School Reopening Fall 2020, Draft 2

RETURNING BOSTON STRONG
# Table of Contents

**Letter from the Superintendent**  
Executive Summary  
Introduction  
Planning to Reopen  
   - Core Values  
   - Public Health Metrics  
   - Practical Realities  
   - School Start Date: Request for DESE Waiver  
   - Timeline  
   - Working Groups  
Listening and Learning  
   - Community Engagement  
   - Initial Family Preference for Hybrid Learning  
   - Improving Remote Learning: Lessons Learned  
   - Concerns Raised; Views Expressed  
BPS Reopening Plan: Options for Families  
   - Option 1: Fully Remote Learning  
   - Option 2: Hybrid A/B  
   - Option 3: Hybrid C (Special Populations)  
      - Teaching Students In-Person and Remote  
      - Classroom Layouts  
   - Summary of Available Learning Options  
   - Phasing Into Hybrid Models  
   - Not an Option: Simultaneous In-person Learning for All  
Protecting BPS: Health & Safety Requirements  
   - Home Health Screenings  
   - Handwashing  
   - Wearing a Mask  
   - Physical Distancing  
   - Monitoring and Containment Protocols  
      - Contact Tracing  
      - Quarantine  
      - Isolation  
      - Testing  
      - Response to a Symptomatic Person  
      - Response to Potential Exposure Within A School  
      - Response to Potential Exposure Across Schools  
   - Out of State Travel  
   - Privacy  
   - BPS Health Support Staff  
      - School Nurses  
      - Behavioral Health Team
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operationalizing the Plan</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Rides the Bus</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Students Ride the Bus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Safety-Related Changes to Bus Transportation</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitors Not Allowed</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entryways &amp; Hallways</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HVAC/Air Filtration</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classrooms</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Common Areas</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor Spaces</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrooms</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Nutrition</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Meals</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritized Efforts</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Platforms</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniform Digital Learning Platform(s)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Within the Plan(s): Academics</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Design: Equitable Instructional Recovery Principles</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing Unfinished Teaching and Learning</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transformative Social and Emotional Learning</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standards</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curricula</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structured Learning Time</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scope and Sequence</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specials</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade Level Differences</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary School</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle School</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Education</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Learners</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District-Required Formative Assessments</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Summative Assessments</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Tiered System of Supports: Student Success Plans</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Delivering the Plan: School Leaders and Staff
  School-Specific Plans 73
  COVID-19 Planning Task Force 73

Supporting the Plan: Community Partners
  Engagement with Public and Elected Officials 74
  Out of School Time and Partner Programming 74
  Athletics 75

Supporting Family Choice
  Choices for Families 76
  Partnering with Families 76

Succeeding Together: Supporting School Staff
  Mandatory Home Health Screening 79
  Professional Development 79
    Returning Boston Strong Educator Conference 79
    Additional Professional Learning Opportunities 80
  First Week of School PD 81
  Human Capital Supports 81
  Ensuring Staff Coverage 82

Financing the Plan
  Available New Funding 82
  Strategies to Leverage Existing Resources 83
  Increased Costs 84

Improving the Plan
  Appendix 87
Letter from the Superintendent

The upcoming school year will look and feel different than any we have previously experienced. Never before have we started a school year in the midst of a global health crisis. In less than 10 months, the COVID-19 coronavirus has taken lives, altered communities, and changed the very foundations of how we gather. The new school year is also arriving in the midst of another profound change in our nation. We have begun to directly reckon with and band together to confront decades of racial inequity and systemic oppression throughout our nation, including within Boston Public Schools.

These twin pandemics have not robbed us of our unbreakable connection: we remain Boston Strong. In that spirit of community, we will continue to support each other, follow public health guidelines to keep each other safe, honor each other and treat each other with respect, always guided by the fact that we can accomplish anything when we work together.

As we do with all our efforts, the Boston Public Schools has kept equity at the center of our school reopening planning. We remain committed to identifying and implementing antiracist policies and closing opportunity and achievement gaps in the new school year. We recognize that prioritizing the social, emotional, and physical wellness of students, families, and staff is the only way to adequately address equity and ensure health and safety. In our planning, we have continually evaluated its impact on our students of color, English learners, and students with disabilities, to ensure we are providing all students what they need to succeed.

As always, we have critically important work to do this school year. We must create safe, welcoming, and culturally affirming environments where students are engaged academically and socially-emotionally. We must ensure consistency and connectivity. We must continue to support our families and partners as they step into new roles. I thank you for your continued partnership as we embark on a successful school year that promotes learning, relationships, and success for all students. I am proud to stand with you as one Boston – Boston Strong.

Dr. Brenda Cassellius, Superintendent
Executive Summary

These are unprecedented times. But even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, public schools play an integral role in strengthening our shared society. School is not only where children learn math and science, it is where they learn to work collaboratively in diverse teams to achieve shared goals. Schools support families with the critical work of nurturing children, helping each and every one of our community’s young people grow into their best adult selves. This fall, like every fall, it is time to get back to school.

This fall we have to approach the new school year differently. We have to make sure that - while we continue to live with COVID-19 - we also do the hard work of figuring out how to do school safely and well. In that spirit, our gathered community feedback has led us to make the following changes to our initial plan.

- **Provide Necessary Training.** We are applying for a waiver from DESE to give teachers and staff members additional days of professional development and training to prepare for the year ahead. We expect that the first day of school for students will be September 21, 2020.

- **Honor Parent Choice.** There is no one solution that will work best for every student, every family, or every person who works with Boston Public Schools. Recognizing and respecting that fact, the BPS Reopening Plan provides several learning model options for families to choose in order to best meet the educational needs of their children.

- **Take the Time We Need.** Boston Public Schools will either: (a) reopen school in a hybrid learning model through which students alternate between returning to school buildings and continuing to learn remotely; or (b) reopen school remotely for all students. **We will continue to monitor local health data and will be guided by the advice of our public health officials as we get closer to our anticipated start date.**

- **Science will continue to drive the decision.** BPS will only reopen our school buildings to students and staff if and when the Boston Public Health Commission determines it is safe to do so given its constant monitoring of public health metrics.
• Whether we start school remotely or in a hybrid model in September, it is critical to the ongoing strength and vitality of our community that we get students and staff back in our school buildings as soon as it is safe to do so during the 20-21 school year. As such, we are enriched by, and dependent on, the full community's continued commitment to working collaboratively to ensure that all of our students are safe and fully engaged in learning.

Within this framework, let’s work together to get back to school – Boston Strong.
Introduction

On March 16, 2020, the Boston Public Schools (BPS) closed its school buildings and sent home its 53,000 students in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 19th, our dedicated staff began teaching our students remotely, using online instruction designed and provided by classroom teachers and supporting staff. Within days, food service staff set up 16 meal sites throughout the community to serve breakfast and lunch to BPS students. Since the closure, this staff served over one million meals to BPS families, including over 500,000 meals delivered door-to-door by our dedicated bus drivers and monitors on yellow school buses. At the same time, our technology staff delivered over 33,000 Chromebooks to students. BPS nurses volunteered to assist the Boston Public Health Commission conduct contact tracing in an effort to limit community spread of the virus. Our custodial staff cleaned all of our school buildings and began making plans to physically distance students in the fall. Since March, our central office administrators have made plans to improve online learning, provide needed professional development to our educators, drafted new human resources protocols to support the COVID-19-related leave needs of our staff, retooled our fiscal processes to allow for electronic processing, and conducted specific equity analyses of various options under consideration. At the same time, BPS designed and executed an online summer learning program that is currently providing high quality remote learning to nearly 14,000 students, including almost 6,000 special education students and over 5,000 English Learners. Throughout this difficult time, we continue to be proud to work hard for all of the students and families we serve as we stand together.

We released the first draft of our reopening plan on August 3, 2020. Since then, we have continued to engage with partners and solicit feedback. We have heard from teachers, principals, parents, community based organizations, and higher education partners. We listened. We learned. And we've made the plan better.

We've provided more specific information about COVID-19 health and safety protocols and health measures in our school buildings. We broadened the explanation of simultaneous teaching to encompass a broader conception of hybrid instruction that includes various teaching and learning methods appropriate to various grade levels. Task forces made up of teachers and principals weighed in on recommended and required assessments, transformative social-emotional learning, and platforms for remote and hybrid learning. Through this rich and ongoing
collaboration with members of our Boston Public Schools community, we have strengthened our ability to return to school safely and together.

Planning to Reopen

This second draft of the BPS Reopening Plan, like all subsequent drafts that will follow as the circumstances continue to evolve, is grounded in our core values.

Core Values

• **Equity** exists when the biases derived from dominant cultural norms and values no longer predict or influence how one fares in society. Equity systematically promotes fair and impartial access to rights and opportunities. Equity is the core driver of our work.

• **Health and Safety** - Nothing is more important than safeguarding the health, well-being and safety of our BPS students, families and staff. All of our decision-making is, and will remain, grounded in the public health guidance issued by the Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

• **Relationships** are the cornerstone of building trust. Building meaningful relationships with our students and families not only provides for a sense of safety and security, but encourages greater school and classroom participation and engagement.

• **Communication** - Everyone in our community has important perspectives to share. The more we listen, the better decisions we can make. We are committed to providing accurate, timely and continual information to our students, families and the greater community and respectfully receive their collaborative feedback and ideas. All views are welcome.

Public Health Metrics

Nothing is more important than the safety of our BPS community. Since March 2020, BPS has been working closely with BPHC on best practices for prevention and containment of COVID-19. With an unwavering focus on the health of the
entire Boston community, BPHC has ensured that the City of Boston is well positioned to have the ability to test, contact trace, isolate and quarantine, as necessary, those who are suspected of infection, and ensure those who need care can get it.

BPHC continues to monitor key data metrics in order to allow us to appropriately plan for and respond to public health issues that may arise. The critical metrics include:

- Daily number of positive tests
- Daily percent of positive tests
- Daily visits to emergency rooms with COVID-19-like symptoms

All of these metrics are measured as a 7-day trailing moving average. Reported data is analyzed in terms of racial, ethnic and neighborhood level disparities to determine areas of concern and where focus is needed.

For the past two months, Boston has had a very low positive test rate, very low hospitalization rate and the capacity to respond to all COVID-19 activity as it occurs. This decrease and flattening rate of activity has allowed the community to slowly open up various public activities that had been shut down earlier. In the past week or so, the City of Boston has seen a slight uptick in these metrics, which both BPHC and BPS are monitoring closely.

As of August 14, 2020, the City of Boston qualifies as “yellow” within the three-tier guidelines recently published by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts [here](#). As such, BPS is within the appropriate range to open in a hybrid or fully remote learning model, as illustrated below.
We understand that the Boston metrics may change as the virus continues to evolve. BPS and its public health partner, BPHC, are monitoring the data on a daily basis specifically to determine if, and when, the numbers indicate that our planning should shift to a different approach to reopening.

Practical Realities

Like all other large, urban school districts in the nation, the Boston Public Schools plans to reopen school in the fall of 2020 within circumstances never before experienced. All of our planning is grounded in the following realities within which the District currently operates.

- The COVID-19 virus is constantly evolving as evidenced in the public health data, and an effective vaccine will not be available in time to impact the fall 2020 reopening of school.

- Boston Public Schools will rely on guidance from the Boston Public Health Commission about current virus conditions in determining if, and when, to return to in-person instruction.

- Following the reopening of school facilities, there may be instances of COVID-19 exposure which require the intermittent closure of a BPS classroom, floor, school building(s) or the entire District for a limited period of time. While such closures will be disruptive, the CDC and the BPHC recognize that these actions are an essential and required response in our shared responsibility to limit the spread of the disease.
• Public fiscal resources are limited and in increasing demand given the economic and social harms suffered by our community throughout the pandemic.

• Meeting the increased costs demanded in response to COVID-19 will require BPS to limit, reschedule or eliminate other important work.

• Our workforce is made up of dedicated public servants but many, including educators, bus drivers and monitors as well as other support service employees who work closely with students, may be at higher risk for COVID-19.

• People of color and families living with less financial resources are disproportionately harmed by COVID-19; the majority of BPS families meet one or both of these descriptors.

• Regulatory guidance issued by BPHC, CDC, DESE, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Occupational Safety and Health Administration and other state and federal agencies often directs a “one size fits all” solution to a problem that manifests differently in every community, including in every school district.

• Every BPS family holds a unique perspective on how best to ensure the health and safety of their student(s) and others in their household.

School Start Date: Request for DESE Waiver

BPS is currently calendared to start school for students in grades 1-12 on September 10, 2020, and for PreK to Kindergarten students on September 14, 2020. On July 27, 2020, DESE provided districts with the opportunity to adjust their instructional start dates by adding up to 10 additional days for work with educators in preparation for the fall start.

In a separate filing, BPS has requested a waiver from the DESE requirement that districts begin providing student instruction by September 16, 2020 in order to adopt the adjusted day and student learning time requirements for School Year 2020-2021, as announced on July 27, 2020. Upon the granting of this waiver request, the BPS School Year 2020-2021 calendar will be altered as follows:
- **Start Date for All Educators**: September 8, 2020 - all educators report to their assigned school buildings for professional development, unless medically or otherwise exempt

- **Start Date for Students Grades 1-12**: September 21, 2020

- **Start Date for Grades PreK-K**: September 23, 2020

- **Learning Time Requirements for Elementary Students**: 170 days and 850 hours

- **Learning Time Requirements for Secondary Students**: 170 days and 935 hours

**Timeline**

For the past six months, BPS has been working tirelessly to meet the needs of its students, families and staff, and to get school reopened in a manner that is safe and healthy for all.
Working Groups

Many voices contributed to this second draft of the BPS Reopening Plan. We received input from community stakeholders and task forces made up of school leaders, educators and other school-based staff. These views supplemented the work of the BPS planning team, organized into the following illustrated “lanes” of experts focused on identifying issues, vetting ideas and recommending logistical and operational decisions.
Listening and Learning

BPS has been gathering community input for months in an effort to ensure that our planning is well informed by the needs and expectations of those whom we serve. We have sought and obtained the views of over 20,000 stakeholders - students, families, school-based and central office staff, and community organizations. We have also gathered input from other large, urban school districts, leaders in higher education, BPS school leaders, our union partners, public health officials and the City of Boston. All of the views shared have enriched our thinking and our ability to determine how best to meet the needs of the community we serve.

