

# Effective and Equitable Educational Recovery

## 10 Principles



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# INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to the frequent closure of school buildings in most countries in the world and has interrupted the school attendance of at least 1.2 billion students in 2020 and 2021. Although many education systems have been able to adapt in varying degrees, the pandemic has shown that countries' current learning infrastructures are highly vulnerable to external shocks. While schools have shown great resilience in trying to compensate for the crisis, they need to be better prepared for similar challenges. Education systems must ensure the continuity of learning which must be the centrepiece of all considerations.

Acknowledging the disruption that the health crisis has brought about and its likely impact on educational quality and equity, the OECD Secretariat and Education International have, based on their respective work during the pandemic, jointly established 10 principles that can facilitate the collaboration of education authorities, the teaching profession and their organisations to navigate the crisis effectively and reshape education systems after the pandemic to reach greater levels of educational quality and equity. Education systems around the world have been facing similar challenges but generated diverse approaches and experiences. The intention is also for these principles to contribute to a framework for international cooperation and peer learning.

The return to in-school and in-presence teaching has varied across countries. This suggests that countries should be prepared to alternate between three types of schooling in the near future, sometimes simultaneously in different parts of their territory: 1) in-school teaching with appropriate health measures; 2) hybrid schooling with a mix of in-presence and remote schooling; 3) remote schooling through a variety of means. Preparing for those scenarios is crucial to ensure the continuity of learning during the pandemic.

The recovery of education systems from the effects of the health crisis will be vital to the future social and economic health of societies, and to the recovery of societies as a whole. The pandemic has sharply exacerbated existing inequities in education as it has in wider society. Addressing inequities in students' access to educational provision and learning during and after the pandemic should be a central principle of education systems' successful recovery.



# PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE AND EQUITABLE EDUCATIONAL RECOVERY

These principles have two objectives: 1) within countries and educational jurisdictions learning continuity and the enhancement of students' development, growth and well-being in the most effective and equitable ways possible must be ensured, and; 2) reduced learning gains and the widening of the achievement gap due to the crisis must be addressed. The principles are thus organised in two parts.

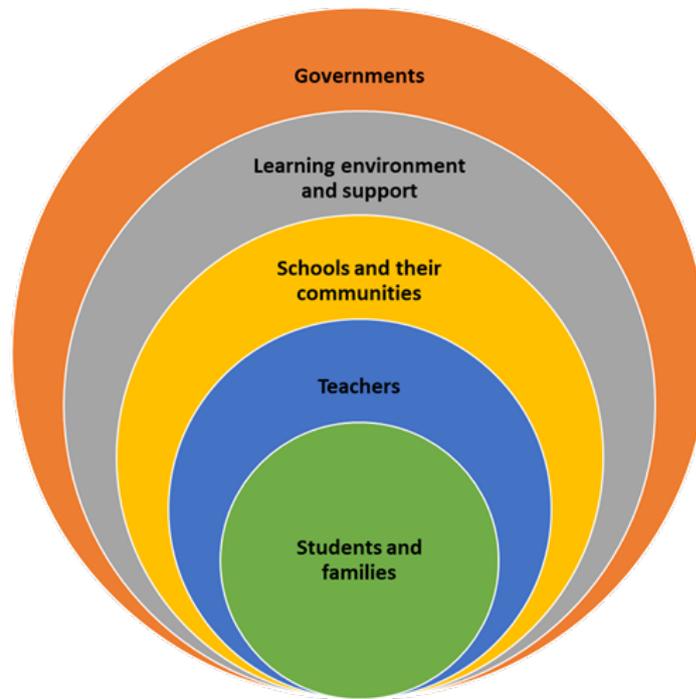
Fulfilling lives and successful economies hinge on equitable opportunities for cognitive,

social and emotional development. This is a fundamental obligation which all societies must meet in order for all students to succeed in their learning. Learners are thus at the core of the principles, which aim to meet students' cognitive, social and emotional educational needs during and after the pandemic, with the help of their families and the active support of teachers, educational institutions and their wider community (Figure 1). The principles also recognise that teachers are more effective when

their needs for health, safety and wellbeing are recognised and addressed. The best conditions for achieving these goals occur when all

partners involved in education recovery work in collaboration.

## Figure 1. The recovery ecosystem



Governments will need to provide supportive institutions, funding and regulatory frameworks for an effective and equitable recovery that prioritises students who have suffered the most from the crisis. National stimulus packages put in place to support a good recovery should thus support recovery efforts in the education sector. More generally, education decision-makers and stakeholders will need the necessary and stable funding to develop appropriate strategies to regenerate education and narrow the achievement gap and overcome the detrimental effects of the pandemic. All stakeholders will need to work in a spirit of trust in achieving the common goal of repairing and recovering the education of students.

