

**EXPANDED In-Person Instructional Plan for
Northumberland County Public Schools**

Amended February 22, 2021

Expanded four day learning for current hybrid students

On February 17, 2021, the NCPS School Board approved a change in the hybrid schedule to allow both groups, who currently attend, to increase in-person participation from two to four days (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) weekly beginning March 15, 2021.

Wednesdays will remain asynchronous (100% virtual) for all students. NCPS will create a waiting list for 100% virtual students who may wish to change to the four-day in-person learning schedule. NCPS will continue to monitor the health and safety of students and staff during the expanded return to learning schedule before deciding when the next cohort of students may attend.

The following mitigation protocols will continue to be required and mandatory:

- Consistent and correct use of masks
- 6' Physical/social distancing to the extent possible with no less than 3'
- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Cleaning and disinfection
- Contact tracing in collaboration with the local health department.

Further mitigation details are located in the **Northumberland County Public Schools Health and COVID-19 Mitigation Plan**. The School Board will continue to monitor the CDC and VDH guidelines as well as COVID-19 statistics.

Previous Updates

The NCPS School Board voted on August 3, 2020 to provide in-class instruction (parent/guardian choice) for grades prek-3, students with disabilities prek-12, and English Learners prek-12. Grades 4-12 received instruction virtually.

On October 1, 2020, the NCPS School Board approved the hybrid model of instruction for all students, providing the opportunity for all students to attend in-class instruction. Virtual instruction will resume and be available for students who do not attend, per parent/guardian choice.

Introduction to NCPS Expanded Reopening of Schools Plan

On June 9, Governor Northam announced a phased reopening for Virginia public schools. This

plan outlined guidance on instructional and service delivery for the 2020-21 school year. This document is intended to communicate specific components of Northumberland County Public Schools' (NCPS) plans and preparations for reopening schools in the fall of 2020. Based on lessons learned from spring 2020, review of state guidance, and reflection on stakeholder input, NCPS has refined its approach to flexible educational delivery. Expanded options reflect the needs and concerns of families and staff while maintaining priorities for health, safety, robust instruction, and support services.

Reopening Schools Task Force

In June of 2020, the superintendent and Director of Instruction established a task force to prioritize and expedite information-gathering and development of recommendations for reopening school.

The task force was charged with developing specific action plans to address two reopening models: full-time online instruction and a blended in-person and online instruction model which requires physical distancing and face coverings in NCPS schools. Task force membership reflects perspectives to actively involve stakeholders in the planning process. The following perspectives ensure a range of community, staff, and student needs are considered as plans are established: staff representing classroom teachers and the Northumberland County Education Association (NCEA), student representatives, parent representatives from the elementary, middle, and high school, transportation services, information technology, instructional services, professional learning and family engagement, special education, and principal representatives from each level. The task force was formed to address the review of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) guidance as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic, parent/family Return to Learn survey responses, and staff Return to Learn survey responses.

The superintendent and Director of Instruction formed Action Teams to address staff childcare, a 1:1 device initiative for all students in grades Pre-K through grade 12 and all teachers, school nutrition, Human Resources processes in relation to COVID-19, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), and the cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting of each school facility. Action teams continue to meet daily and include additional members who bring direct knowledge and skills for identifying specific issues and generating a plan to address each of the identified critical actions.

Guiding Principles for Reopening NCPS has identified five principles to guide all planning for school reopening. 1. Ensure safe learning and working environments for students and staff. 2. Maximize family choice in student learning format, offering two options for instruction: a. Full-time online instruction; or b. A blended In-person and online instruction with required physical distancing and the wearing of face coverings by students and staff in all NCPS school buildings. 3. Ensure all students receive instruction that meets state and federal standards and have the necessary supports for success, including: a. Access to technology and connectivity;

b.Social-emotional wellness and health supports; and c.Additional supports to meet needs of special populations. 4. Provide training, time, support, and flexibility necessary for staff to prepare for successful reopening. 5. Provide proactive, clear communication to all families and staff.

