



2024-2025

Prolonged State of Emergency

Virtual Education Plan

Staffing and Personnel Assignment Plan

The ACPS will be prepared to implement a virtual learning schedule if/when a prolonged state of emergency has been announced. Within the virtual learning environment, all school activities will be conducted online and through distance learning platforms.

ACPS teachers will provide expectations to their students on synchronous¹ and asynchronous² instruction and instructional assignments, as well as expectations on grading, assessment, and learning expectations that are aligned to the ACPS BOE policy.

*¹**Synchronous Instruction:** A group of students is engaging in learning at the same time. The teacher and the student are engaged in video conferencing or live streaming.*

*²**Asynchronous Instruction:** Students learn the same material at different times and locations. Teachers will be assigning work to be completed by students. These assignments and tasks often will be completed by the student independently and in response to objectives within individual lessons.*

If a prolonged state of emergency is deemed necessary, the Superintendent, with approval by the Board of Education, will provide a fully virtual or distance learning model where students will attend and participate in a virtual synchronous environment, video-conferencing with their teachers and the completion of assigned work in an asynchronous environment where students are working independently online.

All ACPS faculty/staff, with the exception of designated essential personnel, will work remotely during a prolonged state of emergency. Instructional support staff such as instructional assistants and special education staff will be assigned to work remotely, in collaboration with their content-level teacher (s), during a prolonged state of emergency. Workloads will be in alignment with current employee contracts.

Student Virtual Instruction Plan

During virtual instruction, there will be an appropriate balance of synchronous and asynchronous learning. For full days, students will have at least four hours of synchronous instruction. For half days, students will only participate in synchronous instruction.

Students will have the same access to curriculum and equivalent standards as in-person instruction. The ACPS will ensure that Maryland College and Career Ready Standards, PreK-12, are taught in all content areas and the State Frameworks, which include career and technical education (CTE), are followed for each content.

| CCR Standards | Accountability | MSDE Website | Links |
|---|--|--|---|
| <p>ACPS will ensure that the College and Career-Ready Standards in PreK through Grade 12 are taught in all the content areas and the state frameworks are followed for each content.</p> <p>These standards define what students should know and be able to do at each grade level and align state standards and state assessments.</p> | <p>The ACPS benchmarks that are aligned to the standards will be used to aid in the accountability of teaching to the standards.</p> <p>Schools will continue to use root cause analysis techniques to determine goals and strategies for school improvement purposes.</p> | <p>Instruction, Frameworks, and Units of Study</p> <p>https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DCIPL/index.aspx</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Other Areas</p> <p>Technology Education</p> <p>CTE</p> | <p>https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DCAA/Math/index.aspx</p> <p>https://marylandpublicschools.org/programs/Pages/ELA/index.aspx</p> <p>https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DCAA/Social-Studies/index.aspx</p> <p>https://marylandpublicschools.org/about/Pages/DCAA/Science/index.aspx</p> <p>http://www.dsd.state.md.us/comar/comarhtml/13a/13a.04.01.01.htm</p> <p>https://www.mdctedata.org/state/index.php</p> <p>http://staging.barnowlbox.com/programs.php#</p> <p>CTE Dashboard at this link.</p> |

The Maryland College and Career Ready Standards (MCCRS) will be used to ensure that students have a strong command of the skills and processes taught in all of the content areas. In order to deliver a quality educational experience for every student, the district has set the expectations that Pre-K through 12 MCCRS must be taught in all content areas. While there is a strong focus on ensuring that the standards and frameworks are followed for mathematics, English language arts, social studies, and science, the district is also committed to maintaining the inclusion of fine arts, physical education, health education, technology education, family consumer sciences, social and emotional learning, mental health, and environmental literacy as part of the instructional program. Regardless of a fully virtual, hybrid, or traditional schedule, students will be enrolled in all of their classes, including the aforementioned ones, as well as other electives, as applicable.

The CTE programs in the ACPS will be aligned to industry standards and will be developed and organized in the following manner: CTE programs are developed in conjunction with all relevant stakeholder groups. CTE programs are organized under broad clusters, based on all aspects of an industry, designed to help students make informed decisions regarding career pathways. Economic market demands, both current and projected, constitute the criteria for identifying value-added opportunities. CTE programs are developed in response to an identified opportunity to add value to students' overall educational programs by preparing them for both college and careers. CTE programs are based on the most appropriate, reliable, and valid technical and academic standards available. CTE programs provide multiple options for students as they prepare for entry into careers and further education. CTE programs are measured against student attainment of rigorous academic, employability, and technical skills and student success in further education and employment. Local school systems and local advisory councils collect and analyze data on student attainment of rigorous academic, employability, and technical skills.

