

**Richmond County Public Schools
Instructional Plan for Operating During
The COVID 19 Pandemic**



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Section One: Introduction



RCPS will offer regular, new instruction beginning in September, 2020. Figure 1 provides a summary of the division's options for instruction, during Phase III where community spread is low.

Figure 1. RCPS Options for Instruction during Phase III: Low Community Spread

RCPS
Reopening

On Fridays ALL students will participate in Home Learning

Allows for teachers to monitor students who are completing the Home Learning week
Teachers will have a scheduled "office hour" so students and families can work together



Option One: Blended Learning

- Face-to-Face Instruction one week and Home Learning the other week
- Face-to-Face Instruction follows CDC guidelines, as found in the RCPS Health Mitigation Plan
- Every Friday is Home Learning for ALL students
- Face-to-Face Instruction is focused on Reading and Math in K-7; Home Learning is focused on Science and Social Studies
- Home Learning will use Virtual Virginia content on the computer (will not require internet)

Option Two: Fully Online

- Family Choice, by semester
- Completely Virtual, but with some individual Face-to-Face meetings
- Required Orientation
- Must have reliable, high speed internet
- Adult family member(s) acts as the Learning Coach
- RCPS teacher monitors progress
- Virtual Virginia content for K-7
- Students must take state and local assessments (ex. SOLs, PALs, VKRP)

Guiding Principles

The more people a student or staff member interacts with, and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. The RCPS instructional plan takes this into account, along with the changing conditions related to the spread of COVID-19. Option One: Blended Learning supports:

- Class sizes of less than 11, allowing for a maximum social distance.
- New learning for students both face-to-face and online
- Opportunities to engage with supports and services at the school building during on-site weeks

Option Two supports:

- The ability for families to choose an option that works for individuals in their homes who may be high risk
- The opportunity for students and teachers in vulnerable groups to engage in new teaching and learning
- A continued relationship between families who want to pursue fully virtual instruction and RCPS

These are unprecedented times. Students, families, and educational staff have continued to shift and be flexible in the face of novel coronavirus COVID-19. As RCPS plans to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year, it will be important for staff, students, families and other local agencies to work together to ensure the best instructional options possible for our community.

RCPS is committed to:

- Establishing and continuing communication with employees, families and the community about instructional programming and options available.
- Providing the best possible instruction for students in a non-traditional manner.
- Identifying, protecting, and supporting vulnerable students and staff who are at higher risk for severe illness, by providing options for telework and virtual learning.

Section Two: Operational Infrastructure to Support Learning

RCPS has developed an operational infrastructure plan that will support learning and school reopening.

RCPS COVID 19 Planning Team

Members include: Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Building Principals, Division Disaster Preparedness Coordinator, and School Nurse Coordinator

COVID Point Person: RHS- Building Principal; RCEM- Building Principal; MTLC- Building Principal

School Schedules

RCPS will establish school schedules that allow for student participation to occur at levels aligned with current CDC recommended social distancing guidelines of 6 feet. Buildings will need to operate at approximately 50 percent capacity and buses at less than 50 percent capacity to achieve this goal. Staggered schedules will be necessary to implement this model. RCPS has developed two options for families from which to choose, as outlined in Figure 1.

Students whose families choose option one will be divided into two groups, a red and gray group, which will attend school Monday through Thursday on alternating weeks for face-to-face instruction. Additional learning will occur during a Home Learning Time (HLT) week through virtual instruction. Every Friday will be HLT for all students to allow for virtual instruction for all students with their classroom teachers.

Students in K-5 will remain in classrooms, with adults moving between student groups, as needed. Students in 6-12 will change classes through staggered releases, and will sanitize their desks during the last three minutes of an instructional block.

School principals, or their designees, will work together across grade levels to ensure that families and students who co-reside will attend on the same week.

Students whose families choose option two will develop their own schedules, with support from the Distance Learning Coordinator. These schedules will include time for synchronous and asynchronous learning.

Employing both blended and fully virtual models will allow RCPS to provide new instruction to all students in the event complete school closures become necessary.

