Georgia’s K-12 Restart Working Group: Mental Health and Wellness

Georgia’s K-12 Restart: Mental Health and Wellness Working Group members:

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Georgia’s K-12 Restart Working Groups provide considerations, recommendations, and best practices to ensure a safe and successful 2020-2021 school year. This guidance is not mandated, or state required. Local school districts have the authority and flexibility to meet their individual needs and be responsive to their communities.
## General Considerations

### Questions to Ask

- **How does the Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) process support the needs of students regardless of instructional modality?**
  - Where are community resource lists provided? If you do not have this list, could someone else supporting your community provide it?
    - **Organizations to consider:** GA Family Connection Partnership, RESA Wraparound Services Coordinator, Local Department of Public Health, Local Interagency Planning Team (LIPT), Office of Family Independence/DFACS, Local Attendance and Climate Protocol Committee, Chamber of Commerce, TCSG/USG institutions serving your area, and other community support agencies.
  - Do resource lists include food, shelter, transportation, and other identified non-academic barriers with updated contact information?
- **Is there a referral process that has been clearly communicated to students and families for accessing services and supports?**
  - **Organizations to consider:** GA Family Connection Partnership, RESA Wraparound Services Coordinator, Local Department of Public Health, Local Interagency Planning Team (LIPT), Office of Family Independence/DFACS, Local Attendance and Climate Protocol Committee, Chamber of Commerce, TCSG/USG institutions serving your area, and other community support agencies.
- **What organizations in your community are also working to support student and staff mental health and wellness (physical health)?**
  - Does the district have a repository of information for stakeholders about mental/physical health on its website?
    - **Organizations to consider:** GA Family Connection Partnership, RESA Wraparound Services Coordinator, Local Department of Public Health, Local Interagency Planning Team (LIPT), Office of Family Independence/DFACS, Local Attendance and Climate Protocol Committee, Chamber of Commerce, TCSG/USG institutions serving your area, and other community support agencies.
  - Is there an established way for community members to assist the districts need in supporting students and staff?
- **Does the district provide learning opportunities for parents and families to support student health and wellbeing?**
  - Are these opportunities regularly communicated? Is communication send in multiple formats? (Email, text, mail, etc.)
  - Are they offered in-person and virtually with language considerations of the served population?
- **Does the district provide mental health resources to parents for personnel support or enrichment?**
  - How can parent engagement facilitators assist in this effort?
  - How can your PTA/PTO assist in this effort?
- **Does the district partner with local institutions of higher learning to provide support and/or professional learning to staff?**
  - How will emotional well-being be built into the curriculum and/or general educational programming?
# Mental Health Supports

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<th>District/School Considerations</th>
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<td>All items should be web-based.</td>
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## Foundational
*basic best practices, guidance, and recommendations for all three levels*

- Create a “check-in” system/opportunity for students to share their thoughts and experiences
  - Consider mental health affirmations, growth mindset
- Provide lessons to support students’ mental and emotional well-being
  - Consider students understanding and discussing current events
- Provide a list of mental health resources and support including contact information/links to websites
- Promote relationship-building activities
  - Items to consider: Healthy conversations, respecting personal space, and other topics
- Consider phrasing to reduce anxiety (social distancing vs physical distancing)
- Reinforce social skills to support interpersonal relationships
- Allow time for students and staff to socially reacclimate
- Establish a system to connect students and families to supports
  - Topics to consider: Homeless students, threats/bullying, domestic violence, substance abuse, self-harm

## Universal

- Establish small groups for students with specific concerns
  - Topics to consider: Grief, Anxiety, Resilience, Support Systems, and Depression
- Provide a list of mental health resources and supports including contact information/links to websites
- Establish small group discussion circles for students and staff with specific topics
  - Topics to consider: Collective and communal impacts of COVID-19

## Group
### Foundational – cont.

- Involve school district social workers, school psychologists, mental health clinicians and school counselors to support students
- Consider outside mental health partnerships (telehealth)
- Provide family group session interventions
- Identify potential funding sources to support mental health services for under-insured or uninsured students
- Establish routine of check-in with students for social emotional learning and encouragement

