



March 16, 2021

COVID-19 Resource Guide

K-12 Education



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●●● A NOTE FROM CONGRESSWOMAN SUZAN DELBENE ●●●

The COVID-19 pandemic is the largest public health and economic crisis our state and county have faced in a lifetime. Many people have lost their jobs, kids are out of school, and businesses have closed their doors. This situation requires bold action to provide relief to the most affected and provide a strong recovery.

I want you to know that I'm fighting for you in Congress. Since the beginning of this outbreak, my priorities at the federal level are protecting families, workers, and small businesses, and getting our health care system the resources it needs to save lives.

Congress has now passed three major bipartisan relief packages to address this pandemic and provide economic resources to our communities. This guide contains information about the resources available to children in grades K-12, their teachers, and their parents whose education has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is meant to be a reference tool and the information within is not exhaustive. Inside you will find a compilation of existing federal and state resources.

Because the situation is constantly evolving, check my website (delbene.house.gov) or call my office in Kirkland at 425-485-0085 for additional assistance.

Please know that my staff and I are here to help. Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Suzan DelBene".

Suzan DelBene
U.S. Representative

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QUICK GUIDE

Congresswoman DelBene's COVID-19 Resource Page:

My page on COVID-19 resources is continually updated and includes information for businesses, workers, nonprofits, and more.

FEMA information on federal COVID-19 response:

<https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus/>

House Education and Labor Committee:

<https://edlabor.house.gov/committee-response-to-covid-19>

Washington State: A comprehensive list of state resources is available on the governor's coronavirus page: [coronavirus.wa.gov](https://www.governor.wa.gov/coronavirus)

Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction: Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance and Resources:

<https://www.k12.wa.us/about-ospi/press-releases/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-resources>

U.S. Department of Education: <https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus>

Centers for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

Bureau of Indian Education: <https://www.bie.edu/>

Bureau of Indian Affairs: <https://www.bia.gov/covid-19>

American Council on Education:

<https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Summary-CARES-Act-HigherEd-Provisions-032620.pdf>

For assistance please contact any of my offices, or visit my website at www.delbene.house.gov

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THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

Building back America's economy by safely getting kids and educators back into classrooms. The historic \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan (ARP) builds upon the two previous relief packages passed in 2020. In addition to investing \$20 billion to finally establish an effective and coordinated national vaccination supply and distribution plan, this legislation provides critical supports to K-12 schools in safely reopening.

More specifically, this includes:

- \$130 billion to support states and school districts to safely re-open classrooms. These funds are available to states and school districts for immediate and long-term relief so they can work with public health experts to safely re-open schools and make up for lost time in the classroom.
 - These funds can be used for projects including fixing ventilation systems, reducing class sizes, providing PPE and social distancing supplies, and hiring of support staff.
 - Additionally, it ensures that 20% of funds are put toward addressing learning losses caused by the pandemic.
 - The legislation requires states award funds to local school districts within 60 days, and also mandates that districts provide re-opening plans;
- \$7.1 billion to expand internet connectivity to students and communities;
- \$3 billion for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
- invests more than \$5 billion in P-EBT so that low-income families have access to school meals and food assistance during both the school year and summer months;
- \$1.3 billion for evidence-based summer enrichment programs, and an additional \$1.3 billion for after school support initiatives;
- \$2.75 billion to states to award grants to private K-12 schools;
- \$850 million for grants to Bureau of Indian Education-operated elementary and secondary schools as well as Tribal Colleges and Universities; and
- \$800 million to support youth experiencing homelessness.

CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2020

The second major coronavirus relief package, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020, passed in December 2020 and will extend the previous funding deadline set in the CARES Act from December 31, 2020, to December 31, 2021, for state and local governments.

Schools that accept funding are required to pay employees and contractors during any closures whenever possible.

The law provides the following for emergency education funding to students, schools, institutions, and states across the country, including:

- \$82 billion for an Education Stabilization Fund to remain available through September 30, 2022.
- \$54.3 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund. This can be used by schools to improve facilities and infrastructure to reduce COVID spread, address learning losses caused by the pandemic, and purchase technology.
 - 90 percent of funds must be distributed to local education agencies based on a proportional share of ESEA Title I-A funds. The remaining 10% can be held in emergency reserves by the state to address issues related to the pandemic.
- \$4.1 billion for the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief fund for pandemic education assistance.
 - \$2.75 billion is set aside for private schools that will be administered by public agencies.
- \$819 million to the Bureau of Indian Education-operated and funded schools and tribal colleges/universities.

