

# Stage 4 Instructional Planning Guide

## Introduction

In Stage 4 of our Return to School plan, all Albemarle County Public Schools (ACPS) students will be invited to return to school for face-to-face instruction with a modified schedule. Families will still have the option for students to continue with fully virtual learning. As students return to school buildings, we believe that our key instructional priorities should be at the forefront of planning and decision-making, as follows:

- All students will be making academic progress towards learning targets every day.
- All students will have a full day of instruction each day.
- All students, no matter their learning environment, will have equitable learning opportunities.

The Stage 4 Instructional Planning Guide is not intended to provide detailed guidance for each teacher; rather, its purpose is to provide a starting point for teachers. It is a framework from which teachers can begin to consider and navigate the various instructional opportunities and decisions involved in providing instruction when we move to Stage 4.

This guide builds on our [Return to School Planning Guide](#) (June 2020), which will continue to inform our plans to provide a safe and healthy physical environment for both students and staff.

## Acknowledgements

The Stage 4 Instructional Planning Guide is the collaborative product of more than 100 ACPS teachers who serve 25 school sites. The Department of Instruction sincerely thanks all staff who contributed to the important work of the secondary and elementary work groups. We appreciate the enthusiastic dedication with which you have served our students and their families, your colleagues, and our community members.

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## How This Planning Guide Will Be Used

1. Central staff will share the Stage 4 Instructional Planning Guide with principals.
2. Secondary principals will share the planning guide with department chairs.
  - Secondary departments will begin to make decisions on models of instructional delivery.
3. Elementary principals will share the Stage 4 Instructional Planning Guide with grade-level leaders.
  - Principals and grade-level teams will begin to create teacher partner pairings.
  - Grade-level teams will begin to make decisions on schedules and models for partnerships.
4. The planning guide and requests from principals will drive development of planning resources, professional development supports, and technology supports to meet teacher needs.

## Considerations for Secondary Instruction

### What Teaching and Learning Will Look Like

Secondary students (i.e., students in Grades 6-12) will be invited to attend school for face-to-face instruction two days a week and will participate in virtual learning the remaining three days a week. In order to reduce the number of students in each building and classroom per day, students participating in face-to-face instruction will be divided into two groups who will attend school on different days—either Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday. All students will learn from home on Fridays.

As part of the preparations for transitioning to this hybrid model for our secondary students, secondary teachers were invited to four division-level work sessions organized by content area. These meetings allowed teachers to assist the school division in framing viable instructional models and identifying the steps needed to move from virtual to hybrid learning.

Four key questions were explored during these work sessions:

1. What are possible instructional models for Stage 4 when secondary students can be in school two days per week or continuing to learn virtually?
2. How does hybrid instruction impact pacing? How can new instruction be delivered in the Stage 4 hybrid model (every other day) so that we finish the curriculum by the end of the year?
3. When considering staffing of courses, do we want to aim to have students who are remaining 100% virtual integrated with hybrid students or in virtual-only sections?
4. What professional development do we need to move to hybrid instruction? What technology resources will be necessary to support these models of instruction?

In these meetings, teachers identified several opportunities and benefits to students returning to school for two days per week of face-to-face instruction:

- More hands-on activities (such as labs);
- Increased peer interactions;
- Increased individual and small group interactions with teachers;
- More balanced use of technology;
- Access to resources and materials; and
- Increased in-person feedback from teachers and peers.

Teachers also recognized that moving to a hybrid learning model presents several challenges:

- We need ongoing time to develop plans for both in-person and at-home learning.
- We want to ensure that students who are 100% virtual have an equitable learning experience.
- We need resources to create a quality whole-group learning environment for both students learning virtually and in person.

In addition to these general elements, each work team identified opportunities and challenges specific to their content area. These are outlined in the [Resources to Support Planning Priorities and Models by Content Area](#) in the [Additional Resources](#) section of this guide.

## Sample Frameworks

Following are sample frameworks developed to help teachers plan their instruction and determine which model best matches the learning activities designed for students.

### Possible Flow of an A/B Secondary Class Block

Monday			Tuesday		
10 min	Opening Activity/Check-in with Whole Group Zoom		10 min	Opening Activity/Check-in with Whole Group Zoom	
70 min	<b>Group A:</b> Hands-on Activity (Lab, Debate, PBL)	<b>Group B:</b> Independent Work (Video of Direct Instruction, Exploring Reading and Videos to Learn Content)	70 min	<b>Group A:</b> Independent Work (Video of Direct Instruction, Exploring Reading and Videos to Learn Content)	<b>Group B:</b> Hands-on Activity (Lab, Debate, PBL)
5 min	Closing Activity/Check-in with Whole Group Zoom		5 min	Closing Activity/Check-in with Whole Group Zoom	

