

# Status of School Reopening and Remote Education in Fall 2020

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LFC POLICY SPOTLIGHT



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## Acknowledgements

- Legislative Education Study Committee
- Public Education Department
- New Mexico Coalition of Education Leaders
- Teach Plus New Mexico
- New Mexico Parent Teacher Association
- 3,191 teachers who responded to the LFC teacher survey
- Teachers, Staff, and Parents who participated in group forums and interviews

## Overview: Lessons Learned

1. Covid-19 Will Likely Compound New Mexico's Existing Learning Gaps
2. Remote Instruction Has Improved in the Fall Compared to the Spring, But is Still an Inadequate Substitution for In-Person Learning
3. New Mexico's Re-Entry Criteria and District-Level Decisions Will Keep Most Students in Remote Instruction Through at Least the Fall



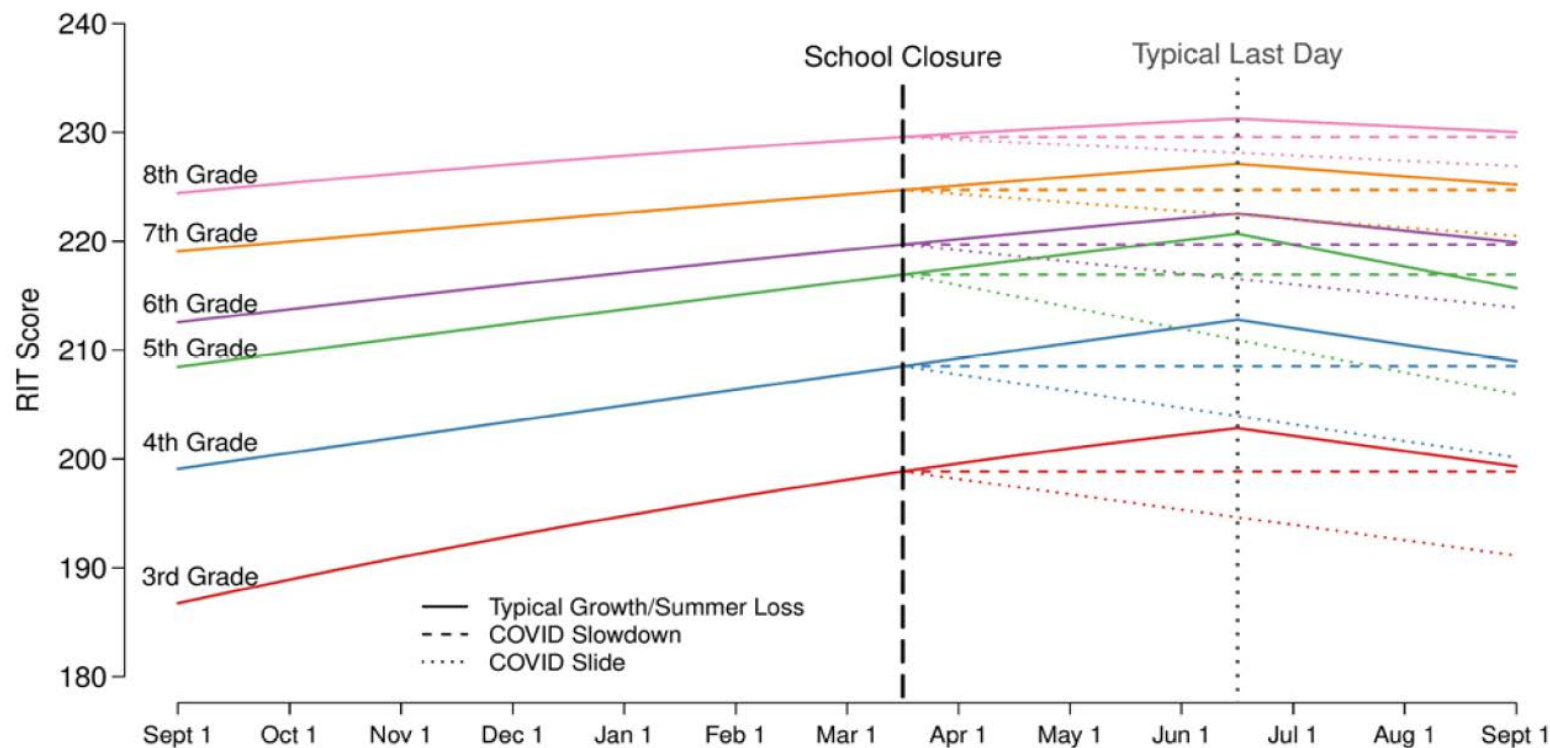
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# Finding #1

1. Covid-19 Will Likely Compound New Mexico's Existing Learning Gaps
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New Mexico students projected to lose 4 months to more than a year of learning due to in-person school closures in the spring.

