2022 Reopening Plan

Winter Update

First Semester | September 8, 2021–January 31, 2022
Superintendent’s Note
George Arlotto, Ed.D.

For the first time since March 2020, the doors of AACPS opened to welcome students for full in-person instruction in September 2021. This was the moment that had been carefully planned for and nothing could contain the excitement. What felt like the familiar anticipation that typically accompanies a new school year was quickly replaced with the lingering uncertainty that has become too familiar while living in a pandemic. And as we began to ride along our roadmap to reopening, we indeed began to encounter bumps. The road we have all traveled together has been rocky, to say the least. From staffing shortages in almost every career path to ever-evolving health and safety protocols to simply figuring out how to adjust to this seemingly new way of life; our collective ability to practice grace, patience, and flexibility is what has allowed us to persevere.

As the first semester of the 2021-2022 school year ends, we should be proud of our efforts. This midyear update is a testament to this hard work. Our amazing school-based teams and others throughout our system have gone beyond their traditional roles and done everything possible to sustain in-person learning and keep school doors open. Despite the obstacles and detours, we are still on track to have an #AACPSAwesome rest of the year.

This report contains updates or additions under applicable sections ONLY in complement to the Reopening Plan. For context with regard to the supplemental information found in this report, the Reopening Plan can be reviewed at www.aacps.org/reopeningplan2021.

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Guiding Principles for Sustaining Schools

- **Prioritize**
  - the health and safety of students and staff

- **Cultivate**
  - a robust, equitable learning environment

- **Maintain**
  - strong relationships with students, families, and community partners

Guiding Principles for Supporting Schools

- **Grace**
  - in understanding the many challenges of students, staff, families, and community members and responding with empathy

- **Patience**
  - in dealing with staffing shortages despite increasing demands

- **Flexibility**
  - in adjusting to evolving mitigation and safety practices that help keep students in school

The 14 Future Planning Committees (FPCs) that were established in the spring of 2020 continued their work to review the results of their planning toward reopening and address issues related to keeping educational and operational flows functional and efficient. Additional work groups were formed and feedback regarding the Reopening Plan and AACPS practices was gathered. This report is a culmination of their work. Surveys among most of the FPC memberships conducted during the first semester revealed that the school system’s actions were 75-100% aligned with the intent or prescriptions of the overall Reopening Plan.

AACPS values the voice of its entire community. In that vein, AACPS utilizes a feedforward philosophy to promote a cycle of continuous improvement. Feedforward allows for informed strategic actions and next steps in outreach, curricular engagement, communication, pedagogical pursuits, partnership development, etc.
**Equity**

To ensure safe, inclusive, relevant, engaging, and effective learning experiences, AACPS continues to uphold the principles and practices as outlined in *MSDE’s Equity and Excellence Guide* and the school system’s *Educational Equity Policy* and *Regulation*. By developing or bolstering existing policies, the school system has made it a priority to address safe and inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ students; bias motivated behavior and language; and workforce diversity.

To inform all decisions, AACPS also uses the *Equity Literacy Framework* and the Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) *Looking Through the Equity Lens* self-check for equicentricity.

For staff, the school district expanded its equity work to include a current focus on Culturally Responsive Teaching, building staff capacity for greater awareness of how the brain can apply intentional action to mitigate implicit bias in the classroom and school.

Aimed at promoting academic success and social-emotional well-being, additional professional development efforts are rooted in equitable access to educational rigor and resources. Of particular interest is appropriately aligning student diversity and representation with opportunity and access to advanced level programs. As such, AACPS continues to provide district wide equity professional development to build staff capacity to implement equitable practices. In this effort, the Advanced Studies and Programs leadership has embarked upon the Building Equity Stamina Training (BEST training) with the intent to directly influence the diversification of advanced learning programs.

**Teaching & Learning**

**Recruitment & Staffing**

To support quality teaching and learning experiences for students, creative and persistent staffing strategies were utilized such as itinerant teaching assignments, contracted positions, adjunct professors, and temporary hires.

**Professional Development**

To ensure and promote technological aptitude and efficiency, educators have been afforded numerous electronic resources, including newsletters, weekly tips, and on-demand learning modules. These efforts help educators personalize their Brightspace classrooms and other learning experiences for students both synchronously and asynchronously. The Office of Instructional Technology provides routine office hours throughout each week dedicated for staff to ask questions and receive personalized feedback and assistance with topics surrounding the use of Brightspace, Google Meet, and other digital resources. In addition, the Office of Student Data offers regular office hours support for any administrator or teacher who has student data related process or procedural questions.

