



Florida Council of 100

Issue Brief

April 2020

THE IMPACTS OF PREK-12 SCHOOL CAMPUS CLOSURES

SUMMARY

- Due to COVID-19, states have closed at least 124,000 schools affecting at least 55.1 million students. This includes approximately 7,000 public and private schools and 3.3 million students in Florida.
- On April 18, Governor Ron DeSantis recommended the closure of Florida school campuses for the remainder of the academic year (approximately six weeks) to safeguard student, educator, and community health.
- School campus closures impact students both academically, via reduced learning time, and social-emotionally. They can also affect businesses' ability to operate efficiently and effectively.
- It is estimated that the economic impact of a six-week closure of PreK-12 school campuses in Florida is approximately \$859 million. To put this in perspective, this output would have hypothetically generated only about two-tenths of one percent of Florida's 2018-19 sales tax revenues.
- There are steps that schools and businesses can take to mitigate the effects of school campus closures.

BACKGROUND

The containment of COVID-19 is essential, and [closing schools] is not a decision we made lightly. Districts have taken action and have instituted distance learning as a necessary precaution to protect students, educators, families, and Florida's overall public health.... Our number one priority is keeping our families safe and healthy and stopping the spread of this virus.¹

Richard Corcoran, Florida Commissioner of Education

There is no research and there is no best practice for this kind of mass extended closure. This is going to be new for everyone.²

Stephen Pruitt, President of the Southern Regional Education Board

To protect students and slow the community spread of novel coronavirus (COVID-19) by symptomatic and asymptomatic children, states have closed at least 124,000 U.S. public and private schools, affecting

¹ Florida Department of Education. (2020, March 17). Florida Department of Education announces additional guidance for the 2019-20 school year. Retrieved from <http://www.fldoe.org/newsroom/latest-news/florida-department-of-education-announces-additional-guidance-for-the-2019-20-school-year.shtml>

² Blad, E. (2020, April 15). States face thorny issues in deciding when to reopen schools post-pandemic. Retrieved from https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/04/15/states-face-thorny-issues-in-deciding-when.html?utm_source=ECS+Subscribers&utm_campaign=edd91920bc-ED_CLIPS_04_17_2020&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1a2b00b930-edd91920bc-53611075

30% of their reading learning gains and 50% of their math learning gains as compared with a typical school year.¹⁰ Additionally, according to Miami-Dade School District Superintendent Alberto Carvalho, it is possible that the most at-risk students (e.g., living in poverty, having disabilities, learning English) could see “historic academic regression.”¹¹

To mitigate this loss, more than two-thirds of school districts and parents report that their schools are attempting to substitute distance learning activities for in-classroom instruction (including in Florida).¹² However, while formally planned, developed, and executed virtual learning has proven effective, there is no precedent for a large-scale emergency roll-out of patchwork systems, unfamiliar to both unprepared teachers and students, due to unplanned school campus closures. Florida has been recognized as having the best virtual learning system in the nation as noted by Vice President Mike Pence and U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos.¹³ Despite this recognition, the American Enterprise Institute states that such an endeavor implemented largely during the crisis equates to “trying to build the plane as it is going down the runway,” and anecdotal evidence from Florida appears to support this perspective.¹⁴

Some loss of student learning time is unavoidable as large number of teachers learn to teach virtually for the first time while their students are unexpectedly plunged into educational environments necessitating new, unfamiliar learning strategies and technologies, as well as increased self-discipline. This is problematic because learning time, a function of students’ opportunity to learn (time provided for learning) and their level of perseverance (time engaged in learning), is the “most valuable resource in the educational process,” and vital to student achievement.¹⁵ Several studies reinforce this connection, especially in times of school interruption.¹⁶

Moreover, to enforce rigor and better ensure students are learning the requisite course content, Florida possesses a robust set of statewide, standardized end-of-year exams that are directly tied to content

¹⁰ Kuhfeld, M., & Tarasawa, B. (2020, April). The COVID-19 slide: What summer learning loss can tell us about the potential impact of school closures on student academic achievement. Retrieved from https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2020/04/Collaborative-Brief_Covid19-Slide-APR20.pdf

