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School responses to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic during the 2020-2021 academic year

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Responses by state

Alabama ▼ Submit

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All 50 states closed schools to in-person instruction at some point during the 2019-2020 academic year. In forty-eight states, officials closed schools to in-person instruction for the remainder of the academic year after the coronavirus outbreak. Officials in Montana and Wyoming closed schools to in-person instruction but allowed them to reopen later in the school year.

This page covers the **changes made during the 2020-2021 academic year** as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. These changes included reopenings, closures, and the use of hybrid learning schedules.

In this article you will find:

- [The most recent updates](#)
- [The status of school reopenings by state](#)
- [School reopening plans in the 2020-2021 school year](#)
- [A timeline of all statewide policy changes](#)
- [A month-to-month comparison of school statuses by month](#)
- [Arguments about school closures](#)
- [General resources for citizens](#)

Click your state in the map below to read more about its coronavirus response.

Choose your state... ▼

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Most recent actions

- **May 17, 2021:** Massachusetts started requiring schools to offer full-time in-person instruction for high schoolers on May 17. ^[1]
- **April 26, 2021:** South Carolina schools had to start offering in-person instruction five days a week. Gov. Henry McMaster (R) signed the requirement into law on April 22. The legislature passed the requirement on April 21. ^[2]
- **April 19, 2021:**
 - New Hampshire public schools had to offer full-time in-person instruction by April 19. Gov. Chris Sununu (R) said parents still had the option of requesting remote learning. ^[3]
 - Oregon public schools had to open for hybrid or full-time in-person instruction for grades 6-12 by April 19. Gov. Kate Brown (D) issued the requirement on March 12. ^[4]
 - Washington public schools had to offer all K-12 students at least 30% in-person instruction every week by April 19. Gov. Jay Inslee (D) signed the proclamation March 15. ^[5]
- **April 13, 2021:** Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak (D) announced that, on May 1, county school districts would gain control over all COVID-19 mitigation measures. ^[6]

Status of school reopenings, closures, and responses

Ballotpedia considered schools to be **fully open** if they used a traditional, in-person learning schedule where all students had the option to attend classes five days per week. Schools that were **partially open** offered some in-person classes but did not offer daily in-person classes for all students or grades. Schools were closed if they only offered virtual instruction.

Ballotpedia tracked state-level orders related to school openings and closures, but most states left reopening decisions to local health officials, schools, school boards, and districts. [Click here](#) to see Burbio's 50-state map tracking the percentage of in-person instruction at the county level.

The statewide statuses in the map below are categorized in the following manner:

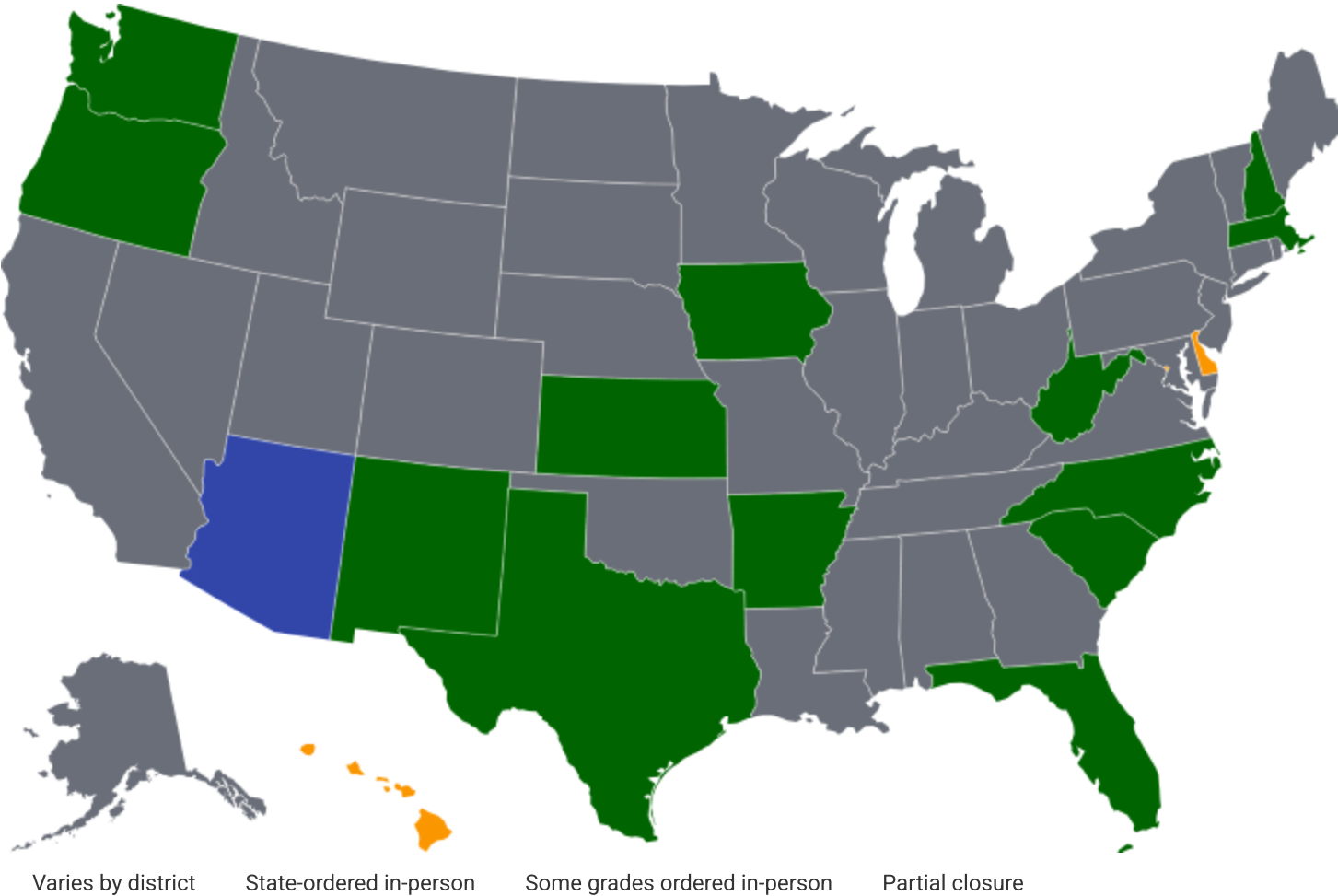
- **State-ordered partial closure** - A state had regional school closures, required certain grade levels to close, or allowed hybrid instruction only.
- **Varies by school/district** - Districts, individual schools, or other local authorities could choose to reopen schools based on state-provided guidance.
- **State-ordered in-person instruction for some grades** - Schools statewide were required to offer in-person instruction (either full- or part-time) to students in certain grades.

- **State-ordered in-person instruction** - Schools statewide were required to open (either full- or part-time) to in-person instruction.

As of July 8, 2021, the status of school closures and reopenings was as follows:

- **Two states** (Delaware, Hawaii) and Washington, D.C. had state-ordered regional school closures, required closures for certain grade levels, or allowed hybrid instruction only.
 - 2019-20 enrollment: 410,896 students (0.81% of students nationwide)
- **Thirteen states** had state-ordered in-person instruction.
 - 2019-20 enrollment: 15,697,460 students (30.96% of students nationwide)
- **One state** (Arizona) had state-ordered in-person instruction for certain grades.
 - 2019-20 enrollment: 1,152,586 students (2.27% of students nationwide)
- **Thirty-four states** left decisions to schools or districts.
 - 2019-20 enrollment: 33,449,499 students (65.96% of students nationwide)

School openings and closures for the 2020-2021 school year



Source: [EdWeek](#)

School openings and closures for the 2020-2021 school year

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State	Status	Details
Alabama	No order in effect	Districts will make the decision on whether to open school buildings. The state board of education encourages that all schools provide, at a minimum, access to both traditional and remote learning throughout the 2020-21 school year.
Alaska	No order in effect	Each school district will decide when and if to reopen buildings. The state departments of education and health created a framework and guidance to help districts as they decide how to provide instruction.
Arizona	Some grades ordered open	All schools must have reopened for in-person learning by March 15, or following their spring break, according to an executive order by Gov. Doug Ducey. Middle and high schools in areas with high transmission, as defined by the Centers for Disease Control, are exempted from the order. Families can opt to continue with virtual schooling.
		Education Secretary Johnny Key issued guidance Aug. 5 that requires districts to offer in-person instruction five days a

School reopening plans in the 2020-2021 school year

The following sections contain links to initial school operating plan summaries for the 2020-2021 academic year and a timeline of state responses to the pandemic.

Alabama

See also: [School responses in Alabama to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Alabama were closed to in-person instruction on March 18, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on June 1, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Alabama. [\[7\]](#)
[\[8\]](#)

- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Alabama. [\[9\]](#)[\[10\]](#)
- **August 3, 2020:** The Alabama Department of Public Health released an 85-page school reopening toolkit. It contained recommendations and guidelines for school districts to incorporate into their reopening plans. [\[11\]](#)
- **July 29, 2020:** Gov. [Kay Ivey](#) (R) extended her Safer At Home Order through August 31. She modified the order's existing mask mandate to extend to students at schools (second grade and older) and colleges. [\[12\]](#)
- **June 26, 2020:** Superintendent [Eric Mackey](#) released reopening guidance for schools. Mackey said that the 50-page document was not a mandate but that it should be used by school districts to craft their individual reopening plans. [\[13\]](#)
- **May 21, 2020:** Ivey announced that schools could reopen beginning June 1 if they followed social distancing and sanitation guidelines. [\[14\]](#)

Alaska

See also: [School responses in Alaska to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Alaska were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Alaska. [\[15\]](#)[\[16\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Alaska. [\[17\]](#)[\[18\]](#)
- **June 4, 2020:** The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development released the Alaska Smart Start 2020 guidance. The guidance offered instructions for schools operating in low-risk, medium-risk, and high-risk environments. [\[19\]](#)

Arizona

See also: [School responses in Arizona to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Arizona were closed to in-person instruction on March 15, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on August 17, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Arizona. [\[20\]](#)[\[21\]](#)
- **March 15, 2021:** Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey's (R) executive order requiring public schools to offer in-person instruction took effect March 15. High schools and middle schools in high-transmission counties were exempt from the order. Parents could still keep their children in virtual classes. [\[22\]](#)
- **March 3, 2021:** Gov. Doug Ducey (R) issued an executive order requiring public schools to offer in-person instruction by March 15. High schools and middle schools in high transmission counties were exempt from the order. Parents could still keep their children in virtual classes. [\[23\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Arizona. [\[24\]](#)[\[25\]](#)

- **August 17, 2020:** Schools in Arizona were officially allowed to reopen to in-person instruction if they met metrics the state Department of Health released the week of Aug. 3. For a district to reopen, its county needed to have a two-week drop in the number of COVID-19 cases, a two-week period where the percent of positive cases was below 7%, and less than 10% of hospital visits were COVID-19 related. Some school districts that did not meet these criteria also reopened to in-person instruction. Gov. [Doug Ducey](#) (R) said he supported those districts in their decision and that superintendents and principals could have the final say. [\[26\]](#)
- **July 23, 2020:** Ducey ordered public schools to reopen for on-site learning on August 17 for students who had nowhere else to go. Superintendent [Kathy Hoffman](#) clarified that the order meant each school district needed to open at least one site for students to go, but did not have to open every school or require every teacher to work in-person. [\[27\]](#)
- **June 29, 2020:** Ducey ordered public schools to delay the start of the school year until at least August 17. [\[28\]](#)
- **June 1, 2020:** The Arizona Department of Education released guidance for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The guidance included screening students before entry, face covering requirements, smaller class sizes, and the elimination of communal dining halls. [\[29\]](#)
- **May 29, 2020:** Ducey announced that schools would reopen in the fall and that the state would release guidelines to schools on June 1. [\[30\]](#)

Arkansas

See also: [School responses in Arkansas to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Arkansas were closed to in-person instruction on March 17, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on August 24, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Arkansas. [\[31\]](#)[\[32\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Arkansas. [\[33\]](#)[\[34\]](#)
- **August 24, 2020:** Schools in Arkansas reopened to in-person instruction. [\[35\]](#) The Arkansas Center for Health Improvement announced that district-level data on testing rates and active coronavirus cases would be made available online. [\[36\]](#)
- **August 13, 2020:** Gov. [Asa Hutchinson](#) (R) released the Arkansas Ready to Learn Healthy School Guide. The document was a support guide for teachers and administrators created in partnership with Arkansas Children's Hospital and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. The guide outlined best practices for in-person learning. [\[37\]](#)
- **August 4, 2020:** Hutchinson said that public schools in the state were still on track to reopen beginning Aug. 24. "We need to have school this year. Absolutely. I'm firm on that. The educators are firm on that. Public health is firm on [that]. We need to have school," he said. [\[38\]](#)
- **July 9, 2020:** Hutchinson announced that the reopening of schools would be delayed until August 24. Schools in the state were previously set to open on August 13. [\[39\]](#)
- **June 24, 2020:** Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner Johnny Key released updated guidance for schools. The new guidance recommended that students older than 10 wear face coverings while riding on the bus and that younger students wear face coverings whenever practical. [\[40\]](#)
- **June 10, 2020:** Hutchinson said that he expected schools would re-open for in-person instruction in the fall. [\[41\]](#)

- **June 5, 2020:** The Arkansas Department of Education released its 26-page Arkansas Ready for Learning plan. The plan required face coverings for staff and students older than 10, social distancing requirements, and staggered meal times to limit cafeteria capacity. [\[42\]](#)

California

See also: [School responses in California to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in California were closed to in-person instruction on March 19, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in California. [\[43\]](#)[\[44\]](#)
- **March 15, 2021:** California Judge Cynthia Freeland issued a temporary restraining order preventing the state from enforcing the California's Safe Schools for All reopening framework through March 30. The order temporarily lifted the state's partial closure. [\[45\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in California. [\[46\]](#)[\[47\]](#)
- **July 17, 2020:** Gov. [Gavin Newsom](#) (D) announced that counties on the state's coronavirus watch list would begin the school year with online education only. As of July 20, 33 of the state's 58 counties were on the watch list, which was based on new infections per capita, test positivity rate, and hospitalization rate. [\[48\]](#)
- **June 8, 2020:** The California Department of Education released a 55-page guidance document for reopening schools to public instruction. The guidance included temperature checks before entering schools or buses, face coverings for staff and students, and physical distancing requirements. [\[49\]](#)

Colorado

See also: [School responses in Colorado to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Colorado were closed to in-person instruction on March 23, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on July 20, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Colorado. [\[50\]](#)[\[51\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Colorado. [\[52\]](#)[\[53\]](#)
- **July 20, 2020:** The Colorado Department of Education released guidance for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The guidelines contained separate criteria for elementary schools and secondary schools. Decisions about school start dates and remote learning would be left to local districts. [\[54\]](#)

Connecticut

See also: [School responses in Connecticut to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Connecticut were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on August 31, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Connecticut. [\[55\]](#)[\[56\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Connecticut. [\[57\]](#)[\[58\]](#)
- **August 31, 2020:** Connecticut schools were allowed to reopen for in-person instruction. Schools in the state were initially closed on March 16. [\[59\]](#)
- **July 30, 2020:** Gov. [Ned Lamont](#) (D) said school districts would be able to choose between a fully in-person and hybrid plan without requiring state approval. Districts that wanted to use a fully remote model needed to apply for an exemption from the state Department of Education. [\[60\]](#)
- **June 25, 2020:** Education Commissioner [Miguel Cardona](#) said that his department was proposing all schools reopen to students in the fall. Cardona said that students and staff would be required to wear masks while inside school buildings. [\[61\]](#)
- **June 11, 2020:** Lamont said that he expected schools in the state to reopen for classes in the fall. [\[62\]](#)

Delaware

See also: [School responses in Delaware to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Delaware were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Delaware. [\[63\]](#)[\[64\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Delaware. [\[65\]](#)[\[66\]](#)
- **August 25, 2020:** Gov. [John Carney](#) (D) signed the 25th modification to his emergency declaration, requiring students in kindergarten and above to wear face coverings inside schools at all times. The order also required school districts and charters to notify parents when a positive coronavirus case was identified in their child's building. [\[67\]](#)
- **August 4, 2020:** Carney announced that schools across the state could reopen using a combination of in-person and remote learning starting in September. [\[68\]](#)
- **July 15, 2020:** Carney released guidance for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Districts would use the guidance to create reopening plans that accounted for in-person, hybrid, and distance learning models. [\[69\]](#)

Florida

See also: [School responses in Florida to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Florida were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state ordered schools to reopen for in-person instruction by August 31, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in Florida . [\[70\]](#)[\[71\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Florida . [\[72\]](#)[\[73\]](#)
- **August 31, 2020:** Public schools were required to reopen for in-person instruction five days per week no later than August 31, according to the Florida Department of Education's order. [\[74\]](#)
- **August 28, 2020:** Florida's First District Court of Appeals put a hold on Florida Second Circuit Court Judge [Charles W. Dodson](#)'s ruling that Education Commissioner [Richard Corcoran](#)'s order requiring schools to open for in-person instruction was unconstitutional. [\[75\]](#)
- **August 24, 2020:** Dodson issued a temporary injunction against Corcoran's order requiring schools to open for in-person instruction by the end of August. In his decision, Dodson called Corcoran's order "unconstitutional to the extent that it arbitrarily disregards safety, denies local school boards' decision making with respect to reopening brick and mortar schools, and conditions funding on an approved reopening plan with a start date in August." [\[76\]](#)
- **July 6, 2020:** The Florida Department of Education ordered that all school boards and charter school governing boards must physically open schools for at least five days per week for all students beginning in August. [\[77\]](#)
- **June 11, 2020:** Gov. [Ron DeSantis](#) (R) announced that he expected schools to reopen at full capacity in August. The Florida Department of Education released guidance for schools including social distancing guidelines, the conversion of common spaces (such as libraries, gyms, and auditoriums) into classroom areas, and disinfection protocols. [\[78\]](#)

Georgia

See also: [School responses in Georgia to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Georgia were closed to in-person instruction on March 18, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Georgia . [\[79\]](#)[\[80\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Georgia . [\[81\]](#)[\[82\]](#)
- **July 14, 2020:** The Georgia Department of Education released reopening guidance for schools for the 2020-2021 school year. [\[83\]](#)
- **June 18, 2020:** Gov. [Brian Kemp](#) (R) said that he would apply for a waiver to forgo standardized testing for the 2020-2021 school year. [\[84\]](#)