Community Engagement

The BPS Community Engagement Team conducted over 33 stakeholder meetings to gather input on the draft reopening plan. These were attended by over 4,000 stakeholders, including students, parents, educators, community organizations, school leaders, school staff and members of the public. Community-based organizations partnered with the district to support outreach and engagement efforts with linguistic and ethnic communities. The District also surveyed its families and staff, and solicited ideas and participation from the community through regular social media posts, robocalls, texts and emails. We also heard from elected officials and participated in hearings before the Boston City Council where
we received input from Councilors and the public. We continue to also receive regular feedback from the Boston School Committee and update members regularly at public School Committee meetings on our planning.

Our collective thinking is critical to the development of a reopening plan that will result in positive educational experiences for our children. Stakeholder feedback and the results of our reopening surveys are publicly shared on the BPS website, to ensure that we have a common understanding of the diverse perspectives, shared interests and concerns, and recommendations. The trends are shared below.

**Initial Family Preference for Hybrid Learning**

Beginning in June, we surveyed students, families, teachers and staff to understand what worked well, and what did not, during the District's remote learning in the spring. Over 17,000 families responded. When asked whether they would prefer to have their student(s) engage in online learning, hybrid learning, or in-person learning in the fall of 2020, nearly half (40%) indicated a direct preference for a hybrid learning model. Approximately two-thirds of the responders favored some sort of reopening plan that brings students back into school buildings for some period of time. As the primary reasons for their expressed preferences, families reported continued concerns of learning loss related to online learning, parents’ needs to return to the workplace, and the belief that on-campus learning results in more holistic support for students.
The results were more specific when broken down by race; between 51% and 74% of responders supported a reopening plan that brings students back into school buildings in some way - either fully or in a hybrid model.

![BPS Family Reopening Survey Results](image)

**Improving Remote Learning: Lessons Learned**

We also gathered information regarding what did, and did not, work well with the online learning provided during the closure period at the end of the 2019-2020 school year. Here is what we learned.

- Across all races, families cited the following as the most common challenges they faced with remote learning: balancing work (57%); tracking assignments (40%); finding space (26%); uninteresting curriculum (25%); and managing different learning platforms (23%).

- Families reported that more small group meetings (63% of respondents), relevant work (48%), and recorded lessons (41%) were the most desired components of remote learning across all grades, races, and students.

- A greater percentage of families with students in higher grade levels reported the need for more engaging delivery of challenging online curriculum (28% for grades 6-12 compared to 23% for grades K-5).
- BPS staff indicated that ‘balancing work and home life’ was the most challenging part of remote learning (57%).

- At the time of the survey, 45% of non-white families responding planned to use yellow school bus transportation while only 33% of white families planned to do so.

- Special populations of students reported different needs related to transportation: responses indicated that 14% of EL students solely rely on yellow school buses for transportation compared to only 7% for students. The same disparity was observed among students with disabilities and those without: 20% of students with disabilities reported sole reliance on yellow school buses for transportation compared to only 7% for students without disabilities.

School leaders and educator teams are reviewing this data to guide instructional improvement work at the school level. Combined with recent interim assessments data, this data is also informing the development of professional development being provided for leaders and educators prior to the start of the 20–21 school year.

**Concerns Raised; Views Expressed**

Through community engagement listening sessions, we gathered concerns, suggestions and recommendations about how to reopen schools in a way that is best for students and families. **All of this gathered information guided our planning.**
Health & Safety

- Access to PPE/cleaning supplies
- Balance high academic expectations while recognizing family/community trauma,
- Expectations for students wearing masks all day
- Time/space for students to be outdoors/active
- Access to school nurses & counselors, mental health resources

Operations

- Different planning for high schools and elementary and K-8 schools
- Considerations - building ventilation, meal distribution, outdoor space
- Opportunity to partner with community organizations/businesses for creative satellite learning spaces

Transportation

- Cleaning and maintenance of school buses
- Social distance on school buses & public transportation
- Partnership with the META & safety measures for students

Academics, Learning & Tech

- Keep families together so younger and older siblings can attend the same days so parent/guardian can work
- High quality remote learning/hybrid learning
- Families might not want to go forth with having their kids move to the next grade due to the time/learning loss from Covid-19
- Consider vulnerable student populations first, plan will work for the rest of the population

Special Education

- Can we prioritize in person sessions for students with IEPs?
- Many students require close proximity to adults to access education. How will the district address these needs with social distancing considerations?

English Language Learners

- Access in home language is important
- We really need help navigating bilingual technology
- Worried about students, especially newcomers, who were already struggling with school engagement and are now even more falling through cracks
BPS Reopening Plan: Options for Families

DESE required all school districts in the Commonwealth to file a reopening plan that addresses three options on a continuum of learning models. On one end of the continuum is an on-site learning model serving all students together in person within school buildings. On the other end of the continuum is an online learning model that allows all students to learn remotely full-time from home or other location, not including a school building. In the middle of the two bookends is a hybrid learning model that allows for some students to learn remotely while others return to school buildings for in-person learning.

Learning Models: A Continuum

The BPS Reopening Plan addresses all three models on this continuum. As specified below, the BPS Plan is not premised on the District choosing a “one size fits all” option for its 54,000 students. Instead, the plan includes a series of learning options.

**The BPS Plan defines the choices available to our families and allows them to determine which option will serve their child(ren)’s educational needs best.**
Boston Public Schools will offer both remote and hybrid learning choices this school year, as well as combinations of the two. As specified below, parents will be allowed flexibility to craft various combinations of these models as determined best for their student(s), allowing learners the opportunity to be in the classroom with their peers and teachers as well as, or in addition to, at home for independent project based and online learning. Teachers and school leaders are hard at work designing and crafting engaging and rigorous lessons for these learning environments. These educational opportunities will continue to develop throughout the school year as teachers continue to share, grow, and learn from each other.

A broad outline of the learning model options parents will be able to select for their student(s) is set forth below. Hybrid learning involves learning in school two days a week and three days in remote learning at home or possibly with a partner organization. In the online learning model, a student's learning is all remote; there is no in-person learning. There is also an option for special populations: students who receive special education or English Learner services, or who are in specific need of more in-person time with their teachers and other staff. Depending on the needs of the learner, these students may be allowed a longer week of in-person learning. Parents can select between these options without losing their enrollment at their selected school. Students may also return from a remote only schedule to a hybrid option involving some in-person learning at various points in time, provided there is sufficient space and staffing to accommodate the student's needs.

**Families will be contacted by the District during the week of August 17, 2020 and asked to select which learning option their student(s) will participate in this fall.** For students who are opting into the hybrid model and eligible for yellow bus transportation, parents will also be asked to confirm whether or not their student plans to ride the bus to school.

**Option 1: Fully Remote Learning**

No matter the public health and safety measures in place as outlined below, not all BPS families will decide to send their student(s) back to school buildings at the beginning of the school year. Whether to protect elderly household members from the possibility of community spread of the disease or for any other reason, some families will choose to keep their student(s) home and engage in remote learning. At BPS, we will honor that choice: any family that chooses to have their student(s) continue in the remote learning model offered by the District will be considered
fully enrolled and progressing toward grade completion throughout at least the first semester of school year 2020-2021.

Working collaboratively with school leaders, teachers and other staff, the BPS Academics Team has been collecting and curating examples of best practices in remote learning and planning for new and better ways to provide planning resources each week for teachers on a consistent platform. Summer learning academies added to the BPS toolbox of effective practices and engaging curricula for remote learning. Rubrics that describe the criteria for high quality remote instruction, planning templates that support planning for instruction, and professional development differentiated by current level of performance are all under development.

Students who opt for fully remote learning will continue to be taught by staff from their home school in a remote setting, with infrastructure and tools to support online learning. Students who opt for a fully remote model will learn remotely five days per week. There will be choice points during the year where students can select to switch from the remote learning model to the hybrid model if desired. In addition, BPS will initiate and/or be ready to pivot to fully remote learning for all students if and when the public health metrics require it, as identified by the Boston Public Health Commission.

Two Hybrid Options: Hybrid A/B and Hybrid C

The District’s current hybrid learning plan alternates between groups of students, each on campus for certain days of classroom learning and learning remotely the other days of the week. In the hybrid model environment, students who are physically present in the school building will be learning alongside their peers who are physically distant and learning remotely, pursuing the same learning objectives and interacting with their peers to the greatest extent possible.

Paraprofessionals, ESL teachers, Inclusion teachers, and other educators that typically share a lesson period or provide support during the same lesson will cooperatively plan and provide small group or one-to-one support according to the co-designed lesson plans both on-campus or remotely. Educators who support the same students will co-plan during designated times such as in common planning time, professional development (PD), or planning and development (P&D) periods. The goal is to have well-crafted lessons that can be delivered in all instructional
models, support students with their mandated services and instructional minutes, as well as provide interventions and tiered support.

Option 2: Hybrid A/B

In the hybrid model, students in all grades (preK-12) are divided into two groups by grade and by school: Group A and Group B. To the greatest extent possible, students from the same household will be scheduled within the same group. Within each school community, the groups will alternate between learning in person in their school buildings and learning remotely from home (or an alternate location in the community if available). Under this model, we will reduce the number of students in each building by approximately half at any one time, which will in turn reduce the risk of virus exposure and spread.

Option 3: Hybrid C (Special Populations)

Some students need more than two days of in-person learning in order to make sufficient progress toward their educational goals. These students might receive English Language (EL) instruction or special education, or might instead be identified as needing additional (MTSS Tier 2 or 3) supports through the Student Support Team process. Still others might be identified as in need of this additional in-person educational support by their parents/guardians. No matter the source of identification, the District is committed to providing richer educational opportunities for these learners if at all possible.

Upon identification by parents/guardians and affiliated educator teams, if appropriate, these students will be provided in-person instruction on not just the two days allocated to Groups A and B but also an additional 1 or 2 days of in-person instruction per week, depending on need. The availability of this option, and the number of days available for any specific student, will be made on a school-by-school basis, factoring in the number of available in-person slots once families have opted into fully remote learning. In situations where seats are available, the Hybrid C model will potentially allow BPS the space to bring many of our most vulnerable learners back into school buildings for more intensely needed in-person instruction and related supports.
Teaching Students In-Person and Remote

Meeting the needs of a classroom full of students in an on-campus setting is challenging; meeting the needs of students when some are on-campus and some are learning remotely is even more so. The talented BPS educators in each school, working in teams, will address these challenges by planning for instruction that addresses the unique contexts of their school community while also ensuring consistent access to grade level rigor whether on campus or remote.

Here's one example:

A grade level team consisting of homeroom teachers as well as ESL and Special Education teachers along with paraprofessional educators plan the learning for all students in the grade: students learning both on-campus and remotely. The educators work as a team, drawing on the unique strengths and skills of team members, to group and regroup students throughout the day. After each section of the day, students get a break to stretch and move. All students have lunch, recess and bathroom breaks. The team has a brief meeting at the end of each day to communicate vital information to the adults who will support a student the following day and keep track of any social-emotional or instructional warning signs for specific students. Asynchronous learning opportunities for all students on Wednesday afternoons will allow for teacher teams to analyze student work, plan for groupings and adapt curricula for student and teacher needs.

Part of the student's day may also include electives or specials like the arts and physical education. Some students will receive small group instruction while others work independently, peer-to-peer, or in a small group.

Students who are at home remotely will log into their class for whole school or class community building time, during direct instruction, and at times when they may be engaging with peers in small groups or receiving one to one support from a member of their team of educators.

Classroom Layouts

Under the hybrid model, generally only half of the students (Group A or Group B) will be in the school building on any particular day. Splitting the class into two groups allows us to ensure that students can maintain physical distancing within the classroom. Though the room may still be set up with desks that are less than six feet apart, which is compliant with the DESE guidance that allows even three feet of distance in some circumstances, the two groups of students will be assigned
desks in a manner that takes advantage of the fact that one group is absent when the other group is present. For example, in the illustration below only the desks assigned to Group A are occupied on Group A days; the desks assigned to Group B are empty. So even though the desks may be less than six feet apart, the students present in the classroom will be six feet apart, separated by empty desks.

Classroom layouts for early childhood classrooms, for some special education classrooms and for other specialized types of instruction will look different. No matter those differences, school leaders and teachers, with support as needed from the BPS Facilities staff, will ensure that all classrooms are organized so as to provide the appropriate physical distance between all who occupy the space.
Summary of Available Learning Options

In the hybrid models illustrated above, students learn in different ways and from different locations based on their group. **High school schedules are still evolving and may vary by school to meet both health and safety requirements and the highly-differentiated course requirements of our students.** The following generally describes the hybrid model in an elementary school.

- Students in Group A of the **Hybrid A/B model** come to school in person on Mondays and Tuesdays, then learn online remotely on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

- Students in Group B of the **Hybrid A/B model** come to school in person on Thursdays and Fridays, and learn online remotely on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

- Students in the **Hybrid C model**, made up of learners with special needs, may have the option of coming to school for learning on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, depending on the space available in their specific school buildings and the availability of their teachers. This hybrid component allows the District to try to bring our most vulnerable learners back to the buildings for more intensely needed on-campus instruction and related supports.

- Students in the **Fully Remote model** are taught by school staff all five days of
the week and learn remotely, at home or in space supervised by other community partners.

- All students are off-site and learn online remotely on Wednesdays, which allows the custodial staff to sanitize the buildings between use by different groups of students. Buildings are similarly cleaned after school ends on Fridays and before school starts on Mondays.

- All teachers teach from school buildings; no teachers remain outside the physical building except with accommodations and on appropriate leave, approved through the Office of Human Capital.

- Teachers will be provided technological tools (i.e. camera; speaker; etc.) and training to support this hybrid model of instruction.

- At each school, school leaders can propose to the District to make minor changes to the hybrid model to accommodate the specific populations, programming and/or configurations of their school, including with regard to the phased-in structure specified below.

- With approval from the District, school leaders will publish a master schedule for each grade and each teacher to inform families of what schedule their student(s) have been assigned.

