



School Reopening Fall 2020, Draft 1

RETURNING BOSTON STRONG



Table of Contents

Letter from the Superintendent	5
Executive Summary	6
Introduction	8
Planning to Reopen	8
Core Values	9
Working Groups	9
Practical Realities	11
Timeline	13
Listening and Learning	13
Learning Models: A Continuum	13
Community Engagement	14
Preference for Hybrid Learning	14
Improving Remote Learning: Lessons Learned	16
Concerns Raised; Views Expressed	17
Recommended Reopening Plans: First Drafts	19
Summary of Available Learning Models	20
BPS Remote/At-Home Learning Plan	22
BPS Hybrid Learning Plan	23
Hybrid Summary	24
Simultaneous Teaching and Student Experience	25
Classroom Layouts	26
Staffing Model & Delivery of Instruction	27
Start Date	28
Protecting BPS: Health & Safety Requirements	29
Home Health Screenings	29
COVID-19 Testing Not Required for Initial Return	29
Handwashing	30
Wearing a Mask	30
Physical Distancing	31
BPS Health Supports	31
School Nurses	32
COVID-19 Protocols	32
Behavioral Health Team	33

Operationalizing the Plan	33
Transportation	33
Who Rides the Bus	34
How Students Ride the Bus	35
Other Safety-Related Changes to Bus Transportation	36
Facilities	37
Visitors Not Allowed	37
Entryways & Hallways	37
HVAC/Air Filtration	38
Classrooms	38
Common Areas	38
Outdoor Spaces	39
Restrooms	39
Sanitation	39
Food & Nutrition	40
Student Meals	41
Water	42
Technology	42
Prioritized Efforts	42
District Platforms	42
Uniform Digital Learning Platform(s)	43
Teaching Within the Plan(s): Academics	43
Instructional Design: Equitable Instructional Recovery Principles	43
Addressing Unfinished Teaching and Learning	44
Social and Emotional Learning	45
Standards	45
Curricula	46
Structured Instructional Time	46
Scope and Sequence	46
Specials	47
Grade Level Differences	48
Early Childhood	48
Elementary School	49
Middle School	49
High School	50
Vocational Education	50

Adult Education	50
English Learners	51
Special Education	51
Assessments	52
District-Required Formative Assessments	53
Required Summative Assessments	54
Multi-Tiered Systems of Support: Student Success Plans	54
Attendance	55
Grading	57
Delivering the Plan: School Leaders and Staff	57
School-Specific Plans: Due August 21st	57
COVID-19 Planning Task Force	58
Supporting the Plan: Community Partners	58
Afterschool Programming	58
Athletics	59
Choosing the Plan: Families	59
Choices for Families	59
Partnering with Families	60
Succeeding Together: Supporting School Staff	61
Mandatory Home Health Screening	61
Professional Development	61
BPS Reopening Conference	61
Additional Professional Learning Opportunities	62
First Week of School PD	62
Human Capital Supports	62
Ensuring Staff Coverage	63
Continuing to Improve	63

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 ten months, the COVID-19 coronavirus has taken the lives of far too many and changed the very foundations of how we gather as a community. 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 community, including within the 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's dignity and treat each other with respect, always guided by the fact that we can accomplish anything when we work collaboratively 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 antiracist policies and closing opportunity and achievement gaps. 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
Boston Public Schools

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.

In the fall of 2020, we will be going back to school at the Boston Public Schools by: (1) reopening school remotely for all students; or (2) reopening school in a hybrid learning model through which students alternate between returning to school buildings and continuing to learn remotely. **We have not yet made a final decision regarding which of these options is best for the students of the Boston Public Schools. We continue to monitor local health data and will be guided by the advice of our public health officials.** We have decided that BPS will not reopen this fall with all of our students gathered in our school buildings together at the same time.

As we continue to work to decide whether it is best to start the school year fully remote or with a hybrid learning option, these foundational decisions will shape our decision:

- **Science will 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.
- **Once made, the decision may change.** As the virus continues to evolve, our decision-making will continue to evolve as well.
- **The decision will not be made until our partners weigh in and are heard.** We have included school leaders, teachers, other staff and BPS families in the past several months of planning. Reopening Task Forces are currently meeting to contribute their ideas in order to improve this draft plan. **As new ideas are received and old ones are improved, updated versions of this plan will be released.**

- **The outlined hybrid model is not perfect.** Many have commented that the simultaneous teaching of students in person and online is impossible for our BPS teachers to do, no matter what technology supports are provided. Now is the time to identify how BPS teachers can equitably teach all students - each of whom is legally entitled to structured instructional time, every day of the school year. That is the task before us; the time to complete that task is now.
- **No matter how we start school in the fall, students and staff will be back in our school buildings in some manner, on some schedule, at some point 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-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.

Planning to Reopen

As we work to reopen the Boston Public Schools in the face of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, we are committed to ensuring that all of our students return to safe and joyful learning environments where all children thrive. This first 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.