¹¹ Mekler, L., Strauss, V., & Heim, J. (2020, April 13). Millions of public school students will suffer from school closures, education leaders have concluded. Retrieved from <https://www.boston.com/news/education/2020/04/13/millions-of-public-school-students-will-suffer-from-school-closures-education-leaders-have-concluded>

¹² Brenan, *supra* note 7; Malkus, N., Christensen, C., & West, L. (2020, April). School district responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic: Round 1, districts’ initial responses. Retrieved from <https://www.aei.org/research-products/report/school-district-responses-to-the-covid-19-pandemic-round-1-districts-initial-responses/>; and Florida Department of Education (March 31), *supra* note 6.

¹³ Florida Department of Education (April 18), *supra* note 6.

¹⁴ Malkus et al, *supra* note 12; Morgan, I. (2020, April 14). The truth about K-12 remote learning at home: Kids may fall behind academically by next school year. Retrieved from <https://www.floridaphoenix.com/2020/04/14/the-truth-about-k-12-remote-learning-at-home-kids-may-fall-behind-academically-by-next-school-year/>; Solocheck, J. S. (2020, April 9). Distance learning a heavy lift for many Florida parents. ‘Just very frustrating.’ Retrieved from <https://www.tampabay.com/news/health/2020/04/09/distance-learning-a-heavy-lift-for-many-florida-parents-just-very-frustrating/>

¹⁵ Gromada, A., & Shewbridge, C. (2016, January 27). Student learning time: A literature review. Retrieved from <https://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jm409kqqkj-h-en>

¹⁶ See, for example, Marcotte, D. E., & Hemelt, S. W. (2007, July). Unscheduled school closings and student performance. Retrieved from <http://ftp.iza.org/dp2923.pdf>; Jez, S. J., & Wassmer, R. W. (2015). The impact of learning time on academic achievement. *Education and Urban Society*, 47(3), 284-306. doi: 10.1177/0013124513495275; Cattaneo, M. A., Oggenfuss, C., & Wolter, S. C. (2016, March). The more, the better? The impact of instructional time on student performance. Retrieved from <http://ftp.iza.org/dp9797.pdf>; and Lavy, V. (2010, July). Do differences in school’s instruction time explain international achievement gaps in math, science, and reading? Evidence from developed and developing countries. Retrieved from <http://www2.stat-athens.aueb.gr/~jpan/Lavy-NBER-2010.pdf>

teachers are expected to teach in the classroom. With these, parents and students have an additional, objective data point outside of the traditional course grade for evaluating a student's content knowledge in a given subject. However, because of the school campus closures' effect on student learning time and state testing windows, the state has cancelled all its statewide standardized tests and suspended school grading for the 2019-2020 school year.¹⁷ Both are key components of Florida's long-effective education accountability system.

School campus closures can also affect the social-emotional condition of students. In addition to their uncertainty and fear regarding the virus itself, students unaccustomed to learning at home must cope with disrupted lifestyle routines. Moreover, the social support systems that they typically turn to in times of stress are often unavailable. This has led, for example, to adolescents displaying more loneliness and depression than other age groups due to the pandemic.¹⁸

Businesses

School campus closures are expected to result in reduced labor productivity due to the significant absenteeism of working parents who serve as their children's primary caregivers and thus must stay home with them.¹⁹ Moreover, even with the ability to telecommute, parents assuming the roles of day-time caregiver and educator often have less time and energy to perform professional job responsibilities.²⁰ These effects are magnified with regard to parents in lower-income families who are significantly more likely to have jobs paying hourly wages, requiring a physical presence, and foregoing flexible leave programs.²¹

In fact, the Florida Council of 100 commissioned a recent survey showing that nearly two-thirds of employed parents of minor children in Florida say that school closures and/or lack of childcare have either somewhat (41%) or greatly (23%) hurt their ability to fully perform their job responsibilities during the pandemic.²² Mothers express greater levels of difficulty performing job responsibilities while juggling childcare: 71% say that this has either somewhat (44%) or greatly (27%) hurt their job performance, compared with 44% of employed fathers who say so.