- We continue to work with our community partners to support programming outside of the school day and in non-BPS buildings in order to provide critical services and support to students when they are not engaged in on-campus learning.
## Summary of BPS Learning Model Options

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Option 1: Fully Remote</th>
<th>Option 2: Hybrid A/B</th>
<th>Option 3: Hybrid C (Special Populations)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fully Remote students</strong> will be provided online instruction and will have a combination of independent project-based learning as well as one-to-one and small group instruction. They will be provided remote learning opportunities and tools that will assist with their learning. Every student will be issued a Chromebook and will be provided or supported in obtaining wifi access. Other learning supplies and tools may also be provided to assist in their learning. Parents will be provided support through training, conferencing, and home visits/weekly check ins from their child's learning team.</td>
<td>The Hybrid A/B Model is a combination of on-campus and remote learning days for students. Students will experience whole group instruction, project based and independent lessons during the day, and will be provided one-to-one and small group instruction from their teachers, specialists and paraprofessionals throughout the day, both to address their social emotional well-being and their academic needs.</td>
<td>Students who receive special services, either EL or special education, or who are identified by Student Support Teams as needed additional in-person learning, may be able to choose 3 or 4 days of on-campus learning, if supported by their level of need. This option is only available if in-person learning slots are available in the student’s school, given the number of other students who have opted into hybrid learning models.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Environment</strong></td>
<td>At home (possible partnership collaborative environments for the remote learning days at some schools)</td>
<td>On-campus and remote learning (possible partnership collaborative environments for the remote learning days at some schools)</td>
<td>Blended at home and on-campus as requested and as logistics (IEPs or LAT teams, space, teacher availability) allow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Day</strong></td>
<td>All students will be provided 6.5 hours of daily instruction designed by their teachers. All students will participate in formative and interim assessments throughout the year. All students will have access to technology and learning tools at school and at home.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Remote Learning</strong></td>
<td>All students will have some portion of their week in remote learning. Students and staff will be expected to be engaged in school all 6.5 hours of the day in remote learning and will have both independent project based learning opportunities and activities designed by their teachers, as well as, online opportunities for direct instruction, small group and one-on-one instruction depending on the students' individual needs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staffing</strong></td>
<td>Teachers of record will be assigned to each student who will coordinate the learning of their students. This will be the classroom teacher in elementary schools and the advisory or homeroom teachers at the secondary levels. Students will be supported throughout by counselors, nurses, social workers and other staff.</td>
<td>Schools will adapt their staffing to support both remote and on-campus learning. They will also require the support of paraprofessionals and support professionals for social and emotional learning as well as teacher leaders for curriculum and school climate support.</td>
<td>Staffing will match the students' needs and will conform to the student's ELD level, IEP or MTSS tier identification. They will be provided services from their teachers and support staff as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>English Learners</strong></td>
<td>All students will be provided services based on their ELD level.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Students with Special Needs**

All students will be provided educational services and accommodations as required by their IEP.

**Co-curricular Clubs and Athletics**

To the greatest extent possible students will have access to their co-curricular clubs, activities and athletics as determined by health guidance and MIAA / DESE regulations. Student life is an important and essential component to a well-rounded education and we will do everything in our power to provide these opportunities to our students either remotely or on-campus.

**Partnerships**

We are seeking partnerships to enhance the on-campus and remote learning experiences for our students. We will continue to leverage mentors, partners and our community to accelerate learning and the health and well-being of our students in school and at home.

---

**Phasing Into Hybrid Models**

No matter which of the available options parents choose for their student(s), BPS currently expects that any hybrid model involving in-person learning will be phased in as follows:

- **Grades 1-12 start school on September 21** but all are learning online and taught remotely, not in school buildings, until their grade level is rolled in as specified below.

- **First In: Grades PreK (K0/K1/K2) - Kindergarten** start school on September 23rd. Students who have opted into Remote Learning start remotely; Students who have opted into either Hybrid A/B or Hybrid C come back to school within the hybrid model (half on campus, half learning remotely), as assigned.

- **Second In: Grades 1-8** come back to school within the hybrid model (half on campus, half learning remotely) on September 28th.

- **Third In: Grades 9-12** come back to school within the hybrid model (half on campus, half learning remotely) on October 5th.
Not an Option: Simultaneous In-person Learning for All

Under this learning model, all students would return to school buildings as they do in a typical year. At BPS, this is impossible for reopening in the fall of 2020 for the following reasons:

1. Current CDC guidance requires that students be physically distanced on yellow school buses, seated no closer than one student per bench unless students reside in the same household. Given typical BPS student ridership, these public health restrictions limit the District's buses to transporting only about half of their usual capacity. Because BPS cannot obtain an additional 700 buses so as to be able to transport all of its students safely and in a timely manner, it cannot get 100% of its students to school on buses and has no cost effective or practical alternative to do so otherwise.

2. Current public health guidance requires that students and staff maintain at least six feet of physical distance between each other to prevent the spread of the virus. Given the size and configuration of the 125 school buildings, it is not physically possible to rearrange a sufficient number of instructional spaces to accommodate in-person learning for all of BPS's 54,000 students.

Given these logistical barriers, BPS cannot, and does not, plan to reopen with an on-site in-person learning model for all students in the fall of 2020.

Protecting BPS: Health & Safety Requirements

As we prepare to return to our school buildings, all members of the BPS community must do their part to ensure the health and safety of students, families and staff by strictly complying with the following public health requirements.

Home Health Screenings

Every day - before sending their students to school or allowing them to board a school bus or public transportation in order to get to school - parents/guardians must complete a home health screening checklist for each BPS student. The draft home health checklist can be reviewed here. As noted in the checklist, caregivers must monitor their children for the following symptoms.
**BPS Family At-Home Health Checklist**

**YOUR CHILD MUST STAY HOME** if your child or anyone in the home have any of the symptoms listed below:

- Fever (100.4°F or higher without the use of fever reducing medicine), **chills**
- **or shaking chills**
- **Cough** (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- **Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Sore throat**
- **Headache** (when in combination with other symptoms)
- **Muscle aches or body aches**
- **Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea**
- **Fatigue** (when in combination with other symptoms)
- **Nasal congestion or runny nose** (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) (when in combination with other symptoms)

**OR**

- **If your child is in contact with a household member who has an active COVID-19 diagnosis** who has not yet been cleared from isolation by Boston Public Health Commission.

If your child does NOT have any symptoms BUT has been exposed to a COVID-19 positive person, your child must stay home from school and quarantine for 14 days. Contact your primary care provider, the Boston Public Health Commission or your school nurse for further guidance.

If a student has any of these symptoms, they must be tested for COVID-19 before returning to school. Parents will also be advised that any student that does not have any symptoms but has been exposed to a COVID-19 positive person, that child must stay home from school and quarantine for 14 days.

Although the written results of the checklist do not need to be submitted to the school, if the checklist reveals that a student has any COVID-19 related symptoms the parent/guardian must:
1. Keep the student home; do not send the student to school.

2. Report the absence to their school administration and school nurse, noting if the absence is COVID-19-related.

3. Schedule COVID-19 testing through the family’s primary care doctor or community health center.

If positive, this will allow BPS to advise the family on how to work with the Boston Public Health Commission to determine the risk to others through any advised contact tracing.

**Handwashing**

The most effective way to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is for everyone to wash hands often and thoroughly with soap and water [see CDC guidance linked here](#), or to clean hands using a sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. All BPS students and staff will be expected to engage in frequent handwashing and/or hand sanitation throughout the day and specifically in the following situations:

- After nose blowing, coughing, or sneezing
- Before entering or exiting a yellow school bus or public transportation
- Before entering or exiting a BPS school building
- Before putting on or removing a face covering/mask
- Before and after eating and/or preparing food
- Before touching one’s eyes or face
- After using or assisting someone in the bathroom
- Before putting on and after removing gloves
- After touching garbage

Appropriate hand sanitizer will be available on every bus, in school entryways and hallways, and in every classroom.

**Wearing a Mask**

Public health experts agree that people should wear face coverings (masks) whenever they are within six feet of another person in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Everyone is expected to wear a mask whenever inside a BPS building.
or vehicle, or outside on school grounds when others are within a distance of six feet or less. Accommodations will be made for our youngest learners, students with sensory issues and for our most vulnerable and medically fragile special needs students, as appropriate and necessary.

BPS expects all students and staff to bring and wear their own cloth masks whenever possible and appropriate. Anyone who forgets their reusable mask will be provided a disposable mask to wear on the bus and within the school building. Staff will be provided written protocols on how to teach appropriate mask wearing and storage, to aid them in teaching their students how best to protect themselves and their classmates and teachers.

**Physical Distancing**

Physical distancing - *defined for purposes of this document as staying at least six feet apart from any other person* - keeps everyone safer by minimizing face-to-face interactions and limiting the spread of COVID-19. When BPS reopens, all students and staff are expected to maintain six feet of physical distance at all times possible. We will implement this directive as follows:

- On buses, students will be assigned seats with the limitation of one student per bench.
- School entryways and hallways will be marked with traffic flow lanes and/or signage to ensure that students maintain physical distancing when traveling through the school.
- Signage will be posted throughout each school building reminding all occupants to physically distance themselves from others.
- Large group interactions will be eliminated or reduced when feasible.
- Restroom use will be limited to the number of students required to maintain physical distancing.
- Lockers will not be used unless physical distancing can be maintained, including through staggered schedules of access or other enforceable means.
- Classroom furniture will be placed in such a manner as to provide appropriate physical distancing. As each school building is made up of
classrooms of varying sizes with differently-shaped furniture, classroom layouts will vary at each school. All layouts will be designed to maintain six feet of physical distance between all persons present at any one time, even if there is less than six feet between items of furniture.

**Monitoring and Containment Protocols**

School nurses will be provided training on all COVID-19 health-related protocols. In turn, BPS nurses will provide appropriate training to the staff in their buildings so all adults in the school community are equipped with the information they need to help ensure the health and safety of our students and staff.

**Contact Tracing**

Contract tracing involves the evaluation of close contacts of persons with confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19. Contact tracing helps prevent the spread of the virus by determining whether other individuals need to be tested, isolated and/or quarantined. The Boston Public Health Commission performs all official contact tracing and case investigation for confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 within the City of Boston, including those that attend or work within the Boston Public Schools. Other local boards of health perform contact tracing, case investigation, and risk assessments for confirmed positive cases of COVID-19 involving any student or staff who is not a City of Boston resident.

As defined by the CDC, a [COVID-19 close contact](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/contact-tracing/contacts-definition.html) includes anyone who has been within 6 feet of a confirmed positive individual for at least 15 minutes during the infectious period: 48 hours prior to symptom onset or, in the case of an asymptomatic individual, 48 hours prior to a positive test result. Evaluating close contacts within the school environment will focus on contact between persons in school spaces, buses or predictable extracurricular activities during the infectious period.

Individuals determined to be close contacts of a person with a positive test will be referred for COVID-19 testing. They may not return to school until they have completed a 14-day quarantine, measured from the date of last contact with a confirmed positive case. If the close contact later tests positive for COVID-19, that individual will isolate for at least 14 days after symptom onset and may not return to a school building until 24 hours have passed with no fever (without the use of fever reducing medication) and with improvement in other symptoms.
Quarantine

When there has been a potential COVID-19 exposure, quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department. See CDC guidance on when to quarantine.

Isolation

The practice of isolation keeps someone who is sick or tests positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home, for at least 10 days after symptom onset and and until 24 hours have passed with no fever (without the use of fever reducing medication) and improvement in other symptoms. Asymptomatic individuals, or those without symptoms, should stay home for 10 days from the date of positive test result.

Testing

Current guidance from the CDC and BPHC recommends testing in the presence of symptoms or when an individual has been exposed to someone with COVID-19. If unable to obtain testing through their own health care provider, families may be able to access COVID-19 testing through mobile sites located throughout the City as indicated on this City of Boston interactive map.

Response to a Symptomatic Person

If a person is symptomatic while in a BPS building, nurses will follow the protocols found below. Working through the District supervision structure, BPS nurses will collaborate with the Office of Health Services and the Boston Public Health Commission to report any suspected cases of exposure or transmission of COVID-19, for purposes of testing, tracing close contacts, isolation and quarantine, as necessary.
Response to Potential Exposure Within A School: Closure Protocols

Protocols for attending school in person limit close contact to peers who learn together in the same classroom. Protocols for entrance, exit, and moving throughout the building ensure that students are not spending more than 15 minutes around students who are not in their classroom cohort. That way, if an individual tests positive, a single classroom can be closed rather than the whole school, impacting the fewest number of people possible. The chart below summarizes the actions that will be taken if one or more individuals within a school exhibit symptoms of COVID-19.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Exposure</th>
<th>What Potentially Exposed Person Does</th>
<th>Result of Testing</th>
<th>Response to Testing; Effect on School Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual exhibits symptoms of COVID-19</td>
<td>Individual with symptoms isolates and classroom continues to operate in hybrid model</td>
<td>Individual has a negative COVID-19 test result</td>
<td>Individual returns to school in hybrid model after negative test results, only if not identified as a close contact of a previously confirmed case. All students continue in hybrid model.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Individual declines testing</td>
<td>Individual who exhibited symptoms isolates. The entire classroom (groups A &amp; B) shifts to remote learning for 14 days; only individuals in close contact with symptomatic individual who declined case quarantine for 14 days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The individual with a positive test result isolates. Classroom (groups A &amp; B) shifts to remote learning for 14 days; individuals in close contact with positive case quarantine for 14 days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple individuals in the same classrooms within a school exhibit symptoms of COVID-19</td>
<td>Individuals with symptoms isolate and classrooms continue to operate in hybrid model</td>
<td>One or both of the individuals have a positive COVID-19 test, linked within a classroom</td>
<td>Classroom shifts to remote for 14 days; individuals in close contact with positive case quarantine for 14 days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple individuals in different classrooms within a school exhibit symptoms of COVID-19</td>
<td>Individuals with symptoms isolate and classrooms continue to operate in hybrid model</td>
<td>Both individuals have a positive COVID-19 test, linked within a school</td>
<td>Classrooms of each case shift to remote for 14 days, additional members of the school community quarantine based on where the exposure was in the school. Students who were not exposed continue in hybrid model.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Response to Potential Exposure Across Schools

If a student or staff tests positive for COVID-19, contact tracing will help determine if there was close contact that could have led to spread across school communities. If cases are linked between multiple schools, the affected classrooms will shift to remote learning for 14 days. The exact protocol for closure will depend on the amount of possible exposure within the school communities.

If the link between multiple cases in different schools is unable to be determined, broader action may need to be taken in order to ensure possible spread is contained. These decisions will be made by the BPHC in partnership with Boston Public Schools on a case-by-case basis.

Out of State Travel

All travelers arriving to Massachusetts – including Massachusetts residents returning home – are required to self-quarantine for 14 days. There are exceptions to the current order: travelers from a small list of close or adjacent states arriving in Massachusetts are exempt from this directive and need not quarantine for 14 days.

Privacy

BPS will not disclose personally identifiable information from a student’s education records, including health records, without the consent of a parent/guardian or eligible student (over 14 or in ninth grade), except: (1) when an articulable and significant threat exists to the health or safety of any student or staff due to COVID-19; and (2) sharing of the information will help protect health and/or safety. In such cases, BPS will only disclose the minimum amount of information required to address the immediate threat caused by COVID-19.

BPS Health Support Staff

The BPS Office of Health Services and Office of Behavioral Health Services exist to serve the physical, social and emotional health needs of all BPS students. During the pandemic, this team has focused their efforts on preventing the spread of the disease.
School Nurses

Every BPS school is supported by a BPS nurse. Within the school setting, our nurses are our first responders when it comes to keeping our community as healthy and safe as possible. To aid them in doing this critical job easier, the following supports have been put in place.