Operational Approach for 2020-21

NCPS plans to reopen schools following guidance from the VDH and the Three Rivers Health District taking into consideration community spread data being tracked by the VDH for the Eastern region, and will provide families two options for instructional format. Full-Time Online Instruction or a blended In-Person and Online Instruction. The In-Person instruction will occur in NCPS School Buildings with required physical distancing and the wearing of face coverings by student and staff.

For Phase 3, the In-person schedule will offer all Grade levels: Two days of direct/interactive instruction (synchronous) per week and three days of independent learning (asynchronous) per week. Students will also receive specialized instruction, as needed, such as English Learner (EL) or special education services. The amount of special education service will be determined by individualized education program (IEP) teams. Considerations will be given to individualized student needs. Middle and High School students will follow the school's daily bell schedule. All Grade Levels: At least two full days of instruction in person at school each week. Specialized instruction will be provided, as appropriate, such as EL or special education services required by the IEP for students with disabilities. Students will be engaged in independent (asynchronous) learning on the days they are not in the school building. More in-person instruction is possible based on the number of students who choose full time online instruction or if community health conditions and guidance change.

Courses 1. All courses required by Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) are offered. 2. There is no guarantee that all programs or elective courses will be available. 3. General classroom instruction at all levels will feature whole group, small group, and individual support. 4. Eligible students will have access to the Academically Talented & Gifted (ATAG) curriculum, the Chesapeake Bay Governor's School (CBGS) curriculum, and the Northern Neck Technical Center.

School Nutrition meal service options are under development, and an announcement will follow. Meals will be available during the week.

Transportation will be available. Health Protocols not applicable to staff will guide students on health and safety protocols, following CDC guidelines. All staff and students must wear face coverings as developmentally appropriate in accordance with CDC guidelines. Schools will provide face coverings to students unable to provide their own. Six feet of physical distancing

will be maintained whenever possible.

Reflections From Spring 2020

The impact of the school closures on student achievement and well-being has been studied by various organizations around the world. Building a reopening plan that takes into account learning points from the Spring NCPS Continuity of Learning Plan and beyond will help create an infrastructure aligned to student, family, and staff needs. Documenting the successes and learning points from the spring 2020 distance learning implementation will inform decisions and planning for the reopening of schools in the fall 2020.

Sixteen key areas of learning have been documented by NCPS staff from analysis of our own experiences and review of recent articles and studies.

1. In Phase 3, the instructional model and schedule should be consistent divisionwide to promote equity.
2. Online Synchronous student learning (live, interactive learning) is preferred. Increased access to live teaching experiences is needed to reduce the family burden to support student learning.
3. Online Asynchronous student learning (independent learning) should be relevant, intentional, and meaningful.
4. Increased social emotional learning (SEL) opportunities are needed in a virtual environment.
5. Equity concerns in relation to technology and connectivity must be provided by the division to ensure that all students can participate equitably in online instruction.
6. Division plans must account for the disproportionate health and economic impact of COVID-19 on certain communities, including how this affects students' ability to equitably participate in online learning, potentially widening achievement gaps.
7. Communication Opportunities should be provided for two-way conversations with all stakeholders to generate plans and monitor implementation.
8. Frequent and consistent messaging from the school division will continue, with safeguards to ensure communication reaches all families. Verbal interpretations and written translations must be available for all families who require them.
9. Return to Learn success stories should be shared with stakeholders through social media, news releases, and media outlets.
10. Teachers and instructional staff need dedicated time to plan and work in collaborative teams. Ongoing professional development is needed to strengthen remote teaching strategies.
11. Digital citizenship concepts and skills should be integrated into lessons.
12. Consistent inclusion of "specials" classes in elementary school and electives in middle

and high schools is needed to support the whole child.

13. Grading policies should be carefully crafted to appropriately motivate student engagement.
14. Technology and Infrastructure needs to be strengthened. Timely distribution of laptops, Chromebooks, and MiFi devices must be deployed to support student access to online instruction. Learning platforms and video conferencing must be able to support consistent access by NCPS students and staff. Students must have secure ways to access synchronous learning. Honoring students' individuality while maintaining security is critical, such as by reflecting preferred names within digital platforms.
15. Teachers and staff should have access to childcare to meet the demands of virtual instruction and telework.
16. Administrators, teachers, and support staff should receive sustained professional development on a range of crisis-related issues, self-care, and productivity tools. The division must ensure that all staff have consistent access to internet connectivity so they may effectively support students, families, and the school system.

