



January 11, 2021

# COVID-19 Resource Guide

*K-12 Education*



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●●● A NOTE FROM CONGRESSWOMAN SUZAN DELBENE ●●●

The COVID-19 pandemic is the largest public health and economic crisis our state and county have faced in a lifetime. Many people have lost their jobs, kids are out of school, and businesses have closed their doors. This situation requires bold action to provide relief to the most affected and provide a strong recovery.

I want you to know that I'm fighting for you in Congress. Since the beginning of this outbreak, my priorities at the federal level are protecting families, workers, and small businesses, and getting our health care system the resources it needs to save lives.

Congress has now passed two major bipartisan relief packages to address this pandemic and provide economic resources to our communities. This guide contains information about the resources available to children in grades K-12, their teachers, and their parents whose education has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is meant to be a reference tool and the information within is not exhaustive. Inside you will find a compilation of existing federal and state resources.

Because the situation is constantly evolving, check my website ([delbene.house.gov](http://delbene.house.gov)) or call my office in Kirkland at 425-485-0085 for additional assistance.

Please know that my staff and I are here to help. Stay safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Suzan DelBene".

Suzan DelBene  
U.S. Representative

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## QUICK GUIDE

### **Congresswoman DelBene's COVID-19 Resource Page:**

My page on COVID-19 resources is continually updated and includes information for businesses, workers, nonprofits, and more.

### **FEMA information on federal COVID-19 response:**

<https://www.fema.gov/coronavirus/>

### **House Education and Labor Committee:**

<https://edlabor.house.gov/committee-response-to-covid-19>

**Washington State:** A comprehensive list of state resources is available on the governor's coronavirus page: [coronavirus.wa.gov](https://coronavirus.wa.gov)

**Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction:** Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance and Resources:

<https://www.k12.wa.us/about-ospi/press-releases/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-resources>

**U.S. Department of Education:** <https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus>

**Centers for Disease Control:** <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

**Bureau of Indian Education:** <https://www.bie.edu/>

**Bureau of Indian Affairs:** <https://www.bia.gov/covid-19>

### **American Council on Education:**

<https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Summary-CARES-Act-HigherEd-Provisions-032620.pdf>

For assistance please contact any of my offices, or visit my website at [www.delbene.house.gov](http://www.delbene.house.gov)

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## **CONSOLIDATED APPROPRIATIONS ACT OF 2020 HIGHLIGHTS**

The second major coronavirus relief package, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2020, passed in December 2020 and will extend the previous funding deadline set in the CARES Act from December 31, 2020, to December 31, 2021, for state and local governments.

Schools that accept funding are required to pay employees and contractors during any closures whenever possible.

The law provides the following for emergency education funding to students, schools, institutions, and states across the country, including:

- \$82 billion for an Education Stabilization Fund to remain available through September 30, 2022.
- \$54.3 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund. This can be used by schools to improve facilities and infrastructure to reduce COVID spread, address learning losses caused by the pandemic, and purchase technology.
  - 90 percent of funds must be distributed to local education agencies based on a proportional share of ESEA Title I-A funds. The remaining 10% can be held in emergency reserves by the state to address issues related to the pandemic.
- \$4.1 billion for the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief fund for pandemic education assistance.
  - \$2.75 billion is set aside for private schools that will be administered by public agencies.
- \$819 million to the Bureau of Indian Education-operated and funded schools and tribal colleges/universities.

Maintenance of Effort (MOE) states that states must maintain spending on K-12 and higher education in FY 2022 at least at the proportional rate of the state’s support for K-12 and higher education relative to the state’s overall spending averaged over FY 2018, FY 2019, and FY 2020. MOE may be waived by the Secretary of Education.

## *Child Care*

The act includes:

- \$10 billion in emergency funds to the child care sector via the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program. This allows states to maintain the flexibility that came with CARES funds, including:
  - Child care assistance to families.
  - Increased operating costs for providers from COVID safety protocols.
- \$250 million for Head Start providers to continue service for low-income families throughout the pandemic.

## **CARES ACT HIGHLIGHTS**

### *Education Provisions*

The CARES Act provides approximately \$31 billion in emergency education funding to students, schools, institutions, and states across the country.

\$30.75 billion total, less 2 percent for Indian Education, grants to governors in impacted areas and administrative expenses; or \$30.135 billion, divided into three pools.

