

Returning to Learning

ADVANCED MATH & SCIENCE ACADEMY
BACK-TO-SCHOOL PLAN 2021



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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

AMSA's 2020 Back to School Plan is the product of the dedicated work of dozens of AMSA staff members. Over the past several months, our teachers and administrators came together to develop an exceptional educational model to both keep our staff and families safe and to provide an outstanding AMSA education to our students. Working in a variety of Back-to-School committees, our staff discussed and analyzed the challenges COVID-19 presents for our community from multiple perspectives. The decisions presented within this document are the fruit of our labor and have been made with a great deal of care and thought.

To best manage the impact of COVID-19, AMSA Charter School will be implementing a phased back-to-school approach. The physical limitations of our facilities and the COVID-19 safety requirements issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) prevent us from supporting a 100% physical return to school with distancing. Our overriding desire to protect our community's health and to base all decisions on verifiable scientific data drives our decision to reopen AMSA using the remote learning model described in this report on page 8. Our remote model is based on lessons learned from the spring term and is academically challenging and rigorous.

AMSA will continue with remote learning until the end of first term on November 16, 2020. Towards the end of October and in early November, we will evaluate existing conditions within the state of Massachusetts with the hope and expectation that we will return to school using one of the hybrid models outlined within this document. If the data and science show evidence that re-opening schools has had a negative impact on COVID-19 transmission rates within our state, AMSA will continue with our remote learning model.

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Important days to note:

- You are invited to join our Administrative Team to discuss our Back-to-School Plan on Tuesday, August 18th at 1:00pm or Wednesday, August 19th at 6:00pm. The remote links will be emailed separately within a formal invitation a week prior to the forums. Please join us and bring your questions.
- AMSA Teachers will participate in ten (10) extra days of professional development in addition to the three (3) days previously planned. Their professional development days will be held August 26th – September 14th except for Labor Day, September 7, 2020. This extra time will ensure our teachers are fully prepared to engage your students in learning beginning on the first day of school.
- We will be hosting our remote “6th Grade and New Student Orientation Day” on Monday, September 14, 2020. More information and login details will be sent to our new students and families about these opportunities.
- Tuesday, September 15, 2020 will be AMSA’s first day of school and the introduction of our updated remote learning program to our students. Students will receive their schedules well before the first day of school.
- New this fall, AMSA Charter School will welcome your feedback and suggestions through a new centralized email address: amsaremotelearning@amsacs.org. All student and family remote learning surveys and feedback will be tracked by a small team of AMSA administrators, so nothing will fall through the cracks and issues can be identified and corrected quickly.

B. LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear AMSA community,

We are living through uncertain times, not only in the world of education, but in our everyday lives. Nothing is the same and even when something begins to feel “normal” again, it does not take long before you see a telltale reminder that times have changed. Wherever we look, we see health and safety information, recommendations, guidelines, and requirements that are coming from all directions. There are few clear answers on what the safest way to return to school is or if a return to school will put the health and safety of our teachers, staff, students, and their families at risk. Though the situation looks fairly stable in Massachusetts, COVID-19 is raging throughout many parts of our nation with new cases and deaths being reported each day.

There are no easy solutions or clear directions to follow. AMSA is a brick and mortar school, and our curriculum is intended to be taught and directed by our talented and passionate educators in-person within our classrooms. We are committed to this model today and in the future, but because there are so many unknowns ahead of us, we need to be especially cautious in our decisions. The health and safety of each member of our school community has always been - and will always be - our most important priority. With this in mind, **I am announcing that AMSA Charter School will return to full in-school learning using a *phased* approach. At the start of the academic year, and continuing through November 16th, we will teach and enrich our students through a new and improved remote learning program.** We will continue to monitor the most current scientific data in Massachusetts and across the country and will make a decision concerning the second quarter during the first week in November. If the data show that it is safe to return to school, we will return using a hybrid model.

The remote learning model we will use for the first quarter is an improved remote learning program and will not resemble the remote learning plan followed this past spring. Remote learning classes will be scheduled, attendance will be taken, participation is mandatory, and grades will be earned. We will deliver an AMSA curriculum using Google Classroom enhanced with Zoom Conferencing. Our academic calendar has been adjusted to include ten (10) additional preparation days for our teachers; therefore, **grades 7-12 will begin on Tuesday, September 15th.** We will offer a **remote 6th grade orientation on Monday, September 14th.**

Please take a moment to read the following **AMSA Back-to-School Plan 2020**. It will give you specific information about our plans for the coming school year. We will be offering two (2) virtual Family Forums on Tuesday, August 18th at 1 p.m. and Wednesday, August 19th at 6 p.m. We look forward to seeing you and answering any questions you may have.