State Guidance on Reopening Schools

Governor Northam's Phase Guidance for Virginia Schools was accompanied by comprehensive guidance from the *Virginia Department of Education, Recovery, Redesign, Restart 2020*. The state guidance reinforces that Virginia schools are expected to deliver new instruction to all students in the 2020-21 school year, while recognizing that the format for instructional delivery may shift across the year. The state plan articulates that the start of the year is likely to bring a blend of in-person and remote learning across the state. However, it recognizes that divisions in different areas of the state may have differing needs and may be on different timelines with delivery models. All state decisions related to easing health restrictions will continue to be governed by public health status data, as outlined in the *Forward Virginia Blueprint*.

The Governor's phase guidance provides a gradual scale-up of school operations. Mitigation strategies including physical distancing, enhanced cleaning, health screening protocols, etc., are necessary across all phases to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Based on local health data, divisions are authorized to be more restrictive for in-person services than what is allowed in each phase.

Phase I: In-person services may be provided under strict safety protocols for special education programs, in special cases where all parties agree it is appropriate. Childcare may be offered in schools for working adults under special restrictions. During this phase, instruction is generally remote. No athletics or extracurricular activities are permitted. Social distancing guidelines are defined as: Maximum 10 people per bus or classroom and 6-foot physical separation, whenever possible; and Limited mixing of students in groups, no communal spaces, such as cafeterias, and

no large gatherings.

Phase II: In-person services may additionally be offered for PreK-3 and English learners. Summer camps may be held in school buildings with strict social distancing measures in place. During this phase, instruction remains predominantly remote. Limited access to athletics and extracurricular activities with mitigation strategies. Social distancing guidelines are defined as: 6-foot physical separation, whenever possible, and physical distance between children on school buses; 50 person limit on large gatherings, assemblies, etc., and limited mixing of students in groups; and Communal spaces remain closed, if possible, or receive intensive disinfection between uses.

Phase III: In-person services are permitted for all students with strict physical distancing measures in place. During this phase, instruction includes more in-person delivery, but remote instruction will continue to supplement face-to-face time. Athletics and extracurricular activities may be expanded with continued mitigation strategies. Social distancing guidelines are defined as: 6-foot physical separation, whenever possible, and physical distance between children on school buses; Limit on large gatherings, assemblies, etc., as directed by Executive Order; and Considerations to limit mixing of students in groups, including adjusted schedules, transitions, etc.

Beyond Phase III: Divisions begin a “new normal” in operations in consultation with public health officials. Some mitigating strategies will remain in place, such as those outlined as applying across all phases.

Across All Phases: Divisions are expected to follow CDC guidance for schools pertaining to social and physical distancing, health and hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting. These include: Daily health screenings for students and staff; Online instruction and teleworking options for students and staff with elevated risk of severe illness; Cloth face coverings for staff and encouraged for students, as developmentally appropriate, whenever 6-foot physical distancing cannot be maintained; and Encouraging staff and students who feel sick to stay home, with clear policies on when they can return.

Before entering Phase II or Phase III, divisions must submit a plan to the Virginia Department of Education outlining strategies to mitigate public health risk for COVID-19 and address CDC and Virginia Department of Health (VDH) recommendations. NCPS submitted documentation of its health mitigation plan in June of 2020.

Health Mitigation Strategies for Reopening

Virginia’s reopening plans are based on CDC guidelines for ensuring safe and healthy learning

and working environments. NCPS is actively collaborating with the Three Rivers Health District to determine criteria and guidelines for school operations in 2020-21. Together, staff have outlined critical health mitigation strategies, outlined in the COVID-19 Health & Mitigation Plan for NCPS.

Adherence to State and Local Guidance

All decisions about how schools reopen—as well as decisions about any future closures—are informed by the most recent local health data in partnership with the Three Rivers Health District. Health and safety protocols for students and employees are detailed in COVID-19 Health & Mitigation Plan for NCPS. The CDC has defined certain students and staff who need extra precautions against infection. As prescribed in the Governor’s phase guidance, NCPS will provide a full-time online option for students.