Figure 1. Mathematics forecast



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## NM School Districts Use of Assessments for Fall 2020

Assessment	Percent
Istation	46.3%
Iready	8.5%
SAT	7.3%
Edgenuity	7.3%
Cognia	6.1%
Illuminate	6.1%
Maps	6.1%
Canvas	6.1%
NWEA	4.9%
ISIP	3.7%
Imagine	3.7%
Lexia	3.7%
ACT	3.7%
Edulastic	3.7%
CBMs	3.7%
IXL	3.7%
Achieve	2.4%
EOCs	2.4%
RTI	2.4%
MLSS	2.4%
Not listed	26.8%

Note: Percentages based on 81 school district assurance documents reviewed.  
Source: New Mexico school district fall 2020 assurance documents

High-quality assessments are needed to quantify potential learning loss statewide and identify potential disparities



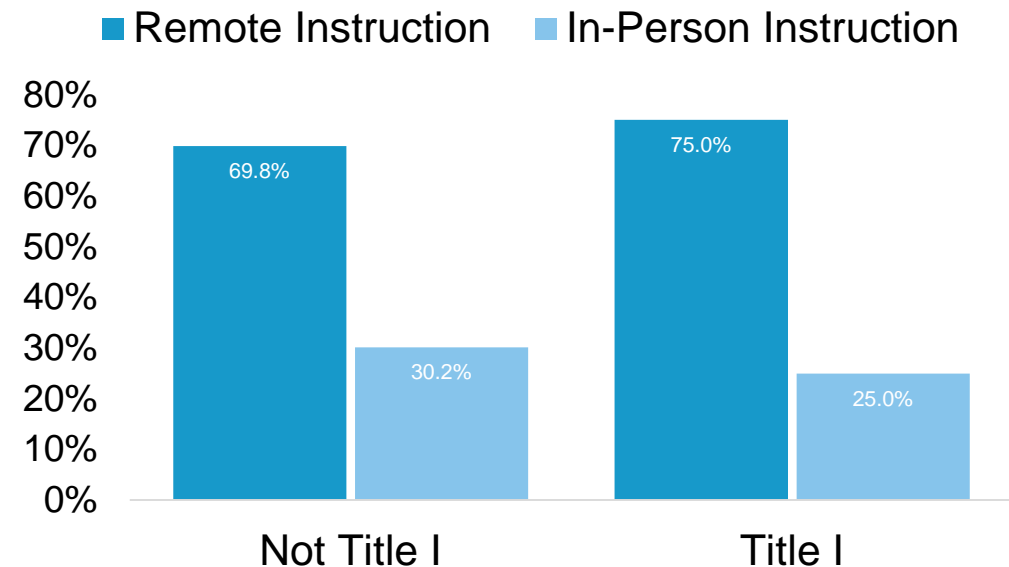
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- PED made Fall 2020 assessments optional.
- Many districts did opt to assess students, but results are unreliable and likely invalid due to low completion rates and testing irregularities.
- Districts vary widely in the types of assessments utilized.
  - 85 percent of districts reported that they had a plan to identify which students might be behind.
  - 88 percent of districts had a plan to assess students using formative or short-cycle assessments.

# Covid-19 related learning loss could compound existing achievement gaps

- Even before the pandemic, New Mexico students entered kindergarten behind and needed extra learning time.
- Students at Title I schools are more likely to be receiving remote instruction than students at non-Title I schools.
- Research indicates that students in online only courses tend to perform worse than students in in-person-only courses.

## Children at Title I Schools Are Significantly Less Likely to Be Receiving In-Person Instruction



Source: LFC Fall Teacher Survey



# Percent Change in Student Math Progress\*

In New Mexico, as of October 25 2020, students from high income ZIP codes decreased



