

As you sign into the session today, we'd like for you to complete a reflective response to the question below. When responding, consider this:

Agility is the ability to adapt quickly and easily, in response to internal or external changes.

How "agile" was your school's response to COVID-19?

- A. We slowly responded to the crisis, and we did not truly launch e-learning.
- B. We responded quickly, and we did launched e-learning that met the needs of some students.
- C. We responded quickly, and we had e-learning in place that allowed for some differentiation and personalization.
- D. We responded quickly, and we continued to adapt e-learning plans to differentiate and personalize learning.

Beyond Quarantine: Resetting School Culture, Collaboration and Community

Dr. Matthew Clifford, American Institutes for Research

www.air.org

mclifford@air.org

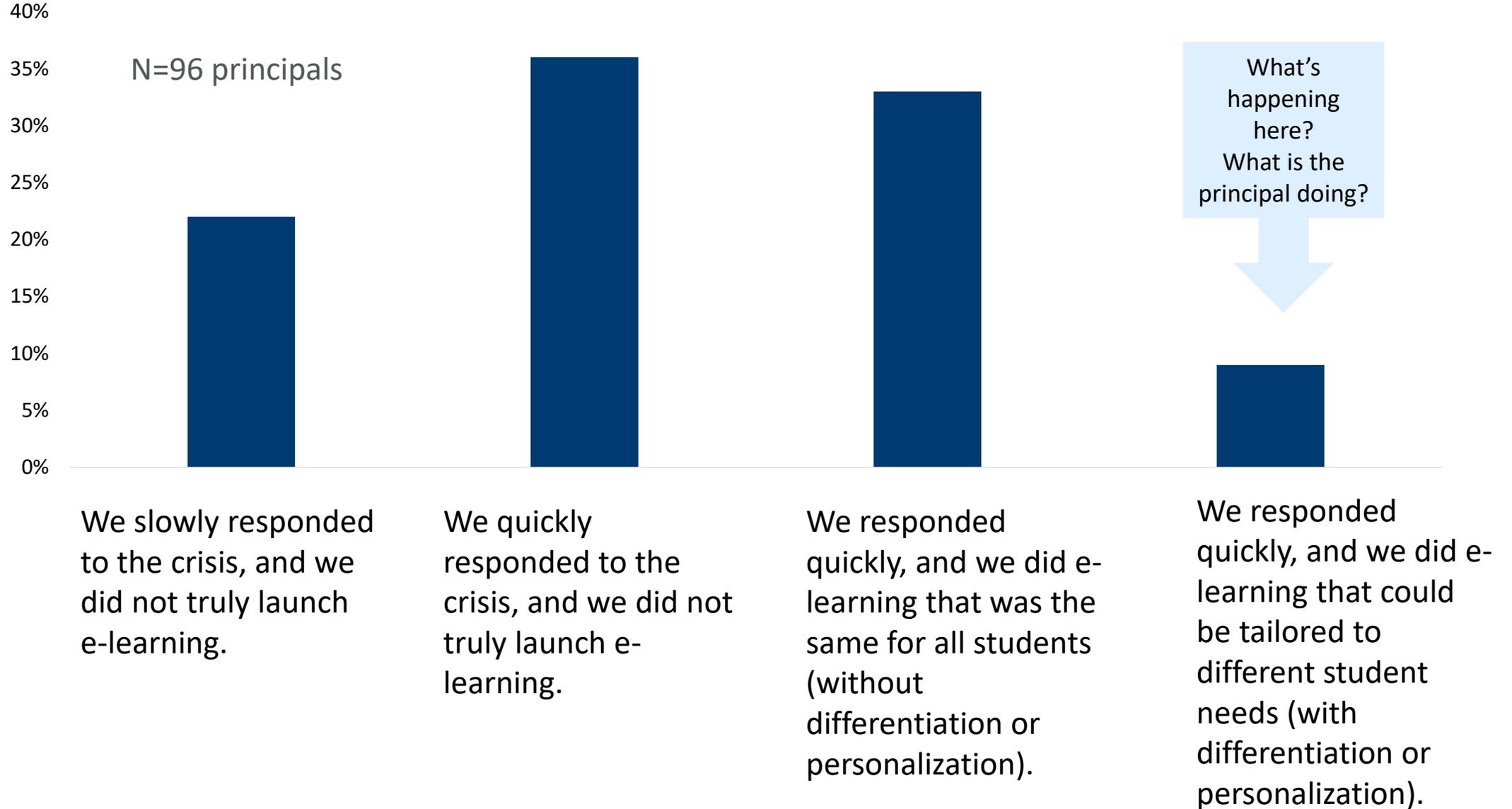
MAKING
RESEARCH
RELEVANT

AMERICAN INSTITUTES FOR RESEARCH® | AIR.ORG

Copyright © 2020 American Institutes for Research®. All rights reserved.



How agile was your school's response to COVID-19?



Schools exhibiting strong culture, higher levels of collaboration, and strong sense of community tend to retain staff and be higher performing.

