

Emergency Planning

Questions Superintendents Need to Think Through Right Now For When COVID-19 Spreads Into Your Community

The IASA COVID-19 Swat Team has encouraged superintendents to think about the challenges that lie ahead through the prism of three main priorities:

1. Feed and care for the extended safety, health and welfare of students, families and your community at large.
2. Communicate Clearly
3. Provide Continuity of Learning

The time has come to consider a fourth priority—Emergency Planning.

As COVID-19 continues to spread and infect more residents across Illinois, schools will be asked to take on additional responsibilities to support their communities. **The time has come to prepare for the next phase.**

To help with this effort, the IASA COVID-19 Swat Team has assembled a checklist of questions to begin to think through, as well as resources to help guide leaders through this process.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY



Have you communicated with government partners and your county's emergency management coordinator?

The time has come for key stakeholders in your community to come together and discuss an emergency management plan to address the spread of COVID-19. Every community is unique, but this group should include superintendents, mayors, emergency management coordinators, local health department, hospital administrators, fire department, police department etc. Together this team is referred to as the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) for your county or community. Identifying who is on this team and understanding what role the school district has when the EOC is activated will help later on.

Here is a CDC resource on how an EOC works: <https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/eoc/how-eoc-works.htm>



Are regularly scheduled calls with the Emergency Operations Center occurring now?

The three pillars of an EOC are people, systems and things. Regardless if you have a confirmed case in your county, the calls are necessary now as planning is critical before an emergency occurs. For example, this team may discuss how many trained EMA volunteers there are and if further capacity is needed before a rapid response team is needed.

[Here](#) is an example of what that looks like in McLean County.

Also, [here's](#) an example of an agenda of a COVID-19 Partners Meeting in the north suburbs.



Are you ready if school buildings in your district need to be used as a temporary hospital site or for COVID-19 testing?

There may be instances across Illinois where communities do not have enough capacity as it relates to hospital space or testing areas. Therefore, it is essential that school leaders begin to think about what your role may be in filling this statewide need. In rural communities especially, a gymnasium or cafeteria might be the most logical option to serve as a temporary, spillover site to house additional hospital beds. Forming a plan now, in conjunction with your EOC, will make this possible transition smoother.

In addition, school leaders need to think about what if their buildings will be used as a COVID-19 testing site. What would that look like from a logistical standpoint in your district?