Remote learning is likely to widen socioeconomic achievement gaps

Jan 20  
First U.S. COVID-19 Case

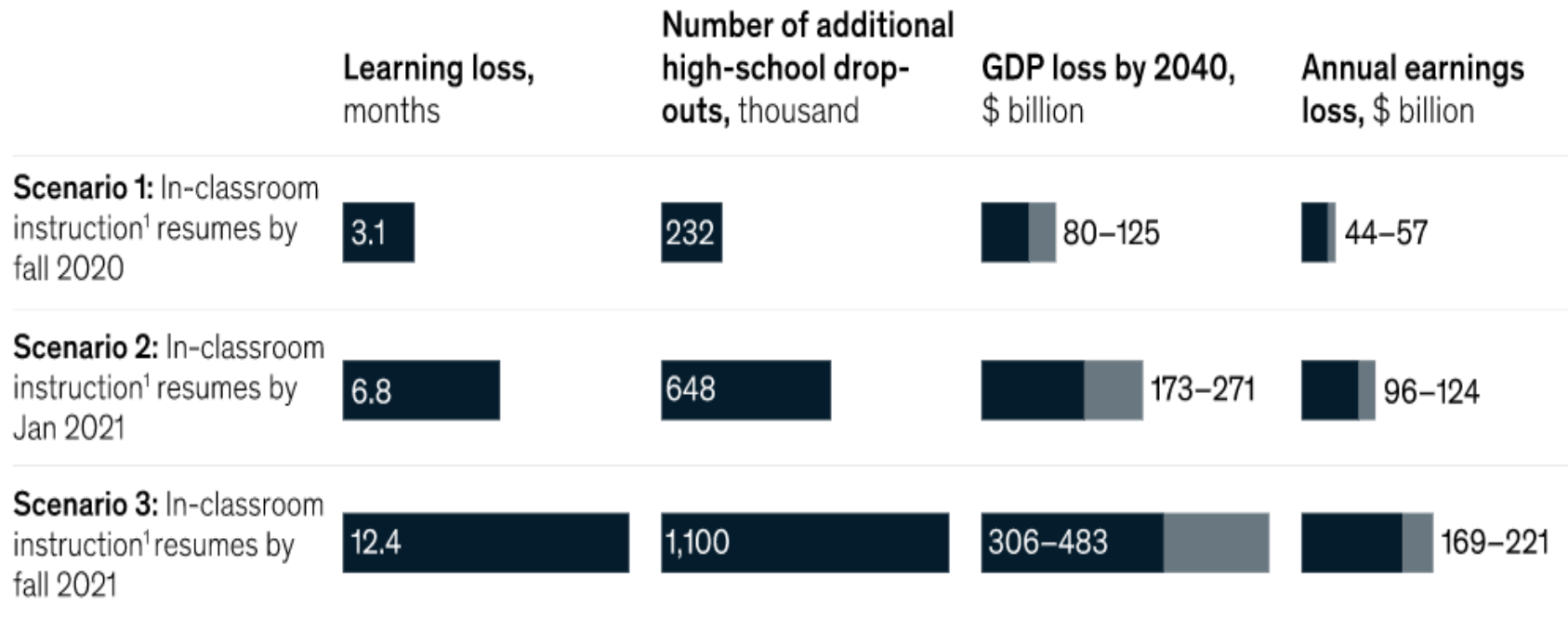
Mar 16  
NM Public Schools  
Close

May 03  
School summer  
closures begin

# School closures could increase high school dropout rates by up to 9 percent



Figure XX. McKinsey & Company estimates of educational losses caused by COVID-19 that could hurt long-term GDP growth

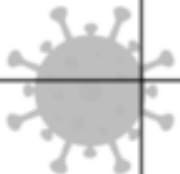


<sup>1</sup>Or instruction as effective as in-classroom instruction.

Source: Dorn, E., Hancock, B., Sarakatsannis, J., & Viruleg, E. (2020, June). COVID-19 and student learning in the United States: The hurt could last a lifetime. McKinsey & Company. Available: <https://www.mckinsey.com/~/media/McKinsey/Industries/Public%20and%20Social%20Sector/Our%20Insights/COVID-19%20and%20student%20learning%20in%20the%20United%20States%20The%20hurt%20could%20last%20a%20lifetime/COVID-19-and-student-learning-in-the-United-States-FINAL.pdf>



**Scenario for Students at Grade Level**

	Grade												
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Days of Covid-19 related learning loss		-153	-128	-103	-78	-53	-43	-33	-23	-13	-3	7	17
Potential extra days added to the school year			25	25	25	25	10	10	10	10	10	10	10

To mitigate lost learning time, the Legislature could consider a universal extension of the school calendar for FY22 at an incremental cost of \$138 million.

FY21 unit cost	\$4,531.74
K-5 multiplier	0.3
ELTP multiplier	0.11
K-5 students	146,078
6-12 students	175,333
K-5 plus units	43,823
ELTP units*	20,091
FY22 K-5 Plus cost for K-5	\$198,596,255
FY22 ELTP cost for 6-12	\$91,048,140
Total Cost FY22	\$289,644,395
Est. Recurring Appropriation	\$151,290,000
<b>Incremental Cost</b>	<b>\$138,354,395</b>

\*Note: ELTP units include continued funding for districts that implemented K-5 Plus and ELTP for elementary students in FY21

Source: Staff analysis of LFC files



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# Extended learning time value

