

a COVID-19  
planning  
document that

# CARES

communicates  
a  
response;  
engages  
stakeholders

**We believe  
that you must  
ask questions  
before you have  
the answers.**

Even amidst all the unknowns, there is no shortage of advice for school districts about how to close out the school year and prepare for fall 2020.

*So how do you put the right plan in place for your district?*

This customizable, question-based CARES planning tool will help uncover YOUR unique issues and populate a framework for resolving them in manageable pieces. It's designed to complement more prescriptive models from great minds at work across the nation and world. And most importantly, it's built to enhance collaboration and clear communication with stakeholders, which could be the difference between success and failure during unprecedented times.

The CARES framework was developed by an experienced school superintendent-turned-facilitation-consultant, in cooperation with organizational training, communications and school architecture consultants.

## How does it work?



*This guide is broken down  
into manageable steps*

*and thoughtful questions within  
a series of categories that can be  
championed from within your district*

*to create a step-by-step  
action plan.*

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The information and questions presented are designed to be a work process that enables districts and individual schools to purposefully plan decisions both for the short-term and long-term. It involves thinking and questioning an appropriately positioned team of school leaders in five (5) key areas: COORDINATION, HEALTH & WELLNESS, TEACHING & LEARNING, FACILITIES & OPERATIONS, TECHNOLOGY. Embedded within all of these areas are vital questions related to communication. Communication strategies, tools and practices could be what separates successful change and response initiatives with those that are chaotic and fail students, staff, parents and the community.

The approach to this process involves three phases for timing of this work: WHAT CAN BE DONE **NOW**, WHAT SHOULD BE DONE **NEXT**, and WHAT CAN BE DONE ONCE **OPEN**. You can consider the green shaded areas as questions that can be answered in the immediate. For some districts and schools, this may be one session, for others it may take a few weeks. During this “Now” process, responses to the questions listed may spark a set of “issues” that need to be resolved. You will see a blue bar at the end of each individual section that reads: **“OUR ISSUES TO RESOLVE BEFORE MOVING TO NEXT STEPS ARE”**. You will see a chart at the end of this document that walks districts/school teams through a process to settle those issues satisfactorily before moving into the “Next” phase. The same process would then be conducted to satisfactorily move through the “Next” phase set of questions and issues identified.

	NOW	NEXT	OPEN
<i>COORDINATION &amp; COMMUNICATION</i>	<a href="#">WORK</a>	<a href="#">WORK</a>	<a href="#">WORK</a>
<i>HEALTH/WELLNESS</i>	<a href="#">WORK</a>	<a href="#">WORK</a>	<a href="#">WORK</a>
<i>TEACHING &amp; LEARNING</i>	<a href="#">WORK</a>	<a href="#">WORK</a>	<a href="#">WORK</a>
<i>FACILITIES &amp; OPERATIONS</i>	<a href="#">WORK</a>	<a href="#">WORK</a>	<a href="#">WORK</a>
<i>TECHNOLOGY</i>	<a href="#">WORK</a>	<a href="#">WORK</a>	<a href="#">WORK</a>

A district that successfully works through the contents of this plan may be able to better communicate current knowledge and decision-making, be positioned to ask better questions and be more agile when information changes, and feel more confident in how they can successfully navigate our uncertain future. This will be your document, so you can place your cursor and the cursors of your team members-- click behind a question mark and log your responses. You'll simply then have a conversation about the “issues” in each section, record those in the blue bar at the end of each section-- and that will cast your net for issues to use in your problem solving area.

At the end of this process is a table to document ways you plan to [resolve identified issues](#) for each phase in the sequence. You will note that much of this is hyperlinked to help you navigate the template. You can certainly repopulate your issues, and “cut and paste” a new set of issues to resolve. Also know that there is some online support help available for you to facilitate this in an overview to you and your team.

We wish you all great health and as smooth a transition back to Face to Face School as we can hope to have!