Hawaii

See also: [School responses in Hawaii to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Hawaii were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Hawaii . [\[85\]](#) [\[86\]](#)
- **October 19, 2020:** The Department of Health released updated guidance for school reopenings. When the requirements were published, the previous two weeks of data made every island in the state eligible for blended learning or full-time, in-person instruction. The state also said it would consider schools' and districts' abilities to implement mitigation measures before it would allow reopenings. [\[87\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Hawaii . [\[88\]](#)[\[89\]](#)
- **August 7, 2020:** Gov. [David Ige](#) (D) announced that public schools would begin the school year with four weeks of online learning. The school year was scheduled to begin Aug. 17. [\[90\]](#)
- **July 30, 2020:** The Hawaii Board of Education voted to delay the start of the public school year until Aug. 17. [\[91\]](#)
- **June 28, 2020:** The Hawaii Department of Education announced public schools would begin reopening starting August 4. [\[92\]](#)

Idaho

See also: [School responses in Idaho to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Idaho were closed to in-person instruction on March 24, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in Idaho . [\[93\]](#)[\[94\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Idaho . [\[95\]](#)[\[96\]](#)
- **July 9, 2020:** The Idaho Board of Education approved a reopening framework. The guidance said that all school buildings were expected to reopen in the fall for in-person instruction. [\[97\]](#)
- **May 5, 2020:** The Idaho State Board of Education released initial reopening guidelines. [\[98\]](#)

Illinois

See also: [School responses in Illinois to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Illinois were closed to in-person instruction on March 13, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Illinois . [\[99\]](#)[\[100\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Illinois . [\[101\]](#)[\[102\]](#)
- **June 23, 2020:** Gov. [J.B. Pritzker](#) (D) released guidance for reopening schools. The guidance required face coverings for all students and staff, prohibited gatherings of more than 50 people, and established temperature screenings and social distancing protocols. [\[103\]](#)

Indiana

See also: [*School responses in Indiana to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic*](#)

Schools in Indiana were closed to in-person instruction on March 19, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on July 1, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Indiana . [\[104\]](#)[\[105\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Indiana . [\[106\]](#)[\[107\]](#)
- **August 3, 2020:** Gov. [Eric Holcomb](#) (R) modified the mask mandate for schools to allow students to remove masks in a classroom when they could maintain three to six feet of distance between themselves and others. [\[108\]](#)
- **June 5, 2020:** Indiana released guidelines for schools to consider before reopening. The guidelines included requiring face coverings and social distancing rules. Schools in Indiana were allowed to reopen for in-person instruction beginning July 1. [\[109\]](#)

Iowa

See also: [*School responses in Iowa to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic*](#)

Schools in Iowa were closed to in-person instruction on March 15, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on July 1, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in Iowa . [\[110\]](#)[\[111\]](#)
- **February 15, 2021:** Iowa schools were required to offer full-time in-person instruction. Legislation Gov. Kim Reynolds (R) signed on Jan. 29 required schools to open but also allowed parents to request a hybrid or all remote option for their children. Additionally, schools could request a waiver from the requirement to provide in-person instruction from the state Department of Education based on factors such as the number of teachers quarantining because of the virus. The bill passed the state House and Senate with the support of all Republicans and one Democrat. [\[112\]](#)
- **January 29, 2021:** Gov. Kim Reynolds (R) signed a bill requiring school districts to provide students in-person instruction five days a week. Under the law, parents could still request a hybrid or all remote option for their children, and schools could request a waiver from the Department of Education based on factors such as the number of teachers quarantining because of the virus. The bill, which passed the state House and Senate with the support of all Republicans and one Democrat, set a Feb. 15 deadline for schools to offer full-time in-person instruction. [\[113\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Iowa . [\[114\]](#)[\[115\]](#)
- **July 30, 2020:** Iowa Gov. [Kim Reynolds](#) (R) set requirements for public schools to seek a state waiver allowing them to provide online-only education. A school needed at least a 15% positive test rate in its county and a 10% absentee rate among students. Schools in counties with a 20% or higher positive test rate did not need to meet the absentee rate requirement. The waiver would have allowed a school to operate fully online for two weeks before re-applying for the waiver. [\[116\]](#)
- **July 17, 2020:** Reynolds ordered that students spend at least half of their schooling in-person. She said that districts could seek waivers to the requirement from the state Department of Education. Des Moines, the

state's largest district, had previously announced one day of in-person instruction for students each week. [\[117\]](#)

- **June 25, 2020:** The Iowa Department of Education announced that schools would be allowed to reopen beginning July 1. Officials announced that there would be no requirement for students or staff to wear face coverings, undergo health checks, or social distance. [\[118\]](#)

Kansas

See also: [School responses in Kansas to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Kansas were closed to in-person instruction on March 23, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Kansas. [\[119\]](#) [\[120\]](#)
- **April 5, 2021:** Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly (D) signed SB 63, requiring all public school districts to offer full-time, in-person instruction. The law applied to grades K-12. [\[121\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Kansas. [\[122\]](#)[\[123\]](#)
- **August 11, 2020:** The Kansas Department of Education released updated recommendations for returning to in-person education. The document broke the recommendations into color levels—green, yellow, orange, and red—based on criteria such as the number of students missing school, number of new cases, and local hospital capacity. There were separate recommendations for Pre-K through grade 5 and grades 6 through 12 at the yellow and orange levels. [\[124\]](#)
- **July 21, 2020:** The Kansas State Board of Education voted 5-5 on Gov. [Laura Kelly](#)'s (D) executive order delaying the start of the public school year until Sept. 9. The order required board approval before taking effect, so the tie vote effectively canceled the governor's executive order. [\[125\]](#)
- **July 20, 2020:** Kelly signed an executive order delaying the start of the public school year until Sept. 9 and requiring students, faculty, and visitors to wear face coverings in school buildings. The order required approval from the Kansas Board of Education. [\[126\]](#)
- **July 14, 2020:** The Kansas State Board of Education voted 9-0 to approve guidelines for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Board members said that the guidelines were not mandates but were meant to help districts craft their own individual plans. [\[127\]](#)
- **June 10, 2020:** The Kansas State Board of Education announced that it was expecting to reopen schools in August and that it would deliver guidance to schools in early July. [\[128\]](#)

Kentucky

See also: [School responses in Kentucky to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Kentucky were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Kentucky. [\[129\]](#)[\[130\]](#)

- **March 29, 2021:** Kentucky public schools had to offer at least two days of in-person instruction each week starting March 29. The requirement was the result of HB 208, which Gov. Andy Beshear (D) signed on March 4. The bill passed the state Senate 28-8 on March 3 and the House 81-15 on March 4. Parents could still keep their children in fully remote learning. [\[131\]](#)
- **March 4, 2021:** Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear (D) signed HB 208, requiring public schools to offer at least two days of in-person instruction each week starting March 29. The bill passed 28-8 in the state Senate on March 3, and the House approved the Senate's version 81-15 on March 4. Parents could still keep their children in fully remote learning. [\[132\]](#)
- **March 1, 2021:** Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear's (D) executive order recommending all school districts and private schools offer some form of in-person instruction became effective. [\[133\]](#)
- **February 23, 2021:** Gov. Andy Beshear (D) issued an executive order recommending all school districts and private schools offer some form of in-person instruction by March 1. The Kentucky Department of Education released KDE COVID-19 Guidance 2.0 to guide school reopenings. [\[134\]](#)
- **January 4, 2021:** Kentucky's [Healthy at School guidelines](#) became mandatory and middle and high schools were allowed to reopen for in-person instruction. [\[135\]](#)
- **December 14, 2020:** Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear (D) announced the state's Healthy at School guidelines would become mandatory starting Jan. 4, 2020, including rules for social distancing, mask-wearing, sanitization, and other in-person activities (like food service in lunch rooms). [\[135\]](#)
- **December 7, 2020:** Public and private elementary schools started reopening for in-person instruction on Dec. 7 in non-red zone counties. Middle and high school instruction would be fully remote through at least Jan. 4. Gov. Andy Beshear (D) previously ordered all schools to close on Nov. 23. [\[136\]](#)
- **November 23, 2020:** All K-12 public and private schools statewide had to stop in-person classes. Middle and high school instruction were scheduled to remain remote through at least Jan. 4. Elementary schools were scheduled to reopen in-person instruction starting Dec. 7 in non-red zone counties. [\[137\]](#)
- **Sept 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Kentucky. [\[138\]](#)[\[139\]](#)
- **August 10, 2020:** Gov. [Andy Beshear](#) (D) requested that school districts not offer in-person instruction until at least Sept. 28, and instead begin the school year with virtual learning. [\[140\]](#)
- **July 27, 2020:** Beshear asked schools to avoid reopening for in-person instruction until the third week of August. [\[141\]](#)
- **July 6, 2020:** The Kentucky Department of Education released guidelines on reopening schools in the fall. The document, a complement to interim guidance issued in June by the Kentucky Department of Public Health, did not mandate a uniform course of action for reopening schools. Instead, "it [was] intended to be a guide for local school districts when developing and adapting their return-to-school plans." [\[142\]](#)
- **May 15, 2020:** The [Kentucky Department of Education](#) released guidance for schools to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year. Before opening, schools would be required to identify a Healthy at Work officer, create a Healthy at Work communications plan, educate and train employees, establish contact tracing procedures, establish calendar, enrollment, and attendance guidelines, and create a plan for sudden closures or extended periods of remote learning. [\[143\]](#)

Louisiana

See also: [School responses in Louisiana to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Louisiana were closed to in-person instruction on March 13, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Louisiana . [\[144\]](#)[\[145\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Louisiana . [\[146\]](#)[\[147\]](#)
- **July 14, 2020:** The Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted unanimously to approve reopening guidelines proposed by Superintendent Cade Brumley. The guidelines included a requirement for all adults and students in grades 3 through 12 to wear face coverings. [\[148\]](#)

Maine

See also: [School responses in Maine to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Maine were closed to in-person instruction on March 18, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists the statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Maine . [\[149\]](#)[\[150\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Maine . [\[151\]](#)[\[152\]](#)
- **July 31, 2020:** The Maine Department of Education released guidance for reopening public schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The guidance required all staff and students age five and older to wear masks. [\[153\]](#)

Maryland

See also: [School responses in Maryland to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Maryland were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Maryland . [\[154\]](#)[\[155\]](#)
- **March 1, 2021:** Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan (R) encouraged schools in counties across the state to return students to the classroom. In January, Hogan said school districts that didn't offer some in-person instruction could face legal action. Districts were allowed to decide how many days a week to offer in-person instruction. Students could still opt for virtual schooling. [\[156\]](#)
- **September 22, 2020:** Karen Salmon, the Maryland Superintendent of Schools, announced that she had approved in-person reopening plans for every school district in Maryland. [\[157\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Maryland . [\[158\]](#)[\[159\]](#)
- **September 8, 2020:** Schools in Maryland were allowed to reopen virtually. How long virtual instruction would last varied by district. [\[160\]](#)
- **September 1, 2020:** The Maryland Board of Education approved new minimums for instruction. Schools needed to be open at least 180 days and offer at least a total of six hours of instruction, of which 3.5 hours needed to be synchronous instruction (all students taught at the same time) for grades K-12. [\[161\]](#)

- **July 22, 2020:** Maryland Superintendent of Schools [Karen Salmon](#) announced that schools had until Aug. 14 to submit reopening plans to the state board of education. Schools were allowed to open in-person so long as they followed specific CDC and state health guidelines and met benchmarks set by the state. [\[162\]](#)
- **June 10, 2020:** The Maryland Department of Education released *Maryland Together*, the state's school reopening plan. [\[163\]](#)

Massachusetts

See also: [School responses in Massachusetts to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Massachusetts were closed to in-person instruction on March 17, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in Massachusetts. [\[164\]](#)[\[165\]](#)
- **May 17, 2021:** Massachusetts started requiring schools to offer full-time in-person instruction for high schoolers on May 17. [\[1\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Massachusetts. [\[166\]](#)[\[167\]](#)
- **July 27, 2020:** The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education signed an agreement with the state's teachers unions to reduce the length of the 2020-2021 school year from 180 days to 170 days. [\[168\]](#)
- **June 24, 2020:** Gov. [Charlie Baker](#) (R) released guidance for reopening schools. The guidance required all staff and students in second grade or higher to wear masks, social distancing of desks in classrooms, and students to eat breakfast and lunch in their classrooms. [\[169\]](#)
- **June 8, 2020:** The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released preliminary guidance for reopening schools. The memo outlined a face-covering requirement for both teachers and students, desks spaced six feet apart, and classroom size restrictions of 12. [\[170\]](#)

Michigan

See also: [School responses in Michigan to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Michigan were closed to in-person instruction on March 12, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Michigan. [\[171\]](#)[\[172\]](#)
- **December 21, 2020:** Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) allowed public and private high schools to reopen starting Dec. 21. [\[173\]](#)
- **December 7, 2020:** On Dec. 7, Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) extended the suspension of in-person instruction at all public and non-public high schools through Dec. 20. [\[174\]](#)
- **November 18, 2020:** Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) announced a three-week ban on in-person high school and college instruction across the state beginning Nov. 18. [\[175\]](#)

- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Michigan .^{[176][177]}
- **August 20, 2020:** Gov. [Gretchen Whitmer](#) (D) signed an education package consisting of three bills that guided how school districts could reopen for the school year. The bills stipulated that although school districts weren't required to offer in-person education, school boards needed to review their district's instructional plans each month. Schools that did reopen to in-person instruction needed to prioritize that option for K-12 students. The legislation also weighted per-pupil funding based on 75% of last year's enrollment and 25% of the current enrollment.^[178]
- **June 30, 2020:** Whitmer released the "MI Safe Schools Return to School Roadmap," a set of guidelines by which local districts could draft their own reopening plans for the fall. The guidelines, which included both requirements and recommendations, were tiered to the phases of the state's broader reopening plan.^[179]
- **June 17, 2020:** Whitmer announced that Michigan schools could resume in-person instruction during Phase 4 of the state's reopening (the state entered Phase 4 on June 1). Whitmer said she would issue an executive order June 30 outlining requirements and recommendations for reopening the state's traditional public, charter, private, and parochial schools.^[180]

Minnesota

See also: [School responses in Minnesota to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Minnesota were closed to in-person instruction on March 18, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Minnesota .^{[181][182]}
- **February 22, 2021:** On Feb. 22, all middle and high school students were allowed to return to the classroom for either full-time instruction or a hybrid approach combining remote and in-person instruction. Gov. Tim Walz (D) said he expected schools to offer some in-person instruction by March 8. Under the plan, families could still opt to keep their children home for remote instruction.^[183]
- **February 17, 2021:** Gov. Tim Walz (D) released a plan to return students to in-person instruction. On Feb. 22, all middle and high school students were scheduled to return to the classroom for either full-time instruction or a hybrid approach. Walz said he expected all schools to offer some in-person learning by March 8. Under the plan, families could still opt to keep their children home for remote instruction.^[183]
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Minnesota .^{[184][185]}
- **July 30, 2020:** Gov. [Tim Walz](#) (D) released the Safe Learning Plan for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The plan required a county to have fewer than 9 coronavirus cases per 10,000 residents over a 14-day period in order to fully reopen schools.^[186]

Mississippi

See also: [School responses in Mississippi to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Mississippi were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. All counties in the state were allowed to start reopening schools by August 17, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Mississippi . [\[187\]](#)[\[188\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Mississippi . [\[189\]](#)[\[190\]](#)
- **August 4, 2020:** Gov. [Tate Reeves](#) (R) mandated that all students and teachers wear masks on school property. He delayed school reopenings in eight counties to Aug. 17. Previously, the counties were allowed to set their own start dates for the academic year. [\[191\]](#)
- **June 10, 2020:** The Mississippi Department of Education released optional guidance for schools reopening in the fall. It contained recommendations for school districts to choose and implement one of three learning schedules: traditional, hybrid, or online. [\[192\]](#)

Missouri

See also: [School responses in Missouri to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Missouri were closed to in-person instruction on March 19, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Missouri . [\[193\]](#)[\[194\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Missouri . [\[195\]](#)[\[196\]](#)
- **July 14, 2020:** The Missouri Department of Education released guidance for reopening schools. Recommendations included screening students and faculty for symptoms, limiting students and faculty to the same group of people every day (cohorting), and requesting students and faculty wear masks. [\[197\]](#)
- **June 9, 2020:** Missouri Education Commissioner Margie Vandeven announced fall reopenings for schools would occur at the discretion of county and school board officials. [\[198\]](#)

Montana

See also: [School responses in Montana to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Montana were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and were allowed to reopen on May 7. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in Montana . [\[199\]](#)[\[200\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Montana . [\[201\]](#)[\[202\]](#)
- **July 2, 2020:** Gov. [Steve Bullock](#) (D) announced guidelines for reopening schools in the state. The plan encouraged schools to consider implementing precautions that included limiting occupancy, adjusting transportation schedules, and adopting special cleaning and disinfecting protocols. [\[203\]](#)

Nebraska

See also: [*School responses in Nebraska to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic*](#)

Schools in Nebraska were closed to in-person instruction on April 1, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Nebraska . [\[204\]](#)[\[205\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Nebraska . [\[206\]](#)[\[207\]](#)
- **August 3, 2020:** Gov. [Pete Ricketts](#) (R) said that schools were ready to reopen but would leave decisions on when and how up to local school officials. [\[208\]](#)
- **May 7, 2020:** The Nebraska Department of Education released guidelines for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. [\[209\]](#)

Nevada

See also: [*School responses in Nevada to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic*](#)

Schools in Nevada were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on June 9, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Nevada . [\[210\]](#)[\[211\]](#)
- **April 13, 2021:** Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak (D) announced that, on May 1, county school districts would gain control over all COVID-19 mitigation measures. [\[6\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Nevada . [\[212\]](#)[\[213\]](#)
- **July 28, 2020:** Gov. [Steve Sisolak](#) (D) issued a directive ordering all staff and students from K-12 to wear a mask in school at all times. The directive also imposed social distancing guidelines of three feet for preschools through middle schools, and six feet for high schools. [\[214\]](#)
- **June 24, 2020:** The Nevada Department of Education released guidance for distance education for the 2020-2021 school year. The guidance included requirements for frequency of teacher-student contact, calendar changes, and implementing hybrid learning systems. [\[215\]](#)
- **June 9, 2020:** Sisolak signed an executive order allowing schools to reopen buildings and athletic facilities effective immediately. [\[216\]](#)

New Hampshire

See also: [*School responses in New Hampshire to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic*](#)

Schools in New Hampshire were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in New Hampshire . [\[217\]](#)[\[218\]](#)

