

**Arlington Public Schools**  
**2020-2021 Revised Instructional Plan**  
**Per Virginia’s Phased Reopening Plan**

**Note:** Revisions to APS’ initial Instructional Plan are noted in blue.

Arlington Public Schools (APS) began the school year via full distance learning. We expect to take a phased approach to **transitioning to** hybrid in-person instruction, based on continuous monitoring of health and operational data in **March**. Families have selected whether to keep their students participating in full distance learning or to transition their child to the hybrid model. Following is a description of the levels of transition to the hybrid model:

- **Level 1: Return Date – November 4, 2020**
  - Students with Disabilities (SWDs) who require direct support to access distance learning.
  
- **Level 2: Projected Phased Return – Most beginning in March**
  - All PreK-5th grade students, including PreK-5th grade English Learners and SWDs with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), and high school students enrolled in selected Career & Technical Education (CTE) courses at the Career Center.
  - Students phase in the following groups:
    - **February 3rd** - CTE students in selected classes
    - **March 2nd** – PreK-2nd grade
    - **March 9th** –3rd-5th grade
  
- **Level 3: Projected Return Date – March**
  - **March 9th** - 6th and 9th grade
  - **March 16th** - 7th -8th, 10th-12th
  
- **Operational Infrastructure to Support Learning**
  - **Plan for school schedules (Links have been updated to reflect the hybrid model.)**
    - The **elementary schedule** can be found at this [link](#) to APS’ “School Year 2020-21” webpage, which is part of our communications and outreach to families.
    - The **middle school schedule** can be found at this [link](#) to the FAQ page.
    - The **high school schedule** can be found at this [link](#) to the FAQ page.

○ **Transportation –**

- Routes are based on student data available on February 5. Routing for hybrid return is not dynamic.
- Transportation Services continues to check the data and is working with a consultant to develop entirely new routes. Drivers are learning new routes.
- Transportation information for all bus eligible, hybrid return students who told APS they would use the bus will be posted in ParentVue as students are phased in.
- Bus stops and routes will look very different than normal to adjust to 11 riders per bus; shorter routes moving quickly back and forth to schools.
- Pickups may be earlier to allow buses to pick up more students before start time. Middle and high school dismissal routes will pick up 15-30 minutes later at school to accommodate earlier elementary dismissal times.
- Students will only have one bus stop; those who are not assigned will not be permitted to ride the bus.
- FAQs are available on the Transportation web page:  
<https://www.apsva.us/transportation-services/hybrid-in-person-bus-transportation-faq/>

○ **Technology**

- All PreK – Grade 12 students have a device – elementary and middle school students have iPads, high school students have MacBook Airs.
- New teachers received devices prior to the start of the school year.
- All clerical employees have been issued laptops
- Bus drivers, Food Services, Extended Day, and Maintenance staff have received iPads
- System-wide use of Microsoft Teams meetings to deliver synchronous instruction and for meetings
- Upgrades to Office 365 and Microsoft Teams including 7x7 grid (49 faces) for laptops, improvements for teacher management of the Teams meeting lobby.
- Telephony services offered in Office 365 platform
- Internet access via the Comcast Internet Essentials program, a partnership with Arlington County to provide free internet access to eligible APS families
  - Extending offer to include APS Adult Education Program students

- As of October 12, 2020:

- 3,100+ Comcast Internet Essentials Codes have been distributed with 380 active connections to date.
- 1,300 Mi-Fi's (mobile hotspot devices) have been distributed to provide connectivity to students
- Additional 300 Mi-Fi's being distributed to families as needed
- An additional 24 Wireless Hotspots around the county with direct and unlimited access to APS have been set up and more to come.
- Comcast also provides numerous wireless hotspots around the county.
- APS schools putting APS wireless outside schools
- More information on Hotspots with maps are available on our website at <https://www.apsva.us/digital-learning/internet/>

