

COVID-19 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND RESOURCES:

ADDRESSING STAFF AND STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH FOR SCHOOL RE-ENTRY



CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF
SCHOOL COUNSELORS INC.



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COVID-19 PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS AND RESOURCES

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August 1, 2020

Dear School Superintendent,

We would like to express our deep appreciation for the work you are doing for students, families, and staff members during this pandemic. We know the health and well-being of your students have been, and continues to be, at the center of all decisions. We also recognize the pandemic has created extreme challenges, whether schools continue virtually or in-person, this coming school year. From district to district, there are commonalities within the opening-of-school process that must include developing a nurturing environment and providing early detection and treatment for addressing mental health issues. School counselors and others are in need of "hands-on" resources.

The guide is organized to lead decision-making in designing school-wide systems of support for staff and students. It is organized with a three-phase re-entry process. Each phase includes ideas to consider, with supporting details and links to resources. These resources include examples of "Welcome to School" videos, PowerPoint training presentations, grade-level lessons, social media student nudging messages, etc. All attached documents within this resource may be edited and used freely.

Additionally, CASC will be hosting a Fall 2020 virtual conference dedicated to addressing mental health and race-based trauma (October 8-10, 2020). We hope you, your administrators, teachers and other support staff will be able to attend. Detailed conference information may be accessed by clicking [here](#).

As we approach the 2020-21 school year, it is well known that California schools, even prior to Covid-19, were [struggling with growing student mental health conditions](#). Likewise, California, has historically underfunded school-based mental health service professionals (i.e. school counselors, school social workers & school psychologists). While ratios have improved significantly in the past decade, now is not the time to reduce funding. Suicide and depression rates are climbing and will continue to climb long after the pandemic diminishes. Children and youth are at critical periods of brain development and are at greater risk from trauma due to months of extended stress. Likewise, unmet mental health needs will be magnified due to economic disruptions and racial/ethnic disparities. This is even more pronounced for many students where their school was a respite from tumultuous home lives. All this to say, we encourage you to continue to invest in your school counseling workforce and allocate adequate funding for ALL school-based mental health staff.

The resources and exemplars included in this guide will be continually updated to accommodate the ever-changing needs of the PreK-12 school system for the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic at www.covid19k12counseling.org. Dozens of school counselors, under the exceptional coordination of Lezya Weglarz (San Marcos USD), Sarah Slemmons (Culver City USD), Priscilla Grijalva (Alvord USD), and in consultation with the County Offices of Educational Leadership for School Counseling (COELSC) have worked in collaboration to assemble this guide. As Local Education Agencies (LEAs) continue to plan for the 2020-21 school year, whether it be virtual or classroom-centered learning, we wish you the absolute best in this process and we are pleased to contribute to and support your school district's success.

Sincerely,


Dr. Loretta Whitson
Executive Director


Josh Godinez
President

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Today's Mental Health Challenges: Experts are projecting that the mental health challenges affecting PreK-12th grade students due to the global pandemic will be of concern for at least two years, even after the health crisis is brought under control. This is due, in part, to families directly and indirectly affected by multiple years of increasing personal and economic losses and instability. In addition, the loss of an educational routine and the lack of access to online learning support has contributed to [increases in students' emotional distress](#). Many students are struggling with the [loss of hope](#) for their [future career and college prospects](#); they are devaluing education and seeking other alternatives. Students [dropping out](#) of school are rising, and generalized changes in dispositions are evident due to grief, uncertainty, and maladjustment to dramatic societal and family changes. A recent Covid-19 [study](#) summarizes the results from a national survey pointing to serious challenges schools face and the relationship between basic needs, academic achievement and social emotional wellness. The study stresses the need for professional development, district supports, university training, and an effort to reconnect a potential "lost generation of students."

The Covid-19 Planning Considerations and Resources: Addressing Staff and Student Mental Health for School Re-Entry is a "Guide" designed to provide state decision makers and school superintendents with a number of tangible strategies and resources to address student and staff mental health needs. The aforementioned and complex issues were the basis for the forming of a school counseling taskforce and the impetus for creating this guide. Throughout the spring and summer, LEAs wrestle with a number of issues related to the global pandemic, including paramount considerations regarding safety and the re-opening of schools. Simultaneously, the best and brightest minds within the California school counseling profession came together to tackle the issue of student and staff mental and emotional wellbeing. It is our hope that this guide will be helpful and used by educators throughout California. [Covid-19 Planning Considerations and Resources: Addressing Staff and Student Mental Health for School Re-Entry](#) was published in July 2020; however, it is also a linked to the www.covid19k12counseling.org website, which will be updated on a regular basis, for the next few months, as new resources and materials become available.