Health Screening

NCPS will implement daily health screening practices for students, staff, and visitors. NCPS is partnering with the VDH to develop and refine protocols for daily screening, reporting, and monitoring for 2020-21. A public information campaign will be utilized to reinforce the importance of staying home for any individual who is sick. Staff will be required to complete daily self-reporting to verify they are asymptomatic when reporting to the worksite.

Health and Safety Measures

The CDC has highlighted specific mitigating strategies to reduce risk of COVID-19 infection and transmission.

1. *Healthy Hygiene Practices Routine.* Healthy hygiene practices are a foundational measure to protect against COVID-19 and other illnesses. NCPS hand washing guidelines indicate that students should wash hands for at least 20 seconds after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing; before eating, and upon entering classrooms. Breaks will be provided for hand washing. If soap and water are not readily available, sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol will be provided.
2. *Face Coverings.* All staff, visitors, and students over age two will wear face coverings while inside NCPS facilities and while using NCPS provided transportation. Face coverings may be cloth or disposable and will be provided for individuals who are unable to provide their own. Exceptions to this requirement include: While individuals are eating, drinking, or exercising; When under the supervision of a school staff official who directs the covering to be removed; and Individuals with a health condition, a

communication or impairment, or disability that prevents them from wearing a face covering.

3. *Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)*. Additional protective equipment including face shields, gloves, and gowns will be provided, as appropriate, for settings that require close human contact, such as for staff providing certain supports for students with disabilities.
4. *Intensified Cleaning and Disinfection*. Cleaning and disinfection measures will ensure the physical spaces, equipment, and materials students and staff come into contact with remain safe. Daily sanitizing will be implemented for high touch areas (doorknobs, handles, fixtures, etc.) with a medical grade sanitizing solution. Restrooms will be monitored and cleaned more frequently throughout the day. Outside cleaning services will be addressed, as needed.
5. *Physical Distancing Practices*. NCPS staff will employ physical distancing strategies to increase spacing between individuals, including adjusted seating arrangements for school buses and classrooms and posted signs to remind staff and students of 6-foot social distancing. Staff will maintain small groups by having students eat meals in classrooms whenever possible and limiting volunteers and visitors in the building. Additionally, staff will use strategies to minimize mixing between groups whenever possible. Specific practices will be customized for each school and may include designating building entrances by grade level, mapping traffic patterns through the school, and scheduling student and staff groupings to be as static as possible.
6. *Ongoing Monitoring Practices*. NCPS will regularly communicate and monitor developments with local health department authorities regarding cases, exposures, hospitalizations, and any other relevant metrics that may require a change in school operations. In the event of an elevated number of cases in local health data or in the event of presumed or confirmed cases directly impacting schools or the central office, NCPS will collaborate with Three Rivers Health District authorities to implement all necessary health and safety protocols. This could include short-term closure of one or more NCPS facilities until health officials deem it safe to reopen. More information on preparations for future closures may be found in this plan.

Elements Present in Both Reopening Models

Some elements will support continuity of learning across NCPS for students instructed under either operational model.

Technology and Connectivity

In June and July, the Superintendent approved expanding the NCPS 1:1 device initiative to include all students in grades PreK through 12. This expansion means that every NCPS student will have access to a personally assigned NCPS-provided laptop/Chromebook for use at home

and at school. With these enhancements, all students in PreK-12 will be provided with devices, as needed, to support learning in-person and online. Additionally, the division has purchased additional MiFi devices for distribution to families, when reliable home internet access is not available. NCPS also continues to partner with internet service providers to expand free and low-cost home service options in communities. Also, school buses, with WiFi, are strategically located throughout the community for family and student support.

Assessment

The focus for student assessments within all reopening plans will be to help staff identify students' learning needs and plan for upcoming instruction. Assessments geared to this purpose will be prioritized in the division assessment program. This includes use of measures for division-level analysis of learning loss that can be attributed to extended school closures. Resources and professional development will be provided for staff to support effective and appropriate assessment practices in an online learning environment, including limitations tied to test security in some cases. A new system of assessment by appointment will be implemented to ensure students participating in full-time online instruction can still access standardized assessments, such as federally required Standards of Learning (SOL) and English language proficiency exams.