- **Communication**

- APS held 12 Virtual Town Halls for staff and families regarding Return to School topics
  - 21,000+ staff and family viewers overall
  - 38,300+ Facebook views of family Town Halls
- Return-to-School and [Distance Learning](#) Task Forces composed of representatives of advisory committees, parents, staff, students, and Executive Leadership Team members.
- Weekly updates on Tuesdays via School Talk messaging to families and Staff Central (staff intranet)
- Regular Monitoring Report at School Board meetings (see PowerPoint presentations at this [link](#).)
- APS [School Year 2020-21](#) webpage and Social Media #ReopeningAPS
- Videos in Spanish and English throughout return to school planning
- [Parent Academy](#) videos focusing on a variety of topics (academic planning, social-emotional support, CTE via distance learning, etc...)
- Updates via WhatsApp and Bilingual Family Liaisons
- Employee FAQ, Staff Central dedicated page for reopening

- **New Instruction for All Students**

- Plan for providing new instruction to all students including the learning needs of all students equitably, with attention to vulnerable and special populations

- **Students With Disabilities**

- IEP and 504 teams meet to adjust services and supports to align with the distance learning and hybrid instructional models.
- Special education eligibility assessments and re-evaluations have been conducted in a virtual and hybrid format starting in the fall.
- The student support process (which includes the Arlington Tiered System of Supports – ATSS) - will continue virtually.
- Identification of students who require Recovery Services will be done by assessing students' progress and determining areas of regression.
- Mondays are used for Special Education teachers and general education teachers to plan together for robust differentiated instruction. Assistants will be encouraged to join.
- Individualized, specially designed instruction is provided that aligns with students' IEP services and goals. Small group instruction will be provided within the general education virtual and in-person classroom.
- Teletherapy, coaching models, and in-person services are used to deliver related services (Counseling, Speech, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy).
- Consultative sessions with parents and caregivers are provided by related service providers and special educators.
- Ongoing progress monitoring is conducted to identify successes and opportunities to intensify support, if needed.
- Instructional Assistants provide additional support for students to address executive functioning skills, social-emotional support, and academic assistance.

- **English Learners (EL)**

- English Learners (ELs) will participate in either the hybrid or distance learning model that their families have selected. Their instruction will continue to focus on English language development (based on WIDA Standards) and content attainment (based on Virginia Standards of Learning).
- Students have received new instructional content and student work has been graded.

- Opportunities are available for students to practice using English in the four language domains (reading, writing, speaking, listening) during in-person, synchronous and asynchronous instruction.
- EL teachers collaborate and co-teach with grade-level teachers.
- Opportunities for synchronous and in-person pull-out instruction for ELs, based on language development needs, are available.
- ELs participate in instruction with their grade level peers.
- Daily instructional blocks continue to meet the requirements of the DOJ Settlement Agreement.

#### ○ **Gifted Students**

- Identified gifted students will participate in either the hybrid or distance learning model based on their family's selection. The collaborative cluster model will still be used to support the daily academic and social-emotional needs of gifted learners. Within the concurrent model, students will be grouped (clustered) together with other students who are also identified as gifted. Students will be clustered with a teacher who understands working with diverse gifted learners whether through the earning of an endorsement in gifted education, the earning of 40 gifted points and/or the demonstrated commitment to do so.
- Teachers of gifted cluster classes are responsible for the daily planning and delivery of gifted services, with ongoing support from the Resource Teacher for the Gifted (RTG) at each school.
- Cluster teachers and RTGs will use ongoing assessments to identify students who have mastered some or all of the content (and/or those who pick it up quickly after exposure) in a unit of study. Based on this data, the cluster teacher and RTG will use curriculum compacting to plan appropriately challenging extensions to the standards.
- Within the curriculum compacting plan, cluster teachers and RTGs collaboratively plan small group instruction. This small group instruction may be led by the RTG when scheduling permits.
- Cluster teachers and RTGs will use the Gifted Services Elementary Canvas site when planning and delivering instruction to ensure high quality curricular resources and strategies are used to challenge students who show readiness and to give all students opportunities for critical and creative thinking.
- RTGs will also continue to provide ongoing support and coaching in the following ways:

- Work with teachers to develop digital portfolios (via Seesaw or Canvas) to show growth over time and beyond standards, highlight talent development, and communicate with parents. These portfolios will be used during the spring screening for gifted services.
- Collaborate with special education case carriers and teachers to provide planning and support for twice exceptional (2e) learners supporting the instructional expectations for special education.
- Collaborate with EL teachers to support students who are advanced/gifted and need extension activities supporting the instructional expectations for ELs.
- Lead targeted professional learning for teachers using the Gifted Services Professional Learning Cycle.