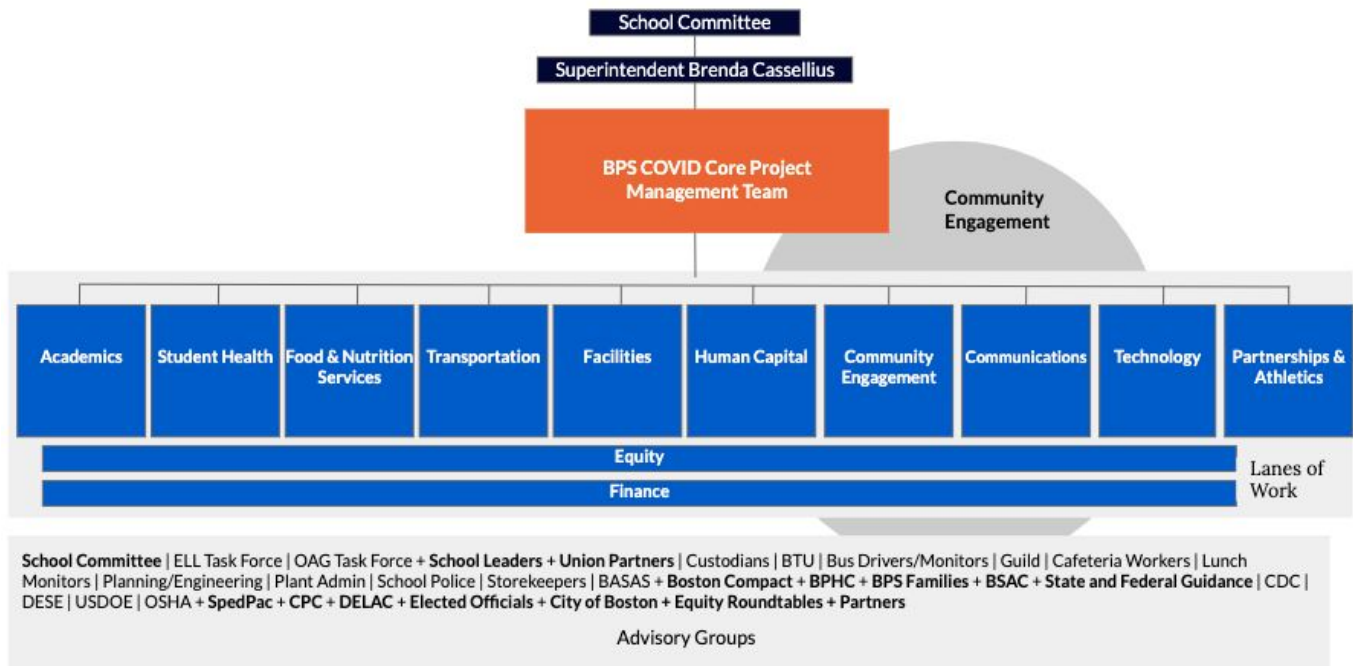
Core Values

- **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. BPS is committed to providing all students with high quality academic and social-emotional learning as well as holistic support, and to ending inequitable and racist practices throughout our community.
- **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). Our plans are designed with flexibility in mind so we are well positioned to pivot our decisions if necessary due to changing public health guidance.
- **Relationships** are the cornerstone of building trust. Building meaningful relationships with our students and families not only provide for a sense of safety and security, but encourage greater school and classroom participation and engagement. Relationships contribute to the development of Social emotional wellness through creating conditions for risk taking and regulation. Relationships contribute to a sense of belonging.
- **Communication** - Everyone in our community has important perspectives to share. The more we listen, the better decisions we will 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.

Working Groups

Many voices contributed to this initial draft of the BPS Reopening Plan. With input from community stakeholders, school leaders, educators and other school-based staff, the planning team was organized into “lanes” of experts focused on identifying issues, vetting ideas and recommending logistical and operational decisions.

BPS Structure of Reopening Planning



- **Academics**, including **Special Education, English Learners, and Early Childhood**, focused on district and school level practices, modified curricula, pacing, assessments, school and grade level scheduling best practices in hybrid and remote learning, and culturally responsive social emotional learning. Through eight ongoing task forces, principals and teachers and others provided input into how best to provide excellent student instruction and support when we reopen school.
- **Student Health** focused on supporting the health and safety of all students within our school communities including our most vulnerable students; through the development and implementation of policies and protocols for the management of infectious diseases with an emphasis on COVID-19. Education and support for school based staff, securing personal protective equipment, infectious disease screening, tracking, reporting, and collaboration with the Boston Public Health Commission.
- **Food & Nutrition Services** focused on safe food service practices and delivery operations.
- **Transportation** focused on routing change scenarios and vehicle sanitation practices and procedures aligned with public health recommendations.

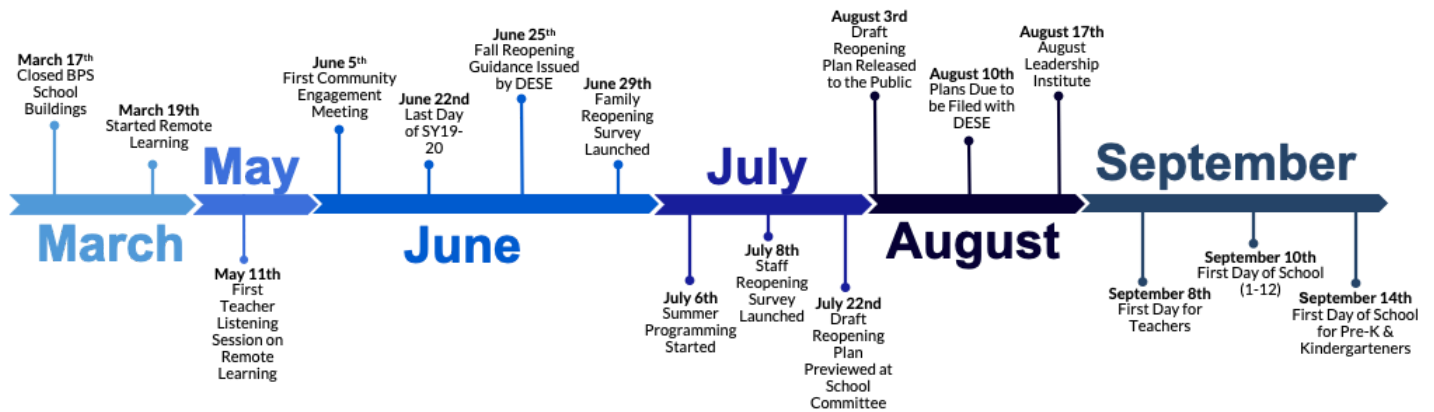
- **Facilities** focused on physical distancing and sanitation protocols, classroom configurations and air filtration protocols based on public health and regulatory recommendations and guidance.
- **Human Capital/Labor Relations** focused on policies and staffing needs in support of instructional models and operational supports.
- **Community Engagement** focused on engaging stakeholders - students, families, staff, community members and community and faith-based organizations - through public forums, dialogues and the District's Equity Roundtable. This included hosting meetings for specific ethnic and linguistic communities, as well as youth-only sessions.
- **Communications** focused on informing the public in a timely fashion of the status of Plan-related decisions and opportunities for input.
- **Technology** focused on platform integration and training and hardware resource supplementation in support of online learning models. This includes the assurance that all students have access to a 1-on-1 device and active internet service.
- **Partnerships and Athletics** focused on logistical support from partners for before and afterschool services and opportunities.
- **Equity** considerations and analyses were embedded throughout all the lanes of work. The District employed its racial equity planning tool to the various learning models in order to assess the impacts on students of color, students with disabilities, and English learners, and their families. In particular, we examined how these key populations would be impacted by the models in terms of: (1) potential physical and mental health risks, including COVID-19 exposure, hunger, isolation, abuse, and gun violence; plus (2) learning loss.
- **Finance** limitations are real and consequential; at BPS, we are keenly aware of our legal and ethical responsibility to use all public resources only to provide services the public desires and are willing and able to fund.

