



BRIEFING SHEET

Report 20-8
August 2020State Auditor
[Joe Chrisman](#)

Best Practices for Transitioning from Virtual Instruction to In-Person Instruction

Department of Public Instruction

Background

Under the provisions of 2019 Wisconsin Act 185, we have completed a review of the best practices guidance for transitioning from virtual instruction to in-person instruction that the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) posted on its website. As required by Act 185, DPI posted its guidance by June 30, 2020.

To complete our review of DPI's guidance, we independently identified best practices for transitioning from virtual instruction to in-person instruction. To identify these best practices, we reviewed more than 65 documents from international, federal, and state entities, as well as other organizations.

Key Findings

- We found that DPI's guidance contained almost all of the best practices that we had independently identified.
- DPI's guidance did not include two best practices that we had independently identified. In addition, it relied on information that the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) had developed for extracurricular activities, but this information did not address certain types of extracurricular activities not overseen by WIAA.
- DPI's guidance included hyperlinks to more than 125 websites and documents. We found that some hyperlinks to the same website or the same document were not labeled consistently, and the guidance did not contain an appendix or resource page that listed all hyperlinks.
- In August 2020, DPI updated its guidance and indicated that it plans to make additional updates.

Recommendations

When DPI next updates its guidance, we recommend that it:

- advise school districts and schools to review and potentially revise staff contracts and employment documents to reflect virtual instruction and flexible leave time policies, advise them to determine the level of staff and student absenteeism that will disrupt teaching and learning, and provide them with guidance on offering extracurricular activities that are not overseen by WIAA; and
- make its guidance easier for school districts and schools to use.

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