#### ○ **Early Childhood**

Community building with a focus on connection with peers and the teaching staff with social-emotional learning built on key skills such as self-regulation, impulse control and concentration into the framework.

- A routine and consistent structure for synchronous learning for students who will continue to participate in the distance learning model. [The hybrid schedule will mirror the distance learning schedule.](#) The morning will begin with a Morning Meeting at a consistent time each day. The day will also have built in breaks for students to take movement/gross motor breaks, snack, and lunch.
- Literacy and math mini lessons as well as small group instruction in order to provide formative information about student learning and subsequent instruction.
- Content time to address social studies and science in a fun and engaging manner virtually and in person for students participating in the hybrid model.
- Specials are provided during the day giving students a balanced day during their virtual and in-person experience.
- Specific lessons were delivered at the beginning of the school year designed to teach young learners about how to use the IPAD during Teams and Seesaw as well as proper etiquette while engaging online (muting mics, taking turns, etc.) with their classmates.

○ **Preparing teachers through professional development**

- Pre-Service Week 1 (Aug. 24-28)
  - Professional learning related to strategic priorities (equity, culturally responsive practices, trusted adult, trauma-sensitive schools, etc.) & job-related skills
  - Content area preparation - revised curriculum guidelines to address 4th quarter essential standards
  - School-based priorities
  
- Pre-Service Week 2 (Aug. 31-Sep. 3)
  - Preparation to provide students, as well as parents, teachers, and administrators a consistent experience across distance learning experiences.
  - Help teachers learn the existing APS tools such as Microsoft Teams and Canvas and other distance learning tools
  - Build skill sets related to the best online instructional practices
  
- Level 1 and Level 2 planning days (October 27 and October 28)
  - Students engaged in asynchronous work while Level 1 and Level 2 teachers set up their classrooms and use an updated guidance document to prepare to transition to the hybrid model, which will require them to deliver instruction in-person and via distance learning.
  
- Level 3 planning days (Feb 4 and 5)
  - Professional learning for Level 3 staff. All secondary students (grades 6-12) engage in asynchronous work to provide time for professional learning to prepare staff for the concurrent learning model.
  - Early release day on Feb. 5 for all elementary schools. This allows 3rd-5th grade teachers to receive training on this model, and all other elementary teachers and staff will also receive additional professional learning at that time.
  
- March 5
  - Teacher planning day for grades 3-12 as teachers prepare for delivering concurrent instruction.
  - No school day for 3rd-12th grade students as well as PEP students at the Career Center.
  - Students in PreK-2nd grade and those who attend Montessori Public School of Arlington will attend school as planned via distance learning or in the hybrid model.

- Specials teachers will instruct PreK-2nd grade classes and will use time when they would normally instruct grades 3-5 to plan for hybrid instruction.

- **Robust family engagement**

- Community surveys of staff, students, and families
- Gather feedback on distance learning and reopening plans
  - June 3-10: Student and Staff Survey
  - June 8-15: Family Survey (English, Spanish, Amharic, Arabic and Mongolian)
- Survey families regarding hybrid or distance learning model selection (July 6-July 20 and September 20-October 21).
- Engage page established to which parents and community can share feedback and ask questions
  - Input submitted through Engage@apsva.us is shared directly with Work Groups based on topic

- **Communication with stakeholders**

- Weekly meeting with Task Force members
- Weekly community updates on planning
- Board meeting Monitoring Reports through the fall
- Posting information for staff on Staff Central (intranet)
- Weekly updates on Tuesdays via School Talk messaging to families

- **Identification of Instructional Gaps and Student Needs**

- **Plan for identification of learning needs through formative assessment**
  - Ongoing assessments drive instruction
  - Utilize midyear screening tools to identify students who are not making expected progress
    - Any student who was flagged on a mid-year universal screener will receive additional diagnostic assessments (as needed) to identify



specific area(s) of need. Using this additional data, targeted intervention plans are created.