Maryland Technology Education Standards are organized into five interdependent conceptual understanding categories. 1. The Nature of Technology 2. Impacts of Technology 3. Engineering Design and Development 4. Core Technologies and the Designed World 5. Computational Thinking and Computer Science Applications Each category represents an overarching concept that fosters technological literacy. Concepts are deconstructed into essential skills and knowledge that details what students must know and do to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of each category. Essential skills and knowledge are organized by grade bands representing middle school (Grades 6-8), high school (grades 9-12), and advanced technology (Grades 10-12) expectations. Technology education standards are designed to be used in conjunction with Maryland State Curriculum Frameworks for Reading and Writing in Science and Technical Subjects. Ultimately, students should be able to participate in rigorous technology education courses that will allow them to acquire the skills and knowledge expected of technologically literate individuals.

Grades 6 – 8 Local school systems can offer students course options that will allow them to meet expectations detailed in the Maryland Technology Education Standards document. Local school system leaders can develop or adopt their own course offerings or use MSDE pre-approved courses.

Grades 9-12 Technology education is a graduation requirement for all Maryland public school students (COMAR 13A.04.01.01). Each local school system is required to offer a technology education program in grades 9-12 that will allow students to meet graduation requirements and select advanced technology education electives.

Per COMAR 13.A.04.11, World Languages must be offered beginning in middle school. Students enrolled in the world language program will continue when schools reopen in the fall. In Grades 6-7, students are enrolled in World Languages and Cultures of the World. In Grade 8, students may enroll in Spanish I. The district also has a Chinese Immersion Program (CHIP) in Grades K-8. A cohort model is used for the CHIP program. Currently, students in the CHIP program at the middle school level are taking courses to potentially earn high school credits in Chinese I, II, and III.

COMAR 13.A.04.17.01 requires that Environmental Literacy is integrated into current curricular offerings. While some aspects of environmental literacy can occur in a digital and online environment, it is the intent of the district that outdoor field experiences are completed face-to-face with teachers leading instruction with small groups of students as soon as it is safe and feasible to implement the hybrid plan for in-school learning. Developmentally appropriate lessons and activities have been created to ensure that elements of the Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) are completed in accordance with the county's curriculum/scope and sequence during the year.

Taking attendance while students are learning from home will verify the students' presence. Tracking attendance will include a combination of measures that indicate a student is demonstrating engagement in learning. Elementary teachers will complete daily attendance for their students. Middle and high school teachers will take class attendance for each period. An official DAILY attendance will be completed by designated school staff members by the end of each school day. The DAILY attendance will be recorded in the Aspen Management System for ACPS by the end of each school day.

During virtual learning, the ACPS teachers will utilize components of the Gradual Release of Responsibility (GRR) to encourage active student participation. The lesson will provide focused instruction, guided practice, and independent learning in all grades and content areas. While collaborative learning is more challenging via distance learning, teachers will utilize Schoology tools to provide collaborative opportunities when the district is utilizing a fully virtual learning environment. Chat features will be utilized, and teachers have been trained on how to differentiate instruction and provide break-out sessions for the students. All students will be directed to activate their cameras during the entire class period. Parents will be contacted if a student doesn't comply with these guidelines.

Instructional materials will be provided through several methods: in person pick up at selected sites within the district, home visits by the pupil personnel workers, scanned and emailed to parents/students, or placed in a Schoology folder.

The district will continue to monitor services through an equity lens to ensure all students receive an appropriate education during virtual learning. Several methods will be used to ensure equitable access and service:

- Provide local and diagnostic assessments to identify gaps in learning and prepare a path for success and recovery.
- Provide student support through a MTSS framework for academics, behavior, and social emotional learning.
- Ensure appropriate support is given to our most vulnerable populations through collaboration and coordination with School Counselors, PPWs, Resource Teachers, School Psychologists, Interventionists, and Case Managers.
- Provide virtual Parent Conferences, if needed, to help support families with challenging instructional and/or personal support needs.

ACPS is committed to ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All students with IEPs will continue to receive FAPE as outlined on their IEP regardless of the model of instruction.

Compliance is ensured by monthly fidelity checks that are completed between IEP chairpersons and every special education teacher during scheduled coaching sessions. An emphasis of the coaching sessions is the instructional cycle including development of the IEP, delivery of service, collection and analysis of data, and revision to instructional delivery. Special education department supervisors hold monthly coaching sessions with IEP chairpersons. During these sessions, regular self-auditing of IEPs occurs, as well as a review of the information gained during the teacher/IEP chairperson coaching sessions. The special education department tracks referrals and evaluations to ensure compliance with timelines using a central tracking system. All special education and related service providers are completing daily service logs which are uploaded and available for review to document the provision of special education services.

