



# **CCPS Recovery and Return-to-Learning Plan**

**Revised August 2023**

*If you require this document in a language other than English, please contact the Carroll County Public Schools International Office at 410-386-1699.*

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# Core Statement, Values, and Beliefs



**Core Statement:** *Carroll County Public Schools: Building the Future*

- Core Values:**
- The Pursuit of Excellence
  - Life-Long Learning and Success
  - A Safe and Orderly Learning Environment
  - Community Participation
  - Fairness, Honesty, and Respect
  - Continuous Improvement
  - Priorities, beliefs, and mores of our local community

<b>Core Beliefs</b>	
<b>The Board of Education believes that the Carroll County Public Schools system operates effectively and efficiently when:</b>	
<b>The greater Carroll County Community:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values the importance of a quality education</li> <li>• Supports educational initiatives at home</li> <li>• Volunteers in schools</li> <li>• Forms partnerships with schools to support system initiatives</li> </ul>
<b>All central office staff:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish and maintain a framework for organizational decisions to be based on empirical data</li> <li>• Establish and maintain a safe and orderly environment for students and staff</li> <li>• Provide adequate resources that are equitably distributed</li> <li>• Provide an equitable educational opportunity for all students</li> <li>• Communicate effectively with all stakeholders</li> <li>• Enforce accountability for system initiatives</li> <li>• Model effective leadership and professional respect</li> <li>• Provide a diverse program of studies with a global perspective designed to meet students' educational goals</li> <li>• Respect and appreciate diversity</li> <li>• Coordinate professional development opportunities that are relevant, site-based, job embedded, aligned with the tenets of cultural proficiency, and meet the needs of all staff</li> <li>• Empower employees, students, and communities to make school-based decisions within an established framework</li> </ul>
<b>All school staff:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome their school community</li> <li>• Establish positive home and school relationships</li> <li>• Provide a safe and orderly learning environment for students and staff</li> <li>• Work to ensure that every child succeeds</li> <li>• Display cultural proficiency while respecting and appreciating diversity</li> <li>• Prepare students with a global education</li> <li>• Place priority on the educational needs of students</li> <li>• Motivate students to learn</li> <li>• Recognize the unique learning styles of each student</li> <li>• Facilitate learning by encouraging, prompting, interacting, and connecting with students</li> <li>• Establish and maintain positive and appropriate relationships with students</li> <li>• Ensure learning by providing instruction that meets each student's individual needs</li> <li>• Support student success</li> <li>• Encourage students to make choices that provide challenges</li> <li>• Assess student progress through both formal and informal methods and then provide appropriate and targeted data-driven instruction</li> <li>• Engage students in rigorous and relevant instruction</li> </ul>
<b>All students:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enroll in coursework that prepares them to be career – college ready</li> <li>• Obtain the skills to thrive as independent 21st century learners</li> <li>• Become knowledgeable, responsible, and caring citizens</li> <li>• Respect and appreciate diversity among peers</li> <li>• Demonstrate respect for the learning environment and other individuals</li> <li>• Reach their potential</li> <li>• Develop effective communication, interpersonal, and leadership skills</li> <li>• Participate in varied co-curricular and extracurricular activities</li> </ul>

# Executive Summary



## Background

The Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) completed the 2020-21 school year in a four day per week in-person instructional model. In accordance with all State guidance and in collaboration with our local Health Department, the Board of Education voted in March 2021 to return all students to four days per week in-person instruction beginning in mid-March 2021. CCPS was informed that this decision did not require that our 2020-21 Reopening Plan be resubmitted to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) for review or approval.

In accordance with HB 1372, *Blueprint for Maryland's Future – Revisions*, CCPS began simultaneously planning for summer 2021 academic recovery as required by the new law. Plans and updates were presented to the Board of Education throughout the spring and early summer. Summer 2021 Academic Recovery began on July 6<sup>th</sup> and will conclude on August 6, 2021.

CCPS returned to full in-person instruction for the 2021-22 school year, as well as for academic recovery programming during the year. The Board of Education announced to the public that we would open for full in-person instruction in September 2021.

