Minnesota

Summer Programming Guidance for Schools

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education.mn.gov

Letter from Education Commissioner Mary Cathryn Ricker

Dear Minnesota School Communities:

As we are working through this challenging time, my team and I at the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) are working closely with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to determine this next phase to safely provide education during this pandemic. The safety and well-being of our students, families, and school staff will always be our top priority. We also know that there are many students who are not being served well by distance learning, despite our most creative efforts, and would greatly benefit from returning to in-person instruction as soon as we are able to safely do so. That's why today we are ready to announce that MDE, in consultation with MDH, has determined that a school district or charter school may safely open its building for a hybrid model of in-school learning activities and distance learning for summer learning and extended school year services, should they choose to. Schools may also choose to continue summer learning through a distance learning model.

The hybrid model of instructional delivery for summer learning was created to offer school districts and charter schools that flexibility for some in-person instruction if they are able to adhere to all of the public health guidance to keep their students, their families, and school staff safe and healthy. You will find more details in the following pages of this document about the hybrid approach which would include having all students on an alternating schedule of being in the school building, while maintaining social distancing, and doing distance learning from home when students are not physically in school – like an A/B schedule.

This virus is unpredictable, so for right now we are only offering this hybrid instructional model for education programming over the summer months, when a district or charter school's 2019-20 school year concludes. MDE will continue to work closely with MDH to monitor the public health situation and offer additional guidance for school districts and charter schools for how to safety begin the 2020-21 school year.

We know how important it is to ensure that students are receiving the education that they deserve. Distance learning has been hard on everyone – students, their families, and educators, and especially children of color, indigenous children, immigrant children, low-income families and communities, and people who have disabilities. We hope that by offering a model where schools will be able to safely provide at least some in-person instruction will be an opportunity to better support students who have been struggling with distance learning.

Thank you for your leadership and partnership, and especially for your support for our school communities, during this unprecedented time.

Together,

Mary Cathryn Ricker, NBCT
Commissioner of Education

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Vision

Minnesota is the best state in the country for children to grow up in – those of all races, ethnicities, religions, economic statuses, gender identities, sexual orientations, (dis)abilities, and zip codes.

Guiding Principles

- *Practice servant leadership*
- *Treat everyone with respect and dignity*
- *Do the right thing, especially when it is difficult*
- *Ask how your actions are reinforcing or removing structural inequity*
- *Promote the common good over narrow special interests*
- *Be accessible, transparent, and accountable*
- *Include voices from communities who will be most impacted*

Priorities

Minnesota does best when state agencies and community partners collaborate to achieve common goals. We will solve problems in education, health care, environment and energy, housing, jobs, transportation, and so much more by focusing on these key priorities:

- *Children and Families*
- *Equity and Inclusion*
- *Thriving Communities*
- *Fiscal Accountability and Measurable Results*
- *Minnesota's Environment*

Equity

Educational equity is the condition of justness, fairness and inclusion in our systems of education so that all students have access to the opportunities to learn and develop to their fullest potential. The pursuit of educational equity recognizes the historical conditions and barriers that have prevented opportunity and success in learning for students based on their races, incomes, and social conditions. Eliminating those structural and institutional opportunities requires systemic change that allows for distribution of resources, information and other support depending on the student's situation to ensure an equitable outcome.

Equitable Summer Programming

Equity is a priority to reach all children, especially children of color, indigenous children, immigrant children, low-income families and communities, and people who have disabilities must continue to be prioritized. Further, access to mental health services and support, hands-on student education and support, broadband and devices, and consistent instructional expectations continue to be concerns for many students. Responding to these challenges will take innovation and public-private collaboration. Our educators stand ready to meet this need. Safely providing opportunities for in-school learning and other activities this summer will provide engagement, support, and access for our students, families and communities.

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), has determined that a school district or charter school could safely open its building for a hybrid model of in-school learning activities and distance learning this summer, if they can ensure public health guidance can be adhered to. This determination aligns with Governor Walz's Executive Order 20-57.

