Strategic School Models in the Year of COVID

Education Week Webinar

October 30, 2020
Today’s Discussion

- A little bit about us
- Organizing school in the year of COVID
- Three pivotal questions
- Power strategies for 2021 and beyond
Today’s Discussion

A little bit about us

Organizing school in the year of COVID

Three pivotal questions

Power strategies for 2021 and beyond
Who’s Who

David Rosenberg
Partner, Education Resource Strategies

Aleesia Johnson
Superintendent, Indianapolis Public Schools
What is your favorite Halloween candy?
ERS is a national nonprofit that partners with district, school and state leaders to transform how they use resources so that every school prepares every child for tomorrow, no matter their race or income.

- **107** district partnerships
- **11** state partnerships
- **3** ERS-led networks of **63** district leaders across **25** districts

Representing **5 million** K-12 students:
- **64%** from low income households
- **78%** students of color
We create DIY tools and in-depth research based on our learning from real districts that are transforming...
About Indianapolis Public Schools

32,640 learners

- 44% Black, 29% Hispanic, 21% White, 5% Multiracial, 1% Asian
- 19% English Language Learners
- 17% Students with Disabilities

48 IPS-managed schools and 21 IPS Innovation schools

- 48 Special Ed and Alternative Ed programs
- 30 Choice programs in addition to neighborhood schools
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The pandemic is exacerbating the *triple squeeze* that already complicates district transformation efforts.

- **Flat or declining revenue**
  - Even greater financial pressure due to precipitous drops in tax revenue

- **Unsustainable cost structures**
  - Ongoing constraints on service delivery from physical distancing

- **A higher bar for student learning and greater needs**
  - Greater depth, breadth & inequity of student need
Leaders face deepening student needs that require new investments...

- Assessing student learning & social-emotional needs
- Providing extra time, staff & programming for education recovery
- Providing social-emotional support
- Ensuring 100% digital access
- Costs of running school with physical distancing and other COVID safety measures
...at a time when analysts are projecting steep declines in state revenue

“Equal to more than 25% of state revenues”

In the average large urban district, a 25% decline in state revenue translates to a 13.1% decline in overall revenue, assuming no decline in local or federal revenue.*

*Based on 79 U.S. districts with at least 20,000 students and at least 70% of students receiving free or reduced lunch benefits

Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, July 7, 2020. NCES; ERS analysis.
Most large school districts began the school year with remote instruction.

School District Re-opening plans, September 2020

- 24% Full in-person learning available for all students
- 27% Hybrid/partial in-person learning
- 49% Remote learning only

Source: Education Week; ERS analysis.
Audience Poll: Check all that apply

What model/s did your district open with this year?

☐ In-person: early grades
☐ In-person: middle/upper grades
☐ Hybrid
☐ Remote
How did IPS open this year?

What factors did you weigh in making that decision?

What ultimately drove your decision?
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Three Pivotal Questions

1. What should be our next step — hybrid or in-person?

2. How do we meet the needs of in-person and remote students simultaneously?

3. How should we handle teacher opt-outs from in-person instruction?
Conventional wisdom: a continuum of learning environments

Many districts are “moving to hybrid” as a step toward full in-person instruction.

Remote
Students attend school from home or some other location via laptops and the Internet.

Hybrid
Students attend school both in-person and remotely based on an established, predictable schedule (A/B days).

In-Person
Students attend school in a school building every day.
A better way to understand our options

- **Pre-pandemic Full in-person school**
  - Fully in-person for some.
    - Students prioritized by need, grade level and/or family choice

- **Hybrid for all who can come to school.** In-person and remote students may or may not be taught simultaneously.

- **Spring-Fall 2020 Full remote school**
  - More students in person

- **More time in person**
  - More in-person
Hybrid is a discrete choice, not a middle ground

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students who come to school...</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>In-Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend in-person some days and remotely other days, typically on an A/B schedule</td>
<td>Attend in-person every day</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trade-offs</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>In-Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More complex and resource intensive to do well compared to other models</td>
<td>With distancing and staff limitations, some students still attend remotely</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Audience Poll: Check all that apply

What model/s are operating in your district as of today?

☐ In-person: early grades
☐ In-person: middle/upper grades
☐ Hybrid
☐ Remote
District Focus: Q&A with Supt. Johnson

» Where are you in the re-opening process?
» What has gone particularly well so far?
» What has been a particular challenge that you and your team are working through?
Supporting both in-person and remote students

Student experiences vary by model

- **In-person every day**
- **Rotate in-person and remote**
- **Remote every day**

- **Fully in-person for some**
- **Hybrid for all who come to school**
- **More time in person**
- **More students in person**

- **Spring-Fall 2020**
  - Full remote school

- **Pre-pandemic**
  - Full in-person school
Both models require managing students in multiple modalities.