- **April 19, 2021:** New Hampshire public schools had to offer full-time in-person instruction by April 19. Gov. Chris Sununu (R) said parents still had the option of requesting remote learning. [\[3\]](#)
- **April 1, 2021:** New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu (R) announced that all K-12 schools had to return students to full-time, in-person instruction by April 19. Sununu said parents would still have the option of requesting remote learning. [\[219\]](#)
- **March 8, 2021:** Schools in New Hampshire were required to begin providing at least two days of classroom instruction each week. Under the order, schools could switch to fully remote instruction for up to 48 hours without state approval. Gov. Chris Sununu (R) issued the requirement in a Feb. 19 order. [\[220\]](#)
- **February 19, 2021:** New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu (R) signed an executive order requiring schools to provide at least two days of classroom instruction per week starting March 8. [\[221\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in New Hampshire. [\[222\]](#)[\[223\]](#)
- **August 13, 2020:** Gov. [Chris Sununu](#) (R) outlined guidelines for combating community spread of coronavirus in schools. Evidence of transmission between classrooms and cohorts would be classified as an outbreak and would allow school officials to revert to remote learning for two weeks. [\[224\]](#)
- **July 14, 2020:** Sununu released guidance for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Sununu said that the plan was meant to give school districts local control over how they reopened. Education Commissioner Frank Edelblut said that he expected students back in schools in September. [\[225\]](#)

New Jersey

See also: [School responses in New Jersey to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in New Jersey were closed to in-person instruction on March 18, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on August 12, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in New Jersey. [\[226\]](#)[\[227\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in New Jersey. [\[228\]](#)[\[229\]](#)
- **August 12, 2020:** Gov. [Phil Murphy](#) (D) signed an executive order allowing public and private K-12 schools, colleges, and universities to offer in-person instruction when they reopened. Schools would decide whether to offer remote learning, in-person instruction, or a hybrid approach. Schools that could not meet requirements set out by the New Jersey Department of Education would be required to begin the school year remotely. [\[230\]](#)
- **August 3, 2020:** Murphy announced all students would be required to wear face coverings in schools, with exceptions for students with disabilities. [\[231\]](#)
- **July 24, 2020:** New Jersey released guidance regarding a remote-only learning option for public school students. During the 2020-2021 school year, parents would be able to opt their children into a fully online learning schedule. [\[232\]](#)
- **June 26, 2020:** The New Jersey Department of Education released a 104-page reopening plan that included social distancing guidelines and a face-covering requirement for teachers and staff. Gov. [Phil Murphy](#) (D) said that schools would reopen to in-person instruction this fall. [\[233\]](#)

New Mexico

See also: [*School responses in New Mexico to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic*](#)

Schools in New Mexico were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on September 7, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in New Mexico . [\[234\]](#)[\[235\]](#)
- **March 9, 2021:** New Mexico Public Education Secretary Ryan Stewart announced all schools and grade levels could return to full-time in-person classes if schools were able to establish the safety protocols the state outlined. Stewart also said schools were expected to return to five-days-a-week in-person classes by April 5. Previously, all primary and secondary schools could open under a hybrid model. [\[236\]](#)
- **January 18, 2021:** Schools in areas of New Mexico with lower transmission rates were permitted to begin reopening for in-person or hybrid instruction. [\[237\]](#)
- **January 4, 2021:** Schools in New Mexico were required to close in-person instruction through Jan. 15 to mitigate virus spread. [\[238\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in New Mexico . [\[239\]](#)[\[240\]](#)
- **July 23, 2020:** New Mexico Gov. [Michelle Lujan Grisham](#) (D) announced schools would not be able to open for in-person instruction until after September 7. Individual school districts decided when classes began in New Mexico, so there was no statewide reopening date. [\[241\]](#)
- **June 23, 2020:** The New Mexico Department of Public Education released guidance for reopening schools. The guidance required students and staff to wear masks and eliminated large gatherings like pep rallies and assemblies. [\[242\]](#)

New York

See also: [*School responses in New York to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic*](#)

Schools in New York were closed to in-person instruction on March 18, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in New York . [\[243\]](#)[\[244\]](#)
- **January 4, 2021:** New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) announced schools could remain open in communities with 9% or greater positivity rates if positivity among students and school staff was lower than positivity in the surrounding community. Previously, the state had required schools to close in communities where the positivity rate was 9% or greater. [\[245\]](#)
- **October 30, 2020:** New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) announced schools in the state's red and orange mitigation zones could reopen after all of a school's students and teachers got tested. Cuomo did not give a timeline for the reopening but said the state would provide the tests. [\[246\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in New York . [\[247\]](#)[\[248\]](#)
- **August 7, 2020:** New York Gov. [Andrew Cuomo](#) (D) announced schools would reopen to in-person instruction at the start of the school year. Students would be required to wear masks. Parents would retain the option to keep their children home. [\[249\]](#)
- **July 13, 2020:** The State Department of Education released a framework for school reopening plans. Each school district would be required to submit a district-specific reopening plan based on the template

between July 17 and July 31. Formal guidance for reopening was expected later that week. [\[250\]](#)

North Carolina

See also: [School responses in North Carolina to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in North Carolina were closed to in-person instruction on March 14, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on August 17, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in North Carolina. [\[251\]](#)[\[252\]](#)
- **March 1, 2021:** The North Carolina State Senate failed to override Gov. Roy Cooper's (D) veto of SB 37, a bill that would have required schools to provide daily in-person instruction. The final vote was 29-20, one vote short of the three-fifths majority necessary to override a gubernatorial veto. One Democrat joined with Republicans in voting to override the veto. The Senate passed the bill 31-16 on Feb. 16. Cooper vetoed it on Feb. 26. [\[253\]](#)
- **February 26, 2021:** North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper (D) vetoed a bill that would have required schools to provide daily in-person instruction. The state House of Representatives passed the bill 77-42 on Feb. 22, while the state Senate passed the bill 31-16 on Feb. 16. To override Cooper's veto, the bill would need the support of three-fifths of the members in both chambers of the legislature. [\[253\]](#)
- **February 11, 2021:** [\[254\]](#)
 - The North Carolina House of Representatives voted 77-44 on Feb. 11 to advance a bill requiring school districts to provide the option of in-person instruction for all students. Families would be able to choose remote instruction. All Republicans and five Democrats in the chamber supported the bill.
 - The state Senate passed a similar bill 29-15 on Feb. 9, but the chamber refrained from holding a final vote on the state House's version of the bill. The state House bill contained modifications distinguishing it from the state Senate bill, including a provision allowing special accommodations for educators who had conditions that increased their risk of severe illness from COVID-19. No Republicans opposed the state Senate bill, and two Democrats voted in favor of it.
- **February 2, 2021:** North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper (D) announced new school guidance and encouraged public K-12 schools to reopen for full-time in-person instruction. The guidance instructed elementary schools to reopen under Plan A, which did not require social distancing. Middle and high schools were slated to reopen under Plan B, which did require social distancing. Cooper said he wanted to leave the final reopening decisions to school districts. The state still required districts to provide a remote learning option for families that chose to opt in. [\[255\]](#)
- **September 17, 2020:** Gov. [Roy Cooper](#) (D) announced that elementary school and charter school students could return to classrooms at full capacity beginning Oct. 5. Students, teachers, and staff were required to wear face coverings, and schools needed to enforce social distancing and screen for symptoms. [\[256\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in North Carolina. [\[257\]](#)[\[258\]](#)
- **August 17, 2020:** Schools in North Carolina were allowed to reopen. Based on state guidelines, most K-12 districts would begin the year with at least some online learning. [\[259\]](#)
- **July 14, 2020:** Cooper released the state's school reopening plan, which emphasized a combination of in-person instruction and distance learning. [\[260\]](#)
- **June 8, 2020:** The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services released guidance for reopening schools to in-person instruction. The guidance included more frequent cleanings, a temperature check for all individuals entering buildings or buses, and physical distancing guidelines. [\[261\]](#)

North Dakota

See also: [*School responses in North Dakota to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic*](#)

Schools in North Dakota were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on June 1, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in North Dakota. [\[262\]](#)[\[263\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in North Dakota. [\[264\]](#)[\[265\]](#)
- **May 11, 2020:** Gov. [Doug Burgum](#) (R) announced that schools in North Dakota could reopen starting June 1 for summer programs, though schools were not required to. Under the order, child care programs, summer school classes, and college admissions testing could resume. The order also did not prohibit schools from offering summer distance learning options. [\[266\]](#)

Ohio

See also: [*School responses in Ohio to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic*](#)

Schools in Ohio were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Ohio. [\[267\]](#)[\[268\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Ohio. [\[269\]](#)[\[270\]](#)
- **August 15, 2020:** The Ohio Department of Health said the state would not allow face shields to be substituted for face masks in schools unless a child met certain exceptions. The health department cited CDC guidance saying it was unknown how effective face shields were at protecting from respiratory droplets. [\[271\]](#)
- **August 4, 2020:** Gov. [Mike DeWine](#) (R) announced all K-12 students would be required to wear face coverings in public schools. [\[272\]](#)
- **July 2, 2020:** DeWine released guidelines for reopening schools in the state. The guidelines included a requirement that all staff wear masks and a recommendation that students in third grade or higher wear masks. [\[273\]](#)
- **June 2, 2020:** DeWine announced that he intended to reopen schools for in-person instruction in the fall. DeWine said that the state was still working to develop health guidelines for schools and that districts would be given the flexibility to determine their start date. [\[274\]](#)

Oklahoma

See also: [*School responses in Oklahoma to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic*](#)

Schools in Oklahoma were closed to in-person instruction on March 17, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide,

[email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Oklahoma . [\[275\]](#)[\[276\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Oklahoma . [\[277\]](#)[\[278\]](#)
- **July 31, 2020:** Gov. [Kevin Stitt](#) (R) announced a distribution system for school PPE and said that schools would reopen for in-person instruction in the fall. [\[279\]](#)
- **June 3, 2020:** The Oklahoma Department of Education released guidelines for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. [\[280\]](#)

Oregon

See also: [School responses in Oregon to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Oregon were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Oregon . [\[281\]](#)[\[282\]](#)
- **April 19, 2021:** Oregon public schools had to open for hybrid or full-time in-person instruction for grades 6-12 by April 19. Gov. Kate Brown (D) issued the requirement on March 12. [\[4\]](#)
- **March 29, 2021:** Oregon public elementary schools had to reopen no later than March 29 for hybrid or full-time in-person instruction. Parents could still keep their children in fully remote instruction. [\[283\]](#)
- **March 12, 2021:** Oregon Gov. Kate Brown (D) issued an executive order requiring public elementary schools to reopen no later than March 29 for hybrid or full-time in-person instruction. The order also required public schools to open for grades 6-12 by April 19. Parents could still keep their children in fully remote instruction. [\[284\]](#)
- **March 5, 2021:** Gov. Kate Brown (D) announced she would issue an executive order requiring public elementary schools to reopen no later than March 29 for hybrid or full-time in-person instruction. The order was also scheduled to require public schools to open for grades 6-12 by April 19. She said parents could still keep their children in fully remote instruction. [\[285\]](#)
- **January 1, 2021:** Oregon's school reopening metrics, which determined when schools could open, became advisory instead of mandatory. [\[286\]](#)
- **October 30, 2020:** The Oregon Department of Education released updated school reopening guidance. Under the rules, schools in counties with less than 50 new coronavirus cases per 100,000 residents over 14 days could resume full-time, in-person learning. Previously, the state only allowed full-time, in-person schedules in counties with 10 or fewer new cases per 100,000 residents each week over a three-week rolling average. [\[287\]](#)
- **October 6, 2020:** The Oregon Department of Education announced the state would disregard positivity rate data from September in determining whether school districts could reopen. The announcement meant school districts could reopen for in-person instruction if their counties met the state's case count criteria until October positivity data was available. [\[288\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Oregon . [\[289\]](#)[\[290\]](#)
- **August 11, 2020:** The Oregon Department of Education released updated school reopening guidelines that allowed schools to reopen to in-person instruction if the school had 250 students or fewer, was in a county

with fewer than 30,000 residents, and if the county had reported no more than 30 COVID-19 cases in the past three weeks.^[291]

- **July 28, 2020:** Oregon Gov. [Kate Brown](#) (D) announced the metrics that would guide school reopening decisions. Counties needed to have 10 or fewer coronavirus cases per 100,000 people and a 7-day positivity rate of 5% or less for three consecutive weeks before in-person and hybrid instruction could resume. The state also needed to have a positivity rate of 5% or less for three consecutive weeks before any in-person or hybrid instruction could resume.^[292]
- **June 10, 2020:** The Oregon Department of Education released guidelines for schools to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year. Under the plan, individual public and private schools would need to submit an Operational Blueprint for Reentry to their local public health authority before they reopened.^[293]

Pennsylvania

See also: [School responses in Pennsylvania to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Pennsylvania were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Pennsylvania.^{[294][295]}
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Pennsylvania.^{[296][297]}
- **August 19, 2020:** The Pennsylvania Department of Education announced the statewide public mask requirement for everyone over the age of two applied to all public and private schools. Students could remove their face coverings when they were eating and drinking (at least six feet apart), in situations when wearing a face covering might be unsafe, and during socially distanced face covering breaks lasting no more than 10 minutes.^[298]
- **August 10, 2020:** The Pennsylvania Department of Education released guidelines for when schools could reopen to in-person instruction based on health statistics in the county.^[299]
- **July 16, 2020:** The Pennsylvania Department of Education released updated guidance for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year.^[300]

Rhode Island

See also: [School responses in Rhode Island to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Rhode Island were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on September 14, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Rhode Island.^{[301][302]}
- **January 15, 2021:** Public schools were allowed to reopen on a staggered schedule between Jan. 7 and Jan. 15. After reopening, districts and schools were allowed to make their own decisions on openings and closures, but the state encouraged in-person learning schedules.^[303]
- **September 14, 2020:** In-person K-12 classes were allowed to resume statewide. Cumberland and Warwick school districts were starting the school year fully remotely. Most school districts resumed with a hybrid

schedule.^[304]

- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Rhode Island .^{[305][306]}
- **August 31, 2020:** Gov. [Gina Raimondo](#) (D) announced every public school district in the state except Providence and Central Falls would be permitted to resume in-person instruction when schools reopened for the 2020-2021 academic year. Raimondo said in-person classes were still scheduled to start Sept. 14. Raimondo also signed an executive order extending Phase III of the state's reopening plan.^[307]
- **August 24, 2020:** Raimondo announced the Facilities Readiness Team would inspect every public school in the state to ensure compliance with Department of Health guidelines before reopening. Public schools statewide were set to reopen on Sept. 9 for teachers and Sept. 14 for students.^[308]
- **August 12, 2020:** Raimondo announced she was delaying the start of the school year until Sept. 14. She previously said she wanted schools to reopen at the end of August.^[309]
- **June 19, 2020:** The Rhode Island Department of Education released health and safety guidelines for reopening elementary and secondary schools.^[310]

South Carolina

See also: [School responses in South Carolina to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in South Carolina were closed to in-person instruction on March 15, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in South Carolina .^{[311][312]}
- **April 26, 2021:** South Carolina schools had to start offering in-person instruction five days a week. Gov. Henry McMaster (R) signed the requirement into law on April 22. The legislature passed the requirement on April 21.^[2]
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in South Carolina .^{[313][314]}
- **July 31, 2020:** South Carolina Superintendent of Education [Molly Mitchell Spearman](#) announced masks would be required in South Carolina public school facilities for staff and students in grades 2-12.^[315]
- **June 22, 2020:** Spearman released recommendations on reopening schools in the state. The recommendations included required face coverings for all students and staff, social distancing protocols, one-way hallways, staggered arrivals and dismissals, and buses operating at 50 percent capacity.^[316]

South Dakota

See also: [School responses in South Dakota to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in South Dakota were closed to in-person instruction on March 17, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in South Dakota .^{[317][318]}

- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in South Dakota . [\[319\]](#)[\[320\]](#)
- **July 28, 2020:** Gov. [Kristi Noem](#) (R) said that schools would open in the fall and that she would not consider closing schools in the event of a coronavirus resurgence. [\[321\]](#)
- **June 2020:** The South Dakota Department of Education partnered with the Department of Health to release “Starting Well 2020,” a series of documents containing guidance on reopening and daily operations for K-12 schools. The documents covered several areas, including guidelines for teachers, special education, libraries, distance learning, school buses, and COVID-19 mitigation. Many of the guidelines were updated throughout July. [\[322\]](#)

Tennessee

See also: [School responses in Tennessee to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Tennessee were closed to in-person instruction on March 20, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Tennessee. [\[323\]](#)[\[324\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Tennessee . [\[325\]](#)[\[326\]](#)
- **August 12, 2020:** Tennessee Education Commissioner [Penny Schwinn](#) said that the Tennessee Department of Education was encouraging school districts to mandate face coverings for middle and high school students. [\[327\]](#)
- **July 28, 2020:** Tennessee Gov. [Bill Lee](#) (R) released guidelines for reopening schools. The recommendations covered testing and contact tracing, immunizations, and resources necessary for returning students to classrooms or teaching remotely. [\[328\]](#)
- **June 8, 2020:** The Tennessee Department of Education released guidance for reopening schools in August. The document did not require Tennessee school districts to adopt any particular approach but provided suggestions and best practices for safely reopening, including requiring students and staff to wear masks and setting staggered schedules. [\[329\]](#)

Texas

See also: [School responses in Texas to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Texas were closed to in-person instruction on March 20, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Texas . [\[330\]](#)[\[331\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported about half of schools were in-person in Texas . [\[332\]](#)[\[333\]](#)
- **July 17, 2020:** The Texas Education Agency extended the time local school districts could keep schools closed and teach students remotely without losing funding. According to the new rules, districts could

teach students remotely for up to eight weeks from the start of the school year, so long as the local school board votes on the matter after four weeks. [\[334\]](#)

- **July 14, 2020:** Gov. [Greg Abbott](#) (R) said that schools would be permitted to delay returning students to physical classrooms for longer than originally planned. Previously, state guidance said schools should offer three weeks of virtual instruction to start the year but could lose state funding if they did not return to in-person instruction after that period. Abbot said he would provide more information soon. [\[335\]](#)
- **July 7, 2020:** Education Commissioner [Mike Morath](#) released guidance for reopening schools in the fall. Parents would be able to choose between on-campus and distance learning options. Masks would also be required in school buildings. [\[336\]](#)
- **June 18, 2020:** Morath said that the state's schools would open to students in the fall. [\[337\]](#)

