

# Pittsylvania County Schools 2020-2021 Instructional Plan

## Guiding Principles

- Safety and security for students and staff are priority. Reliance on guidance from the Governor's Office, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Virginia Department of Health, the Virginia Department of Education, and the Danville Pittsylvania County Health Department is most critical.
- In-person instruction is most effective for most students.
- Development of reading skills is crucial for the primary grades.
- Most students are better served with staggered scheduling as opposed to not attending in person at all.
- The social and emotional well-being of students as well as physical activity contributes to a well-balanced education.
- Childcare is a great concern for all parents, including staff.

## Standards of Learning Coverage

- The Instructional Department has identified the specific content that had not been taught and assessed as of Friday, March 13, 2020, via Google Spreadsheets. In addition, high school course syllabi have been submitted to verify that 50% or more of the content was taught. This content was provided to students during the school closure as new material. Students will be assessed with a pretest, posttest, and ongoing formative assessments to determine mastery of instruction on the new material taught during the school closure. Any gaps in skills identified by the assessment results will be addressed by folding the content into the existing Pacing Guides referencing the VDOE SOL Tracking Logs.
- **New instruction will be provided and assignments will be graded for all students.** Continuous formative assessments and benchmark assessments administered at specified intervals will provide targeted progress monitoring.
- **A hybrid model, which includes both face-to-face and remote instruction, will be used to deliver instruction.**
- Learning modules via Google Classroom and Virtual Virginia will align with the existing 2020-2021 school year schedule's Pacing Guides to address gaps in learning from the school closure and support continuous five-day lesson plans with spiral review.
- The Instructional Department will develop an equitable plan to incorporate the missing content into the curriculum for all students, including specific groups of students: Special education, ELLs, and other vulnerable populations. Students with disabilities will be served and their IEPs will be fulfilled. *(See Return to School Equity Planning – VDOE Recover, Redesign, Restart 2020 pgs. 132-135.)*
- Schools are encouraged to cluster group Special Education, English Language Learners (ELLS), and identified gifted students to allow for instructional support in push-in and pull-out small group settings to eliminate the mixing of students from multiple classrooms based on CDC recommendations.
- Instructional delivery options include the following: Instructional Packets, Online Instruction, Virtual Courses, Instruction during the Summer (High School & ELLs Newcomers), Internet Hotspots to Students (various locations in the county), and Continuity of Instruction with New Content During the Closure. Please note that paper copies mirror the instructional content provided online in the Google Classrooms.
- All students, including those with health complications, will have the option to work remotely for 100% of instruction.
- Frequent communication with stakeholders, especially parents, will be critical to students' academic success and well-being.
- Continued implementation of PBIS and social emotional learning will also support students' well-being and address concerns and anxieties due to COVID-19.

## State Accreditation / SOL Testing

- The recommendations of the Virginia Accreditation Task Force are now under consideration by state policy makers as they work towards a final determination. At this point in time, VDOE anticipates that strong consideration will be given to waiving accreditation for 2021-2022 based on student data from 2020-2021. Information about a final decision will be forthcoming.
- It should be noted that barring a federal waiver, VDOE expects all divisions to administer SOL assessments in the spring of 2021. This assessment will establish a baseline for growth measures in the 2022-2023 school year accreditation.

## SOQ Waivers

- The Instruction Committee will closely follow waivers and policy changes and inform stakeholders.
- A full list of waivers and relief measures can be found on the [Virginia Department of Education's dedicated COVID-19 page](#).

## PCS Instructional Units/Learning Modules Guidelines

**Below are guidelines to assist in the creation of learning modules with instructional units to support academics during school closures, help address instructional gaps and specific content not taught and assessed by incorporating learning modules into the existing school year schedule, and provide opportunities for instructional intervention/remediation.**

**The learning module** is a tool that provides course materials in a logical, sequential order, guiding students through the content and assessments in the order specified by the teacher. *Teachers can insert PowerPoints, formatted text, files, web links, discussion topics, assignments, tests, quizzes, and other types of assessments to support the instructional units.*

Each **learning module** will comprise six weeks of instructional units. The **instructional units** will correlate with the PCS Pacing Guides and VDOE Curriculum Frameworks and include learning experiences to help students obtain mastery of the Standards of Learning (SOL) and Industry Certification Competencies. **The Learning Modules are the foundation of the school division's contingency plan for ensuring the continuity of new instruction should further closures be necessary.**