The pandemic and subsequent calls for recovery have highlighted the interconnectedness of countries. Learners need

to be aware of a world which will require more international collaboration and awareness of global challenges. This includes, for example, a stronger awareness of climate change and its consequences, contributing to achieving the sustainable development goals through a series of learner initiatives, creating a stronger emphasis on complex problem solving and on 21st century skills such as creativity, critical thinking, collaborative problem solving and communication.

The 10 Principles are presented below. The document also provides textboxes which the OECD and EI believe offer interesting examples of responses to the pandemic through policy and practice, even if it is too early to fully evaluate the effectiveness of policies adopted during the pandemic.

## 10 Principles for effective and equitable educational recovery

### Principles for schooling during the pandemic:

1. Keep schools open as much and as safely as possible.
2. Ensure equity and align resources with needs.
3. Provide a remote learning infrastructure which is designed to reach all students.
4. Support teachers in their professional lives.
5. Enable teachers and parents to support learners.

### Principles for recovery towards effective and equitable education:

6. Provide targeted support to meet students' learning and social and emotional needs.
7. Co-design a robust digital learning infrastructure with teachers and stakeholders.
8. Empower teachers to exercise their professionalism and benefit from professional learning opportunities.
9. Encourage a collaborative culture of innovation.
10. Learn from national and international evidence.



# SCHOOLING DURING THE PANDEMIC

The main overarching objective during the pandemic is to ensure learning continuity and to protect the well-being of students. Learning and teaching are not just a transactional service but a relational and social experience. School building closures have highlighted

the importance of the school as a place that facilitates social interaction. The pandemic has limited the social dimension of learning, which cannot be fully reproduced through virtual means.

## Principle 1: Keep schools open as much and as safely as possible

During a pandemic, it is essential to ensure reliability and predictability of educational services for students and parents. Even during school closures, all students should have daily and dedicated contact with educators. Long phases of distant learning need to be avoided,

and daily schedules for hybrid learning work better than weekly or monthly schedules.

The pandemic has highlighted the essential role of schools in the education of children and young people. As far as possible, schools should remain open, with appropriate health

measures that minimise risks for students, school staff and the rest of the population. It is important to combine transparent criteria for schools and education services – e.g. the use of bubbles and stable pods, masks, ventilation, testing, quarantine, vaccination, classroom closures or school closures – with flexibility to implement these at the frontline. Hybrid and remote learning should be second and third best options, and only be used when keeping schools open proves impossible to preserve students and staff safety. Hybrid learning allows schools to cater for fewer students at any point in time and can take several forms: study shifts, less frequent whole-class instruction, some remote and some in-presence activities. Providing transparent criteria and guidelines based on infection levels and other relevant considerations for different modes of schooling is essential, as is the flexibility to implement them at the frontline. The best way of securing the most suitable conditions for learning, assessment

and social and emotional growth is through collaboration, with jurisdictions and education authorities working together with teachers and their organisations, parents, communities and other education stakeholders to achieve them.

Where there are capacity constraints for learning most notably in the form of more limited effective learning time, education systems need to establish clear priorities for what should be taught that balance the cognitive, social and emotional development of learners. Where in-school learning is limited or constrained, priority should be given to the teaching of new content, to the preparation and review of material learned at distance, to the motivation and development of effective learning strategies, and to social learning. In-school learning is especially important for the early years, where direct contact with educators is particularly important and digital alternatives are least effective.

## Principle 2: Secure equity and align resources with needs

The crisis created by the pandemic must lead to a recovery which addresses inequity. The needs of students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and those who are particularly affected by the crisis, such as children at risk of abuse or with poor mental health, must receive additional focus and support. Such support could include mentors and tutors. This effort to tackle reduced learning opportunities and the social and emotional consequences of the pandemic on students' lives should be based on system wide diagnosis and assessment. Where school capacity is

limited due to social distancing requirements, it is important to prioritise young children and disadvantaged students for in-school learning. Education, health and other social services may need greater co-ordination, which may require either a reallocation or increase in resources. Resources should be aligned with needs and reflect the social and economic conditions of students and schools in a transparent way (e.g. through the use of funding formula). This should include addressing and easing inequities in access to learning resources via the Internet and digital technology or via other means.