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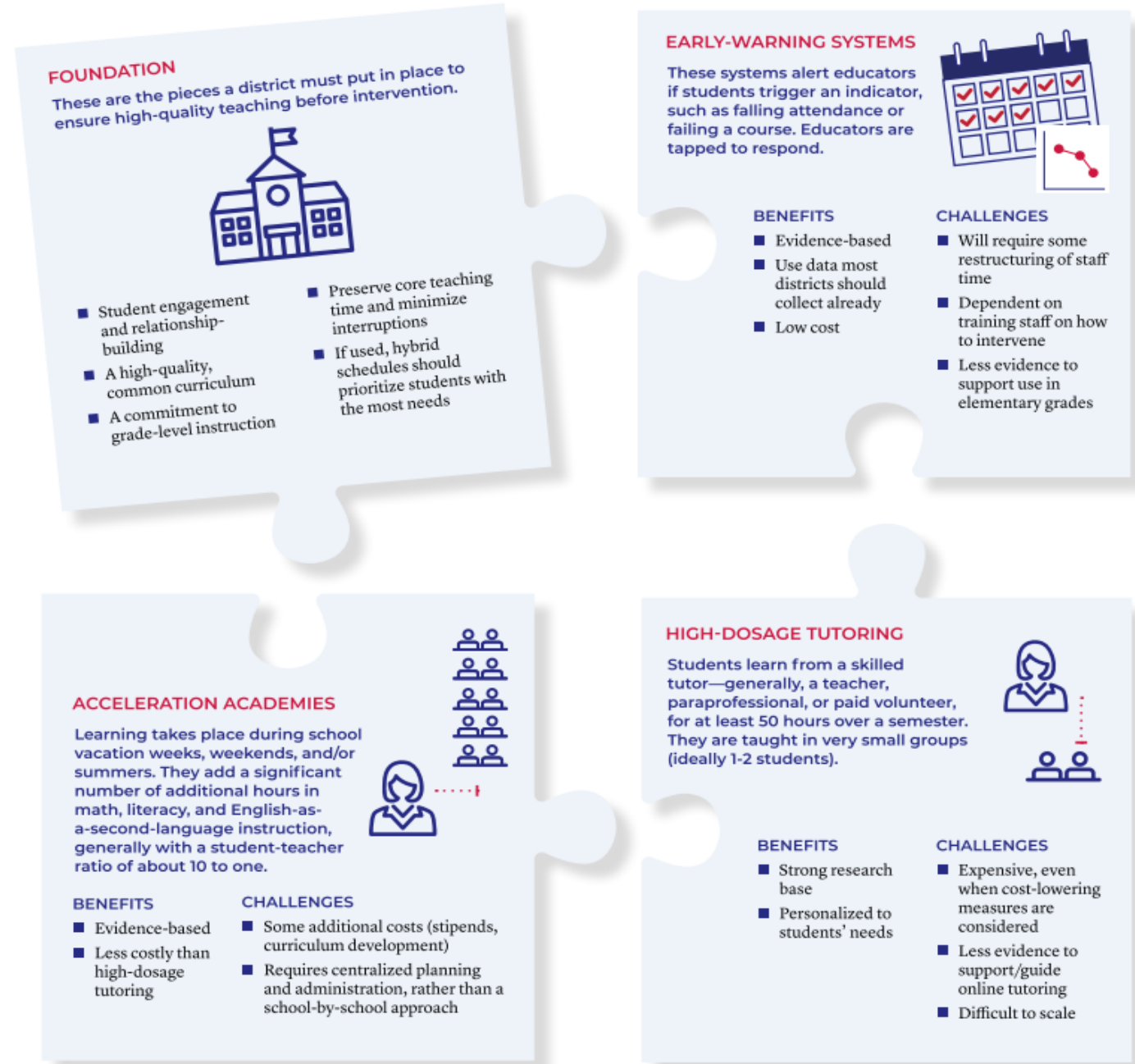
- Implemented as a voluntary program (ELTP and K-5 Plus)
- LFC 2018 Program Evaluation and 2019 LFC Results First Report Found
  - Amount of instructional days has declined over the last 10 years
  - NM extended learning time programs (e.g. K-3 Plus) have been scientifically proven to boost student achievement
  - First Judicial District Court highlighted extended learning time as a potential intervention
  - Extended learning time provides opportunities for more and better learning if used well and has been proven to help mitigate learning losses caused by lack of school (e.g. summer slide).
  - Extended learning also forms a core component of the community school model

LFC 2018 Report: [https://www.nmlegis.gov/Entity/LFC/Documents/Program\\_Evaluation\\_Reports/Instructional%20Time%20and%20Extended%20Learning%20Opportunities%20in%20Public%20Schools.pdf](https://www.nmlegis.gov/Entity/LFC/Documents/Program_Evaluation_Reports/Instructional%20Time%20and%20Extended%20Learning%20Opportunities%20in%20Public%20Schools.pdf)

LFC 2019 Report: [https://www.nmlegis.gov/Entity/LFC/Documents/Results\\_First/Results%20First%20Costs%20and%20Benefits%20of%20Selected%20Evidence-based%20Interventions%20in%20Public%20Education.pdf](https://www.nmlegis.gov/Entity/LFC/Documents/Results_First/Results%20First%20Costs%20and%20Benefits%20of%20Selected%20Evidence-based%20Interventions%20in%20Public%20Education.pdf)

# Evidence-Based Strategies for Making Up Lost Learning

- Early-Warning Systems
- Tutoring
- Acceleration Academies



## Finding #2

1. Covid-19 Will Likely Compound New Mexico's Existing Learning Gaps
2. **Remote Instruction Has Improved in the Fall Compared to the Spring, But is Still an Inadequate Substitution for In-Person Learning**
3. New Mexico's Re-Entry Criteria and District-Level Decisions Will Keep Most Students in Remote Instruction Through at Least the Fall