To preserve the health and safety of our students, their families, school staff, and the public, and to provide continuity of education during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is necessary that school districts and charter schools providing summer learning opportunities implement hybrid models where students are on alternating schedules between distance learning and in-school learning. This allows all participating students access to both experiences in a safe and meaningful manner.

A school district or charter school, under certain circumstances, may continue summer learning and extended learning year services wholly through a distance learning model.

Summer Learning Overview

This guidance is intended to help schools with summer learning planning in situations where they would normally hold summer learning opportunities either through the school or through community education or in partnership with outside organizations. This is not a new program.

Summer, 2020 Summer Learning – General Education and Special Education Extended School Year (ESY)

Model Types: MDE and MDH jointly recommend two options from which school districts and charter schools should choose for summer and ESY programming:

1. Implement a hybrid approach (all students are on an alternating schedule of being in the school building, while maintaining social distancing, and doing distance learning from home – like an A/B schedule).
    a. Note: At a minimum, multi-lingual learners and ESY students should receive additional opportunities for face-to-face instruction – like an A/B/B schedule, in accordance with MDH guidance.
2. Continue distance learning model to provide summer learning and ESY.

[ADDED O5/20/20]: Note: If a district or charter school chooses a hybrid approach, they must offer in-person summer programming to all students who qualify for those services (e.g. targeted services), as well as students receiving extended school year services (ESY), while maintaining social distancing. Multi-lingual learners and students receiving ESY services should receive additional opportunities for face-to-face instruction, in accordance with MDH guidance. A district may not offer a hybrid program to some students while requiring others to do full-time distance learning, unless it is not possible to provide the face to face hybrid services in accordance with MDH social distancing guidelines. Nothing in this guidance should be construed to encourage or require school staff, students, or families in at-risk categories to act inconsistently with public health recommendations or the advice of their doctors. Any family may choose to opt their student out of in-person programming.

Recommended Start: The start date of summer programming should be determined at the local level. We recommend summer learning (in a hybrid approach) starts in late-June, but can begin as early as the end of your traditional school year. If a longer summer learning session is appropriate, please consider lengthening it.

Required Educator Prep/Planning Time*:* Must provide at least two planning days for educators to prep for the new summer format.

Options and rationale explored prior to this recommendation:

- Provide summer learning programming in school buildings with no social distancing expectations
  - Decision and rationale: This does not meet current MDH and CDC guidance.
- Provide daily in-person summer learning programming with all students socially distanced.
  - Decision and rationale: The budget required for this is very high for the increase staffing to provide social distance for all students.
- Provide summer learning programming with all students engaging in a distance learning model.
  - Decision and rationale: This is a continuation of our current model and could be used in a district if deemed appropriate at the local level.
- Provide summer learning programming using a hybrid approach (students are on an alternating schedule of being in the school building, while maintaining social distancing, and doing distance learning from home).
  - Decision and rationale: This is a plausible option for the summer and could serve as a pilot for full implementation in the fall, if needed.

Purpose of Summer Programming and Students Served

Purpose: Summer programming supports students in need of continuity of learning, reinforcement of learning, remediation of learning, and/or credit recovery – this includes multi-lingual learners. Extended School Year (ESY) must be provided to students whose IEP team determines that the student meets one of the condition under Minn. Rule 3525, 0755. ESY serves students who: A) have a likelihood of significant regression, B) need to attain and maintain self-sufficiency skills, and/or C) have unique needs where ESY services are necessary to provide a free and appropriate education.

Students Served: Priority should be given to students who receive free or reduced-price lunch, multi-lingual learners, students with disabilities with specific needs (regression, recoupment, and self-sufficiency), American Indian students, and those students who are not one of the aforementioned who need remediation and/or credit recovery.

Hybrid Model for Teaching and Learning

Hybrid is commonly used to describe classes in which some traditional face-to-face instruction has been replaced by distance learning activities. A hybrid class is designed to integrate face-to-face and distance learning activities so that they reinforce, complement, and elaborate on one another, instead of treating the online component as an add-on or duplicate of what is taught in the classroom. During classroom instruction time,

students can be engaged in authentic, collaborative learning experiences. The distance learning components can include multimedia-enhanced content, learning practice, and channels for ongoing discussion.