Transportation

RCPS will provide transportation to and from school for families who need it. In order to adhere to social distancing guidelines and reduce bus capacity to less than 50 percent, students will:

- Wear face coverings on the bus

- Sit one to a seat, except in the cases of students who co-reside, when they will sit together
- Load the buses from back to front, and unload from front to back
- Adhere to required seating plans
- Will have their temperature taken by a bus monitor before sitting down

Buses will be disinfected daily between runs, and any bus/vehicle that has transported a COVID positive individual will be temporarily put out of service until a thorough sanitization is completed.

Processes and Systems

RCPS has established several new processes and systems to ensure safety of teachers and students and the opportunity to engage in new instruction. These include:

- Daily check-in procedures delivered via digital means that assess both student and staff wellness
- Grab-and-go meal service for breakfast and lunch at all schools, which will allow students to eat in their classrooms, thereby eliminating large gatherings in school cafeterias where social distancing recommendations cannot be maintained
- Static seating arrangements in classrooms across the school division that have been approved by division leadership, adhere to six foot physical distancing recommendations, and allow for thorough daily cleaning
- Additional signage to be posted in school buildings to reinforce social distancing in hallways, classrooms, and office settings
- Systematic deep-cleaning of instructional settings and hourly cleansing and disinfecting of high-traffic areas in each school
- Age-appropriate reinforcement of good hygiene practices through posted and verbal messages, reminders from staff, and the wide availability of hand-washing and hand-sanitizing stations throughout the school buildings
- Students to have individual supplies, books, devices, desks, and other classroom necessities to eliminate the need for students to share these items
- Staff members and students, when age-appropriate, to wear face coverings in the hallways and in small-group instruction settings when social distancing is not possible –
- Barriers and partitions to be in place in office settings where the social distancing is not always practical or possible
- School nursing personnel to be trained and properly equipped with PPE and medical supplies/equipment for addressing COVID-19
- Health clinics and nurse stations in the schools to be outfitted with masks for students exhibiting contagious symptoms and separate waiting areas to be available for students whose health conditions require those students to be isolated from others
- FERPA-compliant notifications to inform staff members and families of students who are in regular contact with any student or staff member who is found to have contracted COVID-19
- Visitors to school will be limited to essential support for teaching and learning. All visitors will be screened for COVID-19 symptoms prior to entering the school

- Students will remain with their classroom groups as much as is possible to restrict mixing with other student populations and increasing the risk of exposure to illness.

Technology

For students participating in option one, RCPS will provide technology to students during Home Learning Times. Laptops will be issued to students which will be taken home during Home Learning Time, with content downloaded (K-7) to be completed during the upcoming week. Students in 8-12 will continue to work on assignments in Canvas during Home Learning. Expectations include:

- School-provided devices will have all of the apps and technology capable for any needs during remote learning. Students should use their school devices during this time for compatibility purposes.
- A limited number of internet hot spots are available for checkout by secondary students who need assistance accessing the internet for virtual learning.
- Students (K-12) should check Canvas daily for updated assignment information.
- Students should be courteous and respectful online and adhere to the RCPS Acceptable Use Policy.
- Students participating in virtual classes should take turns, contribute, and ask questions in class discussions.

Students participating in option two should provide their own laptop and have access to reliable, high speed internet. A limited number of laptops will be available for families to borrow on a first come, first served basis. Expectations include:

- Students (K-12) should check Canvas daily for updated assignment information.
- Students are expected to attend synchronous class meetings on a weekly basis.
- Students should be courteous and respectful online and adhere to the RCPS Acceptable Use Policy.
- When participating in virtual, synchronous classes, students should take turns, contribute and ask questions during class discussions.

Communication

RCPS will provide continuous communication to families and the community through the following methods:

- School Messenger calls and emails will be sent to families on a weekly and/or as needed basis to provide pertinent updates and other information.
- RCPS will share information on both the webpage (www.richmond-county.k12.va.us) and its Facebook page.
- Critical news and information will shared through these channels, but additionally through 105.5 WRAR and 107.5 WNNT and the local paper *The Northern Neck News*.

- Families may share input through the parent outreach email address or our parent question hotline (804-333-5080), where they can leave a message and have their call returned. Feedback may also be shared through email, phone calls, or the Facebook platform.

Section Three: New Instruction for All Students

RCPS is committed to providing new instruction for all our students.

Equitable Provision of Instruction.