## Plan Development

The Superintendent's Cabinet has assumed the lead role in creating this plan. However, various CCPS teams were already formed and working on the plans and implementation for summer recovery, return to full, in-person instruction, and academic recovery. The efforts of those teams are now incorporated into this report.

## Plan Format

The format of this CCPS Recovery and Return-to-Learning Plan is divided into several key elements. First, academic recovery programming for the 2022-23 school year is addressed. The second section provides the framework for educational programming for in-person learning for school year 2023-24. The next two sections – Student Supports and Athletics and System Operational Guidelines – outline the protocols associated with a full return to in-person instruction. Finally, there is an Appendix that incorporates feedback from stakeholder groups and other pertinent background information.

## Stakeholder Feedback

In many ways, soliciting feedback from the public and identified, representative stakeholder groups has been ongoing throughout the entire pandemic and endemic time period. This includes community email blasts following formal Board meetings where relevant items have been discussed including summer recovery, academic recovery, and full, in-person instruction. This process has included public discussions regarding the application of federal ESSER funding to recovery programming. Public comment has been available at most Board meetings on these topics as well.

In addition, communication and collaboration has been on-going with designated employee groups through the reopening and recovery period. With the units most impacted, the Board entered into memoranda of understanding (MOU) to define conditions for employees participating in summer academic recovery and academic recovery.

Finally, we submitted the plan to the specific stakeholder groups. The draft of this plan will be presented to those same stakeholders with a request for the collective feedback from each group on this plan.

This revised plan was vetted through the Superintendent's Cabinet. Cabinet was responsible for discussing updates and then drafting revisions to the plan. Specific Cabinet members vetted changes through their department meeting processes before arriving at a final, revised plan.

None of the identified stakeholder groups provided substantive feedback on the CCPS Recovery Plan and, therefore, there is no feedback to link in the appendix. Additionally, the Board of Education has not received any written feedback or oral testimony that was noted as being specifically in response to the Recovery Plan.



## Communication

Communication of the CCPS Recovery and Return-to-Learning Plan will occur through multiple methods. The plan will be provided to a broad array of stakeholder groups for both information and further dissemination. In addition, our CCPS website will be revised for the 2023-24 school year to include the formal Recovery and Return-to-Learning Plan as well as related information.

Throughout the pandemic, the Board of Education maintained a dedicated portion of each public business meeting agenda to discuss COVID-19 updates. During this agenda item the Board receives updates from the Carroll County Health Officer and discusses the impact of the pandemic on CCPS operations. Updates to operational practices or procedures are also announced in this agenda item. A period of public comment follows later on the agenda and citizens and stakeholders may offer comment in that window.



## Overview

- CCPS provided Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs) during the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years. The ELOs were offered after school and transportation was provided. A Fall session and a Spring Session was offered each year. The ELOs consisted of small group tutoring.
- CCPS provided ELOs during the summers of 2021 and 2022.

## Student Enrollment and Educational Focus

- Students were identified and invited to take part in the ELOs based on student achievement. Pre-assessment recovery data was utilized to drive classroom instruction and based on the MSDE Power Standards/Continuity of Learning Standards provided earlier in the school year.

## Special Education

Summary: Students with disabilities will continue to receive all special education and related services as identified in Individualized Education Programs (IEPs).

