partner with community-based organizations (YMCA/YWCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, faith-based organizations, etc.) to identify space outside the school to provide off-site after-school programming)… Apply the same cohorting recommendations for the school day, when feasible.
Florida	Florida recommends Learning Zones - "Create visible safe learning zones" and "Encourage the use of outside and unconventional spaces with significant options for social distancing for learning and extracurricular activities."
Kentucky	Kentucky mentions "Afterschool programs may continue but must adhere to maximum group sizes and physical distance protocols. For younger students unable to maintain physical distance, maintain static groups.
Maryland	Maryland goes into detail about how its Out of School Time (OST) programs will work to maintain safety while continuing operations including "State and federal funded Maryland OST programs continue implementation through the utilization of the following recommendations • Alternating/staggered days of instruction for students; • Reducing class sizes to allow for fewer students; • Placing student desks 6 feet from each other as possible in classrooms; • Requiring students and staff to wear face coverings; • Restricting students from changing classrooms; but rather have teachers change classrooms to avoid hallway traffic; • Eliminating assemblies, field trips/recreation activities; • Utilizing online/virtual parent trainings and meetings; • Increasing health and hygiene measures; and • Staggering school bus schedules to allow fewer students on a bus at a time."
Oregon	Plan for offering after-school programs that meet requirements outlined in physical distancing and cohorting… To the extent practicable, out-of-school time programs operating in school facilities must apply the same cohorting structures as the school day. The goal of effective cohorting is to limit as much disruption to quality learning experiences, while maximizing safety and efficiency in contact tracing. Consider the logistics of after-school program space utilization to ensure that social distancing requirements are maintained and students are exposed to the fewest practicable number of other students and staff."
Wisconsin	Continue to ensure OST staff have a clear understanding of any restrictions or guidelines to use of the facility and its resources (playground equipment, use of cafeteria). Determine what physical spaces, technology, staff, etc. will be made available to OST programs to effectively and safely deliver programming. Collaborate with OST providers to ensure that an adequate number of staff are hired in alignment with school protocols around staff-to-student ratio and group size.

Working Across Silos – Education and Child care	
Illinois	Illinois' plan mentions this in a few different sections: "When crafting student schedules, it is important to keep child care needs of your community in mind. It is estimated that 700,000 school age children (ages 6-12) in Illinois reside in household where all parents work and likely require some form of out-of-school child care… Child care assistance is available for low-income families through the Illinois Department of Human Services; this is a potential funding source to help with the cost of child care programs. Districts should also consider exploring community partnerships to ensure educators who are also parents have access to affordable child care. For more information on child care availability and guidelines, please visit the COVID-19 resource hub for the Governor's Office of Early Childhood Development… Child care programs in schools, even if deemed license-exempt, should follow the IDPH and DCFS guidance for licensed child care facilities. Child care should be available for all families that need it in Phases 3 and 4 (not restricted to only families of essential workers as it was in Phases 1 and 2), according to the Restore Illinois Plan for Reopening Child Care in Illinois. Child care programs in schools will be required to follow all infection control measures that are used during the school day (e.g., social distancing when possible, face coverings, cleaning, and sanitation)."
Maine	Maine asks that schools "should also ensure a daily schedule that offers safe supervision for younger students if needed. This could be accomplished by developing a child care program through the school or by partnering with child care agencies."
Maryland	Maryland mentions that as child care is often co-located in schools, coordination with the Office of Child Care around safety measures becomes even more critical. "And local school systems will want to consider opening child care programs prior to opening schools to ensure school staff have adequate care for their children while they are at work. Child care programs will need to be well-resourced with cleaning and medical supplies and the ability to purchase food and paper goods in bulk."
Minnesota	**Child Care and School-Age Care Programs** Equitable and affordable school-age child care programs are essential to support working families and provide critical support and care for students in school buildings. Over one hundred thousand students across the state rely on school-based child care programs as their trusted child care provider. Community Education departments are encouraged to provide care to families while implementing guidance for child care programs from the Minnesota Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control, and the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Programming through community education or other programs may be available to any child as a district would typically offer. Nothing prevents school districts and charters from providing care to children outside of those in families working in critical sectors. Districts may charge fees for the care provided. Districts may consider, if financially feasible, including a sliding fee-based scale and scholarships, to ensure children from low-income families are able to access the care.
