

Executive Summary for School Board Work Session - 10/21/2020

Purpose of Executive Summary

The purpose of this executive summary, better known as the “BITE,” is to provide you an overview of the Virtual PLUS+ Phased Reentry Plan (5.0) that was developed in collaboration with multiple stakeholders. At the center of the proposed phased-in plan is a commitment to safety, wellness, equity of experience, and ensuring successful outcomes.

Closing of School Buildings and Learning Plans

Since our school buildings' closing resulting from the COVID-19 Pandemic, Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) has continued to provide students and families with various educational opportunities. Our school division has provided students and families access to technology, instructional learning materials, educational resources, meals, and support services during the crisis.

Our Enhanced Continuity of Learning Plan 1.0 addressed student and staff needs following the school buildings closing; Enhanced Continuity of Learning Plan 2.0 extended and redefined educational resources available to students, including both instructional packets, synchronous learning, asynchronous learning, and online lessons; Continuity of Learning Plan 3.0: Summer Learning through Engagement and Enrichment for All Plan addressed learning loss, engagement, and enrichment; and the Enhanced Continuity of Learning Plan 4.0: Reimagining Schools is aligned with global, national, federal, state, and local guidelines.

The Virtual PLUS+ Phased Reentry Plan (5.0) ensures a safe and healthy learning environment for our students, staff, and families. This plan continues to ensure fidelity to Virtual PLUS+ while planning for a phased-in approach for reopening schools and buildings. As we work to reopen, we will continue to seek feedback from our leaders, staff, students, families, and community, as well as provide progress updates based upon data and feasibility factors. This 5.0 plan will start on November 5, 2020, and expand through the second semester.

Guiding Principles

Throughout this 5.0 planning process, we have maintained our guiding principles because they are front and center to ensuring successful outcomes for all students.



These principles also informed our two guiding questions across planning groups, and throughout our first planning session (September 21, 2020 - October 16, 2020):

- **What adjustments can we make to the Virtual PLUS+ learning model to better meet the needs of students and staff?**
- **Is it feasible to start in-person learning in quarter two?**

Overview of Phased Reentry Plan

Executive Summary for School Board Work Session - 10/21/2020

The expanded plan includes more details related to:

1. Adjustments to the Virtual PLUS+ Elementary School Schedule;
2. Health + Safety Measures;
3. Meal Service Plan;
4. Phased Reentry;
5. Procedures in the Event of a Positive COVID-19 Case; and
6. Transportation of Students.

The [Virtual PLUS+ Phased Reentry Plan \(5.0\)](#) plan provides additional details around our planning for phasing in students. Our transition plan ensures all students and staff are healthy, safe, and engaged during the reopening process, including following required health and sanitation mitigation procedures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The phase-in transition plan will also ensure that students receive personalized academic support and interventions to address any learning losses resulting from school building closings. It is important to note that the health, safety, and well-being of students, teachers, staff, and their families are critical in deciding whether to reopen school buildings for in-person learning. Also, the academic learning loss that students might likely experience remains a core priority for ACPS. We know that schools are an essential part of our community, and they create supportive learning environments for students and families.

This plan includes feedback from staff, students, families, and the community. This plan also designs an option that we know we can implement and not have to pull back from due to an outbreak of the virus as we head into flu season.

Reentry planning has taken into account:

- **Building Capacity:** classroom layouts; furniture; learning spaces; hallways and communal spaces;
- **Students:** prioritized based on need; education; equity; family preference;
- **Staff Availability:** Ability to return, personal health conditions; direct instruction; virtual roles;
- **Instructional Model:** schedules; technology; pacing;
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) + Health/Safety Training:** procurement; cleaning protocols; ability to monitor; health mitigations from the Alexandria Health Department; and
- **Transportation:** Modified routes; bus capacity; driver support; monitors.

Racial equity is at the heart of ACPS' work. We also want to assure you that we aim to build trust with our community through frequent communication and transparency. We have also ensured that all internal and external stakeholders have had a voice within our planning process. Stakeholders include the Alexandria Health Department (AHD), students, staff, families, partners, the Education Association of Alexandria (EAA), and the Parent Teacher Association Council (PTAC). Although we collaborate with other school divisions, we must do what we know is most feasible for our community in Alexandria.

Please be aware that we are still working through our staffing model, which takes into account that our staff members are facing some of the same challenges that many of our families are grappling with during this pandemic, such as:

- People who are 65 or older;
- People of all ages who have underlying medical conditions are at higher risk of serious illness if they do get COVID-19;
- Other groups at higher risk for complications including pregnant women or people with weakened immune systems;
- Caring for a family member with underlying medical conditions or weakened immune systems;

Executive Summary for School Board Work Session - 10/21/2020

- Child care; and
- Family life obligations.

This iterative process of our phased-in return to school is informed by this feedback and allows us to pivot as necessary. We will continue to make changes and updates according to comments and questions from staff, the School Board, and the community. Data from the October 4, 2020, survey was incorporated into both the improvements to the Virtual PLUS+ model and the reentry plans.

Once the School Board approves the proposed phased-in reopening plan, we will provide continuous updates on our progress at the following School Board meetings: November 12 and 23, 2020; December 3 and 17, 2020; and January 21, 2021. ACPS will continue to review its plans as well as survey our families and staff every seven to nine weeks.

Recommendations

Contingent upon staffing, the superintendent recommends that the School Board discuss and approve a **phased-in approach for in-person learning for all students** grades Pre-K-8 beginning with our most vulnerable **Students with Disabilities and English Learners**, expanding student participation according to the following timeline:

Begin with Students with Disabilities in grades K-2 who are enrolled in the Citywide Special Education program who opt into in-person learning.	November 5
Expand to include Students with Disabilities in grades 3-5 who are enrolled in the Citywide Special Education program who opt into in-person learning.	November 17
Expand to include Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) students who opt into in-person learning [to be housed at the Early Childhood Center (ECC)].	November 30
Expand to include Students with Disabilities in grades K-5 who receive self-contained Language Arts and Math instruction who opt into in-person learning.	November 30
Expand to include Students with Disabilities in grades 6-8 who are enrolled in the Citywide Special Education program who opt into in-person learning.	December 2020
Expand to include all remaining students in grades PreK-5 who opt into in-person learning.	January 2021
Expand to include all remaining students in grades 6-8 who opt into in-person learning.	February 2021