Utah

See also: [School responses in Utah to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Utah were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Utah. [\[338\]](#)
[\[339\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Utah. [\[340\]](#)[\[341\]](#)
- **July 20, 2020:** The Utah Department of Health issued an order mandating the use of face coverings in all public and private K-12 schools. The order included exemptions related to eating and drinking and medical conditions. [\[342\]](#)
- **June 29, 2020:** Gov. [Gary Herbert](#) (R) approved the state Board of Education's reopening plan for the 2020-2021 school year. The plan allowed for local districts to make decisions based on state recommendations, although it did include specific mandates that all districts needed to follow. Local districts had to post public reopening plans online by August 1. [\[343\]](#)

Vermont

See also: [School responses in Vermont to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Vermont were closed to in-person instruction on March 18, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on September 8, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Vermont. [\[344\]](#)[\[345\]](#)
- **September 22, 2020:** Vermont Education Secretary Dan French announced that schools would advance to step 3 of reopening, which allowed for inter-scholastic competitions, on Sept. 26. Step 3 also permitted schools to use common areas like gyms and small groups of students. [\[346\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Vermont. [\[347\]](#)[\[348\]](#)

- **July 28, 2020:** Gov. [Phil Scott](#) (R) announced that schools would not reopen until Sept. 8. School districts would decide whether to return students to physical classrooms or offer distance learning. [\[349\]](#)
- **June 17, 2020:** The Vermont Agency of Education released a 25-page guidance document for reopening schools. The guidance included health checks on entry, staggered drop-off and pickup times, and hand sanitizing stations at entrances. [\[350\]](#)

Virginia

See also: [School responses in Virginia to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Virginia were closed to in-person instruction on March 16, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Virginia. [\[351\]](#)[\[352\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Virginia. [\[353\]](#)[\[354\]](#)
- **June 9, 2020:** Gov. [Ralph Northam](#) (D) announced that schools would reopen to in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. The state released guidance for a three-phase reopening. Phase One had remote learning as the dominant teaching strategy, while Phase Two allowed in-person instruction for preschool through third grade, and Phase Three allowed in-person instruction for all students. [\[355\]](#)

Washington

See also: [School responses in Washington to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Washington were closed to in-person instruction on March 17, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were in-person in Washington. [\[356\]](#)[\[357\]](#)
- **April 19, 2021:** Washington public schools had to offer all K-12 students at least 30% in-person instruction every week by April 19. Gov. Jay Inslee (D) signed the proclamation March 15. [\[5\]](#)
- **March 12, 2021:** Washington Gov. Jay Inslee (D) said he would issue an emergency proclamation requiring elementary schools to provide students at least two partial days of in-person instruction by April 5. Inslee said schools had to provide older students the same by April 19. As of March 15, Inslee had not signed the proclamation. [\[358\]](#)
- **December 16, 2020:** On December 16, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee (D) released updated school reopening guidance for returning students to the classroom. The guidance, which wasn't binding, gave schools three options based on the level of COVID-19 spread. For schools in counties with low spread, the guidance recommended in-person learning for all students. For schools in counties with moderate spread, the guidance recommended a phased approach starting with elementary students and increasing by grade level. In counties with high COVID-19 spread, the guidance recommended in-person learning in small groups for elementary and high-need students only. [\[359\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Washington. [\[360\]](#)[\[361\]](#)

- **June 11, 2020:** Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal released guidance for reopening schools. The guidelines required face coverings for all students and staff and the development of alternate instruction plans for each school. Reykdal said that his expectation was for schools to reopen to in-person instruction in the fall. [\[362\]](#)

West Virginia

See also: [School responses in West Virginia to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in West Virginia were closed to in-person instruction on March 13, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. The state allowed schools to start reopening on September 8, 2020. The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in West Virginia. [\[363\]](#)[\[364\]](#)
- **March 24, 2021:** Gov. Jim Justice (R) ordered all schools, regardless of grade or county transmission levels, to reopen for in-person learning five days a week. Previously, high schools had to close in counties the DHHR designated as red transmission areas. [\[365\]](#)
- **January 19, 2021:** All public and private pre-K, elementary, and middle schools in West Virginia were required to resume full-time in-person or hybrid (at least two in-person days every week) instruction, regardless of their county's transmission rates. High schools were still required to close if they were located in counties the Department of Health and Human Resources classified as red in the County Alert System map. [\[366\]](#)
- **December 30, 2020:** On Dec. 30, Gov. Jim Justice (R) announced that all elementary and middle schools would reopen to full-time, in-person instruction beginning Jan. 19. Justice also announced that most high schools would reopen unless they were located in counties the Department of Health and Human Resources classified as red. [\[367\]](#)
- **December 3, 2020:** Public and private schools in West Virginia were allowed to reopen from Thanksgiving closures starting Dec. 3. Gov. Jim Justice ordered schools closed from Thanksgiving through Dec. 3 to allow a seven-day period between holiday gatherings and in-person instruction. [\[368\]](#)
- **September 15, 2020:** Gov. [Jim Justice](#) (R) announced he was adding a new color—gold—to the color-coding system that determined how schools could reopen. Counties with between 10 and 14.9 COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people would be classified as gold. While in-person learning was allowed in gold counties, there were limits on gatherings and sports travel. [\[369\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in West Virginia. [\[370\]](#)[\[371\]](#)
- **August 14, 2020:** Justice announced a color-coded school reopening metric for counties. Schools in green and yellow counties would be able to reopen for in-person instruction on the statewide school reentry date. Schools in red and orange phase counties would be required to conduct fully remote operations. Fifty-two out of the state's 55 counties were in the green or yellow phases. [\[372\]](#)
- **August 5, 2020:** Justice released reopening guidance for schools in the state. Justice set a target reopening date of Sept. 8 and counties were required to submit their reopening plans by Aug. 14. [\[373\]](#)

Wisconsin

See also: [School responses in Wisconsin to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Wisconsin were closed to in-person instruction on March 18, 2020, and remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 academic year. To notify us of when schools were allowed to reopen statewide, [email us](#). The timeline below lists statewide responses we tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Wisconsin. [\[374\]](#)[\[375\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported a majority of schools were using virtual or hybrid learning in Wisconsin. [\[376\]](#)[\[377\]](#)
- **June 22, 2020:** The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction released reopening guidance for schools. Superintendent [Carolyn Stanford Taylor](#) said that schools would reopen to in-person instruction for the fall. The guidance outlined several scenarios for physical distancing, including four-day school weeks, a two-day rotation, an a/b week rotation, and virtual learning. [\[378\]](#)

Wyoming

See also: [School responses in Wyoming to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Schools in Wyoming were closed to in-person instruction on March 15, 2020, and were allowed to reopen on May 15. The timeline below lists statewide responses we've tracked.

- **June 29, 2021:** At the end of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported all schools were in-person in Wyoming. [\[379\]](#)[\[380\]](#)
- **Sept. 10, 2020:** At the beginning of the school year, [Burbio](#) reported most schools were in-person in Wyoming. [\[381\]](#)[\[382\]](#)
- **July 1, 2020:** The Wyoming Department of Education released guidance for reopening schools in the state. The state's 48 school districts were responsible for developing reopening plans in accordance with the guidance and submitting those plans for approval by the state. Each plan needed to account for three scenarios: traditional learning, hybrid learning (a mix of in-person and distance learning), and distance-only learning. [\[383\]](#)

School responses by state

To read about a state's school responses to the coronavirus, click one of the following links:

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Alabama | • Illinois | • Montana | • Rhode Island |
| • Alaska | • Indiana | • Nebraska | • South Carolina |
| • Arizona | • Iowa | • Nevada | • South Dakota |
| • Arkansas | • Kansas | • New Hampshire | • Tennessee |
| • California | • Kentucky | • New Jersey | • Texas |
| • Colorado | • Louisiana | • New Mexico | • Utah |
| • Connecticut | • Maine | • New York | • Vermont |
| • Delaware | • Maryland | • North Carolina | • Virginia |
| • Florida | • Massachusetts | • North Dakota | • Washington |
| • Georgia | • Michigan | • Ohio | • West Virginia |
| • Hawaii | • Minnesota | • Oklahoma | • Wisconsin |
| • Idaho | • Mississippi | • Oregon | • Wyoming |
| | • Missouri | • Pennsylvania | |

Timeline

Noteworthy events

The timeline below captures all state-level school closure and reopening updates through the end of the 2020-2021 school year in reverse chronological order.

- **May 17, 2021:**
 - Massachusetts started requiring schools to offer full-time in-person instruction for high schoolers on May 17. [\[1\]](#)
- **April 26, 2021:** South Carolina schools had to start offering in-person instruction five days a week. Gov. Henry McMaster (R) signed the requirement into law on April 22. The legislature passed the requirement on April 21. [\[2\]](#)
- **April 19, 2021:**
 - New Hampshire public schools had to offer full-time in-person instruction by April 19. Gov. Chris Sununu (R) said parents still had the option of requesting remote learning. [\[3\]](#)
 - Oregon public schools had to open for hybrid or full-time in-person instruction for grades 6-12 by April 19. Gov. Kate Brown (D) issued the requirement on March 12. [\[4\]](#)
 - Washington public schools had to offer all K-12 students at least 30% in-person instruction every week by April 19. Gov. Jay Inslee (D) signed the proclamation March 15. [\[5\]](#)
- **April 13, 2021:** Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak (D) announced that, on May 1, county school districts would gain control over all COVID-19 mitigation measures. [\[6\]](#)
- **April 5, 2021:** Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly (D) signed SB 63, requiring all public school districts to offer full-time, in-person instruction. The law applied to grades K-12. [\[121\]](#)
- **April 1, 2021:** New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu (R) announced that all K-12 schools had to return students to full-time, in-person instruction by April 19. Sununu said parents would still have the option of requesting remote learning. [\[219\]](#)
- [March 2021 \(click to expand\)](#)
 - **March 29, 2021:**
 - Kentucky public schools had to offer at least two days of in-person instruction each week starting March 29. The requirement was the result of HB 208, which Gov. Andy Beshear (D) signed on March 4. The bill passed the state Senate 28-8 on March 3 and the House 81-15 on March 4. Parents could still keep their children in fully remote learning. [\[131\]](#)
 - Oregon public elementary schools had to reopen no later than March 29 for hybrid or full-time in-person instruction. Parents could still keep their children in fully remote instruction. [\[283\]](#)
 - **March 24, 2021:** Gov. Jim Justice (R) ordered all schools, regardless of grade or county transmission levels, to reopen for in-person learning five days a week. Previously, high schools had to close in counties the DHHR designated as red transmission areas. [\[365\]](#)
 - **March 15, 2021:**
 - Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey's (R) executive order requiring public schools to offer in-person instruction took effect March 15. High schools and middle schools in high-transmission counties were exempt from the order. Parents could still keep their children in virtual classes. [\[22\]](#)
 - California Judge Cynthia Freeland issued a temporary restraining order preventing the state from enforcing the California's Safe Schools for All reopening framework through March 30.

The order temporarily lifted the state's partial closure. [\[45\]](#)

- **March 12, 2021:**

- Oregon Gov. Kate Brown (D) issued an executive order requiring public elementary schools to reopen no later than March 29 for hybrid or full-time in-person instruction. The order also required public schools to open for grades 6-12 by April 19. Parents could still keep their children in fully remote instruction. [\[284\]](#)
- Washington Gov. Jay Inslee (D) said he would issue an emergency proclamation requiring elementary schools to provide students at least two partial days of in-person instruction by April 5. Inslee said schools had to provide older students the same by April 19. As of March 15, Inslee had not signed the proclamation. [\[358\]](#)

- **March 9, 2021:** New Mexico Public Education Secretary Ryan Stewart announced all schools and grade levels could return to classes if schools were able to establish the safety protocols the state outlined. Stewart also said schools were expected to return to five-days-a-week in-person classes by April 5. Previously, all primary and secondary schools could open under a hybrid model. [\[236\]](#)

- **March 8, 2021:** Schools in New Hampshire were required to begin providing at least two days of classroom instruction each week. Under the order, schools could switch to fully remote instruction for up to 48 hours without state approval. Gov. Chris Sununu (R) issued the requirement in a Feb. 19 order. [\[220\]](#)

- **March 5, 2021:** Gov. Kate Brown (D) announced she would issue an executive order requiring public elementary schools to reopen no later than March 29 for hybrid or full-time in-person instruction. The order was also scheduled to require public schools to open for grades 6-12 by April 19. She said parents could still keep their children in fully remote instruction. [\[285\]](#)

- **March 4, 2021:** Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear (D) signed HB 208, requiring public schools to offer at least two days of in-person instruction each week starting March 29. The bill passed 28-8 in the state Senate on March 3, and the House approved the Senate's version 81-15 on March 4. Parents could still keep their children in fully remote learning. [\[132\]](#)

- **March 3, 2021:** Gov. Doug Ducey (R) issued an executive order requiring public schools to offer in-person instruction by March 15. High schools and middle schools in high transmission counties would be exempt from the order. Parents would still be able to keep their children in virtual classes. [\[23\]](#)

- **March 1, 2021:**

- Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear's (D) executive order recommending all school districts and private schools offer some form of in-person instruction became effective. [\[133\]](#)
- Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan (R) encouraged schools in counties across the state to return students to the classroom. In January, Hogan said school districts that didn't offer some in-person instruction could face legal action. Districts were allowed to decide how many days a week to offer in-person instruction. Students could still opt for virtual schooling. [\[156\]](#)
- The North Carolina State Senate failed to override Gov. Roy Cooper's (D) veto of SB 37, a bill that would have required schools to provide daily in-person instruction. The final vote was 29-20, one vote short of the three-fifths majority necessary to override a gubernatorial veto. One Democrat joined with Republicans in voting to override the veto. The Senate passed the bill 31-16 on Feb. 16. Cooper vetoed it on Feb. 26. [\[253\]](#)

- [February 2021 \(click to expand\)](#)

- **February 26, 2021:** North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper (D) vetoed a bill that would have required schools to provide daily in-person instruction. The state House of Representatives passed the bill 77-42 on Feb. 22, while the state Senate passed the bill 31-16 on Feb. 16. To override Cooper's veto, the bill would need the support of three-fifths of the members in both chambers of the legislature. [\[253\]](#)

- **February 23, 2021:** Gov. Andy Beshear (D) issued an executive order recommending all school districts and private schools offer some form of in-person instruction by March 1. The Kentucky Department of Education released KDE COVID-19 Guidance 2.0 to guide school reopenings. [\[134\]](#)
- **February 22, 2021:** In Minnesota, all middle and high school students were allowed to return to the classroom for either full-time instruction or a hybrid approach combining remote and in-person instruction. Gov. Tim Walz (D) said he expected schools to offer some in-person instruction by March 8. Under the plan, families could still opt to keep their children home for remote instruction. [\[183\]](#)
- **February 19, 2021:** New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu (R) signed an executive order requiring schools to provide at least two days of classroom instruction per week starting March 8. [\[221\]](#)
- **February 17, 2021:** Gov. Tim Walz (D) released a plan to return students to in-person instruction. On Feb. 22, all middle and high school students were scheduled to return to the classroom for either full-time instruction or a hybrid approach. Walz said he expected all schools to offer some in-person learning by March 8. Under the plan, families could still opt to keep their children home for remote instruction. [\[183\]](#)
- **February 15, 2021:** Iowa schools were required to offer full-time in-person instruction. Legislation Gov. Kim Reynolds (R) signed on Jan. 29 required schools to open but also allowed parents to request a hybrid or all remote option for their children. Additionally, schools could request a waiver from the requirement to provide in-person instruction from the state Department of Education based on factors such as the number of teachers quarantining because of the virus. The bill passed the state House and Senate with the support of all Republicans and one Democrat. [\[112\]](#)
- **February 11, 2021:** [\[254\]](#)
 - The North Carolina House of Representatives voted 77-44 on Feb. 11 to advance a bill requiring school districts to provide the option of in-person instruction for all students. Families would be able to choose remote instruction. All Republicans and five Democrats in the chamber supported the bill.
 - The state Senate passed a similar bill 29-15 on Feb. 9, but the chamber refrained from holding a final vote on the state House's version of the bill. The state House bill contained modifications distinguishing it from the state Senate bill, including a provision allowing special accommodations for educators who had conditions that increased their risk of severe illness from COVID-19. No Republicans opposed the state Senate bill, and two Democrats voted in favor of it.
- **February 2, 2021:** Gov. Roy Cooper (D) announced new school guidance and encouraged public K-12 schools to reopen for full-time in-person instruction. The guidance instructed elementary schools to reopen under Plan A, which did not require social distancing. Middle and high schools were slated to reopen under Plan B, which did require social distancing. Cooper said he wanted to leave the final reopening decisions to school districts. The state still required districts to provide a remote learning option for families that chose to opt in. [\[255\]](#)
- [January 2021 \(click to expand\)](#)
 - **January 29, 2021:** Gov. Kim Reynolds (R) signed a bill requiring school districts to provide students in-person instruction five days a week. Under the law, parents could still request a hybrid or all remote option for their children, and schools could request a waiver from the Department of Education based on factors such as the number of teachers quarantining because of the virus. The bill, which passed the state House and Senate with the support of all Republicans and one Democrat, set a Feb. 15 deadline for schools to offer full-time in-person instruction. [\[113\]](#)
 - **January 19, 2021:** All public and private pre-K, elementary, and middle schools in West Virginia were required to resume full-time in-person or hybrid (at least two in-person days every week) instruction, regardless of their county's transmission rates. High schools were still required to close if they were located in counties the Department of Health and Human Resources classified as red in the County Alert System map. [\[366\]](#)

