



AUGUST 28, 2020

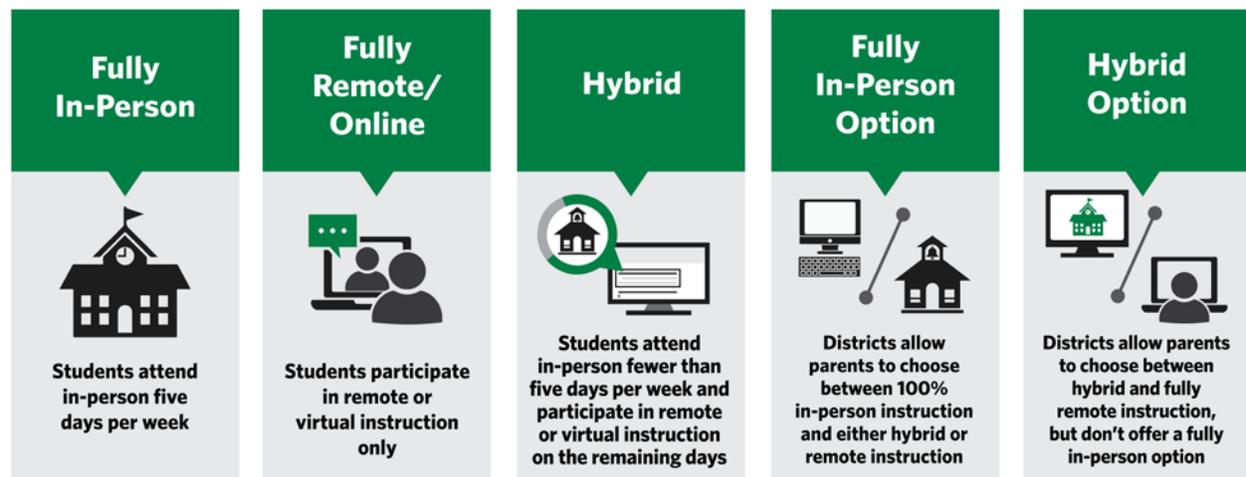
## Education Policy Innovation Collaborative

# Return to Learn: How Michigan School Districts Plan to Reopen in Fall 2020

Executive Order 2020-142 required districts to submit Return to School plans to the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) by August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020. These plans needed to indicate what policies and procedures will be followed if/when the Michigan Economic Recovery Council (MERC) region in which the district is located is in Phases 1-3, Phase 4, and Phase 5 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan.

Researchers from the Education Policy Innovation Collaborative (EPIC) collaborated with MDE to read, analyze, and code contents of the 823 Return to School plans submitted by Michigan school districts as of August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020, representing 99% of all 832 LEA and PSA districts in the state.<sup>i</sup> We collected data pertaining to districts' plans for MERC Phases 4 and 5 and then analyzed how districts are expected to reopen based on their current phase: fully in-person, fully remote/on-line, hybrid, fully in-person option, or hybrid option.

## Modes of Instruction Districts are Planning to Provide in Fall 2020



Executive Order 2020-142 did not explicitly require districts to indicate the mode of instruction for every phase of the Michigan Safe Start Plan, and only 78% of districts did so for the phase in which they are expected to reopen. However, by supplementing the data collected from Return to School Plans with information from district websites (posted as of August 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020), researchers were able to determine how 97% of districts planned to reopen. Importantly, these data on reopening modality are current as of these dates and do not reflect any changes made subsequently.

## RESULTS

Only 12% of districts specified that all instruction would take place remotely, while 86% planned to offer some amount of in-person instruction. Sixty percent indicated that parents could choose between different modes of instruction; most of these districts offered fully in-person and fully remote options. Sixteen percent indicated that all students would receive in-person instruction five days per week; another ten percent indicated that all students would participate in a hybrid instructional model, receiving in-person instruction fewer than five days per week and remote instruction on the remaining days.