- Identification: CCPS will continue to implement its regular process for determining eligibility for special education and related services as well as providing a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) for all eligible students with disabilities.
- Process: CCPS will continue to provide a FAPE for all eligible students with disabilities. This includes continuing to provide in-person special education assessments, services, and related services as identified for eligible students with disabilities. Services for students in the Birth through Kindergarten Program and the Transitions Connection Academy (Post-Secondary Program) will resume full normal operations at the start of the 2021-2022 school year. CCPS is not offering a virtual program.
- Compensatory Services: CCPS will continue to provide compensatory services to eligible students as a result of the pandemic. Compensatory services will continue to be provided before/after school during the 2023-2024 school year. Transportation will continue to be provided to eligible students. The Office of Special Education will continue to work with families to make any remaining special/education recovery/compensatory determinations as data becomes available and apparent. Throughout the window of providing special education recovery/compensatory services, the Office of Special Education has worked collaboratively with families when scheduling special education recovery/compensatory services.
- Social-Emotional Needs of Students with Disabilities: CCPS recognizes some students with disabilities may require additional social/emotional/behavioral supports. Students with disabilities in CCPS may access any of proactive and reactive general education social/emotional/behavioral supports. Some students with disabilities may require more intensive supports. IEP teams may convene at any time to determine if a student requires additional support, accommodations, or specially designed instruction in these areas (or a modification to any existing support in the IEP). IEP teams will continue to implement all social/emotional/behavioral supports identified in IEPs, including but not limited to, Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs), supplemental aids and services, counseling, etc.
- Technology Access for Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities in CCPS continue to have access to all assistive technologies identified in their IEPs. All students in CCPS have a personal device. Parent training and counseling is provided as identified. IEP teams can meet at any time to discuss any need related to assistive technology.
- Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: As was the case prior, during, and after the pandemic, IEP teams are available at any time to convene at the request of the school or family to discuss the need for accommodations or revision to any existing accommodations that ensure access to a FAPE for individual students with disabilities. This includes, but is not limited to accommodations related to masking, distancing, physical barriers like plexiglass, and modified transitions. It is essential that the unique needs of the student be considered. There is no set “menu” of accommodations for students with disabilities as the determination of supplementary aides and services, including accommodations, must be made on an individual basis by IEP teams. Any accommodation identified by the IEP team will be implemented by the IEP team. CCPS will continue to follow IDEA and COMAR along with any technical assistance provided by MSDE with regards to supplementary aides and services.

## Academic Recovery



- IEP Team Meetings: IEP team meetings will continue to take place in-person unless the family requests a virtual meeting. CCPS will utilize Microsoft Teams for virtual meetings. IEP teams may amend IEPs as needed in accordance with IDEA and COMAR.
- Learning Continuity Plan: CCPS will continue to meet the requirement to include a learning continuity plan that will be implemented during emergency conditions. These plans will be implemented should schools in CCPS be closed for 10 or more days at any time for all students without face-to-face instruction. These plans will continue to be developed/revise at the time of each individual student's annual IEP meeting. CCPS is awaiting formal guidance from the MSDE on this requirement.
- MSDE Guidance: CCPS will continue to implement guidance provided by the MSDE, including Technical Assistance Bulletins (TABs) and TIPS documents.

### English Learners (ELs)

- Identification, Instruction and Support: CCPS will continue to use state-identified English Language Development (ELD) screening tools to test students for ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) service eligibility. Upon identification, CCPS will provide content and language instruction and support in a variety of settings. ESOL staff will continue to collaborate, co-plan and co-teach with content teachers, as well as develop and modify resources, materials and assessments. Extended Learning Opportunities will also be offered and provided as needed to support recovery efforts.
- Professional Learning and Support: CCPS will continue to provide individualized professional learning opportunities to all teachers, administrators and other school-based staff as needed to address best practices and strategies for supporting ELs and differentiating content in mainstream/content settings as well as blended learning environments. Supports include embedded co-planning, peer mentoring and curriculum and assessment modifications.
- Family Engagement: ESOL Family Engagement events will take place regionally throughout the county for EL families. Focus areas include but are not limited to: sharing educational and community resources and language/content-based activities to strengthen the home/school connection and increase content and language development, technology tutorials in which staff will lead EL families in navigating school-based online platforms and programs and educating families in potential career pathways for ELs in which ESOL staff will collaborate with CTE staff to co-plan and deliver professional learning and informational opportunities for EL families. ESOL staff will also continue to conduct home visits and material deliveries as needed, along with connecting families to essential community resources.