Maintenance of Effort (MOE) states that states must maintain spending on K-12 and higher education in FY 2022 at least at the proportional rate of the state’s support for K-12 and higher education relative to the state’s overall spending averaged over FY 2018, FY 2019, and FY 2020. MOE may be waived by the Secretary of Education.

Child Care

The act includes:

- \$10 billion in emergency funds to the childcare sector via the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program. This allows states to maintain the flexibility that came with CARES funds, including:
 - Childcare assistance to families.
 - Increased operating costs for providers from COVID safety protocols.
- \$250 million for Head Start providers to continue service for low-income families throughout the pandemic.

CARES ACT HIGHLIGHTS

Education Provisions

The CARES Act provides approximately \$31 billion in emergency education funding to students, schools, institutions, and states across the country.

\$30 billion total, less 2 percent for Indian Education, grants to governors in impacted areas and administrative expenses; or \$30 billion, divided into three pools.

Governors (9.8 percent, or \$2.95 billion)

- Provides \$3 billion to governors for emergency education relief that can be spent on school districts, institutions of higher education, or both.
- Allocated to states on basis of 60 percent of the population ages 5-24 and 40 percent on the population of children counted under ESEA.
- Funds are not restricted to public institutions within the state.
- Imposes a MOE on participating states that ties funding for the governors' pool and the K-12 pool to an average of the past three years' spending on K-12 and higher education for FYs 20-21.
- MOE doesn't cover capital projects, R&D, and tuition revenue.
- The Secretary may waive the MOE requirement for "states that have experienced a precipitous decline in financial resources."

Governors can distribute these funds to agencies and institutions across K-12 and higher education that "have been most significantly impacted by

coronavirus” to support their ongoing functionality and ability to continue to deliver education and services to students.

Update: For the Governors Emergency Education Relief Fund, Governors may use funds to provide emergency support to school districts and institutions of higher education or other education-related entities essential for carrying out emergency education services. Funds can be used for authorized activities as well as the provision of child care and early childhood education, social and emotional support, and the protection of education-related jobs. More information is provided [here](#).

According to the House Appropriations Committee, Washington State has been awarded nearly \$56,770,000.

K-12 (43.9 percent, or \$13.23 billion)

Gives states \$13 billion to support school districts. This funding would cover a wide range of activities, including cleaning and sanitizing schools, purchasing educational technology such as laptops and hotspot devices, training educators to use online learning tools, ensuring access to education for students with disabilities, and providing students emergency funding for food, housing, and other essentials.

Child Care

The CARES Act offers child care relief to families and frontline workers.

- Provides \$3.5 billion for child care and an additional \$750 million for Head Start.
 - Supports child care providers through the crisis, even if providers are forced to close, and ensures that workers in the health care sector, emergency responders, sanitation workers, and other essential workers have access to child care to enable them to work.
 - Ensures children and families enrolled in Head Start continue receiving services, to the extent possible, and provides funding for summer programming in areas of the country that will be ready to reopen by then.

Related Agencies

The CARES Act provides relief for AmeriCorps volunteers, grantees, and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

- Ensures that AmeriCorps volunteers whose service has been disrupted by COVID-19 can still earn their education awards.
- Ensures National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) members can re-enroll if their service if it is interrupted by COVID-19 up to the age of 26, and creates additional flexibilities for grantees and the Corporation of National and Community Service to fulfill their financial obligations.

\$3.5 billion in funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) in the CARES Act

The emergency CCDBG funds will help states provide an emergency funding stream to child care providers, even if providers close; continuing to pay child care staff; helping providers stay open or re-open, and providing child care to essential employees, including healthcare sector employees, emergency responders, and sanitation workers.

Tribal Schools

\$69 million to help tribal schools, colleges, and universities through the Bureau of Indian Education.

Meals and Nutrition

Child Nutrition Programs – The bill includes \$8.8 billion in additional funding for Child Nutrition Programs to ensure children receive meals while school is not in session.

Many students rely on school meals to meet their nutritional needs. Additionally, as this outbreak begins to impact the economic environment, we know more families may find themselves needing assistance. During these school closures, school districts may provide breakfast and lunch to any student, regardless of their family income, at the location(s) designated by the district.

