Learning Continuity:
Planning Considerations for School Leaders

The following planning guide offers school leaders actionable advice on how they can leverage digital instructional content and remote teaching practices to provide learning opportunities for all students in the event of unanticipated and extended school closures.

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Dear School Leaders,

The COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges for our state's educational community unlike any we've seen. We appreciate your commitment to develop innovative ways to support the educational, social, and emotional needs of every child in Michigan during this time of unprecedented crisis. I thank all of our dedicated educators who are striving hard to meet these new demands.

To help districts prepare to serve students who cannot physically be in school, we appreciate that *Michigan Virtual* is providing a resource in this time of need for planning online instruction: *Learning Continuity: Planning Considerations for School Leaders*. This document can assist you in the decisions you may need to make, and structures you would need to put in place, if you are able to transition to virtual learning at this time.

While we recognize that some of you were already well down the road in this process, many others of you have had little experience in this area due to limited computers and connectivity in your homes and communities. We understand that many of you are at the very beginning steps of your journey to transition to online instruction. As a result, your current reality is a very different reality and your journey on this path will be longer.

Regardless of whether our children are learning in school or are learning at a distance, their education is critical to their success and to that of the state as a whole. As we rise to this challenge together, this document has the potential to be a useful resource for you.

Sincerely,

Michael F. Rice, Ph.D.
State Superintendent

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Introduction

During the 2018-19 school year, Michigan schools faced extended closures due to inclement weather conditions. Today, we face mandatory closures due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in our communities. Increasingly, school leaders are recognizing the need to prepare their districts for remote learning in the event of extended closures due to natural disasters, public health emergencies, or any other extraordinary circumstances that might arise.

The following planning guide offers school leaders actionable advice on how they can leverage digital instructional content and remote teaching practices to provide learning opportunities for all students in the event of unanticipated and extended school closures. Shifting to a remote or virtual learning model requires thoughtful planning and coordination, and school leaders are advised that when pressed to make such a shift in a short period of time, they should be mindful of the following five tenets:

- Start small (be realistic, don't try to introduce too many new things at once)
- Leverage current resources (rely on individuals who have experience with remote learning)
- Build on micro-level successes (the needed transition may be a shock to the system, be patient and celebrate tiny steps forward)
- Set and manage expectations for students, parents, and educators (lack of a common vision will cause challenges that could be avoided)
- Take care of each other (work to reduce stress, anxiety, worry, illness, financial security, etc.)

Leadership & Planning

To maintain effective teaching and learning during extended school closures, school leaders must develop a comprehensive strategy that proactively addresses the challenges and barriers they may encounter throughout the implementation of their learning continuity plan.

A key aspect of such a strategy is the development of a carefully designed execution plan. Similar to the crisis management strategies already established in schools and districts across the state, execution strategies should be aligned with actions and tactics already adopted and practiced by schools and districts.

The MI Ready Schools Emergency Planning Toolkit is a widely recognized document that contains guidance and advice for school leaders on how to develop and execute a learning continuity plan. In particular, some of the recommendations from the U.S. Department of Education in this document highlight key characteristics of an effective emergency management plan (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Characteristics of an Effective Emergency Management Plan

Characteristics of an Effective Emergency Management Plan

- Establishes Crisis Response Team (CRT) with National Incident Management System
- Demonstrates collaboration with local community
- Reflects an "all-hazards" approach
- Obtains and documents School Board approval
- Aligns with federal, state, and local emergency management plans
- Contains specific plans for accommodating individuals with disabilities or special needs
- Provides a timeline for maintaining/updating the plan

U.S. Department of Education

Source: Michigan Department of Education. (2011). MI Ready Schools Emergency Planning Toolkit. https://www.michigan.gov/documents/safeschools/mi_ready_schools_emergency_planning_toolkit_370277_7.pdf

Specific actions school leaders can take to prepare their schools or districts for remote teaching and learning may be placed into seven general categories:

- Leadership & Planning
- Technology & Technical Support
- Curriculum Resources — Digital Content
- Professional Learning — Instructional Practices
- Parent & Family Support
- Communication
- School Operations

Throughout the rest of this document, we offer guidance and considerations for school leaders as they create remote learning and teaching plans. As school leaders move to implement such plans, we highly recommend they form a cross-functional team within their school or district to coordinate the various activities required to shift to a remote learning model that is productive for students, families, and staff during extended school closures.

