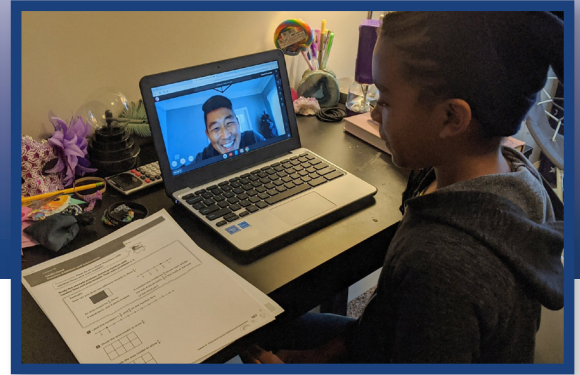


CAPITAL PLAN 2027 AND COVID-19



Advancements in medical technology indicate there is a light at the end of the tunnel when it comes to the COVID-19 pandemic. After such an unprecedented and unusual 2020 and 2021, it is natural to think about the way Capital Plan 2027 may play a role in managing future situations with similar complexities.

The answer is that Capital Plan 2027 includes funding flexibility for future health and safety concerns, such as COVID-19. Because situations like these are ever-evolving, it is more practical to be adaptable rather than to prematurely identify full-scale solutions.

Considering the current pandemic, however, Fulton County Schools has fared better than most school systems locally and nationally. Proactive, long-range technology planning due to previous capital plans as well as swift action helped the school district successfully navigate many of the unexpected issues that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic.

PRIOR TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENTS

In particular, the technology investments of Fulton's previous capital plans made it possible to pivot instruction online in Spring 2020 and offer in-person or at-home learning options during the 2020-2021 school year. As some examples:

- More than 80,000 laptops, primarily funded by ESPLOST, were issued as take-home learning devices to students in grades 2-12 to use for remote learning with their teachers during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Information and collaboration software applications, like Infinite Campus, ClassLink and Microsoft Teams, connected students virtually with their teachers and kept business operations going throughout the school district.
- Safari Montage, a database for storing FCS-created lesson plans and instructional materials, helped teachers provide digital content to students when schools were closed in Spring 2020. Other safe, supported, and effective applications were used to provide access to high quality instructional content.

VIRTUAL LEARNING

School systems, including Fulton County Schools, learned from the COVID-19 pandemic that learning and teaching can successfully occur anytime, anywhere using appropriate instructional and technology strategies. While face-to-face learning continues to be the preferred educational model in our schools, virtual education has demonstrated some benefits and is in demand due to its expanded curricular offerings and flexibility.



In line with this national trend, the Fulton Academy of Virtual Excellence (FAVE) opened its virtual doors in August 2021 as Fulton County Schools' first full-time online school for students in grades 3-12. Capital Plan 2027 will support the technology needs of this growing school.

FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Protective equipment such as clear acrylic partitions, enhanced cleaning products, safety signage, paper towel dispensers and hand sanitizer stations were quickly put inside schools and administrative buildings to combat the spread of COVID-19.

In addition, HVACs were adjusted to increase ventilation in accordance with health agency and industry recommendations. MERV-13 filters, which are some of the highest EPA-rated air filters available, also were installed. While these facility-related items were purchased through the school district's general fund, Capital Plan 2027 includes some funding flexibility for future health and safety concerns, such as COVID-19.