- As necessary, nurses' offices will be reconfigured for heightened infectious disease control so as to better protect both the health of the school community and the medical privacy of students.
- Isolation rooms have been identified in every school building.
- Nurses will be provided personal protective equipment (PPE) appropriate to their role as health care professionals.

Behavioral Health Team

The BPS Behavioral Health team (school psychologists and social workers) in collaboration with our Office of Health and Wellness and the Office of Student, Family & Community Advancement will be providing training for families, staff and students on dealing with trauma, supporting the social-emotional needs of students during this public health crisis, creating trauma sensitive classroom environments, and supporting families to create optimal learning environments at home. Training opportunities will begin in mid-August and constitute a foundational component of support for all schools toward successful reopening.

Operationalizing the Plan

Transportation

To ensure that our yellow school buses can effectively and safely transport our students to school while appropriately protecting the health of our students, drivers, and monitors, BPS has made the following changes to its bus transportation processes and procedures.

Who Rides the Bus
Given the guidance of maintaining a “one student per bench” model on school buses, BPS can transport approximately one third of the total number of students we have transported in the past. As such, we must find other ways for students to get to school safely. If it becomes necessary, BPS is prepared to increase its walk zones for first to fifth grade students from 1 mile to 1.5 miles. Walk zones would stay the same as they have always been for sixth graders (1.5 miles) and pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students (1 mile). While still well below the state-allowed 2 mile zone, these expanded walk zones will decrease the numbers of students who require school bus transportation, bringing BPS closer to closing the gap in its significantly restricted bus capacity.

The District is exploring ways to provide additional crossing guards and making other safety improvements to ensure students stay safe and feel safe when walking to and from school. Families are encouraged to check out BPS’ Safe Routes to School Boston initiative for additional resources designed to make sure that walking to school is safe and easy.

Families who are eligible for bus transportation will be contacted to determine whether their student(s) plan to ride the bus to school. By the date specified in the communications from the District, families must confirm whether or not their student(s) will ride the bus to school this fall. BPS will need this information to assign bus routes that efficiently transport students to and from school on time.

Students in grades 7 through 12 will continue to qualify for free M7 T-passes to enable them to ride the MBTA to and from school. Students in grades 7 through 12 will continue to pick these up on the first day of in-person learning. Sixth-grade students will continue to have the option to opt-in to a free MBTA pass. Information on how to opt-in to a free MBTA pass can be found here. All students riding the MBTA must comply with public health requirements, including by wearing a mask.

Due to bus capacity challenges, BPS is limited in the ability to accommodate requested changes to transportation assignments this year. Unfortunately, BPS will not be able to accept any MBTA Waiver Requests, for children who are assigned a T Pass but would like to
request yellow bus service instead. Parents and guardians are encouraged to continue to submit other types of requested changes, including Alternative Request Forms and Bus Stop Change Request Forms. While BPS will accommodate these changes where possible, our capacity to approve these changes will be limited.

How Students Ride the Bus

- Every person will do a home health screening prior to boarding a BPS bus.

- All students and staff who ride a BPS yellow school bus will be required to wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth at all times. Masks must be in place prior to boarding the bus, stay in place throughout the ride, and remain on while exiting the bus. Students who arrive for bus pickup without a mask will be provided a disposable mask, but continued failures to bring and properly wear a face covering will be reported to the school leader and addressed at the school level pursuant to the applicable Code of Conduct. Any student seeking an exception to the mask requirement will need to process it through the District process. Drivers and monitors will not review or approve mask exception requests.

- Buses are being equipped with hand sanitation supplies. All students will be expected to sanitize their hands before boarding a bus.

- During morning pick up, students will be assigned to a specific seat on the bus upon boarding to decrease passing on the bus. In the afternoon, students will be assigned seats at the school level such that the student closest to the front exits the bus first and so on through the end of the route.

- Students will be seated one per bench on the bus; as an exception, household members will be permitted to sit on the same bench. As a result of these seating limitations, each bus will transport approximately one third of its usual capacity.

- The District is seeking to hire additional bus monitors so as to be able to assign one monitor to each bus. This is in addition to any monitors assigned per an IEP/504. The purpose of the additional monitors is to focus on COVID related safety measures such as proper mask usage.
and maintaining seat assignments. We do not anticipate having a sufficient number of monitors in place until mid to late fall. This means that it will be critical for all families, students, schools and drivers to be clear on bus riding expectations and to follow those expectations to avoid delays in transportation. If there are issues of non-compliance with COVID safety protocols, this will delay buses and cause late drop offs/arrivals/pick-ups.

- Monitors and drivers will wear appropriate PPE at all times.
- Students who have complex health care needs and/or are mobility impaired will continue to receive transportation services through BPS yellow school buses. Bus drivers and monitors will be provided with training and additional personal protective equipment to ensure the safety of our students and staff during transport to and from school.
- Consistent with existing District policies, no one other than the driver, monitor(s), and students assigned to a bus may enter that bus. Family members are prohibited from entering buses. Families are not permitted to enter buses to assist students with CSR systems for students to which these systems are applicable. Only approved BPS employees may enter buses to assist with safety or maintenance issues should they arise. Every person entering a bus must wear a mask, sanitize their hands, and maintain physical distancing to the greatest extent possible. Should non-district individuals enter buses, this will cause bus delays in drop off/arrivals/pick-ups.

**Other Safety-Related Changes to Bus Transportation**

- School start times may need to be altered within small time increments (15-30 minutes) in order to allow BPS buses to complete more runs each day. This might be necessary in order to accommodate the fewer numbers of students allowed on each bus trip. If necessary, updated start and end times will be announced as soon as possible.
- Buses will be sanitized every evening before the start of a new school day and between the morning and afternoon shifts in order to meet public health standards with regard to the cleanliness of each bus. The night cleaning will include physically wiping down the bus. The mid-day cleaning protocol will use an atomizing fogging process.
Given the short time between routes during the morning or afternoon shifts (typically 1-5 minutes), it will not be possible to clean buses between routes in a shift. Doing so would require further decreasing bus capacity by approximately 33%-50% during each shift.

- Bus yards and the route bidding processes are being reconfigured to accommodate the need for appropriate physical distancing.

- Like all BPS staff, drivers and monitors will be required to complete a home health screening each day before reporting to work at a BPS bus yard. Drivers and monitors must report to their supervisor if they are unable to report to their worksite, as required, for reasons related to COVID-19.

- Monitors will continue to follow the standard call out protocols. Monitors must call out two hours before their shift start time in order to allow the Transportation team time to provide a coverage monitor if available.

- If a student is reported to a nurse’s office as being suspected of COVID-19 exposure or infection, and that suspicion is well grounded as defined by public health guidance, that student will be returned home by means not utilizing a BPS bus driver or monitor. Within student and health privacy requirements, bus operations will be notified of any students removed from bus routes so as to ensure that the health and safety of our transportation staff is appropriately protected.

- Information on these and any additional future changes to BPS Transportation processes and procedures will be detailed on the BPS Transportation website.

**Facilities**

The BPS Facilities staff has spent the past five months getting schools ready for students to return safely in the fall. A list of guidelines and expectations for summer cleaning procedures can be found here. As with everything else affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, our school sanitation processes, classroom layouts, offices, and overall school operations have all been altered to ensure we can keep students and staff physically distanced and compliant with all other public health guidelines.
Visitors Not Allowed

As a means of keeping students and staff healthy and safe, visitors - including parents or caregivers - will not be allowed to enter BPS school buildings for any purpose other than to drop off or pick up their student(s), all of which will be limited to the school’s administrative space. This prohibition does not apply to BPS staff with a business purpose to be at a school site or vendors necessary for providing school services, though specialized health check procedures may be required. Approval from the staff person’s supervisor or school leader, with respect to vendors, is required and adherence to requirements for masks and physical distancing will be enforced.

Entryways & Hallways

To enforce six feet of physical distancing, entryways, exits and hallways will be marked and/or signed to ensure students exiting or entering buses or being dropped off or picked up do not cluster. Students will be expected to line up within marked foot traffic lanes to enter or exit buildings as directed by staff. Signage will be posted to help students and staff understand what traffic patterns are expected. Working with parents, school leaders will develop, and submit to the District for approval, building entry and exit plans, plus hallway and stairway traffic patterns, that best meet the needs of their students and staff. Upon District approval of these plans, the school leader and the custodial team will work together to hang signage and mark entryways, exits and hallways with signs and floor markings provided by the District.

Additional signage will be provided by the District to promote social distancing, the wearing of masks, and the reminder to wash hands throughout their buildings. Students and staff will be expected to sanitize their hands before entering a school building. Hand sanitation stations will be provided at entrances and throughout each school.

HVAC/Air Filtration

Both current CDC guidance [linked here] and the July 22, 2020 directives issued by DESE [linked here] require that districts maximize air movement in school buildings in order to help minimize the risk of COVID-19 exposure. In compliance with this guidance, BPS staff have changed filters on mechanical air filtration
systems and made repairs where necessary to ensure that windowed learning spaces can safely open windows and doors to increase outdoor air intake. A description summary of BPS HVAC/Air filtration systems is available for review [draft linked here]. Facilities staff are working with school leaders to identify any windowless areas formerly used for learning spaces; these activities will need to be relocated to areas where outside airflow is available.

**Classrooms**

**Layouts.** Generally, desks will not be removed from classrooms. Given that the hybrid model allows only approximately half of the students to be present for in-person learning on any given day, it will be possible to seat students at desks so that each student is six feet away from the next nearest student and from the teacher. Since only one group of students is present in the classroom on any specific day, appropriate physical distancing can be maintained.

**Office and Classroom Furniture and Furnishings.** Any new furniture should be constructed of smooth and easily cleanable surfaces. Furniture with contact surfaces that are made of fabric or soft surfaces cannot be sanitized or disinfected adequately. Furniture or furnishings with any fabric material that have an undamaged smooth vinyl or plastic coating can be easily cleaned and disinfected.

**Clear Ventilation Spaces.** Classrooms should be organized to allow the free uninhibited flow of air into and out from the heating and ventilation system. Vent gratings, unit ventilators or cabinet wall ventilation and heating units, overhead vent gratings, radiators, etc. shall not be blocked or obstructed by any furniture or school materials, or used as storage for materials. Covering ventilation vents in classrooms impacts air quality, makes it more challenging to clean a classroom, and attracts pests. Materials on top of vents must be removed by teachers and school administrators to allow for air flow.

**Food Waste.** Trash and recycling barrels will be provided in hallways outside classrooms. Once any breakfast or lunch meal is complete, staff and students will be expected to place all food waste, including disposable utensils that have touched student’s hands and mouths, into the trash barrels. No food waste shall be left out overnight. Blue recycling bins should be used for plastic bottles, aluminum, and paper, and never for liquids or food.
Wiping Down Desks and Tables. Physical spaces used by students and staff will be equipped with spray bottles with disinfectant and paper towels required to wipe down desks, tables and other person-occupied surfaces. Teachers will instruct students on how to properly and safely use these supplies to wipe down their own work area at the beginning and end of every rotation that requires movement to a different space, or at the end of the school day, using the following three step process:

1. Clean or wipe these surfaces with a solution of soap and water.
2. Wipe surfaces dry.
3. Spray surfaces with the provided disinfectant and let air dry.

Common Areas

Each BPS school building is a different size and shape, and has differing amenities. Depending on the grade configuration, academic and wraparound programming, and student and staff space needs within each school community, common areas (gymnasiums, cafeterias, library space, other) may need to be repurposed as learning spaces. Physical education, choir, band, orchestra and other large class groupings may need to be reformatted to allow for required physical distancing.

Schools will be provided countertop dividers for high traffic locations in their main office and other administrative spaces. Additional countertop and mobile dividers can be requested as new needs are identified throughout the school year.

Outdoor Spaces

School communities are encouraged to utilize their available outdoor space for educational purposes. Most BPS schools have physical education and play structures, gardens, or outdoor classrooms, with accompanying curriculum resources available to teachers and students. Currently, public health guidance suggests that the COVID-19 virus is less infectious between people interacting outside. Even so, the District requires that all students and staff continue to wear masks while engaged in learning activities outside the school building, and that strict hand sanitation protocols are followed upon return to the classroom.

Restrooms

The number of students allowed in a restroom at the same time will vary depending on the size and layout of restrooms in light of the requirement to keep at least six
feet of distance between individuals. Toilet partitions provide appropriate separation for individuals. Where necessary, signage will direct the use of every other urinal or restroom sink to allow for appropriate distancing. Restroom exhaust fans will be running 24 hours, 7 days a week.

**Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting**

The BPS custodial staff has developed upgraded cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting protocols in accordance with public health guidelines. A list of these upgraded protocols can be found [here](#). In accordance with these protocols, both the frequency and the intensity of building cleaning will be increased, as follows:

- All high touch areas (door handles, push bars, light switches, water coolers and hand or stair railings) of every building will be cleaned multiple times every day.

- Clear dividing partitions and desktop barriers are being provided to classroom teachers as necessary, appropriate and available given changed room layouts and uses.

- Bathrooms will be monitored every two to three hours to allow custodians to wipe down all sink hardware, toilets, door handles and other high touch areas plus restock soap dispensers, towels and toilet paper as necessary.

- Disinfectant and paper towels will be available in all classrooms to allow for frequent wiping down of desks and other surfaces during the day; evening custodians will complete this work at the end of every school day.

- Hand sanitizer will be available in all classrooms, at building entries and exits, and strategically placed throughout the school building as necessary.

- Doors will be pinned open (with doorstops) to avoid frequent touch points, except when doing so would create a fire hazard or go against building code.

- Misting disinfectant will be utilized twice per week (on Wednesdays and after Friday classes end and Monday classes begin) in every classroom in an attempt to kill the COVID-19 virus and any other
organisms that can compromise the health and safety of our students and staff. **This procedure will also be implemented in the event of a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case, as part of the BPS Communicable Disease Rapid Response protocols.**

The District’s custodians are trained and ready to do their part in ensuring we can keep our buildings safe and clean. All new staff has completed training on the following critical cleaning protocols: classrooms; lobby/entrance; gymnasium; grounds, furniture; bathrooms, locker rooms, auditoriums, machine care, stairways, offices; cafeteria; mechanical rooms; common areas, storage and hallway corridors.

**Food & Nutrition**

The BPS Food Service staff have been helping meet the food and nutrition needs of our students and families throughout the course of the pandemic. Whether in standing up and staffing 16 free student meal sites or organizing and supporting the delivery of meals directly to student’s homes, the District’s food team has continued to plan and provide for meeting the food access needs of all of our learners, no matter the learning model within which they participate.