Sincerely,
Ellen Linzey
Executive Director

C. IN-PERSON LEARNING MODEL

In July, AMSA conducted a facilities feasibility study of our three buildings (199, 201, and 165 Forest Street in Marlborough, MA). None of the three buildings are traditional school buildings but rather repurposed office spaces which present a number of physical challenges. The purpose of the study was to determine if 100% of our students and staff could return to school while meeting the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) distancing requirement of three (3) feet minimum between our students while in class (measuring seat edge to seat edge). In order to fit 24 or 25 students in a classroom 3 feet apart, the room must be at least 750 square feet. We determined that only 12 of our 58 classrooms are 750 square feet or larger. Seventy-nine percent (79%) of our classrooms are between 347 square feet and 743 square feet. Our hallways and staircases are narrow and the layout of the lower school building does not allow for one-way traffic flow.

Based on our feasibility study we cannot accommodate a 100% in-person return to school with the minimum requirement of 3 feet of physical distancing in our classrooms. Ventilation has been identified as important to reopening and is a limiter for AMSA. A complete Air Quality Evaluation will be completed on all three buildings in order to ensure the proper airflow according to the DESE Facilities and Operations Guidance (see DESE guidance in **Section H**).

D. HYBRID LEARNING MODEL

At the end of the first term, we will evaluate existing conditions with the expectation that we will be able to have a partial return to school. Our hybrid model will have cohorts of student switching alternating between in-person and remote learning. Parents will have the option to keep their student(s) on the remote learning model when the school begins the hybrid learning model phase.

OPTIONS:

We have two options for this plan:

- **33% Model** - 33% of students will be in school, while the remaining 67% of students are at home, participating in remote learning. All students will participate in a remote flex day on Mondays, then the first third will come to school Tuesday-Friday of one week. The following week, the second third of students will be at school for in-person learning, with the first third returning to remote learning. In the third week, the remaining third of students will attend in-person. This approach also accounts for the incubation period of the virus. As explained in **Section C**. Between our classroom size, lack of windows, limited HVAC system, hallway size, and cafeteria size, AMSA's facilities are such that having fewer students in school is definitely the safer option.
- **50% Model** - 50% of students will be at school for in-person learning while the other 50% participate in remote learning. All students will participate in a remote flex day on Mondays, then the first half will come to school Tuesday-Friday of the first week. The groups will switch the following week.

HYBRID LEARNING SCHEDULE:

- To minimize transition times in hallways, and thus population mixing, we will institute a four period block schedule (see **Section H**).
- Monday will be used as a remote flex day. The schedule will include one flex day each week, on Mondays. Each flex day will start with a 30-minute check in and meeting with a small, 12-14 student cohort and one teacher. The teacher will take attendance, then lead students in an advisory lesson. The remainder of the flex day will be used by students to complete assignments and by teachers to schedule and hold extra help sessions, particularly for High Needs students or students who are struggling to learn class content; conduct review classes; communicate with parents and teachers; evaluate and post assignments; and hold department meetings to share best practices and ensure policies and curriculum are being followed.
- Teachers will prepare material to provide instruction and learning opportunities during the first 70 minutes with the remaining 30 minutes designated an Academic Workshop for students to complete work for that class.

D. HYBRID LEARNING MODEL

- Students at home will either watch a pre-recorded lesson, watch a live-stream of the lesson being taught to the students physically at school, or complete other work assigned by their teacher during the scheduled time while the students in class are being taught by their teacher. Live streaming can be done by using Zoom Conferencing. A second device will also be available for teachers so that one can be used for streaming and the other can be used for the lesson.
- There will be 11-minute breaks between classes, during which students can go outside for mask breaks.
- The lunch period will be 30 minutes long.
- The schedule will rotate on a bi-weekly basis, with a Blue Week followed by Orange Week (see **Section H**).