## Principle 3: Create a remote learning infrastructure which is designed to reach all students

In some countries, student access to remote learning provision triggered by the pandemic has been uneven and initial evidence points to widening learning gaps between students by social background and geography. In many countries, a coherent infrastructure for remote learning did not exist prior to the pandemic. Countries should develop a multi-modal remote learning infrastructure designed to support learning which would enable a variety of learning opportunities for those students that need them. This remote learning infrastructure should enable effective feedback channels between teachers and students, teachers and school leaders, schools and families. The establishment and evaluation of such an infrastructure would need to engage and

involve the teaching profession and relevant stakeholders and organisations in order to draw on their experiences of providing or receiving remote learning during the pandemic. It should take into account the diverse realities of access to different media across their territories and ensuring that the interactive dimension of learning with teachers, peers and communities are maintained. A multimodal approach can encompass virtual class tools, online learning platforms, TV and radio education, worksheets, social media channels as well as the use of texts and calls to support students' learning. The investments in this supportive infrastructure could contribute a more coherent and inclusive environment for learning in the longer-term.

## Principle 4: Support teachers in their professional lives

Since teachers and schools continue to be at the centre of student learning now and in the future, their working conditions and professional learning need to be fit for purpose in supporting their work both during the pandemic and in post pandemic recovery.

Teachers' job satisfaction, well-being, beliefs and professionalism are inter-related and have an effect on student outcomes. Job satisfaction has a positive impact on teachers, school culture and ultimately on students. Teacher well-being and student well-being are integral. The pandemic has placed school communities, teachers, support staff, the students they teach and support, and students' parents under significant strain. Many teachers have initiated constant micro-innovation, adapting to rapidly changing circumstances, including

updating health protection, adapting teaching and learning strategies, responding to the social and emotional learning needs of their students and attending to their own professional learning needs.

With teachers and their unions, jurisdictions and education authorities should review teachers' working conditions in order to identify the areas that need to be improved for teachers to be the most effective during the pandemic (and post-pandemic recovery). Such efforts could be particularly beneficial in the most disadvantaged schools, whose teachers are most likely to face unfavourable working conditions. This review will remain essential during the post-pandemic recovery.

## Principle 5. Enable teachers and parents to support learners

Teachers need to be able to support students' remote learning by regular personal communication with students (and families, when necessary) and should, in turn, be supported to do so effectively. While teachers' professionalism is the basis for supporting students' learning and wellbeing, education systems should also support teachers to do so. Education systems and schools should aim to provide means and schedules of communication with students and families, the provision of training, opportunities teachers to network with each other, and a variety of teaching and

learning resources which would support remote teaching and enable teachers to devote more time to bilateral interactions with students. They should be empowered to adapt the curriculum to their learners' needs and situation. In addition to teacher support, education systems should provide resources to help parents support their children's learning and wellbeing. Effective guidance for on-line safety, developed by jurisdictions with the input of teachers and parents need to be in place. Teachers need to be supported by on-line safety protocols.

### Box 1. OECD examples of country initiatives for education continuity and recovery

During the pandemic, the OECD Directorate for Education and Skills supported member and partner countries by providing a series of resources and publications that can be read or watched on its dedicated [COVID knowledge hub](#). It also provided countries with an [international place](#) to share their responses and initiatives.

Most countries tried to ensure learning continuity during the COVID crisis, usually by providing some kind of remote education resources and by asking teachers to remain responsible for their classes. Three approaches to keep schools open or reopen them can be highlighted.

In **Japan**, schools remained successfully open for most of the pandemic. Japan organised its safety measures for staff and students around avoiding "3 Cs": closed spaces, close-contact settings, crowded places. Japan experienced only 11 cases of in-school transmission (as of September 2020) and summarises its policy as "Ensuring children's learning as much as possible regardless of the state of COVID-19 infections". Japanese schools have taken measures such as staggering attendance, redesigning other students. To this effect, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) employed retired teachers, university students, staff from education-related NGOs as well as community personnel. Support staff, school counsellors and social workers were also hired to provide extra support to the mental health of students. Learn more [here](#) and [here](#).

In **France**, after a closure for almost all students during the "first wave" of the pandemic, learning continuity was provided thanks to the opening and expansion of its [pre-existing digital learning infrastructure](#) and the support of [digital education advisers](#) working with teachers, principals and other stakeholders to quickly deploy education continuity solutions. As of March 2021, schools have remained opened nationally since September 2020, regardless of the country's epidemic situation,

with a strict sanitary protocol in place: physical distance for students from different classes; mandatory mask wearing for teachers and students (over 10); (sometimes supervised) hand sanitation for students; regular sanitisation and ventilation of classes and public spaces; specific protocols for school lunch, recess, boarding, physical education and music education; prioritisation of teachers and students for COVID testing. The [protocol](#) is implemented with school adaptations and calls for consultation with teachers at the frontline. Teachers recognised as vulnerable have teleworked for the period of the pandemic.