#### **Sec. 18002. Governors (9.8 percent, or \$2.953 billion)**

- Provides \$3 billion to governors for emergency education relief that can be spent on school districts, institutions of higher education, or both.
- Allocated to states on basis of 60 percent of the population ages 5-24 and 40 percent on the population of children counted under ESEA.
- Funds are not restricted to public institutions within the state.
- Imposes a MOE on participating states that ties funding for the governors' pool and the K-12 pool to an average of the past three years' spending on K-12 and higher education for FYs 20-21.
- MOE doesn't cover capital projects, R&D, and tuition revenue.
- The Secretary may waive the MOE requirement for "states that have experienced a precipitous decline in financial resources."

Governors can distribute these funds to agencies and institutions across K-12 and higher education that "have been most significantly impacted by

coronavirus” to support their ongoing functionality and ability to continue to deliver education and services to students.

**Update:** For the Governors Emergency Education Relief Fund, Governors may use funds to provide emergency support to school districts and institutions of higher education or other education-related entities essential for carrying out emergency education services. Funds can be used for authorized activities as well as the provision of child care and early childhood education, social and emotional support, and the protection of education-related jobs. More information is provided here:

<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/education-stabilization-fund/governors-emergency-education-relief-fund/>.

According to the House Appropriations Committee, Washington State has been awarded \$56,769,263.

### **Sec. 18003. K-12 (43.9 percent, or \$13.229 billion)**

Gives states \$13 billion to support school districts. This funding would cover a wide range of activities, including cleaning and sanitizing schools, purchasing educational technology such as laptops and hotspot devices, training educators to use online learning tools, ensuring access to education for students with disabilities, and providing students emergency funding for food, housing, and other essentials.

### *Child Care*

The CARES Act offers child care relief to families and frontline workers.

- Provides \$3.5 billion for child care and an additional \$750 million for Head Start.
  - Supports child care providers through the crisis, even if providers are forced to close, and ensures that workers in the health care sector, emergency responders, sanitation workers, and other essential workers have access to child care to enable them to work.
  - Ensures children and families enrolled in Head Start continue receiving services, to the extent possible, and provides funding for summer programming in areas of the country that will be ready to reopen by then.

## *Related Agencies*

The CARES Act provides relief for AmeriCorps volunteers, grantees, and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

- Ensures that AmeriCorps volunteers whose service has been disrupted by COVID-19 can still earn their education awards.
- Ensures National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) members can re-enroll if their service if it is interrupted by COVID-19 up to the age of 26, and creates additional flexibilities for grantees and the Corporation of National and Community Service to fulfill their financial obligations.

### *\$3.5 billion in funding for the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) in the CARES Act*

The emergency CCDBG funds will help states provide an emergency funding stream to child care providers, even if providers close; continuing to pay child care staff; helping providers stay open or re-open, and providing child care to essential employees, including healthcare sector employees, emergency responders, and sanitation workers.

## *Tribal Schools*

\$69 million to help tribal schools, colleges, and universities through the Bureau of Indian Education.

## *Meals and Nutrition*

**Child Nutrition Programs** – The bill includes \$8.8 billion in additional funding for Child Nutrition Programs to ensure children receive meals while school is not in session.

Many students rely on school meals to meet their nutritional needs. Additionally, as this outbreak begins to impact the economic environment, we know more families may find themselves needing assistance. During these school closures, school districts may provide breakfast and lunch to any student, regardless of their family income, at the location(s) designated by the district.



Each district and school has a unique set of circumstances and resources. OSPI is individually assisting districts and schools to determine how to best meet community needs. [Guidance for school districts is available on OSPI's Meals & Nutrition Guidance webpage.](#)

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

**Q: Are schools required to serve meals during the closure?**

A: Many students depend on school meals as a crucial part of daily nutrition. Districts are expected to develop plans and resources to ensure student needs are met during extended closures but are not required to serve meals during an unanticipated school closure.

**Q: Does the Governor's "stay at home" order affect meal service?**

A: Governor Inslee's "stay at home" order does not prohibit school districts from continuing to provide meals, as this is an essential function.

**Q: Who can receive a meal?**

A: Any child aged 0–18, or adults with disabilities who are enrolled in educational programs, can receive meals free of charge.

**Q: How do I know if my district is serving meals?**

A: Districts must share information publicly if they are serving meals. Information can often be found on district websites, via email communications, or through other communication formats.