"Administrators and counselors contribute to weekly "Kudos" publications on Zoom and the school's website to celebrate the small and big things students and staff have done."

- Dr. Loren Dittmar, High School Counselor, Simi Valley USD



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Thoughts & Observations: A systematic process of gathering resources was utilized in the preparation for organizing the final materials that are included in this guide. This section reflects some of the more nuanced considerations and the organizing process used to determine content areas.

Task force members carefully considered LEA's capacity to provide adequate mental health services given the extremely high caseloads for school-based mental health service professionals (SBMHSP) (i.e. school counselors, psychologist, and social workers) – a historical condition impacting California schools, disproportionate to other states.

They discussed the depth and possible duration for additional mental health services needed and the overarching barriers in creating systems of support virtually or within a face-to-face restricted school environment. Task force members also reviewed existing mental health research and re-opening of school guidelines. In particular, they reviewed several California publications. These valuable resources include the California Department of Education's (CDE) [Stronger Together: A Guidebook for the Safe Re-opening of California's Public Schools](#) (issued June 8) and the [Association of California School Administrators \(ACSA\): School Re-opening Report](#) (issued May 28).

The task force invited school counselors from throughout California to submit their best practice resources and strategies being utilized to address trauma and other mental health issues. The task force vetted the large number of submissions and categorized resources into a three-phase re-opening schema. Consideration was also given to support a number of re-opening scenarios, including strategies to provide school-based mental health services to the over 500 LEAs who are considered to be [small and often from rural areas where re-opening challenges and mental health needs are unique](#). The task force members also felt it was of utmost importance to provide hands-on materials that includes grade-level lessons and other materials for classroom social emotional learning. The lessons were designed to be flexible and applicable for remote learning, as well as in an in-person classroom setting. Other exemplars were created such as: virtual welcoming and nudging messages within multiple online formats (i.e. Twitter, Instagram, apps, Facebook, text messaging), and easy to use resources for universal screening in order to determine students and staff who are struggling with elevated stress levels, anxiety, and other mental health concerns.

The discussion included bolstering the over 10,000 California school counselors with hands-on resources and training materials. Sample professional developments with asynchronous accompanying videos were created to build capacity, which enables school counselors to take a lead in offering faculty trainings. The team concluded that school employees do not have time to review the wide array of content available and need quick, easy access to materials that are easily adaptable, regardless of the school setting. Task force members felt that directly reaching out to school superintendents would be the best way to ensure efficacy and compliance. Finally, the gathering and sharing of resources and tackling the perplexity of student and staff mental health concerns was cathartic for team members..."many hands make light work".

The following questions guided the task force members work:

- What resources can we provide to reduce stress and increase mental health wellbeing in the school community?
- What assessments can we utilize to determine and prioritize schoolwide and tiered supports?
- What professional developments are necessary prior to school starting and within the first few months of opening school?
- How can we support school counselors and other mental health service professionals in providing training to staff related trauma-informed care?
- What pupil re-engagement strategies can be applied for pupils absent from distance learning during the Spring 2020 term?
- How can we develop an effective referral process that addresses a range of unknown issues when schools begin again: poor academic performance, attendance, school refusal, acting out, family, physical, mental and economic issues?
- How can a [Multi-Tiered System of Support](#) (MTSS) be applied to a schoolwide social emotional developmental process?

"In June, I collected Chromebooks from students absent from distant learning as a re-engagement strategy."

- Lezya Weglarz,
Middle School Counselor,
San Marcos USD

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONT.)

From the aforementioned questions, four windows of opportunity emerged. A [window of opportunity](#) opens when a problem gets defined, viable solutions are available, and there is a will to match them up. These four areas are listed in figure I below.

MEETING STAFF MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

- Assigned staff check-in process by dividing staff groups among SBMHSP staff.
- Dedicate faculty meeting time for restorative circle conversation to process feelings, social emotional challenges, and self-care.
- Provide one-on-one support for overly stressed staff by utilizing SBMHSP.
- Develop systems to support staff's dedication. Educators who experience extreme stress can improve with acknowledgement and empathy to manage difficult circumstances.