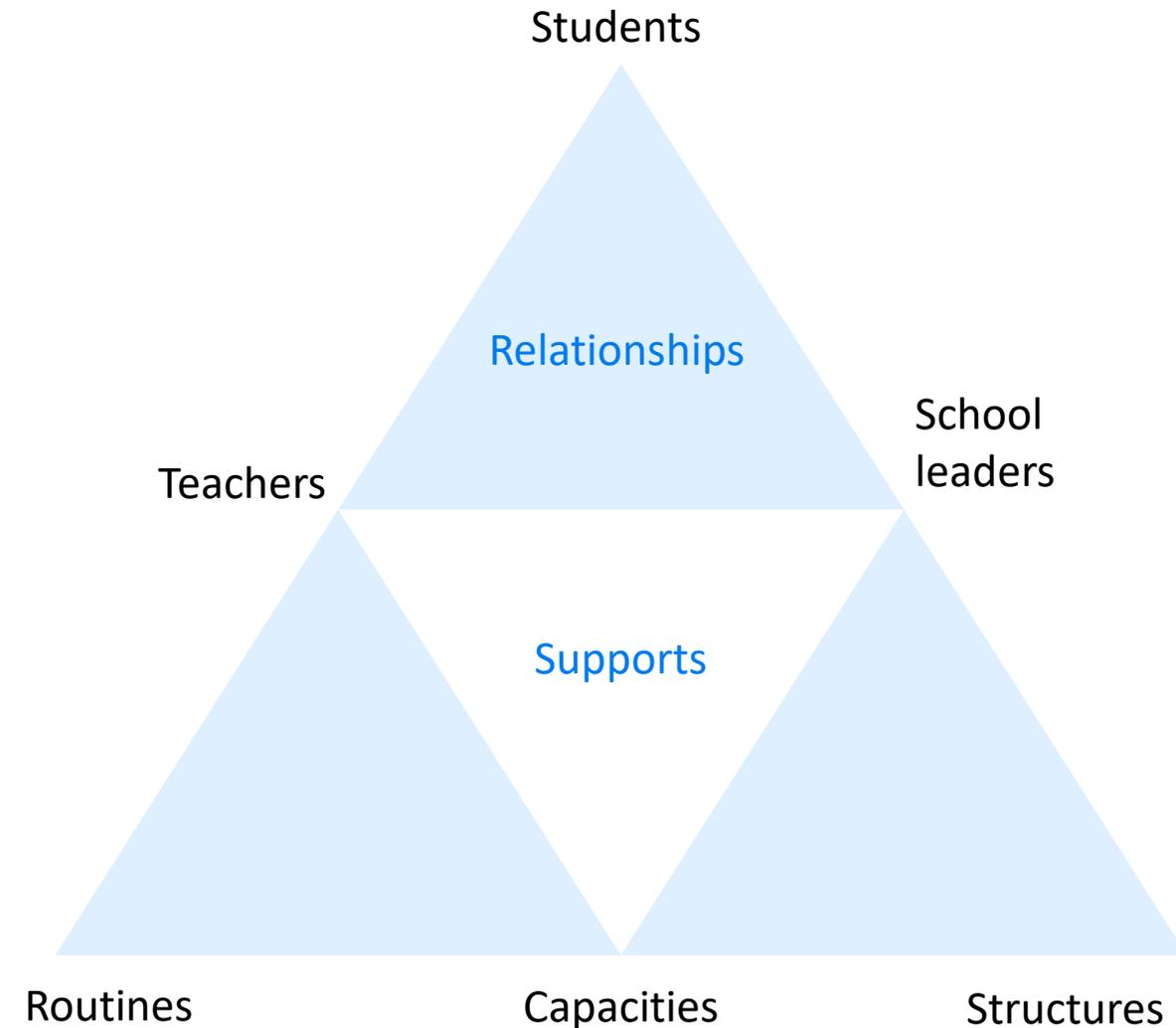
What we know from research is that school culture, staff collaboration and staff sense of community makes a difference when attempting to retain staff and rapidly improve student performance.

- Strong school culture is positively associated with high student academic performance and with academically improving schools.
- Strong school culture is associated with high teacher retention.
- Strong school culture and teacher collaboration is positively associated with school change.
- Effective principal leadership that focuses instruction and talent management is associated with stronger school cultures.

Schools exhibiting strong culture, higher levels of collaboration, and strong sense of community tend to retain staff and be higher performing.

In research, school culture has different definitions and is measured by different survey items. Meta-analyses of school culture studies identified some common features:

- Trust in colleagues and school administrators
- Physical and emotional safety
- Staff engagement together in solving problems
- Mutual accountability and support
- Autonomy to innovate
- Common sense of school mission
- Time to teach and to learn