¹⁷ Florida Department of Education. (2020, March 17). Florida Department of Education announces additional guidance for the 2019-20 School Year. Retrieved from <http://www.fldoe.org/newsroom/latest-news/florida-department-of-education-announces-additional-guidance-for-the-2019-20-school-year.shtml>

¹⁸ Mutasa, T. (2020, April 6). How will Washington's school closures affect teenagers and their mental health? Retrieved from <https://komonews.com/news/coronavirus/how-will-washingtons-school-closures-affect-teenagers-and-their-mental-health>

¹⁹ Sadique, M. Z., Adams, E. J., & Edmunds, W. J. (2008, April 24). Estimating the costs of school closure for mitigating an influenza pandemic. *BMC Public Health*, 8(135), 1-8. doi: 10.1186/1471-2458-8-135; Beilfuss, L., (2020, March 13), How school closings will hurt the economy. Retrieved from <https://www.barrons.com/articles/coronavirus-school-closings-hurt-the-economy-51584116337>; Sparks, S. D. (2020, March 13). Long school closures could cost U.S. billions, cut health-care capacity. Retrieved from http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/inside-school-research/2020/03/long_school_closures_could_cost_billions.html; and Abadi, M., Silverstein, S., & Frank, J. (2020, March 17). Closing every school in America because of the coronavirus would cost the US economy \$51 billion a month. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/coronavirus-school-closing-cost-economy-2020-3>

²⁰ Bohl, R. (2020, March 14). Opinion: School closures force many Americans to choose between their children's education and earning a paycheck. Retrieved from <https://www.marketwatch.com/story/school-closures-force-many-americans-to-choose-between-their-childrens-education-and-earning-a-paycheck-2020-03-13>

²¹ *Id.*

²² The Florida Council of 100, in partnership with Sachs Media Group, conducted a statewide COVID-19 survey of 1,200 Florida voters between March 27-28, 2020. The survey is representative of Florida voters in terms of age, race, gender, political affiliation, and region of the state, with a margin of error of 3.1% at a 95% confidence level.

A recent national study estimated that a six-week closure of all U.S. schools and daycare centers could cost the economy between \$19–\$85 billion (0.09%–0.40% of GDP) in lost productivity due to absenteeism.²³ Based on the Florida Council of 100’s own analysis, it is estimated that the economic impact of a six-week closure of PreK-12 school campuses in Florida is between \$859 million and \$3.9 billion dollars, or only 0.08%–0.35% of the state’s GDP. (See Exhibit 2 for the results of the estimate and Appendix A for the methodology.)

The Council believes the low estimate presented in Exhibit 2 to be the most likely estimate of the economic cost of school campus closures in Florida due to it being the only simulation of the three scenarios where parents and guardians can avoid missing work to care for a child through the use of informal childcare (e.g., grandparents, family daycare providers). Further, the low scenario is the only simulation which allows for a portion of the parents who stay home to care for a child to also work from home. Parents may not be as effective working from home as they are in the traditional workplace, and the low scenario factors this in as well. That said, the actual economic impact might be even lower than the low estimate due to two factors: rising unemployment reducing the economic costs of school campus closures and parents’ propensity for sending kids back to school decreasing. (See Appendix A for a discussion of these factors.)

**Economic Impact of School Closures in Florida
(In 2020 US Dollars and Percent of State GDP)**

Closure Length	Low Estimate	Baseline Estimate	High Estimate
2 weeks	\$286.2 million (0.03%)	\$1.2 billion (0.11%)	\$1.3 billion (0.12%)
4 weeks	\$572.5 million (0.05%)	\$2.3 billion (0.21%)	\$2.6 billion (0.23%)
6 weeks	\$858.7 million (0.08%)	\$3.5 billion (0.32%)	\$3.9 billion (0.35%)
12 weeks	\$1.7 billion (0.16%)	\$7.0 billion (0.64%)	\$7.7 billion (0.70%)