BUILDING SYSTEMS OF CARE

- Provide professional development to teachers in the areas of self-care and student trauma.
- Add a trauma informed and bereavement question to the registration packet and a flagging system in student information management software.
- Establish opening-of-school strategies to provide a link between last-year's staff and this year's staff.
- Develop student check-in process to assess need and triage services.
- Pre-record webinars to reteach schoolwide routines (e.g. how to greet each other) with a focus on relationship building.

CREATING EMOTIONALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

- Use symbolic messaging by promoting visibility of SBMHS at screening areas to demonstrate the team of trusted adults present to help students.
- Focus on effective mastery of social-emotional learning (SEL) competencies for educators.
- Assign SBMHSP to serve as SEL coaches or provide SEL lesson.
- Create welcome-to-school messages, virtual school orientation tours, and virtual school assemblies to address important topics and rules.
- Secure community-based mental health service professionals to service Tier III students.

ENGAGING HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS USING CAREER PLANNING STRATEGIES (High School Counselors)

- Help high school students to develop pathways for college and career through comprehensive supports and counseling services.
- Accelerate college-level learning. There is no return to the way things were for current high school juniors and seniors. Consider developing effective practices for accelerating learning across systems.
- In times of crisis, new opportunities present themselves as we gain clarity and evolve. Encourage high schoolers to unite around shared goals for creating a better world when we emerge from this crisis.

"School counselors are collaborating with Physical Education teachers to create Wellness Wednesday activities with the goal of strengthening students' mental and physical health."

- Dustin M. Seemann,
Assistant Superintendent
of Education, Beverly Hills
Unified School District



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (CONT.)

Document Limitations: While there are a number of overarching issues related to school re-opening, this publication narrowly focused on addressing staff and student trauma, mental health, school climate, and prioritizing and targeting interventions that are best suited to be delivered by school counselors and other school-based mental health service professionals (SBMHSP). The committee agreed that the most helpful approach was to provide educational leaders with a list of considerations and supporting information within a three-phase re-opening. Each consideration was supported by user-friendly, replicable, and easy to access resources that can be shared with appropriate staff members. In a “watch and learn” format, selected professional development lessons were accompanied by recordings that model the delivery of those training sessions. The guide provides links that vary within topic areas and are downloadable.

Three Phase Re-opening: The guide is organized within a three-phase re-opening process: 1) Prior to School Opening Preparation, 2) Opening of School and Assessment Strategies (first few weeks of school), and 3) Comprehensive Services. As indicated earlier, at the time of publication, the committee recognized that materials would continue to be developed and added into the guide over time due to rapidly changing factors surrounding re-opening. Please refer to the www.covid19k12counseling.org for updates.

The resources and exemplars included in this guide will be continually updated on the website created in April 2020: [COUNSELING RESOURCES - Key educational and counseling resources to support students during the COVID-19 outbreak \(http://covid19k12counseling.org\)](http://www.covid19k12counseling.org). This website is receiving international acclaim for its all-inclusive approach to PreK-12 counseling resources in the era of Covid-19. The depth of resources has been accessed by over 30,000 individuals in 14 countries in less than three months.

Schools are the primary social institution responsible for influencing the overall well-being of children and youth. Optimal functioning among PreK-12 students as they return to school will be contingent on how well schools develop a comprehensive mental health wellness approach. The work in the next two years is not easy, however together we can all do our part to make a positive impact on our students during these most difficult times.



"School counselors held virtual drop-in meetings with all parents, staff and students in order to keep us connected during this physically distant time."

- Alma Lopez, School Counselor Coordinator, Livingston Union School District

Phased PreK-12 Schools Re-Opening Guideline: Mental Health

The following framework is divided into three major components: 1) Preparation and Start of School, 2) Opening & Implementing Multiple Assessments, and 3) Comprehensive Delivery of Services. Listed below are resources to create an effective mental wellness reentry plan that includes materials for:

- Developing systems of support
- Providing professional development (PD) designed for all stakeholder groups
- Delivering grade-level exemplar lessons that engages students in addressing trauma and mental wellness
- Identifying and partnering with community-based organizations
- Securing important datasets to inform the decision-making process

Step 1: Preparation and Start of School

Whether schools are preparing for in-classroom learning or virtual instruction, it is critical that mental wellness be a strong consideration in the planning process. This section addresses five factors to consider as schools reopen: 1) Teachers and staff mental wellness; 2) Teachers and staff understand factors on identifying students with mental health concerns and systems to address those concerns; 3) School-systems that are welcoming and caring; 4) Schoolwide Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) protocols; and 5) Establish agreements with community-based agencies for MTSS Tier III support.

