

# Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan Template (2020–21)

The instructions for completing the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan is available at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/re/lc/documents/lrngcntntyatndncpln-instructions.docx>.

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## General Information

[A description of the impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on the LEA and its community.]

As an online public school, school operations were impacted minimally by the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to the onset of COVID-19 the majority of our instruction and support was offered in a virtual environment; however, driven by state and public health department guidance, all in-person activities, events, and support were suspended and moved to virtual support. Additional virtual opportunities for both community building and academic support were made available, so that students have additional access to Method teachers and support staff. In consideration of its employees’ health and safety, Method Schools shut down its headquarters, and all staff moved to work remotely from home.

While the onset of COVID-19 did not significantly impact the daily operations, Method recognizes the intangible effects of the pandemic on the general morale of both staff and students and staff. Method Schools leadership and faculty were instructed to be aware of social and emotional fatigue in the Method community such as increased anxiety, stress, and/or fatigue.

## Stakeholder Engagement

[A description of the efforts made to solicit stakeholder feedback.]

Upon the onset of COVID-19, Method Schools released regular updates to all stakeholders as new guidance was released. With the understanding that these sudden measures take a toll on all stakeholders’ well beings, Method Schools increased its visibility through a heightened social media presence and virtual community and social events.

Method Schools also offered a series of virtual Parent workshops focused on the discussion of COVID-19, its affects of students and family, as well as how to support your student emotionally and academically through a turbulent time. Further, Method Schools solicited feedback through regular check-in and communication with students and through an end of year survey which asked parents to measure Method’s level of support in response to COVID-19.

In response to the sudden move of staff to work completely from home, one on one check-ins with faculty and staff increased in its regularity from every month to every week in order to assess the level of support that Method Schools provided. Method also conducted a staff survey to get feedback on the morale of faculty in light of COVID and to assess any added needs based on the move to working completely remote and provided all hands updates on a more regular basis.

[A description of the options provided for remote participation in public meetings and public hearings.]

Method continues to provide Zoom access information (links, phone numbers, conference IDs) on all Board meeting agendas so members of the public, as well as staff and Board members, may participate remotely in these meetings.

[A summary of the feedback provided by specific stakeholder groups.]

Based on the end of year Method parent survey released in June 2020, Method found the following results:

1. 80.8% felt the homeroom teacher support increased (31.31%) or maintained (49.49%) in response to COVID-19.
2. 74% found that opportunities for virtual instructional classes as well as added educational support such as Teach Squad or Study Halls increased or maintained.
3. 71% of families found that virtual social opportunities increased or maintained.
4. 80% felt that Method Schools maintained or increased the level of parent support.
5. 77% found the level of Method Schools' responsiveness was maintained or increased.

The following results were found in the staff survey:

1. All staff (100%) were extremely satisfied (70%) or somewhat satisfied with their current work from home arrangement.
2. 82% of staff felt somewhat or extremely optimistic about working from home.
3. 76% felt they have all the equipment they need to work from home and 92% have a dedicated work space.

In a solicitation of open response, staff members felt positive about the support received from Method, staff members responded to say support "has been great" and "feel fully supported."

[A description of the aspects of the Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan that were influenced by specific stakeholder input.]

Based on stakeholder input, Method Schools begins the 2020-21 school year with a focus on increasing virtual community building opportunities and a more robust catalog of live instructional classes. To increase the social aspects of education, teachers are also facilitating weekly group homeroom instruction for students to build positive relationships and positive peer pressure to achieve. Method Schools published a resource list for parents and students that

Method Schools allotted all staff a one-time stipend of funds to assist in the transition and added expense of working from home.

## Continuity of Learning

### In-Person Instructional Offerings

[A description of the actions the LEA will take to offer classroom-based instruction whenever possible, particularly for students who have experienced significant learning loss due to school closures in the 2019–2020 school year or are at a greater risk of experiencing learning loss due to future school closures.]