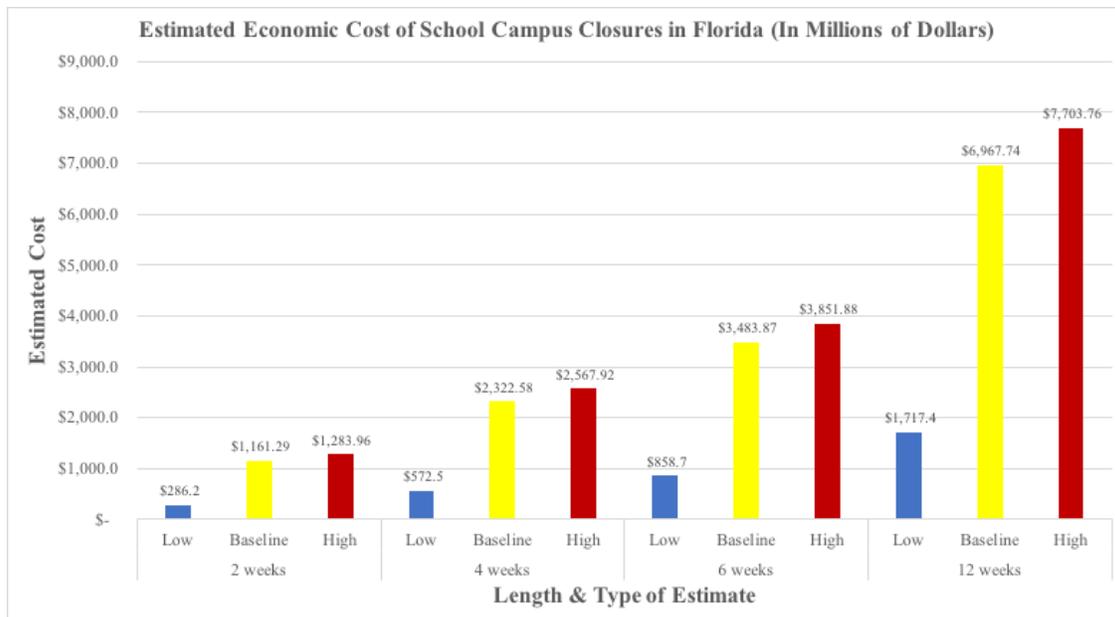


Exhibit 2. Estimated economic impact of school campus closures in Florida

²³ Epstein, J. M., & Hammond, R. A. (2020, March 11). Cost and healthcare impacts of U.S. school closures: An update. Retrieved from <https://chalkbeat.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/EpsteinSchoolClosures.pdf>

RECOMMENDATIONS

According to *The Economist*, a governmental decision to close schools is a “choice between two bad options”—shutting down schools to preserve societal health and risking community spread by promoting economic activity.²⁴ That said, even recognizing the upfront economic and educational costs, it is generally thought that currently doing so means avoiding even larger costs down the road.²⁵ Reopening schools too quickly could put students in danger and risk accelerating asymptomatic spread of the virus.

Thus, we strongly agree with Governor DeSantis’ prudent recommendation to close Florida school campuses for the remainder of the academic year. This decision is consistent with the White House’s Opening Up America Again plan for schools to reopen only when the safety of students, teachers, leaders, and staff can be secured and the potential for them to contribute to community spread of the virus can be minimized.²⁶ (See Appendix B for the portion of the plan relating to the criteria for reopening schools and daycares.) It is also justified by the relatively low estimated short-term economic impact of such closures as weighed against the potential long-term public health harms of opening school campuses too quickly. Furthermore, we firmly believe that, to reopen school campuses, there must be a societal commitment to mitigate future outbreaks through a comprehensive program of testing, contact tracing, isolation, and monitoring until a vaccine and/or effective therapeutics are developed.

Be that as it may, regardless of the timing of reopening school campuses in Florida, the state can take the following actions to mitigate the ongoing negative impact.²⁷

- The state must continue its rapid response to mitigate any learning loss caused by school campus closures. Distance learning platforms have been quickly developed and scaled up, but school leaders and teachers must continually find innovative ways to provide delivery of high-quality lessons and educational support to students unfamiliar with learning outside of bricks-and-mortar settings. Such support must also extend to parents unaccustomed to helping their children excel in a purely virtual education environment.
- Upon returning to school, leaders and teachers should emphasize the use of formal and/or informal formative assessments to gauge students’ learning losses and the need for intervention and support. Such assessments could also be administered at the end of the current school year to identify at-risk students who might benefit from a summer bridge program and/or an early return to school in the fall for remediation.
- Over the summer, school districts should provide teachers with professional development relating to the effective delivering of distance education in case sporadic outbreaks of the virus cause school campus closures during the next academic year. Districts should also use this time to plan more consistent methods and technologies for teaching virtually. In Florida, this could potentially include