**Lessons Learned from the 2020-2021 School Year**

**Data Updates**

Metrics are consistently examined to drive next steps to address gaps and learning opportunities. Baseline metrics and projected student outcome data are monitored for all student groups (as defined by COMAR). The result is the continuation of strategic interventions and actions selected to respond to student performance. These actions are designed to address student learning issues or concerns while also focusing on accelerated learning opportunities for all.

On the next pages are key data highlights that have informed academic decision-making in the effort to support academic recovery, growth, and achievement.
iReady Diagnostics

iReady diagnostic assessments have been completed and continue to be used to monitor progress to identify students needing additional support and inform and impact differentiated instructional delivery.

Past assessment analysis

Reading Grades 3–8 took the iReady reading diagnostic. Across all grade levels, AACPS students demonstrated summer learning gain in reading and literacy, far outperforming historical national loss baseline in 2018–19. Literacy was a component of 38% of summer programs.

Mathematics Grades K-8 took the iReady math diagnostic. With the exception of grades 2–3 and 7–8, the summer learning loss of AACPS students in mathematics was less than the historical national loss based on 2018–19 norms. For grade 2-3 students experienced summer learning gain, while students in grades 7–8 did not experience summer learning loss. Mathematics enrichment, remediation, and bridge was a component of 30% of summer programs.

Current school year assessment status

Weekly iReady usage 1st quarter

AACPS continues to identify iReady as a critical component in the plan to address student recovery and mastery. Using the iReady diagnostic tool, students were assessed to establish a baseline for reading and mathematics content knowledge and skills. The iReady platform automatically creates a unique learning path for each student. Students should spend 45-minutes per week working in their iReady digital learning pathways to help build the skills they need. This additional support and practice create the opportunity for students to master previous or current content in addition to their work with the teacher in the classroom. Research on the iReady learning tool suggests that students who spend at least 45-minutes per week working individually on the platform show above average growth in the areas on which they focus.

The iReady usage data in the bar graphs suggests that there remains work to do with teachers, students, and families to better understand and engage with the iReady tool in a meaningful way. Comparing the results from quarter 4 in the 2020–2021 school year, the usage data, overall, remains approximately the same. Students continue to trend toward approximately 30-minutes per week of usage. There is a reduction in the percentage of students who are recording zero minutes (-1.45% in Reading / -4.97% in Mathematics) and an increase in the percentage of students who are recording 10–29 minutes (+3.5% in Reading / +9.37% in Mathematics). AACPS will continue to work with schools to encourage and provide time for iReady usage during the school day. Knowing students need time to transition between tasks it is possible that some additional time is needed to help students achieve the targeted usage times. As well, AACPS will continue to create opportunities for families to be aware of the benefits and usage goals for this program to encourage student usage at home.
Academic Outcomes

Across the board, first marking period data reflects a decrease in student failures.

**Elementary**

Examination of first marking period failing grades for elementary students shows a substantial decrease, across all subject areas, in percentage of students who had failing grades at the end of the first marking period in 2021 when compared to the end of the first marking period 2020. The data chart shows the total percentage of all elementary students who earned failing grades in core subject areas during the first marking periods of the two-year timeframe. Closer examination of the 2021 first marking period data reveals that African American, English Language Learners, and FARMS students are represented slightly higher in math with a failure rate of 2% compared to the 1% overall rate. In reading and writing the data is similar with the previously mentioned groups experiencing over 1% failure rates in comparison to the 0.86% overall rate.

**Elementary Academic Outcomes: Percentage of Student Failures (% student enrollment)—Marking Period 1 (2020-21 to 2021-22)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Reading/Writing</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Social Studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students (Grades 3-5)</td>
<td>3.87%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>3.50%</td>
<td>0.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>3.39%</td>
<td>0.95%</td>
<td>2.69%</td>
<td>0.62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>4.34%</td>
<td>1.25%</td>
<td>4.31%</td>
<td>1.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>6.36%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>6.06%</td>
<td>1.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1.54%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>1.60%</td>
<td>0.19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>6.21%</td>
<td>2.14%</td>
<td>5.09%</td>
<td>1.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>7.53%</td>
<td>1.74%</td>
<td>7.32%</td>
<td>1.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Racial</td>
<td>3.34%</td>
<td>1.17%</td>
<td>3.00%</td>
<td>0.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.95%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1.74%</td>
<td>0.45%</td>
<td>1.61%</td>
<td>0.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>5.35%</td>
<td>1.68%</td>
<td>5.19%</td>
<td>1.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active ELL Students</td>
<td>11.18%</td>
<td>2.16%</td>
<td>11.71%</td>
<td>1.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>8.47%</td>
<td>2.94%</td>
<td>7.96%</td>
<td>2.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other FARMS</td>
<td>7.35%</td>
<td>1.68%</td>
<td>6.98%</td>
<td>1.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All FARMS</td>
<td>7.96%</td>
<td>2.31%</td>
<td>7.51%</td>
<td>1.68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronically Absent (&gt;18 days)</td>
<td>53.54%</td>
<td>14.15%</td>
<td>55.82%</td>
<td>9.93%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Student groups of at least 10 or more in grades 3-5, includes all applicable “courses” in reading and math
*Students completed virtual learning during the 1st MP of 2020-2021
*Data Source: BOE Accountability Grades Files MP1, SY2020-2021 & SY2021-2022

