Digital Equity Checklist

The COVID-19 pandemic brought to light the extreme inequities that exist around the digital divide. Digital Promise is working to ensure that each student has equitable access to powerful learning opportunities.

The Digital Equity Checklist is informed by how districts in the League of Innovative Schools prepared for reopening schools in hybrid and distance learning environments during the COVID-19 pandemic. It serves as a guide to support district leaders in meeting the needs of every student, with a directed focus on under-resourced students. This guide highlights six primary categories that include and extend beyond providing students with devices and internet access.
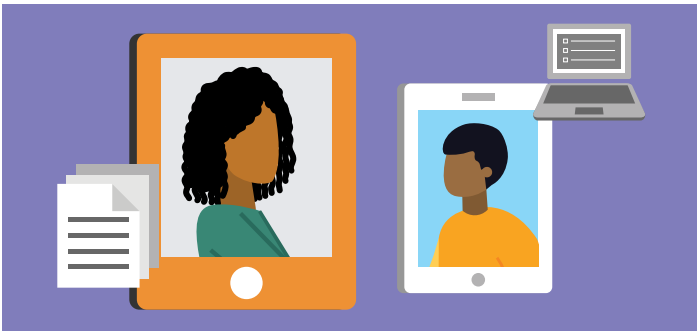

Devices & Internet Access

Ensure that each student has a fully functional device and high-speed internet that allows them to access powerful digital learning opportunities.

- ☐ Survey families to determine if students have access to the internet and a fully functional device.
- ☐ Ensure each student has equitable access to high-speed internet (including but not limited to hotspots, WiFi parking lots).
- ☐ Plan for students who may max out their internet data package.
- ☐ Engage local internet providers and community partners who can connect under-resourced students access to the internet.
- ☐ If providing hot spots, include procedures to filter for CIPA compliance.
- ☐ Provide tiered tech support resources for all devices throughout the district.
- ☐ Adhere to student privacy laws, including FERPA, and ensure the safety of data through cybersecurity and other measures.
- ☐ Provide opportunities for students to learn media literacy and digital citizenship.
- ☐ Provide training for teachers and families/caregivers on digital citizenship.

Communication & Engagement

Ensure that engagement with under-resourced communities is prioritized and includes the voices of all stakeholders.

- ☐ Survey and engage community stakeholders throughout the planning process.
- ☐ Invite parents from all economic backgrounds within the district to share an equal voice in the reopening decision making.
- ☐ Adapt communication strategies and differentiate delivery methods to ensure messaging will reach the communities most impacted by the pandemic. (Email, social media, webinars, office hours, etc.)
- ☐ Incorporate support for families/caregivers to help them navigate through the curriculum (Parent On-Demand Training Portal, Parent Help Desk, etc.).
- ☐ Redesign parent/teacher communication to address accessibility options.

Teaching & Learning

Ensure that curriculum and instruction are adapted to the virtual learning environment and supports are in place to provide access to learning prioritizing the needs of the most under-resourced.
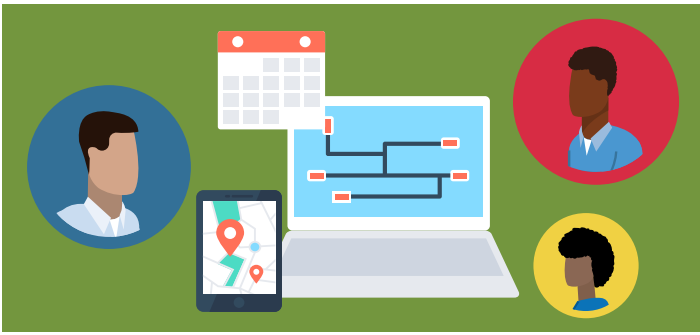
☐ Adjust assessment of student learning to reflect current methods of teaching, focusing on competency and mastery, rather than non-academic measures.

☐ Ensure that the instructional model and curriculum are culturally relevant, responsive, and representative of student populations.

☐ Provide instructional supports to students whose progress may have been impacted by learning loss.

☐ Ensure that students' selected devices are compatible with the curriculum and instructional software.

☐ Implement support for students with diverse needs (English Language Learners, students with special needs, struggling learners, etc.)

☐ Examine and modify grading practices to ensure grading is centered in equity.

☐ Evaluate pedagogical practices to ensure adaptation to virtual and hybrid classroom models.

Budget & Funding Opportunities

Ensure that the district is addressing educational parity for students farthest from opportunity through equitable funding models.

☐ Research and evaluate needs in the district by student demographic and align funding with those needs.

☐ Evaluate traditional resource allocation methods against equity-focused principles.

☐ Incorporate the most current guidance from local and federal relief programs and other COVID funding opportunities (grants, non-government related entities, educational organizations).

☐ Ensure that the allocation of funding is transparent and student-centered across the district.

☐ Include a funding model that ensures students have a positive trajectory towards college and career readiness.

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Policy, Support & Logistics

Ensure policy and practices support positive outcomes for all learners.

- ☐ Appoint an executive group to oversee and delegate the tasks required to execute the plan and achieve the district's goals.
- ☐ Incorporate an update to policies and procedures that have been affected by COVID-19 or distance learning. (i.e: attendance, grading, promotion, graduation, sick leave, etc.)
- ☐ Include a flow chart of a student's path during a typical day, including transportation, check-ins, meals, classroom changes, etc.)
- ☐ Include reopening scenarios and contingencies to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of all students and staff.
- ☐ Make adjustments to the master schedule to include opportunities for remediation and additional supports.
- ☐ Prioritize technological support for families.
- ☐ Reevaluate expectations for students, families/caregivers, and teachers..
- ☐ Create high-quality, frequent feedback processes through teacher feedback in the appropriate instructional delivery method.
- ☐ Set protocols to deliver and distribute meals to students.

Professional Development

Ensure school staff is knowledgeable and have opportunities to successfully support student engagement in virtual classrooms and courses.

- ☐ Identify ongoing needs for professional learning through robust teacher feedback systems, including surveys.
- ☐ Address and incorporate the feedback of school staff to understand their comfort level with online platforms to tailor learning opportunities and workshops.
- ☐ Provide professional development on how to create and maintain a successful virtual classroom.
- ☐ Consider expanding access to professional development through micro-credentials and other formats.
- ☐ Continually update opportunities for synchronous and asynchronous professional learning on relevant, high-need topics.

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