### Equity Focus

- The Carroll County Public Schools Board of Education is committed to the success of each student in our schools. For that success to occur for each student in lifelong learning and the world of work, the district prioritizes educational equity by recognizing and removing institutional barriers and ensuring that social identifiers are not obstacles to accessing educational opportunities and supports that benefit each student. Desired Outcomes: (1) The Board of Education evaluates the impact of every policy, procedure and practice through an equity lens; (2) Every student in Carroll County Public Schools is provided equitable educational opportunities and access to educational rigor, resources, services, programs, supports, activities, and culturally relevant instruction and curriculum; (3) Achievement is raised for all Carroll County Public School students and that action plans are developed and monitored to address persistent disparities; (4) Carroll County Public Schools demonstrates equal opportunity employment by maintaining practices that recruit, employ, retain, promote, and support a culturally diverse and highly qualified skilled workforce; (5) Every school and worksite within the school system will be free of discriminatory acts of hate, violence, insensitivity, and disrespect and; (6) Carroll County Public Schools provides equitable and inclusive learning environments that empower students to understand and appreciate diverse cultures within and around their community and that prepare them for lifelong learning, the world of work and full participation in representative government.

# In-Person Learning



## Overview

As noted above in the Executive Summary, CCPS has held in-person learning for students since the conclusion of the 2020-21 school year. Parents were queried regarding a virtual option for certain students and, due to limited interest, CCPS did not implement a virtual learning option.

A cross-departmental executive team provides direction as it relates to identification of students, appropriate interventions, data collection and targets, transportation and meals.

## Spring 2024 Projected Targets and Results

The targets for Spring 2023 were based on a 20% reduction from Spring 2022 in the number of students with at least one failing grade in the student groups below as measured by Q3 report card grades. The projected targets for Spring 2024 are based on a 10% reduction from Spring 2023 in the number of students with at least one failing grade in the student groups below as measured by the Q3 report card grades. Report card grades are reported quarterly in accordance with CCPS policies, administrative regulations, and the CCPS Model for Quality Instruction (MQI) and are a cumulative reflection of achievement over the marking period.

Count of Students with at Least One Failing Grade in Q3		2021-22 Performance	2022-23 Target (less than/equal to number identified)	2022-23 Performance	2022-23 Target Met?	2023-24 Target (less than/equal to number identified)	2023-24 Target Met?
MALE	Alternative	21	17	18	No	14	TBD
	Elementary (3rd to 5th)	91	73	112	No	90	TBD
	Middle	237	190	196	No	157	TBD
	High	428	342	433	No	346	TBD
FEMALE	Alternative	14	11	7	Yes	6	TBD
	Elementary (3rd to 5th)	56	45	67	No	54	TBD
	Middle	119	95	120	No	96	TBD
	High	270	216	267	No	214	TBD
FREE/REDUCED MEALS	Alternative	25	20	16	No	13	TBD
	Elementary (3rd to 5th)	92	74	118	No	94	TBD
	Middle	196	157	227	No	182	TBD
	High	314	251	379	No	303	TBD
SPECIAL EDUCATION	Alternative	3	2	3	No	2	TBD
	Elementary (3rd to 5th)	22	18	30	No	24	TBD
	Middle	49	39	39	Yes	31	TBD
	High	61	49	69	No	55	TBD
ESOL	Alternative	0	0	0	Yes	0	TBD
	Elementary (3rd to 5th)	9	7	9	No	7	TBD
	Middle	10	8	7	Yes	6	TBD
	High	17	14	22	No	18	TBD
AFRICAN AMERICAN	Alternative	3	2	4	No	3	TBD
	Elementary (3rd to 5th)	8	6	13	No	10	TBD
	Middle	26	21	31	No	25	TBD
	High	58	46	55	No	44	TBD
HISPANIC	Alternative	1	1	1	Yes	1	TBD
	Elementary (3rd to 5th)	22	18	28	Yes	22	TBD



## In-Person Learning



	Middle	43	34	38	Yes	30	TBD
	High	87	70	89	Yes	71	TBD
WHITE	Alternative	30	24	19	No	15	TBD
	Elementary (3rd to 5th)	102	82	116	Yes	93	TBD
	Middle	261	209	217	Yes	174	TBD
	High	518	414	503	Yes	402	TBD