SAFETY PROCEDURES

To facilitate a safe return to school, we have done an in-depth study of our facilities and developed the following safety procedures:

- Students report directly to first period when they arrive at school.
- Students enter classrooms immediately upon arrival rather than waiting in the hallway.
- All students and staff will use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting any classroom or office.
- Bathroom monitors will be used to ensure there are only two students in each bathroom at a time.
- Seating arrangements will be designed so all desks face the same direction.
- Stairwells will be designated as up-only and down-only in our two buildings with stairwells.
- Doors in two of our three buildings will be designated as enter-only and exit-only; it is impossible to do this in our third building.
- Lockers will be eliminated for all 8-12 graders, except when necessary due to disability or injury. This will significantly cut down on students interacting in the hallways in close proximity.
- Hallway traffic will be limited to one-way direction in the hallways in the upper school building and white building. Due to entrances/exits, we are unable to do this in the lower school building.

Remote learning technology, attendance policies, student supports, homework and assessments, grading, and communications in the hybrid model will follow the same expectations outlined in the remote learning model on pages 10-11.

E. REMOTE LEARNING MODEL

This is the model we will be following in the first quarter. With the outbreak of COVID-19 in March, educators around the country were faced with the unprecedented challenge of learning to teach remotely. Prior to this spring, the idea of remote teaching was not even conceptualized by most teachers, and it is not something that teachers were trained to ever have to do in their careers. Thus, the spring proved to be remarkably instructive, though it was not without challenges.

Like many schools, AMSA learned much this past spring. We have gathered feedback from teachers, students, and families about their experiences in the spring and have used that to thoughtfully create a drastically improved approach to remote learning to start the 2020-2021 academic year. The details of this plan are as follows:

ACADEMIC MODEL:

- The AMSA remote learning plan will provide remote, online learning for all AMSA students.
- Remote learning lessons will be aligned with AMSA curriculum standards. Before the start of the year, AMSA's academic department chairs will work closely with teachers to coordinate curriculum plans for the year. Throughout the year, department chairs, administrators, and teachers will meet to review and assess curriculum progress and make any adjustments as needed.
- AMSA's remote curriculum and instructional materials will be consistent with our normal, in-school curriculum and instructional materials. As noted above, department chairs and teachers will work together before the start of the school year and throughout the school year to assess student progress in relation to our curriculum. AP teachers, in turn, will (as they have done in the past) coordinate their curriculum in accordance with College Board requirements.
- Department chairs and teachers will also regularly meet to discuss and share best pedagogical remote teaching and learning practices so that we can ensure that AMSA's curriculum is effectively delivered in an online environment. In addition, and throughout the school year, AMSA teachers will receive professional development focused on the effective use of online platforms and a variety of remote teaching techniques, including best practices on effective assessment techniques and ways to evaluate online student learning. AMSA will also provide teachers with PD on how to effectively build positive student-teacher relationships in an online environment.
- The remote staffing model that AMSA will use will be consistent with previous years. Each of AMSA's classes will be taught by highly qualified teachers chosen by their department chair to teach assigned classes based on their content expertise and experience.

E. REMOTE LEARNING MODEL

REMOTE LEARNING SCHEDULE:

- For all students, learning time will be highly structured, based on a schedule that will be provided to students and parents before the start of the school year.
- Regular academic classes will be block-scheduled and will run Tuesday through Friday. Appropriate breaks throughout the day will be provided for students and teachers (see **Section H** on p. 15).
 - Classes will be held for 70 minutes. All teachers will design 70 minutes of material to be done during each block. Each class will begin with a live attendance check.
 - First period will be followed by a 30-minute Academic Workshop.
 - Students are expected to stay in their first period class during this 30-minute academic workshop and remain logged in. Academic workshop time will be used in the following ways, at the discretion of the academic workshop teacher:
 - Completion of assigned work and/or assessments either independently or with teacher support
 - Completion of assigned work and/or assessments independently for another class
 - There will be a 15-minute break between the Academic Workshop and the second class.
 - There is also a 40-minute lunch, taken by all students and staff at the same time.
 - Afternoon follows same format as morning: class, Academic Workshop, break, class.
- The schedule will include one flex day each week on Mondays from 9:05AM–9:35AM. Each flex day will start with a 30 minute check in and meeting with a small, 12-14 student cohort and one teacher. All students will be required to attend this check in. The remainder of the flex day will be used by students to complete assignments and by teachers to schedule and hold extra help sessions, particularly for High Needs students or students who are struggling to learn class content; conduct review classes; communicate with parents and teachers; evaluate and post assignments; and hold department meetings to share best practices and ensure policies and curriculum are being followed.
- The schedule will rotate on a bi-weekly basis with a Blue Week followed by Orange Week (see **Section H**).
- Schedule for office hours on half-day Flex Days, by department:
 - English - 10:00am - 10:20am
 - Math - 10:20am - 10:40am
 - History - 10:40am - 11:00am
 - Science - 11:00am - 11:20am
 - World Language and Art - 11:20am - 11:40am
 - Physical Education and Health - 11:40am - 12:00pm
 - Reading and ELL - 2:15pm - 3:00pm

