

Pandemic Readiness Planning for School Districts

Despite the confusion and hardship that has resulted from the pandemic, the students and families in your district are still counting on their schools to provide them with high quality education and support – in-person, remotely, or through some combination – during the upcoming school year. In order to be prepared for any scenario, your district needs a Readiness Plan to ensure that you can meet your community's expectations and needs.

At Mass Insight, we've learned that successful planning relies on strong facilitation that engages district and school leaders, teachers, families, and students. We bring a team of skilled facilitators committed to asking the right questions and involving diverse perspectives to develop your plan. We have a national perspective and expertise informed by work with states, districts, and schools across the country, knowledge of national public health guidance, and intelligence on how other districts are addressing similar challenges posed by the pandemic. We also bring a commitment to ensuring equity for all students.



We take a design-based approach, and will customize the process described below to meet your needs:

Step 1: Establish a readiness planning team

- Mass Insight will work with the superintendent and district leadership to identify a readiness planning team (RPT) that will develop and manage the readiness plan throughout SY 2020-21.
- Mass Insight will support the district in developing initial stakeholder engagement and communication plans that reflect district values and goals while building community trust and confidence.

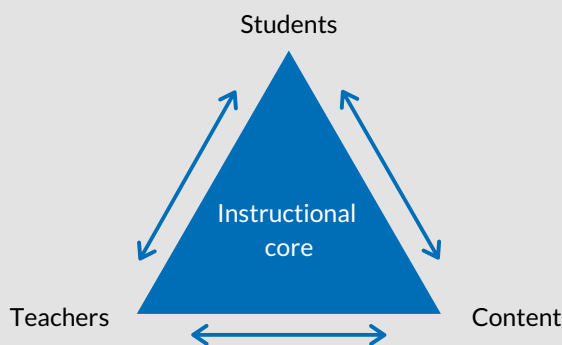
Step 2: Assess local conditions and develop assumptions

- Mass Insight will provide support to understand the federal, state, and local health and safety parameters under which the district and its schools will operate during SY 2020-21.
- Mass Insight will facilitate and support the district RPT to:
 - Assess the district's status on each of the District Readiness Factors, taking stock of what is already in place and what needs to be addressed.
 - Identify the major challenges to delivering high quality in-person and remote instruction.
 - Gather stakeholder (teacher, family, student, and community) input.
 - Develop a set of initial operating assumptions for SY 2020-21 based on a review of local district and community conditions and input from stakeholders (we note that these are likely to evolve, and Mass Insight will be there to support your RPT as they do).

Step 3: Identify action steps

- RPT will identify the most likely instructional scenario.
- With the Step 2 assessment of local conditions complete, Mass Insight will help the RPT identify the most critical challenges and develop action plans to address them.
- RPT will use customized templates provided by Mass Insight to identify goals, action steps, timelines, milestones, and owners for each action plan.
- Mass Insight will ensure ongoing communication with stakeholders about the key elements of the plan.

Learning happens in the instructional core: the interaction between students, teachers, and content. With the uncertainties caused by the pandemic, it's more important than ever to focus on strengthening the instructional core. Regardless of how instruction is delivered, your district's success will depend on your students' readiness to learn, your teachers' readiness to teach, and the quality and accessibility of the content.



To learn more, reach out to Rob Jentsch at rjentch@massinsight.org or Andrea Wolfe at awolfe@massinsight.org.

Step 4: Plan management

- Mass Insight will work with the RPT to utilize protocols for ongoing tracking and reporting on progress, addressing challenges, and adjusting when needed.
- Mass Insight will help district and school leaders engage school and community stakeholders in collecting data on implementation and progress.
- Mass Insight will provide the RPT tools and systems for reporting progress to stakeholders.
- District leaders will use the plan implementation process to build collective responsibility for student success.

Sample District Readiness Factors:

1. Projecting student enrollment and teacher vacancies to determine school staffing needs
2. Recruiting and hiring teachers and other staff
3. Ensuring student and staff health and safety
4. Building school and district calendars and schedules
5. Delivering effective remote instruction to students
6. Identifying student needs and providing the required services and supports
7. Addressing the needs of special education and English Language Learners while complying with legal requirements
8. Providing transportation and food services consistent with health requirements

For 1-8:

- Communicating with students, families, community members and community leaders
- Working with bargaining units to implement the plan
- Addressing the impact of all available funds