Beyond the provision of digital learning resources as well as educational programmes on TV and radio, **Chile** decided on a step-by-step plan of reopening of schools that focuses on safety, and is voluntary (for schools and for parents) and gradual (with a priority given to Grades 11 and 12). In accordance with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education provide schools with a sanitary protocol (sanitisation, mandatory masks, physical distance, staggered schedules, etc.) that each school implements according to its specific circumstances. They provide information about the measures to the school community (students, parents and teachers) and have an induction programme with teachers and staff. Given the conditions, the Ministry provided schools with a new pedagogical plan prioritising some aspects of the curriculum and some diagnosis instruments to identify students' learning needs in reading and mathematics as well as their socio-emotional situation.

Equity has been a key aspect of many countries' responses as they have recognised that the pandemic could have had a differential impact on less advantaged students, students in rural areas, or students that are more vulnerable for other reasons. They have tried to level the playing field by targeting measures related to nutrition, technology or social support to students and families that needed it the most.

In the state of São Paulo (**Brazil**), one of the first measures of the state department of education was to deal with nutrition. Public schools in São Paulo usually offer one free meal to all students on a daily basis. But during school closures, the State Ministry decided to target students living in extreme poverty and launched a social support programme called *Merenda em Casa* aimed at providing food to students from families in the lowest quintile of the income distribution by transferring a cash allowance using a platform called PicPay. For students whose families do not receive *Bolsa Família*, a national cash transfer programme, the allowance was doubled by donations from Comunitas, a national non-profit organisation that promotes public-private partnerships. The Department also established a task force to reach parents of "out-of-reach" students by phone or any other possible way, including home visits, after teachers reported their disengagement in learning (learn [more](#)).

In **Colombia**, the national government created a learning resources platform for mobile phone ([movil.colombiaaprende](#)) and published a decree requesting mobile operators to provide zero-rating conditions for access to specific education services and websites (both voice and data). The government reached an agreement with mobile and Internet operators ensuring all inhabitants have access to educational content and guidelines, in particular lower income households, with a cap at about USD 20.

In **Korea**, in cooperation with the Ministry of Science and ICT, Statistics Korea, local governments and governments and 17 Metropolitan and Provincial Offices of Education along with private companies, the Ministry of Education provided digital devices and subsidised Internet subscription fees to students from disadvantaged backgrounds to fully support all students with online classes nationwide. All students who apply for digital devices can rent them without cost. As of April 2021, 5.3% of all students (that is, 280 000 students) had rented digital devices (learn [more](#)).

Many OECD countries have set up online platforms with learning resources, but accompanied them with TV education, radio education or other means in order to adapt to the technologies that are more accessible on different parts of their territory. Most of these infrastructures target different possible users (students, teachers, parents). Multi-modal infrastructures have thus become the signature of digital learning infrastructures during the pandemic. Perhaps this should inspire the next-generation infrastructure.

**Mexico** built on its long-standing TV education experience (*Telesecundaria*) to develop [Aprende en Casa](#), which mainly draws on audiovisual content broadcast across a network of TV stations and streamed through Internet platforms. The content was expanded from secondary education to all levels of education and was broadcast at specific times for each educational level, complemented with learning activities and assessment questions available online or delivered in print in unprivileged areas with no internet access. *Aprende en Casa* also delivered 300 000 printed educational materials to students from rural and isolated communities with no Internet access, and included a special radio strategy to reach students from indigenous communities.

Several similar initiatives could be observed in middle and low income countries. For example, in Madhya Pradesh (**India**), the state developed digital and non-digital programmes under the campaign ‘#ab padhai nahi rukegi’ ([# learning will not stop](#)) to ensure learning continuity during school closures. The non-digital programmes for students include school lessons on the radio for primary school grades (1-8), educational television programmes for secondary school grades (9-12), as well as books, worksheets, and one-on-one teacher interactions for all grades. The digital learning component, the ‘Digital Learning Enhancement Programme’ (DigiLEP) shares curated learning material for all grades through WhatsApp groups. The CM RISE digital teacher-training programme supports online teacher professional development. And a TopParent App was developed to help parents monitor primary school students’ learning. Initiatives based on multi-model platforms were developed in other Indian states, for example [Nagaland](#), and several other countries, such as [Pakistan](#) or [Peru](#).