New Jersey	Child care will be needed as schools reopen, particularly in instances where modified school schedules may increase the likelihood that families that otherwise would not utilize child care will now require it. The NJDOE encourages schools to involve child care providers in planning meetings, communicate the school's modified schedule to local child care providers, and plan to transport students from school to child care facilities… Districts are encouraged to establish, strengthen, and continue partnerships with local organizations and utilize county-based resources for afterschool, enrichment, and summer learning such as the New Jersey Child Care Resource and Referral Agency – resources in appendix- Academic Enrichment, Expanded After-School Learning & Summer Programming; New Jersey's Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies by County ŠNJSACC: The Statewide Network for NJ's Afterschool Communities – Virtual After School Resource Guide; NJ YMCA Locations; United Way's Summer Learning Resources.
Maryland	Maryland says (as child care is often colocated in schools)- As LSSs make decisions on opening, it is critical that this be coordinated with the Office of Child Care because regulations and temporary operating procedures have been put in place to ensure the health and safety of staff and children. And local school systems will want to consider opening child care programs prior to opening schools to ensure school staff have adequate care for their children while they are at work. Child care programs will need to be well-resourced with cleaning and medical supplies and the ability to purchase food and paper goods in bulk.

Community, Parent and Student Voices as Key to Successful Planning	
Nevada	Nevada's plan mentions "Districts and schools should engage, educate, and empower all families and communities at every level of the decision-making process to ensure that reopening plans are responsive to their concerns and expressed needs and address specific challenges in each community. For families and communities to fully invest in a reopening plan, they need to have a seat at the table and be empowered to implement the plan in their community…" The plan also asks that districts "Consider conducting listening sessions with families, caregivers, students, and community partners to hear their perspectives consider some of the following topics: What has our school done well during the past months, and what could we have done better? How might you like to contribute as we prepare to transition to a new school year?"
Ohio	Ohio - A collaborative effort of both education and community organizations is needed to ensure the effective delivery of appropriate instruction to each child in our schools. Community organizations (and others) can serve both to share community needs with school districts and to help districts share key information with students and families. Additionally, these partners can implement food distribution, address mental health needs of students and families, and help meet other ongoing needs … A collaborative effort of both education and community organizations is needed to ensure the effective delivery of appropriate instruction, while meeting the needs of the whole child, for each student in our schools. Partners can include after-school program providers, libraries, faith-based organizations, Boys and Girls Clubs, scouting organizations, philanthropies, chambers of commerce and business groups, health care providers, social service organizations, local governmental agencies and many more… Idea to walk in the students shoes for a day to test the feeling of the plan: A Student's Daily Journey.
Oregon	Oregon - In the planning process, schools have the opportunity to cultivate relationships with the families, tribal, and community organizations, and the early learning and child care providers who supported student learning and development during school closure. These groups and individuals have been closest to our students during the closure, and are best positioned to help schools identify drivers for a successful school plan… Elevate student voice in designing the educational spaces/experiences… Build a collaborative partnership for moving forward, and plan for additional engagement opportunities to support the iterative development. "As schools and districts consider options for reopening and redesigning the school day, they should reach out proactively to before and after school partners. Not only do out-of-school time providers excel in building positive youth relationships and provide enriching activities to help ease the effects of isolation and learning loss from the pandemic, they are an essential support to families in need of child care."
Wisconsin	Wisconsin - Educators should consider the following questions as they plan to return to school: What inequities has the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted? How are you addressing these inequities? Who is at the table when you are planning and making decisions? How are you ensuring those who are most impacted are an integral part of the planning and decision making process? How are decisions and decision-making processes made transparent to those they affect? Does everyone know how to make a suggestion or raise an issue? What are the assets of under-served and under-resourced communities that you work with or belong to?
Wyoming	Wyoming - Reach out to early child care and youth serving organizations and engage to align instructional programs to accelerate learning… Immediately prior to opening - Do not underestimate the need to have ongoing communication with families and community partners. Re-engaging and reaching out often and sometimes through multiple avenues is critical to ensure connectedness and support especially for families who may be in crisis… Reach out to agencies and other groups including Department of Family Services, pediatricians, and youth serving organizations to communicate expectations.
New Jersey	In New Jersey, districts are encouraged to establish, strengthen, and continue partnerships with local organizations and utilize county-based resources for afterschool, enrichment, and summer learning such as the New Jersey Child Care Resource and Referral Agency – resources in appendix- Academic Enrichment, Expanded After-School Learning & Summer Programming; New Jersey's Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies by County; NJSACC: The Statewide Network for NJ's Afterschool Communities – Virtual After School Resource Guide; NJ YMCA Locations; United Way's Summer Learning Resources.