

## Overview

When school facilities were closed to students during the final months of the 2019-2020 school year, school systems that offered continuous learning opportunities to students focused instruction on the essential learning of the grade level and subject area to ensure unfinished learning was minimized for all students. As leaders plan to start the 2020-2021 school year strong, this guide will help school systems address remaining unfinished learning. This guide is designed in two parts:

- [School System Approach](#) defining the steps school systems should take to build strong academic plans to address unfinished learning across grade bands and disciplines, and create systems that are adaptive to student needs.
- [Content-Specific Approaches](#) defining the specific actions teachers need to take by grade band and discipline to address unfinished learning throughout the 2020-2021 school year, with the right supports, at the right time, in the areas below.
  - [Approach in Early Childhood](#)
  - [Approach in ELA, Grades K-2](#)
  - [Approach in ELA, Grades 3-12](#)
  - [Approach in Math, K-12](#)
  - [Approach in Science and Social Studies](#)
  - [Supporting Students with Additional Needs](#)

## School System Approach

School system leaders must plan now to address unfinished learning gaps that will be wider than in a typical school year. These guiding principles define the steps leaders should take to address unfinished learning and develop adaptive systems that will meet students' needs and ensure learning continues.

### *Addressing Unfinished Learning Steps*

- Address unfinished learning with plans grounded in current [high-quality curricula](#).
  - Begin the 2020-2021 school year with Unit 1 from on-grade-level curriculum.
  - Use the curriculum-specific [Instructional Materials Guidance](#) to incorporate 2019-2020 standards that were unaddressed or abbreviated into the 2020-2021 learning sequence, and provide additional supports for students with unfinished learning.
- Administer [diagnostics and/or screeners](#) to help identify students' learning needs.
- Use the [Individual Learning Plan](#), as needed, to make adjustments for individual student needs using current high-quality curricula, with embedded supports for diverse learners.

### *Developing Adaptive Systems Steps*

- Create a [staffing plan](#) for the 2020-2021 school year that is responsive to the needs of all students.
- Provide [virtual professional development](#) offerings for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Support the [social, emotional and behavioral needs](#) of students as they transition back to school.

## Content-Specific Approaches

Each grade band and discipline is unique. Teachers should use the content-specific guidance and resources below to tailor their approach to addressing unfinished learning in the 2020-2021 school year.

### Approach in Early Childhood

To support children entering or continuing in early childhood classrooms, teachers must consider their social and emotional development, and how it may have been interrupted or impacted by multiple transitions, breaks in routines, and disruptions in relationships with their caregivers. Teachers should continue to foster and improve adult-child interactions that support high-quality early childhood experiences. To do this, teachers should:

- Establish consistent routines and structures early as children transition back to classrooms.
- Create and maintain positive environments to support children’s healthy development.
- Use the curriculum-specific [Instructional Materials Guidance](#) to support relationships with families partnering with them in the care and education of their children, in classrooms and at home.
- Use assessment data, such as [Teaching Strategies GOLD®](#) or other approved assessments, to adjust teaching based on the individual needs of each child.
- Use open-ended questions and feedback loops to individualize interactions with children that promote their growth and readiness.
- Use [professional development opportunities](#) provided by Teachstone, the creator of the CLASS® tool, to provide training to Louisiana early childhood educators in supporting adult-child interactions as a result of lost classroom interactions and instruction and to strengthen social emotional development going into the new school year.

### Approach in ELA, Grades K-2

To support K-2 students in ELA instruction, teachers must continue to use high-quality curricula to focus on reading, understanding, and expressing understanding. Teachers should use [literacy screener](#) results to:

- Individualize instruction and provide necessary explicit, structured foundational skills phonics instruction.
- Guide use of high-quality curriculum for each student.

### Approach in ELA, Grades 3-12

To support students in grades 3-12 in reading, understanding, and expressing their understanding of complex, grade-level texts, teachers should focus on supporting students in accessing the features of complex, current grade-level texts. The [Louisiana Student Standards](#) for each grade level are cyclical in nature, with text complexity building at each grade level. Therefore, in order to address unfinished learning gaps, teachers should:

- Teach the new grade-level content, starting with Unit 1, using the high-quality curriculum’s complex, grade-level texts.
- Use formative assessments from their high-quality curriculum to regularly diagnose students’ needs.
- Provide targeted supports aligned to the theory of [diverse learner support](#), understanding that more students will need support and some supports will be provided in a whole group setting.

After students have received all possible curriculum-based support described above, a small subset of students may also require support in the areas of *phonological awareness*, *phonics*, and *fluency* through intensive interventions focused on the foundations of reading. Intensive interventions should be provided in addition to core, high-quality curriculum-based instruction. Please review [Foundations of Reading Intensive Intervention Material Reviews](#) to determine if particular materials are appropriate.

### Approach in Math, K-12

To support students in math, teachers should ensure previous grade-level work is connected to on-grade-level work throughout the school year, using a high-quality curriculum. By providing a coherent sequence of lessons, students will build mathematical understanding to achieve grade level mastery. Teachers should use [guidance on scaffolding and supports for grade-level lessons](#) throughout the 2020-2021 year, including:

- Implementation calendars that embed missed skills or background knowledge from the 2019-2020 school year into the next grade level, connected to the on-grade-level lessons, and
- Additional, optional work aligned to the most important work of the grade that students who are significantly struggling may need, connected to the on-grade-level lessons.

### Approach in Science and Social Studies

When supporting students in science and social studies, it is important to understand that content spirals across grade levels. Therefore, teachers should not teach entire units missed from the 2019-2020 school year. Teachers should instead focus instruction on standards for the current grade level.

- Science teachers can use the learning progressions provided in Appendix A of the [Louisiana Student Standards](#) to scaffold on-grade-level lessons and units during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Social studies teachers should anticipate that students may need some additional support to demonstrate mastery of disciplinary skills, such as analyzing sources and developing claims.

### Supporting Students with Additional Needs

*Students with Disabilities.* To address the unfinished learning of students with disabilities, IEP and IAP teams should:

- Continue to use the high-quality curriculum with embedded supports, as described in each content section above, while providing additional supports based on the student's IEP or IAP and individual needs.
- Complete [compensatory](#) education reviews to identify students with disabilities who need additional instruction and services as a result of lost skills and learning during the extended school facility closure. These determinations are made by IEP teams.
- Ensure additional instruction and services, as a result of compensatory education reviews, are connected to high-quality curriculum and IEP goals, as appropriate for each individual student.

*Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities.* In addition to the steps for IEP teams noted above, teachers supporting students with significant cognitive disabilities should also:

- Use results from the LEAP Connect Spring 2020 administration and other progress monitoring data to identify academic and functional skill gaps.
- Use [Essential Elements Cards](#) to scaffold learning towards grade-level [Louisiana Connectors](#).

*English learners.* To support English learners with any gaps in language acquisition, teachers should:

- Review [ELPT scores](#) from Spring 2020 along with any content [diagnostics](#).
- Understand that some students may need additional support beyond what their ELPT levels will suggest.
- Continue to develop and use [English Learner Instructional Support Plans](#) to develop appropriate supports while working on grade level content area standards to support language acquisition.
- Complete the [English Language Proficiency Screener](#) (ELPS) for any newly enrolled students who could not be screened before the school facility closure and all entering Kindergarten students who meet the [criteria](#).