



Insight: July 2020

Opening School's Amidst a Pandemic

As schools and educational institutions prepare to resume activities across the country, the scare of the pandemic worsens with each passing day. While governments have changed the narrative around the severity of the disease seeking public cooperation, school owners and operators must be mindful to strengthen their defense and develop strategies to mitigate, tackle and overcome the ill effects of the corona virus.

Schools need to understand that their eagerness to reopen should not result in nearsightedness. The rush to resume activities can lead to managerial oversight leading to drastic ramifications such as school closures and containment. In this monograph, suggestions have been made keeping the safety of all teachers, students and staff in mind. Schools must work towards creation of a detailed recommencement plan in line not only with the national regulations but also by understanding international best practices and guidelines issued by bodies such as UNESCO, WHO, IIEP etc.

About Eduvisors:

Eduvisors is a leading sector-focused consulting firm in Education in India. A part of Barry & Stone (B&S), a global network of independent consulting firms with 12 offices in 8 countries, Eduvisors is a pioneer amongst consulting firms in India with sole focus on the Education sector.

For more information, please contact:

Bharat Parmar

T: +91 (124) 4119162, 4229162 Extn. 106

M: +91 98117 99162

E: bharat@eduvisors.org

To unsubscribe, please write to unsubscribe@eduvisors.org

Disclaimer:

This Monograph has been prepared for clients and Firm personnel only. It provides general information and guidance as on date of preparation and does not express views or expert opinions of Eduvisors. The Monograph is meant for general guidance and no responsibility for loss arising to any person acting or refraining from acting as a result of any material contained in this Monograph will be accepted by Eduvisors. It is recommended that professional advice be sought based on the specific facts and circumstances. This monograph does not substitute the need to refer to the original pronouncements and is based on publicly available information.

Key Focus Areas: Identify High Contact Zones

It is imperative for schools to seek out and identify areas in the school where students and staff come in close contact with each other. The best way of doing so is reviewing a student's typical day in the school and identify likely common areas and interaction points where the student is widely exposed.

- In accordance with the respective state **government regulations**, schools must devise a student attendance strategy and supplement the same with cordoning off areas that require physical engagement and supervising the same to ensure that social distancing is strictly followed .
- Beginning from the classroom, cafeteria, auditoriums right down to water coolers and play grounds will need to be individually assessed for housekeeping service levels in order to adhere to social distancing norms. Adjacent table shows different areas of school segregated based upon frequency of student / staff movement

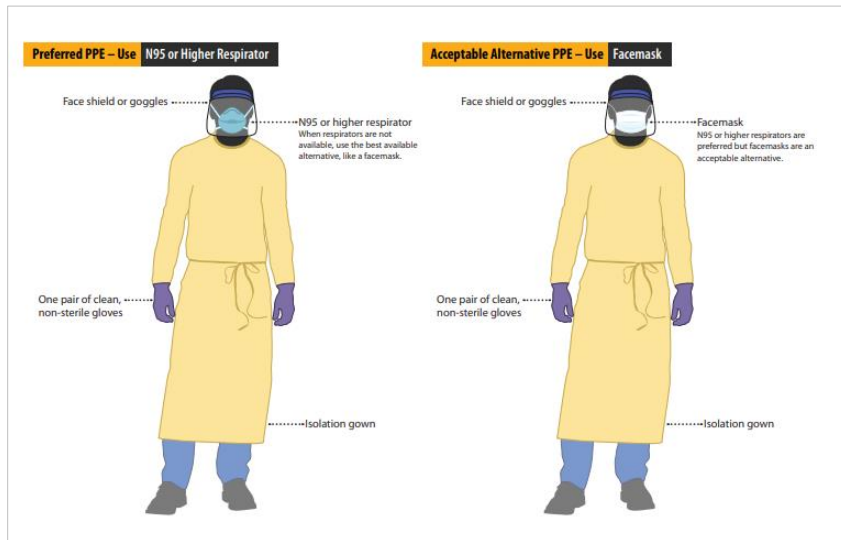
Zone Classification Amongst Typical K12 Schools