Recent updates regarding meal accountability and expectations will now require identification of enrollment in Boston Public Schools. Parents/guardians are allowed to pick up meals for children that are participating remotely and may be allowed to take home more than one meal at one time, however, the name of the child and school attending will be required. FNS is working with DESE for waivers to continue service as currently operating. However, as of today, the waivers have not been approved.

**Student Meals**

Based upon current CDC guidance, BPS is recommending that no meals be served in cafeterias this fall. Instead, meals will be served as set forth below.

- Upon entry to school, students will pick up a grab & go breakfast and take it to their classroom where it can be enjoyed during the first 15-20 minutes of the school day. For campuses that previously had breakfast in the classroom, this option remains the same.

- Lunches will be eaten in the classroom as well. Depending on the size and configuration of each school building, meals will either be
delivered to the classroom to students or students will proceed to the cafeteria (or designated building location) - maintaining physical distance - to pick up their meal and take it back to the classroom. Having physically inspected each cafeteria in every school, Food and Nutrition Services has created school-specific meal service plans in an attempt to implement the food delivery model that works best at each school given the following criteria: available space, capacity, building configuration, and human resources. These plans will be reviewed with school leaders, food service managers and/or satellite leads to finalize the school-specific food service delivery details, including protocols for accommodating student food allergies.

- Families who opt out of participating in the District’s hybrid learning model and choose to remain remotely engaged in the Remote/At Home Learning Model can assess a week’s supply of student meals (breakfast and lunch) through the District’s specified meal distribution sites, with priority given to the 16 sites where school meals have been offered since March 2020. Sites will be open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm. For students who choose to remain fully remote, we are still working to confirm if and how to continue home delivery of student meals for special education students with door-to-door transportation provisions in their IEPs.

- Families who participate in the hybrid learning model can access student meals (breakfast and lunch) on the days that their cohort group is learning on-site in school buildings by picking up three days worth of student meals at the end of their school day on Tuesdays (for Group A students) or on Fridays (for Group B students).

**Water**

Students are encouraged to bring their own reusable water bottles, filled with water, on all days they report to school buildings for On-Site Learning. Drinking water will continue to be provided at all schools via bottled water coolers and/or bottle refill stations, and disposable cups. Traditional drinking fountain spigots will be turned off or capped off, and not available for use.

**Technology**
Technology devices and connectivity are necessary for students to access staff, resources, assessments, assignments, peers, and classroom community. Having a device and connectivity is only the beginning - a much more important part of the journey is how technology is used to maximize opportunities to learn. As it did throughout the spring period of remote learning and during our summer learning programming, the BPS technology staff has prioritized meeting the needs of students for reliable devices to ensure they can continue to access online learning.

**Prioritized Efforts**

- Providing Chromebooks or other laptop computers to all students and staff that need them. Each computer will have a camera, microphone and speakers to facilitate online learning and teaching, as needed.

- Collaborating with the City of Boston, our community partners and businesses to ensure all students and staff have reliable internet access to complete their work, including through the provision of WIFI and hotspots.

- Providing additional tools to assist with remote learning, including headphones & microphones for students.

- Assisting BPS teams (Office of Academics; Office of Special Education; Office of English Learners) and school leaders and educators to obtain, learn to use and utilize digital learning tools and existing system applications.

- Enhancing family supports & technology assistance in multiple languages.

- Identifying and prioritizing a core set of tools (i.e. Google Classroom and Panorama) to provide robust support for an overall portfolio of systems that are secure, stable, and effective.

- If a student needs access to a device, internet support, or technology repair, contact the BPS Family Hotline at 617-635-8873.

**District Platforms**

All BPS schools should use the common platforms below in order to increase efficiency, have common locations for sources of data that feed into a potential data platform, be able to locate information in a consistent manner, and eliminate duplicate spreadsheets or requests for information that is readily available. The following platforms will be leveraged as district wide tools:
• A balanced assessment system includes a universal screen to determine student growth and formative assessments to monitor standards proficiency. NWEA MAP will be used as a universal reading screen and to measure growth in reading. Illuminate will be used to administer standards-aligned, interim assessments.

• An effective Multi-tiered System of Supports depends upon effective staff collaboration and action. An all hands on deck team approach is required to ensure “every child in every classroom gets what they deserve in order to realize their aspirations..” Panorama Student Success will contain student data, house student success plans, assign team members for communication and collaboration, and help track information in one place.

• Aspen is used to track daily attendance, master schedules/courses, and individual teacher schedules. All school schedules will include specialties, ESL, resource room, and any other individual student supports. To meet the needs of our teachers who want to use teacher/student-friendly applications, we will be introducing new integrations with Google Classroom and Aspen to sync classroom rosters while also piloting a gradebook integration.

• The Office of Special Education will continue to use EdPlan to write IEPs and track delivery of special education and related services.

**Uniform Digital Learning Platform(s)**

Subject to the list above, at the current time all schools are expected to leverage Google Classroom as the main platform for structuring online learning. Individual schools and teachers may introduce other technology and tools to supplement learning, but all families can expect to use Google Classroom as the first point for access to content. BPS will continue to curate a pool of resources that teachers can access to support the creations and customization of their own Google Classrooms, as desired. All schools will be required to make available, and keep accurate records of all online learning locations in a district-wide listing.
Teaching Within the Plan(s): Academics

Instructional Design: Equitable Instructional Recovery Principles

Focusing on individual and collective well-being is the key to moving from trauma to healing. Data indicates that COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted Black and Latinx communities in Boston and nationwide. In this unique moment in history, when our communities are faced with the realities of the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and racial uprisings across the country, prioritizing the social, emotional, and physical wellness of students, families, and staff is a must for addressing equity and ensuring health and safety. At BPS, we will continue to prioritize the experiences and needs of historically marginalized students and their families to ensure that equitable student outcomes are central in our planning.

We are designing for our return to school this fall by thoughtfully creating a transitional experience that supports students to engage again with a new model of school. Our instructional design is focused centrally on meeting the needs of students, both academically and holistically. Throughout the fall, some BPS families will elect for their student(s) to continue to learn in a remote setting; other students will learn both in a remote setting as well as in person. Given these variable conditions, it is critical that the District’s instructional model be built on a backbone of high-quality, rigorous instruction able to be delivered remotely.

This is the work of every educator and all support staff in every school, every office, and every space that Boston Public School students inhabit. This work is exemplified by all of us working together: the Whole School, Whole Community, and Whole Child (WSCC) approach to learning and well-being, currently outlined in our Opportunity Gaps Policy, our Wellness Policy and our 2020-2025 Strategic Vision.

An ecological approach to learning and health, such as the WSCC model, requires efforts at multiple levels within our institution: the district-level, school-level, and in each classroom. The image below describes how teachers can support the whole child in each of their classrooms through each area of the District Wellness Policy. Teachers should also find ways to engage families and involve community partners.
SEL & WELLNESS PRIORITIES FOR REOPENING

**1. Ground reopening in a Whole School Whole Community Whole Child Approach (BPS Wellness Policy)**

- Communicate key health & wellness policies and protocols to the school community
- Establish or strengthen Wellness Council
- Review Wellness Policy & Council Resources & SELWell Opening Guidance
- Assess the current state of implementation of the District Wellness Policy
- Review key health data for the school
- Revise your Wellness Action Plan to meet you Covid-19 priorities
- Attend PD and/or request support

**2. Thread Transformative Tier 1 SEL practices throughout the day & the building:**

- Start with Adult SEL: attend an Adult SEL summer training
- Implement structures focused on building student/adult relationships
- Consider extending community building phase of reopening
- Institute a weekly or daily ritual for the whole school, grade levels, or classrooms
- Deepen existing SEL programming & curriculum, including HE and PE
- Integrate SEL into Academics, including Arts

**BPS Wellness in all Classrooms:** In addition to district and school-level efforts to implement wellness policies and practices, educators should use the framing of the District Wellness Policy (HWD-01) to address the health and wellness needs of students in the classroom.

- Communicate key health & wellness policies and protocols to the school community
- Establish or strengthen Wellness Council
- Review Wellness Policy & Council Resources & SELWell Opening Guidance
- Assess the current state of implementation of the District Wellness Policy
- Review key health data for the school
- Revise your Wellness Action Plan to meet you Covid-19 priorities
- Attend PD and/or request support

- Establish classroom routines to ensure students drink water to stay hydrated and have nutritious snacks; Practice food safety
- Incorporate physical activity into lessons and take frequent movement breaks during the day
- Find ways to incorporate health education topics in other contents areas, such as math, science, and social studies

- Model those healthy behaviors for your students
- Be aware of students’ individual health needs and make accommodations as needed; Communicate health services available to your students
- Establish classroom rituals and routines; Build trust and establish relationships so all students feel safe and supported; Provide tiered supports as needed
- Communicate health and safety protocols to your students; Engage them in caring for the environmental health of their learning space, including common spaces like water fountains and bathrooms

- Establish classroom routines to ensure students drink water to stay hydrated and have nutritious snacks; Practice food safety
- Incorporate physical activity into lessons and take frequent movement breaks during the day
- Find ways to incorporate health education topics in other contents areas, such as math, science, and social studies

- Take care of your own health & wellness so you can care for your students; Check in with colleagues for support
- Be aware of students’ individual health needs and make accommodations as needed; Communicate health services available to your students
- Establish classroom rituals and routines; Build trust and establish relationships so all students feel safe and supported; Provide tiered supports as needed
- Communicate health and safety protocols to your students; Engage them in caring for the environmental health of their learning space, including common spaces like water fountains and bathrooms
Addressing Unfinished Teaching and Learning

Every student experienced an interruption in their education in Spring 2020 when the District schools were closed and all experienced three months of adapted school in the remote environment. We specifically and intentionally are using language that describes the work that the adults must do to equitably recover from these interruptions, rather than casting blame on or assigning deficiencies to students. Thus, rather than COVID-slide, we discuss “unfinished learning”, and rather than “learning gaps” we discuss “unfinished teaching”. The onus is on us, the educators, to expertly design experiences in which we can, and our students can equitably recover from this unprecedented interruption.

Central to our equitable recovery strategy is a focus on providing students the following resources that are critical to closing opportunity gaps caused by systemic bias and racism:

1. Consistent opportunities to work on grade-appropriate assignments (standards-alignment)
2. Strong instruction, where students do most of the thinking in the lesson (cognitively demanding)
3. Deep engagement with what they are learning (culturally and linguistically sustaining, culturally relevant pedagogy)
4. Teachers who hold high expectations for students and believe they can meet and surpass grade-level expectations

The BPS Essentials for Instructional Equity frames collective commitments to a set of competencies that we must master in order to provide students with the necessary resources to close opportunity gaps. The challenges of remote and hybrid learning illuminate what we know to be true about high-quality instruction: students thrive when they are engaged in rigorous and relevant projects that affirm their lived experiences. Academics will prioritize amplifying these types of learning
experiences that exist in the curriculum and supplementing in places where they do not exist.

**Transformative Social and Emotional Learning**

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is the process through which individuals learn essential life skills and competencies that promote a positive identity, a well-managed self, healthy relationships and agency to successfully navigate their future. At BPS, we believe that strengthening adult and youth social and emotional skills and competencies enhances our abilities to connect and relate to others across race, class, culture, language, gender identity, sexual orientation, and learning needs. Our SEL competencies were updated in 2019 to reflect a Transformative SEL approach, an equity-based approach to deepen the social, emotional, and cultural competence of adults and students that is aligned with culturally and linguistically sustaining practices (CLSP). We will leverage a Tier 1 Transformative SEL strategy in the District's reopening to build trust and craft learning environments that are safe, healthy, welcoming, joyful, anti-racisit and culturally affirming. We will use SEL as a lever for equity and wellness by threading it through the decisions, practices, routines, and academic lessons implemented daily. In this way, we will build a bridge from trauma to healing.

As students return to school this fall, BPS educators will exemplify an asset-based mindset and focus on the rich cultural knowledge and individual skills each student brings to the classroom, whether in person or online. Across all grade levels, schools will implement structures that are intentionally focused on building trusting relationships between students and adults. These structures might include an advisory group with a low teacher-to-student ratio for regular check-ins, check-in/check-out procedures, and individual or group student success plans with specific strategies identified to increase learning and social-emotional wellness.

School leaders and educators will be intentional about building school culture and creating a sense of community within the online or blended learning environment. Schools will institute SEL Signature Practices, including a weekly or daily ritual for the whole school, grade levels, or classrooms in order to build teamwork and support. Principals and teachers are encouraged to implement support structures that vary based on grade level and may include things such as practicing classroom routines, collaborating on classroom values, setting up classroom norms for communication, building individual relationships, and activities specifically focused on social emotional learning. We strongly recommend schools extend the
community building phase at the beginning of the school year as we work to create the new normal and a readiness to learn. This will foster a sense of collective care.

Educators should integrate the BPS SEL Competencies into academic curriculum. Social emotional and academic skills are mutually reinforcing. Educators can model SEL skills and use instructional strategies that apply SEL strategies to content learning objectives. This helps students build and practice SEL skills across the day.

In order to build a learning environment that supports student SEL and well-being, schools are called on to foster a supportive staff environment that promotes adult SEL and well-being. Each member of the BPS staff community has experienced some level of trauma from the past few months, including a destabilizing of our work relationships and our professions. Adults need to have opportunities to reflect on their own social, emotional, and cultural competencies, practice self-care, and collaborate with colleagues in order to support our students and families in doing the same. Schools can support this by providing professional learning opportunities, incorporating SEL into team meetings and leadership practices, modeling it for students in the community, and relationship strategies described above.

**Standards**

All students – whether learning on-campus or remotely – must have access to grade-level instruction in all content areas included in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. While the scope and sequence of the instruction will vary depending on student needs and curricula requirements, all students will be required to take the MCAS assessments in Spring 2021. Mirroring their peers learning on-campus, students learning remotely must also have opportunities to engage in enrichment opportunities and receive intervention support as needed.

For SY20-21, all Massachusetts schools are expected to provide students with equitable access to all grade level standards. BPS is recommending that schools balance this requirement with strategic instructional choices necessary during this disruptive period. It is recommended that schools emphasize priority ELA and Math standards aligned to the guidance from Student Achievement Partners. These priority standards are those most closely tied to college and career readiness and foundational to learning that will occur in the subsequent grade level. They are highlighted in the ELA and Math Schedules of Assessed Standards (SAS), described
in greater detail in the Assessment section below as well as in pacing and scope and sequence documents.