- **January 18, 2021:** Schools in areas of New Mexico with lower transmission rates were permitted to begin reopening for in-person or hybrid instruction. [\[237\]](#)
- **January 15, 2021:** Public schools were allowed to reopen on a staggered schedule between Jan. 7 and Jan. 15. After reopening, districts and schools were allowed to make their own decisions on openings and closures, but the state encouraged in-person learning schedules. [\[303\]](#)
- **January 4, 2021:**
 - Kentucky's [Healthy at School guidelines](#) became mandatory and middle and high schools were allowed to reopen for in-person instruction. [\[135\]](#)
 - Schools in New Mexico were required to close in-person instruction through Jan. 15 to mitigate virus spread. [\[238\]](#)
 - New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) announced schools could remain open in communities with 9% or greater positivity rates if positivity among students and school staff was lower than positivity in the surrounding community. Previously, the state had required schools to close in communities where the positivity rate was 9% or greater. [\[245\]](#)
- **January 1, 2021:** Oregon's school reopening metrics, which determined when schools could open, became advisory instead of mandatory. [\[286\]](#)
- [December 2020 \(click to expand\)](#)
 - **December 30, 2020:** On Dec. 30, Gov. Jim Justice (R) announced that all elementary and middle schools would reopen to full-time, in-person instruction beginning Jan. 19. Justice also announced that most high schools would reopen unless they were located in counties the Department of Health and Human Resources classified as red. [\[367\]](#)
 - **December 21, 2020:** Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) allowed public and private high schools to reopen starting Dec. 21. [\[173\]](#)
 - **December 16, 2020:** On December 16, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee (D) released updated school reopening guidance for returning students to the classroom. The guidance, which wasn't binding, gave schools three options based on the level of COVID-19 spread. For schools in counties with low spread, the guidance recommended in-person learning for all students. For schools in counties with moderate spread, the guidance recommended a phased approach starting with elementary students and increasing by grade level. In counties with high COVID-19 spread, the guidance recommended in-person learning in small groups for elementary and high-need students only. [\[359\]](#)
 - **December 14, 2020:** Kentucky Gov. Andy Beshear (D) announced the state's Healthy at School guidelines would become mandatory starting Jan. 4, 2020, including rules for social distancing, mask-wearing, sanitization, and other in-person activities (like food service in lunch rooms). [\[135\]](#)
 - **December 7, 2020:**
 - On Dec. 7, Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) extended the suspension of in-person instruction at all public and non-public high schools through Dec. 20. [\[174\]](#)
 - Public and private elementary schools in Kentucky started reopening for in-person instruction on Dec. 7 in non-red zone counties. Middle and high school instruction would be fully remote through at least Jan. 4. Gov. Andy Beshear (D) previously ordered all schools to close on Nov. 23. [\[136\]](#)
 - **December 3, 2020:**
 - Public and private schools in West Virginia were allowed to reopen from Thanksgiving closures starting Dec. 3. Gov. Jim Justice ordered schools closed from Thanksgiving through Dec. 3 to allow a seven day period between holiday gatherings and in-person instruction. [\[368\]](#)
- [November 2020 \(click to expand\)](#)
 - **November 23, 2020:**

- All K-12 public and private schools in Kentucky had to stop in-person classes. Middle and high school instruction were scheduled to remain remote through at least Jan. 4. Elementary schools were scheduled to reopen in-person instruction starting Dec. 7 in non-red zone counties. [\[137\]](#)
 - **November 18, 2020:** Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) announced a three-week ban on in-person high school and college instruction across the state beginning Nov. 18. [\[175\]](#)
- [October 2020 \(click to expand\)](#)
 - **October 30, 2020:**
 - New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) announced schools in the state's red and orange mitigation zones could reopen after all of a school's students and teachers got tested. Cuomo did not give a timeline for the reopening but said the state would provide the tests. [\[246\]](#)
 - The Oregon Department of Education released updated school reopening guidance. Under the rules, schools in counties with less than 50 new coronavirus cases per 100,000 residents over 14 days could resume full-time, in-person learning. Previously, the state only allowed full-time, in-person schedules in counties with 10 or fewer new cases per 100,000 residents each week over a three-week rolling average. [\[287\]](#)
 - **October 6, 2020:** The Oregon Department of Education announced the state would disregard positivity rate data from September in determining whether school districts could reopen. The announcement meant school districts could reopen for in-person instruction if their counties met the state's case count criteria until October positivity data was available. [\[288\]](#)
- [September 2020 \(click to expand\)](#)
 - **September 22, 2020:**
 - Karen Salmon, the Maryland Superintendent of Schools, announced that she had approved in-person reopening plans for every school district in Maryland. [\[157\]](#)
 - Vermont Education Secretary Dan French announced that schools would advance to step 3 of reopening, which allowed for inter-scholastic competitions, on Sept. 26. Step 3 also permitted schools to use common areas like gyms and small groups of students. [\[346\]](#)
 - **September 17, 2020:** North Carolina Gov. [Roy Cooper](#) (D) announced that elementary school and charter school students could return to classrooms at full capacity beginning Oct. 5. Students, teachers, and staff would be required to wear face coverings, and schools would need to enforce social distancing and screen for symptoms. [\[256\]](#)
 - **September 15, 2020:** West Virginia Gov. [Jim Justice](#) (R) announced he was adding a new color—gold—to the color-coding system that determined how schools could reopen. Counties with between 10 and 14.9 COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people would be classified as gold. While in-person learning was allowed in gold counties, there were limits on gatherings and sports travel. [\[369\]](#)
 - **September 14, 2020:** In-person K-12 classes were allowed to resume in Rhode Island. Cumberland and Warwick school districts were starting the school year fully remotely. Most school districts resumed with a hybrid schedule. [\[304\]](#)
 - **September 8, 2020:** Schools in Maryland were allowed to reopen virtually. How long virtual instruction would last varied by district. [\[160\]](#)
 - **September 1, 2020:** The Maryland Board of Education approved new minimums for instruction. Schools needed to be open at least 180 days and offer at least a total of six hours of instruction, of which 3.5 hours needed to be synchronous instruction (all students taught at the same time) for grades K-12. [\[161\]](#)
- [August 2020 \(click to expand\)](#)
 - **August 31, 2020:**

- Connecticut schools were allowed to reopen for in-person instruction. Schools in the state were initially closed on March 16. [\[59\]](#)
- Rhode Island Gov. [Gina Raimondo](#) (D) announced every public school district in the state except Providence and Central Falls would be permitted to resume in-person instruction when schools reopened for the 2020-2021 academic year. Raimondo said in-person classes were still scheduled to start Sept. 14. Raimondo also signed an executive order extending Phase III of the state's reopening plan. [\[307\]](#)
- **August 28, 2020:** Florida's First District Court of Appeals put a hold on Leon County Judge Charles Dodson's ruling that Education Commissioner Richard Corcoran's order requiring schools to open for in-person instruction was unconstitutional. [\[75\]](#)
- **August 25, 2020:** Delaware Gov. [John Carney](#) (D) signed the 25th modification to his emergency declaration, requiring students in kindergarten and above to wear face coverings inside schools at all times. The order also required school districts and charters to notify parents when a positive coronavirus case was identified in their child's building. [\[67\]](#)
- **August 24, 2020**
 - Schools in Arkansas reopened to in-person instruction. [\[35\]](#) The Arkansas Center for Health Improvement announced that district-level data on testing rates and active coronavirus cases would be made available online. [\[36\]](#)
 - Rhode Island Gov. [Gina Raimondo](#) (D) announced the Facilities Readiness Team would inspect every public school in the state to ensure compliance with Department of Health guidelines before reopening. Public schools statewide were set to reopen on Sept. 9 for teachers and Sept. 14 for students. [\[308\]](#)
 - Florida Second Circuit Court Judge [Charles W. Dodson](#) issued a temporary injunction against Education Commissioner [Richard Corcoran](#)'s order requiring schools to open for in-person instruction by the end of August. In his decision, Dodson called Corcoran's order "unconstitutional to the extent that it arbitrarily disregards safety, denies local school boards' decision making with respect to reopening brick and mortar schools, and conditions funding on an approved reopening plan with a start date in August." [\[76\]](#)
- **August 20, 2020:** Michigan Gov. [Gretchen Whitmer](#) (D) signed an education package consisting of three bills that would guide how school districts could reopen for the school year. The bills stipulated that although school districts weren't required to offer in-person education, school boards had to review their district's instructional plans each month. Schools that did reopen to in-person instruction had to prioritize that option for K-12 students. The legislation also weighted per-pupil funding based on 75% of last year's enrollment and 25% of the current enrollment. [\[178\]](#)
- **August 19, 2020:** The Pennsylvania Department of Education announced the statewide public mask requirement for everyone over the age of two applied to all public and private schools. Students could remove their face coverings when they were eating and drinking (at least six feet apart), in situations when wearing a face covering might be unsafe, and during socially distanced face covering breaks lasting no more than 10 minutes. [\[298\]](#)
- **August 17, 2020**
 - Schools in Arizona were officially allowed to reopen to in-person instruction if they met metrics the state Department of Health released the week of Aug. 3. For a district to reopen, its county needed to have a two-week drop in the number of COVID-19 cases, a two-week period where the percent of positive cases was below 7%, and less than 10% of hospital visits were COVID-19 related. Some school districts that did not meet these criteria also reopened to in-person instruction. Gov. [Doug Ducey](#) (R) said he supported those districts in their decision and that superintendents and principals could have the final say. [\[26\]](#)
 - Schools in North Carolina were allowed to reopen. Based on state guidelines, most K-12 districts were expected to begin the year with at least some online learning. [\[259\]](#)
- **August 15, 2020:** The Ohio Department of Health said the state would not allow face shields to be substituted for face masks in schools unless a child met certain exceptions. The health department

cited CDC guidance saying it was unknown how effective face shields were at protecting from respiratory droplets. [\[271\]](#)

- **August 14, 2020:** West Virginia Gov. [Jim Justice](#) (R) announced a color-coded school reopening metric for counties. Schools in green and yellow counties would be able to reopen for in-person instruction on the statewide school reentry date (expected to be Sept. 8, but a finalized date would be set on Sept. 1). Schools in red and orange phase counties would be required to conduct fully remote operations. Fifty-two out of the state's 55 counties were in the green or yellow phases. [\[372\]](#)
- **August 13, 2020:**
 - Arkansas Gov. [Asa Hutchinson](#) (R) released the Arkansas Ready to Learn Healthy School Guide. The document was a support guide for teachers and administrators created in partnership with Arkansas Children's Hospital and the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. The guide outlined best practices for in-person learning. [\[37\]](#)
 - New Hampshire Gov. [Chris Sununu](#) (R) outlined guidelines for combating community spread of coronavirus in schools. Evidence of transmission between classrooms and cohorts would be classified as an outbreak and would allow school officials to revert to remote learning for two weeks. [\[224\]](#)
- **August 12, 2020:**
 - New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy (D) signed an executive order allowing public and private K-12 schools, colleges, and universities to offer in-person instruction when they reopened. Schools would decide whether to offer remote learning, in-person instruction, or a hybrid approach. Schools that could not meet requirements set out by the New Jersey Department of Education would be required to begin the school year remotely. [\[230\]](#)
 - Rhode Island Gov. [Gina Raimondo](#) (D) announced she was delaying the start of the school year until Sept. 14. She previously said she wanted schools to reopen at the end of August. [\[309\]](#)
 - Tennessee Education Commissioner [Penny Schwinn](#) said that the Tennessee Department of Education was encouraging school districts to mandate face coverings for middle and high school students. [\[327\]](#)
- **August 11, 2020:**
 - The Kansas Department of Education released updated recommendations for returning to in-person education. The document broke the recommendations into color levels—green, yellow, orange, and red—based on criteria such as the number of students missing school, number of new cases, and local hospital capacity. There were separate recommendations for Pre-K through grade 5 and grades 6 through 12 at the yellow and orange levels. [\[124\]](#)
 - The Oregon Department of Education released updated school reopening guidelines that allowed schools to reopen to in-person instruction if the school had 250 students or fewer, was in a county with fewer than 30,000 residents, and if the county had reported no more than 30 COVID-19 cases in the past three weeks. [\[291\]](#)
- **August 10, 2020:**
 - Kentucky Gov. [Andy Beshear](#) (D) requested that school districts not offer in-person instruction until at least Sept. 28, and instead begin the school year with virtual learning. [\[140\]](#)
 - The Pennsylvania Department of Education released guidelines for when schools could reopen to in-person instruction based on health statistics in the county. [\[299\]](#)
- **August 7, 2020:**
 - Hawaii Gov. [David Ige](#) (D) announced that public schools would begin the school year with four weeks of online learning. The school year was scheduled to begin Aug. 17. [\[90\]](#)
 - New York Gov. [Andrew Cuomo](#) (D) announced schools would reopen to in-person instruction at the start of the school year. Students would be required to wear masks. Parents would retain the option to keep their children home. [\[249\]](#)
- **August 5, 2020:** West Virginia Gov. [Jim Justice](#) (R) released reopening guidance for schools in the state. Justice set a target reopening date of Sept. 8 and counties were required to submit their

reopening plans by Aug. 14. [\[373\]](#)

◦ **August 4, 2020:**

- Arkansas Gov. [Asa Hutchinson](#) (R) said that public schools in the state were still on track to reopen beginning Aug. 24. “We need to have school this year. Absolutely. I’m firm on that. The educators are firm on that. Public health is firm on [that]. We need to have school,” he said. [\[38\]](#)
- Delaware Gov. [John Carney](#) (D) announced that schools across the state could reopen using a combination of in-person and remote learning starting in September. [\[68\]](#)
- Mississippi Gov. [Tate Reeves](#) (R) mandated that all students and teachers wear masks on school property. He delayed school reopenings in eight counties to Aug. 17. Previously, the counties were allowed to set their own start dates for the academic year. [\[191\]](#)
- Ohio Gov. [Mike DeWine](#) (R) announced all K-12 students would be required to wear face coverings in public schools. [\[272\]](#)

◦ **August 3, 2020:**

- The Alabama Department of Public Health released an 85-page school reopening toolkit. It contained recommendations and guidelines for school districts to incorporate into their reopening plans. [\[11\]](#)
- Indiana Gov. [Eric Holcomb](#) (R) modified the mask mandate for schools to allow students to remove masks in a classroom when they could maintain three to six feet of distance between themselves and others. [\[108\]](#)
- Nebraska Gov. [Pete Ricketts](#) (R) said that schools were ready to reopen but would leave decisions on when and how up to local school officials. [\[208\]](#)
- New Jersey Gov. [Phil Murphy](#) (D) announced all students would be required to wear face coverings in schools, with exceptions for students with disabilities. [\[231\]](#)

• [July 2020 \(click to expand\)](#)

◦ **July 31, 2020**

- The Maine Department of Education released guidance for reopening public schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The guidance required all staff and students age five and older to wear masks. [\[153\]](#)
- Oklahoma Gov. [Kevin Stitt](#) (R) announced a distribution system for school PPE and said that schools would reopen for in-person instruction in the fall. [\[279\]](#)
- South Carolina Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman announced masks would be required in South Carolina public school facilities for staff and students in grades 2-12. [\[315\]](#)

◦ **July 30, 2020**

- Connecticut Gov. [Ned Lamont](#) (D) said school districts would be able to choose between a fully in-person and hybrid plan without requiring state approval. Districts that wanted to use a fully remote model had to apply for an exemption from the state Department of Education. [\[60\]](#)
- The Hawaii Board of Education voted to delay the start of the public school year until Aug. 17. [\[91\]](#)
- Iowa Gov. [Kim Reynolds](#) (R) set requirements for public schools to seek a state waiver allowing them to provide online-only education. A school needed to have at least a 15% positive test rate in its county and a 10% absentee rate among students. Schools in counties with a 20% or higher positive test rate did not need to meet the absentee rate requirement. The waiver would allow a school to operate fully online for two weeks before re-applying for the waiver. [\[116\]](#)
- Minnesota Gov. [Tim Walz](#) (D) released the Safe Learning Plan for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The plan required a county to have fewer than 9 coronavirus cases per 10,000 residents over a 14-day period in order to fully reopen schools. [\[186\]](#)

- **July 29, 2020**
 - Alabama Gov. [Kay Ivey](#) (R) extended her Safer At Home Order through August 31. She modified the order's existing mask mandate to extend to students at schools (second grade and older) and colleges. [\[12\]](#)
- **July 28, 2020**
 - Nevada Gov. [Steve Sisolak](#) (D) issued a directive ordering all staff and students from K-12 to wear a mask in school at all times. The directive also imposed social distancing guidelines of three feet for preschools through middle schools, and six feet for high schools. [\[214\]](#)
 - Oregon Gov. [Kate Brown](#) (D) announced the metrics that would guide school reopening decisions. Counties needed to have 10 or fewer coronavirus cases per 100,000 people and a 7-day positivity rate of 5% or less for three consecutive weeks before in-person and hybrid instruction could resume. The state also needed to have a positivity rate of 5% or less for three consecutive weeks before any in-person or hybrid instruction could resume. [\[292\]](#)
 - Gov. [Kristi Noem](#) (R) said that schools would open in the fall and that she would not consider closing schools in the event of a coronavirus resurgence. [\[321\]](#)
 - Tennessee Gov. [Bill Lee](#) (R) released guidelines for reopening schools. The recommendations covered testing and contact tracing, immunizations, and resources necessary for returning students to classrooms or teaching remotely. [\[328\]](#)
 - Vermont Gov. [Phil Scott](#) (R) announced that schools would not reopen until Sept. 8. School districts would decide whether to return students to physical classrooms or offer distance learning. [\[349\]](#)
- **July 27, 2020**
 - Kentucky Gov. [Andy Beshear](#) (D) asked schools to avoid reopening for in-person instruction until the third week of August. [\[141\]](#)
 - The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education signed an agreement with the state's teachers unions to reduce the length of the 2020-2021 school year from 180 days to 170 days. [\[168\]](#)
- **July 24, 2020**
 - New Jersey released guidance regarding a remote-only learning option for public school students. During the 2020-2021 school year, parents would be able to opt their children into a fully online learning schedule. [\[232\]](#)
 - New Mexico Gov. [Michelle Lujan Grisham](#) (D) announced schools would not be able to open for in-person instruction until after September 7. Individual school districts decided when classes would begin in New Mexico, so there was no statewide reopening date. [\[241\]](#)
- **July 23, 2020**
 - Arizona Gov. [Doug Ducey](#) (R) ordered public schools to reopen for on-site learning on Aug. 17 for students who had nowhere else to go. Superintendent [Kathy Hoffman](#) clarified that the order meant each school district needed to open at least one site for students to go, but did not have to open every school or require every teacher to work in-person. [\[27\]](#)
- **July 22, 2020**
 - Maryland Superintendent of Schools [Karen Salmon](#) announced that schools had until Aug. 14 to submit reopening plans to the state board of education. Schools would be allowed to open in-person so long as they followed specific CDC and state health guidelines and met benchmarks set by the state. [\[162\]](#)
- **July 21, 2020**
 - The Kansas State Board of Education voted 5-5 on Gov. [Laura Kelly](#)'s (D) executive order delaying the start of the public school year until Sept. 9. The order required board approval before taking effect, so the tie vote effectively canceled the governor's executive order. [\[125\]](#)
- **July 20, 2020**
 - The Colorado Department of Education released guidance for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The guidelines contained separate criteria for elementary schools and

secondary schools. Decisions about school start dates and remote learning would be left to local districts. [\[54\]](#)

- Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly (D) signed an executive order delaying the start of the public school year until Sept. 9 and requiring students, faculty, and visitors to wear face coverings in school buildings. The order required approval from the Kansas Board of Education. [\[126\]](#)
- The Utah Department of Health issued an order mandating the use of face coverings in all public and private K-12 schools. The order included exemptions related to eating and drinking and medical conditions. [\[342\]](#)

○ **July 17, 2020**

- California Gov. [Gavin Newsom](#) (D) announced that counties on the state's coronavirus watch list would begin the school year with online education only. As of July 20, 33 of the state's 58 counties were on the watch list, which was based on new infections per capita, test positivity rate, and hospitalization rate. [\[48\]](#)
- Iowa Gov. [Kim Reynolds](#) (R) ordered that students spend at least half of their schooling in-person. She said that districts could seek waivers to the requirement from the state Department of Education. Des Moines, the state's largest district, had previously announced one day of in-person instruction for students each week. [\[117\]](#)
- The Texas Education Agency extended the time local school districts could keep schools closed and teach students remotely without losing funding. According to the new rules, districts could teach students remotely for up to eight weeks from the start of the school year, so long as the local school board voted on the matter after four weeks. [\[334\]](#)

○ **July 16, 2020**

- The Pennsylvania Department of Education released updated guidance for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. [\[300\]](#)

○ **July 15, 2020**

- Delaware Gov. [John Carney](#) (D) released guidance for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Districts would use the guidance to create reopening plans that accounted for in-person, hybrid, and distance learning models. [\[69\]](#)

○ **July 14, 2020**

- The Georgia Department of Education released reopening guidance for schools for the 2020-2021 school year. [\[83\]](#)
- The Kansas Board of Education voted 9-0 to approve guidelines for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Board members said that the guidelines were not mandates but were meant to help districts craft their own individual plans. [\[127\]](#)
- The Louisiana State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted unanimously to approve reopening guidelines proposed by Superintendent Cade Brumley. The guidelines included a requirement for all adults and students in grades 3 through 12 to wear face coverings. [\[148\]](#)
- The Missouri Department of Education released guidance for reopening schools. Recommendations included screening students and faculty for symptoms, limiting students and faculty to the same group of people every day (cohorting), and requesting students and faculty wear masks. [\[197\]](#)
- New Hampshire Gov. [Chris Sununu](#) (R) released guidance for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. Sununu said that the plan was meant to give school districts local control over how they reopened. Education Commissioner Frank Edelblut said that he expected students back in schools in September. [\[225\]](#)
- North Carolina Gov. [Roy Cooper](#) (D) released the state's school reopening plan, which emphasized a combination of in-person instruction and distance learning. [\[260\]](#)
- Texas Gov. [Greg Abbott](#) (R) said that schools would be permitted to delay returning students to physical classrooms for longer than originally planned. Previously, state guidance said schools should offer three weeks of virtual instruction to start the year but could lose state

funding if they did not return to in-person instruction after that period. Abbot said he would provide more information soon. [\[335\]](#)

- **July 9, 2020**

- Arkansas Gov. [Asa Hutchinson](#) (R) announced that the reopening of schools would be delayed until August 24. Schools in the state were previously set to open on August 13. [\[39\]](#)
- The Idaho Board of Education approved a reopening framework. The guidance said that all school buildings were expected to reopen in the fall for in-person instruction. [\[97\]](#)

- **July 7, 2020**

- Texas Education Commissioner [Mike Morath](#) released guidance for reopening schools in the fall. Parents would be able to choose between on-campus and distance learning options. Masks would also be required in school buildings. [\[336\]](#)

- **July 6, 2020**

- The Florida Department of Education ordered that all school boards and charter school governing boards physically open schools for at least five days per week for all students beginning in August. [\[77\]](#)
- The Kentucky Department of Education released guidelines on reopening schools in the fall. The document, a complement to interim guidance issued in June by the Kentucky Department of Public Health, did not mandate a uniform course of action for reopening schools. Instead, "it [was] intended to be a guide for local school districts when developing and adapting their return-to-school plans." [\[142\]](#)

- **July 2, 2020**

- Montana Gov. [Steve Bullock](#) (D) announced guidelines for reopening schools in the state. The plan encouraged schools to consider implementing precautions that included limiting occupancy, adjusting transportation schedules, and adopting special cleaning and disinfecting protocols. [\[203\]](#)
- Ohio Gov. [Mike DeWine](#) (R) released guidelines for reopening schools in the state. The guidelines included a requirement that all staff wear masks and a recommendation that students in third grade or higher wear masks. [\[273\]](#)

- **July 1, 2020**

- The Wyoming Department of Education released guidance for reopening schools in the state. The state's 48 school districts were responsible for developing reopening plans in accordance with the guidance and submitting those plans for approval by the state. Each plan had to account for three scenarios: traditional learning, hybrid learning (a mix of in-person and distance learning), and distance-only learning. [\[383\]](#)

- [June 2020 \(click to expand\)](#)

- **June 30, 2020**

- Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer (D) released the "MI Safe Schools Return to School Roadmap," a set of guidelines by which local districts could draft their own reopening plans for the fall. The guidelines, which included both requirements and recommendations, were tiered to the phases of the state's broader reopening plan. [\[179\]](#)

- **June 29, 2020**

- Arizona Gov. [Doug Ducey](#) (R) ordered public schools to delay the start of the school year until at least August 17. [\[28\]](#)
- Utah Gov. [Gary Herbert](#) (R) approved the state Board of Education's reopening plan for the 2020-2021 school year. The plan allowed for local districts to make decisions based on state recommendations, although it did include specific mandates that all districts had to follow. Local districts had to post public reopening plans online by August 1. [\[343\]](#)

- **June 28, 2020**

- The Hawaii Department of Education announced public schools would begin reopening starting August 4. [\[92\]](#)
- **June 26, 2020**
 - Alabama Superintendent of Education [Eric Mackey](#) released reopening guidance for schools. Mackey said that the 50-page document was not a mandate but that it should be used by school districts to craft their individual reopening plans. [\[13\]](#)
 - The New Jersey Department of Education released a 104-page reopening plan that included social distancing guidelines and a face-covering requirement for teachers and staff. Gov. [Phil Murphy](#) (D) said that schools would reopen to in-person instruction this fall. [\[233\]](#)
- **June 25, 2020**
 - Connecticut Education Commissioner [Miguel Cardona](#) said that his department was proposing all schools reopen to students in the fall. Cardona said that students and staff would be required to wear masks while inside school buildings. [\[61\]](#)
 - The Iowa Department of Education announced that schools would be allowed to reopen beginning July 1. Officials announced that there would be no requirement for students or staff to wear face coverings, undergo health checks, or social distance. [\[118\]](#)
- **June 24, 2020**
 - Arkansas Department of Education Commissioner Johnny Key released updated guidance for schools. The new guidance recommended that students older than 10 wear face coverings while riding on the bus and that younger students wear face coverings whenever practical. [\[40\]](#)
 - Massachusetts Gov. [Charlie Baker](#) (R) released guidance for reopening schools. The guidance required all staff and students in second grade or higher to wear masks, social distancing of desks in classrooms, and students to eat breakfast and lunch in their classrooms. [\[169\]](#)
 - The Nevada Department of Education released guidance for distance education for the 2020-2021 school year. The guidance included requirements for frequency of teacher-student contact, calendar changes, and implementing hybrid learning systems. [\[215\]](#)
- **June 23, 2020**
 - Illinois Gov. [J.B. Pritzker](#) (D) released guidance for reopening schools. The guidance required face coverings for all students and staff, prohibited gatherings of more than 50 people, and established temperature screenings and social distancing protocols. [\[103\]](#)
 - The New Mexico Department of Public Education released guidance for reopening schools. The guidance required students and staff to wear masks and eliminated large gatherings like pep rallies and assemblies. [\[242\]](#)
- **June 22, 2020**
 - South Carolina Superintendent of Education [Molly Mitchell Spearman](#) released recommendations on reopening schools in the state. The recommendations included required face coverings for all students and staff, social distancing protocols, one-way hallways, staggered arrivals and dismissals, and buses operating at 50 percent capacity. [\[316\]](#)
 - The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction released reopening guidance for schools. Superintendent [Carolyn Stanford Taylor](#) said that schools would reopen to in-person instruction for the fall. The guidance outlined several scenarios for physical distancing, including four-day school weeks, a two-day rotation, an a/b week rotation, and virtual learning. [\[378\]](#)
- **June 19, 2020**
 - The Rhode Island Department of Education released health and safety guidelines for reopening elementary and secondary schools. [\[310\]](#)
- **June 18, 2020**
 - Georgia Gov. [Brian Kemp](#) (R) said that he would apply for a waiver to forgo standardized testing for the 2020-2021 school year. [\[84\]](#)

- Texas Education Commissioner [Mike Morath](#) said that the state's schools would open to students in the fall. [\[337\]](#)
- **June 17, 2020**
 - Michigan Gov. [Gretchen Whitmer](#) (D) announced that Michigan schools could resume in-person instruction during Phase 4 of the state's reopening (the state entered Phase 4 on June 1). Whitmer said she would issue an executive order on June 30 outlining requirements and recommendations for reopening the state's traditional public, charter, private, and parochial schools. [\[180\]](#)
 - The Vermont Agency of Education released a 25-page guidance document for reopening schools. The guidance included health checks on entry, staggered drop-off and pickup times, and hand sanitizing stations at entrances. [\[350\]](#)
- **June 11, 2020**
 - Connecticut Gov. [Ned Lamont](#) (D) said that he expected schools in the state to reopen for classes in the fall. [\[62\]](#)
 - Florida Gov. [Ron DeSantis](#) (R) announced that he expected schools to reopen at full capacity in August. The Florida Department of Education released guidance for schools including social distancing guidelines, the conversion of common spaces (such as libraries, gyms, and auditoriums) into classroom areas, and disinfection protocols. [\[78\]](#)
 - Washington Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal released guidance for reopening schools. The guidelines required face coverings for all students and staff and the development of alternate instruction plans for each school. Reykdal said that his expectation was for schools to reopen to in-person instruction in the fall. [\[362\]](#)
- **June 10, 2020**
 - Arkansas Gov. [Asa Hutchinson](#) (R) said that he expected schools would re-open for in-person instruction in the fall. [\[41\]](#)
 - The Kansas State Board of Education announced that it was expecting to reopen schools in August and that it would deliver guidance to schools in early July. [\[128\]](#)
 - The Maryland Department of Education released *Maryland Together*, the state's school reopening plan. [\[163\]](#)
 - The Mississippi Department of Education released optional guidance for schools reopening in the fall. It contained recommendations for school districts to choose and implement one of three learning schedules: traditional, hybrid, or online. [\[192\]](#)
 - The Oregon Department of Education released guidelines for schools to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year. Under the plan, individual public and private schools would need to submit an Operational Blueprint for Reentry to their local public health authority before they reopen. [\[293\]](#)
- **June 9, 2020**
 - Missouri Education Commissioner Margie Vandeven announced fall reopenings for schools would occur at the discretion of county and school board officials. [\[198\]](#)
 - Nevada Gov. [Steve Sisolak](#) (D) signed an executive order allowing schools to reopen buildings and athletic facilities effective immediately. [\[216\]](#)
 - Virginia Gov. [Ralph Northam](#) (D) announced that schools would reopen to in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year. The state released guidance for a three-phase reopening. Phase One had remote learning as the dominant teaching strategy, while Phase Two allowed in-person instruction for preschool through third grade, and Phase Three allowed in-person instruction for all students. [\[355\]](#)
- **June 8, 2020**
 - The California Department of Education released a 55-page guidance document for reopening schools to public instruction. The guidance included temperature checks before entering

schools or buses, face coverings for staff and students, and physical distancing requirements. [\[49\]](#)

- The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released preliminary guidance for reopening schools. The memo contained a face-covering requirement for both teachers and students, desks spaced six feet apart, and classroom size restrictions of 12. [\[170\]](#)
- The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services released guidance for reopening schools to in-person instruction. The guidance included more frequent cleanings, a temperature check for all individuals entering buildings or buses, and physical distancing guidelines. [\[261\]](#)
- The Tennessee Department of Education released guidance for reopening schools in August. The document did not require Tennessee school districts to adopt any particular approach but provided suggestions and best practices for safely reopening, including requiring students and staff to wear masks and setting staggered schedules. [\[329\]](#)

○ **June 5, 2020**

- The Arkansas Department of Education released its 26-page Arkansas Ready for Learning plan. The plan required face coverings for staff and students older than 10, social distancing requirements, and staggered meal times to limit cafeteria capacity. [\[42\]](#)
- Indiana released guidelines for schools to consider before reopening. The guidelines included requiring face coverings and social distancing rules. Schools in Indiana were allowed to reopen for in-person instruction beginning July 1. [\[109\]](#)

○ **June 4, 2020**

- The Alaska Department of Education and Early Development released the Alaska Smart Start 2020 guidance. The guidance offered instructions for schools operating in low-risk, medium-risk, and high-risk environments. [\[19\]](#)

○ **June 3, 2020**

- The Oklahoma Department of Education released guidelines for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. [\[280\]](#)

○ **June 2, 2020**

- Ohio Gov. [Mike DeWine](#) (R) announced that he intended to reopen schools for in-person instruction in the fall. DeWine said that the state was still working to develop health guidelines for schools and that districts would be given the flexibility to determine their start date. [\[274\]](#)

○ **June 1, 2020**

- The Arizona Department of Education released guidance for reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. The guidance included screening students before entry, face-covering requirements, smaller class sizes, and the elimination of communal dining halls. [\[29\]](#)

• [May 2020 \(click to expand\)](#)

○ **May 29, 2020**

- Arizona Gov. [Doug Ducey](#) (R) announced that schools would reopen in the fall and that the state would release guidelines to schools on June 1. [\[30\]](#)

○ **May 21, 2020**

- Alabama Gov. [Kay Ivey](#) (R) announced that schools could reopen beginning June 1 if they followed social distancing and sanitation guidelines. [\[14\]](#)

○ **May 15, 2020**

- The [Kentucky Department of Education](#) released guidance for schools to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year. Before opening, schools would be required to identify a Healthy at Work officer, create a Healthy at Work communications plan, educate and train employees, establish contact tracing procedures, establish calendar, enrollment, and attendance guidelines, and create a plan for sudden closures or extended periods of remote learning. [\[143\]](#)

- **May 5, 2020**

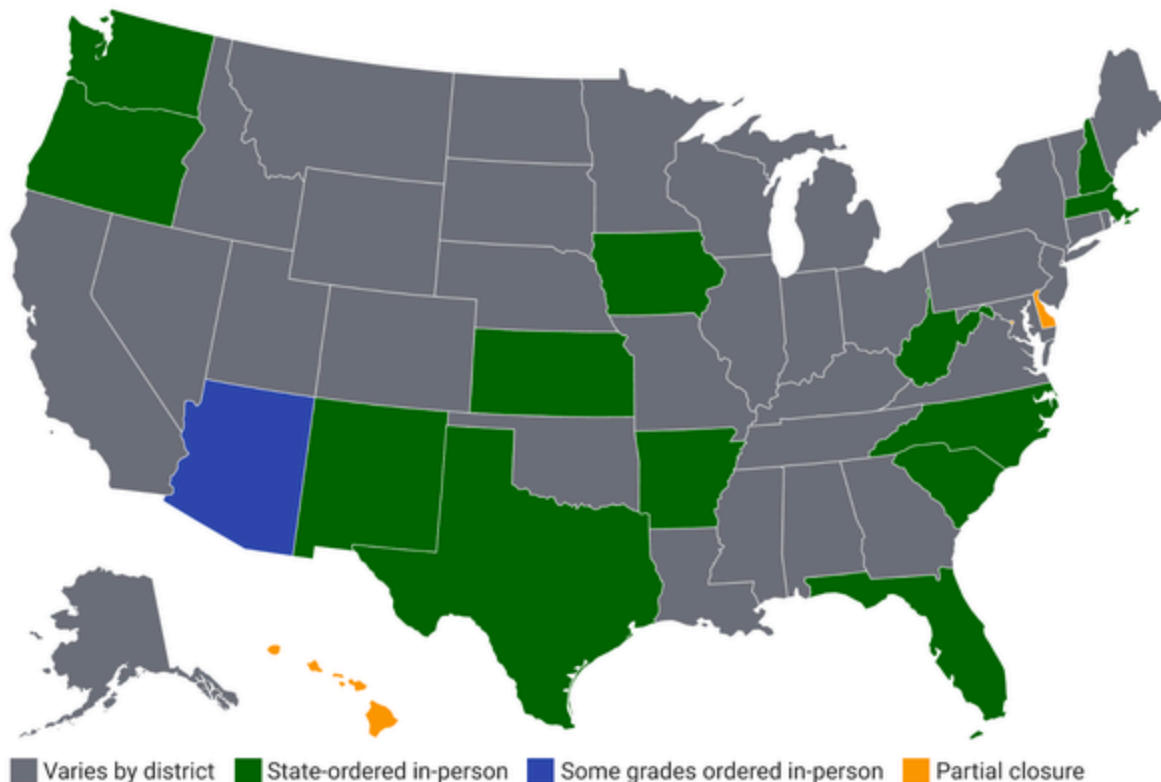
- The Idaho State Board of Education released initial reopening guidelines. [\[98\]](#)

Status of school reopenings, closures, and responses by month

This section compares the statuses of school openings and closures in the states in the 2020-2021 academic year from August 2020 through July 2021. Each image came from the last [Documenting America's Path to Recovery](#) newsletter school feature published in the month's label.