The following resources produced by *Michigan Virtual* will be helpful to school leaders seeking to use digital content and online learning methodologies to support their remote learning efforts:

- **Administrator Guide to Online Learning**
- **School Board Guide to Online Learning**

Technology & Technical Support

One of the primary challenges of creating an effective remote learning environment is providing adequate levels of technology access to all students and instructional staff. Specifically, the following aspects of technology are needed for students and instructional staff working at home or in some other non-school location:

Access to Computing Devices

For students to be able to work consistently in a remote learning environment, they will each need to be able to access digital content and related web-based technology systems on a regular basis. Schools and districts are advised to use discretion regarding the amount of "screen time" required of students to complete their course work. Ideally, it is recommended that each student has a dedicated computing device available to them; however, students can also be successful in situations when they need to share a computing device with other members of their household. In addition, instructional staff members who will be interacting with students through a web-based platform will also need this same level of access to computing devices. Although a smartphone may suffice in some instances, it is not the preferred type of device to be used in most remote learning environments. Instead, a laptop computer or a Chromebook is recommended. In some instances, tablet computers (e.g., iPads) may also be a sufficient option; however, there are some limitations and incompatibilities that may be experienced when using this form of device.

High-Speed Internet Access

Since virtual learning typically relies on digital content that contains multimedia, high-speed internet access for each student working at home is highly recommended. This access may be in the form of broadband connectivity from local internet service providers or through the use of cellular networks (e.g., mobile hotspots or tethering to smartphones). If using cellular networks, school leaders must recognize that restrictions on individual families' wireless data plans may need to be adjusted and should account for this need as they plan guidance for families.

Web Content Filtering

Most schools receive federal E-rate funding, which means that schools will need to provide some degree of web content filtering for all school-issued devices (for both students and instructional staff) to maintain compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). While it is likely that schools and districts have such filtering in place on computer networks within their physical school buildings, individual student devices may not be configured to be filtered when taken home by students. School leaders need to be sure that the appropriate web content filtering occurs for each school-owned device used offsite.

Technical Support for Students & Staff

In addition to providing devices, internet access, and appropriate levels of web-content filtering, school leaders also need to develop and implement a remote technical support program to help students and staff when they experience technical issues with their devices and network access.

Among the primary solutions a school or district's technology staff could provide include traditional, synchronous, "real time" communications by telephone. While this method may be beneficial, it should be coupled with additional channels for two-way communication with students and staff. Such channels could include the use of instant messaging or a text-based chat feature included as part of the school or district's web-based technology help desk ticketing system.

The communication methods described above will help to address most technical issues that students and staff may experience. There may be some instances, however, where technology staff members may need to log into a computing device remotely to adjust the settings or re-configure the device. To accomplish this, the school or district's technology staff will need to have the technical ability to remotely access student and staff devices through reliable software and secure network connections.

Curriculum Resources — Digital Content

The use of digital content is a common way for students and instructional staff to work in a remote learning environment. Schools and districts should address the following aspects of providing digital content to provide the most effective learning experience for students:

Subject-Specific Content

Schools and districts should provide appropriate K-12 digital content for all students learning in a remote learning environment. To accomplish this, content may be obtained from existing curriculum providers (e.g., *Michigan Virtual*, Edgenuity, Pearson, Apex Learning, etc.) or it may be curated or developed by teachers within the school or district. Content that is curated or developed by teachers should be organized within a learning management system (LMS) or some type of learning platform.

Learning Management Systems (LMSs) or Platforms

Curriculum providers often provide an LMS that contains their digital content, assessments, communication tools, and a course gradebook. In many cases, these providers offer teacher training and technical support for those users who will be interfacing with the LMS.

Schools and districts seeking to develop their own digital courses will need to implement their own LMS or learning platform (e.g., Brightspace, Blackboard, Moodle, Canvas, Google Classroom, etc.). When pursuing this option, the development or curation of content will need

to be done by school or district staff, with limited assistance from the LMS or platform provider.

Professional Learning — Instructional Practices

Just as is the case with students, there is a common misconception that once a teacher is skilled in face-to-face instruction, they can easily switch to teaching in a different format (e.g. blended or online learning). As each format has its own unique pedagogies and purposes, switching to a new manner of instruction is not something school leaders can expect their staff or students to embrace overnight with effective results.