Beginning October 1, 2021, in compliance with Maryland SB300/HB714, each IEP developed or revised will contain a Learning Continuity Plan to be implemented during emergency conditions. Each team will determine, in the event of emergency conditions, if the IEP can be implemented as written, revised either through an amendment with parent consent, or a scheduled IEP team meeting. A reasonable attempt will be made to contact the parent within 10 days of the determination of the emergency condition, notifying them of the implementation of the learning continuity plan and seeking input on how to best implement the IEP during emergency conditions.

Accessibility:

ACPS has developed a team to review digitally based and online instructional resources to be sure they comply with current Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. ACPS has provided guidance and tutorials on creating instructional documents and materials that are fundamentally compliant with Web Content Access Guidelines

(WCAG) 2.1 Level AA. These guidelines were reviewed with content supervisors and provided to school-based administrators to review with their instructional staff. ACPS strives to make all instructional materials and technology-based resources whether purchased or teacher produced accessible to all users. ACPS has established a point of contact at accessibility@acpsmd.org for those individuals requesting materials or information in additional alternate formats.

ACPS will:

- Follow provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) related to special education to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for students with disabilities.
- Follow guidance in the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) Technical Assistance Bulletins (TABs) related to COVID-19.
- Consider whether or not a student has experienced a regression of skills and/or lack of progress.
- If regression and/or lack of progress is present, identify opportunities for recovery, including additional, new, or different services and accommodations, as well as the need for compensatory services.
- Special education and related services will be implemented as identified in the Individualized Education Program (IEP).

Roles and Responsibilities of Special Educators and Related Service Providers:

- Work with families of students Birth-21 to collaboratively develop, implement, and evaluate IEPs;
- Communicate with families, administrators, and general educators;
- Partner with general educators to support learning for students with disabilities, regardless of the method of instruction;
- Collaborate with general educators to ensure that each student on their caseload is accessing the general education setting to the greatest extent possible as identified by the IEP;
- Work with general educators to co-develop, co-implement, and co-evaluate specially designed instruction as identified in the IEP for each student;
- Ensure assigned general education teachers have updated accommodations and support them as needed;
- Recommend to parents and teachers additional online learning tools, strategies, or activities that students might be able to access to support the maintenance of skills related to needs;
- Respond to parent questions and communicate progress;
- Monitor and document progress towards IEP goals as appropriate;
- Implement related services as identified in the IEP;
- Conduct IEP team meetings as appropriate;
- Complete assessments identified by the IEP team as appropriate and consistent with the health and safety needs of the student and staff member(s);

- Engage in ongoing professional learning; and
- Advocate for students with disabilities to ensure equitable access to learning.

Student Assessment and Learning Support Plans

During virtual learning, the school staff will administer a formative assessment that is embedded in ongoing classroom instruction to inform immediate teaching and learning goals, as well as administer benchmarks to students at instructionally appropriate intervals throughout the year, including during prolonged virtual education. These benchmarks may contain hybrid elements of formative and summative assessments, and may be daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly to measure student progress on specific grade-based learning goals or course units over time. Teachers will use the Schoology platform and other district level online assessment platforms to measure progress. Teachers will use the results of formative assessments and benchmarks to identify student strengths and weaknesses, and then plan lessons accordingly to address student learning deficits.

Additional learning supports such as academic interventions for reading, mathematics, and behavior, along with tutoring and teacher office hours will be provided for students. Special education staff and teachers will continue to collaborate and provide specially designed instruction for students identified as having learning disabilities.

The ACPS will use the MTSS framework to provide the following during virtual instruction:

- Universal screening for all students in elementary and middle school in the areas of ELA and mathematics early in the school year
- Increasing levels of targeted support for those who are struggling
- Integrated plans that address students' academic, behavioral, social, and emotional needs
- A school-wide approach to student support, with teachers, counselors, psychologists, and other specialists working as a team to assess students and plan interventions.
- Professional development so staff can provide interventions and monitor progress effectively
- Family involvement so parents and guardians understand the interventions and give support at home
- Frequent monitoring of students' progress to help decide if more intensive interventions are needed
- The use of evidence-based strategies at every tier of support

Specialists and teachers will determine which standards and/or proficiency levels need to be addressed, depending on the content area, based upon where there are deficits in skills, processes, and understanding. For example, in mathematics, the specialists and teachers will examine if the students have deficits in their computational skills and conceptual understanding. The collaborative school-based teams will determine the instructional priorities for each class in order to modify teaching or re-teaching strategies for the students. Using assessments as sources of information, following assessments with corrective instruction, and giving students a second chance are steps in the process that the teachers will use to prescribe appropriate personalized instruction to be responsive to areas where achievement gaps exist in order to prepare a path for

instructional success and recovery for each student.