## Distance Learning has Improved in the Fall Compared to the Spring

- Accountability measures restored
  - Attendance
  - Grading
  - Instructional Hours
- Training and preparation for remote instruction
- Adjusted curriculums for accelerated learning
- Remote instruction remains an inadequate substitute for in-person learning

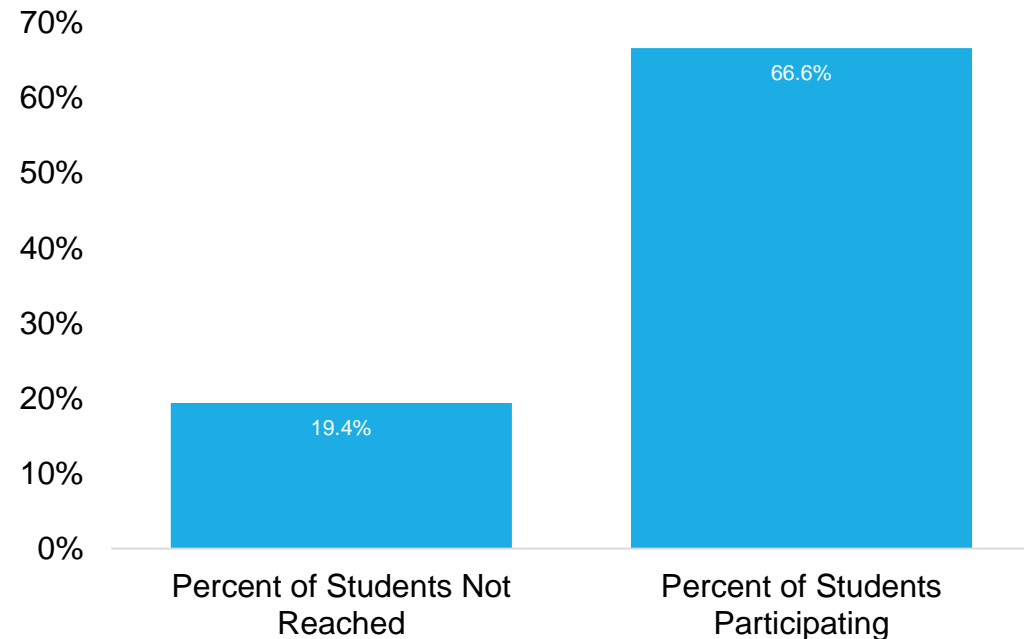


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# Student Engagement Remains an Issue in Remote Learning Environments

- Thirty-six percent of high school athletes are failing one or more class.
- Teachers report not being able to reach 1 in 5 students
- Teachers report that 1 in 3 students are not participating
- ENGAGE NM is a \$3.4 million program that is providing academic coaching to 3,500 families.

**Student Engagement During School Closures in Fall 2020**

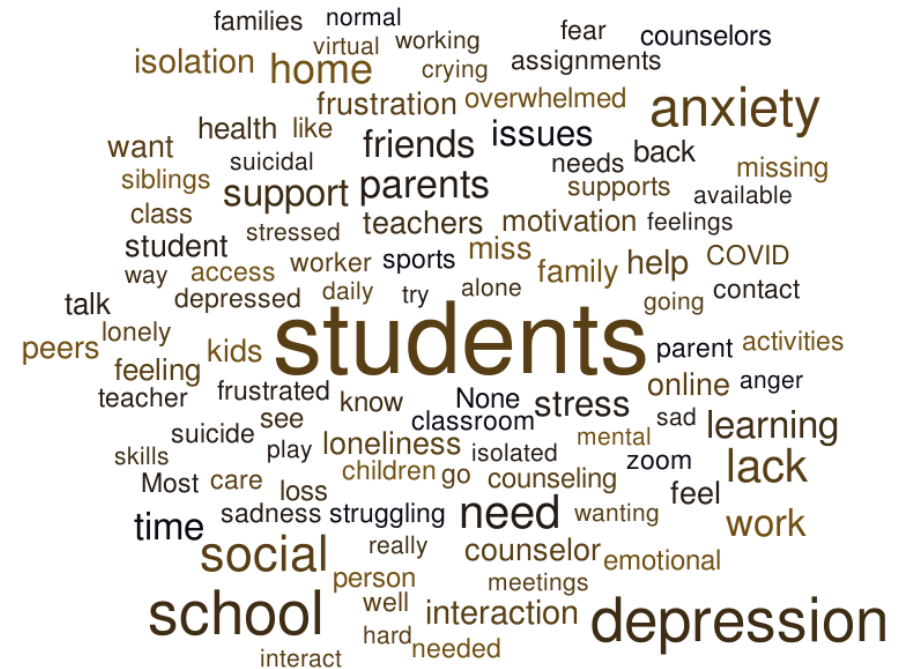


Source: LFC Fall Teacher Survey

# Students social-emotional wellbeing is a serious concern during school closures

- Student deaths by suicide and attempted suicide appears to be increasing during in-person school closures
- PED required districts to include in their re-entry plans details on how they would support students' health and well-being.
- Teachers report that 36 percent of their students are experiencing social-emotional issues or require social-emotional health supports due to school closures and the pandemic

## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL ISSUES REPORTED BY NEW MEXICO TEACHERS IN FALL 2020

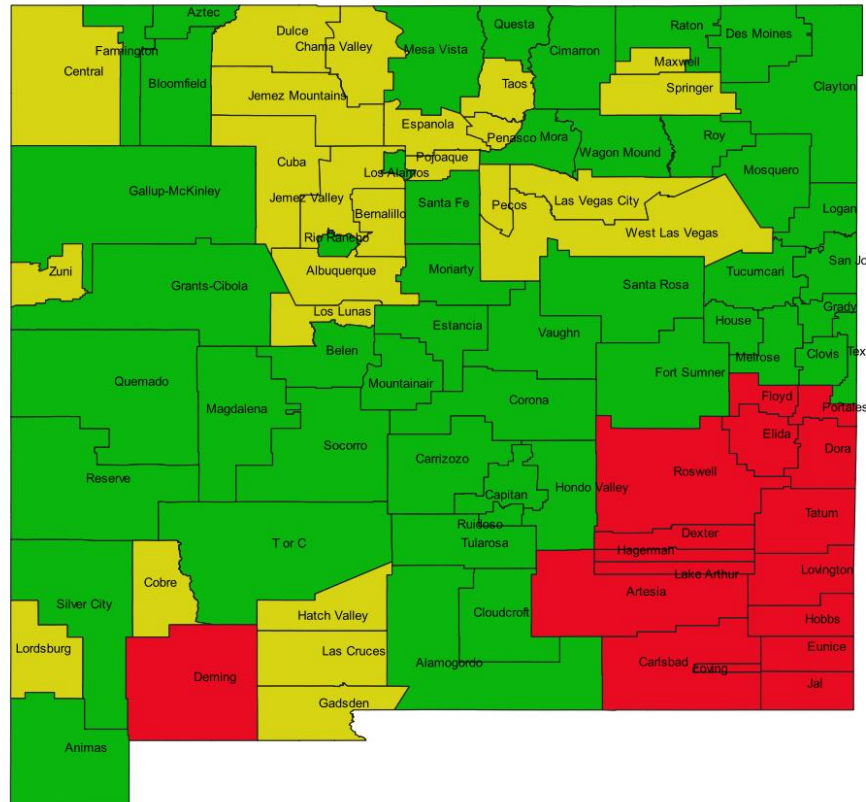


# Finding #3

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## New Mexico's Reentry Criteria and District-Level Decisions Will Keep Most Students in Remote Instruction Through At Least the Fall Semester

Figure 23. School Reopening of New Mexico School Districts as of October



■ Districts that reopened to hybrid instruction in September or October  
■ Districts that were eligible to reopen but didn't by the end of October  
■ Districts not yet eligible to reopen



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Somewhere under a third of K-5 students in public schools are attending any in-person classes

### State Reopening Criteria

- New daily Covid-19 cases under 8 per 100,000 county residents
- Test positivity rate below 5%
- Reentry plan approved by the Public Education Department
- Agree to implement certain health and safety protocols

**46,700:** Number of elementary students in districts that did reopen (34%)

**???:** Number actually receiving in-person instruction

**68,300:** Number of elementary students in districts that were eligible to open but didn't (50%)

**22,600:** Number of elementary students in ineligible districts (16%)



New Mexico is one of only seven states subject to a governor’s order keeping schools partially closed.

- Most states have largely delegated decision making to districts.
- New Mexico lacks two key things present in the plans of other “red” states on the map:
  - Criteria for at least hybrid return for middle and high school
  - Criteria for full return of elementary

Figure 24. State School Reopening Orders as of Oct. 22, 2020



The late rollout of reentry criteria delayed reopening in some areas and contributed to some decisions to remain remote.

- Early guidance in the summer emphasized starting the year in a hybrid model.
- In July, governor announced that in-person learning would be postponed until September 8.
- On September 3, districts received the complete list of reopening requirements. These included changes to health and safety protocols that delayed some hybrid openings.