Method Schools in a non-classroom based school and has operated a completely online model for the past three years and plans to increase the quality of virtual learning in years to come. As a non-classroom based school, in-person support pre-COVID was limited to Teach Squad, field trips, and Mobile STEM events. These have been moved to online events.

While end of the year data demonstrated very little learning loss in our students based on internal diagnostic data, initial enrollment projections show a large influx of students coming to Method Schools from other school districts and recognizes student learning loss due to the school closures experienced elsewhere. Method Schools has “New Parent” Workshops planned, newly revised self-paced orientation classes for students, and upon enrollment, all students meet with Method staff for a live, virtual orientation.

Learning loss will be measured through an initial diagnostic assessment (iReady) and instruction will be tailored to meet the needs of students after a thorough analysis of data by Method’s data team in collaboration with instructional leads.

### Actions Related to In-Person Instructional Offerings [additional rows and actions may be added as necessary]

Description	Total Funds	Contributing
Teach Squad, Field Trips and Mobile STEM Events will continue	\$150,000	N

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## Distance Learning Program

### Continuity of Instruction

[A description of how the LEA will provide continuity of instruction during the school year to ensure pupils have access to a full curriculum of substantially similar quality regardless of the method of delivery, including the LEA's plan for curriculum and instructional resources that will ensure instructional continuity for pupils if a transition between in-person instruction and distance learning is necessary.]

Method Schools continues providing online curriculum through proprietary Student Information System and Learning Management System, Smartfox. Smartfox is completely online and accessible through laptops, desktops, as well as mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones.

Smartfox curriculum is Common Core aligned, provides multiple modalities of instruction, and is flexible. Embedded within the Smartfox curriculum, students are connected to outside learning resources such as an online book catalog (Overdrive) for access to digital textbooks and novels, a foundational reading program (Reading A-Z), as well as online science labs and virtual hands-on instruction (Gizmos).

To help orient new students to the online learning environment, self-paced online orientations as well as live orientations are offered by Method homeroom teachers and Student Success Managers.

### Access to Devices and Connectivity

[A description of how the LEA will ensure access to devices and connectivity for all pupils to support distance learning.]

Method Schools provides loaner laptops and/or chromebooks to students. These devices are shipped directly to the student's home. To ensure internet connectivity and accessibility, Method refers families to the Internet For All Now plan, a state program that provides access to affordable offers for those who qualify based on a variety of income measures including NSLP eligibility, participation in CalFresh or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, SSI, Medi-Cal, or a household income of under \$40,000/year.

### Pupil Participation and Progress

[A description of how the LEA will assess pupil progress through live contacts and synchronous instructional minutes, and a description of how the LEA will measure participation and time value of pupil work.]

In addition to asynchronous online curriculum, Method also offers synchronous live sessions in group web conference format through Zoom. Method instructors facilitate and teach weekly sessions in all core subjects. In addition, at-promise students that demonstrate mastery one

or more grade levels below that of their peers are assigned additional Targeted Direct Instruction (TDI) sessions that in which teachers work with smaller student groups to target specific learning gaps.

Each student is assigned a homeroom teacher that oversees the overall progress of the student in all of his/her courses. Student and homeroom teachers meet weekly in 1-on-1 meetings between the student and teacher or in a group setting with other homeroom students. These one on one and group meetings are designed to check in with the student(s), provide feedback, make school wide announcements, review course progress, set learning goals and check progress in these learning goals.

## **Distance Learning Professional Development**

[A description of the professional development and resources that will be provided to staff to support the distance learning program, including technological support.]

As an online school, Method staff is well-trained to support a distance learning program. Professional development is included throughout the year and include but is not limited to: Student Engagement Strategies, Instructional Interventions for Struggling Students, Social Emotional Learning, Working with Parents, as well as technical trainings such on learning tools such as PearDeck, Zoom, and Smartfox.

## **Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

[A description of the new roles and responsibilities of affected staff as a result of COVID-19.]