High Movement Zone (A)	Medium Movement Zone (B)	Low Movement Zone (C)
Classrooms	Management Office, Admin	Non Academic Infra
Corridors, Toilet	Labs, activity area, Library	Security, Drivers Lounge,
Staircase & Lifts	Stores, infirmary	Amphitheatre, Auditorium
Staffrooms	Cafeteria	Sport complex & grounds

Key Focus Areas: Develop Sanitation Strategies

Once contact zones have been classified, schools must also develop appropriate sanitation and hygiene policies and ensure their adherence as a matter of paramount importance.

- All school inventories must be properly sanitized at the end of each school day in order to make the school a **hazard free** environment.
- Regular cleaning and **decontamination** of guard rails, door handles, classroom benches, lab equipment etc. must be undertaken.
- If the school provides transport, then all vehicles must properly be **inspected** and duly sanitized prior to student pickups / drop offs.
- School cleaning staffs must be provided with adequate **PPE gear** and should be allocated rotational shifts to continually clean lavatories, staff rooms, auditoriums etc. As per the Centre for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), an ideal PPE ensemble should consist of the following



Guidance for appropriate use of PPE equipment:

- Perform hand hygiene using sanitizers
- Put on the isolation gown
- Put on the N-95 facemask or facepiece
- Put on gloves and commence activities

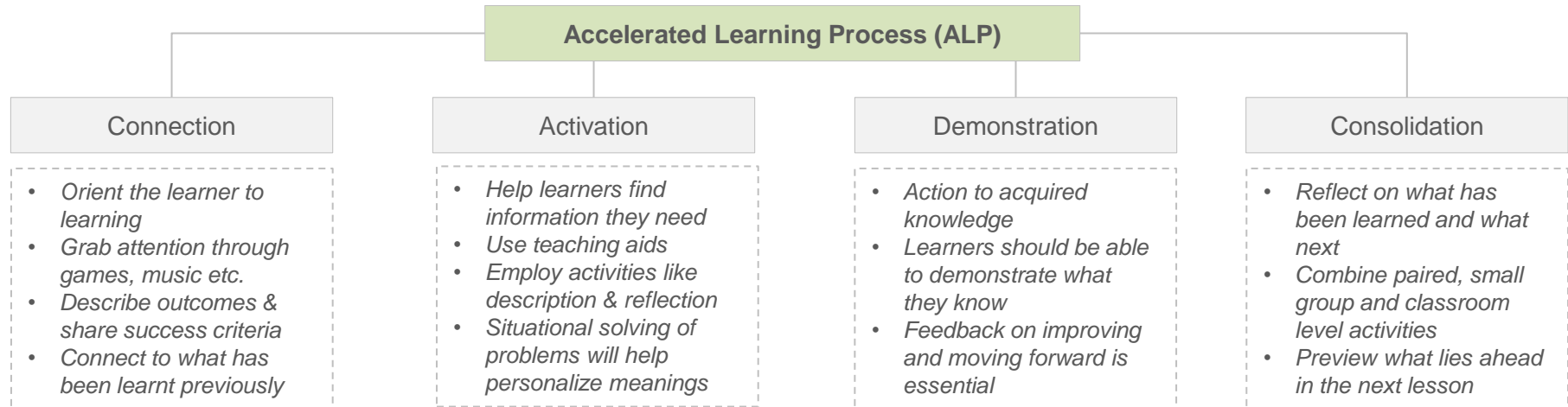
Guidance for safe disposal of used PPE equipment

- Remove gloves near a dust bin
- Remove & dispose isolation gown in a hazard bag
- Perform hand hygiene using sanitizer
- Remove and discard facepiece or mask
- Perform hand hygiene again using sanitizer

Key Focus Areas: Revisit Academic Calendars

As schools choose to reopen and activities resume, time is of the essence. Schools need to act fast and assertively to deal with the ill effects of the pandemic as well as address the need for completion of course content.