This is however not limited to middle and low income countries but as countries such as [Latvia](#), **France** or **Spain** had a similar approach. In Spain, the Ministry of Education launched a web portal, Aprende en casa ([Learn at home](#)), bringing together quality educational resources, online training, tools and apps for teachers, families and students. One aspect was the partnership with the national TV to broadcast 5 hours of education programmes every morning during the school week – that could then be watched on replay on the portal and used by teachers as learning resources.

In a number of countries, teachers played an essential role in the development of learning continuity solutions. In **Finland**, Yle, the Finnish National Broadcasting Company, set up a small in-house team to select the resources that could be useful for distance learning. Yle opened up a Facebook for “forerunner” teachers, whom they identified and invited by visiting the most popular Finnish Facebook groups for teachers. Teachers were asked to test and improve the service. Within days, they launched a special service, *Yle Etäkoulu* ([Yle Distance School](#)), to disseminate these educational resources. The teachers provided instant feedback on an ongoing basis on what they understood and what they did not, what was useful and what was lacking. The involvement of teachers in the definition of the TV programme allowed for its constant improvement and relevance.

In **Korea**, in consultation with the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Korean government also temporarily relaxed copyright rules to allow teachers to produce online class content using existing content materials. Furthermore, a website called “[School-On](#)” was established to provide a platform for teachers to exchange and share self-created online class content and class information. 58.4% of the content was created by teachers.

Edcamps, organised by teacher volunteers in which educators lead their own learning experiences, is an example of the kind of professional development which has emerged during the pandemic. It builds on the idea that teachers can learn from each other to enhance their professional skills with the goal of improving student outcomes. Since March 2020, online Edcamps have supported many teachers to learn about and share their experiences with teaching remotely during the COVID-19 crisis, as exemplified in [Ukraine](#) and in the [United States](#). Edcamp Ukraine hosted a national online Edcamp, “High Five for Education”. In the United States, Digital Promise hosted a series of online Edcamps collectively titled “Edcamp: Powerful Learning at Home”. In Flanders (**Belgium**), [KlasCemens](#) provides a good example of government-supported teacher network, created in 1998 and designed as a “community for and by teachers”, targeting teachers at all education levels, including teachers in adult education and student teachers. A similar platform was created in England (United Kingdom), described as a platform by teachers and for teachers (the [National Oak Academy](#)), and in Korea, called [let’s go to school](#). This model will remain powerful for the recovery.

During the pandemic parents have become more involved in their children’s academic learning. Many initiatives built on this idea during the pandemic. This was particularly the case for early childhood. In [Maranhão \(Brazil\)](#), a state programme targeted parents by developing a family engagement curriculum offering concrete suggestions to encourage their young child learning by interacting with them during daily routines and household tasks. In Colombia, [My Hands Teach You](#) offers an example of collaboration between state services promoting comprehensive early childhood development and involving pedagogical, nutritional, health and psychosocial interventions. It targeted all families with vulnerable children aged zero to five (and pregnant women) through a multi-modal approach ranging from billboards to online resources, while prioritising those with greatest need. In the United States, [Wide Open School](#), offered resources for educators and families aiming to develop disciplinary technical skills, but also creativity, critical thinking or social-emotional skills at all levels, while others just supported family and informal learning activities. Beyond offering access to curated resources,

the platform also suggests a daily schedule to help students and families have a good balance of activities. activities.

**England's [National Tutoring Programme](#)**, which supports schools to employ in-school academic mentors to provide intensive support to their pupils is intended provide catch up tuition for lost learning. Tuition partners are accredited by the programme and, while flexible in its implementation, the programme builds on previous evidence on successful tutoring interventions.

During the first wave of the pandemic, the collection of reliable statistical representative data about education was surprisingly limited. As of March 2021, among OECD members, France, Germany, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the United States seem to be the only countries that have collected enough representative to give an overall picture of the education experience during the pandemic. Hopefully more reliable information will come about the second wave and its effects.



## RECOVERY TOWARDS EFFECTIVE AND EQUITABLE EDUCATION

The crisis led to reduced opportunities to learn and progress for most students during the closure of school buildings and many teacher surveys show a fear that the achievement gap between low and high achievers (and students from lower and higher socio-economic backgrounds and other at risk groups) has widened during the crisis. At the same time, the pandemic has led to a wealth of school- and teacher-led micro-innovations, experimentation and the development of new learning infrastructures. Teachers have initiated learning from these developments. Education systems can learn from these developments

so that they can become more effective and equitable. Across societies, the pandemic has demonstrated the importance of frontline capacity and leadership of change at every layer of the system. Central to education recovery programmes should be a focus on supporting a teaching profession that is actively engaged in the design of learning environments and public policy, in the advancement of professional practice, and in creating a stronger professional work organisation. This will require effective distributed and teacher leadership which combines professional autonomy, trust in teachers' professionalism, collaboration,

appropriate support and a culture promoting learning and engagement at all levels of

education systems and all levels of experience of teachers.