Students will attend school in a staggered manner, physically reporting to their school site on alternating weeks, Monday through Thursday. While physical attendance will be staggered, instruction will be continuous, as RCPS will implement Home Learning Time (HLT) on weeks where students are not scheduled for face-to-face instruction. Students will be assessed to determine unfinished learning, and differentiation of instruction will be provided through intensive small group instruction.

Literacy and math are critical areas of student instruction, and as such will be the focus of face-to-face learning weeks in K-7. Students will participate in interdisciplinary work in science and social studies, which will support new learning in those areas, occurring during Home Learning Time. Students in grades 8-12 will focus on a typical instructional pattern with a focus on earning standard and verified credits necessary for graduation. All IEPs and ELIPs will be followed, Accommodations and priority will be made for students with disabilities who may need to attend school physically each day to do so.

All students, K-12, will be issued a device to support learning at school and at home. Secondary students who need access to the internet at home will be issued a hot spot, as they are available, and as cell service is available in their area. Students in grades K-7 will download necessary instructional items to their devices to be accessed without the Internet, during Home Learning Weeks. RCPS will continue the use of Canvas as the learning management system, requiring all teachers to provide instructional content via Canvas with the support of content provided by Virtual Virginia.

RCPS will provide training and education opportunities for staff, students and families to include: sending informational materials in print, in both English and Spanish; posting informational training videos on the division webpage and Facebook page; providing in person training, as necessary; and developing a virtual learning course for staff to complete.

Vulnerable and Special Populations

In light of flexible educational options, IEP teams may reconvene in order to determine and document appropriate services. Any considerations regarding alternate scheduling for attendance will be made through the IEP team.

Professional Development

To prepare for the use of Canvas LMS, K-12, and the use of Virtual Virginia, certified staff members will complete the professional development modules for Canvas and Virtual Virginia training no later than August 13, 2020. Teachers will have access to training videos from Canvas and VSTE as they prepare virtual and hybrid lessons.

Other professional development will be provided for teachers throughout the summer and school year including: online instructional resources: effectively using technology as an instructional tool: literacy; math; assessment for learning; and internet safety and etiquette.

All math teachers will participate in professional development to assist them for planning to instruct students with unfinished learning, as well as training provided by the VDOE for the use of formative assessments provided by the state.

The Instructional Technology Resource Teaches will offer support and resources for teachers as they plan and develop lessons throughout the fall semester.

Family Engagement

Families are asked to partner with RCPS to support student growth and success in the following ways:

- Communicate regularly with the classroom teacher regarding student progress.
- Encourage students to attend all classes and complete all assignments.
- Create a comfortable, distraction-free place for students to work when participating in classes at home.
- Encourage students to incorporate physical activity and healthy breaks from classes during the day, while practicing responsible social distancing.
- Utilize support resources for families provided by RCPS instructional staff or via the RCPS website.

Communication

In an effort to provide families with *one* virtual location to access all instructional resources and announcements for every PK-12 student, all teachers will use Canvas, the Learning Management System (LMS) used by RCPS and Virtual Virginia, to facilitate instruction and communication with students and parents. The Canvas Learning Management System will exclusively be used for all communication and instruction.

Parents will have several opportunities, both face-to-face (following social distance guidelines) and virtually to participate in training on Canvas, so they are able to effectively facilitate learning at home.

Grades will continue to be reported through Power School and will be updated weekly.

Section Four: Identification of Instructional Gaps and Student Needs

In order to provide the most effective instruction for students in a modified learning environment, it will be critical to identify students' areas of unfinished learning and support instruction in those areas, as well as providing grade level content. RCPS is committed to providing this type of tailored instruction to all students.

Prior to the end of the 2020 school year, teachers completed the VDOE Tracking Logs for all grades. Completed tracking logs will be shared with 2020-2021 teachers to use when designing instruction, ensuring they address areas of unfinished learning, due to the COVID closure in March.

Teachers will use diagnostic formative assessments in math to pre-assess students prior to instruction in order to determine individual needs and areas of unfinished learning. Teachers will use formative assessments and common formative assessments as well to measure student mastery, provide differentiated instruction in the form of remediation and enrichment. Formative assessments will be administered and used for planning instruction in all core areas. The data collected will be used to design differentiated instruction and to adjust pacing and curriculum guides, as necessary. MAP assessment will be administered three times throughout the school year in grades 2-9 to identify gaps and to measure student growth and progress.