- Use instructional models that contain innovative approaches to teaching and learning including learner-centered, teacher-centered, and hybrid models. Delivery of instruction should align with students' needs and resources. Internet access may not be available for all students or teachers; therefore, lessons should be differentiated.
- Utilize materials, resources, learning management systems (Google Classroom), and communication platforms (Class DoJo, Remind) that are consistent across grade levels and content areas within a school. A recommendation of the VDOE Continuity for Learning Task Force is to utilize existing resources that are familiar to students, teachers, and families.
- Target essential knowledge and skills for grade levels and content areas. Educators must identify what is essential for learning to continue while also ensuring that already existing learning gaps are not expanded.

- Create quality learning opportunities that integrate essential knowledge and Virginia's 5 C skills (critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship). Educators can deepen learning by focusing on the essential knowledge that students can engage in while at home.
- Provide equitable support for all students and families recognizing that some families do not have access to the same resources and supports.
- **Please utilize the VDOE Virginia Learns Anywhere website link below for additional guidance and support.**

<http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/c41/virginia-learns-anywhere.shtml>

- Educators will earn up to 90 recertification points for completion of the modules.

### Virtual/Online

- Families without internet access can currently go to any high school to access free WI-Fi hotspots. These hotspots are temporary. New outdoor antennas to provide ongoing free Wi-Fi will be installed on all middle and high schools. A request to the County has been made for the purchase of these outdoor antennas for each elementary school.
- School Messenger surveys were distributed to parents regarding availability of internet and devices and plans for the upcoming school year (face-to-face, blended, or virtual). Parents are encouraged to contact their child's school to inform the principal whether or not the family has internet access and devices needed for learning.
- ***Students without internet connectivity will be provided take-home packets that mirror the learning modules for their remote learning needs.***
- Parts of G Suite for Education have been successfully used by staff and students in the past. However, now students and teachers have the opportunity to fully utilize the full array of Google products to support online learning.
- Every teacher in the division will have his/her own Google Classroom to support online learning. Teachers, administrators, and the Instructional Department will work to ensure content is appropriate and supports the Standards of Learning (SOL).
- The Instructional Department has worked with all schools to develop learning modules that will be available to all teachers via Google Drive. These modules were based on guidance from the Virginia Department of Education's *Virginia Learns Anywhere* document.
- Instructional Technology Resource Teachers (ITRTs) will collaborate with all teachers to identify professional development needs and provide training in the use of G Suite tools, testing platforms, and classroom technology to support in-person and online instruction.

### Schedule

- The School Division reviewed three proposals for the reopening of schools, and Schedule C was selected and approved by the School Board Tuesday, July 14, 2020.
- Under Schedule Proposal C, all students in grades PK-3, SPED, and ELLs will attend school in person Monday through Thursday (4 days) and virtually for one day. General education students in grade 4-12 will attend school in person two

days per week in cohorts (Monday/Thursday or Tuesday/Friday) and virtually for three days. The schools will receive deep cleaning on Wednesday. Teachers will conduct an additional Virtual Check-in for students who are learning remotely.

- The instructional day will be altered slightly to accommodate transportation for bus and car riders as needed.
- Schedules will be arranged to keep families on the same daily routine.
- Classes will be arranged to promote social distancing.
- Dismissal times for middle and high school will be coordinated with the elementary schools.
- Pittsylvania Career and Technical Center students may attend 4 days per week. Group A will attend Monday and Thursday (may ride division transportation) and Tuesday and Friday (must provide transportation to and from PCTC). Group B will attend Tuesday and Friday (may ride division transportation) and Monday and Thursday (must provide transportation to and from PCTC). Wednesdays will include teacher planning, remote instruction, and deep cleaning. Classes will be arranged to promote social distancing.

