



Fall Update

House Education Finance Committee

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Heather Mueller | Deputy Commissioner
August 12, 2020

Agenda

- Executive Order 20-82
- Safe Learning Plan
- COVID-related Funding
 - GEER
 - ESSER
- Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF)



Executive Order 20-82

Executive Order 20-82: Establishing and Changing Learning Models

- **Establish a learning model:** At least two weeks prior to the start of the school year, districts and charters must implement an in-person, hybrid, or distance learning model that adheres to MDH's Safe Learning Plan, which give guidelines on dialing back.
- **Allow individual distance learning:** All districts and charters must allow students and families to choose distance learning regardless of the their current learning model.
- **Can be more restrictive than guidance:** Districts and charters may implement a learning model that is more restrictive than what is required by MDH's Safe Learning Plan.
 - More restrictive models may be required for individual classrooms or buildings.
- **Notify change of plan:** If a school dials back to a more restrictive model, or dials forward to a less restrictive model, it must notify MDE Commissioner within 24 hours of implementation.
- **Commissioner can still close schools:** MDE Commissioner, under statute, may still order a district or charter to dial back to a more restrictive model if the current model is not appropriate under the Safe Learning Plan.

Executive Order 20-82: Safety and Health

- **Incident command team:** Districts and charters are encouraged to utilize an incident command team (preexisting or newly formed) to direct dialing forward/back decisions.
- **COVID testing:** MDH Commissioner directed to ensure school staff and students exposed to COVID-19 be tested promptly.
- **Updated guidance:** MDE and MDH Commissioners are to consult with one another to continue to update guidance for in-person, hybrid, and distance learning for the 2020-2021 school year.
- **Public health guidelines:** Districts and charters' learning environments are to be in compliance with Public Health Guidelines.
- **Meals:** Districts and charters who dial back from in-person learning models must continue to provide meals to students during the school day to the extent possible.

Executive Order 20-82: Families and Community

- **Post and communicate plans:** Districts and charters must electronically post and communicate their chosen learning model to students and their families no later than one week before the beginning of their 2020-2021 school year start date. This communication must be communicated orally and written in languages spoken in their district or charter.
- **Contingency plan:** All districts and charters must create contingency plans for distance learning and hybrid learning to be used in case of a dial-back need. They are encouraged to provide documentation of this contingency plan to staff and families through established communication pathways.
- **Review of technology disparities:** MDE can review learning plans to see if they adequately address technological disparities in access and learning and can recommend changes and provide assistance.
- **Support to disadvantaged communities:** Districts and charters who choose to dial back in-person instruction are directed to support communities disproportionately impacted by distance and hybrid learning. Where appropriate, districts and charters should prioritize in-person learning and services to students from such communities.
- **Tribal consultation:** Tribal consultation must continue and American Indian Education Aid programs must be part of contingency plans.

Executive Order 20-82: Staffing

- **Staff reporting back to school:** For initial in-person or hybrid learning models staff reports to their respective school buildings **no later than** two business days before the start of the 2020-2021 school year to prep for students' return.
- **Staff resources:** Pursuant to labor laws, expectation to negotiate resources for contract teachers and staff. In compliance with labor agreements, should include, but not be limited to, wages, benefits, work schedules, access to protective equipment, etc.
- **Staff utilization:** Consistent with labor agreements, districts and charter schools must utilize available staff who are able to work during the 2020-21 school year.
- **Work from home:** Districts and charter schools must also provide accommodations to staff as required by applicable laws and must allow school staff whose health is at risk or who have members of their household whose health is at risk to work from home to the extent possible.

Executive Order 20-82: Fiscal Considerations

- **Instructional days:** Whenever districts and charters dial back or forward an instructional model, they may count up to five days of planning as instructional days. Any days over five may be counted as instructional days with MDE approval.
- **Special education staff :** Expenses for special education staff may be assigned to other work during distance or hybrid learning.