When students return to the building, formative assessments will be used to plan initial instruction. After routines are established and students are re-adjusted to school (approximately 2 to 4 weeks, depending on age), more formal assessments will be administered to identify learning gaps and needs. The following assessments will be administered:

K-2

- VKRP and PALs
- PASST (phonological assessment-if not addressed with new PALs subtests)
- Locally developed periodic common formative assessments (CFA) for math
- VDOE developed formative math assessments

2-5

- MAP Reading and Math, screening assessment for initial assessment
- Locally developed periodic common formative assessments (CFA) for math
- VDOE developed formative math assessments
- Teacher created pre-assessments and student growth assessments (SGA) for science and social studies

6-8

- MAP Reading and Math
- Locally developed periodic common formative assessments (CFA) for math
- VDOE developed formative math assessments
- Science and Social Studies teacher created/ selected pre-assessments

9 - 12

- MAP reading and math for 9th graders –
- Student growth assessments (SGA) for content areas, as provided by Performance Matters
- Locally developed teacher created periodic Common Formative Assessments (CFA) for math
- VDOE developed formative math assessments

Section Five: Remote Learning

If we have learned anything in the last 6 months of providing education to students during the COVID pandemic, it is that the situation can change very quickly. RCPS is dedicated to continuing to provide instruction in a fluid manner for all students, and in the event of the need for a return to complete remote learning.

Our goal for remote learning will be to keep students engaged by operating as close to a typical, in-person day as possible as we work to provide the best academic experience possible while staying connected as a community of learners. Virtual lessons will be crafted to facilitate student learning and growth, while also affording them meaningful opportunities for connection and community. RCPS will utilize remote learning with the understanding that flexibility is needed for families who may have scheduling or internet conflicts.

Remote Learning in this situation will be much different than Continuation of Learning students and teachers engaged in March-May, 2020.

- Newly designed and developmentally appropriate online, teacher led instruction will be provided Monday through Thursday, each week. Office hours and targeted remediation will occur on Fridays.
- Live, real time (synchronous) instruction will be led by RCPS teachers, in addition to digital coursework, through Canvas and other technology interfaces.
- Attendance will be taken daily through the live instructional components.
- Assignments will be graded.
- Daily activities will mirror a typical school/class schedule.
- Wi-Fi hotspots will be available for check out, as available. If at school, students will download necessary instructional items to their devices to be accessed without the use of the Internet, to use while learning virtually from home. They will be encouraged to use school parking lots to access the RCPS wireless network as needed.
- Limited face-to-face instruction will occur for students in grades PK-3, students with disabilities and English Learners. This instruction will follow the model outlined in plan, and is reflected in Figure 1.

Figure 2 provides a sample elementary virtual schedule for the day and Figure 3 provides sample schedules for middle and high school students using a block.

Figure 2. Sample Elementary Virtual Schedule

Time	Activity
<input type="checkbox"/> 8:15 to 8:30	<input type="checkbox"/> Morning Meeting
<input type="checkbox"/> 8:30 to 10:30	<input type="checkbox"/> Literacy: Whole group reading, small group reading, stations
<input type="checkbox"/> 10:30 to 10:40	<input type="checkbox"/> Movement Break
<input type="checkbox"/> 10:40 to 11:40	<input type="checkbox"/> Math: Number Talk and stations
<input type="checkbox"/> 11:40 to 12:10	<input type="checkbox"/> Lunch
<input type="checkbox"/> 12:10 to 1:00	<input type="checkbox"/> Science/Social Studies
<input type="checkbox"/> 1:00 to 1:30	<input type="checkbox"/> Specials

Figure 3. Sample Secondary Block Schedule

Time	Block
<input type="checkbox"/> 8:15 to 9:51	<input type="checkbox"/> 1st Block
<input type="checkbox"/> 9:51 to 11:19	<input type="checkbox"/> 2nd Block
<input type="checkbox"/> 11:19 to 11:49	<input type="checkbox"/> Lunch
<input type="checkbox"/> 11:49 to 1:15	<input type="checkbox"/> 3rd Block
<input type="checkbox"/> 1:15 to 3:00	<input type="checkbox"/> 4th Block