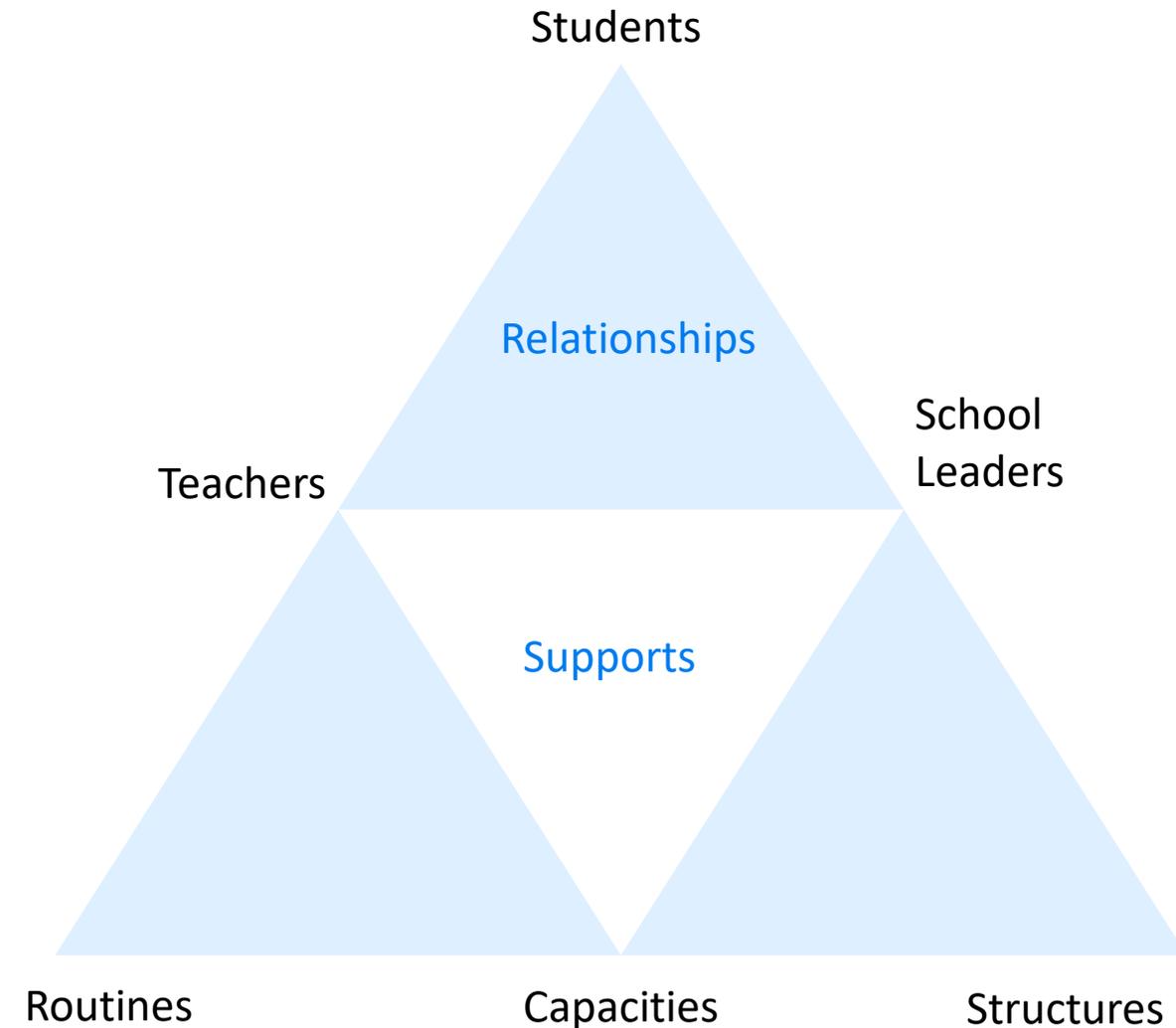


Schools exhibiting strong culture, higher levels of collaboration, and strong sense of community tend to retain staff and be higher performing.

In research, school culture has different definitions and is measured by different survey items. Meta-analyses of school culture studies identified some common features:

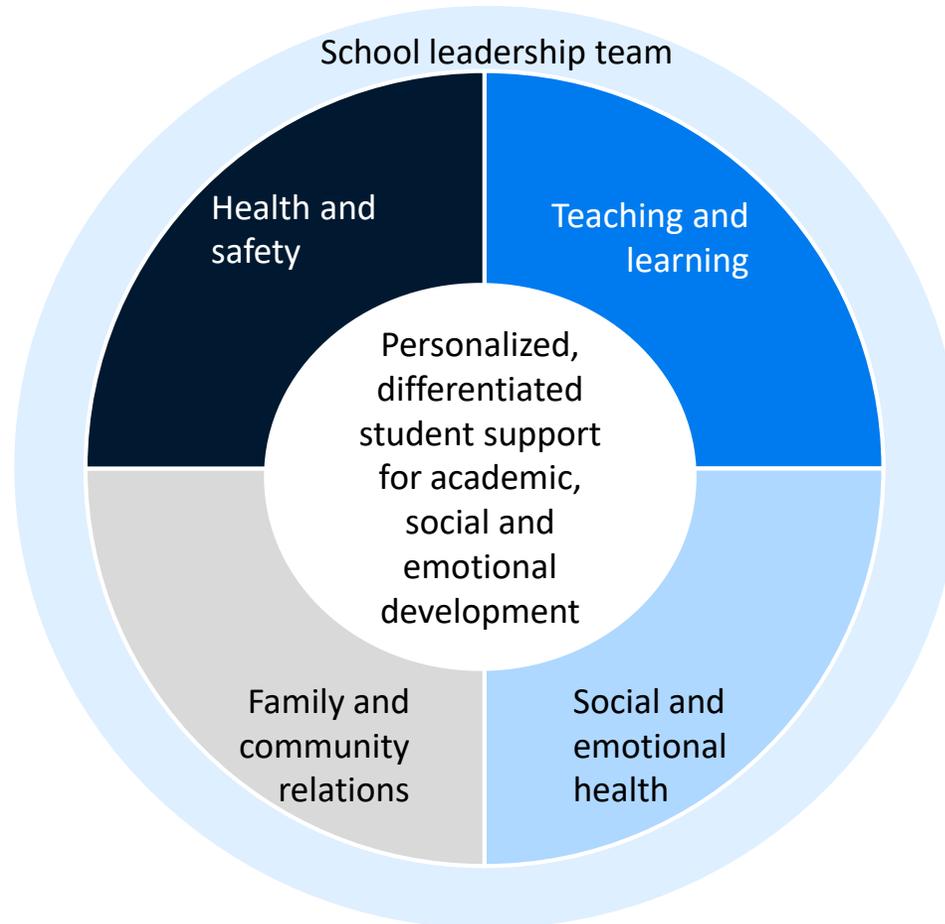
- Trust in colleagues and school administrators
- Staff engagement together in solving problems
- Mutual accountability and support
- Physical and emotional safety
- Autonomy to innovate
- Common sense of school mission
- Time to teach and to learn

During school closures, traditions, practices and policies have been interrupted. How can principals restart school culture to improve differentiation and personalization for students during these uncertain times?