For instructional staff to effectively transition to remote teaching, they require training and professional development in a few key areas:

Training on How to Use the Learning Management System

Regardless of whether schools use a curriculum provider or design their own digital courses, instructional staff will need training on how to use the adopted learning management system (LMS). Ideally, school leaders planning this professional development should allow for up to two months of lead time for the scheduling and execution of training that extends over time. However, in urgent situations when the shift to remote learning must be done rapidly, such training and the related timeline may need to be compressed in a way that allows instructional staff to begin working in the new environment while receiving the training simultaneously.

For schools who use a curriculum provider, we recommend contacting your curriculum provider to see if they can schedule a training, which is typically included as part of the course content purchasing agreement.

For districts who develop their own digital content, instructional staff will need specific training on how to use the LMS or learning platform adopted by the school or district. This training can typically be provided by the LMS or platform provider or other qualified trainers, and schools and districts should reach out to the provider for details on training options and fees. Training for all instructional staff involved in the development of their own digital content should also include aspects of web accessibility and compliance with federal disability laws.

Professional Development on Effective Online Instruction

Although some educators believe that anyone can teach online or that it's easy, it takes a different skill set and practice to be a proficient online instructor. If your teachers will be providing remote instruction to students, they will also require professional development on best practices for online teaching. Once again, it is recommended that two to three months of lead time is planned for the scheduling and execution of the professional learning sessions.

To effectively teach online, instructional staff will need to learn how to manage a digitally-supported course in a way that supports students with diverse learning abilities. They will need

to learn how to build relationships with students in a new way, provide meaningful feedback using digital communication tools, and assess student needs in a teaching environment that lacks traditional social cues, etc. You can learn more about key differences between online and face-to-face instruction in our Teacher Guide to Online Learning.

For schools who use a curriculum provider, your teachers will require training on effectively teaching in a virtual environment, which is sometimes available for additional fees through your provider although not all providers will have this option available.

If your curriculum provider's online courses are taught by certified teachers, then your instructional staff may have the greatest impact by serving in a mentor capacity to your students, providing an additional pillar of support to facilitate strong student outcomes. You can learn more about the role of the mentor in the online classroom on our Mentor Resources page.

For districts who develop their own digital content, your teachers will require training on effectively teaching in a virtual environment. Since your staff will be developing or curating digital content on their own, they will typically need to identify and secure this professional development from a third-party source or rely on their own internal expertise to develop the skills necessary for teachers to be successful teaching in this type of learning environment.

Professional Development on Effective Course Design

Designing learning experiences for students in a virtual learning environment is very different from designing experiences in a face-to-face classroom. Student success in remote learning environments is greatly affected by the manner in which the components of the digital course are structured. If your staff will be designing their own digital course content, they will need professional development in this area to create effective online learning experiences for students.

For schools who use a curriculum provider, the design of the course content is typically already completed in a way that reflects effective instructional design, and professional development on effective course design may not be needed.

For districts who develop their own digital content, instructional staff will require professional development on the effective design of virtual courses. We recommend providing expert professional development to help instructional staff navigate the new challenges they will experience in designing an effective virtual learning environment. The time required to develop the instructional design skills of teachers and staff varies; however, schools and districts must assume that this will be an ongoing process that spans several months.

While it is possible to rapidly provide initial training in the development of virtual courses, the practice of ongoing course development and refinement will be necessary. School leaders should plan for providing professional learning opportunities related to instructional design for teachers and instructional staff throughout their first year of virtual teaching.

Additional Resources

The following resources produced by *Michigan Virtual* will be helpful to school leaders seeking to use digital content and online learning methodologies to support their remote learning efforts:

- **Teacher Guide to Online Learning**
- **Mentor Guide to Online Learning**
- **Introduction to Online Course Facilitation: Practical Knowledge (online course)**

Parent & Family Support

During extended school closures, it is likely that students will need additional support from parents, guardians, or other family members as they continue with their school work. These adult figures in the home environment play a critical role in helping students stay motivated and access the resources they need to be successful.

Technology Needs

In a remote learning environment, the use of technology is essential, and the adults in a student's home can play a significant role to ensure that technology is available and used appropriately. Often, the school or district will provide a computing device for students; however, providing internet access and monitoring the safe use of technology typically becomes the responsibility of the parent or guardian.