As a virtual-based school, Method was well-prepared to handle the needs of staff and students that depend on a remote-based program due to COVID-19 requirements. Our field trips and teach squad programs have been moved to completely virtual operations and our teachers now offer virtual field trips and tours. All staff continue to remain vigilant to stay ahead of potential issues brought on by COVID-19.

## **Supports for Pupils with Unique Needs**

[A description of the additional supports the LEA will provide during distance learning to assist pupils with unique needs, including English learners, pupils with exceptional needs served across the full continuum of placements, pupils in foster care, and pupils who are experiencing homelessness.]

As an online school, Method Schools continues to implement its program as designed to assist English Learners, pupils with exceptional needs, pupils in foster care, and pupils experiencing homelessness.

English Learners participate in specific curriculum in iReady, work with their homeroom teacher who implements SDAIE strategies to make curriculum accessible. English learners participate in additional live Targeted Direct Instruction sessions every week as well as group sessions with a designated EL teacher.

Method also has a Special Education program and abides by student individual educational plans. Services such as Specialized Academic Instruction, speech and language sessions, and counseling are provided virtually through web conferencing.

Students in foster care and experiencing homelessness receive additional assistance by receiving loaner laptops provided by Method to access online curriculum, communicate with teachers and support staff, as well as attend online classes, study halls, and Method social events. Internet service assistance is provided to any student qualifying for financial need as demonstrated by National School Lunch Program criteria.

**Actions Related to the Distance Learning Program [additional rows and actions may be added as necessary]**

Description	Total Funds	Contributing
Professional Development for Teachers	\$25,000	N
Expanding loaner laptop inventory	\$75,000	N
Specific iReady Curriculum and Online Targeted Direct Instruction	\$100,000	Y

**Pupil Learning Loss**

[A description of how the LEA will address pupil learning loss that results from COVID-19 during the 2019–2020 and 2020–21 school years, including how the LEA will assess pupils to measure learning status, particularly in the areas of English language arts, English language development, and mathematics.]

Method Schools recognizes pupil learning loss that results from COVID-19 during the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school year. At the start of enrollment, students participate in a diagnostic assessment to measure the student’s abilities in Reading and Math. These results are thoroughly analyzed by instructors on an individual basis and by Method Schools’ data team at a school wide and grade-by-grade level to identify potential learning gaps by student and by group.

**Pupil Learning Loss Strategies**

[A description of the actions and strategies the LEA will use to address learning loss and accelerate learning progress for pupils, as needed, including how these strategies differ for pupils who are English learners; low-income; foster youth; pupils with exceptional needs; and pupils experiencing homelessness.]

Method Schools follows a multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) model in order to put specific and targeted interventions and strategies in place to address learning loss. Method Schools data team in collaboration with instructional staff analyze initial diagnostic assessment results to identify specific learning gaps at each grade level which inform the adjustment of instructional strategies and refinement of Smartfox curriculum to address the learning gaps demonstrated at each grade level.

Students who demonstrate significant learning loss are identified and interventions such as Targeted Direct Instruction, the involvement with Student Success Managers, or receive added instruction in computer literacy, study skills, or time management.

English learners receive added instruction with iReady curriculum and sessions with English Language Development instructor. Pupils with Exceptional needs receive accommodations and supports as identified by their Individualized Education Plan. Finally, low income, foster youth, and pupils experiencing homelessness receive assistance and access to computers and internet service.

## Effectiveness of Implemented Pupil Learning Loss Strategies

[A description of how the effectiveness of the services or supports provided to address learning loss will be measured.]

Method Schools regularly assesses students throughout the year using internal diagnostic tools to ensure student growth. At regular intervals, students take the iReady test to measure growth in reading and math. From these results, Method data team help to analyze results and inform instructional staff on its effectiveness. From this data, instructional staff makes refinements and adjustments to instruction to ensure teaching addresses student needs as demonstrated by the data.

