

Contingency planning for fall academics

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Community call

As the Coronavirus Comes to School, a Tough Choice: When to Close

As schools in the South and the Midwest reopen this week, officials must decide what steps to take as staff members and students test positive.



At least three students at Corinth High School in northern Mississippi have tested positive for the coronavirus since school resumed last week, and about 40 are in quarantine. Adam Robison/The Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal, via Associated Press

EDUCATION

These Tennessee school districts are already reporting COVID-19 cases after reopening

[Meghan Mangrum](#) Nashville Tennessean

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Most school districts are reopening in-person

'The Photo Does Not Look Good': Georgia School's Crowded Halls Go Viral

A student was suspended for five days for posting images of packed hallways at North Paulding High School, her mother said.



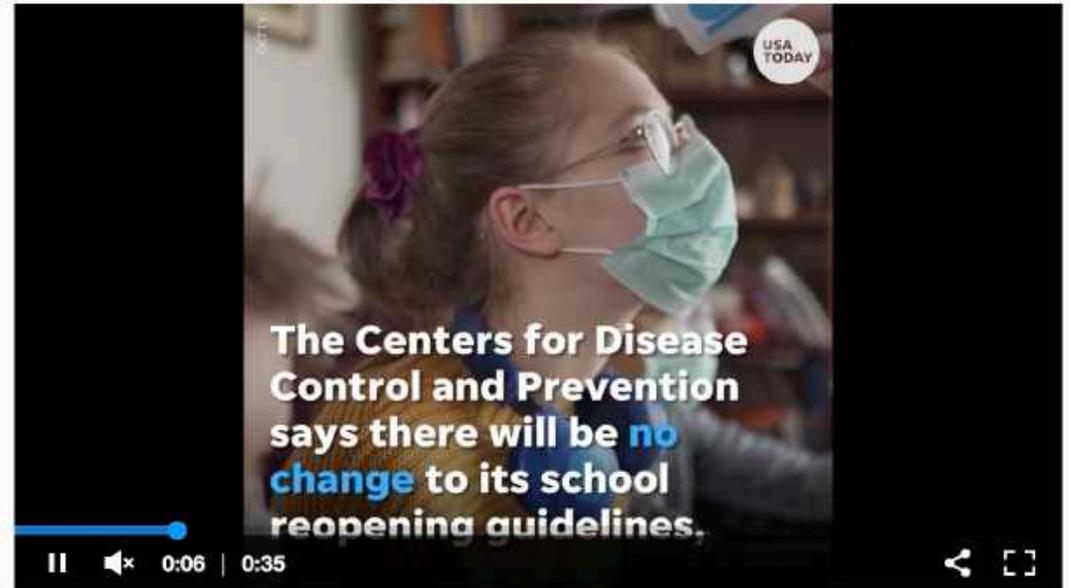
A crowded hallway at North Paulding High School in Dallas, Ga., on Tuesday. Hannah Watters, via Associated Press

EDUCATION

260 employees in Georgia's largest school district test positive for COVID-19 or are exposed

N'dea Yancey-Bragg USA TODAY

Published 11:21 a.m. ET Aug. 3, 2020 | Updated 2:55 p.m. ET Aug. 3, 2020



President Trump believes these CDC school guidelines are too strict

College parties, school openings, contact sports pose challenges in Allegheny County's 'war' against covid-19



NATASHA LINDSTROM | Wednesday, August 5, 2020 7:08 p.m.



AP

BY THE NUMBERS

USF, UCF, UF among top 10 colleges with most coronavirus cases reported



UMass Amherst reverses plan for fall, most students not invited back to campus

By [Deirdre Fernandes](#) Globe Staff, Updated August 6, 2020, 8:47 p.m.



UMass Amherst's new plan for the fall semester dramatically reduces the number of students on campus. BLAKE NISSEN FOR THE BOSTON GLOBE

The University of Massachusetts Amherst announced Thursday night that students were no longer invited to return to campus if they had only online classes, a significant change to its fall plans aimed at drastically reducing the population in the dormitories and surrounding town as coronavirus infections rise.

Some possible scenarios

- An instructor or TA tests positive for COVID-19, and is unable to teach in person or provide remote instruction for a period of time;
- A student in a class tests positive for COVID-19, and based on MIT Medical best practices, the students who interacted closely with that student in a classroom or lab setting are not permitted to attend the in-person elements of the class for about one week (they would be quarantined for five days, tested, and then could only return to class after a negative test result is received);
- Several students in a class are required to quarantine in their dorm rooms because they were in contact with someone outside of class who tested positive for COVID-19;
- Health conditions in the greater Boston area deteriorate and the Commonwealth orders that we discontinue in-person instruction; or
- Some number of instructors and TAs may decide before the term starts or during the term that they are no longer comfortable teaching in-person elements of a class.

Contingency planning

- Have you developed contingency plans for these scenarios and discussed them with your faculty, TAs, and other instructional staff?
- To what extent would your educational goals for in-person instruction be compromised by having to pivot on short notice to fully online delivery?
- **Are there changes in instructional delivery you wish to make now to mitigate potential impacts that pivoting may have on achieving your educational objectives?** This may include offering the class in an online-only format instead of, or in addition to, the class with in-person elements. We ask this now because it is easier to make changes like this with three weeks notice versus on short notice during the term, and also puts us in a position to more clearly communicate to students what they may expect.
- What do your instructional staff and TAs think should happen if a student tests positive to COVID in one of your classes with in-person elements? MIT Medical best practices would be to isolate that student and to quarantine those who interacted closely with the student in class for five days, and then test them and wait for a negative result before allowing them to return to in-person class elements. In order to protect the privacy of the student, MIT Medical would not notify the teaching team or other students in the class unless there was a health reason to do so. Are the instructional staff and TAs in your program comfortable with this approach?

Discussion