



# SCHOOL'S IN SESSION? FOR ADMINISTRATORS, IT'S TIME TO START PREPARING.

As you enjoy the sunshine and your summer break, it might seem like the school year only just ended. But as a school administrator, you don't actually get much of a break. Before you know it, the start of a new school year will be knocking at your door, which is why you need to think ahead, prepare, and be ready for the upcoming academic year. Principals and school administrators are charged with parsing through information about changing procedures, toggling expectations from various stakeholders, and incorporating this information in planning for the school. You're responsible for laying down a framework of operation that addresses the needs of the students, teachers, families, and staff within your school community.

Without the right resources, it's easy to lose track of all that you'll need to do. **Use this guide as a basic framework for things you need to consider and tasks you'll need to complete as you prepare for the return to school.**



## CONSIDER CHANGES

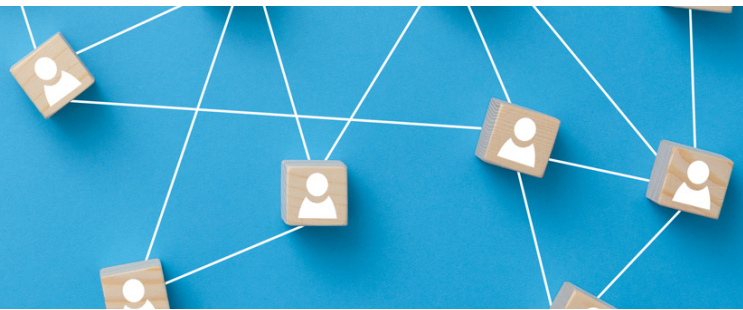
Changes you'll need to think about for the new school year might either come from external entities, like the federal government, your state, and your school district, while other changes you'll make will be driven by internal stakeholders.

- Monitor how federal, state, and local regulations are continuing to evolve in regard to COVID-19.
- With so many changes happening in the learning environment in recent years, think about how you can continue to support your school community or local government to collectively adapt and respond to these changes as they happen.
- Think about your management of employees as we continue to transition to a post-pandemic world. You might have to manage employment related matters and claims related to vaccine mandates and long COVID.
- Review your school safety plan and determine if you'll need to make changes to procedures for emergencies, such as natural disasters or intruder drills. Update this plan according to recommendations set forth by public health officials and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
- Assess your school's policies regarding campus visitors and make sure they're aligned with the school's safety plan.
- If your school has partnerships with community organizations or wants to partner with new organizations, investigate the logistical steps you'll need to take to foster these partnerships.
- Think about the goals you want to achieve with existing or potential partnerships. If you plan to continue an existing relationship, determine what (if anything) should change.
- Take stock of policies for extracurricular activities and school sponsored events, and make adjustments, as needed.
- Identify ways to optimize professional development opportunities for teachers and staff.
- Revisit how you can best support teachers as they plan their curriculums and make changes to best support student learning in the upcoming academic year.
- If you've received feedback from teachers, parents, students, or staff about how to make improvements in different aspects of your school's operations, try to implement changes to meet their needs. Practice diplomacy and apply practicality while balancing divergent viewpoints.

# DEVELOP & ROLL OUT A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Balancing the needs of diverse stakeholders means that you'll need to communicate any pertinent information before and throughout the school year in a clear, effective, and timely manner. You'll likely need to make adjustments in your communication depending on the type of information you're sharing and the stakeholders with whom you're sharing that information.

- Communication takes many shapes and forms, whether it's written, visual, virtual, or in person. You'll need to have a pulse on what works best for different stakeholders and have a tailored communication strategy for each of these groups.
- Identify how you've shared information in the past and take stock of what worked, what didn't work, and what can be improved.
- Consider if you'll need to translate any communication to different languages based on your school's needs or make adjustments for special needs individuals.
- If you have an online presence via social media or a website, think about how you can leverage these resources to share information with your school community. If your school has a website, make sure it meets accessibility standards and that it's easy for people to find how to contact the school.
- Find ways to gather feedback from teachers, students, families, and staff about their respective experiences so the upcoming school year is a more positive experience than the previous year.
- If there are any changes in how the school operates or paperwork that you'll need to collect, share this information with those who will be affected in a timely and clear manner.
- Plan and implement any necessary staff trainings. This includes training on protocols, [sexual harassment](#), and school safety.





## COLLABORATE WITH STAKEHOLDERS

You have a lot of items to check off on your back-to-school checklist, and in order to complete these tasks and be ready for the academic year, you'll need to collaborate with your stakeholders.

- Consider how decisions are made at your school and how you can involve different groups, such as students, families, teachers, and staff.
- How do school administrators, teachers, and campus staff work together for the benefit of the student body?
- Find ways to work with different on-campus teams to set goals and define success metrics for teamwork that you can track as the school year progresses.
- Have a structure for teachers to give each other feedback about their teaching plans and instruction style.
- Develop a plan to track students' learning progress and spaces for teachers to exchange ideas about tactics that are working as well as areas in which they need help.
- Work with parents to improve student learning outcomes and make sure you plan for parent-teacher conferences during the school year.
- Ensure you have a record keeping system in place that allows you to easily access and track information that you might need to share with teachers, staff, students, and families. Keeping records in order also helps you in the event you have to deal with a claim.
- Collaborate with community organizations that can provide resources to your school and improve students' learning and overall experience on campus.



# TAKE CARE OF HOUSEKEEPING

An important part of being ready for a new school year is making sure that buildings are clean and you have supplies available so teachers can best do their jobs and students are in an environment where they're safely able to learn.

- Arrange for the summer cleaning and maintenance process. Make sure that these tasks get completed in time.
- Inspect campus grounds and buildings to make sure they're in good shape and free from [mold and pollution](#). Schedule any repairs that need to be made.
- Order school supplies so they arrive in time for teachers to use in their classrooms.
- [Review your risk management approach and insurance policies with your broker](#) to make sure that they're aligned with the evolving needs of your campus.

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School administrators have a lot to think about and do to prepare for a new school year. The burden of responsibility that comes with being entrusted to operate a safe learning environment for all school community members isn't easy to carry, which is why it's important to stay one step ahead, think strategically, and act collaboratively.

With so many competing priorities, thinking about a risk mitigation strategy might not be top of mind, but failure to do so can have devastating consequences. Our dedicated Education team has the resources and expertise to help you manage your school's risks as they evolve.



[CONTACT US TODAY TO LEARN HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO CREATE A HOLISTIC RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN.](#)

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