Hybrid Model Implementation

Local school districts and charter schools will determine whether a hybrid model or distance learning model is most appropriate for their students and families given the possible constraints of building projects and other summer programming considerations. The expectation is that specific students with disabilities or multi-lingual learners will have additional opportunities to engage in face-to-face instruction. If the district or charter school has the space and staffing, students receiving targeted services can also be provided additional learning time as appropriate. Each district and charter school must notify MDE about their chosen summer learning model and post it to their website at least one week prior to the start of the summer learning period. MDE has created a survey for districts and schools to notify MDE of their chosen summer learning model.

In some hybrid approaches, direct instruction that normally takes place in the classroom is "flipped" with intentional online learning tasks. Another method involves facilitating flipped, short mini-lessons for students to access online (asynchronously or synchronously).

Staff to Student Ratio: Based on the size of classrooms, we suggest a 1:6 staff to student ratio with a maximum of a 1:9 staff to student ratio (to not exceed 10 people in a room). If social distancing cannot be attained with a 1:6 staff to student ratio, then the number of students must be reduced.

Summer Program Plan

The following components must be included in your summer program plan. All aspects should be addressed for both the hybrid and distance learning models.

- Meeting MDH Health and Safety Guidelines (hybrid and distance learning model)
    - Students
    - Staff
    - Families
    - Facilities
- Plan foundations
    - Grounded in equitable practices
    - Daily/weekly schedule
    - Internet and device access
    - Nutrition/Summer food program
    - Family and student communication plans
        - Written and Oral translated communication strategies
    - Specific student group supports
        - Students with disabilities
        - English Learners
        - American Indian students
        - Students experiencing homelessness or housing instability
        - Migrant students

- Tribal Considerations
- Student relationships/connections
- Family engagement strategies
- Mental health support
- Transportation
- Attendance supports and expectations
- Grading (Credit Recovery only)

Health and Safety Guidelines from the Minnesota Department of Health

The Minnesota Department of Health has developed guidelines for summer programming activities during the COVID-19 pandemic, based upon Governor Walz's Executive Order 20-57 allowing for school summer programs to operate so long as they can adhere to the health guidance. The guidelines address public health protection measures for participants in summer programs.

Student Engagement and Relationships

Schools seeking to strengthen relationships with students during summer teaching and learning will find value in reflecting on a student-centered approach:

1. Relationships between the instructor and learners are collaborative
2. Curriculum is thematic, experiential, and inclusive of multiple perspectives
3. Instruction allows for a broad range of learning preferences, builds from learners' strengths, interests, and experiences, and is participatory
4. Grouping is not tracked by perceptions of ability but rather promotes cooperation, a shared responsibility, and a sense of belonging; and
5. Evaluation considers multiple intelligences, uses authentic assessments, and fosters self-reflection.

According to the Search Institute's developmental relationship framework, five aspects are known to promote the power of developmental relationships. These five aspects can also inform our planning for supporting students during summer learning teaching and learning.

1. Express Care: Show me that I matter to you.
2. Challenge Growth: Push me to keep getting better.
3. Provide Support: Help me complete tasks and achieve goals.
4. Share Power: Treat me with respect and give me a say.
5. Expand Possibilities: Connect me with people and places that broaden my world.

To bolster a student-centered approach and positive student and educator relationships as we plan for summer teaching and learning, we offer these recommendations:

1. **Consider staff and student strengths and talents** when creating your hybrid model. Someone might have a great online presence, another the technical skills needed to make online learning successful, and perhaps another is more effective with face-to-face interactions. How can we use the talents of each individual on our team to support the success of every student. This is an opportunity to structure learning in ways that haven't been done before.