**Note:** 100% virtual students align with Group B.

### Possible Flow of a Synchronous Secondary Class Block

10 min	<b>Opening Activity and Check-in</b>	Whole Class Zoom	
20 min	<b>Direct Instruction</b>	Whole Class Zoom	
25 min	<b>Partner or Small Group Work</b>	Face-to-face students in distanced triads	Virtual students in breakout rooms
20 min	<b>Independent Work Time</b>	All students work on their own (virtual students get break from Zoom)	
10 min	<b>Closing Activity</b>	Whole Class Zoom	

# Considerations for Elementary Instruction

## What Teaching and Learning Will Look Like

In order to social distance, elementary classrooms will have between 8 and 11 students. To accommodate these numbers, most grade-level teachers will have a partner classroom and a partner teacher. Partner teachers will be teaching assistants; art, music, and physical education teachers; media specialists; talent development teachers; and interventionists.

Elementary teachers were invited to two work sessions to consider key aspects of teaching partnerships.

Four key questions were explored during these work sessions:

1. What are possible instructional models for Stage 4 for elementary students who are in school four days per week?
2. How do teachers working in pairs impact pacing? How do we make sure partner teaching is coordinated to maintain pacing?
3. How does creating teacher partners impact students' access to specials?
4. What professional development do we need to move to partner teaching instruction? What technology resources will be necessary to support selected models of instruction?

Teachers recognized several opportunities and benefits to students returning to school for four days a week of face-to-face instruction:

- Increased peer interactions;
- Increased opportunities for individual attention and monitoring of learning;
- Increased individual and small group interactions with teachers;
- More balanced use of technology;
- Access to resources and materials; and
- Increased in-person feedback from peers and teachers.

Teachers also recognized that moving into co-teaching partnerships presents several challenges:

- We need ongoing time to develop plans.
- We need ongoing time to develop partnerships with another educator.
- We need to determine different ways for students to receive instruction and support typically provided by specialists and interventions.

## General Schedule Models for Teaching Partners

Following are sample frameworks developed to help teacher partners think about how to organize their day. Partners will develop schedules that meet their areas of strength and the needs of students.

	<b>Student Group 1 - Space 1</b>	<b>Student Group 2 - Space 2</b>
<b>Morning Meeting</b>	Teacher A	Teacher B
<b>Reading &amp; ELA</b>	Teacher A Leads small groups	Teacher B Supports indep work
	Teacher B Supports indep work	Teacher A Leads small groups
<b>Recess (if outside)</b>	Teacher A	Teacher A
<b>Math</b>	Teacher A Leads small groups	Teacher B Supports indep work
	Teacher B Supports indep work	Teacher A Leads small groups
<b>Lunch</b>	Teacher A	Teacher B
<b>Science, Social Studies &amp; Specials</b>	Teacher A - Science or Social Studies	Teacher B - PE; Music/Art
	Teacher B - Recess (if outside)	Teacher B - Recess (if outside)
	Teacher B - PE; Music/Art	Teacher A - Science or Social Studies

Student Group 1 - Space 1		
Morning Meeting	Teacher A	Teacher B
Reading & ELA	Teacher A	
Recess (if outside)	Teacher A	
Math		Teacher B
Lunch		Teacher B
PE; Music/Art	Teacher A	
Recess (if outside)		Teacher B
Science or Social Studies		Teacher B

Student Group 2 - Space 2		
Morning Meeting	Teacher A	Teacher B
Math		Teacher B
Recess (if outside)	Teacher A	
Reading & ELA	Teacher A	
Lunch	Teacher A	
Science or Social Studies		Teacher B
Recess (if outside)		Teacher B
PE; Music/Art	Teacher A	

## K-12 Recommendations

In addition to recommendations specific to secondary and elementary considerations, the following are recommended for division-wide implementation:

- Provide at least two non-student days in the school calendar prior to the transition to Stage 4 for:
  - Time for teachers to plan, collaborate, and set up their rooms; and
  - Student holiday.
- Provide ongoing, uninterrupted planning time for grade levels and content teams to work together (throughout the week and on Fridays).
- Provide resources and models for this planning time.
- Ensure that students who are 100% virtual have an equitable learning experience.



# Additional Resources

## Slide Decks

- [December 10 School Board Meeting](#)
- [Secondary Planning Meetings with Teachers](#)
- [Elementary Planning Meetings with Discussions](#)

## Resources to Support Planning Priorities and Models

**Note:** The following resources are for internal use only; ACPS login required.

### Secondary Resources

- [CTE](#)
- [ELA](#)
- [Fine/Performing Arts](#)
- [Math](#)
- [Science](#)
- [Social Studies](#)
- [Health/PE](#)
- [World Languages](#)

### Elementary Resources

- [Elementary](#)