E. REMOTE LEARNING MODEL

STUDENT SUPPORTS:

- English Language Learners (ELL) (as noted in **Section G**) will participate in scheduled remote classes. Students with IEPs (also as noted in **Section G**) will be provided structured support time within their schedules in a manner fully consistent with their individual plans.
- AMSA's Student Support Team will identify and assist students in the Lower School and the Upper School who may need extra help (see **Section G** for additional school counseling services offered).

REMOTE LEARNING TECHNOLOGY:

- Remote learning for all students will be conducted online and through the use of Zoom Conferencing. AMSA administrators (based on information gained from our survey) will ensure that all students will have a device, such as a Chromebook, to access the internet and participate in all scheduled lessons.
- AMSA will be using the following technology platforms: for grades and grading, Plus Portals; for the conducting of online meetings, Zoom Conferencing; and for the posting of assignments as well as general class management, Google Classroom and/or Plus Portals.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES:

- At the start of each lesson, all AMSA teachers will take attendance through Plus Portals. AMSA administrators **will track daily and period attendance** and will notify parents if a student is missing from classes daily.
- **If a student plans to be absent for the day or a period, parents must call and leave a message on AMSA's absentee line (508-597-2400 - follow prompts) to notify the school that their child will not be able to attend normally scheduled classes.**
- Throughout lessons and through a variety of check-ins, teachers will also track student participation. **It is expected that, for every lesson, students have their camera on** so that the teacher can see them. Parents and students who may be concerned with having their cameras on may speak with their school counselor.
- See Attendance Policy in the [Student/Parent Handbook](#).

E. REMOTE LEARNING MODEL

HOMEWORK AND ASSESSMENTS:

- Through homework, tests, and projects, teachers will be assessing student progress in relation to AMSA's curriculum.
- The amount of homework provided to students will be consistent with existing AMSA homework guidelines (as mentioned in AMSA's Program of Studies) for the Lower School and Upper School and for all classes, including AP classes. Penalties for late work will also be consistent with existing AMSA department guidelines.
- Department Chairs and administrators will also regularly meet to ensure that policies are consistently followed across the entire school and between departments.
- See [Program of Studies](#).

GRADING POLICIES:

- AMSA students will receive letter grades consistent with the policies and procedures established within our academic departments.
- The year will be divided into four quarters and each quarter will be weighted equally. Teachers will update grades bi-weekly on Mondays through Plus Portals (which houses the grades of all AMSA students). Each quarter and consistent with AMSA policy, teachers will send mid-quarter academic warnings to students whose average is a C- or below.

COMMUNICATION POLICY:

- AMSA teachers and administrators, consistent with AMSA's communications policies, will regularly communicate with parents through email and/or Google Classroom. Administrators and teachers will also encourage parents and students to reach out to teachers to ask classroom/subject related questions. AMSA administration will also be providing weekly updates to the entire AMSA community as well as monthly family forums to gather family feedback and answer questions. AMSA will be working through Language Bank, a full-service translation company, to provide all interpretation and translation services that are needed for our parents and our students.
- See Communications Policy in the [Student/Parent Handbook](#).
- All remote learning feedback should be emailed to amsaremotelearning@amsacs.org.

F. OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME PLAN

CLUBS:

We believe that clubs and after school activities are an important part of our students' social, emotional, and physical development and well-being. Our plan is, to the greatest extent possible, to offer our students ways to participate in after school clubs online during the first quarter. As soon as we return to school, clubs will resume as in the past.

SPORTS:

We are still awaiting guidance from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the MIAA on fall sports.