- **Fully in-person** for some
- **Hybrid for all who come to school**
- **In-person** every day
- **Remote** every day
- **Hybrid**: In-person day
- **Hybrid**: Remote day
- **Remote** every day

Supporting both in-person and remote students.
Ways to educate students in multiple modalities

Simultaneous instruction       Remote and in-person in one class together
## Ways to educate students in multiple modalities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If your priority is to…</th>
<th>Simultaneous instruction</th>
<th>Split schedule</th>
<th>Focus in-person on priority groups</th>
<th>Re-group by family/educator preference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain student-teacher relationships</td>
<td>⭐</td>
<td>⭐</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain schedules from fully remote</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduce complexity for teachers</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduce complexity for parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ensure care available for younger children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Differentiate in-person and remote time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Support struggling learners in-person</td>
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</table>
Audience Poll: Check all that apply

How is your district organizing to educate in-person and remote students?

☐ Deliver **simultaneous instruction** to in-person and remote students

☐ Use **split schedules** for in-person and remote days

☐ **Target hybrid or in-person model** to some student groups

☐ **Re-group students and teachers** into remote-only or in-person only classes

☐ **Something else**
» How are you managing the challenge of educating students in-person and remotely?

» Given limited resources, what are some tradeoffs your principals have made?
What if teachers opt out of in-person instruction?

What if teachers opt out of in-person instruction?

**Teachers With COVID-19 Health Risks: Who Gets to Stay Home?**

**Tampa Bay Times**

Many teachers are fearful as they contemplate a return to school

With Florida still reporting thousands of new COVID-19 cases each day, no one knows how safe the schools will be.

**The New York Times**

‘I Don’t Want to Go Back’: Many Teachers Are Fearful and Angry Over Pressure to Return

Teachers say crucial questions about how schools will stay clean, keep students physically distanced and prevent further spread of the virus have not been answered.

**CNN**

Teachers worry about how we'll keep them safe if their schools reopen

'Kids don't go to schools by themselves'

**Chalkbeat**

A looming issue for schools: Teachers with health worries who can’t or won’t go back
About what proportion of teachers in your district are **not available to teach in-person**?

- Few or none
- More than a few, less than 25%
- More than 25%, less than 50%
- More than 50%
Setting the ground rules for teacher opt-outs

- Clearly define **criteria** for opting out of in-person instruction
- Expect opt-out rates to vary by school, requiring **re-balancing**
- Consider **equity** for both students and educators
What if teachers opt out of in-person instruction?

Options to consider

- Create a new, fully remote homeroom of 16 students, led by Ms. Smith

**Ms. Ramirez**
- 8 “A day” hybrid students
- 8 “B day” hybrid students
- 5 fully remote students

**Mr. Davis**
- 9 “A day” hybrid students
- 9 “B day” hybrid students
- 4 fully remote students

**Ms. Smith**
- 8 “A day” hybrid students
- 7 “B day” hybrid students
- 6 fully remote students

Requires fully remote accommodation
What if teachers opt out of in-person instruction?

**Options to consider**

- Create a new, fully remote homeroom of 16 students, led by Ms. Smith
- Reassign Ms. Smith’s students to Ms. Ramirez and Mr. Davis

Requires fully remote accommodation
What if teachers opt out of in-person instruction?

Options to consider

- Create a new, fully remote homeroom of 16 students, led by Ms. Smith
- Reassign Ms. Smith’s students to Ms. Ramirez and Mr. Davis
- Assign Ms. Smith to support hybrid students on their remote days, with or without fully remote students
- Reassign another staff member to take over Ms. Smith’s classroom

Requires fully remote accommodation
## Ways to manage teacher opt-outs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>If your priority is to...</th>
<th>New remote homeroom</th>
<th>Re-assign students</th>
<th>Support hybrid on remote days</th>
<th>Re-assign another staff member</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain student-teacher relationships</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintain schedules from fully remote</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maximize educator-supported time</td>
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<td>Align student and teacher needs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leverage teacher leadership</td>
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About what proportion of teachers have opted out of in-person instruction?

How are you handling those shifts?
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Even facing revenue declines, system leaders must organize to implement Power Strategies for COVID recovery

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Time &amp; Attention</td>
<td>Target individual attention and learning time in and outside of traditional school hours especially for students with greatest learning needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Teacher Roles</td>
<td>Restructuring teaching jobs and roles to be more rewarding, collaborative and sustainable, while ensuring all students have access to excellent instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Teacher Teams</td>
<td>Design schedules, processes, routines, and supports for teacher teams to learn, plan, and coordinate instruction together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>SEL and Engagement</td>
<td>Structure time, roles and routines to strengthen social-emotional supports, relationship-building, and family engagement</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Community Partnerships</td>
<td>Engage community partners in helping to provide instruction and other student supports.</td>
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Key Takeaways

- **Hybrid is not a “middle ground.”** Determine if you can support a full in-person model for those who want/need it.

- **There are often more options than it appears…** *if* you’re willing to challenge the status quo and adjust plans mid-year.

- **Flexibility – especially in how you define roles – expands those options.** Think creatively about staff assignments, leverage all available flexibility.

- **Focus on Power Strategies for student success**, grounded in what we know about how strategic schools work.

- **There are no perfect solutions** – but you *can* organize resources to support your top priorities.
» What is one thing you know now about planning for re-opening during the pandemic that you didn’t know before?
We have developed extensive COVID resources on our website to support district and school leaders.