Executive Order 20-82: Early Childhood and Care

- **Care:** Districts and charters who dial back from in-person learning must continue to provide care for Eligible Children at no cost during the time those children are not receiving instruction in the school building during regular school hours.
- **Early childhood programs:** When doing in-person learning, districts and charters must run their early childhood programs pursuant to public health guidelines. Can continue to charge fees on normal sliding scale. In other models, districts may run their early childhood programs and, if so, continue to charge fees.
- **Scholarship Income Verification:** COVID-19 relief funds do not count towards income for verification to receive an early learning scholarship.
- **Developmental screening:** early childhood in-person screening requirement (in rule) waived and MDE will develop guidance on a parent tool. Thirty day developmental screening statutory requirement extended to 90 days.

Executive Order 20-82: Other Activities

- **Home visits:** MDE Commissioner will establish a protocol for certain home visits by school staff that cannot be provided via distance learning.
- **Other in-school activities:** Districts and charters with distance learning models may safely expand in-school activities and programming that cannot be provided via distance learning.
- **Bilingual seals testing:** Districts and charters in a hybrid or distance learning model must allow graduating seniors to complete any testing to get their bilingual or multilingual seals.



Safe Learning Plan

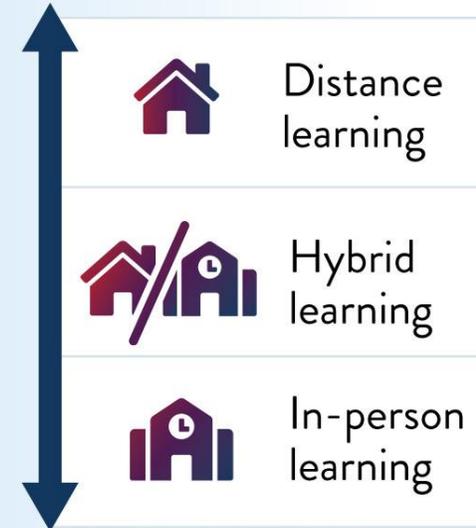
Goals for a Safe Return to School

1. Prioritize the safety of students and staff
2. Prioritize in-person learning, especially for younger learners and those with most need
3. Recognize differences in potential spread among different ages
4. Support planning, while permitting flexibility for districts
5. Take into account disease prevalence at a local level

How do schools determine their safe learning model?

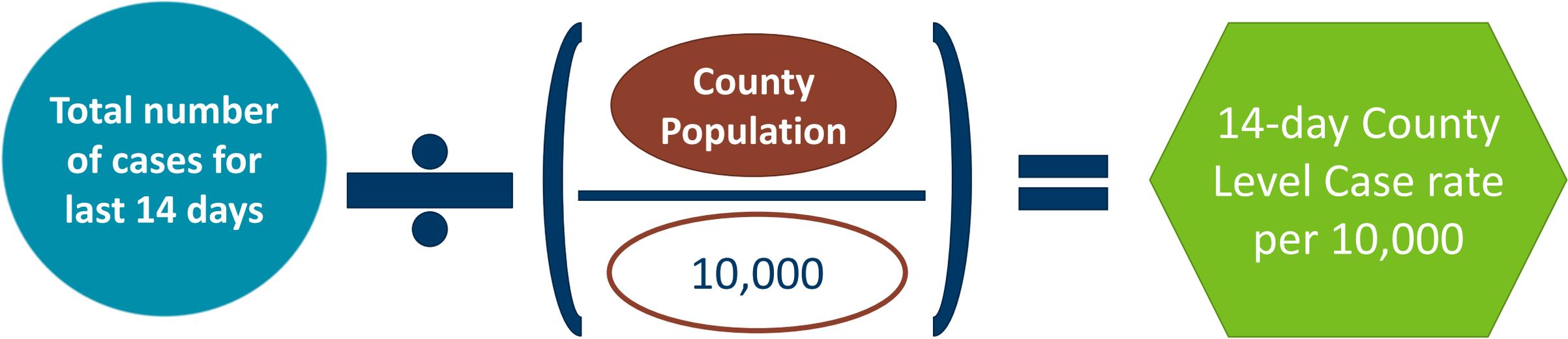
- STEP 1** Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) will use data from counties to determine a base learning model for public schools.
- STEP 2** Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) will share county data and the consultative process for public schools to engage with education and public health experts to review their county health data and safe learning plans.
- STEP 3** Public schools, with their incident command team, will evaluate their ability to implement required and recommended health best practices.
- STEP 4** Public schools, in consultation with public health, will determine a learning model to begin the school year and communicate that decision with their school community.*
- STEP 5** Public schools and MDH will monitor the community and school-level impact of COVID-19 on a regular basis. Adjustments will be made to the learning model if needed.