School leaders should provide guidance for the adults at home related to supporting student technology needs. In addition, clear direction should be provided to the home adults by the instructional staff regarding the channels of communication that should be used to seek additional help and support for students learning remotely.

Distraction-Free Learning Environments

The physical home learning environment in which the student is likely to work during extended school closures will need to be a place that is conducive to learning. School leaders and instructional staff should provide guidelines for parents and guardians that help them to create and maintain a distraction-free learning environment and related regular routines that nurture student success.

Special Education & Disability Accommodations

School leaders must also be aware that not all students may be well-adapted to learning in a remote learning environment. Additional supports should be provided to parents aimed at helping them work with their children to adapt to this new learning format. School leaders and instructional staff must provide special education and disability accommodations for students

who need them. Direct and proactive conversations with parents should be initiated by school leaders prior to shifting to a remote learning environment.

Social & Emotional Support

Since schools often serve as a channel for some students and families to access social services, school leaders should develop a plan to provide remote access to specialized school personnel such as guidance counselors and school psychologists. Access to these individuals will allow families to obtain guidance to mental health and other related services. In addition, these staff members could also shift their regular responsibilities to conduct regular "wellness checks" with students in partnership with teachers. This type of proactive activity, in collaboration with teacher efforts, can help ensure that students are well-supported both academically and emotionally while working in a remote learning environment.

Additional Resources

The following resources produced by *Michigan Virtual* will be helpful to school leaders seeking to use digital content and online learning methodologies to support their remote learning efforts:

- **Parent Guide to Online Learning**
- **Student Guide to Online Learning**

Communication

When shifting to a school- or district-wide remote learning model, the ways in which school leaders and instructional staff communicate with students and parents also shifts. Extended school closures often result in limited physical access to the school and its personnel, so the use of electronic communications between stakeholders typically intensifies. School leaders must attend to the specific ways in which they will communicate with internal stakeholders (e.g., students, parents, and staff) as well as external stakeholders (e.g., citizens, businesses, and the local community).

Internal Stakeholders

Communication with internal stakeholders can most likely be maintained through established email communications and messaging through data systems such as the school or district's student information system, learning management system, or a dedicated emergency calling system. In a time of extended school closures, school leaders will need to revisit the frequency and content of their existing communications and modify it appropriately to bridge the gap between what has been done traditionally and what needs to be done going forward now that school operations have shifted to a virtual environment.

External Stakeholders

Messaging to external stakeholders is also likely to change as organizations and individuals throughout the greater school community will be impacted by students working remotely either at home or in alternative learning spaces within the community. Keeping the school community apprised of developments relating to the school closure on a regular basis will help to maintain confidence in the school or district and has the potential to inspire a sense of comfort or stability that may very well be needed within the community. Of course, specific attention to the content, mode, frequency, and consistency of the messaging will need to be carefully determined by school leaders. While issuing formal press releases and using media outlets may yield some effective results in communicating information, many of these stakeholders will continue to rely on local school and district websites for critical information and announcements.

Authoritative Information Sources

In general, school leaders are advised to leverage existing authoritative sources of information during times of crisis that result in extended school closures. This can be accomplished by providing direct links or feeds to sources such as state or governmental departments (e.g., U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), etc.). Channeling information directly from these sources will result in the most accurate and timely way of disseminating key information.

School Operations

During extended school closures, many facets of standard school operations will change. Schools and districts should consider the following aspects of school operations to ensure the safety of students, staff, and parents:

Facility Maintenance

The maintenance of facilities and compliance with state and federal regulations require administrators to keep the operations of a school running, even during extended school closures. Depending on the circumstances of the school closure, the physical school building may still be available to stakeholders on a limited basis. If this is the case, school leaders will need to implement appropriate controls as recommended by authoritative agencies such as the CDC, HHS, or other state and federal agencies to ensure the safest and healthiest possible work environment. This may include limiting access to school facilities, adding staff to monitor the facility entrance(s) and log visitors, and conducting screening as may be necessary to ensure compliance with government directives. In addition, the school should advertise its hours of access and rules regarding limitations on access via its website.

