



# Family, School, & Community Engagement

NEWS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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### August 2021



#### “Return to School Roadmap,” Preparing for the 2021-2022 School Year

On Aug. 2, the Department [released](#) the “Return to School Roadmap,” a resource to support students, schools, educators, and communities as they prepare to return to safe, healthy in-person learning this fall and emerge from the pandemic stronger than before. As part of the launch of the Roadmap, the Department released:

- A [fact sheet](#) for schools, families, and communities on the Roadmap, reviewing three “Landmark” priorities, and elevating schools and districts that are addressing each in effective ways.
- A [guide](#) for schools and districts outlining what schools can do to protect the health and safety of students, including increasing access to vaccinations and steps for implementing the Center for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) recently updated K-12 school guidance.
- A [checklist](#) that parents can use to prepare themselves and their children for a safe return to in-person learning this fall, leading with vaccinating eligible children and masking up if students are not yet vaccinated.

As part of the launch of the Roadmap, the White House also released a [fact sheet](#) highlighting the Administration’s efforts to safely reopen schools and support our

nation's students, including how the historic investment in the American Rescue Plan is advancing this work.

We need your help to amplify these efforts and share the resources that schools, parents, educators, and communities have available to them. You are on the front lines of the fight for a safe return to school and by engaging with your colleagues and students, and asking them to share their vaccination efforts, you can help us spread the message and get more people vaccinated.

Linked here are [social media resources](#) that can help do just that. We encourage you to use the linked toolkit and others found on the [We Can Do This](#) website to help normalize the vaccine. Our goal is for every student to have the support and opportunities they need to heal, learn, and grow in their classrooms this fall.

The Department collaborated with the White House on the Back to School Vaccination "Week of Action" August 7-15 to mobilize school districts, colleges and universities, students, teachers, national organizations, local government leaders, businesses, social media influencers, celebrities, and thousands of volunteers to encourage young people to get vaccinated and offer accessible ways to do it in their community. Visit <https://madetosave.org/back-to-school/> to read about the week of action's mobilization efforts.

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## New Resource for Children With Long COVID Issued

Marking the 31st anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act ([ADA](#)), the Department's Office for Civil Rights ([OCR](#)) and Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services issued a new resource concerning students who have contracted Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) and are continuing to experience its effects. The resource focuses on two Federal laws, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Parts B and C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as pertains to these students: "[Long COVID under Section 504 and the IDEA: A Resource to Support Children, Students, Educators, Schools, Service Providers, and Families](#)" (see a White House [proclamation](#) on the ADA anniversary and a White House [fact sheet](#) and OCR [blog post](#)). Some children have contracted COVID-19 and are still experiencing its effects, in the form of what has come to be called "long COVID." The resource provides information about long COVID as a disability and about schools' and public agencies' responsibilities for the provision of services and reasonable modifications to children and students for whom long COVID is a disability.

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## Secretary Meets Students of Summer Learning Programs

On Aug. 12, the multiparty [Summer Learning and Enrichment Collaborative](#) held its final virtual meeting for the summer, with a focus on the most important stakeholders: students! The session kicked off with a conversation between Secretary Miguel Cardona and a panel of inspiring students who discussed how they have been impacted by summer programs; they offered advice to educators on how to reimagine, redesign, and rebuild engaging learning and enrichment opportunities for the school year. Then, participants chose from a wide range of tabletop discussions on helpful topics. All sessions are archived on the Summer Learning and Enrichment Collaborative's [landing page](#).

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## Developing Young Children's Math Skills

The Department's [Institute of Education Sciences](#)' Regional Educational Laboratory Program ([Central](#), [Appalachia](#), and [Northwest](#)), has developed [resources](#) to provide quick tips, evidence-based activities and games, and videos that families and caregivers can use at home to support math learning for children ages 2-8.



## Award Winning Accessible Programs

The Department's Educational Technology, Media, and Materials program is the primary source of support for accessible technology and media-related activities under *IDEA*. A recipient of the Department's [Television Access grant](#), [Bridge Multimedia](#), has provided the audio descriptions for 13 Emmy Award-nominated shows and one Emmy Award-winning program, the 2021 Children's Emmy Award winner, "*PBS KIDS Talk About*." *This program* is a series that explores racial identity, inequity, racism, justice, and "good trouble." Bridge Multimedia also provided disability portrayal consultancy for the Emmy Award-nominated show "*Xavier Riddle and the Secret Museum*" (PBS KIDS).

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## Transitioning Back to School or Early Childhood Education Podcast

[Dr. Karen Remley](#), Director of the [CDC's National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities](#) gives parents useful tips, such as an easy-to-complete



emergency information card to keep in your child's backpack and other resources, to make the return to school or early child education easier for your child. [Listen](#) to the featured podcast at CDC's Public Health Media Library.



## Help Prevent Wasted Food

United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service has published a [booklet](#) that discusses ways to reduce, recover, and recycle food before it goes to waste. Parents can get ideas to reduce food waste by reading tips, such as what to make with leftover ingredients, and find kid-approved recipes at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/nutrition-recipes>.

## Traveling With Children

The [Transportation Security Administration](#) requires all passengers to go through security screening while traveling. There are modified screening procedures for children under the age of 13, as well as for [children with medical conditions, disabilities, or mobility aids](#).



## Successful Use of Texting for Dads in Fatherhood Program

The [National Fatherhood Initiative® \(NFI\)](#) highlights recent published research on the use of texts in fatherhood programs. The federally funded [Building Bridges and Bonds \(B3\)](#) studied a smartphone-based mobile application called [DadTime](#), designed to improve fathers' attendance at [Just Beginning](#) program sessions. [Results](#) showed that most fathers felt they were supported and that they used skills learned from the program.

## PTA Teams-Up With TikTok to Provide a Parent Guide

National Parent Teacher Association ([PTA](#)) has teamed up with [TikTok](#) as part of their [PTA Connected initiative](#)

**TikTok Guide  
for Parents**  
A collaboration between  
TikTok and National PTA

to help parents and families learn about the popular social video sharing app in a new guide for parents. The [guide](#) educates parents and families about safety on the app and support parents in having conversations with their teens to use social media productively and responsibly. Tips are on topics that include comment restrictions and a digital well-being checklist.

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The Office of Communications and Outreach works with national, state, and local educational agencies, programs, and organizations to empower parents and families with information and resources to help them be full partners in their child's programmatic, education and academic progress. For more information, please contact Dawn Ellis at [dawn.ellis@ed.gov](mailto:dawn.ellis@ed.gov) or call 202-453-7404.

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