Resetting school culture and collaboration: Structural supports now and for the future

Some national organizations and school districts are creating functional teams within schools to personalize and differentiate learning through the period of COVID-19. The functional teams are either being created or an existing team is addressing the content.



Previous research on what school principals can do to distribute leadership effectively in teams suggests:

- Clarify team responsibilities and responsibilities to collaborate
- Set a simple goal focused on equity and improvement
- Put the right people in place
- Trust teams to struggle and innovate
- Supply the right information and other resources
- Over-communicate

Resetting school culture and collaboration: Structural supports now and for the future

Team	Needs	Supports		
		Structures	Capacities	Routines
School leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's our school culture like now? • What do students needs and what are our priorities? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What supports and information will be coordinated among teams? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we balance change? • How can we set priorities to equitably meet student needs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we collaborate and coordinate work across the school?
Health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What assets are in place? • How well is our school operationally prepared? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What health screening measures should be in place? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we need to know in order to respond? Who needs to know it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What decision rules prompt our response? • How can we provide a coordinated response to preserve safety and security?
Teaching and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well did we meet students' instructional needs and what do students need now? • Who participated regularly and advanced, who did not, and why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are scope and sequence expectations now? • What's the oversight and accountability for learning? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can online learning capacity expand? • What professional learning do teachers need to support and expand online learning? • What talent do we need to provide student services now? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can grade-level and content teams continue to meet together? • How should learning be coordinated, personalized among teachers? • How can we support collaboration?
Social and emotional health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How well are we prepared to support students and educator in the long term? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will work with students and staff to address needs? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What tiered mental health supports need to be in place to restart schools? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What routine can we establish to celebrate our accomplishments? • How can we respectfully support educators who struggle with stress?
Family and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What communications must we prepare to provide? • Who did we reach and not reach, and why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who will communicate with families and community organizations? • What diverse "channels" are available to listen and speak with families? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How should we respectfully and thoughtfully communicate with families? • What partnerships can we leverage to support communication? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can we increased transparency and trust with families and communities? • How can we integrate health and education services for the benefit of communities?

Resetting school culture and collaboration: Structural supports now and for the future

Questions for small group discussion

- What has helped you to maintain a positive school culture during school closures?
- What functional groups do you have in place and which ones might be developed to support school restart?
 - Think about....
 - School leadership
 - Health and safety
 - Teaching and learning
 - Social and emotional health
 - Family and community
- How will the teams' work be coordinated to support problem-solving in the school?
- How can the teams' work help to restart school culture?

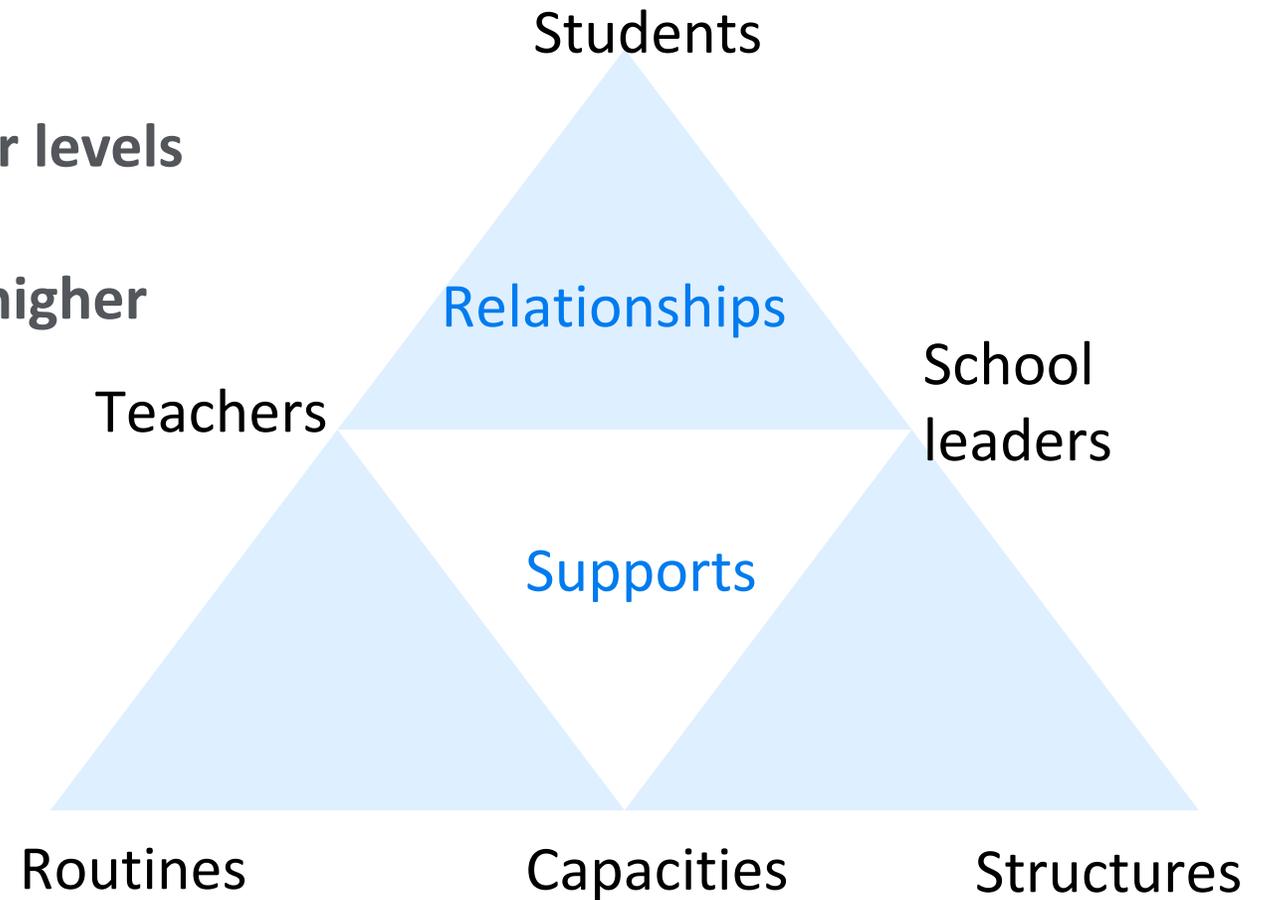
Beyond Quarantine: Resetting School Culture, Collaboration and Community