## Principle 6: Provide targeted support to meet students' learning and social and emotional needs

Countries should make very deliberate efforts and commit resources to provide additional targeted student support to address the reduced learning opportunities experienced by students from some social groups. Educational recovery provides countries with the opportunity to develop strategies which make sure that students' socio-economic background, gender, ethnicity, immigration background, ability and location do not determine their access to quality education and their learning outcomes. All students should continue to receive a broad and balanced curriculum tailored to their learning needs. Many will need support for their social and emotional needs. Targeted support could take different forms: the provision of in-school

and after-school small group tutoring, summer schools, counselling for specific students according to their social and emotional needs, an enhanced emphasis on metacognitive and collaborative learning, on oral language interventions, but also on other forms of pedagogical interventions that are supported by evidence and seem appropriate in the local context. Such interventions need to take into account that schools are both social hubs that support the development of students' socio-emotional skills and wellbeing and centres of their local communities. New interventions and approaches can also be piloted with the engagement of schools within their communities.

## Principle 7: Co-design a robust digital learning infrastructure with teachers and stakeholders

The pandemic has shown that education systems need to have a strong digital learning infrastructure. This infrastructure needs to be developed and implemented in collaboration with the teaching profession. Effective and inclusive digital platforms should offer valuable resources for in-school and out-of-school learning experiences which can, in part at least, address the inequity that blights many learners' experience of education and improve learning effectiveness for all. Beyond learning management systems and platforms of quality educational resources supporting teaching and learning in school and at home, this infrastructure may include digital resources

based on the latest advances of digital technology. For example, intelligent tutoring systems could support the individualised acquisition of procedural knowledge in some subjects; digital resources could provide teachers with feedback on their teaching and students' learning and facilitate the continued learning engagement of students and learning interactions with peers and teachers. This new learning infrastructure should be co-designed with teachers and students and focus on enabling teachers to enhance learning and support for their students. Enabling technology solutions that can easily work with other ones (inter-operability), allowing teachers and other

relevant stakeholders to contribute learning resources (crowd-sourcing) and involving everyone in the curation of those resources (crowd-curation) will also be key to a strong digital infrastructure. The evaluation and quality

assurance of this infrastructure should include transparent technology criteria for providers and have the feedback of teachers, students and school communities at its core.

## Principle 8: Empower teachers to exercise their professionalism and benefit from professional learning opportunities

Many teachers responded to the pandemic by creating their own just-in-time professional development despite the fact that, prior to the pandemic, teachers had identified the use of technology in teaching as a high priority for professional development. Many innovative and creative learning engagements have been created, highlighting the future potential of IT-based pedagogical approaches. A lesson of the pandemic is that teachers need to feel empowered to exert their professionalism in the use of technology as part of their teaching. This also involves the integration of technology in all teacher training courses, and more collaborative platforms and professional learning projects enabling teachers to develop their digital pedagogical competences through a peer learning process. Many of their unions have provided virtual professional development for their members during the pandemic reflecting a

core activity, that of providing effective and highly valued learning.

This lesson has implications for the teaching profession more widely. Jurisdictions and education authorities in collaboration with teachers, their organisations and other relevant stakeholders should consider creating a systemic strategy for teacher learning and professional development drawing on the lessons of the pandemic. This should lead to teachers' multiple professional roles as instructors, coaches, mentors, peers and facilitators to be fully recognised, rewarded and endorsed. As key and active agents of change, it is teachers and school leaders themselves who can create the working environment where autonomy, collaboration with peers and continued professional learning can be exercised.

## Principle 9: Encourage a collaborative culture of innovation in partnership with school communities

Much can be learnt from the innovative and collaborative partnerships between a number of governments, the teaching profession at school level and with its organisations and other education stakeholders which have emerged during the pandemic. The spirit

of those partnerships should continue and should evolve into an innovation culture as a legacy of the crisis, with the same open and constructive approach to improving educational outcomes and equity for all. A culture of innovation relies on learning at the individual,

organisation and system levels and involves both bottom-up and top-down processes and purposeful collaboration and learning. Under an effective leadership, a combination of professional autonomy, supporting resources and collaboration help ensure that good practice becomes culture within systems. Jurisdictions and education authorities should consider teachers and support staff as well as their organisations as full partners in creating the conditions for recovery and sustaining this innovation culture. Some aspects of this innovation culture that could be explored

collaboratively, domestically and internationally, could focus on some of the following aspects: new ways of combining in-school and remote teaching and learning, new approaches to organising schooling and envisioning teachers' roles, new ways of embracing technology to free teachers' time so they can better support their students' cognitive and socio-emotional learning, effective ways to foster social interactions remotely, and new ways to engage parents in supporting their children's learning.