Assessments will be part of an ongoing effort to help students learn throughout the year. In all cases, teachers, in collaboration with the school interventionists, specialists, and/or literacy coach, will follow assessments with corrective instruction, and then provide students with another opportunity to demonstrate their new level of competence and understanding. This additional opportunity helps determine the effectiveness of the corrective instruction and offers students another chance to experience success in learning.

A virtual high-quality after-school tutoring program will be offered Monday through Saturday each week, with the exception of legal holidays, to support struggling learners.

Social and Emotional Support Plan

ACPS will ensure that virtual learning climates support student success and that such learning environments are welcoming, affirming, and positive. The ACPS will continue to ensure that counseling and mental health services are provided to meet social, emotional, and mental health needs. Each school has a tiered behavioral health plan with school counselors leading the tier I supports, school counselors and mental health specialists collaborating for tier II, and mental health specialists and school psychologists addressing tier III, individual, ongoing needs. School counselors and mental health specialists collaborate on referrals to community services, and the school social workers offer additional support as needed.

- Each school counselor and/or mental health provider will provide ways for students to discuss and express concerns and feelings.
- Schools will implement wellness checks with a focus on students and families who are disengaged or families who do not respond to school communications.
- Provide professional learning opportunities for teachers that will support and promote spaces where students can share personal experiences by continuing the county-wide restorative practices work, bullying prevention, and the use of trauma-informed strategies.

Student Support Services and Mental Health

School Counselors:

- Coordinate with the administrative team and mental health colleagues to address the unique needs and challenges of their school relating to the support needed for students and staff.
- Meet virtually with individual students and families as needed.
- Assist with scheduling changes for individual students or groups of students based on the instructional delivery model being implemented within the district.
- Intervene with students in need of individualized support.
- Teach and/or coordinate small group and classroom lessons focused on the social-emotional needs of students.
- Participate in Pupil Service Team, IEP, 504, and other meetings as assigned by the principal or

supervisor.

- The high school counselors will deliver CCR materials and presentations utilizing the LMS and Schoology.
- High school counselors will also share resources through the LMS to assist students with meeting graduation requirements, completing college applications, providing scholarship information, and more.
- School counselors will continue to serve as a liaison in the referral process for students who would benefit from support from our Tier III behavioral specialists, mental health specialists, and/or school social workers.

School Psychologists:

- Assist with the coordination of school-wide SEL initiatives in order to support the social-emotional needs of students.
- Identify students with existing behavior plans, provide training and support to classroom teachers to accomplish successful implementation, develop and update the behavioral plans as needed.
- Special Education Support:
 - Monitor identified students for potential need of increased support;
 - Provide student counseling services and parent coaching as needed;
 - Complete assessments; and
 - Participate in IEP meetings.

Pupil Personnel Workers (PPW's):

- Serve as a liaison between the family and school to ensure students have access to instruction.
- Identify challenges families are experiencing that are barriers to learning and work with principals and other ACPS staff to provide direct services in an effort to mitigate the impact on learning.
 - Conduct home visits and student wellness checks
 - Deliver food, clothing, school supplies, etc.

Mental Health Specialists:

- Provide direct services (individual/group therapeutic services, social and emotional learning)
- Provide after-care services
- Serves as liaison for home-school-community

School Social Workers:

- Help identify students that qualify for the McKinney-Vento program
- Connect families with community resources
- Help remove barriers to attendance

- Make referrals to other ACPS resources as needed
- Deliver food, clothing, school supplies, etc.

Community Communication Plan

The Board of Education affirms the need and obligation to keep the employees and citizens of Allegany County apprised of accurate information regarding the Allegany County Public School System (ACPS) and recognizes the importance of effective means of communication that includes methods to engage parents, guardians, and students from various ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds. In order to communicate clearly with parents, guardians, and students from various backgrounds, accessibility features will be used on the district's website. For those families whose primary language is not English, the LEA will provide language assistance by offering translated materials and a language interpreter.

