



ARPS FALL 2020 PLANNING

Joint School Committees
June 3, 2020

DISTRICT MISSION

The mission of our schools is to provide all students with a high quality education that enables them to be contributing members of a multiethnic, multicultural, pluralistic society. We seek to create an environment that achieves equity for all students and ensures that each student is a successful learner, is fully respected, and learns to respect others.

CONTENT/GOALS OF PRESENTATION

- Review Research and Summary of Distance Learning
- Review May 2020 [CDC Guidance](#)
- Review Potential Concepts for Fall

NOT ADDRESSED IN TODAY'S PRESENTATION

- DESE/CDC temperature checks and PPE recommendations
- DESE guidance/recommendations (anticipated release in mid-June)
- Preschools (different CDC guidance from K-12)
- Transportation/bus safety information (coming with DESE guidance)
- Educational options for students whose families choose not to send them back to school in the fall

DISTANCE/VIRTUAL LEARNING REVIEW

- **Thank you to staff who shifted their modes of instruction and managed five separate DESE and USDOE guidance documents and to families for their perseverance with distance learning.**
- Research evidence that virtual learning does not replace in-school education in terms of academic progress
- Research evidence of limited growth in academic progress from virtual learning for younger students, students with special needs, and English Language Learners
- Staff & family responses to ARPS survey aligned with the research base
- Concerns about an educational crisis that could affect students' long-term educational prospects due to the length of school closure

CONTINUED FOLLOW UP IN SPRING 2020

- Second Distance Learning survey for families, staff, and students administered before the end of the school year

Fall Planning Groups: Guiding Principles

- Elementary Instructional Planning
- Secondary Instructional Planning
- Elementary Distance Learning
- Secondary Distance Learning
- Social/Emotional
- Facilities & School Operations
- Technology
- Communication/Student Enrollment
- Athletics, Clubs, & Before-and-After School Care
- Family Outreach
- Staff Support
- Preschool
- Special Education Programs
- Governance Group

CDC GUIDANCE BASED ON PUBLIC HEALTH FACTORS*

- **Step 1:** Schools that are currently closed, remain closed. E-learning or distance learning opportunities should be provided for all students. Support provision of student services such as school meal programs, as feasible
- **Step 2:** Remain open with enhanced social distancing measures
- **Step 3:** Remain open with distancing measures

**Steps are based on specific data criteria leading to “Phases,” detailed on page 9 of the CDC Report; analysis completed with consultation with the Amherst Health Department*

CDC SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDANCE: STUDENT GROUPINGS

Guidance	Implications K-6	Implications MS	Implications HS
<p>“Ensure (<i>consider</i> at level 3) that student and staff groupings are as static as possible by having the same group of children stay with the same staff (all day for young children, and as much as possible for older children)/restrict mixing between groups”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff rotate through classrooms • Students stay in same classroom • Addition of movement breaks and outdoor learning when feasible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff rotate through classrooms • Students stay in same classroom • Addition of movement breaks and outdoor learning when feasible • Team model would need adjusting, especially with “Uber” team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff rotate through classrooms • Students stay in same classroom, as much as possible • Addition of movement breaks and outdoor learning when feasible • Academic model would need adjusting given the range of offerings and current 7 period, drop schedule
<p>Impact</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Very High</p>

CDC SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDANCE: EXTRACURRICULARS

Guideline	Implications K-6	Implications MS	Implications HS
<p>“Cancel all field trips, inter-group events, and extracurricular activities” (step 1-2);</p> <p>"Limit gatherings, events, and extracurricular activities to those that can maintain social distancing" (step 3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major implications for before-and-after school care programs if located on site • Local field trips and school assemblies would not be feasible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major implications for before- and after-school care programs if located on site • Local field trips and school and assemblies would not be feasible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARHS extracurricular activities (sports, clubs, etc.) would be impacted • All field trips, both interstate and international, would also be impacted by this guidance
Impact	Moderate	High	Very High