## Actions to Address Pupil Learning Loss [additional rows and actions may be added as necessary]

Description	Total Funds	Contributing
Addition of Data Analyst role on staff	\$80,000	N
Addition of added Student Success Manager Staff	\$125,000	N

## Mental Health and Social and Emotional Well-Being

[A description of how the LEA will monitor and support mental health and social and emotional well-being of pupils and staff during the school year, including the professional development and resources that will be provided to pupils and staff to address trauma and other impacts of COVID-19 on the school community.]

Method's Human Resources department has provided all employees with resources and training to help support students/families and employees that may require additional support due to strains caused by COVID. This includes mental health resources available to all staff, free mental health resource sharing with families, and frequent communication and check-ins with staff and students to provide any help as

needed. Method has partnered with ComPsych to provide all employees with an opportunity to attend virtual/phone counseling sessions as needed. Additionally, teachers are in frequent communication with our students and look for any potential signs of emotional or social trauma. As our in-person field trips have been cancelled during COVID, our teachers have added virtual field trips as well as several virtual social interaction events so that students can maintain healthy social relationships with their teachers and peers.

## Pupil and Family Engagement and Outreach

[A description of pupil engagement and outreach, including the procedures for tiered reengagement strategies for pupils who are absent from distance learning and how the LEA will provide outreach to pupils and their parents or guardians, including in languages other than English, when pupils are not meeting compulsory education requirements, or if the LEA determines the pupil is not engaging in instruction and is at risk of learning loss.]

Method Schools employs a team of intervention staff (Student Success Managers) who identify students who are not fully participating in their educational program. Student Success Managers, SSMs, work with students and parents in order to address obstacles that prevent each student’s participation in the education requirements. Interventions can include: increased accountability check ins, incentive programs, additional instructional supports such as study halls, targeted instruction, and/or help in coping with social emotional stress, study skills, time management, and life skills.

Student Success Team meeting protocols are in place as a formal process to promote student success. These team meetings involve student, parent, homeroom teacher, and Student Success Manager.

## School Nutrition

[A description of how the LEA will provide nutritionally adequate meals for all pupils, including those students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, when pupils are participating in both in-person instruction and distance learning, as applicable.]

As a non-classroom based school, Method Schools does not provide meals for its pupils.

## Additional Actions to Implement the Learning Continuity Plan [additional rows and actions may be added as necessary]

Section	Description	Total Funds	Contributing
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Mental Health and Social Emotional Well-being	Mental Health services for students	\$75,000	Y

## Increased or Improved Services for Foster Youth, English Learners, and Low-Income Students

Percentage to Increase or Improve Services	Increased Apportionment Based on the Enrollment of Foster Youth, English Learners, and Low-Income students
11.06%	\$1,332,122

### Required Descriptions

[For the actions being provided to an entire school, or across the entire school district or county office of education (COE), an explanation of (1) how the needs of foster youth, English learners, and low-income students were considered first, and (2) how these actions are effective in meeting the needs of these students.]

Method Schools strives for a 1:1 device to student ratio and a loaner laptop program is in place to ensure that every student has access to Method Schools regardless of financial burden or socioeconomic status. Families demonstrating need are referred to an internet assistance program that provides internet access to the home at low monthly rates. Financial assistance for those demonstrating extreme financial hardship is also provided.

English language learners have additional supports in place at the onset of their educational program to ensure they are receiving additional instruction in language development. Asynchronous lessons are provided specific to their needs through iReady as well as Reading A-Z, and an English Language Development teacher oversees each student's progress in their language development through weekly online and synchronous group sessions.

[A description of how services for foster youth, English learners, and low-income students are being increased or improved by the percentage required.]

Method Schools expanded by 100% its computer fleet in order to meet the increased need for student access and implemented a Internet Service Assistance program to ensure any student has access to online instruction and curriculum.

English Learners receive access to iReady curriculum and the Reading A-Z program to supplement grade level work in Smartfox curriculum. All teachers are trained on scaffolding and SDAIE strategies and work with a specific teacher is assigned to specifically oversee their learning progress and development in English fluency.