



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING


GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL F. RICE, Ph.D.
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 2, 2021

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

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

SUBJECT: U.S. Department of Education Releases Its "Return to School Roadmap" -
MEMO #COVID-19-205

This morning, the United States Department of Education (USED) [released](#) its "Return to School Roadmap" for local school districts across the nation—a resource to support students, schools, educators, and communities as they prepare to return to safe, healthy in-person learning this fall and emerge from the pandemic stronger than before.

The roadmap provides key resources and supports for students, parents, educators, and school communities to build excitement around returning to classrooms this school year and outlines how federal funding can support the safe and sustained return to in-person learning.

With the release of the roadmap, U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona said:

"Over the past year-and-a-half, as a nation, we experienced struggles like never before. Schools, teachers, students, and families were challenged in ways none of us ever imagined. But from that struggle, came resilience. Teachers, principals, school staff, parents, and – mostly importantly – our nation's students rose to the occasion. They demonstrated what is possible if we follow key mitigation strategies to keep our students and school communities safe. Now, we must use our renewed strength to focus on what matters most: winning the fight against COVID-19, getting our students back in classrooms for full-time in-person learning—together—and making our education system better than ever before so that all students receive the excellent education they deserve. I'm proud to be releasing these tools to help make sure students, parents, schools, educators, and communities receive the communication and supports they need to make this academic

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year a success, and I want all schools this year to lead with a clear focus on health and safety, student wellbeing, and academic acceleration as students return to classrooms nationwide.”

As part of the launch of the Return to School Roadmap, USED released:

- A [fact sheet](#) for schools, families, and communities on the Return to School Roadmap.
- A [guide](#) for schools and districts outlining what schools can do to protect the health and safety of students, including increasing access to vaccinations and steps for implementing the CDC’s recently updated K-12 school guidance.
- A [checklist](#) that parents can use to prepare themselves and their children for a safe return to in-person learning this fall with vaccinations of eligible children being the most important strategy and the wearing of masks for students who have not yet been vaccinated being important as well.

As our nation and state continue to address the COVID-19 virus generally and its Delta variant specifically, it is important to do whatever we can to keep our staff and students safe and healthy in our schools. It is critical that we encourage members of our communities to get vaccinated and that we implement the guidance from USED, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services if we hope not to repeat the disruptions to our children’s education over the last year and a half.

Please delve into the provided guidance and share it with your administrative teams, school board members, educators, families, and communities. Together, we can stay safe and healthy and provide a new, better normal for the education of our children.

cc: Michigan Education Alliance
Confederation of Michigan Tribal Education Directors