To effectively enable extended periods of remote teaching and learning during school closures, school leaders may need to modify employee schedules to adapt to employees' personal and family needs, including a blend of onsite and work from home as may be appropriate. As previously mentioned, information technology support services should also be available to staff and students. School health services provided by the school nurse may also need to be made available for students and families at a consultative level. Provisions for essential administrative, clerical, and custodial personnel to continue to work onsite in the physical buildings should also be made in the event that such a presence is needed to keep school operations functioning.

Community Meal Programs

Since many families in schools and districts rely on the free and reduced meal program, school leaders must have a plan in place to continue providing such services to these families. Schools may consider having food service employees continue to report to work as needed and as long as it is safe to do so. The work assignments of these individuals could be shifted to execute a plan to coordinate pick-up and/or delivery of meals for qualifying students.

Special Education & Accommodations

Special education and other related services will also need to continue through the period of extended school closures. It is recommended that special education personnel within a school or district review all student IEPs and 504 Plans to evaluate the need for modifications, intervention, and/or future compensatory services. School leaders should implement the necessary technology tools and procedures so student case managers can conduct instruction and assessment in the same manner as other certified teaching staff, with the same minimum assessment expectations.

Community Partnerships

Supporting students and families during extended school closures can be greatly enhanced if school leaders collaborate with community partners such as community centers, public libraries, churches, civic organizations, and local businesses. Such partnerships can alleviate technology access challenges that some families may face (e.g., access to computing devices, Internet access, etc.).

Engaging Students With Limited Access

The use of computing devices and internet-based resources (e.g., websites, digital curriculum, email, video conferencing, etc.) is certainly the most efficient way for students, teachers, and parents to interact frequently and effectively throughout the remote learning process. However, we need to recognize not all students and families will have access to these devices or to the internet. Therefore, school leaders will need to consider alternatives to providing an effective learning experience for students in such scenarios.

Printed Materials

The most significant differences in providing remote education for students without access to technology or the internet include the *format* of learning materials and the *processes* related to exchanging materials and information between students, teachers, and parents. School leaders should anticipate that the primary source of content provided to students without internet access will be printed materials. This content, including assignments and assessments, will need to be developed or curated by instructional staff members and then delivered to students in the safest and most practical way. Once students have engaged with the content and completed assessments, their completed work will need to be returned to the teachers for grading and feedback.

Non-Internet-Based Digital Options

It is also possible for some forms of digital content and assessments to be used even without access to the internet if the school or district is able to provide a computing device. Digital content can be provided on USB drives or other media such as DVDs. While this may help reduce the need for some printed material, the processes of delivering this content to students will most likely be similar. The exchange of both printed and digital materials to and from students will most likely require advanced planning as the delivery process will require additional time to complete.

Accommodations

School leaders will also need to consider how accommodations related to IEPs and 504 Plans will be provided to students. In an online learning environment, some of these services may be provided through online tools such as email, chat rooms, and video conferencing. Since these tools are internet-based, however, providing such services to students without internet access will require a different approach. Supporting students through telephone conversations and limited face-to-face interactions may be the most practical way to serve students depending on their needs. Teachers and school leaders should maintain a detailed log of what services are being provided to students in need as well as the frequency of these services.

Presence & Community

The final aspect of teaching remote learners who do not have internet access is creating a sense of presence and connectedness. Students who are not able to connect to instructional staff and their peers through video conferencing, email, chatrooms, and discussion boards are at risk of feeling more isolated than their peers who work online. Instructional staff who communicate regularly with students and their families will create opportunities to provide academic support as well as student engagement and accountability. Instructional staff should have a plan developed that includes a regular schedule and method of outreach to students, and they should maintain a communication log that details the content and frequency of such communications.

Conclusion

Without doubt, there are many challenges that come along with the ability of schools to provide remote instruction to all students. There are issues of equity that need addressing, so all students have access to an internet-connected device, particularly in our poor and rural communities. Schools will need to provide teacher training and professional development, prepare students and parents for online learning, and expand schoolwide access to digital tools and learning content. There are many significant steps that will need to be taken before Michigan schools can provide students with equitable and effective learning continuity in such situations.

But the fact of the matter is that emergency situations, such as the COVID-19 outbreak this year, cannot be anticipated, and therefore, we need to do our best to prepare our schools for learning continuity in the event that we face a similar situation in the future. Even in average years, Michigan students lose days or weeks of school to wintery weather conditions. Advances in technology are transforming education and the ability of educators to reach students at any time and in any place. Learning no longer needs to stop when brick-and-mortar school buildings are closed.

As educational leaders, we have a responsibility to work together to prepare our schools, our teachers, our students, and our communities for more flexible models of learning that shift but do not halt in the face of school closures. We're stronger when we work together. By collaborating in creative, strategic, and forward-thinking ways, we can overcome the challenges at hand and create adaptive educational supports and policies conducive to providing learning continuity in emergency situations.

School Closure Learning Continuity Readiness Rubric

Developed by MICHIGAN™ VIRTUAL

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This document best printed on 11x17 paper.

School Readiness	Leadership	Learning Continuity Plan	Digital Infrastructure	Training/ Support	Communications Plan	Curriculum Resources	Technology/ Access	Learning Spaces	Accommodations/ Support
Less Ready	The school leadership has supported limited use of online/blended learning. Online and blended approaches have not been identified as a leading strategy to ensure learning continuity during school closures.	The school has not adopted policies or created a plan to support student learning during school closures.	The school does not have access to an online platform or learning management system (LMS) to support the delivery of online/ blended instruction to students.	Teachers and students have not been trained on how to use an online platform or LMS to support online/blended instructional activities.	The school does not have an internal or external communications plan in place to support awareness about a learning continuity strategy for students during school closures.	Curriculum plans are beginning to incorporate online/ blended learning strategies, but online resources are primarily used to support supplemental instructional activities.	Not all students and teachers have access to a modern computer or tablet device and a reliable connection to the Internet from home.	In general, the experience for students reflect a traditional school calendar based on seat-time requirements, class schedules, and face-to-face instruction.	The school provides accommodations and modifications to support student learning within a school setting, in compliance with IEP and 504 requirements.
↓	The school leadership has promoted the effective use of online/ blended learning to all students, primarily from third-party providers. Planning activities include online/blended strategies to support learning continuity during planned or unexpected school closures.	The school has adopted board-approved policies to support student learning during planned or unexpected school closures, but has not developed or implemented an action plan.	The school has access to an online platform and/or LMS tool to deliver online/blended instruction to students, but use is limited, or self-hosted/cloud-based constraints impact technical scalability to serve all students simultaneously.	Teachers and students have received limited training on how to use an online platform or LMS to support online/blended instructional activities and have some experience using the tool(s).	The school has a basic communications plan in place to support awareness of a learning continuity strategy for students during planned or unexpected school closures.	Curriculum plans incorporate online/ blended learning strategies, but implementation varies by classroom.	Most students and teachers have access to a modern computer or tablet device and a reliable connection to the Internet from home.	The learning environment is beginning to adapt to diverse learning styles and needs by supporting flexible learning schedules and spaces that are not part of traditional classrooms.	In addition to compliance with IEP and 504 requirements, the school provides students with the tools, equipment, and resources needed to effectively support remote learning activities.
More Ready	There is a sustainable vision and practice that all educators use online/blended learning tools and resources to personalize learning for students. The school leadership considers online/blended learning to be a key strategy to ensure learning continuity during planned or unexpected school closures.	The school has adopted board-approved policies based on resilience principles that support student learning during planned or unexpected school closures. An action plan has been developed that includes a budget, community outreach, notification strategies, as well as attendance-taking protocols.	The school has access to and experience using robust/scalable online platform(s) or LMS tools to deliver online/ blended instruction to students. In addition, the school has the capability to conduct online meetings with staff, parents and students.	Teachers, students, and parents have received extensive training on how to use an online platform or LMS to support online/blended instructional activities and have access to helpdesk services.	The school has a robust multi-media communications plan in place to support awareness of a learning continuity strategy for students during planned or unexpected school closures. The plan was developed with significant input from teachers, staff, students, parents and community members.	Learner appropriate and accessible online content and resources are used to create personalized learning plans to integrate face-to-face and online environments that enable authentic learning opportunities in and out of the classroom.	The school has taken steps to ensure all students and teachers have access to a modern computer or tablet device and a reliable connection to the Internet from home. Teachers also have access to mobile phones and related service.	The school provides students and teachers with secure, anywhere, anytime, technology-enabled access to collaborative learning spaces and resources that are not bound by physical time and space limitations.	In addition to compliance with IEP and 504 requirements, the school provides students with the tools, equipment and resources needed to effectively support remote learning activities, as well as establishes network connections with the caseload service provider to ensure continuity of human support services.