**Middle**

At the middle school level, first marking period data from 2020 and 2021 respectively shows decreases in failing grades in all four core subject areas. Examining these percentages more closely reveals a higher failure rate among students groups. In mathematics, students with disabilities and African American students had a slightly higher failure rate than the overall rate of 3%. Hispanic students, English Language Learners, and FARMS students showed an even more significant failure rate. In English courses American Indian, English Language Learners and FARMS students are represented higher than the 3% overall rate and African American, Hispanic and students with disabilities had 4% rates in comparison. There were higher failure percentages for American Indian, Hispanic, African American, FARMS and students with disabilities in science and social studies courses. Approximately 1% more male students are failing than their female counterparts in all four of the core subject areas.
## Middle School Academic Outcomes: Percentage of Student Failures (% student enrollment)—Marking Period 1 (2020–21 to 2021–22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Math 2020-21**</th>
<th>Math 2021-22</th>
<th>ELA 2020-21**</th>
<th>ELA 2021-22</th>
<th>Science 2020-21**</th>
<th>Science 2021-22</th>
<th>Social Studies 2020-21**</th>
<th>Social Studies 2021-22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students (Grades 6-8)</td>
<td>11.58%</td>
<td>3.02%</td>
<td>9.54%</td>
<td>2.86%</td>
<td>8.47%</td>
<td>2.78%</td>
<td>8.25%</td>
<td>3.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>10.40%</td>
<td>2.88%</td>
<td>8.28%</td>
<td>2.11%</td>
<td>7.40%</td>
<td>2.32%</td>
<td>7.22%</td>
<td>2.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>12.71%</td>
<td>3.15%</td>
<td>10.75%</td>
<td>3.57%</td>
<td>9.50%</td>
<td>3.22%</td>
<td>9.23%</td>
<td>3.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Neutral</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>7.35%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>16.18%</td>
<td>8.51%</td>
<td>7.35%</td>
<td>8.33%</td>
<td>4.41%</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4.90%</td>
<td>0.55%</td>
<td>4.28%</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
<td>3.28%</td>
<td>0.82%</td>
<td>2.46%</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>14.50%</td>
<td>4.34%</td>
<td>12.89%</td>
<td>4.13%</td>
<td>10.88%</td>
<td>3.44%</td>
<td>10.13%</td>
<td>4.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>19.30%</td>
<td>4.81%</td>
<td>14.98%</td>
<td>3.65%</td>
<td>16.78%</td>
<td>5.25%</td>
<td>15.85%</td>
<td>5.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Racial</td>
<td>12.05%</td>
<td>2.02%</td>
<td>9.27%</td>
<td>1.78%</td>
<td>6.74%</td>
<td>1.94%</td>
<td>6.68%</td>
<td>2.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander</td>
<td>9.76%</td>
<td>3.23%</td>
<td>2.44%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2.44%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>7.32%</td>
<td>6.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>7.94%</td>
<td>2.04%</td>
<td>6.56%</td>
<td>2.23%</td>
<td>5.02%</td>
<td>1.76%</td>
<td>5.30%</td>
<td>2.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>19.95%</td>
<td>4.09%</td>
<td>16.32%</td>
<td>4.56%</td>
<td>16.65%</td>
<td>4.89%</td>
<td>14.90%</td>
<td>5.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active ELL Students</td>
<td>31.29%</td>
<td>7.77%</td>
<td>26.07%</td>
<td>5.79%</td>
<td>30.10%</td>
<td>9.38%</td>
<td>30.70%</td>
<td>10.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economically Disadvantaged</td>
<td>22.52%</td>
<td>6.84%</td>
<td>19.88%</td>
<td>6.36%</td>
<td>17.39%</td>
<td>6.03%</td>
<td>16.73%</td>
<td>6.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other FARMS</td>
<td>19.14%</td>
<td>4.69%</td>
<td>15.61%</td>
<td>4.41%</td>
<td>15.93%</td>
<td>4.64%</td>
<td>15.12%</td>
<td>5.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All FARMS</td>
<td>20.95%</td>
<td>5.71%</td>
<td>17.93%</td>
<td>5.35%</td>
<td>16.71%</td>
<td>5.30%</td>
<td>15.98%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronically Absent (&gt;18 days)</td>
<td>65.61%</td>
<td>58.33%</td>
<td>65.21%</td>
<td>44.35%</td>
<td>64.35%</td>
<td>44.90%</td>
<td>62.90%</td>
<td>53.19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Student groups of at least 10 or more in grades 6-8, includes Es for 1st MP in required core courses in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies

*Students completed virtual learning during the 1st MP of 2020-2021

Data Source: BOE Accountability Grades Files MP1, SY2020-2021 & SY2021-2022

### High

The high school first marking period failing grades data shows a decrease in the percentage of failures in 2021 in comparison to the first marking period of 2020. Examining the failure percentages more closely reveals a higher failure rate in all four core subject areas for American Indian, African American, Hispanic, English Language Learners, FARMS, and students with disabilities. Chronically absent students seeing similar failure percentages as compared to first marking period last year. Male student percentages are slightly higher than their female counterparts across all four of the core subject areas.

## High School Academic Outcomes: Percentage of Student Failures (% student enrollment)—Marking Period 1 (2020–21 to 2021–22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Year</th>
<th>Math 2020-21**</th>
<th>Math 2021-22</th>
<th>ELA 2020-21**</th>
<th>ELA 2021-22</th>
<th>Science 2020-21**</th>
<th>Science 2021-22</th>
<th>Social Studies 2020-21**</th>
<th>Social Studies 2021-22</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All Students (Grades 9-12)</td>
<td>14.73%</td>
<td>9.49%</td>
<td>14.40%</td>
<td>10.52%</td>
<td>13.50%</td>
<td>8.92%</td>
<td>11.30%</td>
<td>7.48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>11.84%</td>
<td>8.46%</td>
<td>11.34%</td>
<td>9.09%</td>
<td>10.55%</td>
<td>7.55%</td>
<td>8.96%</td>
<td>6.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>17.56%</td>
<td>10.48%</td>
<td>17.42%</td>
<td>11.91%</td>
<td>16.48%</td>
<td>10.25%</td>
<td>13.87%</td>
<td>8.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Neutral</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>No Data</td>
<td>23.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>16.36%</td>
<td>15.58%</td>
<td>18.18%</td>
<td>19.48%</td>
<td>13.46%</td>
<td>12.12%</td>
<td>19.30%</td>
<td>14.46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6.34%</td>
<td>3.05%</td>
<td>5.53%</td>
<td>3.61%</td>
<td>5.04%</td>
<td>2.81%</td>
<td>3.51%</td>
<td>1.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>18.52%</td>
<td>12.08%</td>
<td>17.14%</td>
<td>13.13%</td>
<td>17.91%</td>
<td>12.20%</td>
<td>14.78%</td>
<td>10.64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>26.06%</td>
<td>14.97%</td>
<td>23.91%</td>
<td>16.34%</td>
<td>26.26%</td>
<td>16.34%</td>
<td>23.24%</td>
<td>12.57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Multi-Racial
- 2020-21: 14.13%
- 2021-22: 10.00%

### Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- 2020-21: 10.96%
- 2021-22: 6.06%

### White
- 2020-21: 10.32%
- 2021-22: 6.74%

### Students with Disabilities
- 2020-21: 23.57%
- 2021-22: 15.87%

### Active ELL Students
- 2020-21: 42.54%
- 2021-22: 19.90%

### Economically Disadvantaged
- 2020-21: 28.05%
- 2021-22: 19.10%

### Other FARMS
- 2020-21: 25.17%
- 2021-22: 14.39%

### All FARMS
- 2020-21: 26.60%
- 2021-22: 16.48%

### Chronically Absent (>18 days)
- 2020-21: 73.23%
- 2021-22: 72.69%

*Student groups of at least 10 or more in grades 9-12, includes Es for 1st MP in all courses coded in Powerschool under the core subject areas of Mathematics, English, Science, and Social Studies

*Students completed virtual learning during the 1st MP of 2020-2021

Data Source: BOE Accountability Grades Files MP1, SY2020-2021 & SY2021-2022

### Chronic Absenteeism

Also of particular note, however, is an increase in chronic absenteeism.