### Special Education Recovery/Compensatory (R/C) Services Update

#### Overview:

- R/C services were delivered within the ELO and ESY infrastructure
- R/C services were delivered hourly, in half-day increments, or in full-day increments Monday through Friday
- Data reported below is as of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023

#### Part B (students receiving services through an IEP):

- # of students eligible for R/C services: 1,525
- # of students who have begun receiving R/C services: 1,525
- Number of students completed as of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023: 1,478

#### Part C (students receiving services through an IFSP or extended IFSP):

- # of students eligible for R/C services: 21
- # of students who have begun receiving services: 21
- # of students completed as of June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023: 21



### Student Attendance

Carroll County Public Schools values the importance of consistent attendance and its impact on academic success for in-person instruction. Should a student be absent, the parent must provide documentation to the school regarding the reason for the absence/tardiness in order for the school to code it correctly in the student attendance record. Parents have up to five school days to verify an absence or tardy. As schools continue to confront the challenges of COVID, there may be times when a student's attendance is impacted due to him/her following the health and safety guidelines. While families and schools work together to deal with potential cases in which a student may need to be quarantined as established by safety protocol, overall attendance rates may fluctuate throughout the year.

Students in quarantine due to being identified as close contacts will be coded L17 (Medical Exclusion). This absence will be considered excused, and will not impact the student's attendance record. Students who are symptomatic will be coded I02 (Sick), even while they are in quarantine, since they are ill. This will be considered an excused absence.

### Student Support

Providing appropriate support for our students is critical to ensure success. All principals have participated in professional learning focusing on establishing positive school climate and culture and will be reviewing instructional and mental health best-practices with staff during pre-service week. School leadership teams have plans that focus on instructional outcomes and reducing the learning gap. In the areas of mental health, maximizing Tier I interventions will be critical to support all students and assisting with identifying students who need more targeted support in a Tier II or III delivery. Second Step SEL curriculum was implemented for all elementary grades in the 22-23 school year. All CCPS middle schools have implemented the Sources of Strength program which is designed to contribute to positive school culture and increase students' self-awareness and advocacy skills. At the high school level, 5 out of 8 schools have implemented Sources of Strength and all high schools continue to use advisory lessons to ensure students are aware of the resources available for support.

School Counselors at all levels teach lessons, provide individual and group counseling, and respond to individual needs as they arise as well as support school-based efforts relating to professional learning for staff. School Psychologists support school leadership teams in implementing school-wide initiatives focusing on creating a positive climate and responding to student needs. Our Pupil Personnel Workers meet with families throughout the summer to address attendance issues in the previous years and develop plans to begin the year with a positive outlook and a commitment to attend school, removing any barriers. During the school year, PPWs continue to serve as the liaison with families as they coordinate services both within the school and the community at large.

The CCPS Summer Extended Learning Opportunity (ELO) program served as a springboard to reducing the learning gap of our students due to the instructional impact of COVID-19. Beyond the Summer Recovery program, after school learning support will be offered throughout the year and additional instructional and support FTE have been added at each school. A Coordinator of Home and Hospital Instruction and Quarantine Support position was established to serve the expected increase in applications for Home and Hospital Teaching and to support students who are placed in quarantine because of COVID-19 protocols. The coordinator links families in need with teachers who can support students who need additional assistance beyond the asynchronous learning opportunities that will be provided through the LMS by each teacher.

### Section 504 Services

Principals ensure that 504 meetings are scheduled to continue appropriate services and accommodations for students. Delivery of accommodations and modifications will take place in school, as all students will be attending in person.

### Students in Quarantine

All teachers are using the learning management system regularly with students. Each teacher updates the LMS with learning resources that align with the content being taught. When students are quarantined, they access resources and

## Student Supports and Athletics



take part in asynchronous learning through the LMS. Students are able to utilize resources, turn in completed work, and communicate with their teacher through the LMS. The Student Services Coordinator links families in need with teachers who can support students who need additional assistance beyond the asynchronous learning opportunities provided through the LMS by each teacher.