Curriculum

Recognizing the challenges and limitations many students may have experienced with learning during spring 2020, NCPS is revising curriculum guides at elementary, middle, and high school levels to highlight essential standards for the grade level or course, as well as the prerequisite knowledge and skills learners need in order to be successful with new content. Updated curriculum guides and resources will offer strategies for staff to support learners with differing needs. Instructional schedules will provide significantly more student-teacher interactions for all students than in spring 2020. Additionally, attendance and grading will be required for both the full-time online and in-person operating models, ensuring shared accountability for learning.

Digital Resources

Whether learning takes place primarily in an online environment or face-to-face, expanded digital resources will ensure students have consistent access to high quality learning tools. Staff will continue to receive training and support in applying blended learning strategies, which involve a mix of teacher-directed and self-directed learning. Expanded digital reading materials and intervention supports at the elementary levels will enable students at these grades to benefit from supplemental learning tools beyond what their teachers provide on a daily basis.

Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health

The direct and indirect impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic are expected to have a lasting effect on students and staff. NCPS will reinforce and enhance curriculum and supports focused on social-emotional learning, relationship-building, and successful transitions to new schools, classrooms, and environments, whether in-person or through distance learning. The school psychologist and school counseling staff will provide mental health support and resources, including group or individual counseling and consultation for students and families, as needed.

Intervention Services

All learners will continue to require flexible and responsive support for their academic, behavioral, and wellness needs. NCPS has committed significant resources to support ongoing intervention services across 2020-21. Classroom teachers and support staff will receive professional development to plan and implement a Virginia Tiered Systems of supports (VTSS) reaching across synchronous and asynchronous instruction, in-person and online. Academic supports will provide focus and review of essential standards through whole-group and small-group instruction (Tier 1) and individual student intervention (Tiers 2 and 3). Schools will leverage resources and tools for systematic data collection, ongoing progress monitoring, and timely intervention. Support staff and resource teachers, including the school psychologist and the school counselors will work flexibly across the school to address student needs.

Supports for Special Populations

Students with disabilities and English Learners will be given special consideration to ensure appropriate instruction while complying with federal and state requirements.

Students with Disabilities

Special education services for students with disabilities will include increased time for synchronous instruction and explicit expectations for greater consistency. Instructional delivery will be designed to ensure the least restrictive environment (LRE) as required by their IEP. As needed based on IEP goals, this will include in-person specialized instruction. Students will continue to receive access to instructional materials for use at home, as needed, including assistive technology tools. The student support model will be complemented by enhanced professional development for staff and training for caregivers. When necessary, virtual meetings will be used to convene special education procedural meetings, such as local screening committee, reevaluation, eligibility, IEP teams, etc.

English Learners (ELs)

EL services for English learners will include a defined minimum time allocation for English language development (ELD) instruction within the student's schedule, with opportunities for extended instructional time provided to recently arrived ELs, students with limited or interrupted

formal education (SLIFE), and ELs identified for interventions. Formative ELD assessments will be created to assist monitoring of student progress in development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Family outreach and education will be provided to support families' understanding of distance learning models and how to support their children's learning.

In-person Instruction

The Reopening Schools Plan offers families the option of in-person instruction in NCPS school buildings with physical distancing protocols, per the current CDC and VDH guidance. In this model, students attend classes at their school a minimum of two days per week, with additional days offered as feasible based on health and safety guidelines. Students are automatically enrolled for in-person instruction if their families do not submit their preferred instructional model by the deadline.

Physical Distancing

NCPS building access is limited in accordance with health and safety guidelines, and visitor access is restricted. Six-foot separation is maintained whenever possible for both staff and students, and efforts are in place to limit mixing groups of students. Buses enact new capacity limits and seating guidelines, per health and safety expectations.