### Other Considerations

- Establish referral agreements with community organizations/providers
- Clearly and regularly communicate processes for monitoring student and staff wellness (include vulnerable populations) to students, families, staff and school community
- Provide guidance to school counselors, school social workers, school psychologists, and all other staff serving students
- Establish protocols for digital mandated report processes
- Provide professional development on trauma informed and trauma responsive practices
- Conduct virtual welcome back meetings at various levels (grade/school/cluster)
- Access/create asset maps for currently available supports within your community
- **Article:** Focusing on Learners and SEL: Looping Strategies to Welcome Learners Back
- **Article:** The Logistics of Remote Social Emotional Learning

### Mental Health Resources

- **Mental Health Awareness Training for Educators** - Schedule through your RESA
- **Georgia Department of Education COVID-19 Webinars**
- **CCSSO: RESTART & RECOVERY- Supporting SEL and Mental Health During COVID-19**
- **CDC: Social and Emotional Climate**
- **An Initial Guide to Leveraging the Power of Social and Emotional Learning...As you prepare to reopen and renew your school community**
- **Reunite, Renew, Thrive: Social and Emotional Learning Roadmap for Reopening Schools**
- **Center for Health and Health Care of Schools**
- **Children’s Mental Health Campaign**
  - **COVID-19 Resources**
- **Coalition to Support Grieving Students**
  - **COVID-19 Resources**
- **Council of the Great City Schools: Addressing Mental Health and Social Emotional Wellness in the COVID-19 Crisis**
- **Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities**
**Mental Health Resources** – cont.