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

	All Districts	LEA Districts	PSA Districts
<b>Total Number of Districts</b>	823	537	286
Districts in Phase 4 Regions	84%	79%	93%
Districts in Phase 5 Regions	16%	21%	7%
<b>Mode of Instruction</b>			
Fully in-person only	16%	18%	12%
Fully in-person option	43%	44%	40%
Hybrid only	10%	8%	13%
Hybrid option	17%	14%	22%
Fully remote only	12%	11%	12%
Not specified	3%	4%	1%



Notes: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Data reflect plans submitted by 8/19/2020/websites as of 8/21/2020. Source: Data collected from school districts' Return to School Plans and district websites through a collaboration between the Michigan Department of Education and the Education Policy Innovation Collaborative.

### DIFFERENCES BY SECTOR

Nearly all PSA districts are located in Phase 4 regions, as PSAs are primarily concentrated in urban and suburban areas and the two regions of the state in Phase 5 are primarily rural. PSA districts were less likely than LEA districts to indicate that all instruction would take place in

person, and more likely to offer hybrid instruction for all students and to offer parents a choice between hybrid and fully remote instruction.

## DIFFERENCES ACROSS MERC REGIONS

MERC Region	Fully in-person only	Fully in-person option	Hybrid only	Hybrid option	Fully remote	Not specified
Detroit	10%	37%	17%	19%	15%	1%
Grand Rapids	15%	46%	5%	21%	10%	3%
Kalamazoo	21%	43%	9%	17%	9%	1%
Saginaw	14%	48%	7%	12%	11%	8%
Lansing	9%	45%	2%	17%	26%	0%
Traverse City	33%	52%	3%	8%	2%	3%
Jackson	16%	51%	5%	22%	3%	3%
Upper Peninsula	33%	39%	6%	6%	6%	10%



*Notes: Columns may not sum to 100% due to rounding. Data reflect plans submitted by 8/19/2020/websites as of 8/21/2020. Source: Data collected from school districts' Return to School Plans and district websites through a collaboration between the Michigan Department of Education and the Education Policy Innovation Collaborative.*

Across all eight MERC regions, the most common mode of instruction is parents' choice between fully in-person instruction and either hybrid or fully remote instruction.

The Traverse City and Upper Peninsula regions are the only MERC regions in Phase 5 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan. These districts are substantially more likely to indicate in their Return to School Plans that all instruction will be provided in an in-person format for Fall 2020 (about a third of all districts, compared to only 13% of districts in Phase 4 regions). Districts in the Lansing region are the least likely to offer only fully in-person instruction (nine percent of districts), followed by the Detroit region (ten percent of districts).