G. STUDENT SUPPORTS & PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

AMSA Charter School is committed to supporting all students through their academic experiences. Whether we are teaching in-person, using a hybrid model, or teaching remotely, the commitment is the same. Students in grades 6-8 will continue to participate in Directed Study and will have access to their teachers during “H block” for extra help as well as during scheduled office hours. Directed Study will continue to be the time our advisory curriculum will be taught. High school students will receive extra help during scheduled flex days and during pre-scheduled office hours. Students are encouraged to email their teachers any time they need assistance.

While participating in the remote learning model, students will be required to login to a “Monday Morning Check-in” with a homeroom teacher. The purpose of this time together will be to take attendance, conduct a visual check-in, answer questions or address concerns about the week ahead, and strategize for the week ahead. Students will be grouped in small, 12-14 student cohorts with one teacher that they will meet with each Monday during this check-in time.

SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT:

School counselors and adjustment counselors will offer individual and small group counseling for students in need of additional support remotely through Zoom Conferencing, by phone, or in-person if students have returned to school. Counselors will continue to work with grade level teams, the Student Support Team, and administrators to identify students in need of short-term counseling and will also continue to connect students to outside services when needed through INTERFACE Referral Service and Metrowest Behavioral Health Partners. School counselors will also assist in the monitoring of academic progress, conduct 504 meetings remotely, and consult with teachers and families to support students' mental health and academic needs.

G. STUDENT SUPPORTS & PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL):

In-person learning model

The ELL department will be running as per usual with regular notices and monitoring systems to uphold state regulations and compliance. The class model at AMSA combines both pull-out and push-in ELL services in the SEI model construct.

Hybrid learning model

The ELL department will be running its schedule with regards to the capacity of students during the week being split into two or three sessions. Depending on student schedules this will mean a certain percentage of students being in ELL pull-out classes on campus, while the second and third percentage will be given lessons remotely with additional packet follow-up work to bring in during their in-person classes. Push-in support will follow student schedules and be given as per schedule during in-person weeks.

Remote learning model

ELL students will have a scheduled remote session with their pull-out ELL class which mimics the in-person schedule. Homework and follow-up work will be set-up in a Google Classroom. The ELL teacher will attend student push-in schedules remotely and keep direct correspondence and check-in sessions with supported ELL students regarding their mainstream classwork. Former EL students will be monitored as per usual with electronic submissions and regular electronic check-ins with mainstream teachers alongside current EL and opt-out students.

In all models, ELL staff will be attending grade and department specific meetings to discuss EL student needs, requirements and updates; this to ensure the continued team support of EL, opt-out and former EL students. These will be performed in-person, hybrid or remotely dependent on the decided schedule throughout the school year. All regular parent correspondence and meetings will be followed and held in person when possible and remotely otherwise.

G. STUDENT SUPPORTS & PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

SPECIAL EDUCATION:

In-person learning model

All support and services will be delivered as outlined in Individual Education Plans. Team meetings will be held for each student to discuss if any regression has occurred and what services, if any, are needed to remediate.

Hybrid learning model

Special Education at AMSA is delivered in a fully inclusive model with Academic Labs to support students as determined by the IEP. In this hybrid model ALL students on IEPs are invited to attend academic labs daily to support the curriculum being delivered. All students who require co-teaching and support in the classroom will continue to receive that service whether face to face or virtually, as paraprofessionals and special education teachers will continue to be assigned to the classes indicated as if we were in person. All special education teachers and Special Ed Director will have office hours for both students and parents to discuss any questions or concerns. Related services will, when possible, be scheduled in person. Students will adhere to the structured learning time requirements. Teacher and paraprofessional schedules will be determined based on the hybrid model.

Remote learning model

All students will follow their assigned schedule. Classes will be supported as indicated on student IEPs. ALL students on IEPs will be provided structured support time within their schedules. Related services will be delivered remotely. All students will adhere to the structured learning time requirements. Office hours will be provided by teachers and the Director of Special Education for students and parents to address questions and concerns.

ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED:

Administration will communicate with all families to identify any technology needs and, when necessary, provide Chromebooks and any other appropriate devices to students. We will continue working with surrounding school districts to provide parents with an option of food delivery for those on free or reduced lunch. Overall, the school will continue to provide economically disadvantaged families with appropriate resources so that all students have equitable access to the educational experience of our school. If your student needs a Chromebook or other IT support, please email: itdepartment@amsacs.org.