AACPS Q1 Attendance Data 2019–20 to 2021–22

*chronically absent = missing 10% or more of days enrolled; Student groups with percentages less than 5% are not included in this data.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Overall</th>
<th>By Grade Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>2020-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ES</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HS</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2019-20</td>
<td>2020-21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>16%</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>17%</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>18%</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Initial Learning Recovery**

Achievement, opportunity, and excellence gaps data continue to be monitored and actions are taken in swift, intentional response. Such response has included providing significant in-person opportunities built into the school day and after hours for acceleration, academic support, clubs, and activities. Additional co-curricular activities are offered after-school in either an in-person or virtual environment to allow for more access for all student groups (as defined by COMAR). AACPS uses student engagement and achievement data iteratively to continuously improve what and how we offer opportunities to increase student involvement and eventually positively effect student learning.

**The School Day**

**Schedules**

With fluctuating and sometimes debilitating attendance and COVID infection rates, some classes, grade cohorts, or whole schools have endured periodic conversions to virtual instructional environments. Schedules that closely mimic the in-person school day have been established to ensure that all expectations for PreK12 MCCRS and State Standards are met.
Attendance and Grading

- Attendance collection and monitoring is required of all schools (brick and mortar buildings and the Virtual Academy). This information is reported to MSDE accordingly. For AACPS, this includes personalized support and academic coaching with the attendance recording/monitoring for all courses, including where online vendor products and services (MVLO) are used.

- For families that are keeping students home out of concern or precaution (unexcused), a new code (A20C or A21C) has been created for schools to use in order to keep track of this issue.

- In an exercise of grace, patience, and flexibility, AACPS has been considering evaluating the challenges of student hardship and circumstances as they manage rigor and curricular engagement. This evaluation will still be analyzed while adhering to the pre-pandemic grading policy and regulation that was fully reinstituted this school year.

- During the first semester, a district-wide exception regarding make-up work for credit was allowed for families that kept their students out of school for pandemic-related concern or precaution. This deviation from the grading policy will no longer be in effect for the second semester.

Brightspace and Parent Portal

Pilot test groups have begun using Brightspace for Families as AACPS looks to launch that feature of the learning management system for all families in the second semester. Families who use this feature will be able to better support their students with their school work.

Social-Emotional Learning and Support

As stated in its Educational Equity Policy, “The promise of public education is for every child to succeed in school and life. To realize this promise, every child must be given resources, supports, and interventions based on the individual student’s needs.” As such, AACPS uses an equity lens to bolster staff capacity and empower student awareness through social-emotional lessons and programmatic supports. Policies such as JQ-Safe and Inclusive Environments for LGBTQ+ Students provide a clear example of how the school system prioritizes the well-being of the whole student.

- Using the Second Step social-emotional learning platform, AACPS has shown a clear commitment to catering to this critical aspect of student growth and development at the elementary and middle school levels. Ninety elementary and middle schools across the district are actively using Second Step to provide daily doses of social-emotional lessons.

- In December 2021, students in grades 3–12 took self-assessments regarding the social-emotional functions and climates of their school environments. These assessments were administered for baseline and progress. Another assessment will take place in the spring.

- Documentary screenings about important social-emotional issues facing youth are planned for students and their families. The first was held in October 2021 for secondary students and focused on anti-bullying. The screening included a virtual panel discussion and saw about 3,000 unique participation log-ins by teachers and community members (students and families).

- Five high schools have established Student Alliance for the Flourishing, a club dedicated to helping students cope with pre-and post-assessment stress.

- A behavior threat assessment system has been developed and will be piloted at select schools this spring. Staff at participating pilot schools have been trained.

- The Attendance Works initiative has been implemented at a few schools to develop strategies that encourage chronically absent students to come to school. In tandem, AACPS has partnered with Concentric to assist in home visit interventions.
• Several staff have pursued and completed key trainings in support of student mental health. Dozens of staff (with dozens more clamoring to participate) have completed the Youth Mental Health First Aid training which equips them to use evidence-based tactics to identify youth in need of mental health support and connect them to resources. In addition, district-level and school-based staff have completed The Family Tree trauma training (ACE Interface), using insights about adverse childhood experiences to help students overcome their pasts and plan for a healthier future.

• The Substance Use Prevention and Intervention Team has been established and has begun accepting referrals.

• More than 100 teachers have already taken Mindfulness 101, an online mindfulness course for educators that promotes mindfulness practice strategies for teachers and their students.

