



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 28, 2020

TO: Local and Intermediate School District Superintendents
Public School Academy Directors

FROM: Michael F. Rice, Ph.D., State Superintendent 

SUBJECT: Analysis of Return to Learn Plans – MEMO #COVID-19-099

Today, the Michigan Department of Education and one of its research partners, Michigan State University's Education Policy Innovation Collaborative (EPIC), released a report that noted that 86 percent of Michigan school districts will offer some or all instruction in person at the beginning of the school year, based on EPIC's analysis of districts' return to learn plans.

The study showed that 59 percent of Michigan school districts are offering students at least an option to return to school five days a week, and 27 percent of districts are providing students with the ability to return to schools at least two to three days a week. There is substantial additional detail. Please click on the links to review the [study](#) or the [associated press release](#).

Many of you have reached out and shared with me in the last two months as you have crafted your plans for this school year. From our discussions, from our experiences, most of us have some appreciation that every district, every public school academy, is unique. There is no one best way to educate all children in all districts and certainly not in a pandemic. In phases 4 and 5, local districts must craft and implement plans that best serve the needs of their individual communities.

These are difficult times that require difficult decisions made at the local level, collaborative decisions that must include the voices of educators, students, parents, unions, administrators, and the broader community.

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That said, even schools and districts that are largely educating children at a distance may still provide in-school instruction for small groups of children with profound special needs, beginning English language learners, emerging or fledgling readers, and others who will struggle with remote or virtual instruction. These young people require our special reflection and attention.

Thank you for your continued service to children and your continued leadership.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors