

FAQ on State and District Response to COVID-19 Outbreak

How are districts engaging parents and families to support student learning?

Regional Educational
Laboratory
Northeast & Islands

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School districts are uploading a variety of resources for families, such as the following examples:

- Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education highlighted their [family guides to curriculum standards](#) as a resource for parents. These brief guides describe what students should know and be able to do at each grade level and provide questions for parents/guardians to ask their children to engage them in the learning process. These guides are available in multiple languages.
- Bangor School District in Maine emphasized that [parents are not expected to take the place of teachers](#). The district acknowledged that remote learning time may not resemble that of a traditional school day.
- Many districts, such as Seattle Public Schools, have [created weekly learning packets](#) for different grade levels (preschool, elementary, middle, and high school) as well as a packet for special education. These weekly packets include a suggested remote schedule and a menu of activities for each subject.
- In addition to providing learning packets, Chicago Public Schools includes a [guide for parents on remote learning](#). It makes several important distinctions between remote learning and online learning:
 - Remote learning includes digital and non-digital components and students are often not required to log the hours they spend on classwork.
 - Online learning or e-learning models rely primarily on digital material and incorporate regular attendance taking practices.
 - Typically, remote learning includes more flexible grading practices than online learning, to ensure that students with limited access to technology are not penalized.

School districts, as well as other organizations, have offered general tips for parents/guardians on remote learning. Some common pieces of advice include the following:

- [Create an environment](#) conducive to remote learning:
 - Set a schedule that allows for flexibility and gives kids some agency in choosing their activities. Remote learning does not need to mirror the length or the intensity of a traditional school day.
 - Build breaks, unstructured time, and time for physical activity into the day. Activities such as cooking or spending time outside can be opportunities for families to bond and for informal learning to take place.
 - If possible, designate a distraction-free space where kids can regularly work.
- [Communicate often with teachers](#). Ask questions and inform them of challenges and successes.
- Parents/guardians should try to [be patient](#) with themselves. Remote learning will not look the same for every family.

Resources with remote learning tips:

- Eight strategies for families: <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/education-plus-development/2020/03/17/a-parents-guide-to-surviving-covid-19-8-strategies-to-keep-children-healthy-and-happy/>
- Tips for parents/guardians from educators: http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/DigitalEducation/2020/03/e-learning_overload_8_tips_tea.html?cmp=e-ml-enl-eu-news2-rm&M=59233310&U=320884&UUID=7b5a2855cf90b87dec06a94e135561ab
- Lessons from a homeschool researcher: <https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/03/27/lessons-from-a-homeschooling-researcher-what-you.html?cmp=e-ml-enl-eu-news2&M=59214614&U=320884&UUID=7b5a2855cf90b87dec06a94e135561ab>
- Advice from a parent and teacher: <https://www.today.com/parents/teacher-s-advice-homeschooling-during-covid-19-crisis-t176370>

Resources from districts:

- https://www.seattleschools.org/district/calendars/news/what_s_new/coronavirus_update/resources/learning_resources
- <https://cps.edu/SiteCollectionDocuments/Remote-Learning-Guidance-for-Parents.pdf>
- <http://www.doe.mass.edu/highstandards/>
- <https://www.wabi.tv/content/news/Update-from-Bangor-School-Superintendent-569217751.html>

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