



The New York State Office of Religious and Independent Schools PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE CENTER (PDRC)

The Upstate PDRC - All NYS Regions North of NYC

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E - Newsletter

Issue 3



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Scenarios and guidance for re-opening in the '20-'21 school year

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- AUGUST PDRC Professional learning and CTLE opportunities, free of cost to our NY independent and/or religious schools

Resource Round Up

Resources for in-person, remote and hybrid school re-opening

Flash Resource (NEW):

[The Distance Learning Playbook | Corwin](#)



Reopening New York's Independent and Religious Schools

Planning for an uncertain future, armed with evidence.

On the Upstate PDRC website, (<https://www.nysed-soris-upstate-pdrc.org/fall-2020-resources>) we have compiled important pieces of guidance for schools as they plan reopening. Including, NYSED's Framework of Guidance to Reopen NYS Schools (July 13, 2020). Additional highlights include:

- A webinar hosted by the Brookings Center on Education Policy on "**Reopening Schools in the Fall Amid the Covid-19 Pandemic**", available to view [here](#).
- A collection entitled "**How We Go Back to School**", compiled by EdWeek and available [here](#).
- A recent EdWeek article, "**Scheduling the Covid-19 School Year**", [here](#),

From managing buses and schedules, to how we receive students at the beginning of the day, to the global perspective on how reopening has been envisioned by schools all over the world, this set of resources compiles the most promising practices for in-person, hybrid and entirely remote models for returning to school in the '20-'21 school year.

How does this specifically relate to New York's independent and religious schools? Whether we are public or independent schools, we all have to work with the social and emotional fall-out of Covid-19. We all have to work with keeping students and staff healthy. We all need to know what our families need during this time. Of increasing importance, we all have to work through how our model for reopening will address the deep inequities that permeated our school systems pre-pandemic. How do we accept the challenge of Covid-19 to reinvent our schools in a manner that addresses diversity, equity and inclusion? Will we emerge as better and stronger independent schools, true to our missions, as a result of this fundamental challenge to the status quo?

We encourage you to take a deep dive into the most promising practices regarding the Fall 2020 school reopening. While we cannot, with certainty, predict whether our schools will open in person this fall, we do know that the best preparation is to be ready for all three possibilities. This issue of the PDRC Newsletter is dedicated to preparing for an uncertain future with thoughtfulness and intention. Visit our website resources page to access compiled articles and webinars – updated daily: (<https://www.nysed-soris-upstate-pdrc.org/resources-and-tools>).



Spotlight Educator

In Waldorf schools, “looping” with your class has been the norm for 100 years. Astrea Ravenstar, class teacher at the Waldorf School of Saratoga Springs, spoke to us about her experience with looping.

How does looping work in a Waldorf school?

“In Waldorf schools, the traditional ideal is that one teacher carries most of the core subjects for an 8 year class cycle. In our school, we have divided the class teacher cycle into a 1st-5th loop and a 6th-8th loop. The teacher really knows the class -- their interests, strengths and weaknesses-- and can craft their lessons around the needs of a particular group. It is easier to know how to engage the class and to differentiate learning. The greatest benefit is the development of long-term relationships between the parents, student and teacher.”

What about learning a new curriculum every year?

“When I moved into 2nd grade with my group, everything was so much easier. I knew the parents and their family backgrounds, I knew how each of my students learned. We hit the ground running in second grade. We moved more quickly through the curriculum than we would have otherwise.”

How does this model support students and families in a post-Covid world?

“We were able to leverage our relationships when it came to switching to remote learning. The uncharted territory had a few landmarks in it because Waldorf families expect contact and connection. Sharing struggles was easier, and we all found a way forward together. This fall, knowing who my students and families are, we can meet the challenges together.”

Any advice for schools considering looping?

“It’s important for teachers to consider where their strengths lie. Waldorf used to stress a 1st-8th cycle, but it is rare for a teacher to have that range and confidence. When teachers have a good sense of their own strengths and skill sets, they can elevate the potential of their looping cycle.”

Visit our website to access our most recent Quick Guide on Looping: <https://www.nysed-soris-upstate-pdrc.org/quick-guide-looping>

Upcoming Events



Upstate PDRC Focus Group – Your Voice is Essential

- Join us for Focus Groups to help us understand your needs for August and into the new school year. Your input is essential to helping us develop training and support that aligns with school needs. Visit our website to register: <https://www.nysed-soris-upstate-pdrc.org/>

View ALL PDRC Calendar of Events for August:

(Go to bottom of home page) <https://www.nysed-soris-upstate-pdrc.org>

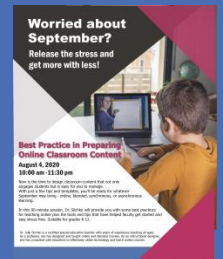
August Interactive Session:

“Best Practices in Preparing Online Curriculum and Content”

August 4, 2020 10:00 am

Worried about September? Release the stress and get more with less!

Now is the time to design classroom content that not only engages students but is easy for you to manage. Designated for K-12.



View the flyer

[REGISTER HERE](#)

August Interactive Session:

“Special Subjects Teachers Forum”

August 3, 2020, 10-11:30 EST

Start the new school year with inspiration, ideas and resources from fellow teachers in your subject area.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Recorded Webinar:

Introducing our first of many “Quick Guides:” Looping

Available on demand:

<https://www.nysed-soris-upstate-pdrc.org/quick-guide-looping>

Learn more about “looping” in the elementary years, how it is practiced and why so many schools are looking at it for ‘20-’21.



Resource Round Up: Promising Ideas and Tools for Fall Reopening



State Education Department Presents Framework of Guidance to Reopen New York State Schools

*Recovering, Rebuilding, and Renewing the
Spirit of New York State Schools*



Read:

A balanced look at hybrid
schedules
from *EdWeek*



Watch:

This webinar from the *National
Association of School
Psychologists*



Listen:

Cult of Pedagogy's podcast on
online best practices



Watch:

This adorable youtube video
Looping in Education:
A Student Interviews a
Looping Teacher



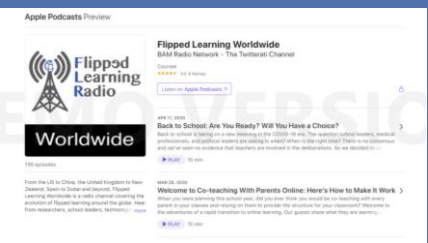
Listen:

Ditch that Textbook's podcast
and resource page on
virtual field trips



Read:

Stay healthy with this
EdWeek article:



Listen:

Flipped Learning Radio



Read:

Project-Based Learning and
you (*Edutopia*)



Watch:

Edsurge on improving our
online game



Find us at:

www.nysed-soris-upstate-pdrc.org/