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. The first draft of the BPS Reopening Plan 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.
- The 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 in 2020.
- Following the reopening of school facilities, it is likely that there will be some level of exposure to and/or outbreak of COVID-19 that will require at least temporary closure of a BPS classroom, floor, school building(s) or the entire District for a limited period of time, which in turn will require the District to immediately pivot to a model where all students are learning remotely.
- 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 (EEOC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) 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.

Timeline



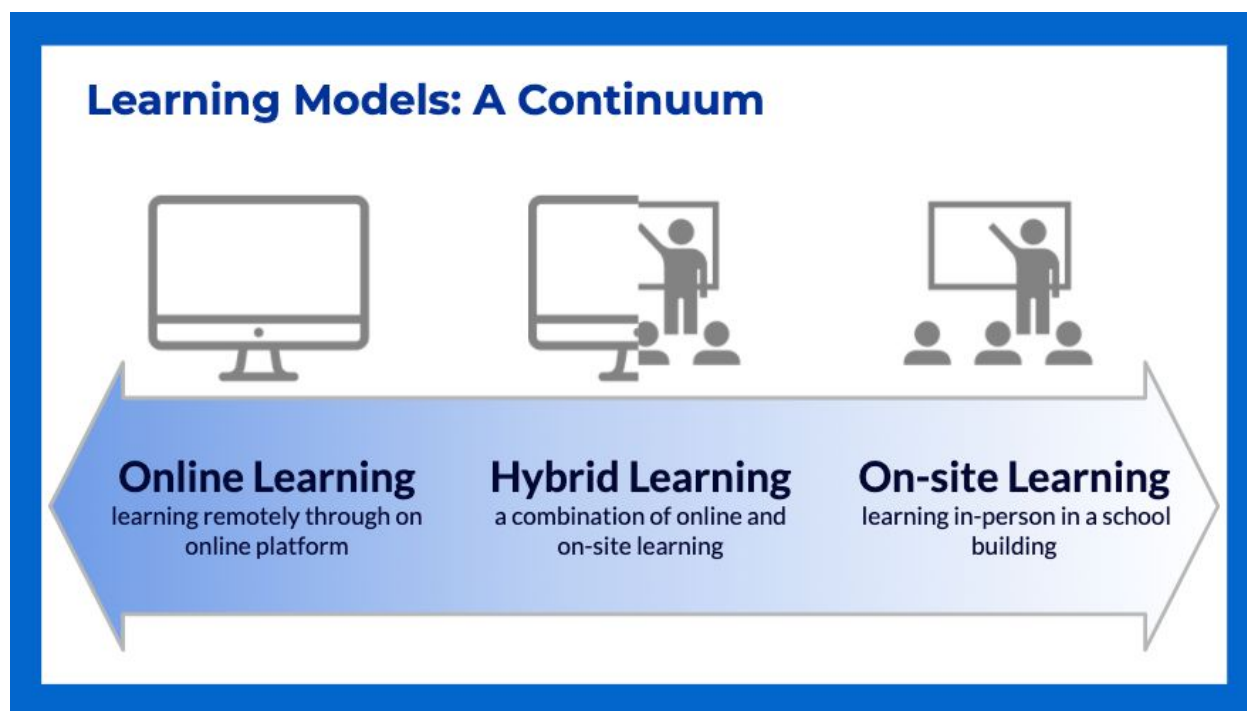
Listening and Learning

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 2,500 community stakeholders and have gathered input from other large, urban school districts, leaders in higher education, BPS school leaders, our union partners, the City of Boston, as well as over 17,000 students, families, and community organizations. 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.

Learning Models: A Continuum

The continuum of learning models we explored focused on the following three options illustrated below:

- a fully remote model of learning;
- a hybrid model that allows for some students to learn remotely and others to return to on-site learning; and
- an in-person learning model serving all students simultaneously.



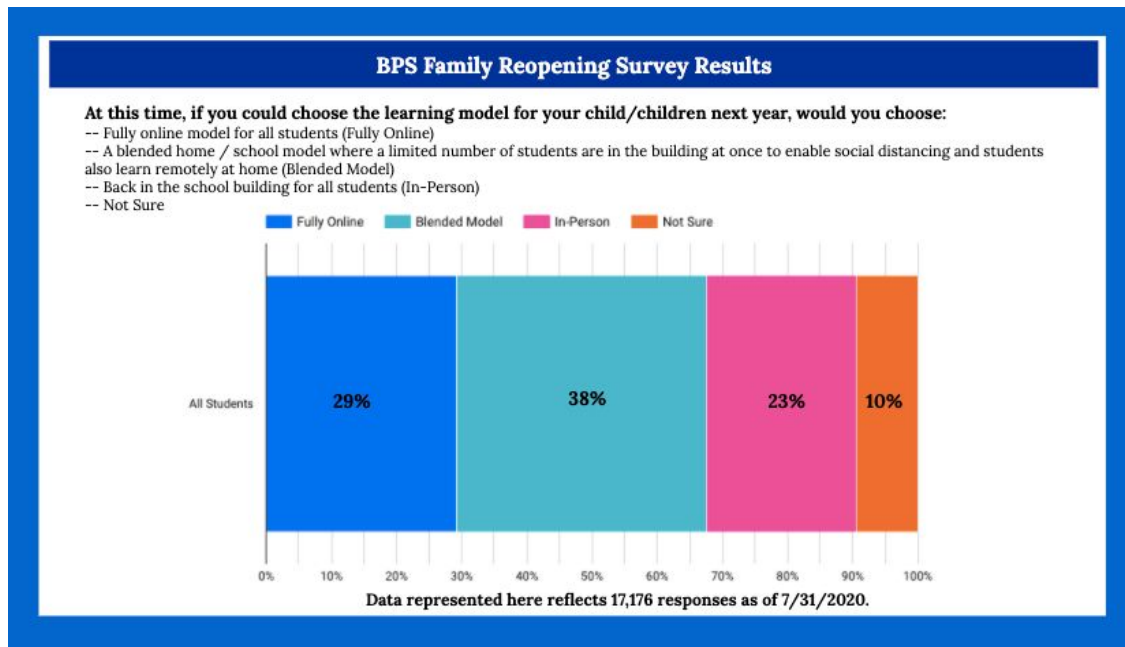
Community Engagement

The BPS Community Engagement Team conducted over 25 stakeholder meetings to gather input on the draft reopening plan. These were attended by thousands of students, parents, educators, community organizations, school leaders, school staff and members of the public. The list of completed and upcoming community engagement sessions can be found [here](#). 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.