Rashidah Lopez Morgan

June 2020

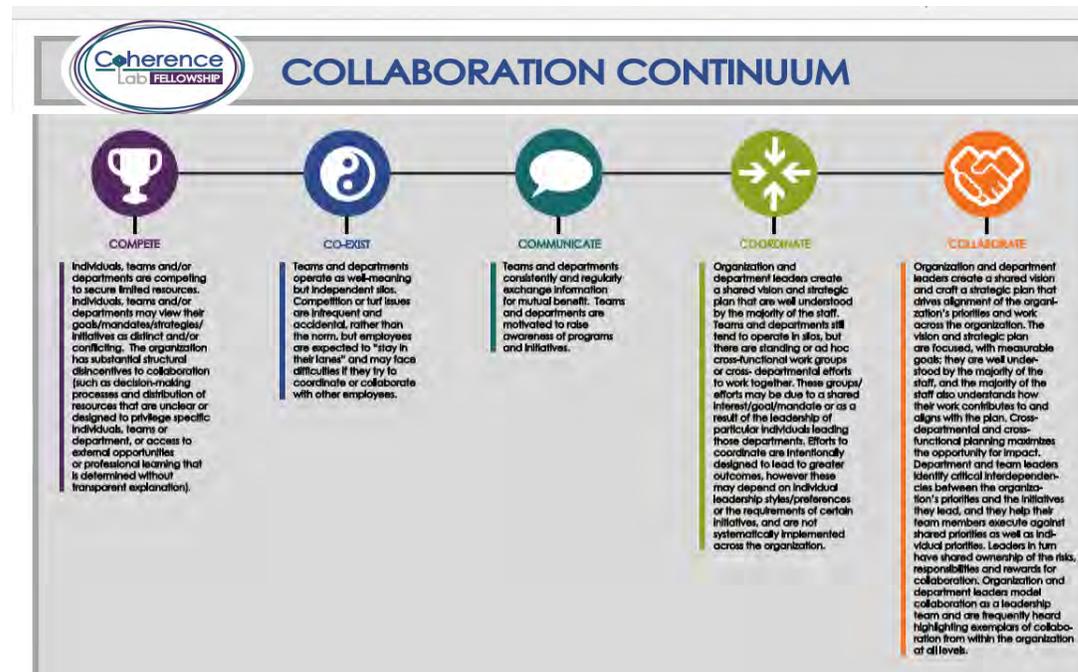
Culture and Collaboration

Schools exhibiting strong culture, higher levels of collaboration, and strong sense of community tend to retain staff and be higher performing.

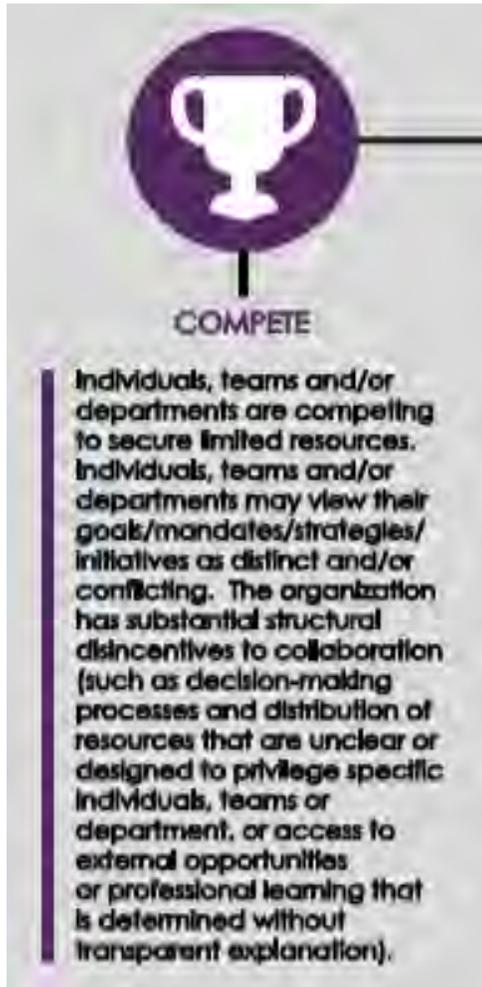


Collaboration Continuum

The Coherence Lab Fellowship's Collaboration Continuum is intended to help leaders intentional choices about working relationships within their teams and across their organization.



Compete



Capacities

Low levels of trust exist. Communication and coordination skills and time to work together is neither needed nor valued. Colleagues may have an instinct to guard information and resources, rather than develop productive relationships. Successful individuals become adept at micro-politics and workarounds. The organization may have a strategic plan and vision, but it is not well understood, shared or owned by departments.