Meeting the Needs of Special Populations

Special Education
• Efforts continue to ensure that Recovery and Compensatory Plan (RCP) eligibility is aligned with MSDE guidance. Data collection and reporting occurs according to established timelines and requirements. To date, 75% of those eligible for RCP have elected to participate.

• AACPS students are engaged via in-person learning with one exception, the AACPS Virtual Academy (a new, MSDE-approved school). The Academy supports all students, including students with disabilities requiring either services as outlined in an IEP or accommodations as documented in a 504 Plan. Here, fidelity to regulations governs individual decisions and programmatic responsiveness.

Students with 504 Plans
Compliance continues to be priority as we ensure accessibility for our students with 504 Plans. The Office of Student Data currently recognizes compliance issues with plans, annual reviews, and re-evaluations at varying degrees. This year, AACPS has provided seven resource facilitators to address Section 504 compliance, training, and educational recovery efforts due to the lack of accessibility.

Evening and Twilight High School Programs
To accelerate learning Twilight high school support programs are currently offered at no charge to students. Further consideration in support of this effort will be evaluated similarly for summer school offerings.

Career Technology Education
CTE offerings have expanded through a partnership between AACPS Signature Programs and Anne Arundel Community College. This collaboration has allowed more students to access and acquire meaningful skills that yield gainful employment upon high school graduation.

Tutoring
Virtual evening tutoring for all middle and high school academic discipline areas has continued for all secondary students from October 2021 through the present time. AACPS continues to market this secondary tutoring through schools, teachers, Brightspace, and via Connect-Ed messaging direct to families.

With the onset of the second quarter, small group in-person tutoring was strategically expanded to after school offerings for grades 4–8. Intermediate and middle school students are selected and invited to attend the small group in-person tutoring based on academic need.
**School Meals**

Health and wellness is a focus of AACPS. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in March of 2020, AACPS provided free meals to students from 2 to 18 years of age. For students learning virtually due to quarantine or enrollment in the AACPS Virtual Academy, free breakfast and lunch may be picked up at a school location of the student’s choosing. Families of virtual learners should call AACPS Food and Nutrition Services at 410-222-5900 to register for meal location and pick-up time.

**Relationships, Opportunities, Achievement: A Summary**

AACPS is committed to cultivating a collaborative community where students, staff, families, community members, and partners connect to discuss and strategize about how to realize school system goals.

Membership across the Future Planning Committees is diverse and inclusive. School system personnel from senior staff, teachers, students, family members, PTA/PTO members, CAC members, Fort Meade Alliance officials, local NAACP members, police officers, bargaining unit representatives, and other community partners spanning a mix of ages, gender identities, cultural backgrounds, and ethnicities all bring valuable perspectives and important input to the FPCs.

Throughout the first semester, FPCs met to discuss progress on plans, necessary adjustments, and recommendations for moving forward. The committees conducted business in several ways: email, virtual meetings, physical meetings, leadership meetings, and surveys. As such the following FPCs met according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Committee Name</th>
<th>Meeting Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>Corresponded and met throughout first semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Partnerships</td>
<td>10/28/21, 12/1/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Data and Technology</td>
<td>10/11/21, 11/16/21, 12/1/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety &amp; Security</td>
<td>10/21/21, 12/3/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>10/14/21, 11/4/21, 12/2/21, 1/6/22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Support Services</td>
<td>9/24/21, 11/5/21, 12/17/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities</td>
<td>9/22/21, 10/21/21, 11/18/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>10/6/21, 11/3/21, 12/1/21, 1/5/22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food &amp; Nutrition and Transportation Services</td>
<td>9/30/21, 11/18/21, 1/6/22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources/Employee Relations</td>
<td>9/28/21, 10/26/21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FPC Leadership</td>
<td>1/18/22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Google Form survey was administered among most of the FPC memberships between December 19, 2021 and January 17, 2022.

The leadership of the FPCs reviewed, archived, and analyzed the responses which largely revealed that the school system’s actions were 75–100% aligned with the intent or prescriptions of the overall Reopening Plan.
Health and Safety

AACPS and the Anne Arundel County Department of Health (AADOH) regularly communicate regarding issues affecting schools and the COVID-19 pandemic. AACPS continues to take guidance from AADOH as it makes decisions regarding the safe operation of schools and offices. A comprehensive and easily translatable web site has been developed at www.aacps.org/covidprotocols to keep students, staff, families, and the public abreast of the most-up-to-date measures employed to battle COVID-19 and its effect on schools.