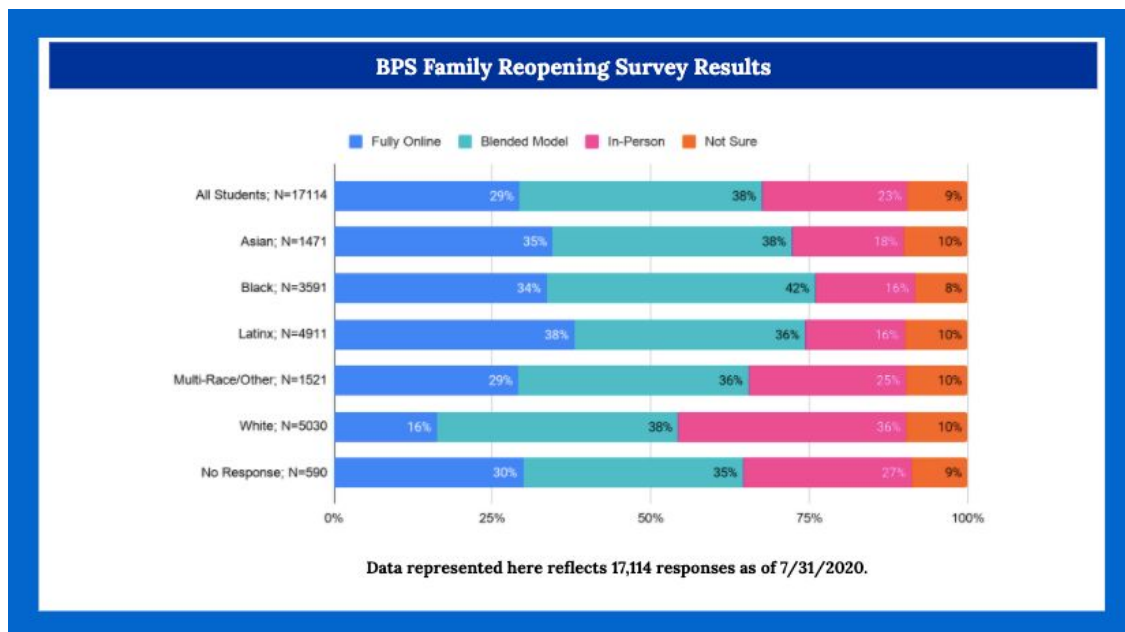
Preference for Hybrid Learning

Beginning in June, we conducted four surveys of 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 On-site Learning in the fall of 2020, nearly half (40%) indicated a direct preference for a hybrid learning model. When the responders who favored a hybrid learning model and those who favored a fully In-person model of learning were combined, the data revealed that 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 in-person 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.



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.

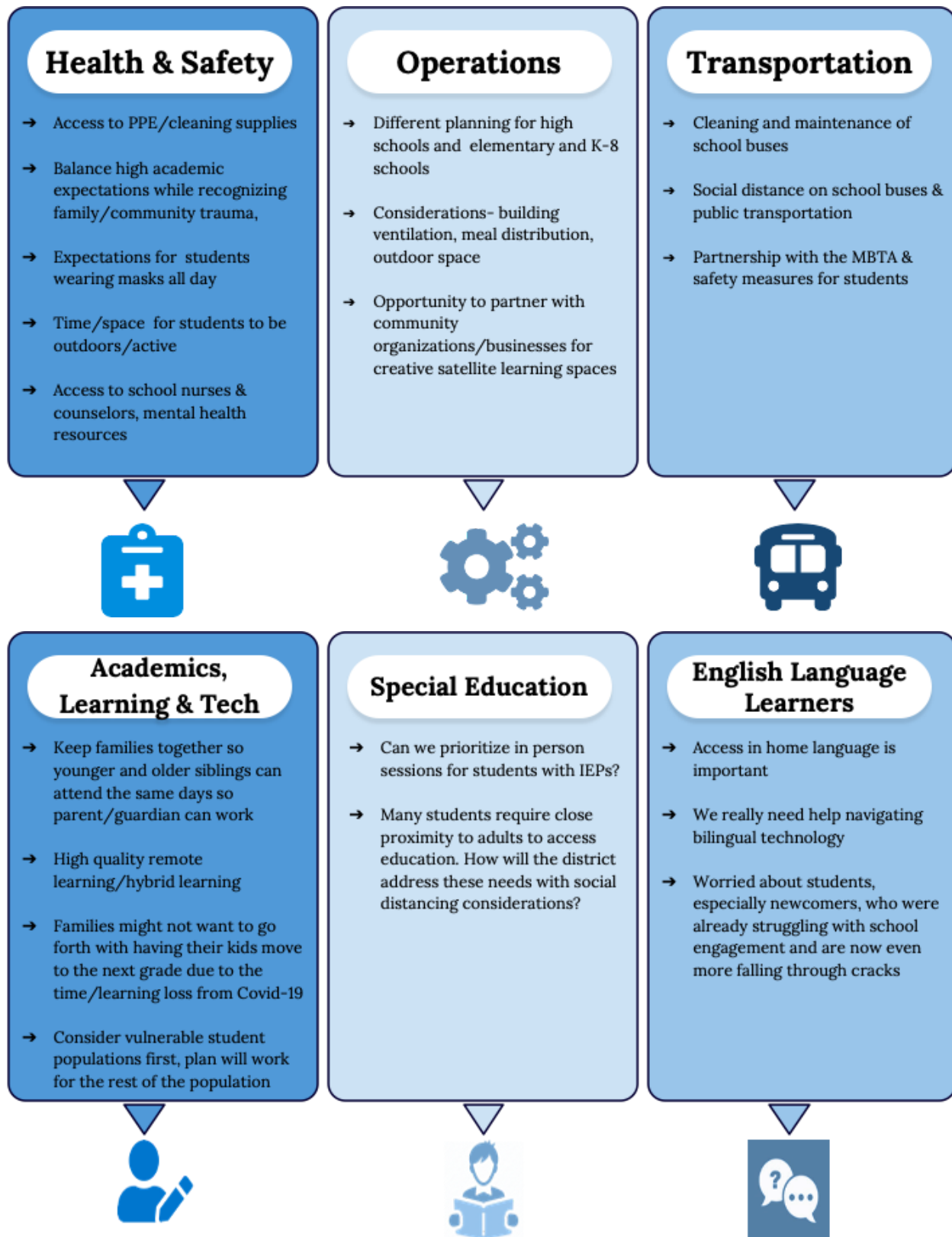
- Across all races, families cited the following as the most common challenges they faced with remote learning: balancing work (57%); tracking assignments (40%); finding space (26%); uninteresting curriculum (25%); and managing different learning platforms (23%).
- Parents reported that more small group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

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.



