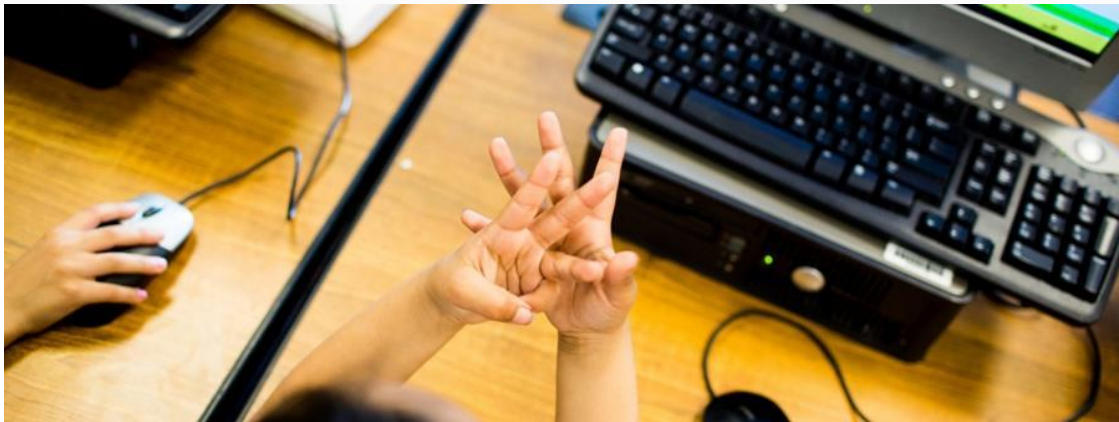


Resources and strategies for systems facing school closures during the coronavirus outbreak.

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March 11, 2020

[Resources for Learning at Home When Schools Close](#)

By Crystal Harmon

While nobody knows what the full extent of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) outbreak will be in the United States, school systems are already planning for the full range of scenarios—including the possibility of extended school closures.

Closing schools for any reason is, of course, a last resort. It creates significant hardship for families, especially those who face disruption to their work schedules. For students, there's no perfect substitute for the missed instructional time—especially when most districts don't have existing virtual learning libraries or platforms.

But with good planning right now, school districts can help ensure students have access to high-quality learning opportunities at home if their schools are forced to close. Below, we offer strategies and resources school districts can use in that planning. We hope you'll find them useful.

In addition, we're offering a limited number of free planning sessions for school system leaders—to help think through instructional content, staff training plans, schedules for home learning, or other resources that might be useful as you navigate this uncertainty. To learn

more, [email us](#).

CHOOSING HOME LEARNING RESOURCES

Before you look externally for home learning resources, take stock of what you already have on hand. Students will need lots of high-quality fiction and non-fiction reading material; math content; opportunities for writing and response to reading; and social studies and science knowledge building content. Ask yourself: what virtual resources do you already have that could provide this content?

If you're coming up short, consider leveraging existing online learning tools. We've found that the following sites offer high-quality content (and most are fully accessible via smartphone):

All subjects

- [Khan Academy](#)
- [IXL](#)
- [Quizlet](#)

Reading/English Language Arts

- [Accelerated Reader](#)
- [Epic](#)
- [Myon](#)
- [Starfall Reading](#)
- [StoryKit](#)

Math

- [Zearn](#)
- [National Council of Teachers of Mathematics](#)
- [National Association for the Education of Young Children](#)
- [The Math Learning Center](#)

Writing

- [Scholastic story starters](#)

- [Independent reading response ideas](#)

Science

- [National Science Teaching Association](#)

Current Events/Social Studies

- [Teaching Tolerance](#)
- [Library of Congress](#)
- [Stanford History Education Group](#)
- [Smithsonian Education](#)
- [Zinn Education Project](#)

USING THE MATERIALS AT HOME

In addition to identifying high-quality home learning materials, you'll need to work with school leaders and teachers as soon as possible to develop instructional plans, learning modules, and schedules in the event of an extended school closure. To mimic classroom learning experiences, build learning modules with online tools like [Eureka Math](#) or [Core Knowledge Language Arts](#), or determine whether your staff could teach to existing scopes and sequences via video or phone conference.

Questions to consider about your instructional plans include:

- Do families need training or other context to use your plans and resources, and if so, when and how can you provide it?
- Does your plan assume families have access to specific technology or other materials at home? How can you ensure the resources you offer are accessible to as many families as possible?
- In particular, how will you ensure that families without a computer or internet access at home can use the plans and resources you're offering? You might consider offering printed resources in addition to online learning suggestions, and ensure that as many online resources as possible are accessible with just a smartphone.
- What will your staff need to feel supported, safe, productive, and instructionally prepared?

COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES

You're likely already sharing regular information with families about ways to keep students healthy and safe at home and at school during the coronavirus outbreak. You can use these same channels to help families prepare for supporting their child's learning at home in the event of a school closure:

- Share any resources available in your community to support childcare, meals, and other supplies if schools are closed.
 - Let families know how they can access home learning resources should the need arise—and how they'll be able to ask questions about them while schools are closed.
 - Encourage families to think about how they'll structure learning at home. You can offer a daily schedule as an example, making sure to stress that it's just one possible way to use home learning resource (not a requirement or something you expect will work for every family's circumstances).
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You might also like:



[Black History is American History. We Should Teach It That Way.](#)

By Sachel Harris



[What a Fourth Grader Taught Me About Supporting ELL Students Like Her](#)

By Cristina Marks



[Opportunity to Learn Mathematics: Time, Task, and Talk](#)

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