Teaching Continuity Readiness Rubric

Developed by MICHIGAN™ VIRTUAL

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This document is best printed on 11x17 paper.

Teacher Readiness	Communications	Content Delivery	Curricular Material	Technology Skills	Learning Communities	Adaptability	Assessments	Relationships
Less Ready	In general, I do not use digital communication tools, including video conferencing services to facilitate class discussion forums.	I use instructional strategies that are dependent on traditional face-to-face delivery models in a classroom setting during normal school hours.	I use a physical textbook as the primary curricular resource for students and supplement it with other print material.	I have basic computing skills and can make online purchases, conduct Internet searches, access social media sites, use presentation software, a word processor, and a spreadsheet tool.	I have a basic understanding of how to use online tools and resources to create learning communities.	In general, I use a fixed schedule with required hours spent on topics based on a traditional school calendar using a synchronous delivery model.	In general, I use paper and pencil assessments and rely heavily on physical cues or observations to access student understanding.	I rely almost exclusively on face-to-face interactions to build relationships with students, parents, and colleagues.
↓	I use digital communication tools to facilitate individual, small group, or class discussion forums.	I have experimented using technology to support instructional strategies that differentiate learning for students.	I use a physical and/or online textbook and I am beginning to use online content, tools, and resources to expand curricular options for students.	I have moderate computing skills and I am able to perform more complex tasks, such as uploading files, installing software, managing student information system (SIS) data, and use cloud-based tools such as the G-Suite or Office 365.	I am beginning to use online tools and resources to create class learning communities that are designed to exchange information and collaborate.	I am beginning to use real-time and on-demand delivery models to adapt to the diverse learning styles and needs of students.	I make use of third-party formative computer-based and/or online assessments and use the results to adjust teaching strategies.	I have begun to augment face-to-face interactions with one-to-one digital communications as a strategy to strengthen relationships with students, parents, and colleagues.
More Ready	I demonstrate advanced facilitation skills using email, text messaging, social media platforms, and other digital communication tools, including audio and/or video conferencing services to facilitate real-time and on-demand discussion forums that capture the voice of students.	I use a variety of technology to support instructional strategies that differentiate learning for students that are not dependent on face-to-face delivery models during normal school hours.	I have extensive experience using a mix of offline and online content, learning materials, and resources to expand curricular options for students that are designed to increase engagement and personalize learning.	I have advanced computing skills and have experience integrating a variety of productivity, data, and educational software apps, including online platforms such as a learning management system (LMS).	I create a range of dynamic, online and blended learning communities to enable students and teachers to exchange information, conduct research, collaborate, investigate, and co-create within local and global communities.	I use real-time and on-demand delivery models to adapt to the diverse learning styles and needs of students and support flexible pacing, as well as learning spaces beyond the classroom.	In addition to using third-party online assessments, I have experience using software apps and online tools to create customized assessments. I use assessment data to adjust in-person and online instructional strategies.	I recognize the value of personalized one-to-one and group digital communications as an effective strategy to build relationships and share feedback. I use a mix of face-to-face and digital communications with students, (age-appropriate) as well as with parents and colleagues.

Teaching Continuity Readiness Checklist

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Effective remote instruction requires different skill sets, tools, and practices than teachers may be accustomed to using in the face-to-face classroom. That being said, there are many simple adjustments teachers can make for quick adaptation to remote teaching. The following checklist is designed to help teachers self-assess their readiness for providing teaching continuity during extended school closures. Tool and resource recommendations are included beneath each category.

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Communications

- ☐ I use a digital tool to communicate with parents.
- ☐ I use a digital tool to communicate with students.
- ☐ I use a digital tool that allows for video conferencing to facilitate real-time discussions.

Missed a box? Consider:

- **Zoom (Grades 6-12)** Video-conferencing app that allows teachers to meet with up to 100 participants for a 40 minute session. Share the link and students can connect and interact via chat or audio.

- **Google Meet (Grades 6-12)** Google's video-conferencing app that enables teachers to schedule a meeting with up to 30 users. Share the link or code and connect with students.

- **Remind (Parent & Student Communication)** A two-way messaging tool that increases communication between school, home, and everywhere in between. If your community can text, they can use Remind.