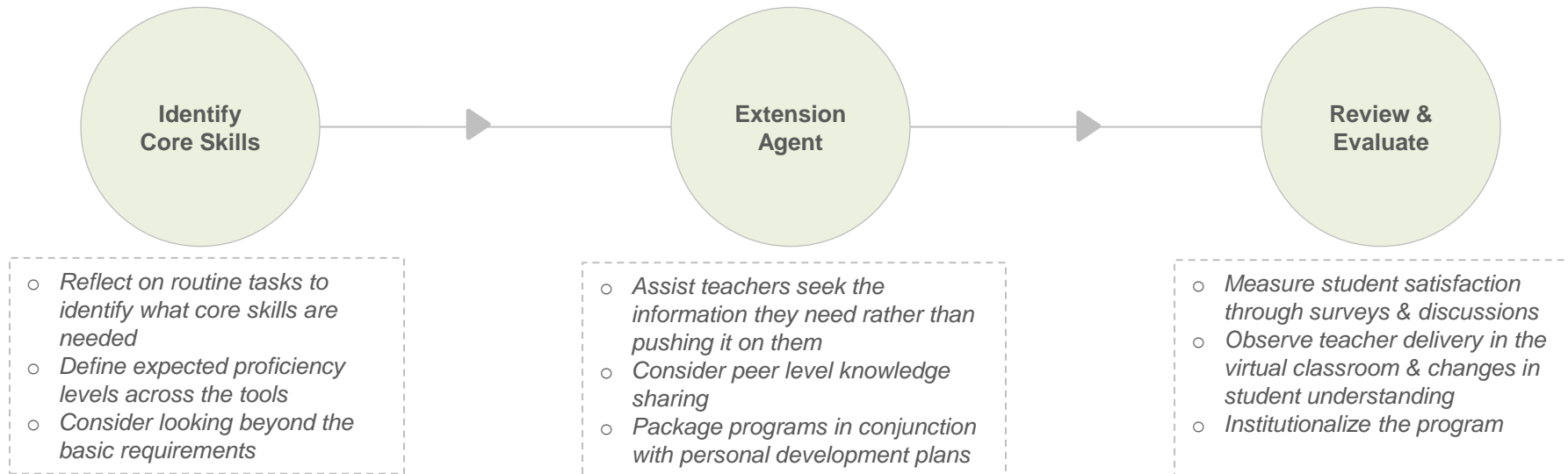
- Schools should actively look into their academic calendar and **re-evaluate** their options to achieve maximum course completion before the next academic session.
- Academic calendars must be **condensed** and optimized to achieve the maximum within the available time.
- Schools need to chalk off all non academic events and repurpose their time towards **core education**.
- Throughout this process, guidance of all affiliated boards is critical, however schools should be well prepared to explore concepts such as **accelerated learning** and new age teaching in greater detail.



Key Focus Areas: Embracing Technology

In emergency situations like the corona outbreak, technology is perhaps an enabler and not a deterrent to education as schools still believe