Health Protocols

Health monitoring protocols are implemented in accordance with CDC and VDH guidance. A daily health screening form requires caregivers to report that their child is asymptomatic and has not been exposed to anyone who is symptomatic. Buildings undergo daily sanitizing for high-touch areas (doorknobs, handles, etc.) using a medical grade solution. At times, contracted cleaning services may be used to meet high needs. Schools and the division collaborate with the Three Rivers Health District to rapidly and appropriately respond to any outbreaks in the community or school and to implement all necessary health and safety protocols.

Schedules

To ensure students and staff can meet physical distancing requirements, instructional delivery under this model requires a reduced schedule of in-person learning. Students participate in virtual learning on days when they are not present in a school building. This structure involves dividing the student population in half with each group attending two days for in-person and three days of virtual instruction.

The schedule below illustrates how it might look to serve half of the students at the school on Mondays and Tuesdays and the other half at the school on Thursdays and Fridays. Students who are not attending in-person on any given day—including Monday—participate in independent online learning, using digital curriculum resources and instructional tasks assigned by their

teachers. Students are assigned to Group 1 or Group 2 based on an alphabetical split by last name (A-K and L-Z). Families with different last names will follow the schedule for the eldest child in the household. Schools will adjust student group assignments, as necessary, to accommodate special programs.

The following schedule will begin March 15, 2021 to allow for all students signed up for hybrid learning to attend four days a week. (See update on p. 1).

Monday & Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday & Friday
<p>Gold Group attends NCPS in person.</p> <p>Green Group attends NCPS in person.</p> <p>Cleaning, Sanitizing, Disinfecting by ServiceMaster</p>	<p>No students report. Gold & Green Groups participate remotely.</p> <p>Teachers: Planning, Virtual Learning Check Ins, & Professional Development</p> <p>Cleaning, Sanitizing, Disinfecting by ServiceMaster</p>	<p>Green Group attends NCPS in person.</p> <p>Gold Group attends NCPS in person.</p> <p>Cleaning, Sanitizing, Disinfecting by ServiceMaster</p>

Schedule Prior to March 15, 2021

Monday & Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday & Friday
<p>Gold Group (50%) attends NCPS in person.</p> <p>Green Group participates remotely.</p> <p>Cleaning, Sanitizing, Disinfecting by ServiceMaster</p>	<p>No students report. Gold & Green Groups participate remotely.</p> <p>Teachers: Planning, Virtual Learning Check Ins, & Professional Development</p> <p>Cleaning, Sanitizing, Disinfecting by ServiceMaster</p>	<p>Green Group (50%) attends NCPS in person.</p> <p>Gold Group participates remotely.</p> <p>Cleaning, Sanitizing, Disinfecting by ServiceMaster</p>

Depending on the level of risk in Northumberland County according to public health data at the time school reopens, the number of students served each day could vary. Capacity limitations may require decisions to prioritize in-person instruction for the highest needs populations, such as students with disabilities, English learners, and primary grade students. On the other hand, if a substantial number of families opt for full-time online instruction, students choosing in-person learning may be able to be served at the school more than twice per week. Decisions about bell

schedules at each school and adjustments to the percentage of the student population attending a school each day will be finalized as division leadership processes additional stakeholder feedback on implications for students, families, and staff. Individual schedules for in-person rotations at the school will be finalized and communicated in mid-August 2020, as family enrollment forms are collected and processed.

Full-Time Online Instruction

NCPS offers families the option of a full-time online instruction as a replacement to in-person instruction within NCPS school buildings. Family decisions to participate in this model are made based primarily on concerns about the potential for virus exposure with attendance at a school site. This option is available for all families.

If health conditions improve that would allow NCPS to resume in-person instruction for all students, the division will reassess its operating status and any additional options for families at that time.

Family Commitments

Families are asked to communicate their intent to participate in this model by the end of July. Families should be prepared to support their children's active participation in all online learning activities. They will need to ensure their children have adequate space, materials, and technology access for their daily online instruction, requesting school assistance to assign a laptop and internet service, as needed. Families will need to be ready to follow the established daily learning schedule and will need to work with school staff to arrange for their children to participate in standardized assessments and other mandated educational activities.

Schedules

This model involves four days per week of teacher-directed Online Synchronous and Asynchronous instruction (Monday through Friday). Certain students may be identified to receive additional intervention or specialized instruction to meet their program needs, such as IEP goals.

