

BOARD MEMO

Date: September 9, 2021
For ACTION ___
For INFORMATION ___
Board Agenda: Yes ___
No ___

FROM: Jennifer Abbruzzese, Director of Policy and Board Initiatives

THROUGH: Julia A. Burgos, Chief of School and Community Relations
John Contreras, Director of Safety and Security Services
Julie A. Crawford, Ed.D., Chief of Student Services and Equity
Alicia Hart, DBA, Executive Director of Facilities and Operations
Kurt Huffman, Executive Director of Community Partnerships and Engagement
Gerald R. Mann, Jr., Ed.D., Executive Director of Instructional Support
Terri H. Mazingo, Ed.D., Chief of Teaching, Learning and Leadership
Marya Runkle, Director of Education and Business Applications
Darrell Sampson, Executive Director of Student Support Teams
Stephen M. Wilkins, Ed.D., Chief of Staff
Gregory C. Hutchings, Jr., Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

TO: The Honorable Meagan L. Alderton, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Policy Revisions Related to COVID-19

ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:

- Goal 1: Systemic Alignment
- Goal 2: Instructional Excellence
- Goal 3: Student Accessibility and Support
- Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation
- Goal 5: Family and Community Engagement

SY 2020-2021 FOCUS AREA:

- Focus Area 1: Reopening of School
- Focus Area 5: Academic Disparities

FY 2022 BUDGET PRIORITY:

Implementation of 2025 Strategic Plan

SUMMARY:

A broad cross-section of policies and regulations were revised for SY 2020-2021 to incorporate COVID-19 public health protocols and distance learning-related guidance. Amendments for the 2021-22 school year are attached and listed in the chart below. They are compiled from the following policy manual classifications:

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G Policies: Personnel

I Policies: Instructional Program

J Policies: Students

K Policies: School- Community Relations

SY 2021-22 COVID-19 Related Policy Revisions		
Policy/ Reg.	Title	Revision
GBE	Staff Health	Updated to reflect current public health guidance and the newly proposed GBE-R/JHCC-R.
GBE-R/JHCC-R	<p>*NEWLY PROPOSED REGULATION</p> <p>Use of Protective Face Coverings (Masks) to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19</p>	Drafted to reflect the 8/12/21 Public Health Order requiring all individuals aged two and older to wear masks when indoors at PreK-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Masks must be worn on school buses per a federal order .
IFA	Assessment and Evaluation	Updated to delete time-limited provisions for SY 2020-21.
IFA-R	Assessment and Evaluation Regulations	Updated to delete time-limited provisions for SY 2020-21.
IGAE/IGAF	Health/Physical Education	Updated to delete time-limited provisions for SY 2020-21.
IKC-R	Grading Regulations	Updated to delete time-limited provisions for SY 2020-21, and to reflect modified grading practices for the 2021-2022 school year. Proposed changes recognize the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on ACPS students, and address learning loss due to the 2020-2021 school closures.
JEA	Compulsory Attendance	Updated to delete time-limited provisions for SY 2020-21.
JFC-R	Standards of Student Conduct	Updated to delete time-limited provisions for SY 2020-21.
JHCF	Student Wellness	Updated to reflect current public health guidance and the newly proposed GBE-R/JHCC-R.

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JHCF-R	ACPS Wellness Guidelines	Updated to reflect current public health guidance and the newly proposed GBE-R/JHCC-R.
KG	Community Use of School Facilities	Updated to delete time-limited provisions for SY 2020-21.
KG-R	Community Use of School Facilities Regulations and Applications	Updated to reflect current public health guidance and the newly proposed GBE-R/JHCC-R.
KK	School Visitors	Updated to reflect current public health guidance and the newly proposed GBE-R/JHCC-R.

BACKGROUND:

On Friday, March 13, 2020, ACPS closed all schools due to the Coronavirus/COVID-19 pandemic in order to promote physical distancing and the safety and wellness of school staff, students, and their families. On the same day, Governor Northam ordered all Virginia schools closed for a period of two weeks. On March 23, 2020 the [Governor ordered all Virginia schools to remain closed](#) for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year.

On June 9, 2020, Governor Northam [announced a phased reopening](#) of K-12 schools, which gradually permitted in-person instruction to resume while prioritizing the health and safety of students and staff.

As of August 12, 2021, a [Public Health Order](#) requires all individuals aged two and older to wear masks when indoors at public and private K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status, with limited exceptions. The Order also applies to Pre-K if the program is at a K-12 school. Masks must be worn on school buses per [a federal order](#).

The Public Health Order reinforces the current state law ([Senate Bill 1303](#)) that requires Virginia schools to offer in-person instruction for the 2021-22 school year, and to the maximum extent possible, to use prevention strategies outlined by the CDC. [CDC's recommended strategies](#) currently include masking of all staff, students, and visitors while indoors.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board approve the policy and regulatory revisions related to COVID-19 for the 2021-2022 school year.

IMPACT:

By revising the attached policies for SY 2021-2022, ACPS will:

- Adhere to mitigation strategies that minimize the spread of COVID-19 established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the Alexandria Health Department (AHD);
- Prioritize safety precautions for the benefit of ACPS students, staff and visitors;

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- Recognize the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students and address learning loss due to the spring 2020 school closures ([Executive Order 53, \(March 2020\)](#)); and
- Ensure maximum flexibility and benefit for ACPS students while maintaining opportunities for mastery of content standards.

REFERENCES:

[Recover, Redesign, Restart 2020](#), Virginia Department of Education, (Revised July, 2020).

Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Virginia PreK-12 Schools, Virginia Department of Health (VDH), (Updated August 31, 2021), <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/182/2021/03/Interim-Guidance-to-K-12-School-Reopening.pdf>.

Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), (Updated August 2021), <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>.

State Health Commissioner Order of Public Health Emergency Statewide Requirement to Wear Masks in K-12 Schools, (August 12, 2021), https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/134/2021/08/PHE-Order_K-12_8-12-2021.pdf.

Virginia LEARNS: Navigating Virginia Education in Uncertain Times, Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), (Summer 2021), <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/learns/virginia-learns.pdf>.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Policy GBE: Staff Health
2. GBE-R/JHCC-R: Use of Protective Face Coverings (Masks) to Mitigate the Spread of COVID-19 (DRAFT)
3. Policy IFA: Assessment and Evaluation
4. IFA-R: Assessment and Evaluation Regulations
5. Policy IGAE/IGAF: Health/Physical Education
6. IKC-R: Grading Regulations
7. Policy JEA: Compulsory Attendance
8. JFC-R: Standards of Student Conduct
9. Policy JHCF: Student Wellness
10. JHCF-R: Student Wellness Regulations
11. Policy KG: Community Use of School Facilities
12. KG-R: Community Use of School Facilities Regulations/Application
13. Policy KK: School Visitors

CONTACT:

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