## Principle 10: Learn from national and international evidence

Successful educational recovery will only occur if the lessons of the pandemic are applied after it subsides. It is critical to build on what has worked and not to repeat what has failed. Recovery should be responsive to the new context of education in the post-pandemic world, building on the good understanding of the opportunities and challenges in the time following the health crisis. These lessons should be derived from evidence coming from diverse sources, including students, parents, teachers, policy makers, using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Educational recovery depends on many factors but at its core is an understanding about why certain strategies have succeeded or failed. All stakeholders within education systems should embrace and use national and international evidence as a means of continuously improving education and

learning. This includes evidence from education reforms, initiatives and research in countries other than their own. While educational research can provide practitioners and policy makers with relevant and robust evidence about what works or is likely to work, one lesson from the pandemic is that education systems should strengthen and diversify their data collection and analysis processes to have quicker feedback on student learning, students and teachers' well-being, and better information about students from disadvantaged backgrounds. System-wide evaluations of the effectiveness of recovery programmes involving all sectors of education and all education stakeholders will be essential.

## Box 2. Education International examples of teacher organisation initiatives for education continuity and recovery

During the pandemic, Education International (EI) and its member organisations have been working to maintain equitable access to education for all students. Below are examples of the initiatives EI has taken help teachers and their organisations respond to the impact of COVID. EI first undertook a [survey](#) to find out how teachers and their organisations were responding to the crisis and the steps they were taking to maintain education. It also published a series of publications, including [Forward to School](#), that sets out 5 pillars of guidance on reopening schools and contains numerous examples of innovations, including examples of social and policy dialogue, which have led to successful steps to reopen schools.

It has become clear that, as students return to schools, their needs should be evaluated so that the appropriate resources and support can be targeted; in particular those who suffer disadvantage may have had greater difficulties in accessing remote learning and possibly greater emotional difficulties. For these reasons EI has promoted the idea of systemic equity audits through its publication: [Auditing Educational Equity in Light of the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). The [Global Framework of Professional Teaching Standards](#), which EI has jointly developed with UNESCO in 2019, will also contribute to the recovery discussions.

At country level, teacher organisations working in partnership with jurisdictions to maintain education during the pandemic as well as providing policy proposals for educational recovery provide interesting [examples](#) to illustrate the thinking behind the Principles.

In **South Africa**, the teacher union SADTU is working with the South African Government on reducing the size of the curriculum, on drafting Annual Teaching Plans, on school-based assessment and on school closure and reopening.

In the **United States**, the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association have proposed a joint approach to Learning Beyond COVID-19 (see [here](#) and [here](#)), focusing on five initiatives: diagnosing student well-being and academic success; meeting the needs of most underserved students; learning, enrichment and reconnection for 2021 summer and beyond; and equity and excellence. The publication references initiatives developed at State level as potential models for student support. Examples include: the Performance Assessment of Competency Education model operated as a federally approved pilot by the New Hampshire Department of Education, and guidance provided by the Pennsylvania Department for Education on compensatory services for students who have been out of school for long periods of time.

In **Ireland**, the provision of education during the pandemic involved extensive teacher union engagement, consistently with Irish law which requires education provision to be “conducted in a spirit of partnership between schools, patrons, students, parents, teachers and other school staff, and the community...” Ireland’s National Curriculum and Assessment Council is an example of this stakeholder approach and includes significant teacher union representation. With the onset of the

pandemic, the Minister of Education and Skills established a COVID stakeholder group which includes the teacher unions Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland (ASTI), Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO), and the Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI). It initially focussed on developing guidance for schools on remote teaching and learning, including for students with special needs, and on wellbeing and on counselling. In May 2020 the focus of the group shifted to Leaving Certificate examinations which were cancelled because of the health crisis. The group then worked intensively with the Curriculum and Assessment Unit and the State Examinations Commission to develop a model of predictive grading with alternative option of sitting the examination in November. This model was extended to 2021. One key feature of the Irish experience of stakeholder engagement has been the emergence of the voice of students: the Irish Secondary Level Students Union joined the stakeholder group and were influential in securing a choice in final assessments.