The community raised issues related to the long-term harm of continued learning loss for students, the need to focus on students' and families' social-emotional well-being, parents' need to work and linked need for child care, plus the overarching public health concerns for our entire school community. All of this gathered information guided our planning.



Recommended Reopening Plans: First Drafts

Boston Public Schools will offer both hybrid learning and remote learning options 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 be developing throughout the school year as teachers continue to share, learn and grow from each other.

A broad outline of models parents will be able to select for their children 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 remote 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. Depending on the needs of the learner, these students may be allowed a longer week of in-person learning. Parents can select between these models 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 any time, provided there is sufficient space and staffing to accommodate the student.

Families will be contacted by the District in August and asked to select which learning model their students 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 if their student plans to ride the bus to school on the same survey.

Summary of Available Learning Models

	Hybrid	Remote Only	Special Populations
Summary	The Hybrid Model in a combination of in-person and remote days for students. Students will experience simultaneous 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 academics.	Remote Only students 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 at-home learning opportunities and tools that will assist with their learning. Every student will be issued a Chromebook and will be provided 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.	For all students who receive special services, either EL or Special education, educators will determine the best programming for their students through IEP and LATF teams. These will be monitored by the child's teacher and support team. Students in this model will determine their amount of in-person /remote days per their plans and will be provided that instruction from 1-5 days in-person or remote respectively.
Learning Environment	In-person and at-home learning (Possible partnership collaborative environments for the remote learning days at some schools)	At home (Possible partnership collaborative environments for the remote learning days at some schools)	Blended at home and in-person as requested and as logistics (IEPs or LATF teams, space, teacher availability) allow

	Hybrid	Remote Only	Special Populations
Course Offerings	All students will be provided 6.5 hours of daily instruction designed by their teachers. This instruction will focus on the BPS Prioritized Standards for the 2020-21 school year, and 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.		
Remote Learning	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. All students will have the tools and supplies to complete the learning tasks provided.		
Staffing	It is likely that most schools will adapt their staffing to accommodate co-teaching models to support both remote and in-person 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.	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.	Staffing will match the students' needs and will be modeled off of a student's EL or IEP. They will be provided services from their teachers and support staff as appropriate.
English Learners	All students will be provided services based on their ELD level.		
Students with Special Needs	All students will be provided educational services and accommodations as required by their IEP.		

	Hybrid	Remote Only	Special Populations
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 in-person.		
Partnerships	We are seeking partnerships to enhance the in-person and at-home 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.		

BPS Remote/At-Home Learning Plan

The BPS Remote/At-Home Learning Plan is not merely required by state regulators, it is critical to the success of the District's ability to continue to meet the educational needs of its students for two specific reasons:

1. Given the ever evolving nature of the virus, BPS will initiate and/or be ready to pivot to fully remote learning if and when public safety requires it. We will not make that decision in a vacuum: we will make it in reliance on the Boston Public Health Commission's constant monitoring of the infection rate and other COVID-specific metrics within our community. If the BPHC advises that schools not reopen for in-person learning due to the current state of the COVID-19 virus, BPS will start the fall with remote/at-home learning for all students. If the public health guidance allows BPS to open its buildings and serve students in a hybrid model including some in-person learning, if at any point the public health guidance changes and indicates in-person learning is not safe closed - we will change course immediately by offering high quality remote/at-home learning to all BPS students until such time as it is safe for us to return to our school buildings.
2. No matter what the Boston Public Health Commission directs or what level of public health and safety measures are put in place as outlined below, not all BPS families will decide it is safe 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

asymptomatic community spread of the disease or for any other reason, some families will choose to keep their student(s) home and engaged in remote/at-home learning. At BPS, we will honor that choice: any family that chooses to have their student(s) continue in the remote/at-home 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.




















The BPS Academics Team continues to develop the specifics of the remote/at-home learning plan, working collaboratively with the Reopening Task Forces made up of school leaders, teachers and other staff. As this work evolves and the plan is reduced to writing, it will be linked here.

BPS Hybrid Learning Plan

BPS has evaluated various hybrid learning models. With advice and support from the School Committee, the City of Boston, community stakeholders and partners as well as our school leaders and BPS staff, the District's current hybrid learning plan alternates between groups of students, each in school buildings for two days of classroom learning and learning remotely the other three days of the week.

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. As Group C, special education and English Language learners will be included in groups within their school community in the same manner as other students are grouped, unless special circumstances provide richer educational opportunities for these learners. Within each school community, the groups will alternate between learning in person in their school buildings and learning online 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.

Hybrid Summary

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekend
Student Group A						
Student Group B						
Student Group C						
Student Group D						

In the hybrid model illustrated above, students learn in different ways and from different locations based on their group. On a school-by-school basis, the hybrid model will potentially allow us the space to bring our most vulnerable learners back to the buildings for more intensely needed in-person instruction and related supports. High school schedules are still evolving and may vary by school. The following generally describes the hybrid model in an elementary school.

- Students in Group A come to school in person on Mondays and Tuesdays, then learn online remotely on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.
- Students in Group B come to school in person on Thursdays and Fridays, and learn online remotely on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays.
- Students in Group C, made up of special needs learners and perhaps English learners, 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 given other competing teaching duties. This component of the hybrid model allows the District to try to bring our most vulnerable learners back to the buildings for more intensely needed in-person instruction and related supports.
- Students in Group D learn remotely, at home or in space supervised by other community partners, all five days of the week. All parents have the option to

place their child in Group D to engage in fully remote learning this fall.

- 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.
- 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 teach their entire class simultaneously - including students who are learning online remotely and those who are in class and learning in-person. Teachers are provided technological tools (camera; speaker; etc.) and training to support this Hybrid model of instruction.
- At each school, school leaders can propose to the District for approval 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 parents 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-Site Learning.
- Through at least the first semester of School Year 20-21, parents/caregivers have the option to choose remote learning for their student(s) and not to participate in any in-person learning.

Simultaneous Teaching and Student Experience

Many have expressed the view that it is impossible for teachers to instruct students gathered in a classroom at the same time they teach students who are attending the class online from a remote location. We acknowledge that simultaneous teaching is very challenging. We continue to believe, however, that the excellent educators at BPS will successfully meet that challenge with appropriate professional development and classroom supports.