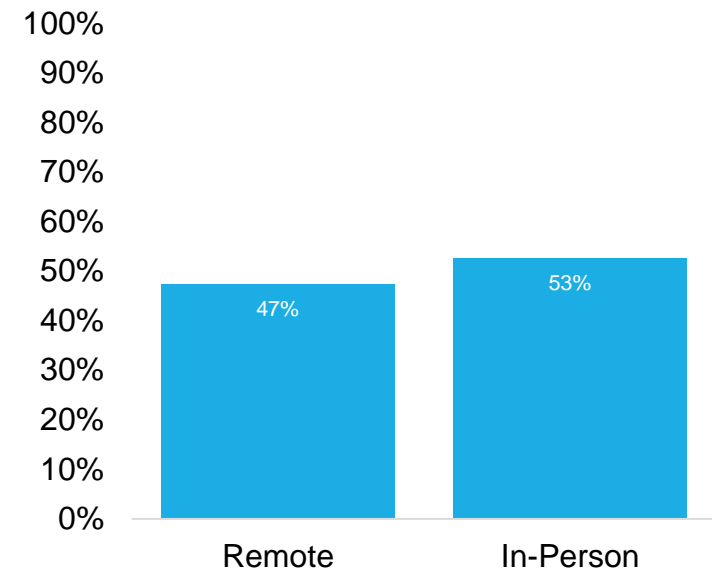
### TIMELINE OF GUIDANCE

June 29	PED Releases Reentry Guidance and template for Reentry Assurance Documents.
July 15	Districts' Reentry Assurance Documents due to PED.
July 24	The governor postponed in-person learning from August 3 to after September 8.
August 3	Schools could begin to open under a remote model of instruction.
August 27	The governor announces county gating criteria for schools to reopen under a hybrid model of instruction for kindergarten to fifth grade.
September 3	PED announces that school districts must meet county gating criteria and have approved assurance documents; issues guidance to districts to assess HVAC configurations to be completed September 4; releases COVID-19 Response Toolkit.
September 8	Schools could open to in-person instruction under a hybrid model for PreK – fifth grade.

# Some districts aren't taking advantage of allowances for at-risk students.

- While schools are closed to in-person learning, students with disabilities are at higher risk of:
  - Falling behind academically,
  - Missing developmental milestones,
  - Experiencing social and behavioral regressions
- School districts in the state are allowed to offer in-person services to special education students within a 5:1 student-teacher ratio.
- 47% of special education teachers reported that they were continuing to teach remotely.

**Chart 20. Percent of SPED Teachers Reporting Teaching In-Person**



Source: LFC Fall Teacher Survey

# School reopenings show risks can be minimized with cautious reentry and mitigation measures, especially for younger students

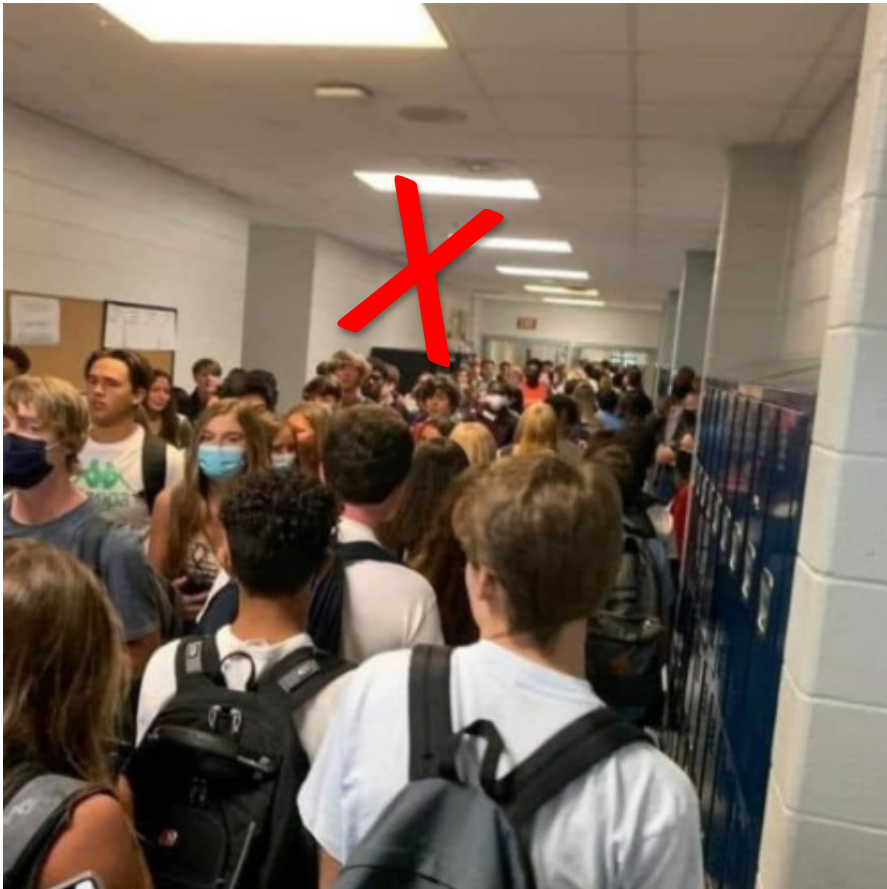
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- Two keys to risk reduction:
  - Low rates of community transmission
  - Mitigation measures within schools such as universal masking, improved ventilation, and cohorting