Safe learning models:



* Regardless of learning model, all public schools must offer an equitable distance learning option to all families.

14-day County-level Case Rate



Selecting a Learning Model for School Opening

Number of cases per 10,000 over 14 days, by county of residence	Learning model
0-9	In-person learning for all students
10-19	In person learning for elementary students; hybrid learning for secondary students
20-29	Hybrid learning for all students
30-49	Hybrid learning for elementary students; distance learning for secondary students
50+	Distance learning for all students

Health Requirements & Best Practices

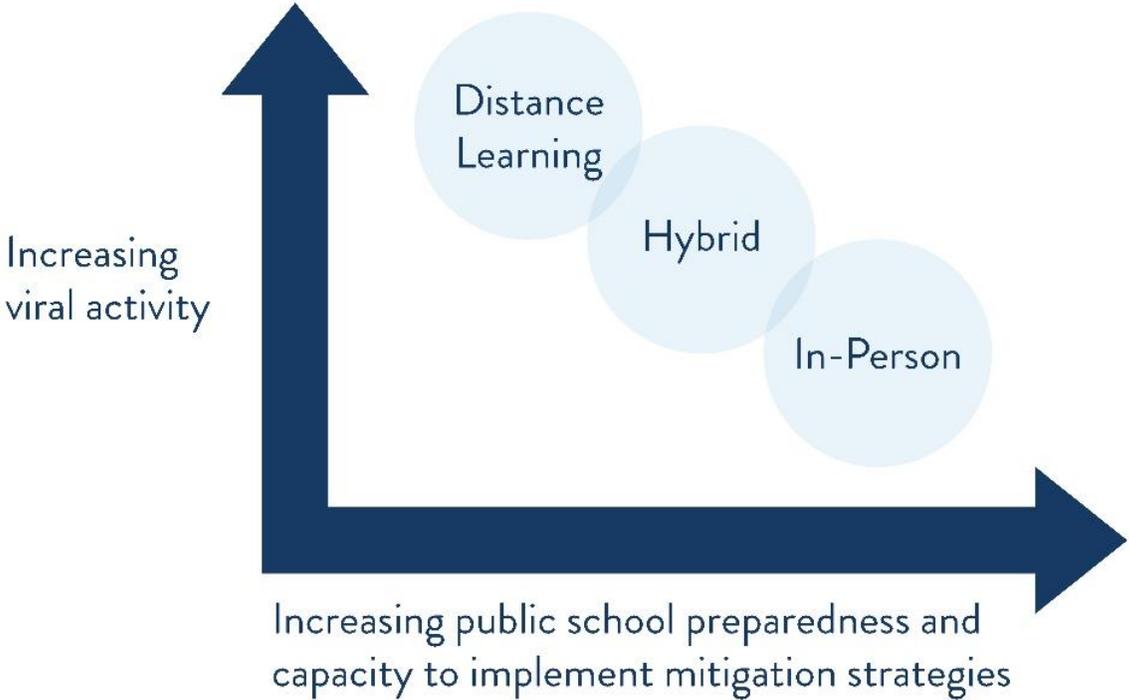
Required for In-Person and Hybrid Learning

- ☐ Masking Policy
- ☐ PPE for direct support student services
- ☐ Build routines of hygiene education & practices
- ☐ Daily cleaning and frequent cleaning of high touch surfaces throughout the day
- ☐ Building level COVID-19 program coordinator, with optional student counterpart
- ☐ Limiting nonessential visitors/volunteers/external groups
- ☐ Discontinue large gatherings/activities that do not allow for social distancing
- ☐ Monitoring and excluding for illness

Required for Hybrid Learning

- ☐ Social distancing of 6 feet at all times in school buildings
- ☐ School facilities at 50% capacity
- ☐ Transportation at 50% capacity
- ☐ Sufficient staffing levels to meet the requirements of the model

Ongoing Evaluation Framework



Assessing Cases in a School after Opening

- How many cases are there? Are they close together in time or spread out over several weeks?
- Are new cases traceable to the school community or are they likely the result of a different exposure?
- Where are cases occurring, and do they have any common themes?
- How many close contacts does each case have?
- Are students, parents, and staff forthcoming about close contacts?
- Is there other significant transmission in the surrounding community that will likely impact families and staff?
- Are you able to maintain your current learning model based on staffing?

