

BATH COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

Section 1: Introduction

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Fund is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. This plan describes how Bath County Public Schools (BCPS) will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and division staff during and following the return to full in-person instruction. Questions or comments about this plan should be directed to Sue Hirsh, Division Superintendent, by phone (540-839-2722) or in writing (sueh@bath.k12.va.us). Comments may also be made at the June 1, 2021 School Board meeting, 7:00 PM, Bath County High School.

BCPS opened in August 2020 implementing a hybrid instructional model of 4-days in-person learning and 1-day remote learning. A 100% virtual learning option was offered. A health and safety plan was followed to provide layers of mitigation strategies in schools and on buses. With the local health department as a partner, contact tracing and isolation and quarantine occurred, as necessary. Due to the likelihood of an increase in cases following November and December holidays, in-person instruction was paused and there was a shift to virtual instruction. Students returned to school in phases, youngest and at risk first. By February 8, 2021, all students had returned to in-person learning. To date, no school Covid-19 transmissions have occurred in schools during the 2020-2021 school year.

Section 2: Maintaining Health and Safety

BCPS has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and division staff during and following the return to full in-person instruction. A description of actions already taken and additional actions planned is below.

Mitigation strategies during the 2020-2021 school year were implemented, as outlined in an approved health plan. The wearing of masks, frequent hand washing, respiratory etiquette, physical distancing, limited movement in buildings, cleaning and sanitizing procedures, school buildings closed to the public, daily screenings for temperature and symptoms, contact tracing to determine the need for isolation and quarantining were practiced.

BCPS follows the safety recommendations and guidelines established by the CDC, VDH, VDOE and required by Executive Orders issued by the Governor.

- Universal and correct wearing of masks. Mask protocol will be determined by CDC, VDH, VDOE recommendations and guidelines and Governor's Executive Orders.
- Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing. Physical distancing, indoors, outdoors, and on school buses, will be determined by CDC, VDH, VDOE recommendations and guidelines and Governor's Executive Orders.
- Both handwashing and respiratory etiquette will be stressed. Hand sanitizer stations will be maintained throughout facilities and transportation.
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation. All cleaning and sanitizing protocols for school buildings and buses will continue. The division is purchasing air purifiers for classrooms.
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local health departments and other coordination with state and local health officials. A collaborative partnership with the local health department and the Central Shenandoah Valley Health Department will continue. As indicated, contract tracing, isolation, and quarantine will occur.

- Diagnostic and screening testing. The division is considering the implementation of diagnostic and/or screening testing at schools.
- Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities. The division has sponsored vaccination clinics for all faculty and staff, for students ages 16 and older, and most recently, for students ages 12 and older. The division will continue work with the local health department to provide vaccination information and opportunities.
- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies. All services required by students, as defined by IEP's and 504 Plans, will be provided.

Section 3: Continuity of Services

BCPS has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs.

BCPS will return to a pre-pandemic schedule of in-person instruction 5-days per week beginning August 18, 2021. The approved division calendar for 2021-2022 provides for 185 instructional days to meet the 180 day/990 hours requirement and allow for inclement weather. To address learning loss summer school, including Extended School Year services (ESY) for certain students, and school year opportunities for intervention and remediation will be provided. Continued training will be provided to ensure faculty and staff are able to identify and support students social, emotional, and mental health needs. Attention will also be given to the needs of faculty and staff.

Section 4: Opportunity for Public Comment

In developing the ARP ESSER Plan, BCPS sought public input and took such input into account as described below.

A draft Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services was shared with all parents/guardians with a request for questions and comments by phone, e-mail or at a School Board meeting.

Section 5: Periodic Review and Revision of Plan

During the period of the ARP ESSER award (until September 2023), BCPS will periodically review and as needed, revise its plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. The plan will be reviewed at least every six months, and BCPS will seek and consider public input during the review process. Plan revisions will address updated CDC guidance on safely reopening schools if any are issued.

Section 6: Making the Plan Available to the Public

BCPS will make this plan available to the public.

The plan will be posted at www.bath.k12.va.us and may be orally translated for parents. Contact Jane Hall (540-839-2722) to request translation.

Upon request, a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA may be provided with the plan in an alternative format accessible by contacting Jane Hall (540-839-2722).