2. **Establish a team** of students, staff, and parents focused on learning from students and families what's working and what may need adjustment during summer learning. The team should include student and family voices previously unheard and under-represented. This will increase the likelihood of our identifying meaningful and relevant strategies to meet their needs. Set a process for how to revise the engagement effort based on the feedback received.
3. **Develop a communication plan** and clearly communicate the *purpose of summer learning* to students, families, and staff, in asset-based and mission-aligned language. Develop a feedback loop (student focus group, family survey, for example) to ensure efforts are serving that purpose. In the Remote Teaching and Learning report, the Minneapolis Foundation and the University of Minnesota provide a template that can help develop your communication plan.
4. **Consider multiple and varied methods** for engaging learners in meaningful and relevant experiences aligned with who they are, how they learn, and what they aspire to be and do.

Family Engagement

Just as each school community is complex and unique, there is no single roadmap to guarantee success in engaging families while navigating through challenging times. Building relationships and trust through regular ongoing communications and meaningful interactions with families is critical to creating effective partnerships.

MDE has developed a Family Engagement Toolkit specific to distance learning, which includes resources on communicating and engaging with families, successfully connecting with students and more. The toolkit can be found on the Supporting Students and Families COVID-19 Resources web page. We will continue to update this web page as we develop more resources and trainings to help school districts and charter schools partner and engage with students and families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the transformation of schools, states that, "Family engagement is not about ways that families should partner with schools, but about ways that districts, schools, and educators must partner with and see families as assets for teaching and learning. Culturally responsive-sustaining family engagement is the practice of authentic, equal partnership with families, rooted in a deep knowledge and appreciation for the rich social and cultural identities, assets, habits and contexts that families bring to learning."

Culturally responsive outreach is the ability to communicate and work effectively across cultural lines by acknowledging and navigating the differences in world views and overcoming structural, attitudinal, and cultural barriers. Successful partnerships with families and students begin with a thorough understanding of school district policy, curriculum, and teaching practices. This information should be shared with staff and families. Engagement is ***more than access to learning***. In order for students to truly learn, we must find those students that need the most support, and to first focus on family wellness.

Prioritization of Children of Critical Workers in Summer Programming and Care

Availability of care and programming for children of critical sector workers has been crucial for the availability of the state's frontline workers to confront the COVID-19 pandemic. During the summer months, districts are highly encouraged to continue this care to the extent possible. The Governor and state appreciate the continued work of districts and others to serve in this capacity.

As school districts and charter schools implement Executive Order 20-57, stating community education and other summer programming can occur during the summer of 2020, the prioritization of critical sectors is highly encouraged. Guidance is available here.

Summer programming and education sites should plan, advertise, and implement options that prioritize the enrollment of children of families in Tier 1 on this guidance document. Based on community workforce needs and local staffing and space considerations, summer programming and education sites are strongly encouraged to then enroll children of workers in Tier 2, followed by Tier 3. As capacity allows and MDH requirements are implemented, summer programming and education sites may choose to provide care and programming to any child.

Programming through community education or other summer 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 this care just as they normally would during the summer months. Districts should consider all options, including a sliding fee-based scale and scholarships, to ensure children from low-income families are able to access the care.

Consistent with standard summer care in previous years, this care may be provided to children of any age as long as districts meet licensing and other regulatory requirements. In addition, districts may continue to provide child care for families participating in the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) at a program licensed or certified by the Department of Human Services.

At the discretion of the school district or charter school, School Readiness programs serving 3- and 4-year-olds may continue to serve children of any critical worker included in the state list and charge fees per statute 124D.15 Subd. 12.

For additional information about child care during the COVID-19 pandemic, visit mn.gov/childcare.

Health Guidance for Summer Programming and Care

It is important to ensure that when any programming or care is provided to youth and children, all Minnesota Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines are followed. This includes social distancing, screening, exclusion guidance, and other public health practices. See the public health guidance for summer programming.

Additionally, the CDC has developed helpful guidance for child care programs that remain open. In this guidance, you will find updated information on health screening methods in school-age care settings.

A summary of health guidance and continued updated information is also available on mn.gov/childcare.