Individual schedules for online instruction will be finalized and communicated in mid-August 2020, as family enrollment forms are collected and processed.

Elementary School

At the elementary level, NCPS staff provide approximately 2.5-3.5 hours per day of direct,

Online synchronous and Online Asynchronous instruction (whole group, small group, and individual). NCPS staff will also provide specialized instruction, as needed, such as EL or special education services. The amount of special education service will be determined by IEP teams. Consideration will be given to individualized student needs. Elementary students will have opportunities to participate in choice activities each day to practice skills and extend their learning away from a computer screen.

Middle and High School

Schedules vary depending on assigned courses. Some middle and most high school courses follow a block schedule.

Curriculum

All courses necessary to fulfill Standards of Learning and graduation requirements are guaranteed for students. However, it is not certain that students will be able to participate in all courses they originally selected, including electives, honors sections, and special programs. Families should recognize that full-time online instruction may not be able to support some specialized programs and course offerings that would otherwise be available to enhance student options and experiences. Specific course offerings will be dependent on matching student course requests to teacher availability. The division will expand online course offerings to fulfill all state requirements and will adjust traditional service models for special education, EL, and advanced academic programs to accommodate the full-time virtual learning environment.

Elementary and middle school curriculum includes instruction in language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health and physical education, etc. High school curriculum will vary based on course enrollment, with students having the opportunity to access core and elective courses necessary to fulfill graduation requirements.

Courses will be taught using online courseware and digital curriculum resources along with synchronous direct instruction and support from an online NCPS teacher. High school students will be served through a combination of Virtual Virginia courses and/or specialized course instruction from NCPS staff.

School Closures

Changes in public health data could necessitate rapid adjustments to the division's operational approach at any time in the 2020-21 school year. Students, families, and staff attending in-person with physical distancing in NCPS buildings should be prepared for the potential of building closure on short notice. Division leaders will communicate promptly to staff, students, and

families in the event that local health conditions warrant school closure or a change in instructional delivery. In the event of closure, NCPS will implement an emergency model of full-time online instruction for all students. Experts studying health trends for COVID-19 and past pandemics recognize that there is the potential for a range of shifts in public health risk as we move toward eventual stability. As we begin to ease physical distancing, we work from an assumption that the worst is behind us. However, analysis of historical data and trends from other areas of the world experiencing COVID-19 suggest the likelihood that we will see a resurgence in cases. This resurgence could take the form of a spike, possibly in late fall when flu season also prompts more COVID-19 transmissions. Another variation could bring recurring waves across many months until a vaccine is developed, reflecting loss of stamina for strict health and physical distancing precautions.

During a health closure for one or more NCPS sites, no students would be allowed in school buildings for instruction. Staff would access buildings for critical purposes, as permitted within health department guidelines. In rare circumstances when a necessary specialized service cannot be provided remotely, individual students may be permitted into a NCPS facility by appointment and with strict mitigation strategies in place.

Instructional Practice

In the event of shutdown, all instruction for the affected schools would be delivered online through enhanced distance learning practices. These virtual practices would reflect learning points from spring 2020 and would include expanded digital curriculum resources, as well as additional staff training. The division's ongoing expansion of technology, connectivity, and blended learning strategies across grade levels and curricular areas will ensure NCPS students are able to access high-quality, rigorous instruction even in the event of a school closure. The division will continue to document effective virtual learning strategies and provide professional development and family resources in order to prepare for a possible transition to online learning.

Schedules

Class schedules in an emergency online learning approach will mirror schedules used for students whose families requested full-time online instruction for the school year. In full-time online instruction, all elementary, middle, and high school students will receive four days per week of teacher-directed/synchronous/asynchronous instruction and one day per week of independent/asynchronous learning.

Additional Considerations for Reopening Supports for Staff

One goal of the NCPS Reopening Schools Plan is to ensure that all staff—instructional, clinical, operational, and administrative—have the resources to feel safe and comfortable returning to the workplace. Employees should contact the Human Resources Specialist and/or Superintendent with any COVID-19 related concerns. NCPS will partner with the Three Rivers Health Department, the VDH, and the CDC to follow and apply best practice COVID-19 guidance.