H. OTHER

REMOTE LEARNING SCHEDULE:

To keep some of the benefits of our normal, rotating 8-day schedule, we will rotate our schedule on a weekly basis.

BLUE WEEK

	M	T	W	Th	F
7:55 - 9:05		A1	E1	A2	E2
9:05 - 9:35	Monday Morning Check-in	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop
9:35 - 9:50		Break	Break	Break	Break
9:50 - 11:00		B1	F1	B2	F2
11:00 - 11:40		lunch	lunch	lunch	lunch
11:40 - 12:50		C1	G1	C2	G2
12:50 - 1:20		Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop
1:20 - 1:35		Break	Break	Break	Break
1:35 - 2:45		D1	H1	D2	H2

ORANGE WEEK

	M	T	W	Th	F
7:55 - 9:05		D1	H1	D2	H2
9:05 - 9:35	Monday Morning Check-in	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop
9:35 - 9:50		Break	Break	Break	Break
9:50 - 11:00		C1	G1	C2	G2
11:00 - 11:40		lunch	lunch	lunch	lunch
11:40 - 12:50		B1	F1	B2	F2
12:50 - 1:20		Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop
1:20 - 1:35		Break	Break	Break	Break
1:35 - 2:45		A1	E1	A2	E2

H. OTHER

HYBRID LEARNING SCHEDULE:

To keep some of the benefits of our normal, rotating 8-day schedule, we will rotate our schedule on a weekly basis.

BLUE WEEK

	M	T	W	Th	F
7:55 - 9:05		A1	E1	A2	E2
9:05 - 9:35	Monday Morning Check-in	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop
9:35 - 9:46		Break	Break	Break	Break
9:50 - 11:40		B1	F1	B2	F2
10:35 - 12:00 Lunch 1: 10:35 - 11:00 Lunch 2: 11:05 - 11:35 Lunch 3: 11:40 - 12:05		lunch	lunch	lunch	lunch
11:40 - 12:50		C1	G1	C2	G2
12:50 - 1:20		Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop
1:20 - 1:31		Break	Break	Break	Break
1:35 - 2:45		D1	H1	D2	H2

Sample Tuesday Blue Week Lunch Schedule

Lunch 1

- **B1:** 9:50-10:30
- **Lunch:** 10:35-11:00
- **Back to B1:** 11:05-11:40

* B1 = 75 minutes
 * Lunch = 25 minutes
 * Students assigned to Lunch 2 will have lunch *during* B1, returning to B1 for 35 minutes after lunch

Lunch 2

- **B1:** 9:50-11:00
- **Lunch:** 11:05-11:35
- **C1:** 11:40-12:50

* Lunch = 30 minutes; extra 5 min. will help facilitate transition between lunches
 * Students assigned to 2nd lunch will have lunch *between* B1 and C1

Lunch 3

- **C1:** 11:05-11:35
- **Lunch:** 11:40-12:05
- **Back to C1:** 12:10-12:50

* C1 = 70 minutes
 * Lunch = 25 minutes
 * Students assigned to 3rd lunch will have lunch *during* C1, going to 30 minutes of class

H. OTHER

ORANGE WEEK

	M	T	W	Th	F
7:55 - 9:05		D1	H1	D2	H2
9:05 - 9:35	Monday Morning Check-in	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop
9:35 - 9:46		Break	Break	Break	Break
9:50 - 11:00		C1	G1	C2	G2
10:35 - 12:00 Lunch 1: 10:35 - 11:00 Lunch 2: 11:05 - 11:35 Lunch 3: 11:40 - 12:05		lunch	lunch	lunch	lunch
11:40 - 12:50		B1	F1	B2	F2
12:50 - 1:20		Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop	Academic Workshop
1:20 - 1:31		Break	Break	Break	Break
1:35 - 2:45		A1	E1	A2	E2

H. OTHER

This is the new 2020-2021 School Calendar based on this back-to-school plan. [\(Click here to download printable calendar.\)](#)

2020-2021 AMSA School Calendar

August							February						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1			2	3	4	5	6
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
23	24	25	26	27	28	29	28						29
30	31												29

September							March							
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
		1	2	3	4	5			1	2	3	4	5	6
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
27	28	29	30				28	29	30	31				