Students in quarantine participate in asynchronous learning through the learning management system. Teachers ensure that learning resources aligned to their current lessons are readily available on the LMS. Further, students are able to turn in work and communicate with their teacher using the LMS. To support students in quarantine during, each school received a 1.0 Instructional Assistant FTE for a Quarantine Success Coach. This staff member communicates with quarantined students and families during the school day, and coordinates any needed academic or social-emotional support.

### Student Extra-Curriculars and Athletics

All typical extra-curricular activities take place in person.

The following protocols apply to student athletics:

- Coaches will keep attendance for all practices, games, and team activities.
- Coaches will remind students experiencing symptoms to stay home. Coaches will send home any student exhibiting symptoms while at a practice or game.
- All coaches completed the online NFHS COVID-19 course. National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) [Learning Center](#) has collaborated with the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) to develop “[COVID-19 for Coaches and Administrators](#).” The course includes information from the “[Guidance for Opening Up High School Athletics and Activities](#)” document that was released by the NFHS in May 2021 for its 51 member state high school associations to consider in restarting high school athletics and other activity programs across the nation. Additionally, the new Learning Center course offers vital information on COVID-19 for coaches and school administrators on conducting workouts, practices and contests as safely as possible.
- Students will not share water bottles.
- Water coolers may be used for refilling of water bottles.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided to every coach and available for students and staff during practices and games.
- Coaches will work to limit overcrowding in locker rooms.

# System Operational Guidelines



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## Building Access Guidelines

Schools and facilities are open for parents and visitors following our normal procedures. The CCPS volunteer program has been reinstated following our normal volunteer and visitor procedures. Parents and guardians will be able to eat with their students in the cafeteria, as well as, volunteer in their child's classroom or school. Normal procedures for community use of facilities continue to be in place.

## Screening and Quarantine Guidelines

CCPS sends monthly community messages informing employees, community members, and students regarding updated COVID-19 information. COVID-19 information will be available on the COVID-19 section of the CCPS website along with CCPS Close Contact Definitions, Quarantine Exceptions, and Communication Plan for COVID-19 Positive Cases.

## Vaccination Efforts

CCPS Health Services staff work closely with our partners at the Carroll County Health Department to be sure families are aware of the COVID-19 vaccination opportunities within Carroll County. Communication is sent to families as requested by the Health Department.

## Building Space Guidelines

CCPS provides commercial air purifiers to schools for all student instructional spaces and some designated office areas. School health suites have with industrial air filtration units. Additionally, Plexiglas barriers were provided to reception high volume areas. Those barriers remain available to staff who wish to continue to use them.

To the extent practicable, schools have the flexibility to arrange layouts and schedules to space students where possible.

## Personal Protective Equipment Guidelines

As per the Maryland State Board of Education's regulations for Face Coverings in School Facilities, students and staff may wear a face covering while inside of schools or any school board-owned facility. Students who come to school without a face covering may request and will be given a face mask to wear. If a student soils a face mask during the day, the student will be provided with a new face mask.

CCPS maintains quantities of PPE including masks, gloves, gowns and face shields. Any employees who wish to receive additional PPE may make a request to the principal or supervisor.

## Employee Use of Leave

CCPS employees will use their available leave in the event of a COVID-related illness and/or required quarantine per their respective Master Agreement, BOE policy, and/or CCPS regulation/procedure.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting Guidelines

CCPS will clean schools and facilities daily. Particular attention will be paid to high touch areas and surfaces. CCPS maintains supplies of approved disinfectant in each school and facilities. Each school also has disinfecting mister machines that will be used to respond to areas of exposure.

## Pupil Transportation Guidelines

School bus routes will be made available to parents approximately 4 weeks prior to school opening. To the extent possible based on ridership, drivers may space students on the bus. When possible, windows and roof hatches will be opened to increase ventilation. CCPS provides disinfectant product and spray bottles to contractors for the driver and attendant to disinfect the high touch areas on the bus as appropriate.

## Food Services Guidelines

Food Services will operate the traditional School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs. Food Services will utilize the Maryland Direct Certification System (MCDS) to match as many students as possible for the FaRMs program

## System Operational Guidelines



and promote the use of the meal benefit applications for other households to ensure optimal identification of households needing this assistance