

## BOARD BRIEF

Date: July 31, 2020

BOARD INFORMATION:

MEETING PREPARATION:

**FROM:** Terri H. Mozingo, Ed.D., Chief of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership

**THROUGH:** Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

**TO:** The Honorable Cindy Anderson, Chair, and  
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**TOPIC:** Enhanced Continuity of Learning Plan 4.0: Reimagining Schools Update

### ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL

Goal 2: Instructional Excellence

### SY 2019-2020 FOCUS AREA

Focus Area 1: Educational Equity

### FY 2020 BUDGET PRIORITY

Academics

### SUMMARY

This week, our *Cross-Functional Planning Teams (CFPT)* closed out Sprint 3, engaging fully in complex dialogue and decision-making during our Monday and Wednesday morning design sessions and beyond. Over 150 CFPT members worked together in a collaborative and integrated manner to support our strategy for feasibly reopening schools. At the core of the work, undertaken by these teams, was a vision for teaching and learning as well as addressing equity and keeping public health as a primary goal. This week, our work was focused on the following essential questions:

- *How will our students and staff experience our designs for 100% Virtual and Hybrid?*
- *Are the Hybrid and Virtual models feasible within our constraints to reopen schools on September 8, 2020?*

Next week, we will provide more specific details and artifacts on our reopening plan during the School Board Presentation on August 7, 2020.

### Completed Activities + Accomplishments (July 27 - July 31)

#### *Day in the Life of a Student, Staff, and Families*

- This activity was initiated across the CFPTs on Monday, July 27, 2020, with the purpose of mapping the journey various stakeholders will take throughout the day in both hybrid and virtual models. This process allowed us to check our understanding of school schedules and designs through the experience of a student, staff member, or family.
- While we understand that we will never be able to design and control for every detail and decision our students, staff, and families will make, what we can do is design for marginalized voices, and therefore prepare ourselves for handling the nuances and specific challenges each staff, student, and community member will bring no matter what.
- Throughout this activity, many participants noted that the instructional day for virtual and hybrid presented various constraints around the following:
  - For virtual days, participants pointed to student and staff mental health and face-to-face connections, engaging virtual instructional models for synchronous learning, Wi-Fi

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- connectivity as well as other potential technological challenges, meal services, steady communications, and childcare.
- For hybrid days, participants noted numerous questions around health screenings before, during, and after the school day, transportation routing, staffing to operate effectively, student to student interactions, and maintaining school culture throughout the week.
- This process clarified 'gaps' to be accounted for as we continue planning and sharing resources with ACPS and our community, as well as help us understand the feasibility of our virtual and hybrid schedules. Each Cross-Functional Planning Team adjusted and strengthened their guidance and materials based on the experience.

### **Feasibility Analysis**

- CFPT Chairs, with materials and analyses completed by the Cross-Functional Planning Teams as well as aligned resources from national, state, and local experts came together to assess the practicality of both the Hybrid and Virtual Models. Each Chair answered the same question from the perspective of their CFPT accountabilities and functional area: *"Is it feasible to open our schools for in-person learning starting on September 8, 2020?"* More specifically:
  - Is the model possible within current constraints and available resources?
  - Does the model support ACPS students, staff and family's needs and preferences?
  - How does the model align to *ACPS 2025: Equity for All?*
- Each Chair recommended to Dr. Hutchings that it was not feasible to open schools for in-person instruction on September 8, 2020, citing constraints in physical capacity, scheduling, transportation, personal protective equipment, and staffing. Details of this analysis will be provided during the School Board Meeting on August 7, 2020.

### **Gratitude and Looking Forward**

- As we recognize the many sprints ahead, we took a moment as a CFPT team to check in on how things are progressing by conducting a quick retrospective to identify practices to continue, practices to start, and other items to stop.
- We also took a moment to shine gratitude across the team, with comments of appreciation landing in our zoom chat, shared in email, and named in this [Padlet](#). It becomes clear through these comments that the deep collaboration enhanced relationships, built respect, and broadened designs across our outstanding team.

### **Upcoming Activities (August 3 - August 7)**

- Cross-Functional Planning Teams, as well as the chairs and Senior Leadership Team, are finalizing outputs for broader communication, including our detailed Feasibility Analysis, Principal Playbooks to provide guidance for reopening, and the workbooks that offer a glimpse into the dialogue and collaboration that occurred within each team during the month of July 2020.
- To implement the ACPS 100% Virtual Plus fall reopening model and deliver the highest quality services to our students, staff, and families, we must meet them where they are and work together on behalf of our students. A major component of this is to ensure ACPS does all it can to support students, families, and staff in a new experience for all. The direct feedback and voice from students, families, and staff on how ACPS can best support them in critical areas will be used to refine planning of supports and partnerships necessary for a successful fall reopening. The key areas of support are based on what was heard from all July engagement with stakeholders through the survey and community chats regarding areas of need in the fall.
- Preparations and support materials for the release of the proposed plan on August 7, 2020, including resources for students, staff, families, and community members.

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### *Our upcoming timeline includes these critical milestones*

- A comprehensive plan with specific details will be shared and discussed at the School Board meeting on Friday, August 7, 2020.
- An updated plan with details and incorporating feedback from the School Board meeting will be shared with the community on Wednesday, August 12, 2020.
- Our final plan will be uploaded and submitted to the *Virginia Department of Education (VDOE)* on Friday, August 14, 2020.

### **BACKGROUND**

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

The development of *ACPS' Enhanced Continuity of Learning Plan 4.0: Reimagining Schools* is aligned with global, national, federal, state, and local guidelines. The plan will ensure a safe and healthy learning environment for our students, staff, and families. As we work to reopen schools, it is critical that we continue to seek feedback from our leaders, staff, students, families, and community so that we can collectively put forth our very best ideas and actions for what is possible, achievable, and essential when reopening. Ultimately, the plan will address the feasibility of reopening schools and buildings.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the information within this brief in preparation for the School Board meeting on Friday, August 7, 2020.

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Day in the Life Activity Sample - Student I
2. Day in the Life Activity Sample - Student II
3. Day in the Life Activity Sample - Teacher I
4. Feasibility Analysis Sample
5. Cross-Functional Planning Team PowerPoint (*from July 29, 2020*)

### **IMPACT**

ACPS will develop and implement a comprehensive reopening plan to ensure that all students and staff are healthy, safe, and engaged during the reopening process, including following required health and sanitation procedures from the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*. The reopening plan will also ensure that students receive personalized academic support and interventions to address any learning losses resulting from school building closings.

### **CONTACT**

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