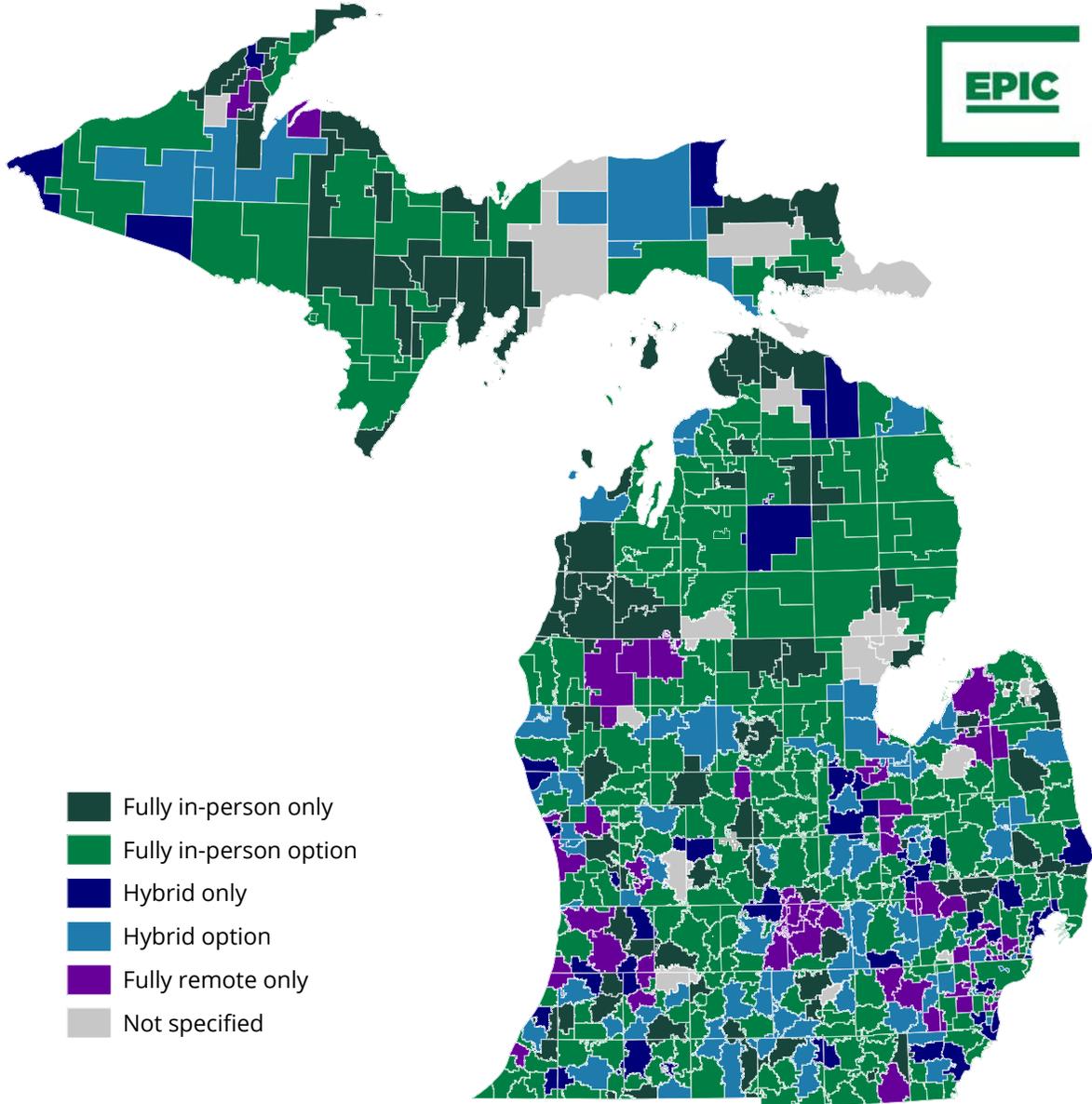
Twenty-six percent of districts in the Lansing region plan to provide all instruction remotely, compared to only 11% of districts across all other regions. Traverse City districts are the least likely to provide all instruction in a remote format (two percent), followed by the Jackson region (three percent).

Districts in the Detroit region are more than twice as likely as districts across the rest of the state to offer hybrid instruction for all students. Districts in the Lansing region are least likely to use this format (two percent of districts).

Districts in the Upper Peninsula and Saginaw regions were least likely to specify the mode of instruction in their Return to School Plans or their district websites, with ten percent and eight percent of districts in the "not specified" category, respectively.

## LEA DISTRICT MAP

The map below shows the locations of LEA districts that are planning to offer each mode of instruction. Fully remote and hybrid instruction are far less prevalent in the northern parts of the state. Many of the districts planning to provide all instruction in a remote format are clustered together, while districts using a hybrid format are more geographically scattered.



*Notes: PSA districts are not shown because they do not have geographic boundaries. Districts in grey did not specify their mode of instruction in their Return to School plans or on their websites. Data reflect plans submitted by 8/19/2020/websites as of 8/21/2020. Source: Data collected from school districts' Return to School Plans and district websites through a collaboration between the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and the Education Policy Innovation Collaborative (EPIC).*

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> The analysis is missing plans from nine PSAs, the majority or all of which were already offering virtual education to their students before March of 2020.