²⁴ The Economist. (2020, March 19). How covid-19 is interrupting children’s education. Retrieved from <https://www.economist.com/international/2020/03/19/how-covid-19-is-interrupting-childrens-education>

²⁵ Lindzon, J. (2020, March 12). School closures are starting, and they’ll have far-reaching economic impacts. Retrieved from <https://www.fastcompany.com/90476445/school-closures-are-starting-and-theyll-have-far-reaching-economic-impacts>

²⁶ Although Florida is testing residents for COVID-19 at a rate commensurate with South Korea, the rate of positive test results in Florida is still five times higher than in South Korea. Even so, South Korea still has not opened its school campuses, only moving to distance learning on April 9. See Reuters. (2020, March 31). South Korea to open schools online and reschedule college exam. Retrieved from <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/news/2020/03/31/asia-pacific/south-korea-open-schools-online-reschedule-college-exam/#.XpyL9Jl7mUk>

²⁷ Significantly adapted from Bailey, J. (2020, March 25). Covid-19 closed schools. When should they reopen? Retrieved from <https://www.educationnext.org/covid-19-closed-schools-when-should-they-reopen-coronavirus/>

continuing the increased implementation of formal Florida Virtual School programs, which students could join at the beginning of the fall semester.

From a business perspective, it is important to note that work output does not necessarily vary proportionally with hours worked.²⁸ If a worker misses some work, he or she might work harder at a later time to make up the lost time or his or her colleagues might take up the slack. The typical value of this elasticity of output is 0.8, meaning that 20% of missed output will be compensated for.²⁹ Thus, businesses can benefit to the extent that they can further decrease this elasticity by mitigating the effects of school campus closures on their employees who are able to work from home. Some steps that businesses can take, include:

- Ensuring that a company has the availability of the equipment and technologies needed to support remote work. A prioritization plan should also be developed to optimize capacity use and training requirements.
- Ensuring that remote employees have the technology needed to work productively, including being able to seamlessly access appropriate company systems and communicate effectively with managers and colleagues.
- Conducting an official launch of remote working at the team level in which social interaction technology (e.g., Zoom, Google Hangout) is used to demonstrate continuity of activity, develop new ways for engaging both formally and informally, and answer technical questions about the new working environment.
- Helping employees develop and adapt to new routines necessitated by remote working, especially in settings in which parents must help with their children's schooling. This might require both technical and social-emotional support from managers and counselors. Reach out to employees who might be emotionally withdrawing under the new circumstances.
- Emphasizing the flexibility of working from home. While work routines are important, those routines might vary from employee to employee, especially if a worker must also care for children affected by school campus closures. Remote-working employees can still be productive, but the rhythm of their days might change.
- Maintaining the “psychological oneness” of the workforce when employees are split between those working in the office and those working from home. Ensure company and team cohesiveness in light of employees working from different locations.³⁰

²⁸ Lempel, H., Epstein, J.M., & Hammond, R.A. (2009). Economic cost and health care workforce effects of school closures in the U.S. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1371/currents.RRN1051>

²⁹ Sadique et al, *supra* note 19.

³⁰ Significantly adapted from Harvard Business Review. (2020, March 24). Adjusting to remote work during the coronavirus crisis. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/podcast/2020/03/adjusting-to-remote-work-during-the-coronavirus-crisis>

APPENDIX A

ECONOMIC IMPACT ESTIMATION METHODOLOGY

Economic Cost Per Student of School Campus Closures

The low, baseline, and high estimates of the economic cost per student of school campus closures used in this estimate are taken directly from the work of Lempel, Epstein, and Hammond (2009) and the inflation-adjusted follow up work by Epstein and Hammond (2020).³¹ These per student estimates account solely for lost wages as a result of taking care of a child and, in the case of the low estimate scenario, reduced output from those able to work from home while caring for a child. In this report, it is assumed that Florida would face these same per student costs. For an explanation of how the low, baseline, and high estimates were derived, please refer to the two aforementioned papers.