Contact Tracing

AACPS administrators and other key personnel spent much of the first semester performing in-depth contact tracing designed to keep students safe while minimizing time away from the classroom. Albeit precautionary, these efforts were exhaustive and unsustainable. Upon return from the winter break, AACPS ceased contact tracing practices and has strictly relied upon data from the AADOH to determine the effects of COVID-19 on specific school communities/populations.

Isolating & Quarantining of Students and Staff

Virtual Teaching-Coaching

Approximately 24-48 hours after being enrolled in Virtual Teaching-Coaching (VTC) by the school team, families will receive an email from Q-studentinformation@aacps.org.

NOTE: The window for notification is wide as information received must be verified and reconciled before proceeding. Families will receive detailed communication as soon as possible after the VTC administrator has been notified of a student’s confirmed isolation/quarantine designation.

All Students

At this time, all isolated/quarantined students have access to virtual learning activities. All students should navigate Brightspace to access their classwork. Middle and high school students will also find their assignments in Brightspace and will be offered free formal evening tutoring. The details of the supports are different by level as noted below.
**Elementary (Kindergarten – Grade 2):**
These students will receive Literacy, Science/Social Studies, and Mathematics live synchronous teaching from their assigned Virtual Teacher Coach daily. They will also have an opportunity to return for virtual office hours if they have additional questions or needs for assistance.

**Elementary (Grades 3-5):**
These students will have access to grade-based learning activities via the new Quarantine Student Brightspace courses.

**Middle (Grades 6-8).**
These students should access their classroom Brightspace for coursework. Teachers will regularly update materials in their Brightspace; they will provide key learning tasks, assignments, and resources. Students are encouraged to access evening virtual homework help or small group tutoring in any core subject areas where they may be struggling via our virtual tutoring. The [www.aacps.org/tutoring](http://www.aacps.org/tutoring) website can and should be accessed for evening academic support.

**High (Grades 9-12).**
These students access their classroom Brightspace courses. Teachers will regularly update materials in their Brightspace courses for students; they will provide key learning tasks, assignments, and resources. Students are encouraged to access evening virtual homework help or small group tutoring in any core subject areas where they may be struggling via our virtual tutoring. The [www.aacps.org/tutoring](http://www.aacps.org/tutoring) website can be accessed for evening academic support.

### Total Student Count Assigned to Quarantine Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>PreK</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>106</td>
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<td>74</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>338</td>
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<td>193</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>209</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>3527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>376</td>
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<td>145</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>3379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>933</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>838</td>
<td>1131</td>
<td>1198</td>
<td>1250</td>
<td>1744</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>249</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>426</td>
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<td>1306</td>
<td>637</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>554</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>18180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Virtual Learning—Whole School

When the number of COVID-positive cases of students and staff in any one school reaches 5%, AADOH reviews the school’s case data to better understand the virus transmission trends. Upon evaluation of the data, the AADOH decides if a classroom, grade, cohort, team, or whole school needs to temporarily transition from in-person to virtual learning.

A comprehensive web site has been developed to support schools and families under such circumstances. This web site provides resources for student and staff use if a whole school is moved to virtual learning. Students will be expected to log on daily for live synchronous instruction with their classroom teachers. Slight adjustments in the daily virtual schedules allow for morning and afternoon breaks, but do not deviate from the breadth of necessary instructional material.
Vaccinations and Screening

Vaccination Clinics for Students
Since the summer of 2021, AACPS has teamed with the AADOH to offer COVID-19 vaccinations for students at various age levels. The third iteration of clinics for children ages 5–11 is currently being offered at elementary schools around the county. COVID-19 vaccinations are not required for students to attend school.

All vaccinations will be available free of charge at clinics. Children do not have to be AACPS students to be registered for these clinics. Locations are open to anyone and do not have to be a child's home school. Information of clinic offerings and scheduling is available at www.aacps.org/covidclinics.