Support for Schools

- Regional Support Teams comprised of MDH and MDE staff to support school districts and charter schools the whole school year.
- A \$430 million investment in our schools.
- Face coverings for every student, educator, and staff member.
- Comprehensive COVID testing care plan for educators and staff.

Regional Support Teams

- Created in partnership with MDE, MDH, Minnesota's regional service cooperatives and local public health.
- Regional support teams are structured in a way that allows efficient communication from the school and district level to the state level in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a school building.
- The regional support teams are made up of rapid response staff, health consultants and testing event planners.



COVID-related Funding

COVID-RELATED FUNDING

COVID-19 ECONOMIC RELIEF (CARES ACT)

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, passed on March 27, provides over \$2 trillion in federal economic relief to protect the American people from the public health and economic impacts of COVID-19. The CARES Act provides assistance for American workers, families, and small businesses, and preserves jobs for American industries.

CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND (CRF)

Section 5001 of the CARES Act established the \$150 billion Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF), providing payments to State, Local, and Tribal governments navigating the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak. The CARES Act sets criteria that expenses must meet to be eligible for CRF funding.

CARES Funding coming to Minnesota for Education

Program	Dollars
Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER)	\$38,127,249
Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER)	\$140,137,253
Child Nutrition Grants to States	\$160,263,207
Library Grants to States	\$509,589
Head Start and Early Head Start	\$10,390,096

Meet Foundational Needs First



Minnesota Priorities

GEER

The Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund

Minnesota: **\$38.1 million**

Technology Access

- Hotspots/broadband
- Devices for students

Summer School Programming

- Increase staffing
- Transportation

0-8 Year Old Wraparound Services

- Grants, focused on underserved communities

ESSER

The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund

Minnesota: **\$140.1 million**

90% formula to districts

- Keep students healthy and connected to learning
- Other local needs

9.5% state-directed grants to districts

- Supplementing GEER priorities
- Mental health supports
- Historically underserved populations

Child Nutrition State Grants

Minnesota's State Allocation: **\$160,263,207**

Purpose: Additional funding to cover the reimbursable meal costs of National School Lunch/Breakfast, Special Milk, Child and Adult Care Food and Summer Food Service Programs, in anticipation of there being more need.

Allowable Uses: These funds will be used in the same manner as the annual Nutrition Grants. The dollars were amended into their current grant.

- ❖ The CARES funds are to be spent before MDE's annual Nutrition Grant funds.
- ❖ Funds can be drawn starting with the March 2020 claims and going forward through September 2020.

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grants to States

Minnesota's State Allocation: **\$509,589**

Purpose: To prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus (COVID 19), including to expand digital network access, purchase internet accessible devices, and provide technical support services.

Allowable Uses:

1. Primarily to address digital inclusion and related technical support targeting Poverty/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Unemployment, Broadband availability;
2. Secondarily to address other efforts that prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19; and
3. With respect to (1) and (2), reach museum and tribal partners, in addition to traditionally eligible library entities, where appropriate.

Head Start and Early Head Start

Minnesota's Allocation: \$10,390,096

Purpose: Federal funds were made available through The Office of Head Start for one-time supplemental funding awarded to existing Head Start grantees. Head Start grantees can use these funds to operate supplemental summer programs and/or repurpose funds for other one-time activities related to COVID-19.

Status: Federal funds will be distributed to existing Head Start agencies by a formula based on Federal funded enrollment @ approx. \$875 per child. At the end of June Minnesota Head Start/Early Head Start programs received their notice of funding. This one-time money totals \$10,390,096 for Minnesota.

Supporting Schools So Far

- MDE School Finance held four webinar trainings for schools to help with the application process.
- MDE has been working alongside applicants to ensure all information has been submitted properly.
- MDE began processing applications on **June 30**.
- Funds may be drawn back to March 13th and can be spent through September, 2022
- Applications must be completed by **May 1, 2021**. After approval, recipients will be able to amend their plans.



Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF)

CARES ACT / CORONAVIRUS RELIEF FUND (CRF) OVERVIEW

COVID-19 ECONOMIC RELIEF (CARES ACT)

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Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF)

The CARES Act specifies that payments can be made from the CRF for:

- Expenditures must be a necessary result of the COVID-19 public health emergency
- Costs must not be accounted for in the current biennial budget
- Funds must be expended by **December 30, 2020**

The CRF cannot be used to fill behind lost revenues or pay for expenditures that will be reimbursed under another federal program.

Total CRF Funding Requested for Schools

Total Request - \$256 Million

- Addressing Operating Costs and Supporting Student, Family, and Educator Needs - \$244.8 Million
- Supplies for Schools; Flexibility for Critical Care Supplies - \$5.2 Million
- Educator and School Staff Saliva Testing - \$6 Million

Face Coverings for Every Student, Educator, and School Staff

- \$5.2 Million
- All students, staff, and others present in school buildings and districts offices or riding on school transportation vehicles are required to wear face coverings.
- Cross agency effort to procure the following supplies to all Minnesota school districts and charter schools:
 - Every K-12 student will receive one cloth face mask
 - Every educator and school staff will receive one cloth face mask
 - Every school will receive three disposable face masks per student
 - Every school will receive face shields for every licensed teacher and 50% of non-licensed staff

Testing Educators and School Staff

- \$6 Million
- Home test available for every educator and school staff this fall at no cost
- MDH guidance prioritizing testing for educators and school staff by health providers exposed to COVID-19.
- Coordination and support for events due to any school exposure, including state implementation of larger events

Department of Education CRF Request

\$244.8 million in additional funding from Coronavirus Relief Funds

- Operational Costs: \$146.7 million
- Supporting Student, Family, and Educator Needs: \$97.8 million
- Administration: \$300,000

Funds are available from July 1 through December 30.

Allocation Method

Funds will be allocated to the schools based on the following:

1. 60% for operational cost –100% based on Average Daily Membership (ADM)
2. 40% for supporting student, family, and educator needs
 - 40% based on ADM
 - 60% based on number of historically underserved population served by each school or school district

Funds may be spent in any amounts in either of the two categories.

Operational Costs

Operational costs associated with the learning model chosen –regardless of in-person, hybrid or distance learning including but not limited to:

- Daily cleaning supplies and disinfectant sprayers.
- Screening supplies including no-touch thermometers.
- Personal protective equipment (PPE) including face coverings.
- Increased costs for transporting students at limited capacity.
- Localized staffing needs, including care of Eligible Children.

Supporting Student, Family, and Educator Needs

Boost student, family, educator support, prioritizing equity. Funds can be used for (not limited to):

- Digital supports
- Technology devices and internet access
- Tutors or mentors to address learning loss
- Translation services
- Care for Eligible Children
- Professional development
- Mental health supports

Administrative Support

MDE Administrative Support:

- Staff time to set up, review, monitor, and report on the use of these funds
- Support the SERVS application, which is used by the schools to draw and manage their funds.
- Fund staff to assist school districts with digital support

School Application Process - Timeline

1. Funds are available July 1 through December 30.
 - MDE will be proactive in monitoring balances so as to ensure we spend all funds available.
2. CRF proposal was submitted to the LAC on August 4; pending approval.
3. Application loaded with CRF allocations – est. August 21.
4. Applications and budget must be submitted by end of day October 1.
 - Funds not obligated through an application/budget will be swept for re-allocation on October 2.
5. November 13 all schools who have not drawn at least 75% of their funds will be contacted. MDE will work alongside schools to support their spending or re-allocate where necessary.
 - Unallocated funds will be re-allocated based on historically underserved populations served
6. Application will be similar to the GEER application process.

Coordination of CARES Act Funds

Significant overlap in allowable uses exists, especially between CRF funds and ESSER formula (90%) funds.

Many other CARES Act funding sources must be spent by the end of December, 2020. These sources include the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) grants.

The GEER and ESSER funds can be spent on expenses from March 13, 2020 through September 30, 2022.

Districts, charter schools, counties, and other CARES Act fund recipients can coordinate which funds they use for the rest of 2020 and which they save for later.

Thank you!