Economic Impact of School Campus Closures

The economic impact of school campus closures estimates is derived by taking the inflation-adjusted per student low, baseline, and high estimates and multiplying each estimate separately by the sum of:

- The most recent estimate of Florida public school enrollment;
- The most recent estimate of Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten (VPK) enrollment; and
- A growth-adjusted estimate of Florida private school enrollment. Since there are no private school enrollment estimates for the 2019–20 school year, the growth-adjusted estimate was derived by taking the 2018–19 Florida PreK–12 private school enrollment and multiplying it by the average rate of growth in Florida PreK–12 private school enrollment over the last five school years. Both the private and public school numbers include at least a portion of their respective PreK enrollments, so there could exist some VPK students that are also counted (or “double counted”) in either of those two enrollments.³²

The percentage of sales tax revenue lost mentioned in the Summary is derived by taking the low estimate scenario of a 6-week closure of school campuses in Florida (\$859 million dollars), multiplying it by the state’s portion of the sales tax rate (6%) and dividing that by the sales tax revenues from fiscal year 2018–19 as seen in the reporting of the Florida Legislature’s Office of Economic & Demographic Research.

The most recent calculation of Florida’s GDP is for the year 2019.³³

This provides a wide range of estimated impact, but we believe the impact likely is closer to the low estimate scenario given that the low estimate is the only one which adjusts for the ability of some adults to work from home while taking care of children. Additionally, the low estimate becomes more relevant, and potentially

³¹ Lempel et al, *supra* note 28; and Epstein & Hammond, *supra* note 23.

³² Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research. (2020, February). Education Estimating Conference for PreK–12 Enrollment: Executive summary. Retrieved from http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/publicschools/publicschools_summary.pdf; Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research. (2020, January). Voluntary Prekindergarten Estimating Conference: Executive summary. Retrieved from <http://edr.state.fl.us/Content/conferences/vpk/VPKsummary.pdf>; and Florida Department of Education. (n.d.). Florida’s private schools: 2018–19 School Year Annual Report. Retrieved from <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/7562/urlt/PS-AnnualReport1819.pdf>

³³ Bureau of Economic Analysis. (2020). SAGDP2N Gross domestic product (GDP by state [Data set]. Retrieved from <https://apps.bea.gov/itable/iTable.cfm?ReqID=70&step=1#reqid=70&step=1&isuri=1>

even higher than what is actually experienced, as rising unemployment reduces the economic costs of school campus closures and as parents' propensity for sending kids back to school potentially decreases.

As unemployment rises as a result of the effects of COVID-19, the economic costs of school campus closures are reduced because there are no lost wages when a parent recently unemployed due to COVID-19 must stay home to care for a child as a result of a school campus closure. While the 2008 data utilized in Lempel et al (2009) includes unemployment numbers that are relatively high as a result of the Great Recession (monthly unemployment in Florida ranged from 4.8 – 8.3% in 2008), unemployment projects to be higher in the state as a result of COVID-19.³⁴ For example, initial weekly unemployment claims in Florida reached record highs of 228,484 and 74,313 for the weeks ending on March 28th and March 21st, respectively – this despite problems with Florida's online unemployment compensation system.³⁵ The previous high over the last three decades was 40,403 in the week ending January 17, 2009.³⁶ Given the unprecedented levels of unemployment expected to be experienced in the state during the last six weeks of the traditional school calendar, the economic costs of school campus closures per student may even be less than the low estimate scenario of Lempel et al (2009).