Content Delivery

☐ I use a tech tool to deliver some of my content.

☐ I use a tech tool to differentiate some of my content.

☐ I have content that can be delivered without face-to-face instruction.

☐ My content is accessible at any time, any place.

Missed a box? Consider:

- **Google Classroom (Grades K-12)** Platform that integrates G Suite for Education, including Docs, Slides, Forms, and Sheets and many other apps. A great tool for sharing and collaboration.

- **SeeSaw (Grades K-5)** Digital portfolio and communication tool. Allows teachers to assign activities and students to submit work in various formats (e.g., text, audio, picture, video, drawing).

- **Moodle (Grades 7-12)** Open-source learning platform. Accessible via smartphones.

- **Google Slides (Grades K-12)** Use the simplicity of slides to help organize your content and communication. See example here.

Curriculum Material

☐ I have access to digital content.

☐ I use digital content to supplement and/or drive instruction.

☐ I use digital content to help differentiate and/or personalize learning.

Missed a box? Consider:

- *Michigan Virtual* **Free Course Content* (Grades 6-12)** Free access to the content of over 70 *Michigan Virtual* courses available during school closures.

- **Khan Academy (Grades K-12)** Standards-aligned math videos with practice problems (ELA content is in beta).

- **Scholastic Learn At Home (Grades PreK-6+)** Day-by-day, integrated projects that stem from a text or video.

- **Prodigy (Grades 1 - 8)** Self-paced math practice with motivational games to further learning.

- **MysteryDoug (Grades K-5)** Science YouTube video lessons.

- **Heggerty At Home (Grades PreK - K)** Phonemic awareness videos and curriculum.

- **NYT Writing Prompts (Grades 9 - 12)** Writing prompts from the *New York Times*.

- **NewsELA (Grades 1-12)** Grade-level fiction and informational texts with comprehension questions and vocabulary words.

- **Epic Books (Grades PreK - 6)** Digital library of illustrated and chapter books.

- **#GoOpen Resources (Grades PreK-12)** Digital lesson plans, curriculum, and interactive resources.

Technology Skills

☐ I use a digital learning platform (e.g., Google Classroom, Seesaw, Edmodo, etc.) to assign content and/or assignments.

☐ I can create my own digital assignments for my students.

☐ My students can create their own digital content.

Missed a box? Consider:

- **Thinglink (Grades 4-12)** Platform to easily augment images, videos, and virtual tours with additional information for accessible, visual experiences.

- **H5P (Grades K-12)** Allows you to create rich, interactive content to use in your learning platform.

- **Nearpod (Grades K-12)** Interactive presentation and assessment tool. Create multimedia presentations or find one shared in the Nearpod library.

- **Anchor (Grades 5-12)** Record, produce, and share original podcasts. **Have Chromebooks?** Check out **Spreaker**, another great podcast creation tool.

Digital Relationships

- ☐ I use a variety of methods for my students to interact, including face-to-face and digital discussions.

- ☐ My students know how to successfully participate in a digital community, including following netiquette, providing respectful feedback, and agreeing/disagreeing.

- ☐ I discuss both academic and non-academic content with students digitally.

- ☐ I am able to build digital relationships with students, parents, and colleagues.

Missed a box? Consider:

- **Flipgrid (Grades 3-12)** Social learning platform where teachers can ask questions and students can respond via video.

- **Padlet (Grades 3- 12)** Digital bulletin board to share information, gather feedback, and provide feedback.

- **Parlay (Grades 7-12)** Platform to host and monitor digital Socratic discussions.

Adaptability

- ☐ My students can move through lessons and assignments at their own pace.

- ☐ My students can move through lessons and assignments in any space and any place.

Assessments

☐ I use digital assessments.

☐ I create digital assessments to inform my teaching.

Missed a box? Consider:

- **Google Forms (Grades 3-12)** Use pre-made templates to create quizzes, exit tickets, worksheets, and surveys to collect information from your students.

- **Explain Everything (Grades 5-12)** A screencasting and interactive whiteboard tool that allows teachers and students to demonstrate skills and knowledge.

- **GoFormative (Grades 4-12)** A response and assessment tool where students can record audio, draw/upload images, enter numbers, or use multiple choice.

- **Quizizz (Grades 3-12)** Create or edit digital assessments that allow students to move through at their own pace.