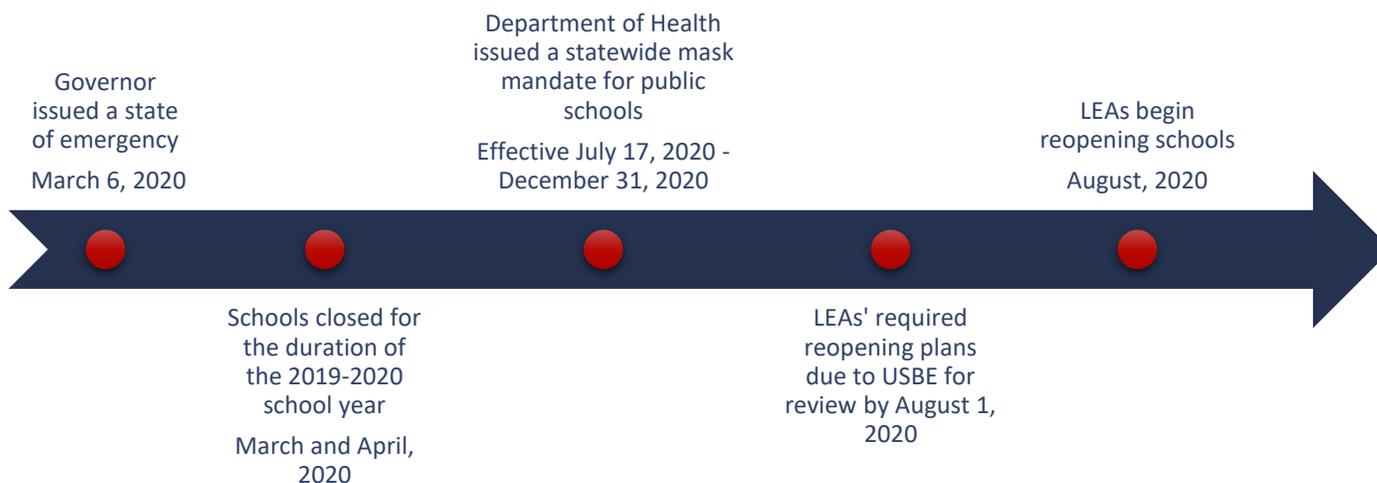


Public School Reopenings: State and Local Stakeholders

Education Interim Committee Meeting | August 19, 2020

Introduction

Many different state and local authorities are involved in decision-making and policy-making processes for reopening schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and implementing those policies. This document provides an overview of the stakeholders involved in the process of reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year. It includes a high-level overview of the roles and responsibilities of the local- and state-level stakeholders but is not a comprehensive list. This document is based on requirements and requirements from the Utah State Board of Education, as outlined in the [School Reopening Planning Handbook](#), and the Utah Department of Health's [COVID-19 School Manual](#). The figure below shows a timeline for closing and reopening schools.



Implementation: Roles and responsibilities of local decision makers and stakeholders

Students and their families

- Help students adjust to an altered school experience.
- Notify school leaders if the student has a health condition that puts them at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- Check students for symptoms and equip students with a clean mask daily.
- Notify the school if the student shows symptoms of, tests positive for, or is exposed to COVID-19 and participate in quarantine following school and health department guidelines.
- Observe other health and safety measures.

Teachers

- Communicate with students and families about how instruction will be delivered, adjustments to the classroom experience, and health and safety protocols in the school.
- Adjust instruction style and lesson plans to align with the LEA's school reopening plan.
- Observe health and safety protocols, including the mask mandate.
- Notify the school if the teacher shows symptoms of, tests positive for, or is exposed to COVID-19 and participate in isolation or quarantine following school and health department guidelines.

- Notify schools leaders if the teacher has a health condition placing them at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

School administrators

- Communicate with students and their families, teachers, and staff about reopening plans, including how instruction will be delivered and health and safety protocols; provide training and assistance as needed.
- Designate at least one point of contact per building to enact health and safety measures in coordination with the local health department, such as contact tracing and providing guidance on how and when to quarantine.
- Enact building-specific health and safety measures, including cleaning protocols and adjustments to extracurricular activities.
- Work with school staff to protect the privacy of students and staff who have tested positive or been exposed to someone with COVID-19.
- Direct students and staff to notify the school and participate in quarantine or isolation if they show symptoms of, test positive for, or are exposed to someone with COVID-19.

Local school boards and local education agencies (LEAs)

- Create school reopening plans for the 2020-2021 school year, including start dates, instruction type (in-person, online, etc.), health and safety protocols, and other provisions required by the State Board of Education.
- Communicate with school leaders, students and families, teachers, and staff about school reopening measures, including cleaning protocols and how instruction will be delivered; provide training and assistance as needed.
- Enact LEA-wide health and safety protocols.

Local health departments

- Coordinate with LEAs in the case of student, classroom, or school exposure. Enable contract tracing and provide other assistance as needed.
- Notify individuals in quarantine and isolation when their quarantine or isolation period is finished.
- Coordinate with LEAs.

Policy and Assistance: Roles and responsibilities of state level decision makers and stakeholders

Utah State Board of Education

- In preparation for schools to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year during a continued state of emergency, required school districts and charter schools to prepare reopening plans to be approved by their local education board and posted on their website by August 1, 2020 (also available on the [state board's website](#)). In addition to the minimum opening requirements, plans should also describe how LEAs will deliver instruction to students.
- Establish minimum opening requirements, including elements LEAs' plans must address, such as communication and training, enhanced environment hygiene, accommodating individual circumstances, and identification of mitigation tactics by school setting.
- Provide technical assistance to LEAs during the reopening process.

- Coordinate with state purchasing to procure supplies for LEAs, prioritizing items that are more difficult to procure at a local level (like disinfecting wipes).
- Manage and distribute federal assistance money (from the CARES Act) to LEAs.
- Waive or revise state board rules as necessary.
- Coordinate with the Legislature to identify statutes that need to be waived or revised.
- Maintain a public-facing [website](#) with information and resources about schools and COVID-19 for LEAs and the public, including the [School Reopening Planning Handbook](#).

Utah Department of Health

- Issued a statewide mask mandate for schools from July 17, 2020 through December 31, 2020.
- Published the [COVID-19 School Manual](#), which provides guidance to local education agencies on responding to and preventing the spread of COVID-19 in schools and managing COVID-19 outbreaks in schools.
- Provide guidance to the Utah State Board of Education on school health and safety measures.

Legislature

- Waive or amend public education-related statutes as necessary.
- Hold public hearings on issues related to school openings.

Governor

- Declared a state of emergency on March 6, 2020 amidst growing concerns about the spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19).
- Instituted short-term, statewide school dismissals (i.e. soft closures) on March 13 and March 23, 2020, and on April 14, 2020 extended those dismissals through the remainder of the school year.
- Incorporated USBE's requirements and recommendations for reopening in to the [Utah Leads Together Phased Guidelines](#) and authorized through Executive Order.