Here's one example:

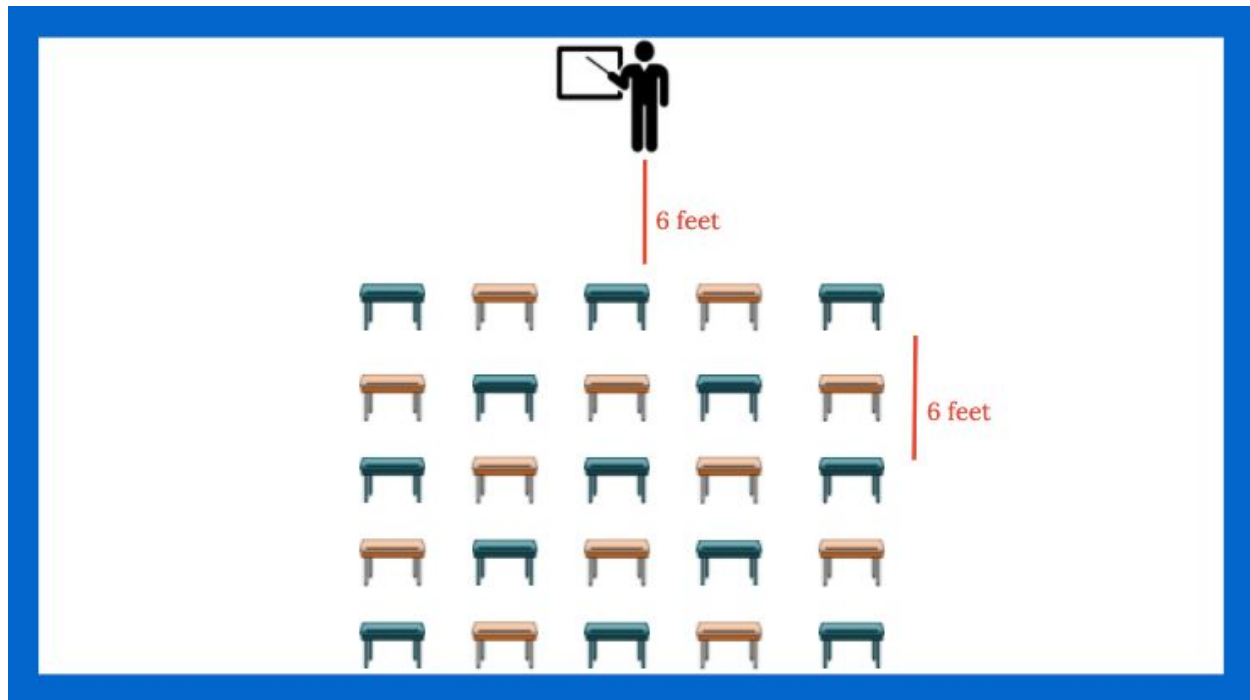
The teacher plans for the whole class: students learning both in-person and remotely. The day is broken up into sections (note: at the secondary level, students will have a class schedule), initially focusing on community building with a whole school gathering, morning meeting as a class, or advisory. Classes are planned using the [Three Signature Practices](#): Welcoming Ritual, Engaging Practices, and Optimistic Closure. The teacher plans for brain breaks and movement throughout the day. A class could start with a mini-lesson for all students, followed by planned activities, assignments, or projects that students complete independently or with peers, and ending together as a whole class to process learning. After each section of the day, students get a break to stretch and move. All students have lunch, recess and bathroom breaks.

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. They will have breaks at the same time as their classmates who are physically present in school.

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.

Staffing Model & Delivery of Instruction

In the hybrid model environment, students who are physically present in the school building will be learning alongside their peers who are physically distant, learning remotely. Teachers will provide instruction to both of these groups of students at the same time, supported by technology available in the classroom.

Paraprofessionals, English Language 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 supports according to the co-designed lesson plans both in-person 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.

Start Date

The calendared start date for School Year 2020-2021 is September 10th. Whether the continually evolving COVID-19 virus changes that date or not, BPS recommends that the school year be started within the following framework:

1. **Science Drives the Decision.** We will start in-person instruction on September 10, 2020 only if the community infection rates, in light of the number of tests and emergency room admissions related to COVID-19, and other public health metrics remain under identified guardrails, as determined by the Boston Public Health Commission. If the metrics exceed those guardrails on or immediately before the calendared start of the school year - or on any other date in the school year, BPS will immediately and fully pivot to the Remote / At-Home learning model for all students.
2. **Educators Start.** All educators report to their assigned school buildings for professional development beginning on a predetermined date, unless medically or otherwise exempt.
3. **Phased In-Person Start. All grades start school on the first day of the official school year** but are learning online and taught remotely, not in school buildings, until their grade level is rolled in as specified below.
 - **Professional Development:** Staff will have a (so far) undetermined number of professional development days prior to students' start date.
 - **First In:** Grades 1-8 come back to school within the hybrid model (half in school/half learning remotely).
 - **Second In:** Grades 9-12 come back to school within the hybrid model (half in school/half learning remotely); the timing is dependent on each building being prepared to be open.
 - **Third In:** K0/K1/K2 students come back to school within the hybrid model (half in school/half learning remotely).

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](#). 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, noting if the absence is COVID-related.
3. Call the family's primary care doctor or community health center to schedule testing for COVID-19.

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.

COVID-19 Testing Not Required for Initial Return

Because the COVID-19 virus can be contagious from carriers who do not yet have or feel any symptoms, fever is not always the first indicator of infection. Current guidance from the CDC and BPHC does not recommend testing of all students and staff prior to their initial return to school or even temperature testing of all students. At this time, the District will not be regularly testing or checking students' temperatures prior to allowing them to enter a BPS school building, but will instead be relying on the health screening identified above. Should the public health guidance change, BPS will immediately update its requirements.

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.

BPS Health Supports

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.

COVID-19 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.

Response to a Symptomatic Person. If a person becomes symptomatic while in a BPS building, nurses will follow the protocol for medical evaluation, potential isolation, follow-up and return to the District found [here](#). 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.

Testing. Current guidance from the CDC and BPHC recommends testing in the presence of symptoms, and/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 Positive COVID-19 Test. If an individual in a school is confirmed, suspects, or has been in contact with someone confirmed to have COVID-19, BPS Office of Health Services will notify the BPHC Infectious Disease Bureau to receive direction. Next steps may include quarantining the class, floor of classes, or school;

providing necessary information for BPHC Infectious Disease to conduct contact tracing; and providing direction regarding when individuals can return to school or work.

Classroom, School or Building Closure. Decisions regarding the closure or dismissal of a classroom, school and/or other BPS facility due to COVID-19 will be made by the Superintendent in collaboration with the Boston Public Health Commission and the City of Boston. Decisions about closures will be made carefully and in light of the specific circumstances, keeping the health, safety and needs of our students, families, and staff as the overriding priority.