Each district and school has a unique set of circumstances and resources. OSPI is individually assisting districts and schools to determine how to best meet community needs. [Guidance for school districts is available on OSPI's Meals & Nutrition Guidance webpage.](#)

Frequently Asked Questions – School Closures & Reopening

Q: Why are schools reopening, and when can I expect students and teachers back in the classroom?

A: In March 2021, Gov. Inslee issued an [emergency proclamation](#) declaring the decline of children and youth's mental health due to school closures a crisis. This measure allows schools to begin safely reopening by staggering student's access to in-person learning.

Beginning April 5, K–5 (some districts include grade 6), must be offered a hybrid option. On April 19, all remaining K-12 schools must offer hybrid learning options. Thirty percent of time spent learning must be in-person. Schools must offer students an option to be on campus at least two days each week. Parents may opt to continue to continue distance learning only.

Q: What safety protocols are being taken to reopen schools?

A: In person learning schedules for students will be staggered to better accommodate physical distancing and cleaning requirements set by the state [Dept. of Health](#) and [Dept. of Labor & Industries](#). Students and staff must adhere to masking. The American Rescue plan passed in March 2021, designates \$130 billion to safely reopen schools, including funding to improve ventilation systems, build plexiglass barriers, hire support staff, etc.

Q: When will educators and students have access to the vaccine? Is the vaccine required to for students to return to classrooms?

A: Washington is currently in [Phase 1B, Tier 1](#) of vaccine distribution, which includes educators. School employees are highly encouraged to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Eligibility and appointments can be made by using the [WA COVID Vaccine Finder](#).

Q: Are childcare options being provided during closures?

A: Closing schools has a major impact on our ability to staff hospitals, health care facilities, and other fire and medical departments. Superintendents have been asked to provide childcare, at no cost, to families who are in the medical field or who are first responders.

Q: If childcare options are provided, how will those children be kept safe?

A: Districts that provide childcare have been advised to take every measure possible to keep students safe, including providing social distancing, ensuring consistent hand washing, sending students home if they're sick, and routinely disinfecting commonly touched surfaces.

Q: How will schools support students experiencing homelessness?

A: Schools are expected to plan how they will continue to support students experiencing homelessness during the closure. Reach out to your school district for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions – School Meals & Student Nutrition

Q: Are schools required to serve meals during the closure?

A: Many students depend on school meals as a crucial part of daily nutrition. Districts are expected to develop plans and resources to ensure student needs are met during extended closures but are not required to serve meals during an unanticipated school closure.

Q: Who can receive a meal?

A: Any child aged 0–18, or adults with disabilities who are enrolled in educational programs, can receive meals free of charge.

Q: How do I know if my district is serving meals?

A: Districts must share information publicly if they are serving meals. Information can often be found on district websites, via email communications, or through other communication formats.

Q: How will my district serve meals?

A: Districts are using a variety of ways to get meals to students. We encourage schools to maintain social distancing during the COVID-19 closure to prevent the spread of the disease. Due to this, meal service will look different than typical service. Meal service options include,

but are not limited to, utilizing school bus routes, grab and go options, and more.

Q: Can breakfast and lunch be given at one time?

A: Yes. Districts may distribute two meals, such as breakfast and lunch, in one meal service.

Q: Can I pick up meals for my child(ren) if they are sick?

A: Children must be present to receive a free meal. If a parent would like to pick up meals for children not present, they should contact their school district for assistance.

Q: How will families be notified about additional information?

A: Districts are expected to follow their standard procedures for notifying families. This includes, but is not limited to, calls, emails, text messages, and contacting local news stations. If families are not hearing from their districts during a closure, they should get in touch with their school principal or district superintendent.

Frequently Asked Questions – Other

Q: Will students have to make up missed days?

A: Schools and districts that close in response to the COVID-19 outbreak should make every effort to make up missed time, including using scheduled vacation days and planned school closure days.

Q: Will this have an impact on student testing?

A: The Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA) ELA and math tests have been rescheduled. Smarter Balanced is administered within the last 12 weeks of the school year, but no later than June 4.

Q: Who should I contact with additional questions?

A: For all questions about receiving meals during this unexpected closure, please contact your district directly. District Websites and Contact Information can be found on the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's website.

Continuous Learning During Closures

While schools are closed and are not providing traditional in-person instruction, education must continue. [Bulletin 024-20 provides school districts with a framework for continuing instruction and learning during school closures](#). The sample plan provided in the bulletin is also [available in Word format](#) for districts to use. Further guidance will be grounded in compassion, communication, and common sense; rather than the traditional compliance measures we are all familiar with in our education community. Our schools are the backbone of our democracy and the structures, routines, and ongoing learning opportunities will create calm connections our families need at this critical time in our state.