**Q: How will my district serve meals?**

A: Districts are using a variety of ways to get meals to students. We encourage schools to maintain social distancing during the COVID-19 closure to prevent the spread of the disease. Due to this, meal service will look different than typical service. Meal service options include, but are not limited to, utilizing school bus routes, grab and go options, and more.

**Q: Can breakfast and lunch be given at one time?**

A: Yes. Districts may distribute two meals, such as breakfast and lunch, in one meal service.

**Q: Can I pick up meals for my child(ren) if they are sick?**

A: Children must be present to receive a free meal. If a parent would like to pick up meals for children not present, they should contact their school district for assistance.

**Q: Who should I contact with additional questions?**

A: For all questions about receiving meals during this unexpected closure, please contact your district directly. District Websites and Contact Information can be found on the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's website.

*Continuous Learning During Closures*

Although schools are closed and are not providing traditional in-person instruction, education must continue. [Bulletin 024-20 provides school districts with a framework for continuing instruction and learning during school closures](#). The sample plan provided in the bulletin is also [available in Word format](#) for districts to use. Further guidance will be grounded in compassion, communication, and common sense; rather than the traditional compliance measures we are all familiar with in our education community. Our schools are the backbone of our democracy and the structures, routines, and ongoing learning opportunities will create calm connections our families need at this critical time in our state.

In late February and early March, the state set a high bar for districts who wanted to continue distance learning if their school buildings were to close. The situation in Washington has drastically evolved since that time. After the state's initial guidance, Governor Inslee shut down all schools in the state for a minimum of six weeks. The state has an obligation to our students to provide them with opportunities to continue their learning during this pandemic.

If they haven't already begun, districts should be building their capacity to provide equitable services during school closures. Districts and communities are in varying states of readiness to provide continuity of learning, and this guidance is intended to be used as a starting point as planning begins. We should avoid assuming that continuity of education outside of a typical school building can only occur through online means. Districts will provide instruction using printed learning materials, phone

contact, email, technology-based virtual instruction, or a combination to meet student needs.

While most Washington school districts have already begun engaging students and families in learning, OSPI expects educational services for all students will begin by Monday, March 30.

Resources to assist districts, students, and parents/guardians are available on [OSPI's Resources for Continuous Learning During School Closures webpage](#).

### *Resources for Continuous Learning During School Closures*

In response to school closures due to COVID-19, OSPI content experts have curated a selection of links to external organizations providing high-quality online educational materials – courses, lessons, videos, physical and outdoor activity suggestions, etc. Please note that in many cases, these resources are free to use online but are not openly licensed for wide-scale reuse and adaptation.

These resources were carefully chosen for their alignment to Washington State Learning Standards (or a recognized equivalent) and/or direct experience with effective implementation with students. Particular attention has been given to identifying best practices and guidance in supporting ALL students and providing suggestions for educator professional learning during this challenging time.

Connect to the [OSPI Remote Learning Resource Suggestions document on the Washington OER Commons Hub](#) for a doc, pdf, and sortable spreadsheet version of the list [here](#).

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Office of Education has put together a roundup of the agency's most popular educational resources for students of all ages to explore at home.

[NOAA's virtual activities](#) are designed to help students learn more about the ocean and atmosphere through [virtual "Sanctuaries at Home" expeditions](#), hands-on experiments, data exploration, and so much more. With access to the internet, parents and teachers can use these resources

with ease to enrich and facilitate their child's or student's educational experience.

There is also a wide range of educational material available via the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution. You can find descriptions and links to Smithsonian Institution resources [here](#), and Library of Congress resources [here](#). The material includes resources for students of all ages and brings with it the credibility of two of our nation's preeminent educational institutions.

Many educational companies are providing limited-time free or low-cost access to educational programming. The sites below show a collection of such resources in alphabetical order, with a description.

- [International Society for Technology in Education \(ISTE\) - Learning Keeps Going Resource Directory](#)
- [State Educational Technology Directors' Association \(SETDA\) eLearning Coalition. Partner Resources](#)

Vendors and resources found in the two directories above have not all been vetted by OSPI, nor should this be considered an endorsement. Educators should be mindful of digital resources that require teachers or students to create online accounts. Please check with district policies and consider HIPPA, FERPA, and COPPA laws with regards to student privacy BEFORE implementing any of these resources. Make sure plans are in place to support educators when access permissions end.