October							April						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3					1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	25	26	27	28	29	30	

November							May						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7							1
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
29	30						23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

December							June						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3							
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	27	28	29	30			

January							July						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2							
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
31													

 School day	 Half Day	 PD
 Academic Notice	 End of Quarter	 Grades Due
 Holiday	 Snow Day	 Summer Break

**Includes 5 emergency closings*

2020-2021 AMSA School Calendar

August
24-25 New Teachers Orientation
26-14 Professional Development

September
7 Labor Day
14 6th Grade Orientation/PD
15 First Day of School

October
12 Columbus Day - No School
19-23 Spirit Week

November
11 Veterans Day - No School
16 End of Quarter
23 Grades Due
25 Half Day for Students and Staff
26-27 Thanksgiving Break - No School

December
21-1 December Vacation

January
1 New Year's Day - No School
18 Martin Luther King - No School

February
1 End of Quarter
8 Grades Due
15-19 President's Day-February Vacation

March

April
6 End of Quarter
13 Grades Due
19-23 Patriots' Day-April Vacation

May
TBD PROM
31 Memorial Day - No School

June
6 Graduation at Hanover Theater
22 Last Day of School *

8-03-20

H. OTHER

GUIDANCE AND LINKS FROM DESE:

Guidance on Courses Requiring Additional Safety Considerations, Remote Learning, Transportation, and Facilities

Over the last week, DESE has released guidance documents on four subjects as supplements to the Initial Fall School Reopening Guidance. Please note that DESE's guidance documents are subject to change depending on COVID-19 trends and as more is learned about the virus from medical research. The recent guidance documents are:

[Transportation](#): The Transportation Guidance is focused on supporting districts as they develop a transportation strategy that provides safe conditions for all students and staff traveling by bus while also maximizing in-person learning. Districts' strategies should: Follow the medically-advised health and safety requirements for school bus transportation; Address bus capacity challenges created by the physical distancing requirements by considering strategies such as adding bus routes, staggering schedules, and pursuing a waiver for student learning time requirements if needed; and take proactive steps to promote safe alternative transportation options for students, including family-provided transportation, walking, and biking, as appropriate.

[Facilities](#): The Facilities and Operations Guidance provides details and considerations for schools' physical plants and grounds, as well as operational protocols based on the most recent information about COVID-19 and related mitigation practices. The document has sections on preparing spaces, making modifications, and developing operational protocols.

[Courses Requiring Additional Safety Considerations](#): chorus, band, theater, musical theater, dance, visual arts, and physical education. The arts, physical education, and other enrichment courses are an integral part of the learning experience for every student at every grade level, and DESE strongly encourages schools and districts to continue providing these classes to students this fall. Adaptations to these courses, however, are necessary to ensure the safety of students and staff.

H. OTHER

[Remote Learning](#): This guidance provides additional detail on remote learning expectations, program models districts may consider, and considerations for implementing various models. The document includes: Important information about policy requirements and related guidance for remote learning this fall; criteria for meeting foundational technology needs; and conditions and considerations for selecting an appropriate remote learning option for a school or district. The Department will continue to issue new guidance and update existing guidance as necessary.

Other Important Links

[DESE Initial Reopening Guidance](#)

[CDC Guidelines](#)

[WHO Guidelines](#)

[DESE Protocols for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios](#)

H. FALL 2021 UPDATES

UPDATE: IN-PERSON ACADEMIC LEARNING

(updated 9/2021)

Consistent with national and state guidelines, we believe that safe, in-person learning offers our students the best opportunities to grow academically and socially. As a result, in the 2021-2022 school year, we are returning to our normal in-school academic model with 100% of our students in school and learning full time, five days a week. To view our academic calendar please see: [2021-22 Academic Calendar](#)

During the 2021-2021 school year, AMSA will be following an 8 day rotating schedule for our classes. Each class period is 45 minutes. You can view our daily class schedule here: [AMSA Bell Schedule 2021-22](#)

Teachers in all departments have begun the year by assessing where students are and what potential learning needs exist so that they can best instruct students. Teachers are also committed to teaching in a spiraled manner - reviewing material when needed while thoughtfully introducing new material to students.

Students who are quarantined as a result of COVID-19 have the option of zooming into their academic classes. All teachers also offer office hours for extra help to students, either in person or through zoom.