## **Building**

(Physical Distancing, Hygiene, Cleaning & Disinfecting)

- Promote physical distancing of 6 feet. If optimal physical distancing (e.g. 6 feet or greater) is not possible, implement a combination of face coverings and physical distancing of at least 3 feet.
- Students and staff are expected to wear face coverings in settings where physical distancing of 6 feet cannot be maintained: restroom, two-way traffic hallway, etc.
- Modify layouts of classrooms and communal spaces.
- Develop strategies for food service that optimize physical distancing.
- Promote healthy hand hygiene.
- Minimize use of shared objects or clean between each use. Consider assigning students individual materials.
- Keep each student's belongings separated from others.
- Develop a schedule of increased, routine cleaning and disinfection.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily, or between uses as much as possible: door handles, sink handles, playground equipment.
- Students will have Grab and Go breakfast upon arrival.
- School lunches selected by students will be delivered to the classrooms.

## **Gatherings, Visitors, Field Trips**

- Limit any nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving external groups/organizations.
- Consider virtual meetings, student assemblies, special performances, spirit nights, etc.
- Follow large gatherings limits as determined by the Executive Order in effect. Promote physical distancing of at least 6 feet and use of face coverings.

## Transportation

- Transportation is among the most significant factors affecting schools' capacity for reopening. Current guidelines established by the Virginia Department of Education state, "Physical distance should be created between children on school buses...limiting capacity as needed to optimize distance between passengers."
- Upon consultation with the appropriate state and local officials, Pittsylvania County Schools has determined the following to be the optimal reduced bus capacities to promote the safe transportation of students to and from school.

Standard Capacity	Reduced Capacity*
65 Passengers	22 Passengers
35 Passengers (Specially Equipped Bus)	7 Passengers + 1 Wheelchair Passenger

\*=Note: In some cases, capacity may be greater because siblings living in the same Household may be seated together on the same seat.

- VDOE guidelines which are based upon CDC and VDH recommendations strongly encourage the use of face masks in certain situations in which six-foot physical distancing cannot be ensured. Therefore, students will be expected to wear masks when riding buses.
- Restricted bus capacity will require bus routes to be based upon students' home addresses.
- Buses will be sanitized daily and will undergo "deep cleaning" once per week.
- Every day, seats will be disinfected using approved chemical sanitizers, all high-touch areas will be wiped down, and trash receptacles will be emptied.
- Each week, buses will undergo "deep cleaning" including damp-mopping vehicle floors, spot cleaning walls and seats, and dusting horizontal surfaces.

## Considerations for the Pittsylvania County Schools Reopening Plan

Considerations	Limitations
Staggering start times between elementary and middle/high school and run two loads of buses	Time required to disinfect each bus between runs Length of bus routes
Use of other community spaces	Staffing Safety and security Liability
Having all students attend everyday	Disregard of CDC, VDH, and VDOE guidance Liability
Having all students learn from home	Limited internet access Difficulty getting take-home packets to students Difficulty sustaining continuity of learning for all students
Half-day schedule	Coordinating bus runs and disinfecting buses between runs Childcare issues for parents
A/B schedule for all students	Teaching reading to young children requiring consistent daily instruction Childcare issues for the youngest students

## **Precautions**

These precautions should include, but are not limited to:

- Providing daily health screenings of students and staff,
- Providing remote learning experiences for students who are at a higher risk of severe illness,
- Expecting the use of face coverings for staff when at least 6 feet distancing cannot be maintained, and
- Expecting the use of face coverings in students, as developmentally appropriate, in settings where physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- The CDC and Virginia Department of Health recommended following all physical requirements. Recent allowances have been made to permit 3 feet distance with facial coverings.
- The CDC and Virginia Department of Health recommend facial coverings when physical distancing requirements cannot be met.

## **Constraints**

- Based on the division's current interpretation of CDC guidelines for reopening of schools, transportation will be the most significant limiting factor. Strict limits on the number of students permitted on a bus at one time will require reevaluation of bus routes and likely will significantly reduce the number of students served in school on a daily basis.

## **Reopening of Schools Teams**

- Meetings with the State Superintendent and regional superintendents
- Planning meetings with Central Office administration and principals
- Virtual meetings with parents, employees, and advisory councils
- Planning team meetings: Instruction, Employees, Schedule, Buildings, Virtual/Online, Support Services & Special Education, Health, Transportation, Hygiene, and Social/Emotional Wellness
- Surveys conducted to gather information from stakeholders

*\*A separate Health Plan outlining strategies for mitigating public health risk of COVID-19 and complying with CDC and VDH recommendations will be submitted prior to the opening of school (in-person offerings begin).*

*\*The first day of school for in-person offerings is Thursday, August 20, 2020.*