Routines

Individuals, teams and departments are siloed and do not have regular ways to exchange information or work together across teams and departments. Information is shared only when requested and may be inaccurate or easy to misinterpret. Information moves only vertically (up and down) in the organization through traditional, hierarchical routines and relationships (such as manager/employee meetings, staff meetings and cabinet meetings). Internal and external communication and messages are likely to be disjointed, redundant or even conflicting, because they are the result of the competitive internal environment. Performance review processes may not exist or have consequence, or they may reward individual performance without taking account of team or department goals or impact.

Characteristics of the teams that **compete** include:

- May view their initiatives as distinct and/or conflicting
- Low levels of trust
- Guard information and resources
- Adept at micro-politics and workarounds
- Do not have regular ways to exchange information or work together
- Information moves through traditional, hierarchical routines and relationships

Co-exist



Capacities

There is little need, incentive or cultural expectation to build trust and partnership across the organization. Trust and time to work together may exist within a team and department only. Team members and leaders do not recognize nor seize opportunities to build mutually-beneficial relationships across departments. The organization may have a strategic plan and vision, but goals/mandates/strategies/initiatives are developed and delivered independently. Once developed and underway, team and department members and leaders do not identify or develop interdependent connections among the goals/mandates/strategies/initiatives. Communication is an independent function that varies in terms of quality and skill across teams and departments.

Routines

Each department likely sets its own performance target or sets targets in isolation with organization leadership without awareness of the targets of other departments. Lines of responsibility may not be clear. Decision making routines likely vary based on individual leadership styles. Each department likely has its own unique routines to exchange information and work together to create and approve work products. Information is easily shared throughout the department, but not across departments. The ease of finding information across departments may vary as a reflection of the different communication and knowledge management and planning routines. Communication materials and messages are likely to be developed, approved and shared directly by departments to external audiences, often resulting in conflicting or contradictory directives and confusion among recipients.

Characteristics of teams that co-exist include:

- Operate as independent silos
- Team members are expected to “stay in their lanes”
- Little expectation to build trust and partnership
- Do not seize opportunities to build mutually beneficial relationships
- Decision-making routines vary based on leadership styles
- Information is easily shared throughout the department but not across departments

Communicate



Teams and departments consistently and regularly exchange information for mutual benefit. Teams and departments are motivated to raise awareness of programs and initiatives.

Capacities

This mode requires good communication skills and routines; it requires a low initial level of trust and a relatively low investment of time. It is possible that there is a high level of motivation to work together, though teams and departments operating in this mode do not regularly share resources or work together. Information is widely shared by organization and department leadership. The organizational norm is to transparently provide information, but there are not clear expectations on how the information is used. Teams are likely to “CC” colleagues to keep them informed of progress, though teams and departments likely do not review or analyze the information to identify connection points or to integrate it into their own plans. At times, this may lead to an overwhelming amount of information and a challenge with distilling or prioritizing information.

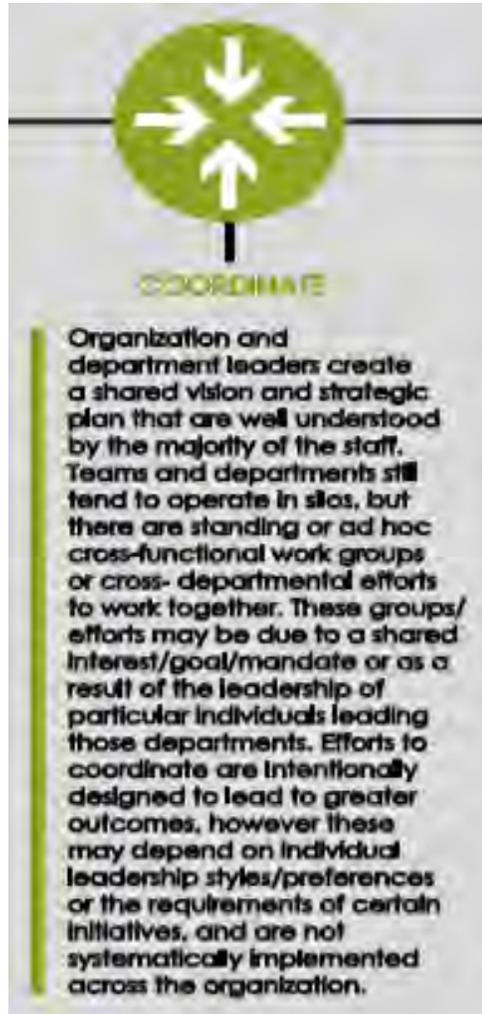
Routines

Shared information is accessible and frequently accessed at least by internal stakeholders who oversee functions or implement initiatives, but there are not routines established to incorporate the information into internal management processes, such as strategic planning, budgeting or performance reviews. Strategic planning and budgeting processes may not fully explore the capacity needed to implement and execute work, including the capacity needed for coordination or collaboration. Many external communication venues may continue to be led by different departments and reach multiple stakeholders with overlapping information or conflicting messages.

Characteristics of teams that **communicate** include:

- Consistently and regularly exchange information for mutual benefit
- High level of motivation to work together, though may not regularly share resources or work together
- Transparently provides information but does not have clear expectations on how the information is used
- Planning processes may not fully explore the capacity needed to for coordination and collaboration

Coordinate



Capacities

Trust and the instinct to coordinate exists. Leaders signal that working together is important, even when doing so requires more time or lengthier processes. Coordination requires some access to shared resources along with structural incentives to work together. Organization culture supports and spotlights examples of coordination, such as through performance reviews, internal communication updates or staff meetings. Individuals are willing to learn from each other and make mid-course corrections to spur continuous improvement. Decisions made by leaders are transparently shared with staff. External communication messages are proactively crafted to resonate with target audiences and the information can spur intended action.