In **Japan**, Japanese Teachers Union (JTU) has worked with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) to ensure the continuation of quality education during the pandemic and has been involved in education recovery planning. Schools have basically been open since June 2020 and where remote learning has been needed, school closure has been relatively short in most cases. The government has allocated budgets for each school to be able to decide on spending according to the needs of children and educators. Described by the JTU as the school discretionary budget, its total sum is JPY 74 billion. The National Diet has legislated to reduce class sizes from 40 to 35 from Grades 2 to 6 in elementary schools.

In **Argentina**, the Government signed a collective agreement with Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina (CTERA), an EI member organisation, in June 2020. It aimed at restructuring school work during lockdown and focusses on teleworking. The agreement is the first of its kind. It formally recognises work carried out during quarantine as “teaching work in a virtual off-site context delivered in environments that are not part of the education system”. Provisions include: a recognition of the need not to overburden school workers in extraordinary circumstances by respecting the equivalence of normal working hours and by including a “right to disconnect”, a broadening of teacher training activities with the help of trade unions, and the assurance that administrative burdens do not take time away from developing and delivering educational content.

Teacher unions have provided professional learning, development and guidance for their members during the pandemic. Within the United Kingdom, the National Education Union (NEU) has developed a [remote education hub](#) which covers areas such as creating positive learning environments on-line, how to approach technical issues, managing challenging behaviour remotely and developing questioning and dialogue in remote classrooms. It has also moved its national Continuous Professional Development (CPD) [programme](#) for its members to on-line access. The NASUWT Teachers’ Union runs webinars for its members on approaches to safe and effective remote learning. Its [materials](#) cover such issues as; the use of technology, the relative merits of synchronous and asynchronous approaches, establishing realistic expectations about what can be delivered remotely, data protection, privacy and managing workloads.

In **Denmark**, the order of emergency education, enacted as a result of COVID, was developed in dialogue with teacher unions. The country's strong tradition of social and policy dialogue and high level of trust between government and teacher unions made alternative methods of education and school return to be the subject of intensive negotiations and agreement, allowing the order to be enacted less than a week after schools closed. Teacher unions may also be involved in Denmark's recovery plan, including dialogue within the European Union's Recovery Facility that will apply to all EU countries. Unions' key issues for discussions on recovery, which they have drawn from their experiences of the pandemic, include a recognition that well-being and achievement are interlinked, that professional control of technology is essential, and that clear contextual guidelines from health authorities and shorter school days and smaller groups of students are needed. Similarly, there is a common understanding between the Finnish Government and the teacher union OAJ that student wellbeing, loneliness and stress are now major issues and that return to in-school teaching is very important.

In **Scotland** (United Kingdom), a COVID Education Recovery Group (CERG) was formed early in the pandemic, involving key representatives from various bodies (the Education Institute of Scotland and other unions, the Scottish General Teaching Council, local authorities and parents' organisations). Although final policy decisions remain with the Scottish Government, CERG is a significant forum for directing the education system's response to the pandemic. Meeting weekly, CERG is chaired by the Deputy First Minister. It generates advice on school based mitigations, health and safety guidance, and receives regular data and scientific updates on the school estate. CERG is a clearing house for system advice in areas such as remote learning and plans for the phased reopening of schools. Scotland significantly invested in new teaching posts and IT equipment for students from poorer backgrounds, and parents and students provided positive feedback on the remote learning offer during the Scotland's second lockdown. Following the decision to cancel traditional examinations in favour of grades based on teachers' professional judgement, a cross-body committee has overseen an Alternative Certification Model.

In **Australia**, even though the country had avoided the worst of the pandemic as of March 2021, the Australian Education Union (AEU) considered that "the extended period of remote teaching and learning it triggered has brought into sharp focus the critically important problem of the lack of digital inclusion for many students." It therefore commissioned [research to examine home internet access for school students in Australia](#) and determine the level of entrenched digital inclusion. The AEU also called for [digital equity audits](#) to be carried out at national level in order to provide evidence for comprehensive action plans which, it believes, must be developed by a comprehensive comprehensive plan, designed in consultation with education unions and backed by resources. The New South Wales government, for example, has introduced an AUD 337 million programme for additional teaching support to provide small group tuition for eligible students in every school. The AEU in New South Wales has pledged to work with the government on ensuring the programme's effective implementation.

Several teacher unions, such as the Federazione UIL Scuola Riva (UIL-Scuola) in Italy, and the NEU in the United Kingdom, have produced their own recovery plans which provide the basis for their negotiations with their governments.