- **DBHDD COVID-19 Resources**
- **2x2 Series: Daily Self Care Tips and Support for Managing Life**
- **DBHDD Regional Map with Service Areas**
- **GA APEX Program Overview**
  - GA APEX School and Provider List
- **Georgia COVID-19 Emotional Support Line** 866-399-8938 24/7 free and confidential support for people needing emotional support or resources during the COVID-19 pandemic
- **Georgia Crisis & Access Line** 800-715-4225 24/7 support to help you or someone you care for in crisis.
- **Mental Health Resiliency Clubhouses**
- **MY GCAL Text & Chat**
- **Office of Children, Young Adults and Families**
  - System of Care Organizations
    - Mental Health America of Georgia
    - NAMI – GA
    - VOICES for GA’s Children
    - VOX Atlanta Teen Communications
- "Free Your Feels" MH Campaign created by VOICES (Jackson Spalding) and DBHDD launches 3rd week of August.
- **District Administration: What social-emotional needs will students return with?**
- **Greater Good Science Center**
  - Student Well-Being
  - Well-Being During Coronavirus
- **Georgia School Counselor Association: COVID-19 Resources**
- **Georgia Parent Support Network**
- **GaDOE Whole Child Toolkit**
- **Kaiser Permanente: Planning for the Next Normal at School – Keeping students, staff, teachers and families safe and healthy**
- **Kansas State Department of Education: Social Emotional Character Development: Standards, Assessment and Instruction**
- **Mental Health America of Georgia**
- **Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network**
  - Mental Health Resources for K-12 Educators During COVID-19
  - Back to School After COVID-19: Supporting Student and Staff Mental Health
- **NAMI Georgia (National Alliance on Mental Illness)**
- **National Center for School Crisis and Bereavement**
  - COVID-19 Pandemic Response Resources webpage
  - VIDEO: When School Starts Back: Helping students and you cope with crisis during a pandemic
  - VIDEO: Supporting students with grief and loss
- National Center for School Mental Health
  - COVID-19 Resources
  - General Resources
- National Center for Homeless Education
  - COVID-19 Information
- National Human Trafficking Hotline- 1-888-373-7888 or Text 233733
- National Suicide Prevention Life Line- 1-200-273-8255
- Our Students Have Strong Emotions Right Now, And That’s Not a Disability
- Partnership Against Domestic Violence
- Peer2Peer Warm Line- 1-888-945-1414
- School Mental Health Ontario: Supporting a Mentally Healthy Return to School
- Signals: Social-Emotional and Mental Health Development for Children and Teens - Interactive Webinar Series
- Strong4Life
  - Resilience and Emotional Wellness
- Suicide Prevention/Mental Health Resources GaDOE
- Supporting your child’s mental health as they return to school during COVID-19
- UCLA Center for Mental Health in Schools: Addressing Barriers to Learning
- University of North Carolina: Joey the Kangaroo and Coping with COVID Plan Coloring Book
- Voices for Georgia’s Children: How Three School-Based Mental Health Providers Serve Students
- World Health Association: #HealthyAtHome- Mental Health
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<tr>
<th>Wellness/Physical Health Services</th>
<th>District/School Considerations</th>
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| **All items should be web-based** | • Establish ways to continue promoting routine check-ups with pediatricians and other health care professionals to stay current on vaccines, screening periodicity schedules, and overall child well-being  
  • Consider: Connecting with health care provider(s) to coordinate telehealth services if there is currently telehealth capacity in the community.  
  • Coordinate with local federally qualified health center(s) to provide necessary services to students  
  • Provide regular updates on the status of the state so school community remains informed  
  • Replicate and adapt communication and referral protocols across student services and supports, e.g., mental health to physical health, and process for referral |
| **All items should be web-based and in-person.** | • Establish ways to continue promoting routine check-ups with pediatricians and other health care professionals to stay current on vaccines, screening periodicity schedules, and overall child well-being  
  • Consider: Connecting with health care provider to coordinate telehealth services if there is currently telehealth capacity in the community.  
  • Coordinate with local federally qualified health center to provide necessary services to students  
  • Consider: hosting a “doctor day” where clinicians visit the school to perform routine screenings such as those for oral health, vision, and hearing |
| **All items should be in-person.** | • Establish ways to continue promoting routine check-ups with pediatricians and other health care professionals to stay current on vaccines, screening periodicity schedules, and overall child well-being  
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| Foundational  
(basic best practices, guidance, and recommendations for all three levels) |
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<td>• Adhere to DPH and DOE safety, preventative and mitigation strategies outlined in guidance, e.g., isolation room.</td>
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<td>• Toolkit with lessons, videos, FAQs, etc. to educate students about the “why” behind physical distancing, handwashing, mask wearing, and proper hygiene</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Coordinate with local health department to provide resources to families on general hygiene and personal care such as oral health, physical health and immunity</td>
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<td>• Coordinate with health/PE staff to share guidance on staying physically fit</td>
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<td>• Consider: developing or connecting to an exercise and healthy habits video repository to encourage physical activity that is age appropriate</td>
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<td>• Provide a list of pediatric and other health resources and services including contact information/links to websites</td>
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<td>• If available, work with clinicians providing services at school to ensure continuity of care and coordination of services/supports (i.e. school nurse, school social workers, school counselor, school-based health center staff)</td>
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<td>• Ensure that students with chronic conditions are being monitored appropriately (if there is capacity to do so)</td>
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<td>• If there is a school nurse available, establish regular check-ins with families of students with conditions such as asthma, diabetes, etc.</td>
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<td>• Establish referral agreements with community organizations/providers</td>
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<td>• At minimum, provide parents with the necessary information they would need to get their child to the referred physician/other provider</td>
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<td>• Clearly and regularly communicate processes for monitoring student and staff wellness (include vulnerable populations)</td>
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<td>• Provide a list of community resources to support needs of families, including food, shelter, and transportation</td>
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<td>• Establish and/or strengthen relationships with community providers in order to ease the process of getting families connected to necessary services</td>
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<td>• Include existing staff and initiatives in coordination of family support resources (McKinney-Vento, migrant, family engagement, ELL, etc.)</td>
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<td>• Conduct virtual welcome back meetings at various levels (grade/school/cluster)</td>
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| • Action for Health Kids  
   o COVID-19 Resources |
| • Alliance for a Healthier Generation  
   o COVID-19 Resources |
| • Bright Futures Periodicity Schedule: Recommendations for Preventive Pediatric Health Care |
| • CCSSO: RESTART & RECOVERY- Supporting Continuity of Health Service During COVID-19 |
| • Center for Disease Control and Prevention  
   o Assessing School Health  
   o Health and Academics |
Wellness/Physical Health Services Resources – cont.