Vaccination-or-Test Program for Employees and Student-Athletes
Effective November 22, 2021, AACPS began a vaccination-or-test program for employees and student athletes. The program was initiated to safeguard the health of employees and their families, students, visitors, and the community at large to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Through this initiative, unvaccinated employees and student-athletes adhere to a weekly COVID testing administered by a third-party vendor.
COVID & Post-COVID Funding Support

ESSER III Update

AACPS has built a multi-year plan to transform the way services are delivered to students through ESSER III. In the original application, roughly $28M was allocated to continue to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, invest in our infrastructure as well as provide additional services to students. These funds are braided with other funds (i.e., ESSER II/ARP Tutoring) to transform the student experience. As of Dec 31, 2021, AACPS has obligated or spent nearly $9M of the $28M allocated in ESSER III funds for FY2022. Below is a list of programs that have or will be implemented in FY2022 using ESSER III funds:

- **IT security enhancements** and upgrade of critical servers
- Covering the cost of background checks for critical employees and volunteers
- Opening the new Virtual Academy that serves approximately 550 students
- **Fall Twilight School** for 9th graders who are struggling with core classes
- **Extended daily substitute teachers** to ensure continuity of instruction
- Additional hours and pay for **temporary Teaching Assistants** to support elementary schools with enhanced Social Emotional programming to include increased recess time.
- Stipends for **additional counseling/mental health services**
- Stipends for **additional college and career counseling** for students
- Funds to support the implementation of our new **Learning Management System**
- **Enhanced Special Education** services
- **Social Emotional training** for all school-based staff
- Resources for **contact tracing** for students and staff
- Additional **preventative maintenance** for all our HVAC units

With a critical need to retain a talented workforce, especially in the current environment, AACPS plans to submit a grant amendment to MSDE to include the following:

- Up to **$1,000 retention bonus** to all permanent employees
- **Payment to teachers** who cover classes during their planning periods or take additional students in their classrooms because of a lack of substitute teachers.

*Funding has been identified in the grant and will not impact programming already implemented in FY2022.*
Technology

Chromebooks & Connectivity

- AACPS recognizes individual student need may require assistive technology to support access, communication, production, and/or behavior. Assistive technology determination is made through the IEP Teams process.

- Universal technology tools are also integral parts of delivering instruction or production of student work in response to the curriculum through the learning management system, Brightspace. Usage is reinforced in the teaching and learning cycle to maximize skill acquisition/mastery.

- All AACPS educators have a Chromebook or laptop to support Teaching and Learning, maximizing the technology resource provisions to support dynamic instruction for our students with the 1:1 provision.

- As of January 2022, email accounts for students in grades 6-12 are now enabled to receive emails from select external vendors to ensure required system functionality. Student email accounts have been accessible for restricted, internal use since March 2020.

- AACPS continues to foster key partnerships that afford critical access to CIPA-compliant Internet service for families.

Communication: School-Home Connection

Pilot test groups have begun evaluating and refining Brightspace for Families as AACPS looks to launch that feature of the learning management system in the second semester.

Facilities

Ventilation

ESSER funding has been allocated to fulfill additional preventative maintenance contractual services to improve the functionality and reliability of HVAC systems. This process and function will continue to be evaluated and prioritized.

Transportation

In response to the bus driver shortage, AACPS initiated a request to its local funding authority to secure more appealing wages and signing bonuses for bus drivers. Moreover, AACPS Transportation Department worked with Anne Arundel Community College to launch a Bus Driver Training Program for those interested in earning their CDL license to subsequently drive a school bus for AACPS or one of our bus contractors.

Steering & Oversight Committee

In addition to the Steering & Oversight Committee, an FPC committee chair workgroup was formed to ensure that the work of each FPC is aligned to the Reopening Plan and the Blueprint for Maryland’s Future (state law), as appropriate. This group met in January 2022 to review and analyze the feedback gathered from the large-scale survey of the FPC memberships.
Staying Informed – Communication

Resources at your fingertips

The Communications Office oversees and ensures that correspondence with and messaging by AACPS is consistent and appropriate to the intended audience. Such communication practices are inclusive of the Plan requirements, as well as beyond its scope.

In addition to the Family Information Line phone and web site resource, there are several email resources that are promoted for families and staff. Email addresses such as fall2021familyquestions@aacps.org, help-desk@aacps.org, tutoring@aacps.org, and BrightspaceSupport@aacps.org are additional, established conduits for families and staff alike to get focused, prompt attention to inquiries.

As mentioned in the Plan, www.aacps.org/fall2021 and www.aacps.org/fall2021educator are centralized web resources that are closely managed and updated. The pages are another easily accessible avenue for families and staff, respectively, to keep abreast of the many moving parts of this fluid school year. The pages contain topics and subpages such as:

- Fall–Top Family Needs
- Family & Employee Reopening Resources
- 21/22 Schedules
- Healthy Safety Guidelines
- Reopening Reports

Social/Emotional Resources
- Contacts
- Latest Announcements
- FAQs

Quick Links:

www.aacps.org/covidclinics
www.aacps.org/covidprotocols
www.aacps.org/buses
www.aacps.org/brightspaceforfamilies