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.

Behavioral Health Team

The BPS behavioral health team (school psychologists and social workers) in collaboration with our Office of Health and Wellness and Family Engagement/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 creating 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 only about half of the total number of students it did in the past. As such, we must find other ways for students to get to school safely. If it becomes necessary, BPS is prepared if necessary 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.
- The District is exploring ways to provide additional crossing guards and making other safety improvements to ensure students feel and stay 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 who complete the school registration process by August 7th and meet the bus eligibility criteria will be prioritized for bus routing. Transportation for eligible students registered and assigned after August 7, 2020 will be finalized as quickly as possible, but registration delays will result in bus routing delays.
- 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 7th - 12th 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.

How Students Ride the 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. 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 a face covering will be reported to the school leader and addressed at the school level pursuant to the applicable Code of Conduct.
- Buses are being equipped with hand sanitation supplies, and all students will be expected to sanitize their hands before boarding a bus.
- Students will be assigned to a specific seat on the bus.
- 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 half of the usual capacity of students.
- The District is seeking to hire additional bus monitors so as to be able to assign one monitor to each bus in order to ensure masks are used properly and physical distancing is maintained.
- 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. 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.

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.
- 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.

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.

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 direct compliance with this guidance, BPS staff have upgraded 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. 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.

Food Waste. Waste receptacles designated for food waste will be provided in every classroom. Staff and students will be expected to place all food waste, including disposable utensils that have touched student's hands and mouths, into the identified receptacles. Once the lunch meal is complete, staff should place the receptacle in the hallway outside the classroom for prompt disposal by the custodial staff.

Wiping Down Desks and Tables. Physical spaces used by students and staff will be equipped with appropriate disinfectant and supplies 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.

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. 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 simultaneously 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.

Sanitation

The BPS custodial staff has developed upgraded sanitation protocols in accordance with public health guidelines. A list of these upgraded sanitation and cleaning 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.
- 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.

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.

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.
- 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 distancing - 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 Mondays and Fridays from 1:00 pm to 4:00 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 not 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. BPS water fountains are not touchless and cannot be refurbished to include that functionality in time for the start of school in the fall.

Technology

As it did throughout the spring period of remote learning and is currently doing 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.
- 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.
- 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

- BPS will leverage the *Illuminate* and NWEA MAP platforms to administer academic assessments for students.

- BPS will utilize *Panorama Student Success* to track student interventions and create individual Student Success Plans.
- ASPEN (our Student Information System) will be used to track daily attendance, master schedules, and individual school schedules. All school schedules will include specialties, EL, resource room, and any other individual student supports.
- 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 builds trust. 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 centered 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 approach to learning and well-being, currently outlined in our Opportunity Gaps Policy, our Wellness Policy and our 2020-2025 Strategic Vision.

Addressing Unfinished Teaching and Learning

In the spring of 2020, every BPS student experienced an interruption in their education during the three months of adapted school provided in the remote environment. To address our students' unfinished learning, BPS educators will now focus on our unfinished teaching by expertly designing experiences in which 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](#) frame collective commitments to a set of competencies that we must master in order to provide students with the necessary resources to close opportunity gaps.

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](#) enhance our abilities to connect and relate to others across race, class, culture, language, gender identity, sexual orientation, and learning needs. We have updated our SEL competencies recently to reflect a Transformative SEL approach, an equity-based approach to deepen the social, emotional, and cultural competence of adults and students. We will leverage Transformative SEL in the District's reopening to build trust and craft learning environments that are safe, healthy, welcoming, joyful, anti-racist and culturally affirming. 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. For additional guidance, resources and support, see [Social Emotional Learning & Wellness Reopening Guidance](#).

Standards

All students – whether learning in-person 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. As do their peers learning in-person, students learning remotely must also have opportunities to engage in enrichment opportunities and receive intervention supports as needed.

Curricula

Structured Instructional 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 students who are also essential workers. The Division of Academics is working to release [recommended daily schedules](#) by grade level that incorporate the guidance for synchronous vs. asynchronous learning time.

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 access standards that were not addressed or fully addressed in the previous year. This guidance is the driver for modifications made to BPS’s existing [pacing guides and calendars](#). The schedule of assessed standards (SAS) has also been modified to match these priorities so assessment data will provide more meaningful insights about student learning and progress.

By the end of the week, BPS will publish a finalized SAS for grades 2-11 that teachers can leverage to inform their individual planning process. The scope and sequence documents will be available to all BPS educators. In addition teams will be working to modify BPS adopted curriculum to make them more accessible/appropriate for remote learning throughout the school year. District instructional guidance aligns to the *Essentials for Instructional Equity* and adopted curricula. Schools that do not use district-adopted curriculum are expected to align instruction with the Essentials and schedules of assessed standards.

Specials

Physical Education, Health Education and Arts Education build rituals, routines, relationships and social-emotional competencies across the school community. A SEL/Well Reopening Guidance document with detailed resources will be available soon. 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. 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. 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 in-person or remote learning. Scope and sequences, curriculum, weekly lessons activities, and guidance on facilities, schedules, protocols, instructional strategies, out-of-school connections, and equipment/supplies/resources will be provided starting in August.

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, all 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 will be provided to PE teachers in August on safe and effective teaching practices and instructional strategies for in-person 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 will supplement this guidance soon.

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.

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 in-person 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.

Elementary School

Generally, elementary grade students spend the majority of their time with one set of classmates, rotating occasionally to another classroom for academic instruction or a specialty class. In the new hybrid model, elementary school students will spend all of their time within one cohort group. For the most part, students in grades 1-6 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

Student Schedule - 9th Grade Cohort 1			
Per	Mins	In-person Week	Remote Week
	20	Arrival & Breakfast	
A	30	Advisory (with cohort 2)	
1	45	World Language	Math (with cohort 3)
2	45		ELA (with cohort 3)
3	45	Math	Science (with cohort 3)
4	45	ELA	
5	45	Lunch	
6	45	Flex Time	Independent Work Time
7	45	Science	World Language (with cohort 3)
8	45		
	20	Dismissal	
** Courses highlighted in blue are year-long **			
** Courses highlighted in green are semester-long **			

High school students change classrooms and mingle with different classmates during every class period throughout the school day. In the hybrid model, to the extent possible school leaders should build adapted student schedules to minimize physical contact between groups of students. Based on current guidance, when physically present at school students will spend time with one group of peers, who receive instruction from rotating teachers in the subjects needed to keep them on schedule for graduation. There may be some courses that a student takes primarily in person while they take additional or different courses remotely in order to accommodate the needed courses, within available teaching resources. Schools might also

consider scheduling students for four classes, two year-long single-block classes and two semester-long double-block classes to minimize transitions and maximize learning time. In the illustration above from Education Resource Strategies, students are placed in cohorts of 13-14 for in-school classes and paired with another cohort taking the same courses for remote learning.

