



School Reopening Fall 2020
KEEPING OUR COMMITMENTS
AS WE RETURN BOSTON STRONG
Equity Analysis and Recommendations for Reopening

Equity Analysis: Executive Summary

Over 200 stakeholders participated in eleven meetings specifically focused on applying the BPS Racial Equity Planning Tool to develop an equity analysis of the two proposed reopening models: all remote instruction, or a hybrid “hopscotch” model. Participants drew upon input collected during extensive student, family, staff, and community engagement meetings regarding reopening, plus numerous data sources, including information about outcomes during the March to June 2020 remote instruction, and student, family, and staff surveys.

In addition to the four overarching concerns and six recommendations below, concerns specifically pertaining to each of the two models were raised, along with numerous, detailed potential mitigating strategies.

Overarching Concerns

Numerous equity concerns belong at the center of the district’s reopening plan. Four overarching concerns were consistently raised by internal and external participants in the Racial Equity Planning Tool meetings.

- 1. The impact of COVID has hit certain subgroups of BPS students, families, and staff disproportionately based on race, ethnicity, immigration status, homelessness, income, disability, and other factors.**
- 2. Access to high quality remote instruction is uneven, and learning loss must be urgently addressed.**

3. **Some students need onsite instruction or supervision as soon as it is safely available.**
4. **Isolation and trauma are serious health risks for our students.**

Overarching Recommendations

1. **Start with a remote model. As soon as possible based on facilities and transportation readiness and confirmed staff availability, initiate a rolling start hybrid model to address students with the highest needs.** High needs students should include students with Individualized Educational Plans, English learners, homeless students, and students where the parent(s)/guardian(s) are unable to work unless their students are in school or another supervised location.
2. **Maximize the effectiveness of remote learning, initially beginning with the deployment of a cross-functional, multi-role, internal/external team to design and implement effective and equitable strategies, to maximize the effectiveness of remote learning.** A virtual learning team must immediately begin to oversee all aspects of making remote instruction work as well as possible, including continually improving the quality of culturally responsive, differentiated, engaging instruction and relationship-building with students; ensuring ample food is accessible as needed; applying trauma-informed and restorative practices; and addressing all of the implications for students who are not reporting to a school building.
3. **Publish specific imperatives to maintain the school system's collective focus on a common set of priorities rooted in our Strategic Plan and core values in the coming school year, particularly our value of equity, with associated measures and accountability systems.** In the context of competing priorities and finite capacity and resources, we must define our equity-centered strategies, and ensure that all students, families, employees, and partners are informed of those shared values and objectives.
4. **Modify the existing hybrid plan to prioritize students who require in-person instruction (according to parent request), then other high needs students, in a phased-in approach contingent on public health guidance, and transportation, staffing, and facility readiness. Launch this work by creating a cross-functional, multi-role, internal/external team.** The district must specifically define our high needs students populations. In-person instruction should not begin until a set of uniform standards are

established for safe facilities, transportation, and interaction among staff and students.

5. **Deeply and frequently engage and communicate with stakeholders on short- and long-term collective work to meet diverse student and family needs, including regular, multimedia communication to students, families, and staff in multiple languages.** Both schools and the Central Office should ensure continuous input and collective planning with an equity lens. COVID infection and death rates, ongoing analysis of academic and other outcomes, and other changes of circumstance and evolving collective learning should result in continuous adjustments and communication.

6. **Engage partnerships to supplement BPS efforts to combat issues such as isolation, access to learning, learning loss, supervision, health and wellness, WiFi connectivity, technology access and training, family support, instructional and other training for families, and more.** BPS is part of a broader context of public, corporate, nonprofit, and higher education resources that can and should be leveraged on behalf of our students and families.