- Teachers utilize a variety of common formative assessments (e.g. exit slips, quick checks, journal entries, conferences) to monitor student understanding and mastery of skills.
  - Digital assessment tools (i.e. Lexia, Dreambox, Waggle, Canvas Quizzes) are used to gather data to evaluate ongoing learning.
  - Collaborative Learning Teams (CLT's) analyze student data and use it to develop responsive instructional plans to support students' learning.
    - An infrastructure schools can use to implement and improve targeted small group instruction across grade levels is being created and shared with schools.
- **Supports for student success and well-being**
- **Tier 1**
    - Comprehensive school counseling
    - Explicit instruction in Morning Meetings and TAs
    - Second Step
    - Sources of Strength
    - Mindfulness lessons and exercises
    - Teachers reinforce and practice SEL lessons daily in Morning Meetings or TAs and send home links or other materials provided by counselors to families
  - **Tiers 2-3**
    - Individual short-term and solution-focused counseling
    - Individual check-ins
    - Counseling as a Related Service (CARS)
    - Group Counseling (RTI or targeted group counseling on issues such as grief and loss)
    - Acculturation, trauma, and reunification support
    - Other skill development and program interventions (such as Superflex, Unstuck and On-Target, Check In-Check Out, Zones of Regulation, etc.)
- **Revisions to curriculum, pacing, and instructional delivery**
- Elementary students who participate in the hybrid model receive a minimum of 5 hours and 20 minutes of in-person instruction on two days

(Tuesday/Wednesday or Thursday/Friday) and via distance learning on the other two days (Tuesday/Wednesday or Thursday/Friday). Elementary students who participate in the full distance learning receive 5 hours and 20 minutes of asynchronous and synchronous instruction via distance learning. All students will participate in 2 hours and 40 minutes of asynchronous instruction on Mondays.

- Middle school students receive a minimum of 5 hours and 43 minutes of instruction regardless of the model (hybrid or full distance learning) in which they participate. All students participate in asynchronous learning for approximately 30 minutes per course on Mondays.
  
- High school students receive a minimum of 5 hours and 35 minutes of instruction regardless of the model (hybrid or full distance learning) in which they participate. All students participate in asynchronous learning for approximately 30 minutes per course on Mondays.
  
- Fourth quarter essential standards that were not addressed in March-June 2020, are embedded in revised curriculum guides and will be introduced organically throughout the school year.

- **Remote Learning**

- All students will continue being introduced to new content via full distance learning should further closures be necessary.

- **Child Care for School Aged Children**

- Plan assessing the demand for and supply of such childcare for school aged children who are participating in virtual learning under hybrid or fully remote reopening; and work done directly or in partnership to support childcare for school aged children.

- **Child Care for APS Staff**

- APS provided childcare for APS staff who are required to physically report to work in the distance virtual model, at cost, utilizing existing Extended Day staff.
- Childcare has been provided in very small groups at designated school facilities only for children ages 4 to 11, due to licensing requirements.
- Cost for childcare services are based on demand and staffing requirements.

- Based on teacher and staff surveys, 1,249 children were projected to need childcare; however, some of these children are either below age 4 or above age 11.
- Safety measures and social distancing have been maintained; health screenings are conducted prior to entering school buildings and face coverings are required unless there are medical exemptions.
- Childcare will be provided during full-time distance learning; locations and service delivery may be adjusted based on space availability once in-person instruction resumes.
- With the return to in-person instruction, Extended Day staff, who have provided the childcare five days per week, will be repurposed to meet instructional and supervision needs. The Instructional Learning Support program (childcare) will be offered on Mondays only going forward. We are working with Arlington County working to provide this program at two community centers using County Parks and Recreation staff the remaining four days per week going forward.

- **Childcare for Families**

- APS is working with Arlington County to implement a program to provide childcare to specific, low-income families.
  - Eligibility will be based on criteria provided by the County's Department of Human Services
  - Will be phased in to two sites (Drew, Hoffman-Boston)
  - Available end of March/beginning of April
  - Arlington County will provide all funding necessary to operate the childcare.
- Arlington County is working to:
  - Identify existing childcare availability for families.
  - Encourage closed childcare centers to reopen and look at expanding existing childcare.
  - Help potential providers navigate the licensing and land use processes.