Summary Considerations	Detail Considerations	Resources and Exemplars
Consider how to support the mental wellness of teachers and staff	<p>Determine sequence and delivery of PD offerings for all professional groups (e.g bus drivers, security, classified, teachers, etc.) in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signs of trauma and stress reduction - Restorative circles to express feelings <p>Host voluntary process group sessions</p> <p>Design an informal support network for staff by assigning school counselors, administrators, and other support staff members to periodically check in on staff to support mental wellness</p>	<p><i>Resources:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-care for Educators • Self-Care During COVID-19 • Responsive Circles for COVID-19 • Relationship Mapping Strategy <p><i>Exemplars:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Self Care Presentation • Restorative Practices Presentation for staff • Recording of RP presentation • Sample Topics for Circles • Mental Health and Self Care presentation • Virtual Coffee with a Counselor for Staff • Staff Support Needs Assessment
Consider deepening teachers and other staff members' knowledge of	Prior to school opening, offer PD to identify, understand, and address student trauma as well as strategies for building a sense of community within virtual and/or	<p><i>Resources:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma Sensitive Schools Online Professional Development • Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators • Trauma Informed School Strategies • When Students Act Out

<p>mental health literacy and strategies for addressing student mental health issues</p>	<p>in-person classroom settings in these suggested topic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signs of trauma in students - An overview of student mental health concerns, such as stress, anxiety, and depression - Ways of avoiding punitive re-traumatizing reactions and alternative discipline measures - Creating a classroom community and holding regular classroom meetings - How to help students share feelings and problem-solve through ongoing dialogue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Practices for Supporting Students with Challenging Behaviors ·Coping with Student Anxiety ·Depression Fact Sheet (for Schools) <p><i>Exemplars:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Addressing Student Trauma Amid a Pandemic ·The Trauma-Informed School presentation for staff ·Trauma in Schools Presentation for Staff ·PowerPoint Depression and Inclusion in Secondary and Middle School
<p>Consider a fresh way to prepare your school community to be a welcoming, helpful, non-judgmental and caring environment, including hosting virtual/in person parent coffee hours</p>	<p>Create video messages, presentations, and/or assemblies that cover a variety of topics including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcoming message focused on new beginnings, kindness, and care - Student/family orientation - Campus resources available, including how to contact the student support team - The importance of social distancing and other safety measures - Tools for practicing self-care 	<p><i>Resources:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Reunite, Renew, and Thrive ·RISE Index ·Supporting LGBTQ students <p><i>Exemplars:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Interactive Bitmoji presentation ·Virtual Calming Room ·Virtual Wellness Room ·Virtual Wellness Connection flyer ·Back-to-School Resources for Families ·TikTok messages for students ·Video messages for elementary students
<p>Consider establishing a whole-class social emotional learning instructional program</p>	<p>Direct teachers and school counselors to partner to establish a schedule for offering Social Emotional Learning (SEL) lessons. Suggested Lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to seek help - school protocol - How traumatic stress impacts our brains to help normalize and reduce shame - How to transition back-to-school during uncertain times - How to stay organized through virtual learning 	<p><i>Resources:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Reunite, Renew, and Thrive ·CASEL Program Guide ·Managing Online Classes <p><i>Exemplars:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Presentation for HS Students on Stress ·Student Presentation on Stress ·Preventing Student Burnout Presentation ·Success During Remote Learning presentation for students
<p>Consider seeking community-based support</p>	<p>Community and county services may be available to support the increased mental health needs.</p>	<p><i>Resources:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ·Best Practice: Guidelines for California School Counselors (Pg. 9)

for MTSS Tiered III students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consider developing a contract or Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) to address communication between school-based Pupil Personnel Service (PPS) staff and community-based licenses providers to meet HIPAA and FERPA requirements - Consider requesting community-based counselors to host voluntary support or process group for employees 	<i>Exemplar:</i> ·LAUSD Policy Bulletin
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Step 2: Opening & Implementing Multiple Assessments

Once students have returned for the new academic year, it is paramount that a mental health evaluation system be established, including both qualitative and quantitative assessment. Four considerations areas to assist district in creating multiple assessment measures to identify and target needs of your student population are listed below, including: 1) Establishing meaningful and relevant systems for identifying student/family need; 2) Monitor student progress within the first few weeks of school; 3) Consider universal screening and formalizing teacher input; and 4) Establish check-in with student protocol.