Curricula

Structured Learning Time

Boston Public Schools will be required to provide, at minimum, 850 hours of structured instructional time for elementary students and 935 for secondary students. Structured instructional time has been defined by DESE as:

time during which students are engaged in regularly scheduled instruction, learning activities, or learning assessments within the curriculum for study of the ‘core subjects’ and ‘other subjects.’ In addition to classroom time where both teachers and students are present, structured learning time may include directed study, independent study, technology-assisted learning, presentations by persons other than teachers, school-to-work programs, and statewide student performance assessments.

Schools must balance these requirements with developmentally appropriate screen time guidance for children as well as family needs. Families need the flexibility to create an at-home learning schedule that works for the needs of their family and their students, especially, for those who may also be essential workers. For these reasons, it is recommended that schools creatively integrate asynchronous learning opportunities for parts of the remote school day. Additionally, schools should include movement breaks and physical activity throughout the school day, for remote and on-campus schedules. This can be in short spurts from 5 to 15 minutes that should take place regularly. Integrating movement into a lesson or movement break during class time has been shown to improve student focus, academic performance and engagement.

The Division of Academics has released draft recommended daily schedules by grade level that incorporate the guidance for synchronous vs. asynchronous learning time. These schedules will continue to evolve as we have additional information about the structure of the school day for the fall.
Scope and Sequence

Expert guidance is consistent and clear that students need to be given appropriate access to rich grade level content along with “just in time” opportunities to incorporate unfinished learning from the previous year. This guidance is the driver for modifications made to BPS's existing pacing guides and scope and sequence documents. These guides have a built-in “cushion” within each unit to accommodate for a delayed start of school and/or additional time needed for community and relationship building, solidifying health and safety routines, and introduction to new technologies.

The scope and sequence documents align to the Essentials for Instructional Equity and district-adopted curriculum. Schools that do not use district-adopted curriculum are expected to align instruction with the Essentials and SAS. The Academics Division will continue to update this guidance as curriculum developers of our adopted materials release updated resources for remote and hybrid environments.

The Department of Early Childhood will provide a remote version of Focus for teachers and families of students in grades K0-2nd.

Specials

Physical Education, Health Education and Arts Education build rituals, routines, relationships and social-emotional competencies across the school community. See the SEL & Wellness Reopening Guidance document for detailed resources on teaching these courses. Physical education and physical activity are imperative during this time considering the benefits both provide by enhancing fitness, reducing stress and increasing concentration and empowerment. Health education will provide essential knowledge in hygiene, stress management, health promotion and disease prevention (including important safety protocols lessons) that builds personal agency and social competence, improves access to health care and improves quality and length of life for individuals and their families. Similarly, dance, music, theatre and visual arts education provide a whole child and whole school learning environment benefit.

Courses that involve increased respiration and/or sharing of equipment require additional safety considerations when in person according to DESE guidance. The BPS Health Education, Physical Education and Arts departments will provide
professional development, on-line resources, technical assistance and coaching to support schools in implementing this state and national guidance on safe and effective practices of instruction for on-campus or remote learning. Scope and sequence documents, weekly lessons activities, and guidance on facilities, schedules, protocols, instructional strategies, out-of-school connections, and equipment/supplies/resources are available in the SEL & Wellness Reopening Guidance.

**Arts Education.** While education in the arts remains critical to our BPS community, teaching various arts courses requires adaptation in light of the pandemic. Educators should consider how and when to use outdoor learning spaces where available and appropriate, and how best to utilize technology to support adapted instruction and learning. Each arts discipline requires unique and creative adaptations, as described in the DESE recommendations linked below.

- **Dance**
- **Music**
- **Theatre**
- **Visual Art**

The BPS Visual and Performing Arts Department will continue offering professional development and weekly on-line Professional Learning Communities and coaching sessions to share best practices and instructional strategies organized by content area.

**Physical Education.** Physical education (PE) instruction will be modified for remote or in-school instructional strategies, addressing the BPS PE Framework and meeting all safety guidelines including limited class sizes, physical distancing, equipment sharing and cleaning, instructional considerations and wearing masks. Professional development opportunities will be provided to PE teachers in August on safe and effective teaching practices and instructional strategies for on-campus and remote learning and will continue through on-line PLCs and coaching sessions throughout the year. Additional recommendations from the CDC and the Society for Health and Physical Educators are linked below.

- **Physical Environment**
- **Hygiene**
- **Equipment Safety and Sanitation**
- **Instruction**
The Office of Health Wellness, Physical Education Team is available to consult with school leaders, and has supplemental guidance available here.

**Physical Activity.** Whole school physical activity is a vital component of student wellness. The Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) is a framework that guides wellness and physical activity programming for students beyond and including physical education. Schools should strive to address the various components of CSPAP (PE, recess, movement breaks, before or after school programming, whole school challenges and active transport to/from school) to ensure students reach the 60 minutes of physical activity a day recommended by the CDC.

**Health Education.** Health educators will provide lessons focused on community building, personal health, safety, and well-being; and healthy relationships, explicitly teaching the BPS social emotional learning competencies. Students may write and reflect in thrive journals; participate in read-alouds; engage in project based learning and community advocacy projects and seek to understand the current pandemic and how best to protect themselves, their families, and communities. Now more than ever students need to build their health literacy skills. Additional resources and guidance are provided in the SEL & Wellness Reopening Guidance.

**Grade Level Differences**

There are some opportunities for differentiation based on the grade configuration of the specific school. Our youngest learners have a different school environment and schedule than our oldest students. The Division of Academics has prepared recommended daily schedules by grade level.

**Early Childhood**

Early childhood classrooms require special attention and design given variations in the type and amount of developmentally-appropriate learning for our youngest students. In the past, early education classrooms from grades K-0 through 2 have relied on shared manipulatives, toys, and materials for learning, all of which will have to change in light of COVID-19.
BPS is exploring implementation option models and NAEYC guidelines to determine the appropriate classroom arrangements for our youngest learners. In one model, for example, two students are assigned together and are able to play and learn near each other while engaged in the same activity, and therefore benefit from collaborative learning while maintaining a safe distance.

For the core learning tools in hybrid and on-campus learning, each student will need dedicated learning materials for personal use such as pencils and crayons. These tools can not be shared with any other students and must be cleaned on a weekly basis. Toys that are shared between pairs of students should be sanitized daily. Materials that are shared between more than two students must be sanitized after every use. High touch surfaces including doorknobs and desks must be sanitized regularly. Here is one option for a possible K-2 classroom layout. The Department of early childhood will provide suggested lists for school leaders.

**Elementary School**

Generally, elementary grade students spend the majority of their time with one set of classmates, rotating occasionally to another classroom or outdoor space for academic instruction or a specialty class. In the hybrid model, elementary school students will spend all of their time within one cohort group. For the most part, students in grades K-6 will stay with one cohort group when they are at school, receiving instruction in all subjects (including specials) with the same set of peers. In the majority of cases, one teacher will provide instruction in all subjects to the group of students.

**Middle School**

Middle school students typically change classrooms and mix with other classmates at various points during the school day. In the hybrid model, transitions are reduced so students spend all day with the same peer group. To the greatest extent possible, students should be scheduled with peers who have similar class requirements so that all can receive instruction in person in English, math, science, and social studies in one peer group. Due to the more specialized content knowledge of middle grade teachers, teachers may be able to rotate between classrooms while students stay in the same classroom in order to minimize the amount of interaction between groups of students, provided the teacher rotating is able to maintain appropriate physical distance and comply with all other health and safety measures in place.
High School

In the hybrid model, to the extent possible school leaders should build schedules to prioritize 1:1 and small group advising on campus. It may be advisable to prioritize core instruction in remote settings so that students can continue to participate in a robust selection of classes needed to ensure progress toward graduation requirements. Where possible, schools should consider on campus learning for high-needs students and students at entry grades. Based on current guidance, when physically present at school students should spend time with one group of peers. Schools might also consider scheduling fewer classes per day to prioritize intensive, project-based modules for half of a semester to make schedules more manageable and learning more focused for students.

Vocational Education

During remote or hybrid teaching and learning, Career Vocational and Technical Education (CVTE) continues to be critical programming to prepare college and career ready graduates. CVTE programs should prioritize on-campus instructional time to focus on hands-on technical skills that correspond to key Vocational Technical Education Curriculum Frameworks (linked here) and build industry competency. Strategies to allocate equipment in safe and equitable ways will be developed in collaboration with educator professional learning communities under the guidance of the BPS Reopening Plans and DESE CVTE Reopening Guidelines released on July 29, 2020 (linked here). The CVTE Department continues to assess each CVTE program to ensure that teachers and students have access to industry-specific instructional materials, where available, such as online learning platforms, virtual simulation software, e-textbooks, technical videos and other resources.

Many CVTE programs include site-based businesses, which follow additional guidance from Massachusetts Sector-specific Protocols and Best Practices (linked here). Although external customers will not be able to purchase goods and services within school buildings at this time, CVTE programs should plan alternative methods to provide students with authentic work experiences including simulating business practices and conducting online meetings with clients or other types of virtual or contact-less interactions.
The BPS Department of CVTE is currently gathering industry-specific reopening guidance for Career and Technical Education programs in the District.

**Adult Education**

Adult education programs will use the same physical distancing and scheduling guidelines as high schools. Adult Education has two vocational classes: a Culinary Arts training class that uses the kitchen and bakery at Madison Park (one day a week) and a Facilities Maintenance Class (three days a week) that rotates in the Electrical, Plumbing, and Carpentry classroom. Class size is limited to 15. Current Madison Park teachers provide instruction and current BPS administrators provide supervision. Adult Education programs follow district guidelines around Career, Vocational, and Technical Education (CVTE).

The BPS Adult Education team is scheduled to submit its reopening plan to DESE's Adult and Community Learning Services on August 31, 2020. Further guidance will be provided in September.

**English Learners**

Instruction should follow best practices for English Learners (EL) grounded in the instructional core of WIDA, SIOP, and MA Curriculum Frameworks (see the [EL instructional guidance](#) for more information). Regardless of the reopening model, explicit instruction in learning English must be provided to all English learners, inclusive of English learner students with disabilities, according to their English Language Development (ELD) level by an ESL licensed teacher. Similarly, other core content teachers of ELs will still be expected to scaffold grade-level, standards-aligned instruction with multiple access points according to students' ELD level and native language. Students in High Intensity Literacy Training for Students with Limited or Interrupted Formal Education (HILT for SLIFE) and Dual Language programs will still receive instruction in the native language (language of the program). Overall, effective quality EL instruction must focus on strong daily routines that build relationships with students and intentional groupings of students to provide targeted opportunities for productive language output (speaking and writing).

- Live instruction occurs when a student or a group of students are engaged in learning at the same time, and should be completed with ELs in front of a
teacher either on-campus or online. On-campus instruction, including push-in and pull-out ESL services, must adhere to all health and safety requirements while also ensuring that EL instruction is not disproportionately scheduled to non-traditional classroom spaces in school buildings. In the remote setting, small-group ESL instruction (even in the form of individual office hours when feasible) is especially beneficial for English Learners.

- Self-paced learning with no live interaction, should continue to follow the principles of live instruction, but with added levels of student independence in order to support English language development.

The use of online learning platforms and other technology tools should include embedded supports for English Learners.

Engaging parents of ELs as partners and close academic monitoring to ensure ELs have the opportunity to address unfinished learning incurred during school closure is key; therefore, collaboration with school staff remains important in the learning process to support student achievement during school reopening in remote, hybrid, or on-campus models. To ensure English Learner students are receiving requisite services and that this information can be communicated to legal monitoring partners and other stakeholders, school leaders must ensure that ESL services and schedules are reflected for each student in Aspen and that attendance for ESL courses and/or service blocks will also be recorded. Additionally, students' progress toward attaining English language proficiency across the domains of reading, writing, listening and speaking should be formatively assessed and discussed with students and their parents.

Over the next few weeks, BPS will help school leaders ensure that reopening programs are designed specifically with the needs of our English Learners in mind and will support teachers with professional development specific to the needs of English Learners. With DESE's guidance on English Learners as an anchor, along with the input and feedback from our Reopening Task Forces, we will ensure that English Learners receive all necessary supports and services and that the appropriate accountability systems are in place.

Additional resources are available as linked below.

- **DRAFT Scheduling Guidance** (school level)
- **DRAFT Instructional Guidance for English Learners** (classroom level)
Special Education

Students must receive all services documented in their Individual Education Program (IEP) through on-campus instruction, remote instruction, or a combination of both. Family engagement will be a critical factor of success for students with disabilities; we look forward to communicating and partnering with families to ensure that students have what they need to be successful, whether learning on-campus or remotely. School staff should reach out to families soon so that families understand their child's special education learning plan.

For school year 2020-21, DESE guidance provides that special education instruction and services must include the following components:

- A regular and consistent schedule of classes, interventions, services, and therapies as required by the student's IEP, offered synchronously or asynchronously and made transparent and available to parents and families through their student schedules;

- Structured instructional time (as defined by DESE above) designed so that the student can access state standards; and

- Frequent interactions with teachers and other staff members to ensure their participation in the student's learning.

The consistent schedule of classes, interventions, services, and therapies must include time students spend interacting directly with teachers and related service providers on a regular basis, as well as some independent work time, as appropriate, and opportunities for interacting with classmates. Synchronous remote lessons or tele-therapy sessions can be provided via telephone or video conferencing. Students might also benefit from asynchronous pre-recorded videos of lessons to follow at home. For students receiving the majority of their daily instruction through special education, teachers and therapists should assign supplemental work (beyond lessons taught synchronously or asynchronously) during the school day that can be accomplished independently with guidance from and accountability to the teacher or therapist.

Over the coming weeks, the Office of Special Education will ensure that practices, systems, instructional materials and content are accessible to students with disabilities and that staff members provide accommodations for students where necessary, including with regard to school bus transportation. We will leverage
DESE’s guidance as an anchor, alongside the input and feedback from our Reopening Task Force.

**Assessments**

Common assessments will be vitally important in determining student progress toward, and proficiency of, grade level content standards. The district will measure growth with an emphasis on accelerated student growth (greater than typical growth) to demonstrate a reduction in opportunity gaps for our most marginalized groups of students. BPS requires the following assessments as part of the District’s comprehensive and balanced assessment system. Additional detail on assessment administration will be forthcoming.

**District-Required Formative Assessments**

Formative assessments are intended to inform ongoing instruction for students in conjunction with ongoing classroom-based assessments and curriculum-embedded assessments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Grades</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MAP Fluency</td>
<td>Universal Screen</td>
<td>K2–2</td>
<td>3x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAP Growth Reading</td>
<td>Universal Screen with growth measure and MCAS prediction</td>
<td>3–11</td>
<td>At least 2x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPS Interim assessments*</td>
<td>Grade level standards-aligned interim assessments aligned to BPS curriculum scope and sequence in ELA and math (required) and science (optional)</td>
<td>2–11</td>
<td>3x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Autonomous* schools may substitute grade level, standards-aligned assessments in Illuminate with the approval of their School Superintendent. Schools participating in the Pre-AP program would utilize the “Learning Checks” from that program in lieu of interim assessments.

