

# 10 Things Teachers Need Before Reopening Schools

[www.kidsacademy.mobi](http://www.kidsacademy.mobi)



Before any other ordinary school year, an educator or parent may ask themselves this simple question: “what are some of the most needed school supplies for teachers”? Especially in the primary grades, students often bring a big box or bag filled with tissues, notebook paper, folders, and pencils to drop off at the annual open house or “meet the teacher” night. After all, these are the supplies that will help get each classroom through the entire school year, which is usually filled with long days of in-person learning.

But we’ve already said it before, and like it was in the spring, the 2020-2021 school year will be no ordinary school year. Due to ongoing outbreaks of Covid-19 throughout the country, many school districts are delaying opening campuses, and are starting with some form of virtual learning, ranging from hybrid schedules to 100% online instruction. Consequently, students will be unable to share supplies, and most assignments will be paperless.

## From Schools

What the layperson might not realize is that teachers typically have very little say when it comes to their job. Decisions are often made on a whole district or schoolwide basis,

and by administrators or board members who are not currently in the classroom. As a result, teachers sometimes feel left out of the information loop.

So, what can schools do to make it easier for teachers as they transition back into the classroom this fall? Let's take a look at a few simple steps:

### 1. Offer transparency and clear communication

When we're working from home, sometimes decisions are made that aren't clearly articulated to staff. This might not be intentional, but educators shouldn't find out about calendar or policy changes via the local news or social media posts. Schools can help teachers simply by including them in key discussions and decisions, and by informing staff before the news hits the press.

### 2. Firm adherence to local or district guidelines to limit and reduce virus exposure

As the virus changes, so does the plans for reopening. While that is expected, local agencies and districts should develop a flexible plan, but also stick to their own guidelines in doing so. Recommendations for reopening will not work if the district is unable or unwilling to follow them. In the end, it comes down to everyone committing to following the health and safety guidelines the state and district set forth to prevent illness.

### 3. Access to PPE

It's widely known that teachers spend hundreds or thousands of their own dollars already to prepare their own classrooms and provide much needed supplies for families who cannot afford to supply them. In this new Covid-19 environment, personal protection equipment (PPE) is absolutely necessary for protecting teachers and staff. Schools can help out by relaxing teacher dress code to allow for clothing that can be washed more often, or and/or provide disposable masks, face shields, etc.

---

[Both teachers and kids need all the support they can get to remediate gaps and boost learning. Kids Academy can help with that. Teachers can take advantage of this summer steal and try our Talented and Gifted program with a 60 day free trial!](#)

---

## From the Community

Whether it's being mindful of what is being posted on local social media pages, or by volunteering time, services, or goods, there are many positive ways that communities can support teachers, schools, and students, such as the following:

#### 4. Patience and support

The old adage, “it takes a village to raise a child” is true! Some folks feel distrustful of public schools, and many would like to see real change take place. Regardless, millions of kids across the country depend on schools to meet a variety of their needs, from education to mental health. And the sentiment of a community greatly affects how parents and their children view their local schools and education in general.

More than ever before, teachers need families and their neighborhoods to show grace and patience when it comes the current situation surrounding schooling during the pandemic. When the community supports its schools, our kids also view school more positively.

#### 5. Unity

We really are in this together, since the coronavirus does not discriminate when it comes to viral spread! Communities can show unity by supporting students in any way they can, which may include donating supplies to schools directly, or even by offering services like homeschooling co-ops or “pods”.

#### 6. Local partnerships between businesses and school districts

One idea that some areas are exploring are partnerships between local business and schools to provide care and oversight of online learning. For working families, including teachers, parents are still expected to report to the office or classroom, while kids are home alone with nowhere to go for districts that are delayed or starting the year virtually. One way to close the gap is to offer services that can connect children with their instructors online. This can allow teachers and other working parents to do their jobs while their kids are safely monitored.

## From Parents

Of course, parents are teachers’ most valuable partners, as there are many things that can be done to prepare for schools to reopen. If you have multiple children, you might ask yourself what supplies do high school teachers need versus middle or elementary? Luckily, what school staff really needs is more general than the usual pens, pencils, and notebooks! For this school year, be sure to have or do the following:

#### 7. PPE for kids

Teachers aren’t the only ones that need personal protective equipment when the first school bell rings this fall! Depending on your district or area, students may need to come to school with masks. Following your local guidelines, be sure to take time to research and decide what type of PPE you would like your child to use. For most kids, this will mean purchasing a supply of masks. Research online to find a variety of options, which

may include clear spaces to see the mouth, a filter pocket, a way to prevent young children from losing masks, and more.

## 8. Preparation

With proper PPE comes proper preparation to teach kids how to correctly put on equipment. To prevent teachers from having to adjust or touch student masks, ensure that your children know how to put them on, adjust, and take them off with ease. If your child does not feel comfortable spending time in a mask, slowly work up to longer use by practicing using the mask inside the house before they go off to school. And of course, it never hurts to start early teaching little learners how to tie their shoes, so teachers don't have to touch them.

## 9. Parent engagement

Educators always hope that parents and guardians will be engaged and active in their students' school lives. But during a time when remote learning may be the only option for some districts, parent involvement is even more critical, as young children will need assistance with using technology and staying focused and on-task. Teachers know that families have a lot on their plates! But they will also be grateful for any help they can get in ensuring their kids are actively learning while studying from a distance!

## 10. Understand the limitations

Even if children head back to the classroom physically this fall, school will look much different than it ever has in the past! It's important that all parents understand this and offer as much grace as possible when it comes to adapting to this new way of conducting school.

Extracurricular activities, sports, and even class schedules will be different to allow for social distancing. Class sizes may be smaller, teachers may rotate classes instead of students moving around the building, and teaching practices may include less cooperative group learning, and more teacher-centered practices, even if they aren't considered the most effective. Unfortunately, the pandemic is forcing a hopefully temporary change to allow for safety and protection. Understand the limitations that this presents and remain supportive and positive as we work through this together.

---

No matter if you're an educator, a parent, or just an interested community member, it's completely understandable if you are apprehensive about the upcoming school year! Going forward, schools and staff will need some extra support. Before reopening to the public this fall, consider the list above, which offers actionable ideas to support teachers before the first school bell rings!