Internet and Device Access

Technology has been an important tool for students and families to stay connected to their schools, friends, family and community. As students are missing out on important social and academic in-person interactions, it is important for students and families to have access to technology during the summer months.

In many cases, districts have provided the only device or hot spot available for families to have access to the internet. This has allowed for access to instructional materials for distance learning as well as online information and applications for benefits, social connections, and COVID-related news and alerts.

For this reason, school districts and charter schools are encouraged, to the extent practicable, to allow students who have access to district-provided technology during distance learning (such as devices and wireless hotspots) to continue to have access to that technology during the summer months. This is especially critical for students enrolled in summer learning needing to access materials and connect with their educators.

Districts' ability to provide technology over the summer may be limited by budget constraints or vendor contracts. However, districts are encouraged to explore the funding flexibilities in Executive Order 20-41, grants and donations from private technology providers, and possible flexibilities with vendor contracts to come up with strategies to keep this important technology in the hands of students over the summer.

Additionally, as districts continue efforts to expand device and internet access for students and families, including technology purchased through federal dollars, districts should make every effort to distribute the technology as soon as possible this summer.

We know that that some families are resistant to technology, and we must work with them where they are at, and see that their needs are met in effective and creative ways.

Nutrition/Summer Food Program

Districts should continue to ensure access to meals for students attending Summer School or participating in Summer Learning activities. Depending on the available USDA waivers, the district may have options on whether to serve all students in their district.

Definitions:

- **Area Eligible:** Sites within the geographical boundaries of a school attendance area with **at least 50 percent** of its children are approved for free or reduced-price meals by school or census data or that have received a waiver from USDA through MDE.
- **Academic Summer School:** Defined as credit recovery or required academic work.

- **Summer Learning or Enrichment:** Activities usually defined as providing recreational, cultural, religious, or other types of organized activities.

Meal Program Options

- **Seamless Summer Program (SSO)** would allow a school who is "area eligible" to serve students participating in summer school activities. It would provide meals for all the students enrolled in classes and follow the NSLP meal pattern requirements and rates of reimbursement.
    - ***Open sites***: Meals are served to all children who request them, including those who are enrolled in **Academic Summer School**, **Summer Learning/Enrichment** as well as the general community. The school can provide home deliveries to all who request it.
    - ***Closed enrolled sites***: Meals are served only to an identified group of children who are participating in **Summer Learning/Enrichment**. These sites usually provide recreational, cultural, religious, or other types of organized activities. Academic summer school is not a qualifying program for a closed enrolled SSO site.
    - **National School Lunch Program (NSLP)** would allow a school to follow the normal school lunch program requirements (meal pattern, F/R/P pricing and reimbursement, etc.). Districts who do not qualify for area eligible SFSP, might choose this option. Free and reduced-price eligible students would receive meals free of charge; paid students would be charged the regular meal rate or the cost of the paid meals could be supported by the General Fund or other non-federal account.
- **Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)** would be allowed for a school that qualifies as area eligible.
    - ***Open sites*** can serve meals to all children request them and provide home deliveries to all who request it.
    - ***Closed enrolled sites*** allows all households who qualified under free or reduced-price eligibility to serve meals to students/children 18 and under. Home deliveries can only be done to free and reduced-price eligible households.

Schools weighing which option they want to pursue should consider:

- Funding possibilities (further detail can be reviewed in the funding section of this document).
- **[UPDATED 05/20/20]:** The USDA has extended the non-congregate waiver until August 31, 2020.
- If a school has a **summer school program** they may not categorize as "closed-enrolled" and must serve meals to all under the "open" option.

If a district or charter school chooses not to operate a summer meals program, they must provide families with information and resources so that they can get access to meals. For example, information about community-based summer food sites, food shelves, restaurants serving free meals to children, etc.

During this unprecedented time, it is critical that districts and charter schools have robust coordination and outreach plans in place to maximize meals served and reimbursements.

These flexibilities are important to provide every child with meals regardless of household income as well as stabilize nutrition programs in districts and charters that may be experiencing loss of fees.