Schools being open are only as economically beneficial as the proportion of parents who are willing to drop their students off. The most relevant data we have been able to find on the topic of parents' desire to have their children in school amid COVID-19 concerns comes from how parents in the UK responded to the first COVID-19 school closures.³⁷ On Friday, March 20, schools were closed indefinitely to all students, except for those of key workers identified as vital in the fight against COVID-19 and those students identified as vulnerable (students with significant special education needs or assisted by a social worker). According to a survey of more than 3,000 members from the National Association of Head Teachers, 94% of schools opened the following Monday to provide coverage for students allowed by the regulation, and 94% of those schools had less than 20% of their usual children attending.³⁸ Further, there is anecdotal evidence to suggest schools were expecting a much larger portion of students to arrive, thus illustrating that fears due to COVID-19 may keep parents from bringing their children to school if it was an option.³⁹ If a significant number of parents do not feel comfortable dropping their children off on school campuses notwithstanding their reopening, the economic cost per student of formal school campus closures could be closer to, or below, the low scenario estimate in Lempel et al (2009).

³⁴ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2020). Unemployment rate in Florida [Data set]. Retrieved from <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/FLUR>

³⁵ U.S. Department of Labor. (2020, April 2). COVID-19 impact. Retrieved from <https://www.dol.gov/ui/data.pdf> (accessed April 9, 2020); U.S. Employment and Training Administration. (2020). Initial claims in Florida [Data set]. Retrieved from <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/FLICLAIMS>; and Ostrowski, J. (2020). Coronavirus Florida: State unemployment system overwhelmed by laid-off workers. Retrieved from <https://www.palmbeachpost.com/news/20200325/coronavirus-florida-state-unemployment-system-overwhelmed-by-laid-off-workers>

³⁶ U.S. Employment and Training Administration, *supra* note 35.

³⁷ Weale, S. (2020). Low attendance at scaled-down schools sparks fears for vulnerable pupils. Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/23/parents-heeding-calls-to-keep-children-home-from-school-say-heads>

³⁸ *Id.*

³⁹ *Id.*

APPENDIX B

PROVISIONS OF THE OPENING UP AMERICA AGAIN PLAN RELATING TO SCHOOL OPENINGS

Initial Gateway Criteria

Symptoms

- Downward trajectory of influenza-like illnesses reported within a 14-day period; and
- Downward trajectory of COVID-like syndromic cases reported within a 14-day period.

Cases

- Downward trajectory of documented cases within a 14-day period, or
- Downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period (flat or increasing volume of tests).

Hospitals

- Treat all patients without crisis care; and
- Robust testing program in place for at-risk healthcare workers, including emerging antibody testing.

Phase 1

- Individuals
 - All vulnerable individuals should continue to shelter in place.⁴⁰ Members of households with vulnerable residents should be aware that by returning to work or other environments where distancing is not practical, they could carry the virus back home. Precautions should be taken to isolate from vulnerable residents.
 - All individuals, when in public (e.g., parks, outdoor recreation areas, shopping areas), should maximize physical distance from others. Social settings of more than 10 people, where appropriate distancing may not be practical, should be avoided unless precautionary measures are observed.
 - Avoid socializing in groups of more than 10 people in circumstances that do not readily allow for appropriate physical distancing (e.g., receptions, trade shows).
 - Minimize non-essential travel and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following travel.

⁴⁰ A vulnerable person is one who is elderly or who has a serious underlying health condition, including high blood pressure, chronic lung disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, and those whose immune system is compromised such as by chemotherapy for cancer and other conditions requiring such therapy.

- Employers
 - Continue to encourage telework, whenever possible and feasible with business operations.
 - If possible, return to work in phases.
 - Close common areas where personnel are likely to congregate and interact, or enforce strict social distancing protocols.
 - Minimize non-essential travel and adhere to CDC guidelines regarding isolation following travel.
 - Strongly consider special accommodations for personnel who are members of a vulnerable population.
- Special employers
 - Schools and organized youth activities (e.g., daycare, camp) that are currently closed should remain closed.
 - Visits to senior living facilities and hospitals should be prohibited. Those who do interact with residents and patients must adhere to strict protocols regarding hygiene.
 - Large venues (e.g., sit-down dining, movie theaters, sporting venues, places of worship) can operate under strict physical distancing protocols.
 - Elective surgeries can resume, as clinically appropriate, on an outpatient basis at facilities that adhere to CMS guidelines.
 - Gyms can open if they adhere to strict physical distancing and sanitation protocols.
 - Bars should remain closed.

Gateway Criteria Must Be Met Again

Phase 2

Schools and organized youth activities (e.g., daycare, camp) can reopen.



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