Summary Considerations	Detail Considerations	Exemplars and Resources
Consider flagging students who may need additional support prior to school opening	Prior to school starting, identify students who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Experienced traumatic events prior to or during school closure - Were at-risk prior to the school closures (social-emotionally or academically) - Face food insecurity or lack access to basic needs - Were infrequently attending instruction during the Spring semester - Were caring for younger siblings or other family members 	<i>Resource:</i> ·COVID-19 K-12 Counseling ·Connecting the Dots: The School Counselor Role in Student Mental Health ·A Framework for Safe and Successful Schools <i>Exemplars:</i> ·Determining Tier 2 Data Interventions ·Sample Data Points for Tier 2 Queries
Consider additional ways to identify and monitor	Re-purpose and rotate school-based PPS staff (school counselors, psychologist and social workers) in screening lines to greet students and problem solve for:	<i>Exemplars:</i> ·Sample "Request for Support" form for families (English) (Spanish)

<p>students and offer targeted support, in the first few weeks of school</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic necessities and practical needs (food, clothing, shelter, medical care, school supplies) - Psychosocial needs (connection, positive feedback, counseling) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample Counseling Referral form for staff
<p>Consider establishing a variety of screening and referral processes to determine social, emotional and behavioral needs</p>	<p>A number of replicable universal mental health screening (UMHS) instruments are available for free</p> <p>Create/Administer a qualitative survey on well-being and social connections. Take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Questions that are developmentally appropriate - Questions that may be best answered by parents for younger students - Systems for categorizing and responding to survey results including the role of teachers, school counselors, or other PPS professionals. Please note that if utilizing teachers, train them in appropriate discourse. - When a well-being survey with concerning response is received, refer it to PPS professionals to follow-up with services resources 	<p><i>Resources:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panorama Education (free) • Back-To-School 2020 Toolkit, Illuminate Education (free) • Learning from Home Survey-CalSCHLS (free) • Structured Trauma-Related Experiences and Symptoms Screener (STRESS) (free) • Child and Adolescent Trauma Screen (CATS) (free) <p><i>Exemplars:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample HS student needs assessment • Sample Distance Learning Needs Assessment • Sample Counseling Referral form for staff
<p>Consider establishing a student check-in process during the first few weeks of school</p>	<p>Counselor will check-in with students and families to determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signs of stress - Basic needs - Any additional supports needed <p>Consider using school-based mental health professionals to conduct minute-meetings with students, either virtually or in-person (if applicable)</p>	<p><i>Resource:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapting Check-in, Check-out for Distance Learning • Individual Solutions Strategy <p><i>Exemplars:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample check-in form for students • Sample student/family check-in log • Sample daily check-in form

Step 3: Comprehensive Delivery of Services

Once school routine is established, students identified as experiencing trauma and other barriers to learning, will need a system for providing interventions, including systems for triaging service. Schools and School-based Mental Health Professionals schedules need to reflect time for short-term counseling interventions and a methodical approach within a multi-tiered system of support. Four considerations were identified, including:

1) Systems for addressing the disconnected students; 2) Ideas for conducting Wellness-Checks; 3) Addressing those students who don't return to school and other Tiered II strategies; and 4) Preventing and addressing race-based hatred and bias.

Summary Considerations	Detail Considerations	Exemplars and Resources
<p>Consider engagement strategies for all students and re-engaging disconnected students</p> <p>Consider a variety of modalities to building classroom community</p>	<p>There are several ways to engage and re-engage students who become disconnected in the class.</p> <p>This brief video about the Learning Brain vs. the Survival Brain explains that when children are in survival mode (Survival Brain), the Learning Brain is stifled. Adults can help students shift into the Learning Brain by creating a physically and psychologically safe environment.</p>	<p><i>Resources:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Step • BrainPop • Building Community Culture Online • Supportive Classroom Environment • Fostering a Strong Community in a Virtual Classroom • Building Belonging with Students and Families Virtually • Improv Games for Virtual Spaces
<p>Consider using school-based mental health professionals to conduct home wellness checks of students</p>	<p>Review data to identify students not engaged in learning. School counselors and other school-based mental health professionals are able to support in trauma-informed, coordinated care. Schools have a responsibility to assess the needs of students and families and connect to school-based and community resources.</p>	<p><i>Exemplars:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social-emotional resources for families • Community Resources for families
<p>Consider using data to identify students requiring Tier 2 interventions</p>	<p>Suggestions of student subgroups to review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students who don't return to school - Students who are irregularly attending classes - Students who are disengaged - Students and staff who demonstrate signs of stress 	<p><i>Resources:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting the Dots: The School Counselor Role in Student Mental Health • Attendance Playbook • Attendance Implementation Guide <p><i>Exemplar:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining Tier 2 Data Interventions • Individual Solutions Strategy
<p>Consider establishing priorities for preventing and addressing hate and bias</p>	<p>Schools play a critical role in supporting students in addressing contemporary issues of social inequality and discrimination. Instructional strategies and professional development are essential in fostering safe and supportive schools.</p>	<p><i>Resources:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coronavirus and Infectious Racism • Teaching Tolerance Resource on school hate and bias in schools • A guide to help students talk about bias • Coronavirus and Racial Disparities • Social Justice Lesson Plans