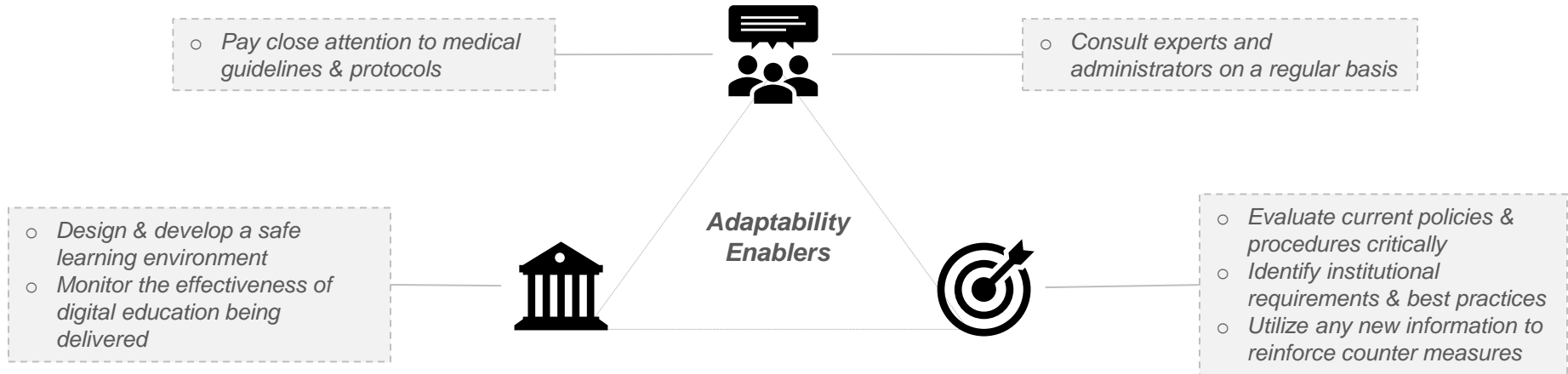
- The school education industry at large has been one of the worst hit industries across the world. In India, schools scrambled to shift curriculum online in the wake of the pandemic.
- COVID-19 has exposed the vulnerabilities of the education system and it is important, now more than ever for schools to become more **accepting** of the use of technology within their pedagogies.
- Schools must invest in **teacher education** and infrastructural improvements in order to introduce technology and modern day teaching aids within the classroom and enable unperturbed education. Explained below is a method of designing an inservice technology training program:



Key Focus Areas: Evolve Rapidly

Schools, like all other industries have now ventured into uncharted territory. While medical science makes quantum leaps everyday in seeking a cure to the pandemic, schools must have their eyes and ears open to any new information that comes to light.

- They must be able to **adapt, improvise and overcome** any situation down the line without an impact on student education.
- They must strategize in a manner that allows them the **flexibility** to swiftly factor in any new changes that emerge in the coming months.
- They must review at **regular intervals** and further refine elements that are not working for them.
- School management must enable all stakeholders including teachers, students and parents to be ready to **transition** with the school as it battles the consequences of the pandemic in its own unique way.
- Schools must also **consult & coordinate** with the right departments actively in order to be ahead of the curve if the situation worsens.



Safe Recommencement: Suggestions

Having considered the prior action steps, following recommendations have been proposed:

WHO Guidelines

- Create a schedule for frequent hand hygiene, especially for young children, and provide sufficient alcohol-based rub or soap and clean water at school entrances and throughout the school.
- Enforce the policy of “staying at home if unwell” for students, teachers or school staff with symptoms. If possible, connect with local organizations to provide home care support and ensure communication between home and school.
- Waive the requirement for a doctor’s note to excuse absences when there is community transmission of COVID-19
- Consider daily screening for body temperature, and history of fever or feeling feverish in the previous 24 hours, on entry into the building for all staff, students and visitors to identify persons who are sick.

Recommendations

- Installation of thermal scanners at school entrance to check body temperatures
- Setting up sanitizing stations around the school with contact less alcohol based sanitizer distribution
- Providing instant read thermometers to school infirmary and medical staff
- Suspend all activities requiring presence of more than 20 students such as morning assembly, sports etc.
- Keeping a mandatory safety kit in each classroom
- Ensuring classroom seating is such that 1.5m distance is maintained between 2 consecutive students
- Ensure sufficient signage and notices across the schools reminding everyone of the protocols at play
- Ensure individuals without masks are not permitted on the school premises



Monograph: June 2020

Centre of Excellence (CoE) / Corporate Office (HO)

Indus World School
61/21, Badshahpur-Darbaripur Road
Near Tulip- Violet Apartments
Sector 70, Gurugram, Haryana 122 001

Thank You

For more information, please contact:

Bharat Parmar

T: +91 (124) 4119162, 4229162 Extn. 106

M: +91 98117 99162

E: bharat@eduvisors.org