In late February and early March 2020, the state set a high bar for districts who wanted to continue distance learning if their school buildings were to close. The situation in Washington has drastically evolved since that time. After the state's initial guidance, Governor Inslee shut down all schools in the state for a minimum of six weeks. The state has an obligation to our students to provide them with opportunities to continue their learning during this pandemic.

We should avoid assuming that continuity of education outside of a typical school building can only occur through online means. Districts will provide instruction using printed learning materials, phone contact, email, technology-based virtual instruction, or a combination to meet student needs.

Resources to assist districts, students, and parents/guardians are available on [OSPI's Resources for Continuous Learning During School Closures webpage](#).

Resources for Continuous Learning During School Closures

In response to school closures due to COVID-19, OSPI content experts have curated a selection of links to external organizations providing high-quality online educational materials – courses, lessons, videos, physical and outdoor activity suggestions, etc. Please note that in many cases, these resources are free to use online but are not openly licensed for wide-scale reuse and adaptation.

These resources were carefully chosen for their alignment to Washington State Learning Standards (or a recognized equivalent) and/or direct experience with effective implementation with students. Particular attention has been given to identifying best practices and guidance in supporting ALL students and providing suggestions for educator professional learning during this challenging time.

Connect to the [OSPI Remote Learning Resource Suggestions document on the Washington OER Commons Hub](#) for a doc, pdf, and sortable spreadsheet version of the list [here](#).

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Office of Education has put together a roundup of the agency's most popular educational resources for students of all ages to explore at home.

[NOAA's virtual activities](#) are designed to help students learn more about the ocean and atmosphere through [virtual "Sanctuaries at Home" expeditions](#), hands-on experiments, data exploration, and so much more. With access to the internet, parents and teachers can use these resources with ease to enrich and facilitate their child's or student's educational experience.

There is also a wide range of educational material available via the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution. You can find descriptions and links to Smithsonian Institution resources [here](#), and Library of Congress resources [here](#). The material includes resources for students of all ages and brings with it the credibility of two of our nation's preeminent educational institutions.

Many educational companies are providing limited-time free or low-cost access to educational programming. The sites below show a collection of such resources in alphabetical order, with a description.

- [International Society for Technology in Education \(ISTE\) - Learning Keeps Going Resource Directory](#)
- [State Educational Technology Directors' Association \(SETDA\) eLearning Coalition. Partner Resources](#)

Vendors and resources found in the two directories above have not all been vetted by OSPI, nor should this be considered an endorsement. Educators should be mindful of digital resources that require teachers or students to

create online accounts. Please check with district policies and consider HIPPA, FERPA, and COPPA laws with regards to student privacy BEFORE implementing any of these resources. Make sure plans are in place to support educators when access permissions end.

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HOW TO SUPPORT STUDENT EMOTIONAL WELLBEING & MENTAL HEALTH

Seek outside help and mental health resources. The COVID-19 pandemic and distance learning have increased strains on student mental health and emotional wellbeing. Those struggling with stress, anxiety and loneliness are encouraged to use the WA Listens hotline (1-833-681-2011) to speak with a support specialist. The WA Office of Public Instruction has also created a list of [resources to support struggling students](#).

Monitor television viewing and social media. Limit screen time as much as possible and avoid watching or listening to information that might be upsetting with your kids around. Remind them that many stories about COVID-19 online are based on rumors and inaccurate information.

Make yourself available. Kids may need extra time with you to process their concerns, feelings, and questions. Make sure they know that you're there to listen to them and provide them with plenty of love and affection.

Remain calm and assuring. Kids pick up on your verbal and nonverbal reactions, so make sure you're in control of those. Help reframe your kids' concerns into the appropriate perspective.

Practice proper health and hygiene. Encourage proper health and hygiene with your kids by doing things like creating drawings to remember family routines or teaching them to wash hands for the correct amount of time by singing a song.

Keep a consistent schedule. Consistent bedtimes, meals, and exercise will help your family feel a sense of calm among change.

If available, encourage students to access distance learning options. School districts are allowed to provide distance learning if they can provide it equitably to all students. Check with your school district for more information.

Have fun! Do things that make your family feel better in times of stress, such as watching movies, reading, or playing [games](#).