

Online and Hybrid Learning: An Equity Checklist for Schools

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated many of the longstanding inequities in our educational system. Black and Brown students, students living in poverty, and other historically underserved groups have been disproportionately harmed by the shift to online learning. To ensure that these students are not left behind, schools must focus on equity and respond flexibly to the individual needs of diverse student populations. Schools will need support for this work from every level of government. This checklist is a guide to ensure that schools providing online instruction are equitably serving students in the new school year.

Access to remote learning and technology

- Do all students have full-day access to a computer and reliable internet service?
- Does the school offer alternative modes of instruction for students lacking computer/internet access or facing other barriers to virtual learning?
- Does the school offer workspace to students who do not have a safe place to learn at home, or has it identified community organizations that offer safe workspaces?
- Does the school offer technical assistance to students and caregivers, including bilingual support?

Quality of remote instruction

- Does the school provide professional development for teachers in areas that help students engage in online learning, including social-emotional learning, cultural competency, and anti-racism?
- Does the school provide ESOL daily and modify instruction for English learners?
- Do teachers provide regular, constructive feedback to students on a one-to-one basis?
- Does the school offer a balance of synchronous and asynchronous learning, ensuring that students interact with teachers on a frequent basis?
- Are students with disabilities receiving mandated services and supports through individualized IEPs and COVID compensatory services (CCS) to make up for deficits from last year?

Home support

- Does the school provide support to caregivers who are supervising at-home learning?
- Does the school identify and provide extra support to students who lack home instructional supervision or digital access?
- Are translators and other professionals accessible to families who have questions or need assistance?
- Are students being given the same level of support from specialists (e.g., social workers, therapists, BCAs, wraparounds, 1:1, tutors) as they were when schools were physically open?
- Does the school take a supportive, non-punitive approach toward students who face barriers to remote learning, adjusting its grading and attendance policies to support these students?
- Does the school offer trauma-informed and/or healing-centered engagement practices?

Degree of engagement

- Does the school provide updates and instructional materials in a language and format accessible to parents?
- Does the school solicit input and feedback from parents on its plans and programs?
- Is the school in regular contact with caregivers who cannot access digital communications?
- Does the school have a plan for identifying and addressing social-emotional barriers to online learning (e.g., family illness/loss, job loss, fear of contracting the virus, isolation, anxiety)?
- Does the school offer mental-health services to students who face setbacks during the pandemic?

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