

BOARD MEMO

Date: August 27, 2020

For ACTION _____

For INFORMATION X

Board Agenda: Yes x

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, Acting 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
Elaine McSorley-Gerard, DNP, Director, School Health Services
Terri H. Mozingo, 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 Cindy Anderson, Chair, and
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

TOPIC: Policy Revisions Reflecting COVID-19 Public Health Protocols and Distance Learning-Related Guidance for SY 2020-2021

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 2019-2020 FOCUS AREA:

Focus Area 1: Educational Equity

FY 2020 BUDGET PRIORITY:

- Academics
- Safe Schools for Students and Faculty
- Optimal and Equitable Learning Environments
- Mental and Social/Emotional Health
- Physical Education/Fitness

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SUMMARY:

A broad cross-section of policies and regulations have been revised for SY 2020-2021 to incorporate COVID-19 public health protocols and distance learning-related guidance. They are compiled from the policy manual classifications below:

E Policies: Support Services

G Policies: Personnel

I Policies: Instructional Program

J Policies: Students

K Policies: School- Community Relations

Although primarily driven by changes related to the global pandemic, some revisions may also reflect current ACPS practice or amendments to the Code of Virginia and Virginia Board of Education regulations.

The chart below outlines the policies and regulations proposed for review:

SY 2020-21 COVID-19 Related Policy Revisions		
White Fill = ACPS Policy/Reg. Impacted by COVID-19		
Yellow Fill = Additional Statutory/Regulatory Revision		
Policy/ Reg.	Title	Revision
IFA	Assessment and Evaluation	Updated to reflect ACPS 2025 Strategic Plan: Equity for All.
IFA-R	Assessment and Evaluation Regulations	Updated to reflect ACPS 2025 Strategic Plan: Equity for All; Virtual Plus+ Continuity of Learning Plan.
IKC-R	Grading Regulations	Updated to reflect Virtual Plus+ Continuity of Learning Plan.
JEA	Compulsory Attendance	Reflects amendment to Va. Code § 22.1-254 re: expanded definition of “attending” school.
JED	Student Absences/Excuses/Dismissals	Reflects amendment to Va. Code § 22.1-258 re: nonattendance recording and notification procedures.

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JEA-R/JED-R	Attendance Regulations	Updated to comply with Superintendent's Memo #188-20, <i>Tracking Attendance for the 2020-2021 School Year</i> ; includes support process when student engages in pattern of (less than a full day) unexcused absences as required by 8 VAC 20-730-20.
JFC-R	Standards of Student Conduct	Updated to reflect 2020-2021 Student Code of Conduct Addendum in response to Virtual Plus+ Continuity of Learning Plan.
JHCF	Student Wellness	Updated to reflect current public health guidance and Virtual Plus+ Continuity of Learning Plan.
JHCF-R	ACPS Wellness Guidelines	Updated to reflect current public health guidance and Virtual Plus+ Continuity of Learning Plan.
IGAE/IGAF	Health/Physical Education	Updated to reflect Virtual Plus+ Continuity of Learning Plan.
GBE	Staff Health	Updated to reflect current public health guidance and Virtual Plus+ Continuity of Learning Plan.
KK	School Visitors	Updated to reflect VDOE's return to school plan implementing Virginia's phased reopening of K-12 schools.
KG	Community Use of School Facilities	Updated to reflect amendment of Va. Code § 22.1-131 requiring monthly reports re: community use of school facilities.
KG-R	Community Use of School Facilities Regulations and Applications	Updated to reflect VDOE's return to school plan implementing Virginia's phased reopening of K-12 schools.
EBCA	Emergency Preparedness Drills	Policy updated to reflect amendment of Va. Code § 22.1-137.2 re: lockdown drill notifications and exemptions. For 2020-2021 school year, safety drills will commence <u>after</u> the resumption of in-person instruction in ACPS facilities.

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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 permits in-person instruction to resume while prioritizing the health and safety of students and staff. In order to minimize the disparate impacts closures have had on students,” the reopening plan (revised July 9, 2020), “prioritizes the needs of students who have been most impacted by school building closures, and for whom in-person instruction is most beneficial.” ([VDOE, July 6, 2020](#))

At the conclusion of a robust engagement and planning process that incorporated thought partners and cross-functional planning teams, ACPS submitted its reopening plan, [Virtual Plus+](#), to the Virginia Department of Education on August 14, 2020. Building upon the resulting recommendations, an ACPS core team collaborated over multiple weeks to review and refine the proposed amendments to impacted policies. These proposals continue to be shared with school and administrative staff, as well as key stakeholders to obtain additional insight.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the policy revisions reflecting COVID-19 public health protocols and distance learning guidance during the 2020-2021 school year.

IMPACT:

By revising the attached policies for SY 2020-2021, 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);
- Align with VDOE’s return to school plan implementing Virginia’s phased reopening of K-12 schools during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Prioritize safety precautions for the benefit of ACPS students and staff;
- Comply with Superintendent’s Memo #188-20, *Tracking Attendance for the 2020-2021 School Year*;
- Recognize the ongoing impact of providing new instruction to students remotely and to address learning lost 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:

Tracking Attendance for the 2020-2021 School Year, [Superintendent’s Memo #188-20](#), (July 24,

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2020).

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

Guidance for Schools, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), (Updated May 2020), <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html>.

Phase Guidance for Virginia Schools, Virginia Department of Health, (July 1, 2020), <https://www.governor.virginia.gov/media/governorvirginiagov/governor-of-virginia/pdf/Final-Phase-Guidance-for-Virginia-Schools-6.9.20.pdf>.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Policy IFA: Assessment and Evaluation
2. IFA-R Assessment and Evaluation Regulations
3. IKC-R: Grading Regulations
4. Policy JEA: Compulsory Attendance
5. Policy JED: Student Absences/Excuses/Dismissals
6. JEA-R: Attendance Regulations
7. JFC-R: Standards of Student Conduct
8. Policy JHCF: Student Wellness
9. JHCF-R: Student Wellness Regulations
10. Policy IGAE/IGAF: Health/Physical Education
11. Policy GBE: Staff Health
12. Policy KK: School Visitors
13. Policy KG: Community Use of School Facilities
14. KG-R: Community Use of School Facilities Regulations and Application
15. Policy EBCA: Emergency Preparedness Drills

CONTACT:

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