

Safety Considerations for School Communities



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When schools change their mode of instruction (e.g., in-person to hybrid) because of a crisis, they face a host of school safety challenges. A theme that underpins these challenges is uncertainty. In this [on-demand webinar](#), panelists address some of the concerns that students, teachers, and administrators have expressed about the return to school a year after the COVID-19 pandemic began.

Learning Outcomes

- » Recognize the variety of safety challenges that school communities face after a crisis or prolonged absence.
- » Discover strategies and resources to help school communities address these challenges.

Key Takeaways

- ✓ Everyone in the school setting—students, teachers, administrators—may have experienced the pandemic as a trauma, and that will alter the way individuals relate to each other and approach the world.
- ✓ Teachers and staff should be proactive and not assume that students have sufficiently dealt with their experience of crisis. Take time to acknowledge potential trauma.
- ✓ For students, social-emotional learning is just as important as academic learning, because many have spent a substantial amount of time away from their peers due to school being moved online.
- ✓ Humility, grace, honesty, and inclusivity are important qualities for strengthening relationships between staff and students after a crisis. It's important to acknowledge any fears that people may have and assure them that they are not alone.
- ✓ To the degree possible, keep tensions and politics surrounding the crisis response out of the classroom and away from students.
- ✓ To support a positive learning environment and a sense of community and harmony, synchrony throughout all levels of the school and district should be promoted.

Additional Resources

[Safer Schools and Campuses Better Practices Clearinghouse](#) - A collection of resources on addressing traumas in school, from COVID-19 responses to food insecurity.

[School Reopening Webinar Series](#) - A series of webinars looking at school reopenings from a variety of perspectives, including students.

Questions for Discussion

- » What resources are in place to support students and staff in the transition back to the classroom after a crisis or trauma? What resources are still needed?
- » How can we grow from the experience of a crisis to improve schools in a way that is more beneficial to students and staff? What should we return to? What changes can we make?

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