July 2021

School openings and closures for the 2020-2021 school year

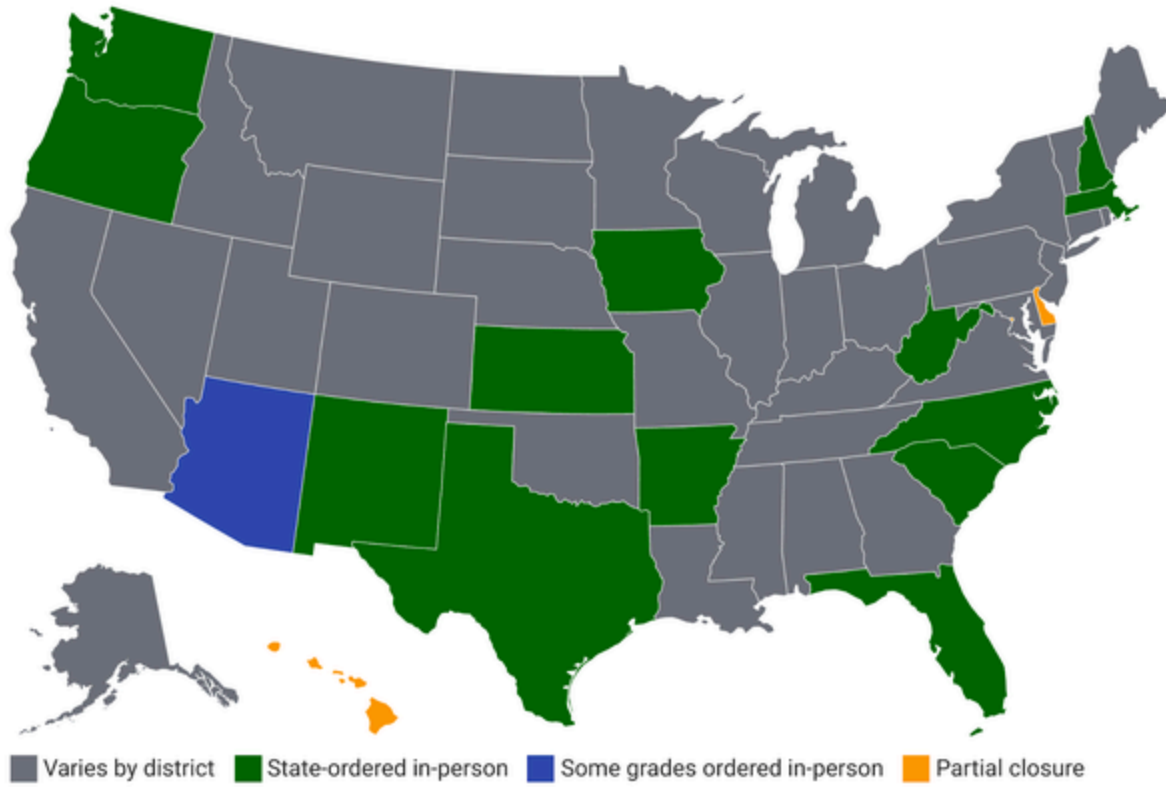


Source: EdWeek

BALLOT PEDIA

June 2021

School openings and closures for the 2020-2021 school year

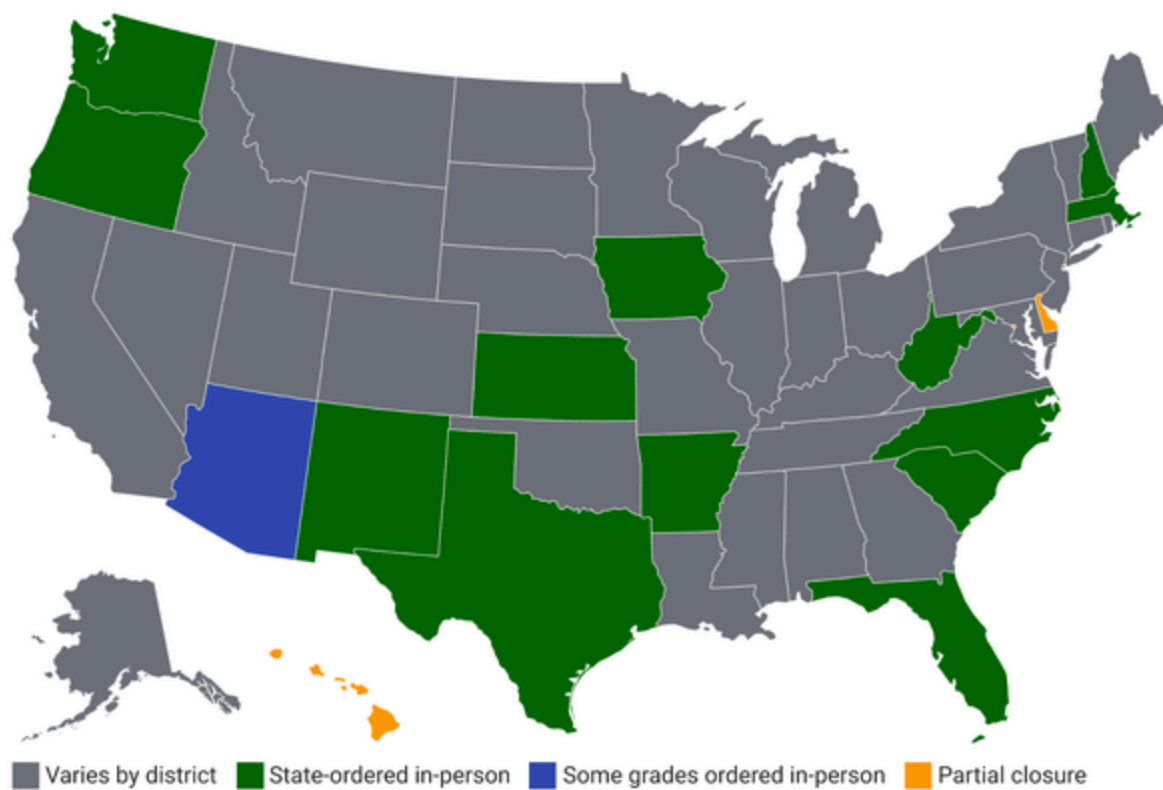


Source: EdWeek

BALLOT PEDIA

May 2021

School openings and closures for the 2020-2021 school year

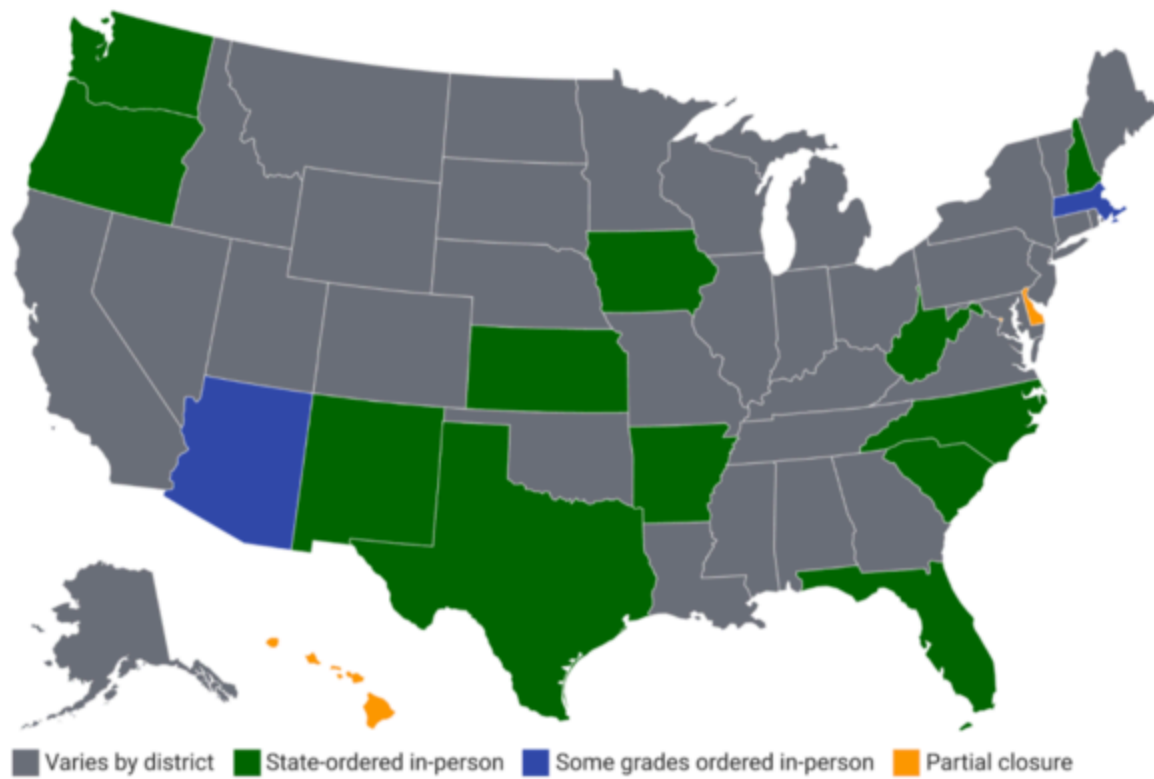


Source: EdWeek

BALLOT PEDIA

April 2021

School openings and closures for the 2020-2021 school year

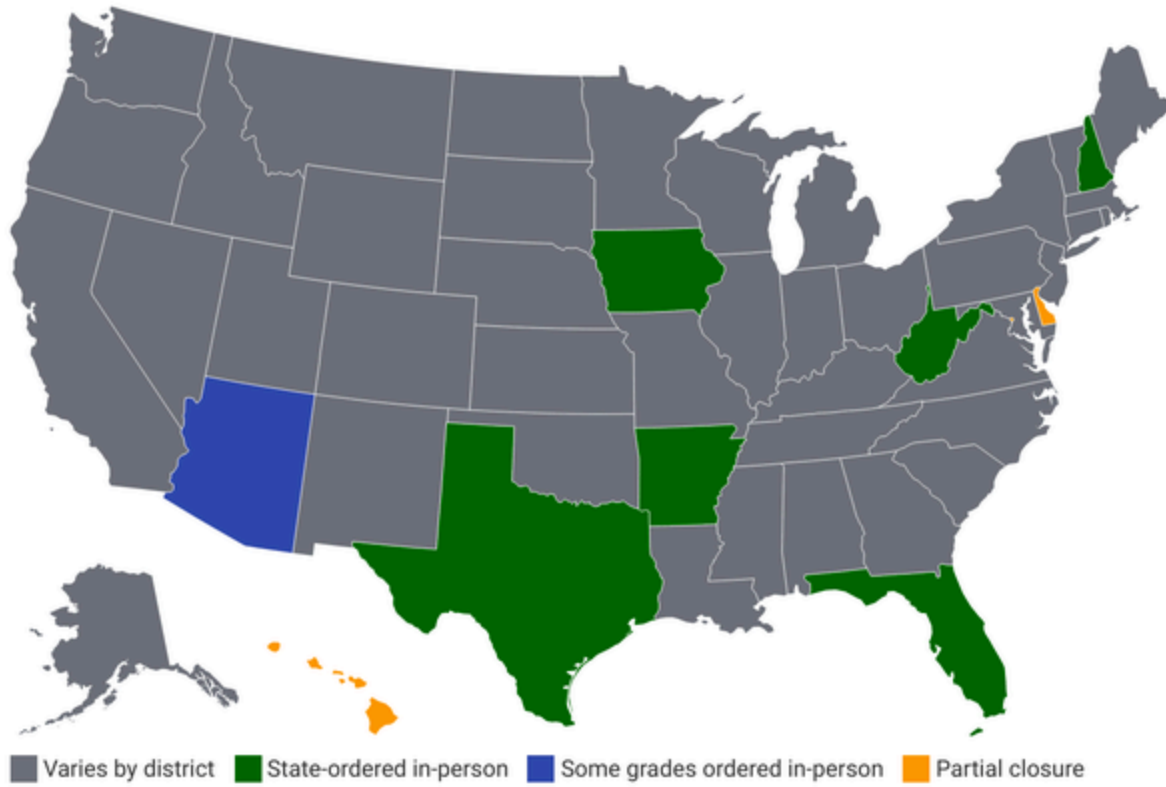


Source: EdWeek

BALLOT PEDIA

March 2021

School openings and closures for the 2020-2021 school year

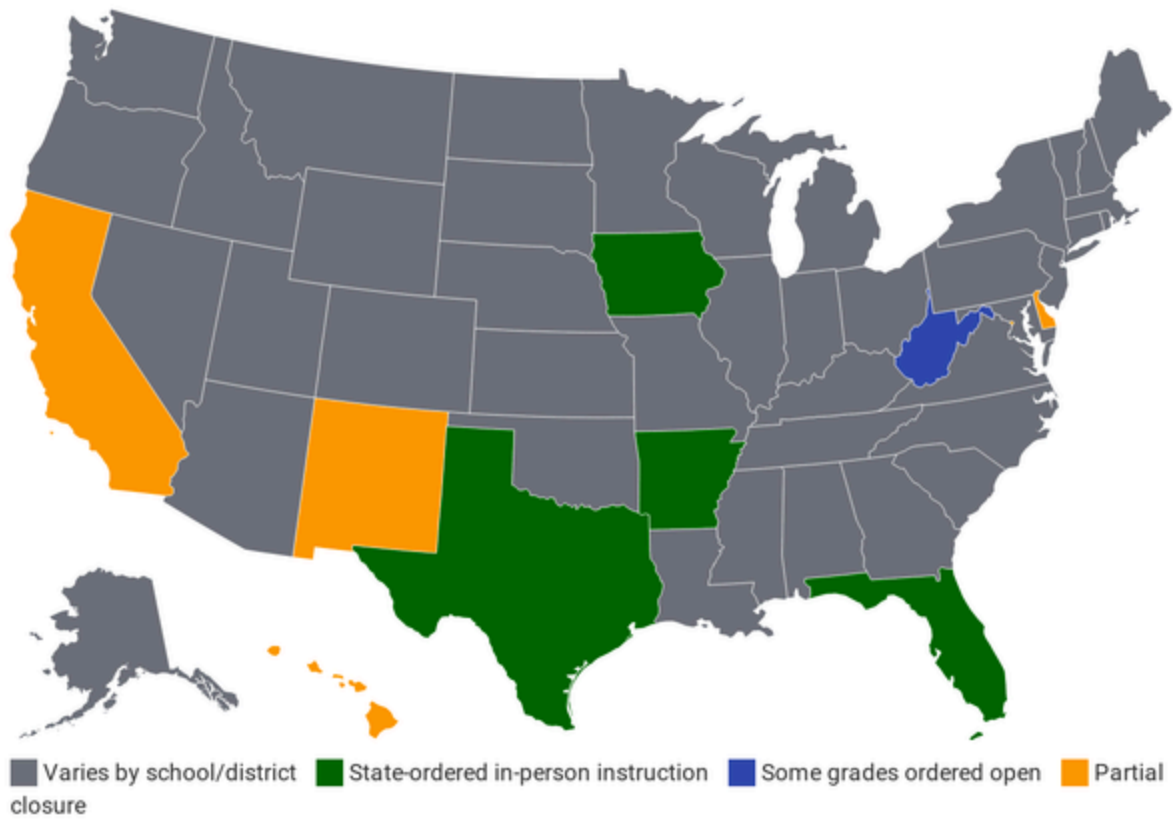


Source: EdWeek

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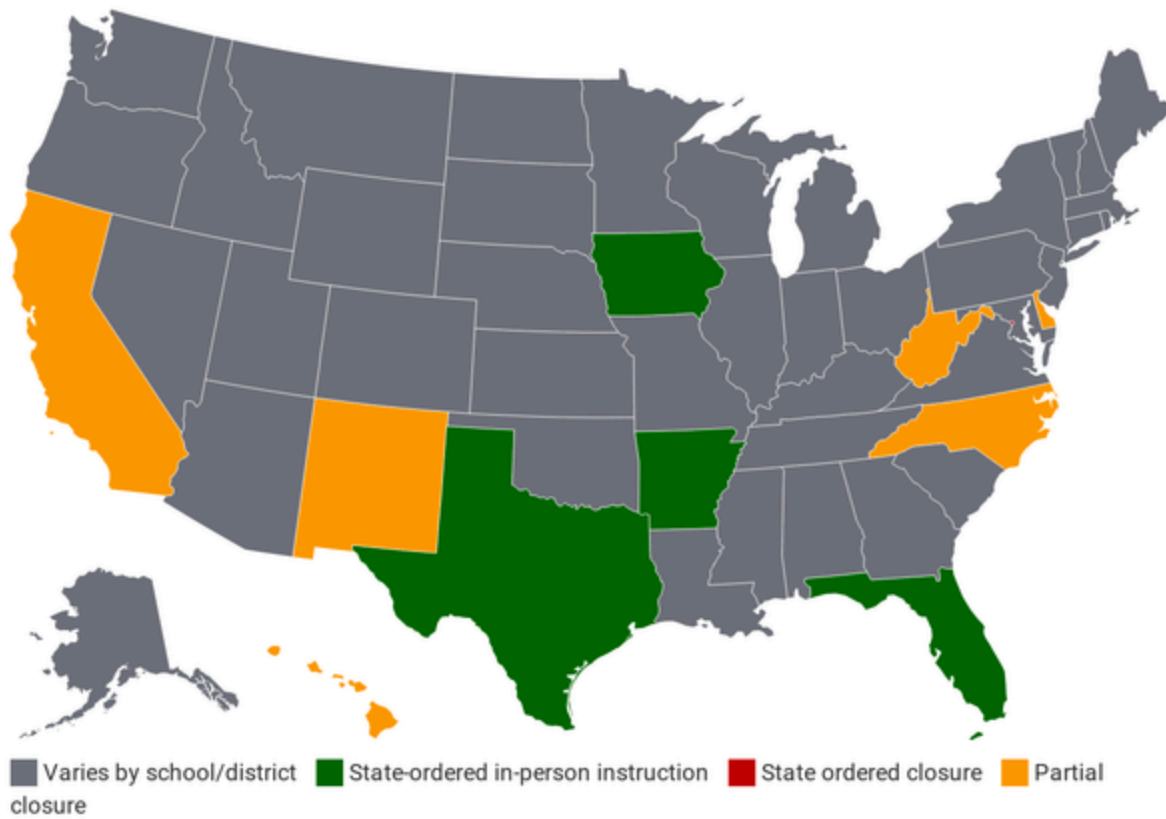
February 2021