Routines

Teams and departments proactively and regularly share information, and use this to inform engagement with the field, including program activities and implementation supports. Shared information is processed during major interdepartmental/cross-agency events, including strategic planning and budgeting, and used to make modifications to these if necessary. Routines for ongoing, systematic coordination across departments may only exist at the cabinet/senior executive levels. In partnership with organization leadership, departments regularly evaluate impact towards the organization's strategic plan and goals. External communication strategies, venues and information are synchronized to coordinate both timing and message, or at least they are centrally coordinated to identify and remove conflicting timing and information before sharing externally.

Characteristics of teams that **coordinate** include:

- May operate in silos but there are standing or ad hoc cross-functional group efforts to work together
- Efforts to coordinate may depend on individuals rather than systematic implementation
- Provides access to shared resources and information along with structural incentives to work together
- Decisions made by leaders are transparently shared with staff
- Shared information is processed and is used to make modifications during planning processes

Collaborate



COLLABORATE

Organization and department leaders create a shared vision and craft a strategic plan that drives alignment of the organization's priorities and work across the organization. The vision and strategic plan are focused, with measurable goals; they are well understood by the majority of the staff, and the majority of the staff also understands how their work contributes to and aligns with the plan. Cross-departmental and cross-functional planning maximizes the opportunity for impact. Department and team leaders identify critical interdependencies between the organization's priorities and the initiatives they lead, and they help their team members execute against shared priorities as well as individual priorities. Leaders in turn have shared ownership of the risks, responsibilities and rewards for collaboration. Organization and department leaders model collaboration as a leadership team and are frequently heard highlighting exemplars of collaboration from within the organization at all levels.

Capacities

Leaders and staff invest sometimes substantial time commitment to champion and participate in collaborative work. A high level of trust and many productive relationships are required. Organization leaders are champions and committed to creating the enabling conditions, including transparency and cultural expectations, to support collaboration, vertically and horizontally, within and across teams and departments. There is a high level of trust within teams and between departments, a desire to align strategies around priorities, and intentional delegation. Capacity is utilized in relation to priorities and resource deployment is aligned to needs and impact. Support for collaboration is evident from the top down and the bottom up. Organization leadership and staff use shared language. Communication and implementation strategies are designed from the outset, consistently reviewed against impact goals, and well-integrated throughout planning and implementation.

Routines

Organization and department leaders have created clear decision-making processes and routines for collaboration and to consider requests to revise/create changes to policy and practice. Departments have a consistent process for managing budgets and/or staff time. There is a deep commitment to continuous improvement and the organization creates shared moments of learning and reflection. Knowledge is transferred within teams and between departments. Professional learning is provided to build the capacity of staff to work collaboratively, including training related to budget development and management, guidance on intra-agency planning and decision-making from the administrative to executive levels. Onboarding new staff includes attention to the routines and processes for collaboration. Performance review processes reward collaboration and team contributions towards impact. Communication strategies and messages are carefully crafted and the organization uses a small number of communication vehicles to reinforce priorities internally and externally. Leaders in schools and school systems understand the organization's priorities and how to align their work to the organization's work.

Characteristics of teams that collaborate include:

- Cross-functional efforts maximize the opportunity for impact
- Identifies critical interdependencies between priorities and initiatives
- Leaders have shared ownership of risks, rewards and responsibilities for collaboration
- Clear decision-making processes and routines for collaboration
- Commitment to continuous improvement
- Shared moments of learning and reflection

Culture and Collaboration

- [Want to help someone? Shut up and listen?](#)-Ernesto Sirolli, TedxEQChChc
- Empathy Interviews, Coherence Lab Fellowship

What's the goal?

You are listening to...	You are not...
 Understand a person's experience, choices and behaviors	 Leading with your opinion
 Understand a person's point of view and relationship to the problem	 Identifying a solution
 "Get to know" the problem better	