All students should complete these formative assessments with the exception of students who take the MCAS-Alt or ACCESS-Alt as specified in the student’s IEP. All students should receive appropriate accommodations to access the assessments. Educators should determine whether a bilingual dictionary, text-to-speech, human
read-aloud, human scribe, or other DESE approved accommodations for English Learners would provide sufficient support to enable all English Learners, especially those at ELD level 1 or 2, to equitably participate in these assessments. It is important for teachers of all ELs, regardless of their ELD level, to be able to monitor students’ mastery of grade-level standards and to adjust practice accordingly. To the extent that these assessments are conducted in English, caution should be exercised in interpreting results in the aggregate.

**Participation is a factor that must be taken into account in order to accurately represent all students, schools, grade levels, and associated subgroups and so that claims from analyses reflect the district as a whole.**

Schools will utilize administrative common planning time in order to focus on data review, open-response grading, and planning towards grade level standards. Schools should follow the schedule of assessed standards (ELA and Math) and all staff must score open response questions according to the scope and sequence for school, region, and district monitoring and analysis.

**Required Summative Assessments**

Current DESE guidance requires all 11th grade students to take MCAS tests in the fall of 2020 and all other students to test in the spring of 2021.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Grade(s)</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCESS for ELLs</td>
<td>English language development</td>
<td>K2-12</td>
<td>1x (midyear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MCAS</td>
<td>State summative assessment of proficiency on grade level standards</td>
<td>3-11</td>
<td>1x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• ELA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Math</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAT in the School Day</td>
<td>College admissions</td>
<td>11-12</td>
<td>1x (Fall 12th grade, Spring 11th grade)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSAT</td>
<td>College admissions/scholarships</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1x (Fall)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multi-Tiered System of Supports: Student Success Plans

Every school will identify and utilize a Student Support Team (SST) to monitor student well-being, engagement, and academic progress. Using the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) principles and vision for Full Service Hub Schools, schools will develop and monitor Student Success Plans for all students identified as needing targeted, group intervention (Tier 2) or intensive, individualized intervention (Tier 3).

The school's Instructional Leadership Team, professional learning opportunities, staff meetings, grade level/content meetings, and SST meetings should revolve around ensuring all students are receiving the support they need to master grade level standards. Schools are required to utilize a centrally-supported system (Panorama Student Success) for intervention planning, monitoring and record keeping, including all individual or small group intervention plans. The district will collect data on which students have success plans in place and the level of tiered support each student is receiving by accessing all collected data through the Panorama Student Success platform. Resources to assist schools in monitoring their students' attendance and re-engaging all students in learning will be provided in the near future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tiers of Instruction &amp; Well-Being for All BPS Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tier One:</strong> All Students - Universal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade level content all students deserve in every classroom; includes planning for differentiation of instruction. (Homeroom teacher, content teacher, specialty teacher w/group of students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Daily Community Building / Relationship Building (advisory/RJ circle/morning meeting/harambee)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Students have a predictable daily/weekly schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Instruction in the grade level content standards and SEL (Note: ESL is Tier One instruction for English Learners)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Office hours for students and families and small group sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Feedback on assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Individual student/family check-in as needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Enter attendance for every class in Aspen K0-12 (homeroom attendance for self-contained classrooms and class-attendance for specialties, ESL, resource room, and grades 6-12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier Two</th>
<th>(targeted, small group support with short cycle monitoring)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All of the above and the Student Success Plan defines a few targeted supports to accelerate progress toward grade level proficiency such as small groups to complete assignments, support in accessing food, troubleshoot access to technology, more frequent check-ins. Tier Two supports should consider English Learners’ unique language development needs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tier Three</th>
<th>(individualized support with increased intensity)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All of Tier One and Tier Two, and the Student Success Plan defines more intensive supports requiring increased frequency, increased interaction, and increased need to monitor progress towards grade level content. Tier Three supports should consider English Learners’ unique language development needs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Attendance**

In all reopening scenarios, teachers will take student attendance in Aspen on a daily and/or class basis. Specifically, teachers will enter attendance for every class in Aspen K0-12 (homeroom attendance for self-contained classrooms and class-attendance for specialties, ESL, resource room, and grades 6-12). Schools and the District will leverage Supervisors of Attendance to teachers in reaching students who are absent. In the event that we implement a hybrid learning model, teachers will record attendance in the context of the student’s cohort location and in compliance with the following specific direction from state regulators:

- **Schools and districts must take daily attendance whether a student is in person or remote.** Consistent with 603 CMR 27.08(3)(b), districts must have a daily attendance policy and system for remote learning that can be reported into SIMS. Schools may employ multiple ways to track attendance (e.g., monitor whether students are present in synchronous sessions, submitting assignments online, logging onto online learning platforms, attending virtual check-ins, etc.) depending on the structure of the remote learning program. It is critical that districts clearly communicate this policy to students, families, and staff to ensure attendance reporting accuracy.
• During the 2020-21 school year, DESE will also require schools and districts to differentiate between students attending school on-campus and remotely in their local Student Information System. This data will allow DESE to monitor remote learning programming and student engagement across the Commonwealth. The Department will release information soon with directions for districts to report this information.

• Parents/caregivers are responsible for ensuring their child attends school every day, whether for on-campus or remote learning. Schools and districts must continue to investigate extended absences and make and document reasonable efforts to locate the student and determine the reason for nonattendance. In addition to attendance officers, schools may identify staff members who are unable to return to school in person who could support more robust efforts to follow-up with absent students. Districts and schools are especially encouraged during this time to work directly with families to identify barriers to student attendance and to support families in alleviating these challenges. Specifically, we encourage districts to create formal support plans for students and families experiencing challenges. Additional guidance, information, and resources for communicating with and engaging students and families can be found on DESE’s Social and Emotional Learning page.

Given this regulatory direction, it is imperative that individual student schedules are reflected in Aspen so that it is possible for attendance to be taken for every class, including specials, electives, ESL, resource room, and related services (ABA, OT/PT, SLP, counseling, etc). The ultimate goal is to be able to access any student’s schedule and document services for students with disabilities and minutes for English language development. Additional courses may need to be created in order to capture inclusion and push-in services.

**Grading**

Consistent with current law, all Boston Public Schools must assess all students based on the district’s and school’s performance criteria for students during the 2020–21 academic year. This performance criteria must be consistent across on-campus, hybrid, and remote learning environments. For example, if students typically receive a letter grade (A-F) for a particular course, students who are participating remotely must also receive a letter grade. Although the grading policy
will be implemented equitably across all learning scenarios, we will consider exemptions in extreme circumstances. The Reopening Task Force is currently focused on equitable grading practices for various reopening scenarios; recommendations from which guidance will be created will be available prior to the beginning of the school year.

**Delivering the Plan: School Leaders and Staff**

**School-Specific Plans**

This document outlines procedures and expectations for school reopening this fall. Each section explains how and in what circumstances schools must follow a consistent practice. Where applicable, the document also notes some areas in which school leaders will make decisions within guardrails to best suit their learners and school community. Given that our school programs and facilities have some differences, it is likely that there will be some variation in how schools safely welcome back students this fall. We will continue to work in partnership with school leaders to define these guardrails and plan for the safe reopening of all of our schools.

School leaders have already begun planning with their school communities. To support these efforts, school leaders will be provided an individualized template that they will be required to use to complete their school-specific reopening plan. All are expected to craft their final plans by working in collaboration with their school leadership team, school nurse, lead custodian, food service manager or satellite lead, Assistant Director from the Office of Special Education, Elementary or Secondary Superintendent and Parent Council. During August Leadership Institute, school leaders will share their plans with peers, get feedback, and finalize their plans. While subsections of the plans may be assigned earlier due dates, the overall plans are due to the District for approval on August 28, 2020, ensuring sufficient time to share the expectations with staff, School Site Councils, and ensure buildings are ready for school opening.

**COVID-19 Planning Task Force**

In order to better manage all matters related to COVID-19, school leaders must appoint a school-based COVID-19 planning task force, with an identified point person other than the school leader. In addition to monitoring compliance and managing decisions related to COVID-19 planning, the point person will serve as a
subject matter expert on school reopening guidance from health experts, government officials, and the BPS central office. Team members within the task force will help support the point-person and ensure that their school is doing everything in its power to ensure the health and safety of students and staff this fall.

Supporting the Plan: Community Partners

Engagement with Public and Elected Officials

Engaging with the elected leaders of the City of Boston is an important part of receiving feedback on how to safely and successfully reopen schools. We will proactively update elected officials on the city and state level of reopening plans and implementation efforts. Our public officials are positioned to solicit and receive feedback from members and constituents, and quickly share recommendations with the district. As needs pivot, BPS will inform elected officials of adjustments to plans and ask for comments and support on implementing those plans.

The Boston School Committee will continue to monitor district planning and implementation efforts, as well as provide feedback and guidance to District leadership on a regular basis.

Out of School Time and Partner Programming

Creating a space for students to learn, grow, and thrive takes the entire community. Before and after school, and partner programming is a key part of our students' lives, providing them with academic enrichment, physical movement, social skill development, the arts, and so much more. Each year, BPS school communities reap the benefits of partnerships forged to extend the school day, offer much needed resources and support like mental health and counseling, and support teachers and students in the classroom and on the playground. Partners often extend the student learning experience in creative ways such as through an outdoor garden and clubs like LEGO® Robotics.

For decades, our partners and the community have used BPS buildings to provide key services to BPS students and community members both before, during and after school hours. Understanding the significant value of partner programs to our
students, families and schools, we are engaged in conversations with our program providers. Our goal is to support them in determining how they best provide safe, welcoming and consistent access to programs and services when school reopens this fall.

As we look ahead to reopening during the continued COVID-19 pandemic this fall, we are having to restructure how and when our buildings are cleaned. If we return to our buildings in a hybrid learning model, we will need to clean and sanitize classrooms after school hours, which will be difficult to do if our building spaces are occupied by our partner organizations serving our BPS students. Our ability to minimize movement and the number of people in our buildings is also critical to ensuring the safety of students and staff. Allowing partner programming to continue as it has in the past will necessarily disrupt the static groups of students we are trying to keep safe by limiting their interaction with adults and other cohorts of children during the school day.

While we are confident that our partners can make the necessary program alterations to maintain physical distancing, we are challenged to determine how it is possible for them to do so without introducing more adult-to-student contact, which increases the opportunities for exposure to the virus. We are committed to finding solutions to these problems. We are exploring the possibility of alternative sites for programming by connecting and matching partners with space and those seeking to offer on-campus programming. BPS will provide guidance and recommendations to guide partners as they launch remote or on-campus programs and ensure effective communications with families. We hope that partners can prioritize BPS students for access to programming and seats. We are in continued conversations with the City of Boston, partners, and community organizations about these critical topics.

Athletics

Athletics are an important part of our students’ physical, social, and emotional well-being and development. BPS Athletics offers middle level and high school interscholastic and Special Olympics teams in the fall season. We value the role athletics play in our students' BPS experience, but we also recognize that the safety of our students, families, coaches, and communities is our number one priority. Our goal is to provide athletic opportunities for BPS students where possible, while
following public health guidance and ensuring a safe environment for all participants. Further information on this topic will be forthcoming soon.

**Opting into the Plan: Honoring Family Choice**

We have, and will continue to, take family voice into consideration in our reopening planning. Through the use of surveys that were sent through email, text and by call, we have gathered the thoughts and opinions of families for several weeks. This data, highlighted earlier, has been used to inform our reopening planning and implementation.

**Choices for Families**

Next week, we will be reaching out to all of our families to ask them to make some very important choices, including:

1. Whether the student(s) in the household will opt out of all in-person learning and choose to participate in the Fully Remote learning model.

2. Whether the student(s) in the household will opt in to Hybrid A/B learning model and choose to learn in-person in school buildings two days per week.

3. Whether a student has special learning needs such that the family would prefer that the student learn in-person in school buildings three or four days per week.

4. If a student is participating in a hybrid learning model, whether the student intends to participate in schoolbus transportation.

Families will be contacted by text, email, phone and direct mail as necessary at the address on file with the school and the BPS Welcome Centers.

**Partnering with Families**

Students cannot be successful without the support of their families. During this time, it is especially important to partner with our families in order to support our
students academically and socio-emotionally. We are partnering with our families in a few ways:

- **Daily Health Screening Checklist:** Families will play a critical role in supporting the health and safety of students and staff. Parents can prepare their children for the changes that will take place this school year by modeling and encouraging preventive and healthy behaviors at home. Before students leave for school each day, families will need to take a few steps to ensure that their child is safe and ready for school. This will include assessing the child for illness or a fever, keeping them home if they have either, and ensuring that students have their learning materials prepared for the day.

- **District and School Communications and Outreach:** BPS will continue to diversify its communications and outreach efforts based on family feedback, including leveraging additional ethnic and neighborhood media outlets to share information and videos. The district is seeking to secure a communications platform that automatically sends information to families in their home language. Families would not have to download an app as they can access the site online and get information by text.

  Schools will receive recommendations and protocols on how to most effectively engage and communicate with families at the classroom and school-wide levels. Additionally, educators will be able to sign up for training on specific outreach strategies such as in-person and virtual home visits, and virtual back-to-school events and open houses to connect students, families and educators.

- **Support with E-Learning Tools:** We have learned from our remote learning efforts during the 2019-20 school year. During remote learning in Spring 2020, families reported difficulty with supporting students in logging into Chromebooks, Google Classrooms and Zoom. We will take a tiered approach to support families, prioritizing families of newly enrolled students and those with low rates of remote participation during SY 2019-20. Families will have an opportunity to receive one-on-one support with logging into their Chromebook and will be enrolled in a small class that will teach them to navigate and use common BPS student platforms (Clever, Gmail, Google Classroom, Seesaw, Zoom, and Aspen). Additionally families will learn to navigate the BPS website so that they can find information. Classes will be offered in multiple languages and times to best meet families' needs.
All families will receive by email and/or text, links to videos and tip sheets outlining how to log into and navigate the e-learning tools used across the district. Schools may be using applications and e-learning tools other than those being used and promoted by the district. School leaders will work with their staff to determine how to best support students and families with learning how to use and navigate the tool(s).