CDC SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDANCE: VISITOR POLICY

Guideline	Implications K-6	Implications MS	Implications HS
<p>“Restrict (<i>‘consider’</i> at level 3) nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving other groups at the same time; Stagger arrival and drop-off times or locations, or put in place other protocols to limit close contact with parents or caregivers as much as possible”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caregivers are frequent visitors to elementary schools; different protocols would be required to maintain connections for families More guidance needed about student teachers and interns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different protocols would be required to maintain connections for families More guidance needed about student teachers and interns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different protocols would be required to maintain connections for families More guidance needed about student teachers, interns and school visitors
<p>Impact</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Moderate</p>	<p>Moderate/High</p>

CDC SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDANCE: SEATING AND SPACE

Guideline	Implications K-6	Implications MS	Implications HS
<p>“Space seating/desks to at least six feet apart. Turn desks to face in the same direction (rather than facing each other), or have students sit on only one side of tables, spaced apart”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capital work required to quads at Fort River & Wildwood • Shift in furniture required at primary grades • Fewer students present in the classrooms & schools • More spaces would need to be used as classrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer students present in the classrooms & schools • More spaces would need to be used as classrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer students present in the classrooms & schools • More spaces would need to be used as classrooms
<p>Impact</p>	<p>Very High</p>	<p>Very High</p>	<p>Very High</p>

CDC SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDANCE: COMMUNAL SPACES

Guideline	Implications K-6	Implications MS	Implications HS
<p>“Close communal use spaces such as dining halls and playgrounds if possible; otherwise stagger use and disinfect in between use; If a cafeteria or group dining room is typically used, serve meals in classrooms instead. Serve individually plated meals.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating meals in classrooms would have implications for staffing and custodial work • Operational plans for outdoor play would need to be developed • Major implications for specials classes’ location and structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating meals in classrooms would have implications for staffing and custodial work • Major implications for elective classes’ location and structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating meals in classrooms would have implications for staffing and custodial work; the size and layout of the high school creates additional challenges • Major implications for the wide range of elective classes’ location and structure
<p>Impact</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Very High</p>

CDC SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDANCE: MATERIALS

Guideline	Implications K-6	Implications MS	Implications HS
<p>“Keep each child’s belongings separated from others’ and in individually labeled...cubbies and taken home each day. Ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (art supplies, equipment etc. assigned to a single student); Avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major impact for specials areas, playground balls, technology labs, etc. • Additional electronic devices needed for students in grades K-2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major impact for elective courses/areas, libraries, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major impact for elective courses/areas, libraries, etc.
Impact	High	High	High

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM CDC GUIDANCE

- Fewer students in classrooms
- Additional spaces required for use as classrooms
- Highly structured and monitored entry and exit to schools and classrooms
- Students' education will occur in fewer spaces (preferably one)
- Staffing constraints will make other shifts necessary to cover the additional sections, potentially affecting the length of the school day
- Common areas/communally-used classrooms and materials may not be accessible
- Transportation and meal service will be major hurdles for in-person schooling
- Differential impact on different grade level bands
- Requires significant shifts in instructional models

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM CDC GUIDANCE

- **It does not appear feasible that all K-12 students will be physically in school, simultaneously, in the fall.**
- **“De-densifying” will drive many decisions**

CAVEATS ABOUT EXPLORING FALL 2020 CONCEPTS

- **Imperfect situation, imperfect solutions**
- Many details are subject to bargaining
- DESE Guidance coming in Mid-June, “80-90% Directive”
 - Waivers from the directive may be required if districts deviate
- Multi-School Committee (within ARPS) collaboration is required
- Additional planning required for academic program and space use
- No clear sense of how many students will return in fall
- CDC Guidance could change through the summer
- **Returning to “normal” models of schooling will not be feasible, and this will be upsetting to many people.**

LEARNING FROM OTHER COUNTRIES THAT HAVE REOPENED SCHOOLS, OTHER STATES, AND RESEARCHERS

- [Report](#) detailing China, Denmark, Singapore, Taiwan, Norway
- Kanegasaki, Japan schools
- Maryland draft [Document](#)

LIMITATIONS

- Space
 - Based on the number of students who can be in a classroom spaced 6 feet apart
 - Plan for loss of classrooms due to renovation of quads at Fort River and Wildwood
- Funding
- Staffing
- Capacity for cleaning objects/shared spaces
 - “De-cluttering” spaces
- Training for staff and students
- Enrollment projections

WHY INITIATE DIALOGUE NOW?