The ACPS Public Information Officer is charged with ensuring that communication is shared through multiple methods with all stakeholders. Communications will be shared through the following methods during periods of virtual education:

- ACPS Blackboard Parent/Staff Notification System
- ACPS District Website
- Local Radio Stations
- Social Media Platforms
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
- School-Based Information
 - Individual school websites
 - Individual school social media platforms
 - Via ACPS email
 - Direct communication from individual school administrators and teachers
 - ACPS Blackboard Parent/Staff Notification System
 - School Newsletters, if applicable
- Direct communication via the Superintendent, Senior Staff, BOE Communication

Prioritizing the release of critical information pertaining to virtual instruction and/or return to in-person instruction shall be coordinated by the Superintendent and the Office of Public Information. The Superintendent, Chief Academic Officer, and designated staff will communicate with employees and the public through a variety of methods, including, but not limited to, television, radio, newspapers, magazines, telephone, email, text message, and the ACPS website and social media platforms.

Technology Plan

ACPS will ensure that every student has equitable access to the educational rigor, resources, and technology support that are designed to maximize a student's academic success and social/emotional well-being. The ACPS will ensure the following occur:

- Continued county-wide partnerships to support connectivity issues and concerns.
- Provide technology devices as needed to ACPS students.
- Provide individual and community hotspots for learning for students with connectivity concerns.
- Work with the County Government for infrastructure support.
- Provide time and support to teach students and parents how to access and utilize the LMS.
- Provide online tutorials and other resources for parents and students.

Nutritional and Health Services Plan

Food Services: In the event of a Full Virtual Model or Blended Virtual Learning Program

1. Meals will be picked up at schools accordingly Monday – Friday. The sites and timeframes will be announced to parents and students.
2. Sites may be determined and communicated to parents/students.
3. Staff handing out meals while maintaining social distancing guidelines will wear masks/gloves.
4. Student meal accounts will be charged per paid, reduced, or free rate.
5. Classroom rosters will be used to account for the meals.
6. Breakfast and lunch will be served to each student.

Health Services: In the event of a Full Virtual or Blended Virtual Learning Plan

1. ACPS will provide virtual counseling sessions with mental health specialists or counselors to address mental health issues.
2. ACPS will provide resources for students and parents to access health-related information, tips, and guidance. This will include information on physical activity, nutrition education, stress management, and sleep hygiene.
3. ACPS will utilize established partnerships with healthcare providers, community organizations, and mental health professionals to supplement school-based services.
4. ACPS will coordinate referrals through the PST process for students requiring specialized care or intervention beyond the scope of virtual health services.
5. ACPS will provide training to school staff on recognizing signs of physical or mental health issues during virtual interactions with students.
6. ACPS will equip teachers with strategies for promoting healthy behaviors and creating supportive virtual learning environments.

Return to In-Person Instruction Plan

1. Assessment and Preparation Phase
 - a. The ACPS will consult with the local ACHD, and follow the requirements or recommendations for the safe return to in-person learning provided by the CDC, MDH, and local ACHD. This will include consideration in regards to a phased in or complete return strategy.
 - b. The ACPS will gather input from teachers, parents, students, and healthcare professionals regarding concerns, preferences, and needs. Planning will include ensuring adequate staffing to meet the social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs of all students regardless of where they are learning.
 - c. The ACPS will take all deliberate action to prevent transmission of illness or limit exposure in schools by implementing layered prevention strategies in alignment with CDC guidance. Strategies will be implemented to minimize spread within school buildings. This may include masking, social distancing, regular sanitizing, health checks and proper ventilation.
 - d. The ACPS will provide training to staff on any new protocols, safety measures or teaching strategies.
2. Communication and Engagement
 - a. The ACPS will provide regular updates to parents, students, and staff regarding the plan for returning to in-person learning, safety measures, and expectations.
 - b. The ACPS will address concerns, answer questions, and gather feedback.
3. Academic and Social Support
 - a. The ACPS will provide rigorous instruction that will appropriately meet students where they are in order to meaningfully engage, enrich, challenge, and support them in effectively continuing their academic progress toward proficiency and beyond. This instruction will provide appropriate language services and support to multilingual learners, and students with disabilities. This will include additional academic support and resources for students who may have fallen behind during remote learning.
 - b. The ACPS will provide counseling services and mental health resources to support students' emotional well-being during the transition back to in-person learning.
 - c. The ACPS will provide instructional activities to help students reacclimate to in-person learning and rebuild social connections with peers and teachers.
4. Monitoring and Adaptation
 - a. The ACPS will continuously monitor data and adjust the return-to-school plan as needed based on public health guidance.
 - b. The ACPS will establish channels for ongoing feedback from students, parents, and staff to identify challenges and make necessary improvements.
 - c. The ACPS will remain flexible and prepared to adjust plans in response to changing circumstances.