APPENDIX

NEW LEGAL AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

Board Policy 5141.6 – Mental Health: The California School Boards Association’s (CSBA) released a new sample Board Policy 5141.5 - Mental Health in the Spring of 2020. It is an expansive policy, going past the requirements of Education Code 215 included in the mandatory BP/AR 5141.52 - Suicide Prevention to address student mental health issues facing all students and may be helpful for districts who want to expand mental health policy language. The policy recognizes students' emotional well-being and mental health as contributing factors to students reaching their full academic and personal potential. It suggests a universal screening protocol for identifying and assessing students who may be suffering so they can be provided interventions and counseling support.

Learning Continuity and Accountability Plan Considerations: Within the goal analysis section, the new [Learning Continuity and Accountability Plan \(Learning Continuity Plan\)](#) requires districts to specifically address student and staff mental health. While specific accountability measures are yet to be determined, the team reviewed the four elements listed below and designed material to help LEAs prepare to meet benchmarks.

In this initial stage of interpretation, the four pertinent areas are:

1. Students experiencing homelessness
2. How the LEA will monitor & support the mental health & social and emotional well-being of pupils & staff
3. Professional development for staff to address trauma & other impacts of COVID-19 on the school community
4. Pupil engagement & outreach

SCHOOL COUNSELOR STANDARDS, POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Provided in this section are links to foundational documents relevant to the school counseling profession in California.

Annual Performance Evaluation: American School Counselor Association. (2015). The school counselor and annual performance evaluation. https://www.schoolcounselor.org/asca/media/asca/PositionStatements/PS_Evaluation.pdf

Best Practices Guidelines: For California School Counselors:
<https://www.schoolcounselor-ca.org/files/Best%20Practice%20Guidelines%20for%20School%20Counselors.pdf>

California Education Code 49600 - Educational Counseling:
This statute outlines requirements associated with California’s comprehensive educational counseling programs in schools: <https://tinyurl.com/yxp2e2c2>

California Education Code 49602 - Confidentiality:
California School Counselors have specific confidentiality requirements when working with students, 12-years old and older. https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?lawCode=EDC§ionNum=49602

Position Statements:
Several national position statements encompasses information topics on various areas relevant to the school counseling profession. Of the 32 position statements available, several are important to note. These include position statements on: Career Technical Education, Credentialing and Licensure, Gun Violence, Identification, Prevention and Intervention of Behaviors that are Harmful and Place Students at Risk and Student Mental Health. All can be accessed from the California Association of School Counselors website: <https://www.schoolcounselor-ca.org/position-statements>

Project Cal-Well:
A federal grant to increase mental health awareness and promote wellness among K-12 students in California <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/mh/projectcalwell.asp>

Pupil Personnel Services School Counseling Standards:
Accreditation and pre-service training requirements https://www.ctc.ca.gov/docs/default-source/educator-prep/standards/pps-pdf.pdf?sfvrsn=5b1ecdd6_2

Supervision by PPS Credential Holders of state licensed mental health professional requirements:
Title 5 CCR 80049.1(c) <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/cg/pr/title5.asp>

Note:

Prior to developing this guide, the committee reviewed a number of very valuable reports to guide our process. The links to these documents are provided below.

- [Public Health Guidance for Schools June 5](#)
(Issued June 5)
- [The California School Boards Association: The Uncertain Road Ahead](#)
(Issued June 9)
- [California County Superintendents Educational Services Association School Reopening Guide](#)
(Issued June 2)
- [CASEL - SEL Roadmap for Reopening Schools](#)
- [Orange County Reopening of Schools Guidance for Pupil Support Services](#)