UPDATE: IN-PERSON SAFETY PROCEDURES

(updated 9/2021)

To make this a successful academic year, we are committed to doing everything possible for the safety of our students and staff. AMSA is working closely with our local and state governments to accurately follow and coordinate all required pandemic procedures. We are encouraging all eligible staff and students to be vaccinated (we communicate with student families about the importance and efficacy of covid vaccines). We are encouraging all staff and students to use hand sanitizer (dispensers have been installed in each room and in our hallways).

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We are strictly following the state mask mandate. All rooms in our building have air purifiers. In addition, with our newly purchased UV air purification units, the buildings and all classrooms are in full compliance with state regulations. We have also purchased two (2) large tents for extra space when needed. The HVAC units for the upper school cafeteria have been adjusted and cleaned.

- [Click here](#) to see the state guidance that we are following.
- [Click here](#) to see the state's masking requirements.
- In addition to the above, we are also following state testing suggestions. We are using BinaxNOW and Test and Stay as explained [here](#).
- [Click here](#) to see DESE Quarantine Student and Staff policy.

UPDATE: STUDENT SUPPORTS

(updated 9/2021)

School Counseling Department

School counselors and adjustment counselors will offer individual and small group counseling for students in need of additional support. AMSA has expanded the school counseling department to include one additional school counselor and has contracted with Wayside Youth and Family Support Network for support from a clinician two days per week. Counselors will continue to work with grade level teams, the Student Support Team, and administrators to identify students in need of short-term counseling and will also continue to connect students to outside services when needed through INTERFACE Referral Service and Metrowest Behavioral Health Partners. School counselors will also assist in the monitoring of academic progress, conduct 504 meetings, and consult with teachers and families to support students' mental health and academic needs.

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Special Education

The Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter School is a fully inclusive school. We have 4 full time special education teachers and 6 full time paraprofessionals. All curriculum instruction is provided in the general education setting. Services indicated on a student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) are delivered by Teams, consisting of special education teachers, general education teachers, paraprofessionals, and related service providers, when indicated. Academic Labs are available when necessary for remediation, and replace Directed Studies or Study Halls. AMSA has a School Psychologist and Speech and Language Pathologist on staff and contracts with organizations for a Board certified Behavior Analyst, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists and Assistive Technology Specialists. AMSA completes their own initial evaluations and re-evaluations and follows all timelines, mandates and directives as determined by DESE.

English Language Learners (ELL)

AMSA's ELL follows an SEI model that consists of both pull-out ELL classes as well as push-in support during at least one of the student's core-content classes. ELL students are enrolled in core-content classes taught by SEI endorsed teachers and an ELL class taught by a fully licensed ELL teacher. Identification is dependent on state identification guidelines including a self-reported Home Language Survey included in registration packets, records checking, and subsequent screening with the WIDA SCREENER as necessary. All required parent correspondence is sent by the ELL department at the beginning of each school year regarding the identification or re-qualification of ELL status, and the Database Manager updates this status in SIMS. Other regular ELE processes throughout the year include the formation of SLEP [Second Language Education Plans] for ELL students not meeting their state-set growth targets. These are then shared with all-staff and serve to further support these student's linguistic needs. The ELL program also regularly monitors the progress of both ELL and FEL/FLEP students, including two documented formal monitoring sessions occurring each autumn and spring. Monitoring forms are sent out to each teacher and answers are recorded via the ELLevation platform. These are then checked by the ELL coordinator.

H. FALL 2021 UPDATES

Additionally, all ELL students are screened with the state's official language assessment ACCESS for ELLs each winter. Students who qualify to exit the ELL program based on their ACCESS scores and at least two other pieces of evidence are formally re-classified as FEL/FLEP and are subsequently monitored for the next four academic school years or until graduation, whichever occurs first. Additionally, ELL staff regularly attends grade and department specific meetings to discuss EL student needs, requirements, and updates. This to ensure the continued team support of ELL, opt-out and former ELL students. The ELL coordinator regularly meets with the vice-principal and ELL student's counselors to discuss the ELL program and continued student support.

Update: Clubs and Sports *(updated 9/2021)*

To promote a return to normalcy and provide for the richest possible student experience, all AMSA clubs and sport teams are running. If the club or sport needs to meet inside, masks are required. If the club or sport meets outside, masks are not required.

For more information: [DESE - Covid-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#)