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### *Frequently Asked Questions*

**Q: Which schools are closing, and for how long?**

A: The Governor has declared that all schools in Washington will be closed for six weeks, public and private. Schools will close no later than Tuesday, March 17, and will not reopen before Monday, April 27.

**Q: Why are schools closing?**

A: There are multiple factors that led to this decision:

- The number of cases is rapidly expanding.
- Health officials can no longer map the contacts of infected individuals reliably.
- School districts within the region are experiencing unparalleled student absences.
- Many districts are on the brink of no longer being able to staff their schools due to staff absences.

**Q: Why is my school closing if there are no cases in my area?**

A: This is a dynamic, fast-moving situation, and counties impacted by COVID-19 now represent 75% of Washington’s population. Public health experts agree that this is the best time to do a statewide closure, and going county-by-county would not allow Washington to get ahead of the wave of cases.

**Q: Are child care options being provided during closures?**

A: Closing schools has a major impact on our ability to staff hospitals, health care facilities, and other fire and medical departments. Superintendents have been asked to provide child care, at no cost, to families who are in the medical field or who are first responders.

**Q: If child care options are provided, how will those children be kept safe?**

A: Districts that provide child care have been advised to take every measure possible to keep students safe, including providing social distancing, ensuring consistent hand washing, sending students home if they’re sick, and routinely disinfecting commonly touched surfaces.

**Q: What if I don’t work in those fields?**

A: If families don’t work in the healthcare or first responder fields, but are expected to continue to attend work during the closure, they should reach out to their school district. Districts can make additional decisions that are needed for their communities.

**Q: Will meals be provided for students during closures?**

A: School meal programs should continue during school closure for COVID-19. Check in with your child's school to find out more about meal services and distribution.

**Q: Will students be learning from home during the closure?**

A: Superintendents have been advised to explore opportunities for extended learning, similar to packets that are sent home during Thanksgiving and winter breaks. Schools should not be providing online learning services unless they can provide those services equitably.

**Q: How will schools support students experiencing homelessness?**

A: Schools are expected to plan how they will continue to support students experiencing homelessness during the closure. Reach out to your school district for more information.

**Q: Will students have to make up missed days?**

A: Schools and districts that close in response to the COVID-19 outbreak should make every effort to make up missed time, including using scheduled vacation days and planned school closure days. However, OSPI will grant emergency waivers to allow districts to end the school year on Friday, June 19 at the latest.

**Q: Will this have an impact on student testing?**

A: OSPI has decided that all state testing will be canceled for the 2019–20 school year. This includes the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA), the Washington Comprehensive Assessment of Science (WCAS), the Washington Access to Instruction and Measurement (WA-AIM), English Learner Progress Assessment for the 21st Century (ELPA21), and WIDA Alternate ACCESS for ELLs.

**Q: How will families be notified about additional information?**

A: Districts are expected to follow their standard procedures for notifying families. This includes, but is not limited to, calls, emails, text messages, and contacting local news stations. If families are not hearing from their districts during a closure, they should get in touch with their school principal or district superintendent.

## HOW TO TALK TO CHILDREN ABOUT SCHOOL CLOSURES

**Be honest with them.** When accurate information isn't available, children often think of the worst-case scenario. Don't ignore their concerns but explain that very few people have COVID-19. Let them know that schools are closed to slow the spread of the virus across the state, not necessarily because there are cases in their school.

**Monitor television viewing and social media.** Limit screen time as much as possible and avoid watching or listening to information that might be upsetting with your kids around. Remind them that many stories about COVID-19 online are based on rumors and inaccurate information.

**Make yourself available.** Kids may need extra time with you to process their concerns, feelings, and questions. Make sure they know that you're there to listen to them and provide them with plenty of love and affection.

**Remain calm and assuring.** Kids pick up on your verbal and nonverbal reactions, so make sure you're in control of those. Help reframe your kids' concerns into the appropriate perspective.

### *Other ways to help kids manage their stress*

**Practice proper health and hygiene.** Encourage proper health and hygiene with your kids by doing things like creating drawings to remember family routines or teaching them to wash hands for the correct amount of time by singing a song.

**Keep a consistent schedule.** Consistent bedtimes, meals, and exercise will help your family feel a sense of calm among change.

**If available, encourage students to access distance learning options.** School districts are allowed to provide distance learning if they can provide it equitably to all students. Check with your school district for more information.

**Have fun!** Do things that make your family feel better in times of stress, such as watching movies, reading, or playing [games](#).