- Improving School Health
- Inclusive Physical Education and Physical Activity
- Virtual Healthy School
- COVID-19 and Asthma Toolkit for Schools (Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America)
- Department of Community Health Service Map for Childhood Health
- Find a Federally Qualified Health Center
- Georgia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics
  - COVID-19 Resources
- Georgia Department of Public Health Maternal and Child Health Coordinator Locator
- Georgia Shape: Healthy Habits
- GaDOE Whole Child Toolkit
- Health Barriers to Learning Resource Toolkit
- Maryland Together: Maryland’s Recovery Plan for Education: Appendix D: Health Considerations for Schools - Resuming Classes pp. 60-64
- Mercer Medical School- Mercer Medical Minute
  - Cover Your Coughs and Sneezes
  - Wash Your Hands the Correct Way
- Metro RESA Social-Emotional SEL Toolkit - Lessons on germs and respect from popular movies
- SHAPE America: Resources for Distance and Hybrid Learning for Physical and Health Education
- Strong4Life
  - Providers and Educators
- World Health Association: #HealthAtHomes- Physical Activity
### School Staff Support

#### District/School Considerations

- Create a “check-in” system/opportunity for staff to share their thoughts
  - Consider: Providing a physical space/designated time for teacher breaks
- Provide opportunity for school staff to have a Q&A with administrative team to target stress/anxiety surrounding reopening
- Communicate importance of staff well-being and establish clear processes for staff who become ill
  - Consider: Providing guidance about CARES Act employee options, care of students, protocol for informing leadership of positive test results and other items of concern
- Provide resources to support the well-being of staff (web-based and in-person)
- Provide motivational resources/activities for all staff to boost morale in uncertain times
- Explore state benefit plans and Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to utilize available resources
  - Consider: Promoting the state health benefit plan (Be Well SHBP) and providing a summary document to share with staff for physical and mental health support
- Create peer support groups/teams for people in similar roles in the schools/district
- Establish Professional Learning Communities around topics of interests or concerns
- Establish or identify support line for staff
- Collaborate efforts with mental health agencies, health experts and physicians to host a district summit for staff/employees

#### Foundational

**Foundational**

*basic best practices, guidance, and recommendations for all three levels*

#### Professional Development

- New teacher training around school functions
- Nurse/medical professional trains staff on safety measures
- Trauma informed schools/practices
- Restorative practices
- How physical health impacts academic success (Health Barriers to Learning)
- School Climate
- Social Emotional Learning resources
- Student engagement and success
- Training on Suicide Prevention and basic mental health
- Create a resource list for school staff

#### School Staff Support Resources

- **Be Well State Health Benefits Plan (SHBP)**
- **CDC – Coping with Stress**
- **Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta**
  - Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information and Updates
### School Staff Support Resources — cont.
- General Guidance
  - **Arkansas Department of Education: G.U.I.D.E. for Life**
  - **American Academy of Pediatrics**
    - COVID-19 Planning Considerations
  - **American School Counselor Association**
    - School Counseling During COVID-19
    - School Reentry Considerations: Supporting Student Social and Emotional Learning and Mental and Behavioral Health Amidst COVID-19
  - **Georgia Association of School Nurses**
    - COVID-19 Resources
  - **Georgia School Counselor Association**
    - COVID-19 Resources
  - **Georgia Association of School Psychologists**
    - COVID-19 Resources
  - **National Association of School Nurses**
- Partners to Consider
  - Georgia Department of Public Health
  - Georgia Family Connection Partnership
  - Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL)- For youth transitioning to K-12
  - Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS)
    - Office of Family Independence (OFI)
  - Fitness Centers and Local Health Clubs
  - Institutions of higher learning (TCSG/USG schools serving your area)
  - Local Attendance and Climate Protocol Committee
  - Local Chamber of Commerce
  - Local Department of Public Health
  - Local Interagency Planning Team (LIPT)
- COVID-19 Resources
- National Association of School Social Workers
  - COVID-19 Resources
  • National Association of School Psychologists
    - COVID-10 Resource Center
  • Nurse Guidance
- Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports
  • Back to School After Disruptions
  • Responding to the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Outbreak through PBIS
  • Returning to School During and After Crisis

- Regional Educational Service Agencies (RESA)