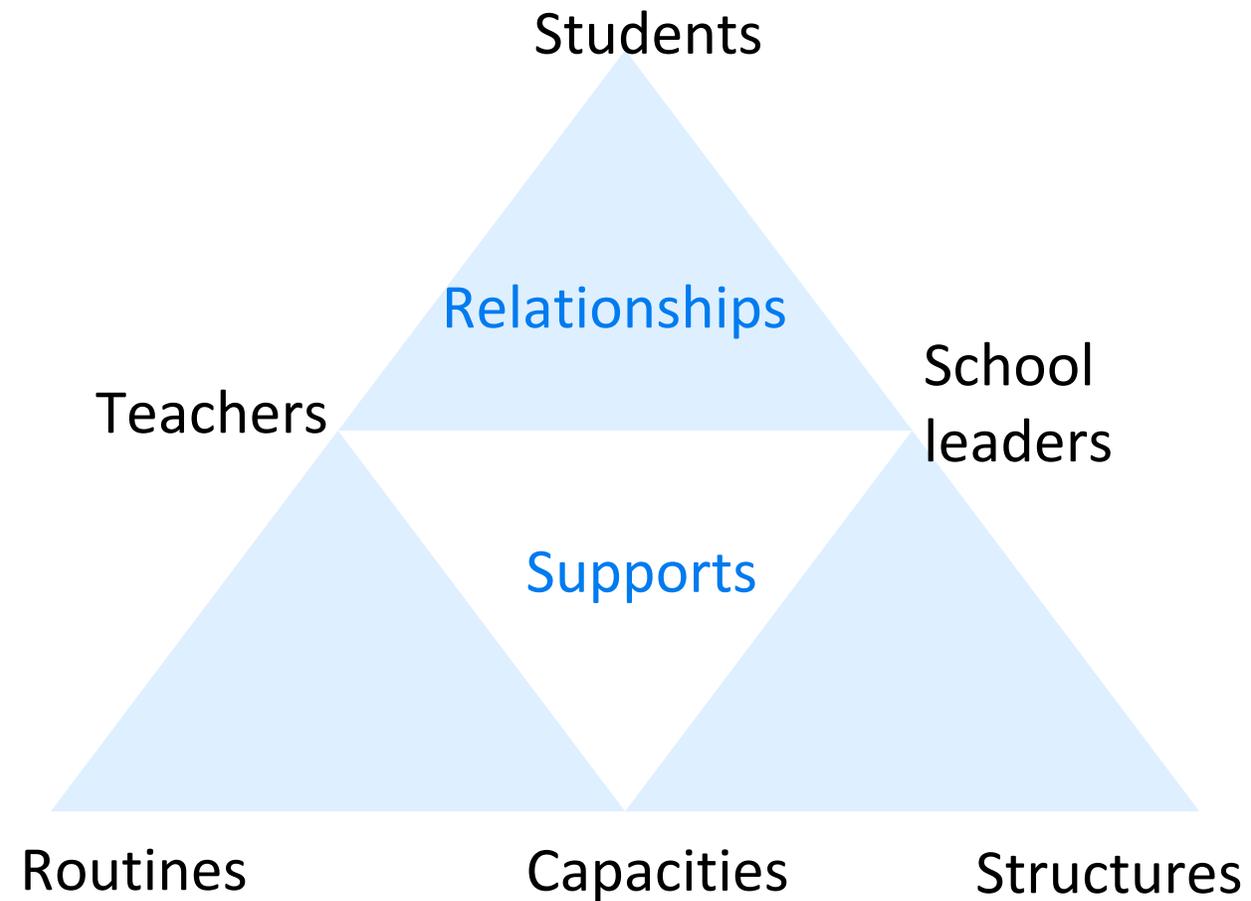


Example from practice: Leading data conversations

Leading teams with data protocols:
Capital City Public Charter School



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OdG7_ggEBlk



Example from practice: Leading data conversations

Leading teams with data protocols:
Capital City Public Charter School



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OdG7_ggEBlk

Structures: Common meeting time
Instructional leadership team

Routines: Leading data protocols
Principal and teacher-leader roles
Information sharing/working together

Capacities: Data sharing
Technology
Teacher training
Trust
Shared vision and ownership

Discussion

- As you reflect on the example, what would have to shift in hybrid/remote environment and what could stay the same?

Resetting school culture and collaboration: Structural supports now and for the future

Resources

American Association of School Administrators (2020). Resolution in support of a safe, healthy, and district-specific reopening process informed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines. Washington, DC: Author. Accessed: <http://aasacentral.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/AASA-Resolution-in-Support-of-a-Safe-Healthy-and-District-Specific-Reopening-Process.pdf>

American Federation of Teachers (2020). A plan to safely reopen America's schools and communities. Washington, DC: Author. Accessed: https://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/covid19_reopen-american-schools.pdf

American Institutes for Research (2020). Educator resilience and trauma-informed self-care: Self-assessment and planning tool. Washington, D.C.: Author. Accessed: <https://gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Educator-Resilience-Trauma-Informed-Self-Care-Self-Assessment.pdf>

American Institutes for Research (2020). Educator context and stress continuum. Washington, D.C.: Author. Accessed: https://gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Stress_Spectrum.pdf

Consortium for Educational Change (CEC) Virtual National Labor-Management Collaboration Symposium, June 29th-July 1st, 2020. For more information and to register visit www.cecweb.org.

Council of Chief State School Officers (2020). Restart & recovery framework. Washington, DC: Author. Accessed: <https://ccsso.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/CCSSO%20COVID19%20Strategic%20Report%20final.pdf>

Council of Chief State School Officers COVID-19 resources: <https://ccsso.org/coronavirus>

Resetting school culture and collaboration: Structural supports now and for the future

Resources

Council of Great City Schools (2020). Ensuring a data-driven approach to reopening schools after COVID-19: Recommendations for research and assessment. Washington, D.C.: Author. Accessed: <https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/313/Data-Driven%20Approach%20to%20Reopening%20Schools.pdf>

Council of Great City Schools (2020). Addressing mental health and social-emotional wellness in the COVID-19 crisis. Washington, D.C.: Author. Accessed: https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/313/CGCS_SocialEmot_Resources.pdf

Council of Great City Schools (2020). Operational issues in the reopening of schools during the COVID-19 crisis. Washington, D.C.: Author. Accessed: <https://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/DC00001581/Centricity/Domain/313/Operations%20Report%20Final.pdf>

National Association of Elementary School Principals Coronavirus Resources: <https://www.naesp.org/content/coronavirus-resources>.

National Education Association (2020). Collaborating in a crisis: Ensuring educator voice when it matters most. Washington, DC: Author. Accessed: <http://myschoolmyvoice.nea.org/collaborating-forstudent-success/get-the-collaborating-in-a-crisis-guidebook/>

Tennessee Department of Education (2020). Reopening schools: Sample social distancing and field operations procedures. Nashville: Author. Accessed: <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/health-&-safety/Reopening%20Procedures.pdf>

Tennessee Department of Education (2020). School reopening toolkit: School improvement. Nashville: Author. Accessed: <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/health-&-safety/School%20Improvement.pdf>

Tennessee Department of Education (2020). School reopening toolkit: Physical health. Nashville: Author. Accessed: <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/health-&-safety/Physical%20Health.pdf>

U.S. Department of Education (2020). Education school climate survey. Washington, D.C.: Author. Accessed: <https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/survey/us-department-education-school-climate-survey-edscls>