## Outbreaks and renewed closures aren't inevitable

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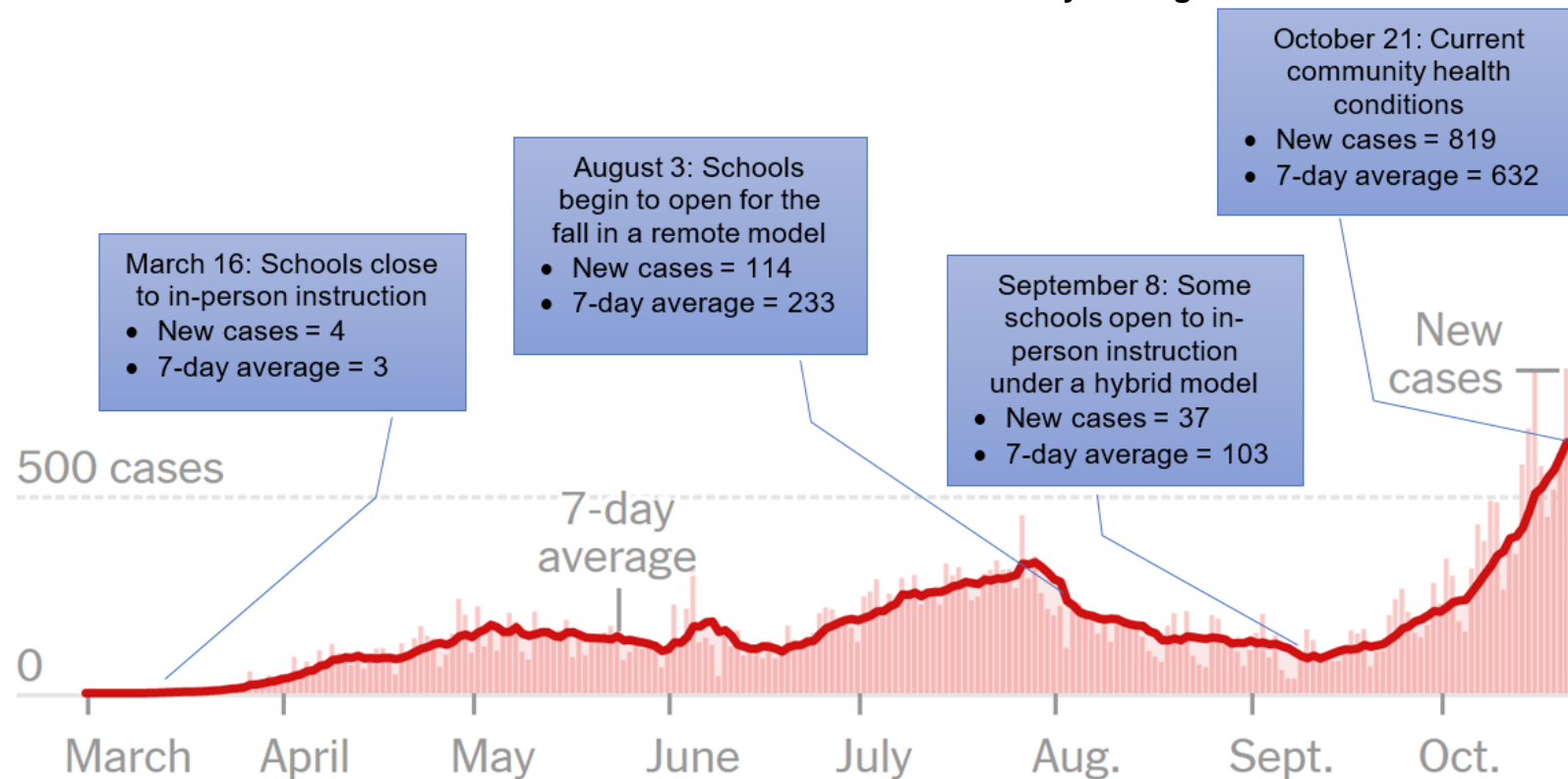
**Random testing in New York City Public Schools revealed a remarkably low incidence of the virus among students and teacher who returned to school. There were only 28 positives among 16,298 tests.**

**“We have not seen a connection between increased transmission and school reopening or in-person learning. We’re looking at the information to see if there is a connection, and so far we have not found one.”**

Dr. Mark Ghaly, California Health Secretary

# Controlling the virus so it's possible for more students to return to school should be a central project for the state and its citizens

**Chart 28. New Mexico Covid-19 Case Count and 7-day Average**



Source: New York Times (2020, October 22). Available: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/us/new-mexico-coronavirus-cases.html>



# Next Steps

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- The state needs a complete and transparent roadmap for getting its K-12 students back in school.
- School systems should prioritize the most at-risk students for in-person learning.
- New Mexico needs a plan to identify and monitor where students are academically after school closures and months of remote learning.
- The Legislature should consider options for addressing learning loss, such as a universal extension of the school year, during the 2021 session.



# Thank you for your time and attention

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QUESTIONS?

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