



**D<sup>3</sup> Consultants**  
DEDICATION. DEVOTION. DEPENDABILITY.

# Education Plus

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## Education in Crisis Situations-Shifting to Remote Teaching

Outlining a clear definition of education in crisis situations is a necessary step toward developing a policy to respond appropriately and in a timely way to potential educational needs. Crisis to refer to a broad range of circumstances in which children's access to education is in jeopardy. These circumstances fall under the following four categories: political, economic, health, and environmental.



## Prepare & Practice

### 1 Ensure digital equity

Equity is the biggest obstacle in preparing for online learning, and the first thing you should be thinking about. During a school shutdown, parents may also be working from home, meaning several people could be competing for one or two computers. Therefore, make sure all online apps work on mobile devices in case a laptop is not available.

### 2 Practice

Schools that regularly have digital learning days – and have worked through home-connectivity and device issues – are already ahead of the game. But if your school has not laid the groundwork, consider this to be an opportunity. None of this learning will go to waste moving forward, as many of the skills learned during the online learning period will be equally beneficial in a regular classroom.

### 3 Provide clear expectations to staff and parents.

During a closure, communication between administrators, staff, parents and students is more important than ever. Posting and distributing FAQs, schools should set up communitywide texting to communicate quickly and then advise people where to find follow-up messages via email or on your website. Next, prepare a step-by-step guide on how to access and use online learning tools and curriculum. Make sure you present this information in various formats including video and text and include screenshots and screen-casting tutorials.

### 4 Take time to plan

Even if a closure is sudden and offers no time to plan before schools are shuttered, it is still prudent to plan before beginning online lessons.

### 5 Pack your bag

Make sure you have access to everything you need from home in case you are not able to return to school or bring home your school computer and move your files into the cloud.

# Implementation

## 6 Establish daily schedules

Expectations should be clear about when teachers and students need to be logged on. A full day in front of a screen is a lot for kids and teachers, especially for families who may be sharing one device.

## 7 Provide robust learning

In extreme circumstances like an impromptu closure, it's tempting for teachers to upload worksheets for students to complete and return. But online learning during a closure – especially during extended closures – should be at least as engaging as the classroom experience (if not more) or students will suffer.

**For key principals that are recommended:**

- Break learning into smaller chunks.
- Be clear about expectations for online participation.
- Provide immediate (or at least frequent) feedback through online knowledge checks, comments on collaborative documents and chat to keep students motivated and moving forward.
- Include virtual meetings, live chats or video tutorials to maintain a human connection.

## 8 Design independent learning

Keep in mind that parents might either be at work or working from home and unable to help much. It's important to design learning that does not require a lot of support from parents who might already be overwhelmed.



## 9 Address the emotional toll

Check in with students and coworkers, especially those who are less comfortable with digital tools to see if they need any help or someone to talk to. Being sequestered at home can be isolating and exacerbate the fear of dealing with a global crisis. Taking time to check in about feelings of anxiety is just as important as checking on academics.

*While it may seem fun to work from home, it can be challenging to keep to a regular schedule. Some things that can help include:*

- Take regular breaks.
- Making time to exercise.
- Keep to a regular sleep schedule.
- Limit distractions when possible (turn off social media notifications, for example).
- Set daily and weekly goals.
- Make time to socialize, even if it's virtually.

## 10 Choose the right tools and stick with them.

With so much out there, it can be tempting to try to use everything. Instead, limit the number of tools, apps and platforms so students and their parents are not overwhelmed. Try to keep online instructions short, simple and clear. Consider making video instructions instead of text.