Please contact mde.fns@state.mn.us or 651-582-8526 or toll free at 800-366-8922 to discuss your options directly with staff.

American Indian Education Partnerships

The pursuit of educational equity recognizes the historical and contemporary conditions and barriers that have prevented opportunity and success in learning for students based on their race/ethnicity, income, and other social conditions. We know that there are many factors that can affect interactions across cultures, including historical cultural experiences and specifically relationships between cultures in a local community. This is especially true with our American Indian communities. The historic legacy of systemic oppression and racism has fostered a lack of trust, fear, and suspicion of governmental entities and school personnel that can negatively influence how school services are viewed by our tribal communities, families, and students.

Many families are struggling with abrupt social isolation, food scarcity, parental employment, and more. In addition, community-based partners have prioritized the need to understand the distinctive contexts between urban and rural American Indian populations. We, as educators need to double our efforts on reaching out to our tribal community members, and to prioritize personalized outreach methods, especially for students and families that have not been present or engaged during distance learning. This is accomplished by working with your Indian Education staff, your American Indian Parent Advisory Committee, and any Tribal partnerships you may have in place.

Indian Education staff are essential for targeted outreach to families and students. Engagement in successful districts that show a true collaboration between district guidance counselors, social workers, administrators, and Indian Education staff. Students and families that have been difficult to reach ***first*** need communications to shift away from academics towards basic needs and safety.

If you have an American Indian Parent Advisory Committee, include them in participating in district decision-making. Parents know many of the other American Indian parents, and can assist the district with vital information about the struggles they are facing during distance learning. Parents can help inform and build district practices and programs that adapt to fit the cultural context of the community, and can inform you of local tribal and community partners that can provide local context and information to help you connect. Please see the Tribal Considerations section within the Minnesota Distance Teaching and Learning Implementation Guidance for further information.

Summer Programming and Indian Education

Summer Programming is a wonderful opportunity for enrichment, especially for Indigenous lessons that incorporate the revised standards that include the contributions of Minnesota's tribal nations and communities. Indigenous thematic units will engage American Indian learners and strengthen relationships with students and their families. The Family Engagement Toolkit has some Indigenous links for early learning through high school. In addition, the Office of Indian Education page has a list of valuable teaching resources on the Teaching and Learning tab.

For schools who receive Indian Education Aid, we recognize that the current school closures and distance learning have impacted your ability to implement your Indian Education Program Plan as intended. We are encouraging you to find alternative and innovative ways in which to spend this money if you are unable to follow the plan submitted to the Office of Indian Education. Suggested options include:

- Purchasing items for culture trunks
- Purchasing the Native authored books found on the recommended reading book list
- Purchasing online or mail subscription services for Indigenous media
- Purchasing Native Language learning applications or materials
- Purchasing Native films for use at student and family engagement activities

The Native authored booklists correspond to standards. The collection of books as a whole, can be found at the following libraries, and are available through inter-library loan (along with an access guide):

- Anoka Public Libraries (12 sites)
- Scott County Public Libraries (8)
- Lake Agassiz Regional Library (22 sites)

Summer programming is a valuable opportunity to provide Indigenous-centered enrichment. Indigenous learning resources will engage all students and will promote positive relationships with your American Indian students, their families, and communities. Please reach out to the Office of Indian Education for any questions you may have.

Transportation

The expectation in Executive Order 20-57 is that school districts and charter schools maintain collaboration and contracts with bus transportation providers.

If a district or charter school chooses to operate a hybrid model that employs distance learning and in-school learning, transportation should be provided to in-school students according to the district or charter school's transportation policy.

If a district or charter school is using distance learning, they should follow their transportation contracts. Contract provisions that account for weather-related closures or other short term closures may not be applicable during the distance learning or extended distance learning periods because the closures are not weather related or short term. Please consult your district or school attorney for questions about how to interpret your contract. Additionally, transportation should be provided to students in the school-age care for children of critical workers program, if offered, just as they would receive this transportation on a normal school day. If transportation for before- and after-school care would normally have been provided, that transportation should also continue.

