



Information Alert #9: How Will Schools Reopen Safely?

June 24, 2020

House Bill 59

At the root of [HB59](#) discussions is how schools will reopen safely during an active pandemic. HB59 seeks to provide school's immunity from legal liability during declared states of emergency. An amendment to HB59 passed by the Louisiana House of Representatives indicates this immunity from liability would *not* apply if the school violates policies or laws. HB59 will be next considered by the Louisiana Senate.

Reopening Schools During a Pandemic and Social Distancing

How can schools reopen during an active pandemic without increasing the risk of spreading the virus?

- Social distancing guidance does not seem feasible for students. For example, guidance on transportation of students would limit the number of students per bus to a point of being impractical in terms of both cost and time.
- Businesses cannot fully reopen without employees, and parents of young, school-aged children cannot leave children alone to go to work.

The High-Risk Population

Certain high-risk children and adults will not be able to avoid the increased risk of infection once schools reopen, an issue that is further complicated by Louisiana laws requiring attendance.

While most children may be at a lower risk of complications due to COVID-19, many people, including students with developmental disabilities, teachers, and family members of some school-aged children, are at increased risk of complications due to COVID-19.

More to Discuss

HB59 raises concerns and hopefully will generate an open dialogue between policymakers, administrators, educators and parents on measures schools need to consider in reopening during this pandemic.

Contact Us

LaCAN is an initiative of the LA Developmental Disabilities Council. If there are any questions about the information in this email, contact the Council by replying to this email, or calling the toll free number listed below:

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