# What does the tool look like?

## 1: Identify issues by category and urgency, via prompt questions



**COORDINATION & COMMUNICATION-- NOW**  
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<b>Aligning our Vision/Values</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is our School District Vision?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are your core values?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> During the school closure did the actions we have taken so far aligned with our district core values?</li> <li>IF YES                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How do we ensure we are keeping our values and vision aligned with our actions going forward?</li> </ul> </li> <li>IF NO                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What changes, if any, we would need to make to ensure we are staying true to our values?</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Have we sufficiently closed this year?</li> <li>IF YES                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What information do we have available to us to start planning for the fall?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What information is missing?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are the lessons learned that we need to bring forward?</li> </ul> </li> <li>IF NO                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How do we sufficiently close this school year and feel ready to begin planning next steps?</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is our message about vision and values that we need to share with our employees, students and community?</li> </ul>
<b>Establishing "Return to School" Task Force</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do we have an existing structure (working group) that could serve as a "return to school" task force?</li> <li>IF YES                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What do we have in place as a task force for our district to make decisions related to "next steps"?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do we have a representative from each school?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Who are we missing?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How do we ensure all perspectives are included?</li> </ul> </li> <li>IF NO                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Who should be on this task force?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Which existing groups can we utilize?</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is the Task Force Charge (AKA Purpose)? (state the purpose clearly)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are the deliverables of the Task Force? (state clear objectives and deliverables for the Task Force to report on)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is the time frame? By when will the work of the Task Force be considered complete?</li> </ul>

Standard questions for all categories to sequentially identify issues:

- Coordination & Communication
- Health & Wellness
- Teaching & Learning
- Facilities & Operations
- Technology

Ability for your team to add questions as we learn more from governing agencies.

**COORDINATION/COMMUNICATION-- NEXT**  
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<b>Identifying Roles &amp; Responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are the roles?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is the line of communication?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is the decision-making process?</li> </ul>
<b>Developing Meetings Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are the norms?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Where will the meetings be held?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What will be the agenda?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How are agendas developed?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How are meetings facilitated?</li> </ul>
<b>Securing Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are the resources needed?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What is the process for securing resources?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Who else might be needed?</li> </ul>
<b>Managing Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What feedback do we need?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are ways to communicate?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How will the results be communicated?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What are appropriate communication channels?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What, if any, are the barriers to communication?</li> </ul>
<b>OUR ISSUES TO RESOLVE BEFORE MOVING TO NEXT STEPS ARE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We lack resources</li> <li>• Haven't defined roles</li> </ul>

You choose which issues are the highest priority for your district..

**COORDINATION/COMMUNICATION-- OPEN**  
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<b>Pandemic Response &amp; Emergency Recovery Plans</b> <a href="#">Pandemic Planning</a> <a href="#">McKinsey Scenarios</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How prepared are we with the establishment and reconvening of a representative team that is ready to plan different scenarios for what school may look like in August? (May be the same task force as Now)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Multiple scenarios could be:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School begins on time and remains open</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School begins on time, but close</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School opening is delayed and w</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Who will be the single-point of contact for the task force?</li> </ul>
<b>Expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Gather feedback from stakeholders related to unions, parent organizations, childcare is</li> </ul>
<b>Coordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If there are separate task forces, how are teams?</li> </ul>
<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> How are we able to maintain regular and district stakeholders</li> </ul>
<b>OUR ISSUES TO RESOLVE BEFORE MOVING TO NEXT STEPS ARE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• okokokok</li> </ul>

## 2: Resolve issues by phase via “solutions to issues” tool



RESOLVING ISSUES- NOW  
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List the issues you identified related to all the topics from above	COORDINATION	We lack representation from our community on our task force. Haven't discussed recommendations with the Board
	HEALTH/WELLNESS	
	TEACHING/LEARNING	
	FACILITIES	
	TECHNOLOGY	
Highlight 1-3 Key Issues to Focus on Right Now	Our SEL curriculum is not equipped for Remote Learning	
	We haven't taken inventory of our ventilation system maintenance materials	
Brainstorm possible actions for each of the 1-3 Issues listed.	For #1	
	For #2	
	For #3	
Choose 3-4 actions you will do. Review your list of suggested actions. Highlight the 3-4 actions that you will actually do and write them in this space.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Write <b>who</b> will be responsible for each action, by <b>when</b> , and how results will be <b>communicated</b> .	<a href="https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_Kyrm_XtgGhc0lhDfc55TRZ52lrydi3igzRo-ulx2Pw/edit?usp=sharing">https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1_Kyrm_XtgGhc0lhDfc55TRZ52lrydi3igzRo-ulx2Pw/edit?usp=sharing</a>	

Issues identified in the questions section feed automatically into the solutions tool

## 3: Track actions, with an emphasis on communication and transparency

CARES ACTION PLANNING TRACKER-SAMPLE

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	A	B	C	D	E
1	Completed	WHO	will do WHAT	by When	how will results be COMMUNICATED?
2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Supt	reviews IASB PRESS Policies for COVID Personnel Policies and Procedures	6/15/2020	Supt will present to BOE at meeting
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	Elem Principal	collects and reports Remote learning Survey responses	6/17/2020	Shared on school website & emailed to staff
4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Counselor and Dean	contacts all students in 11th grade	7/1/2020	Log shared w Supt
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	Instructional Coach	finds all incomplete grades	10/3/2020	List of names emailed to Principal
6	<input type="checkbox"/>				