Community Education

Community Education is a primary provider for childcare and summer programming in school districts and communities across the state. All Community Education programs operating this summer must follow the MDH Summer Programming guidance.

Recommended Start: The start date of summer Community Education programming should be determined at the local level. We recommend that summer care and youth programming begins sometime in June, but programs can begin earlier than that if they can ensure all MDH guidelines can be adhered to.

For more information regarding school-age care programs, refer to the School-age Care for Children of Critical Workers section above.

Youth programs should follow the implementation practices outlined in the Summer Learning Overview section of this document. Community Education programs may charge fees for programming just as they normally would. Programs should consider all options, including scholarships and flexible funding, to ensure children from low-income families are able to access opportunities.

Additionally, the Minnesota Community Education Association has developed comprehensive planning and implementation guidance which may be helpful for program to use as they transition into summer programming while still maintaining strict health protocols during COVID-19. This information can be found on the MCEA website.

Early Learning Community Education Programs

- Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) and School Readiness Programs
  - Many ECFE and School Readiness programs have provided distance learning, which may continue this summer, transition into a hybrid model, or both. Since the purpose ECFE is to provide parenting education to support children's learning and development, programs are encouraged to provide summer programming and services, if funds are available. With limited time and resources, ECFE programs should prioritize programming and services for children and families with the most needs. Programs should also actively engage in partnerships to best ensure children and families are receiving comprehensive support. For example, in what ways can ECFE work with child care providers, Head Start, and their Early Childhood Screening program to support screening efforts? In what ways can ECFE work with preschool programs and School Readiness to help prepare children and their families for kindergarten, or fall programming? In what ways can ECFE programs work with their district on family engagement efforts, including district communication efforts with families?
  - If funds are available for School Readiness programming, efforts should be focused on children defined as “at-risk” by the district.
- Early Childhood Screening programs ensure all Minnesota children are at their optimal health and development and prepared to learn. During this time districts may provide screening components which do not require social distancing such as collection of the parent report of their child’s social emotional health, immunization review, assurance of health care provider and coverage, review of risk factors which may influence learning and follow up regarding past referrals. These components may be provided by mail, phone or online with an interpreter where needed. When social distancing is lifted and face to face screening resumes, these previously completed components will make the visits quicker. Once social distancing has lifted, further screening guidance will be provided from MDE in consultation with MDH.

Adult Basic Education

- Adult Basic Education consortia are providing programming via distance learning, which may continue this summer, transition to hybrid programming, or both.

- GED Testing: On May 6, Commissioner Ricker announced that school facilities may be used for GED testing under certain circumstances. Please see the Use of School Facilities section in the Minnesota Distance Teaching and Learning Implementation Guidance for more information.

Facility Use

- Use of school facilities including school buildings, fields, etc. must follow all MDH and CDC guidelines.

Guidance for State Approved Alternative Programs Summer Learning

2020 Summer Targeted Services Programming

Targeted Services is an optional program for students rising to grades 1-8 in the 2020-21 school year. Rising 8th graders are served in the credit-bearing Alternative Learning Center (ALC) program, not a Targeted Services program. Each state approved program should determine the specific program focus, expected outcomes, and assessment procedures to individualize student Continual Learning Plans (CLP). The scheduled direct time with a teacher is what can be claimed for membership. Student work that is done independently does not generate membership or revenue.

2020 Summer Credit Recovery Programs

Area Learning Centers, Alternative Learning Programs and Contract Alternative Programs Credit Recovery Programs

Alternative programs offer secondary programming with a focus on Credit Recovery for students at-risk and off-track for graduation. These programs are adaptive to student needs and circumstances best served by the strategies of distance learning.