- District staff need to gather stakeholder feedback and receive direction from the School Committee on a schedule that provides enough time for effective and safe implementation.
- Staff can participate more fully while school is still in session.
- While DESE Guidance is anticipated in mid-June, engaging the discussion with stakeholders earlier is preferable
- **The stakes are high for our students, so it is worth the potentially awkward, evolving, and uncomfortable conversations to develop a plan for fall that will work best for students' futures.**

GOAL OF FALL PLANNING

To utilize our collective resources to produce the best long-term outcomes for students, understanding the additional educational debt that the closure and the larger COVID-19 impacts have made on communities within ARPS

**All of the concepts to follow assume a best-case scenario where local area is beyond CDC “Step 1” and other variables resolve in ways that make these scenarios feasible*

CONCEPT #1: K-12 HYBRID MODEL

All students receive in-person school on alternating days or weeks; some method of distance learning for students when they are not in school

- Students in grades K-12 return to school, in alternating smaller groups, such as:
 - Two days a week (Mon/Tue or Thu/Fri)
 - Every other day
 - Every other week
- Explore allowances for some students with special needs and English Language Learners to attend school more often

CONCEPT #1 OVERVIEW/ANALYSIS

BENEFITS

- Easily understood; involves least amount of change
- All students K-12 could have some in-school components to their educational program
- Transportation challenges easier to manage compared to Concept 2
- Likely to be favored by DESE; may require a waiver if this concept is not followed

CHALLENGES

- Hybrid model of in-class instruction and distance learning challenging to implement (esp. K-6)
- Differential impact of distance learning on grade level bands
- Viability for families and staff members with young children, in terms of being able to return to employment
- Cleaning protocols for “every other day” concept, implemented for all schools, would create significant challenges

CONCEPT #2: PRIORITIZE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Prioritize elementary students' daily attendance and secondary schools rely significantly, or exclusively, on remote learning

- Elementary students attend school five days a week
- Due to spacing requirements, upper grade elementary students may need to attend school at another site (likely a Regional school building)
- Secondary Schools either:
 - Implement revised/enhanced remote learning plans;
 - Implement hybrid model with modest in-class learning and mostly remote learning;
 - Explore allowances for some students with special needs and English language Learners

CONCEPT #2 OVERVIEW/ANALYSIS

BENEFITS

- Responds to research about distance learning's differential impact on age bands
- Allows for additional staffing flexibility
- Consistent with how other countries have approached returning to school
- Supports families with young children with regard to regular school attendance/return to employment
- Cleaning protocols easier to implement at K-6 (avoids rotation of students in same spaces)

CHALLENGES

- Significant changes to school building usage/attendance
- Would require Regional ARPS (and likely Union 28) cooperation and coordination
- Likely that some students would attend a different school than anticipated
- Limited in-class sessions for secondary students (as compared to Concept #1)
- Transportation more challenging than Option #1
- May require DESE waiver

SPLIT DAY MODEL

Split day models, which consist of different clusters of students coming in staggered times for partial days, is not believed to be viable due to required transportation and cleaning that would create operational and fiscal barriers.

REVISED K-12 DISTANCE LEARNING

- Given the uncertainty of the situation, distance learning models must be revised for every grade band. This model needs to be ready for implementation regardless of whether an in-class model is selected.
- Distance learning requires simpler operational logistics as compared to models with in-person learning, but evidence suggests it will exacerbate learning loss for all and educational debt/achievement gap challenges, especially among our youngest learners.
- As more parents/guardians have to return to work in the fall, distance learning models will need to operate differently than this spring, as responsibilities for supervision of young children may fall to older siblings or other family members.

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

STAFFING, LENGTH OF DAY AND START TIMES

- Staffing challenges/coverage
- Substitutes
- Licensure requirements/grade levels (affects student groupings)
- Planning time for staff in new model

PROGRAMS AND SPACES

- Retrofitting space(s)
- ELL newcomers program(s)
- Multiage groupings
- Special Education programs
- Caminantes Program

WHAT WOULD THE FOCUS BE IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT?

- Training and support for staff/students/families on the new public health structures that allow for reopening of schools
- Return to socialization with peers and staff and social emotional learning
- After initial assessment of academic skills following the closure, adjustment of curriculum to meet student needs
- Movement breaks within and outside classrooms