School openings and closures for the 2020-2021 school year



January 2021

School openings and closures for the 2020-2021 school year

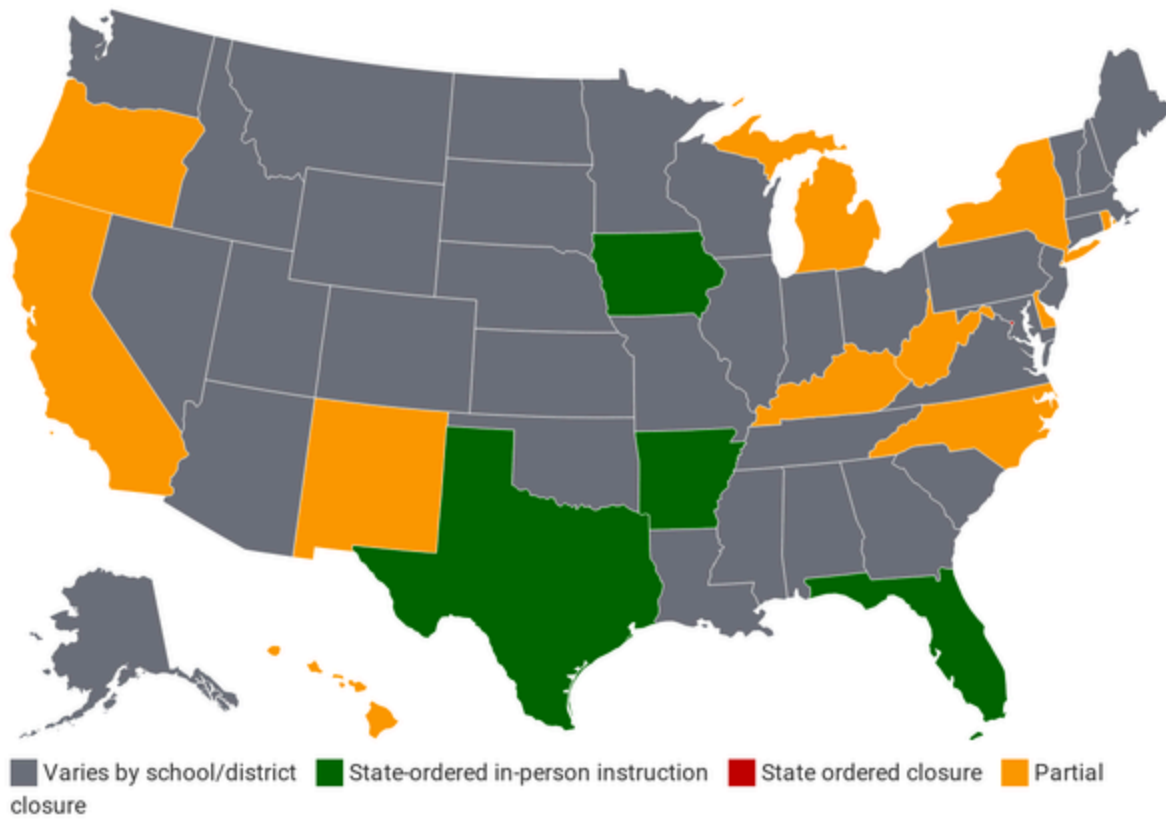


Source: EdWeek

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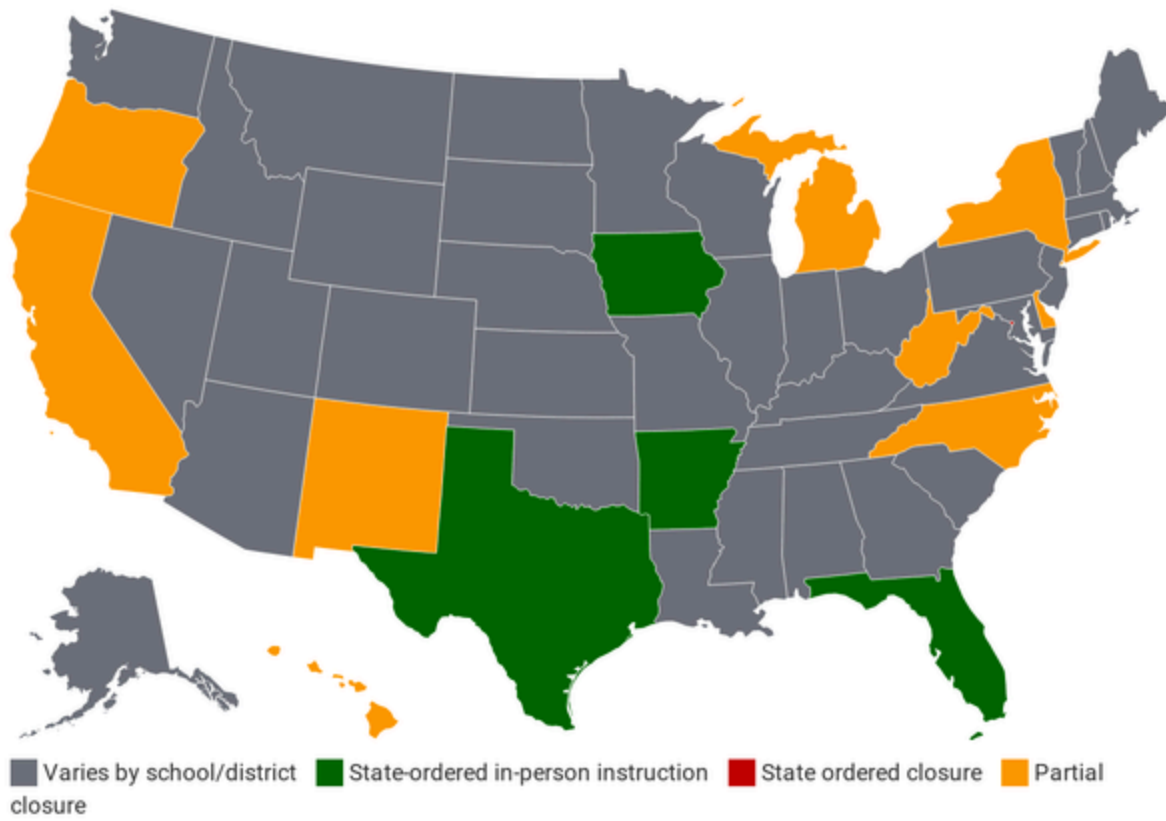
December 2020

School reopenings for the 2020-2021 school year



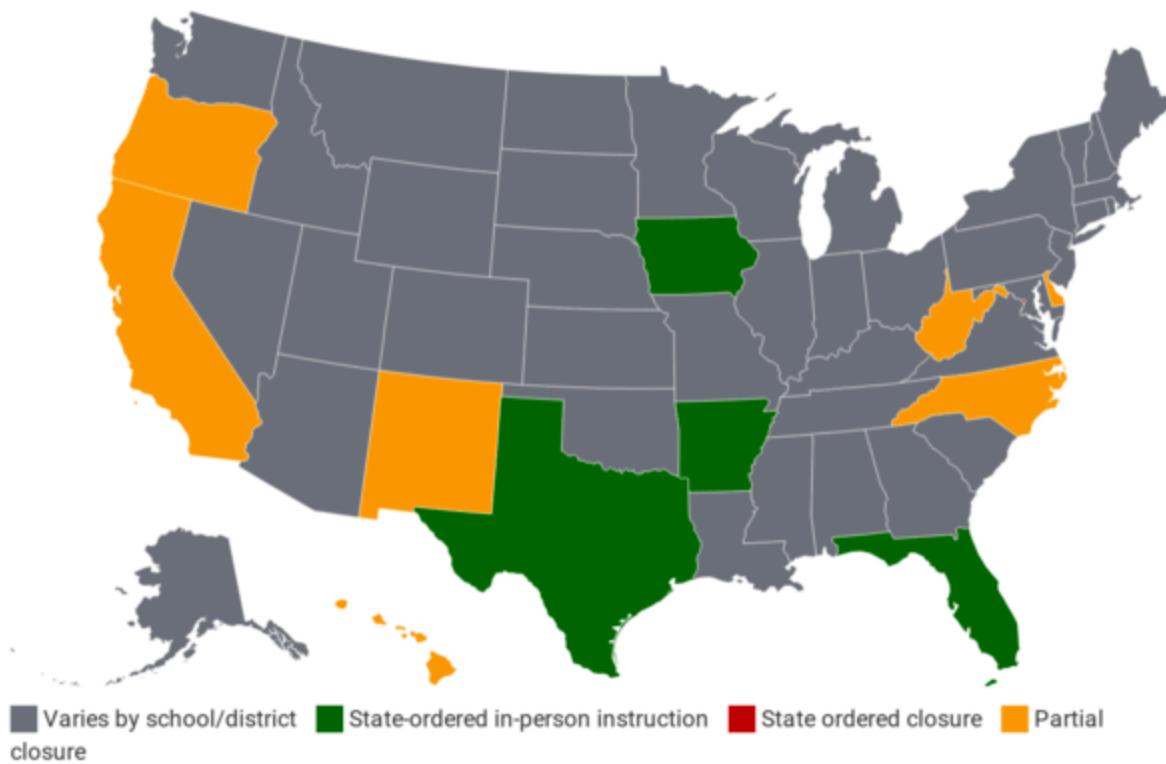
November 2020

School reopenings for the 2020-2021 school year



October 2020

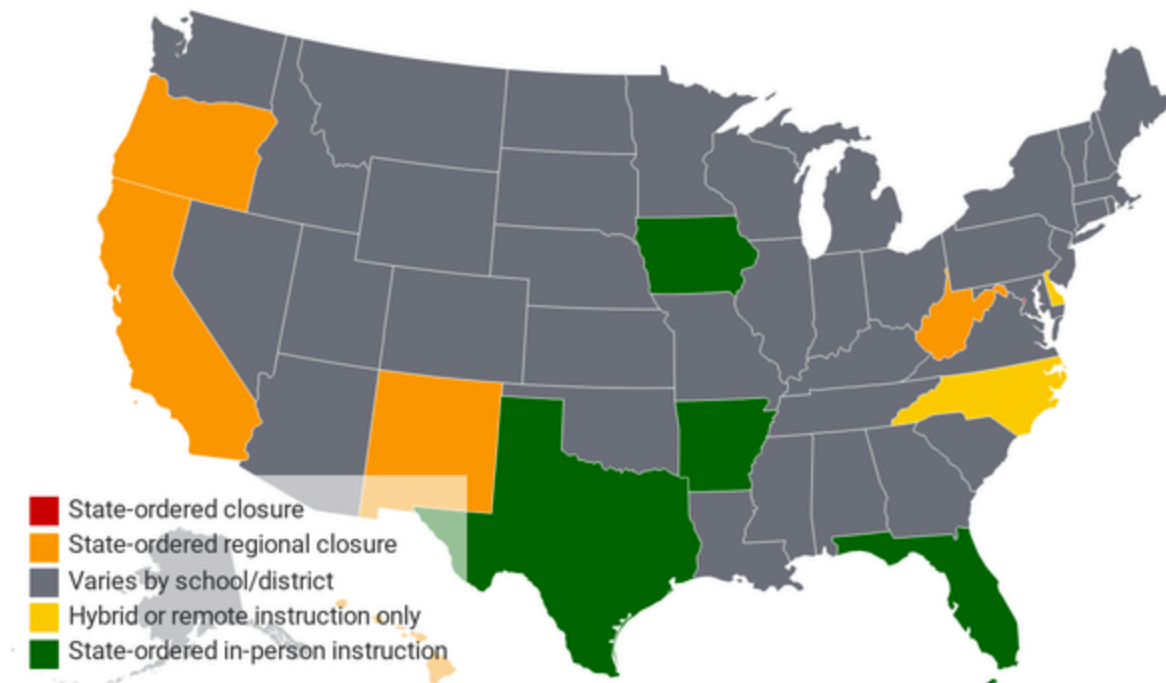
School reopenings for the 2020-2021 school year



BALLOTPEDIA

September 2020

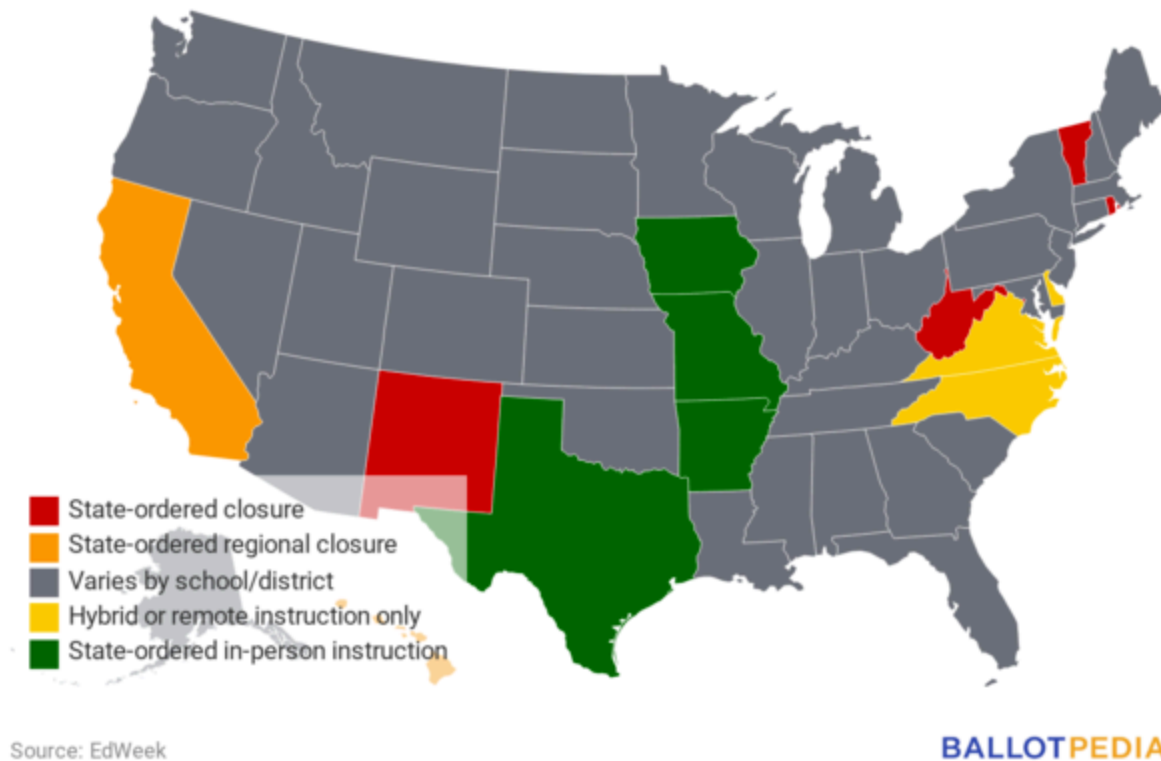
Schools reopening for the 2020-2021 school year



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August 2020

Schools reopening for the 2020-2021 school year



Other COVID-19 education resources

The resources in this section include school reopening data, CDC school reopening guidance, and other information.

- [Burbio's K-12 School Opening Tracker](#) - Burbio
- [Operating schools during COVID-19: CDC's Considerations](#) - U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- [Map: Where Are Schools Required to Be Open?](#) - EdWeek
- [Testing for COVID-19 at School: Frequently Asked Questions](#) - EdWeek
- [COVID-19 Resources for Schools, Students, and Families](#) - U.S. Department of Education

Arguments about school closures

See also: [Arguments about school closures during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic, 2020](#)

State and local government policies around schools during the coronavirus pandemic varied widely. Those policies generated a similar variety of responses from pundits, policy makers, lawmakers, and more. The main areas of disagreement about school closures during the coronavirus pandemic are:

- **[In favor of school closures](#)**
 - [School closures are necessary to prevent the spread of the virus](#)
 - [Evidence from past pandemics supports the efficacy of school closures](#)
 - [Reopening Universities will increase COVID-19 spread](#)
 - [Reopening schools puts people of color at higher risk](#)
 - [Keep schools closed because COVID-19 outbreaks are inevitable](#)

- [Against school closures](#)
 - [School closures are ineffective in preventing the spread of the virus](#)
 - [School closures pose significant unintended consequences](#)
 - [School closures and reopening plans have disparate economic effects](#)
 - [School closures and distance learning exacerbate digital divide](#)
 - [Reopen schools to protect the economy](#)
 - [School-aged children have reduced COVID-19 risk](#)

General resources

The chart below shows coronavirus statistics from countries across the world. The information is provided by [Real Clear Politics](#).

Click the links below to explore official resources related to the coronavirus outbreak.

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services](#)
- [National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services](#)
- [Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor](#)
- [U.S. Department of Education](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)
- [Trends in Number of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths in the US Reported to CDC, by State/Territory](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Vaccinations, Our World in Data](#) (Number of vaccines administered)
- [Coronavirus Vaccine Tracker, New York Times](#) (Progress of vaccine trials)

See also

- [Documenting America's Path to Recovery](#)
- [School responses to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic during the 2021-2022 academic year](#)
- [COVID-19 vaccine distribution](#)
- [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) travel restrictions](#)
- [Officeholders and candidates diagnosed with, dead from, or quarantined because of coronavirus](#)
- [Federal government responses to the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Footnotes

1. ↑ [1.0 1.1 1.2](#) *NBC Boston*, "Mass. High School Students to Return to Classes Full-Time by May 17," accessed May 21, 2021
2. ↑ [2.0 2.1 2.2](#) *Associated Press*, "SC governor signs 5-day-a-week in-person class measure," accessed April 28, 2021
3. ↑ [3.0 3.1 3.2](#) *NBC Boston*, "NH Schools to Reopen Full-Time by April 19, Sununu Says," accessed April 19, 2021
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5. ↑ [5.0 5.1 5.2](#) *King 5*, "Washington students must be offered in-person learning by April 19, Inslee says," accessed April 19, 2021
6. ↑ [6.0 6.1 6.2](#) *ABC 8*, "Gov. Sisolak: Nevada to open at 100% capacity by June 1," accessed April 14, 2021

7. ↑ [Burbio](#) rated Alabama's in-person index at 96.5. To read more about Burbio's school opening tracker, [click here](#). To read more about Burbio's methodology, [click here](#).
8. ↑ [Burbio](#), "[Burbio's K-12 School Opening Tracker](#)," accessed September 29, 2021
9. ↑ [Burbio](#) rated Alabama's in-person index at between 20-40. To read more about Burbio's school opening tracker, [click here](#). To read more about Burbio's methodology, [click here](#).
10. ↑ [Burbio](#), "[Burbio's K-12 School Opening Tracker](#)," accessed September 29, 2021
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16. ↑ [Burbio](#), "[Burbio's K-12 School Opening Tracker](#)," accessed September 29, 2021
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18. ↑ [Burbio](#), "[Burbio's K-12 School Opening Tracker](#)," accessed September 29, 2021
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21. ↑ [Burbio](#), "[Burbio's K-12 School Opening Tracker](#)," accessed Oct. 6, 2021
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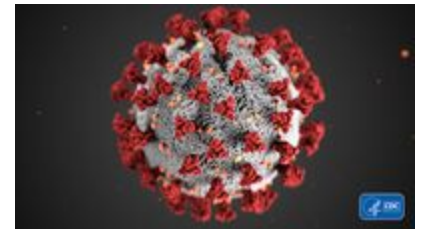
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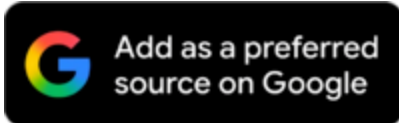
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