Vocational Education

In response to the DESE Career/Vocational Technical Education Reopening Guidelines released on July 29, 2020 linked [here](#), the BPS Department of Career and Technical Education soon will be releasing reopening guidance for each of the 40 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. Further guidance will be provided soon.

English Learners

Regardless of the method, explicit instruction in learning English must be provided to all English learners according to their English Language Development (ELD) level by an EL licensed teacher. Similarly, other core content teachers will still be expected to scaffold grade-level standards aligned instruction with multiple access points for ELs according to their 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). Students' progress toward attaining English language proficiency across the domains of reading, writing, listening and speaking should be formatively assessed.

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 EL services and schedules are reflected for each student in ASPEN and that attendance for EL courses and/of service blocks will also be recorded. Additional guidance is forthcoming on best practices in this regard.

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. 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) - coming soon
- [DRAFT Instructional Guidance for English Learners](#) (classroom level)

Special Education

Students must receive all services documented in their Individual Education Program (IEP) through in-person 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

in-person 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

BPS requires the following assessments for all schools as part of the District's comprehensive and balanced assessment system.

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.

Assessment	Purpose	Grades	Frequency
MAP Fluency	Universal Screen	K2-2	3x
MAP Growth Reading	Universal Screen with growth measure and MCAS prediction	3-11	At least 2x
BPS Interim assessments*	Grade level standards-aligned interim assessments aligned to BPS curriculum scope and sequence in ELA, math and science	2-11	3x

**Non-Transformation 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.

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.

Assessment	Purpose	Grade s	Frequency
ACCESS for ELLs	English language development	K2-12	1x (MOY)
MCAS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELA • Math • Science 	State summative assessment of proficiency on grade level standards	3-11	1x
SAT in the School Day	College admissions	11-12	1x (Fall 12th grade, Spring 11th grade)
PSAT	College admissions/scholarships	11	1x (Fall)

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support: 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 Systems of Support (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 attain grade level content 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 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.

DRAFT Tiers of Instruction & Well-Being for All BPS Students	
Tier One (Homeroom teacher, content teacher, specialty teacher)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily Face to Face Morning Meeting • Students have a predictable daily/weekly schedule • Instruction in the grade level content standards and SEL (Note: ESL is Tier One instruction for English Learners) • Office Hours and small group sessions • Feedback on assignments • Individual student/family check-in • Enter attendance for every class in Aspen K0-12
Tier Two (targeted, group support with short cycle monitoring)	
	All of the above and the Student Success Plan defines a few targeted supports 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.
Tier Three (individualized support with increased intensity)	
	All of Tier One and Tier Two, plus plan, defines more intensive supports requiring increased frequency, increased interaction, and increased need to monitor progress towards grade level content standards. Tier Three supports should consider English Learners' unique language development needs.

Attendance

In all reopening scenarios, teachers will take student attendance in *Aspen* on a daily basis. Students are expected to participate in learning activities daily at the same time as their classmates (synchronously). Teachers will input attendance directly into *Aspen* for each class or course on a daily basis; 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 in-person 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 in-person 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, stand-alone 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 in-person, 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 will be available prior to the beginning of the school year.

Delivering the Plan: School Leaders and Staff

School-Specific Plans: Due August 21st

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 all of our school facilities are different, 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 been doing their own planning, for which the District is grateful and appreciative. Within the next few days, 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 Assistant Superintendent and Parent Council.

During August Leadership Institute, school leaders will share their plans with peers, get feedback, and cement responses. While subsections of the plans may be assigned earlier due dates, the overall plans are due to the District for approval on August 21, 2020, ensuring sufficient time to get school facilities 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

Afterschool Programming

Creating a space for students to learn, grow, and thrive takes the entire community. Afterschool 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. We are engaged in conversations with our afterschool program providers in a sincere and directed effort to determine what safe, welcoming afterschool programs will look like when school reopens this fall.

For decades, our partners and the community have used BPS buildings to provide key services to BPS students and community members both before and after school hours. 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. Allowing afterschool programming to continue as it has in the past will necessarily disrupt the “pods” 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 afterschool 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, and 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.

Choosing the Plan: Families

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

Very soon, we will be reaching out to all of our families to ask them to make some very important choices. We need each family's choice on these critical questions:

1. If the District returns to school buildings in a hybrid model this fall, will your student(s) return for in-person instruction **or** do you choose to have your student(s) learn remotely?
2. If your student(S) are planning to return for in-person instruction in the hybrid model and they qualify for special education or English

Learner supports and services, would you prefer that your student(s) return for more than two days of in-person instruction? [Please note: Providing more than two days of instruction will be dependent upon the availability of space in school buildings and of transportation.]

3. If your student(s) plan to return to school buildings, will the student(s) need yellow school bus transportation?

Family choices on both issues will be expected by an identified date. 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:

- **Parent University:** Parent University runs a number of workshops for BPS families in order to support families throughout their student's education. Families can find more information about upcoming workshops and register [here](#).
- **School Equity Roundtables:** 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.

As we get closer to reopening, we will continue to ask families for their input and increase our communication to families on how we can continue to partner together to reopen safely.

Succeeding Together: Supporting School Staff

Mandatory Home Health Screening

Every BPS employee is required to complete a Health Screening Checklist every day prior to reporting to a BPS school. The checklist will be updated and publicly provided soon.

Professional Development

BPS Reopening 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

In addition, the Office of Digital Learning 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 *LINC Spring*, the online coaching and professional learning platform, educators can access engaging workshops, personalized professional development, and virtual coaching. This summer, *LINC Spring* 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.

Continuing to Improve

Reopening schools safely for students and staff during a global pandemic is a hugely complex task. We've worked hard for weeks to gather all the expert and community input that we could in order to ensure the first draft of the plan would be as thorough as possible and well grounded in science and practical logistics.

But this draft plan can - and will - get better. Anyone with constructive ideas to bring to the table is invited to share them with us by email at:

Reopening@bostonpublicschools.org

While we cannot promise to timely respond to every email, we can and do promise to thoughtfully consider all productive input we receive and use it to improve the second draft of the BPS Reopening Plan. Thank you for being part of this critical work.