

COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan Guidance

Governor Gretchen Whitmer issued [Executive Order No. 2020-142](#) (Order) on June 30, 2020 and the accompanying [Michigan 2020-21 Return to School Roadmap](#) (Roadmap). Together, these documents are intended to provide schools with guidance and requirements for planning for next school year. While questions and some degree of uncertainty remain, a summary of the major considerations and overview of accompanying support documents are provided below.

Requirement to Develop COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan

The Order requires all public and non-public schools in Michigan to develop a COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan (Preparedness Plan) as they prepare for the 2020-21 school year. The Order acknowledges that there is “no one size-fits all solution” and that schools will “retain flexibility to tailor their instruction to their particular needs and to the disease conditions present in their regions.” Districts without an approved Preparedness Plan are not permitted to open or to continue in operation for in-person instruction for 2020-21.

Timeline

August 3 – Each school’s *draft* Preparedness Plan is due to The Center for Charter Schools. Please submit your draft Preparedness Plan via Epicenter.

- Resources, including the [Plan Template](#), Roadmap and Order, will be available in the Epicenter task as well on the Center’s [resource webpage](#).
- The Center team will work swiftly to complete our review to ensure the Preparedness Plan meets the requirements set forth in the Roadmap and Order.
- We encourage early submission, if possible. The submission format will be limited to Microsoft Word to ensure that review comments and recommended edits can be readily provided to your school.

August 15 – As required in the Order, all boards are required to approve the Preparedness Plan by this date.

- The Center prepared a [sample resolution](#) for boards to use for this requirement. The resolution:
 - Ratifies the Preparedness Plan submitted to the Center
 - Acknowledges that CMU is required to approve the Preparedness Plan – thus allowing the school to work with CMU on any final adjustments to the Preparedness Plan to ensure it is in compliance with the Order and the Roadmap.
 - Approves the Preparedness Plan “as approved by CMU.”
 - Approves the Preparedness Plan Contract Amendment.
 - Acknowledges that the Preparedness Plan (and the associated Preparedness Plan Contract Amendment) is in effect so long as the Order and any other governing orders or declarations are in order or until the end of the 2020-21 school year, whichever is shorter.
- If your school’s first day with students is prior to August 23, the Center will establish an earlier deadline as the board is required to approve the Preparedness Plan at least seven days prior to the first day of school with students.
- The board approval date is a requirement of the Order and therefore the Center cannot extend this deadline.

August 17 – Each school will be required to certify on Epicenter that the final, CMU-approved Preparedness Plan is on the school’s website home page.

- The date for posting your Plan online is a requirement of the Order and therefore the Center cannot extend this deadline.

Additional Guidance

- There are several requirements contained in the Order for districts to cooperate with their local health department, primarily for screening, testing and contact tracing. It is imperative that you maintain open lines of communication and a collaborative working relationship with your local health department.
- The Roadmap aligns with the phases included in the Michigan Safe Start Plan. In-person instruction is not permitted if the region in which a school is located is in Phases 1-3. If the region is in Phase 4 and beyond, in-person instruction is permitted, but not required, following required and recommendation protocols outlined in the Roadmap.
- Importantly, provisions of the previous Executive Order (No. 2020-65) suspending strict compliance with the School Aid Act or the Revised School Code with respect to pupil accounting and attendance, will remain in effect through September 30, 2020. This means that schools can offer flexible and creative programs when the region where they are located is in Phase 4 or above of the Michigan Safe Start Plan, including remote learning programs, hybrid options, rotating schedules, etc. Legislative and/or regulatory action is likely to be needed to ensure continued flexibility beyond September 30, 2020.
- There has never been a better time to be innovative! Take time to fully understand the flexibility afforded to you, develop your plan with your team, be bold but also stay focused and disciplined in planning for next school year.