- **Parent Workshops:** A variety of workshops and learning opportunities will continue to be offered to parents and guardians under the Parent University umbrella. Workshops will be driven by parent feedback to ensure that families can access supports in the areas they identify as a need. Offerings may include Coping During COVID, Motivating Your Child to Learn, Partnering with Your Child’s Teacher, Know Your Rights, Code of Conduct During COVID, and many more. Families can find more information about upcoming workshops and register [here](#).

- **Parent Voice and Leadership:** Boston Public Schools values the voices of families and seeks to engage families in both school governance and in an advisory capacity at all levels throughout the district. School Parent Councils (SPC) are organized by parents for parents, and serve as advocates and advisors to Principals/Headmasters. SPC's provide an opportunity for families to be more deeply engaged at the school level, partnering with the Principal/Headmaster to improve school culture and outcomes for all students. The role of SPC's will be particularly critical during reopening. SPC's can convene families to conduct listening sessions for school staff to hear how hybrid learning is working for students and families. They can also connect parents to other parents to share information and meet each other's needs.

Additionally, each school holds a school equity roundtable where the school staff, community members, and families come together to review and analyze data and to talk through and push their thinking on major issues facing the school community. Families are a critical part of this effort and can help illuminate the parent experience and work with educators to address inequities that may be present.

- **School-Based Family Liaisons:** All Transformation Schools or schools that have an English Learner population of 50% or greater of the schools'
enrollment have a Family Liaison. Liaisons will work to create a welcoming environment that values parents/guardians as full partners in the education and development of their children. Liaisons will serve as a bridge between school and home in ways that build trustful relationships and foster understanding. Liaisons will work with educators to implement strategies that will ensure that students are logging in and are prepared to engage.

- **Basic Needs and Resources:** Families may experience instability over the next few months or year including housing and food instability, job insecurity and other needs. Boston Public Schools is working closely with other city departments to meet some of these needs, particularly where an emergency response is needed. Families needing support generally should notify school staff of their needs.

As we get closer to reopening, we will continue to ask families for their input and prepare them to support their child with learning. We will also increase our communication to families on how we can continue to partner together to reopen safely.

### Supporting School Staff: Succeeding Together

**Mandatory Home Health Screening**

Every BPS employee is required to complete a [Home Health Screening Checklist](#) every day prior to reporting to a BPS school, just like our students.

**Professional Development**

**Returning Boston Strong Educator Conference**

During the week of August 17-21, BPS leaders and educators will engage in virtual learning to kick off the upcoming school year. Participants can opt into a strand of learning based on their needs and learning interests, with dedicated strands for educators, school leaders, and parents.
Training for all groups will start with the health and safety protocols put in place to keep our students and staff safe. This training will include our new normal routines for monitoring attendance at school buildings.

Educator professional development will include a focus on pedagogy adapted to the current moment, including:

- Culturally and linguistically sustaining practices and building asset-based relationships with families and students
- Applying an anti-racist lens to curriculum and instruction
- Planning with unfinished teaching and learning in mind (use of formative assessment to understand where students are now to move forward)

More specific information about the available learning strands can be accessed here.

**Additional Professional Learning Opportunities**

As learning must be differentiated for students' needs, the same is true for educators. We propose a model of adult learning for SY20-21 that supports the continued need for differentiation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Offerings</th>
<th>Provider or Convener</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“101” - For New and Developing Educators or Experienced Educators Learning New Tools</td>
<td>OIIT Digital Learning Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“201” - Next-Level Integration of Tools for Remote and Project-Based Learning</td>
<td>Telescope Network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“301” - Innovative Course Offerings and Modules</td>
<td>Teacher PLC’s supported by the Academics Division and BTU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Digital Learning Team will continue to provide workshops throughout the month of August for educators to build their proficiency with BPS platforms including Aspen, Panorama, Illuminate, and Google Classroom.
DESE, in collaboration with LearnLaunch, is also providing Virtual workshops throughout the summer for district leaders and teachers on how to: Set priorities for Learning; Select Aligned (curriculum) Tools; Prepare Educators; Plan for Special Education; Ensure Equitable Access; Engage Learners; Address the needs of English Learners; Social-Emotional Learning; Support Parents; and Communicate Clearly.

The Learning Innovation Catalyst (LINC) Learning is available to all teachers at least until September 30, 2020 for on-demand, self-paced professional learning. LINC supports the development of equitable, student-centered learning by helping educators successfully shift to remote, hybrid, project-based and other student-centered learning models. Through LINCSpring, the online coaching and professional learning platform, educators can access engaging workshops, personalized professional development, and virtual coaching. This summer, LINCSpring is offering live and recorded sessions on topics including: Creating Engaging Screencasts, SEL: Systems and Structures for Checking in with Students, Creating Community in the Digital Classroom, Creating Differentiated Units of Study, and many more. The link to register for live sessions is here and recorded, on-demand sessions are here. If you do not have a log in, please contact Christine Landry, Assistant Superintendent of Academics (clandry@bostonpublicschools.org) to get started.

First Week of School PD

Educators will be present in their individual school buildings for professional learning immediately preceding the first day of school. During this training, staff will walk through their buildings to review how district policies will be implemented at the school level in classroom spaces as well as shared spaces such as hallways, bathrooms, cafeterias, gyms, and outdoor space.

Human Capital Supports

The Office of Human Capital has established leave procedures to request approved leave from work, including FMLA Leave if an employee or a qualifying family member has medical conditions that may prevent them from returning to work. Through December 31, 2020, employees may also qualify for benefits under the Families First Coronavirus Act, including leave to care for a child because the child's school or place of care has been closed or the student’s childcare provider is unavailable, due to COVID-19 precautions. Employees may also seek reasonable accommodations for qualifying conditions.
Ensuring Staff Coverage

BPS plans to reach out to all staff to confirm whether or not staff plan to return to service in school buildings in the fall of 2020. Staff are not required to share this information with the BPS Office of Human Capital. The District will request the information in an effort to determine which staff do not plan to return to school in order to ensure that all of our buildings are staffed appropriately and safely.

Financing the Plan

We expect extraordinary District and individual school costs associated with evolving learning conditions. This section outlines what new funding has been made available to BPS, our strategies for creating flexibility within our existing budget, and the major new costs associated with COVID-19.

Available New Funding

BPS is fortunate to enter this school year in a stronger financial position than most large urban districts and many districts in Massachusetts. This position starts with the steadfast commitment from the City to maintain the $80M investment in BPS for this fiscal year. This 7% increase over last year’s allocation is particularly remarkable when most other districts in the state and across the country are facing cuts. In turn, the District has protected our school-based instructional staff from layoffs and furloughs and we continued our planned investment in new Social Workers and Family Liaisons.

In addition to City funding, BPS has benefited from additional external funding:

- **Boston Resiliency Fund** - This fund is the City of Boston's effort to help coordinate fundraising and philanthropic efforts to provide essential services to Boston residents whose health and well-being are most immediately impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. One of the priorities of the Fund is to provide technology to enable remote learning for students. To date, BPS has received $2.2M in funding for student laptops.

- **Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund** - Congress set aside $13.2 billion of the CARES Act for the Elementary and Secondary School
Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund. This funding provides local districts with emergency relief funds to address the impact of COVID-19. BPS received $32.3M in supplemental funding. We expect to allocate approximately $5 to private and parochial schools based in Boston per federal requirements. We are utilizing CARES Act funding for Summer Learning Opportunities and Personal Protective and Health Equipment.

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement - Through their Public Assistance Program, FEMA will reimburse Cities for a limited range of expenses related to COVID-19. We are working with our partners in City Hall to submit expenditures related to Food Services, Transportation, Facilities and Safety Services. To date, we have submitted $1.03M for reimbursement.

- Specialized State Support Grants - BPS will continue to seek grant opportunities from the State as they become available. Recently, the Office of Instructional and Information Technology secured a grant from the “Remote Learning Technology Essentials” program for $672K, which will provide home internet to 2,000 families and 25,000 headsets with microphones for students learning at home.

Strategies to Leverage Existing Resources

We have evaluated priorities and considered pausing initiatives and projects that may not be effective while we respond to the current crisis. As we rolled out the Strategic Plan earlier this spring and thought about our response to equity and COVID-19, we recognized that our FY21 commitments and priorities are more relevant during COVID-19, not less. The District needed to think differently about the delivery of services, but not about our values and key investments. We were accurate in our assessment of our student needs, but we need to shift the way we are meeting them.

Despite this, the anticipated costs (discussed below) means that we need to be thoughtful about prioritizing spending and to make sure that we create as much flexibility as possible heading into the fall. To that end, we have employed the following strategies:

- Leverage multi-year options on FY20 external funds to carry additional funding into FY21 - We stopped all non-COVID-19 spending at the end of
March due to a combination of factors: saving money and also the inability to accept deliveries when staff were asked to stay out of schools. This led to savings in FY20. We also saved some money on operating expenses that were no longer incurred, such as utilities and fuel for buses. By exercising the multi-year options on external funds, we are able to use savings from FY20 to apply towards FY21 needs. We are still finalizing expenditures from FY20, but we anticipate carrying forward $10M in additional funding to support the COVID-19 response.

- **Redirect of the previously planned FY21 budget** - We are taking a critical eye to the entire existing budget to redirect funds that were typically allocated to our traditional model of education to focus on our hybrid and online learning needs. For example, funds for physical materials are being partially used for more online resources. We are committed to continuing school-based investments in social workers, family liaisons, and instructional facilitators.

**Increased Costs**

There are significant increased costs to operating in this new reality. This plan includes various proposals and options that can significantly influence District expenditures. For example, there are significant cleaning costs associated with in-person classes that would not be needed if the district operated remotely. Conversely, if we operate in a remote-only environment, we are likely to experience significant decreases in revenue associated with the Federal Meals Program. In many cases, maintaining flexibility for the District - that is, preparing for both in-person and remote learning and allowing parents to opt-in and out of services - is the most expensive strategy.
The following categories and estimates are intended to provide you with a clearer picture of the implications for BPS operations:

- **Health & Safety** - This category of expenses relates to the supplies and resources needed to ensure we are following proper public health guidelines. This includes cleaning products and supplies, modifications to buildings, and personal protective equipment. We estimate spending between $25M–$35M in this category.

- **Staffing & Professional Development** - This category includes the additional staffing needed to clean buildings, meet transportation guidelines and compensate instructional staff. All staffing related expenses are subject to collective bargaining agreements. Our current estimate for staffing costs - which does not include an estimate for requests from our union partners - is $20M–$45M.

- **Student & Family Supports** - This category includes additional instructional materials and assessments. In many ways, this is our most conservative estimate; costs are emerging as the academic plan evolves. Our current estimate is $1M–$2M.
• **Technology & Online Learning** - This category includes online learning tools - including online texts, cameras for online learning, and internet access for students. This estimate does not include the cost of additional student devices, which were a planned budget item in FY21. Our estimate for additional technology is $5M-$10M.

We will continue to revise our estimates as the plan evolves. These estimates should not be considered commitments to spending in any given category.

**Improving the Plan**

Reopening schools safely for students and staff during a global pandemic is a hugely complex task. COVID-19 will likely be with us for the months, and maybe even the years, to come. We will continue to work hard to gather expert and community input in order to ensure each draft of the plan is as thorough as possible and well grounded in science and practical logistics. As we continue to learn and adapt, we invite anyone with constructive ideas to share them with us by email at:

[Reopening@bostonpublicschools.org](mailto:Reopening@bostonpublicschools.org)

While we cannot promise a timely response to every email, we do promise to thoughtfully consider all productive input we receive and use it to improve future drafts of the BPS Reopening Plan. Thank you for being part of this critical work.
Appendix

Public Health Metrics:
- COVID-19 Dashboard

Practical Realities:
- CDC Considerations for Schools

Community Engagement:
- BPS Reopening Website
- Stakeholder Feedback
- Reopening Survey Results

Home Health Screenings:
- Draft Student At Home Health Checklist

Handwashing:
- CDC Guidance on Hand Washing

COVID-19 Health Protocols:
- City of Boston Interactive Testing Map

Close Contacts:
- Definition of Close Contact

Quarantine:
- CDC Guidance on When to Quarantine

Travel:
- Massachusetts COVID-19 Travel Order

Transportation:
- BPS’ Safe Routes to School Boston initiative
- MBTA Student TPASSES

How Students Ride the Bus:
- Draft Student At Home Health Checklist

Other Safety-Related Changes to Bus Transportation:
- BPS Transportation website

Facilities:
- Summer Cleaning Expectations

HVAC/Air Filtration:
- CDC Guidance
- 7/22 DESE Guidance
- Draft Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Summary

Outdoor Spaces:
- Outdoor Education Curriculum Resources

Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting:
- Draft Cleaning Protocols

Student Meals:
- CDC Guidance

Addressing Unfinished Teaching and Learning:
- BPS Essentials for Instructional Equity

Transformative Social and Emotional Learning:
Standards:
- ELA and Math standards aligned to the guidance from Student Achievement Partners
- ELA and Math Schedules of Assessed Standards (SAS)

Structured Learning Time:
- Structured instructional time has been defined by DESE
- Recommended Daily Schedules (draft)

Scope and Sequence:
- Pacing Guides and Scope and Sequence Documents (draft)

Specials:
- Draft SEL & Wellness Reopening Guidance
- DESE Guidance: Dance, Music, Theatre, Visual Art
- Additional recommendations from the CDC and the Society for Health and Physical Educators: Physical Environment, Hygiene, Equipment Safety and Sanitation, Instruction

Grade Level Differences:
- Recommended Daily Schedules (draft)

Early Childhood:
- Pre-K Classroom Considerations for Reopening (draft)
- Possible K-2 Classroom Layout (draft)

Vocational Education:
- Vocational Technical Education Frameworks
- DESE CVTE Reopening Guidelines released on July 29, 2020
- Massachusetts Sector-specific Protocols and Best Practices

English Learners:
- Instructional Guidance for English Learner Education (ELE) in Fall 2020 (draft)
- DESE Guidance on English Learners
- DRAFT Scheduling Guidance (school level)
- DRAFT Instructional Guidance for English Learners (classroom level)

Special Education:
- DESE Guidance on Special Education

Multi-Tiered System of Supports: Student Success Plans
- Vision for Full Service Hub Schools
- Panorama Student Success

Attendance:
- DESE Social and Emotional Learning

Parent Workshops:
- Upcoming BPS Workshops

Returning Boston Strong Education Conference:
- Flyer

Additional Professional Learning Opportunities:
DESE & LearnLaunch Virtual Workshops
The Learning Innovation Catalyst (LINC) Learning
LINCSpring is offering live and recorded sessions

Human Capital Supports:
Office of Human Capital Leave Procedures
FMLA Leave
Families First Coronavirus Act
Reasonable Accommodations

Available New Funding:
Public Assistance Program