Credit Recovery Programs in a Distance Learning Model:

1. Seat-based
    a. These classes can continue in a distance learning model. The schedule would remain the same. In other words, English 11, for example, would still meet Tuesday and Thursday at 9 a.m. But instead of meeting at the high school or another physical location, you would meet virtually.
    b. Classes are scheduled. You will need a platform to run the classes.
    c. Attendance would be taken in the virtual class. Students are dropped after one week of not attending the virtual class.
    d. Membership hours would be based on continuous enrollment (students are dropped after 1 week of absence).
    e. CLPs must reflect the distance learning model as a delivery of instruction.
2. Independent Study
    a. Membership hours are based on credits earned and amount of teacher instructional time. This teacher time equals at least 20% of the membership hours claimed.

b. Classes are offered but there is not a set time students must attend classes, even virtually.
c. Teacher instructional time would delivered virtually. This can occur in individual or small group sessions. Teachers can have "office hours" where students can call in or log in for their instruction.
d. Teachers keep track of this time per student. Attendance is this teacher instructional time so be prepared for attendance to be low.

Guidelines for Credit Recovery Program with Social Distancing:

1. Inform families what your social distancing guidelines and procedures will be and confirm registration.
2. Real time instruction can be facilitated through many virtual platforms. Teachers can also schedule individual time with students via these tools or over the phone.
3. A plan to rotate direct instruction; one group of students on Tuesday and Thursday and another group on Monday and Wednesday.
4. The scheduled direct time with a teacher is what can be claimed for membership. Student work that is done independently does not generate membership or revenue.
5. CLPs must reflect the distance learning model as a delivery of instruction.
6. Students are dropped after one week of not attending the scheduled class times.

Attendance

Most school districts and charter schools have an existing Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) or Response to Intervention (RtI) model established for academics and behavior. During summer learning programs, it is appropriate to maintain your MTSS or RtI model to support students' engagement and attendance. MDE's guidance helps identify strategies for ensuring students stay engaged throughout summer programming.

Grading

Unless students are enrolled in summer programming for credit recovery for high school graduation, students should not receive "grades." For students enrolled for credit recovery purposes, decision-makers must approach the creation of new assessment and grading systems with an equity mindset. The new systems must reflect an effort to confront and eradicate known inequities in the current system. MDE developed guidelines for creating equitable grading systems during COVID-19.

Budgeting Considerations

In addition to normal budget processes, districts and charter schools should consider the following:

Funding Flexibilities – Transferring Existing Operating Funds

- Executive Order 20-57 extends the fund balance transfer and revenue use flexibilities authorized by Executive Order 20-41 to include the new summer learning period.
- Please see MDE guidance and request form for fund transfers related to these flexibilities. ***Note:*** these documents are being updated to include updates from Executive Order 20-57.

Federal Funding

- Minnesota is applying for funding through the federal CARES Act, including Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) and Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds.
- Once approved by the federal government, MDE will work with Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) and the Governor's Office to consult with the legislature and allocate funds.
- Funding from the Federal CARES Act will be provided to schools on a reimbursement basis through the MDE SERVS system in the same manner other federal aid grants are made available. Once the funding allocations are loaded into SERVS, schools will complete a streamlined application/certification for each of funding source, confirming how they will spend the money, including a budget plan.

Contact Information

- For health questions about COVID-19, please email the Minnesota Department of Health or call their hotline at 651-201-3920.
- For education questions, use MDEs COVID-19 general email: COVID-19.Questions.MDE@state.mn.us
- For questions about school meal programs, please contact monica.herrera@state.mn.us
- For questions about alternative learning programs, please contact MDE.AlternativeLearning@state.mn.us
- For questions about special education, please contact robyn.widley@state.mn.us
- For questions about special education finance, please contact paul.ferrin@state.mn.us
- For questions about online and digital learning, please contact jeff.plaman@state.mn.us
- For questions about civil rights compliance, please contact marikay.litzau@state.mn.us
- For relevant guidance regarding how schools can protect civil rights during an outbreak, see the U.S. DoE Office for Civil Rights Fact Sheet: Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Schools While Protecting the Civil Rights of Students and the U.S. DoE Office for Civil Rights Fact Sheet released during the 2014 Ebola outbreak.
- For information on ensuring web accessibility for students with disabilities for schools utilizing online learning during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, view this webinar from the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the U.S. Department of Education