

AEA Task Force Meeting 7/1/2020

Principles for a Safer and Healthier Return

Health and Safety - PPE and Distancing Protocols

- The district must provide PPE including: Masks for those who come to school unprepared, goggles, face shields, gloves and gowns available to all staff
- All staff and students (prek-12) are required to wear masks
- There must be established consequences for staff and students who refuse to wear PPE
- 6 feet of social distance is adhered to... not 3. (see Lexington)
- Student to teacher ratio is 10:1 or 12:1 (CDC guidelines)

Expectation is that health and safety is number one... and every decision needs to be driven by that fact.

Health and Safety - Facilities

- Planning for space: 6 foot is non-negotiable, plexiglass stands should be considered especially for small breakout groups and small spaces, how to plan for students who move in and out of classrooms, change classes, or are taken out for groups.
- Staff and students need healthy air flow, fans are needed, windows opened when possible. **District must investigate large tents or other alternative spaces for outside learning.**
- Each building requires a location for sick children other than the nurses' offices.
- Sanitation: paper towels, soap, and availability to water for all, cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer must be regularly available. Custodial staff must have resources to sanitize classrooms.
- Sick time policies need to be evaluated, COVID testing - is this covered? are we required to get tested to return, do we all get tested before we come back?

Social Emotional Concerns – Educators

- Students cannot experience SEL or wellness unless there are confident adults providing instruction in a safe and anxiety/trauma- free environment

- District must acknowledge that many educators are working parents with small children, are caring for elderly parents, and the effects of exposure or remote teaching on home space should be mitigated.
- Work-time and home-time must be distinct if we return to remote learning.
- Boundaries, privacy rights, and parameters around video and audio must be established.
- Educators cannot be expected to fund safety supplies.
- Elderly educators, and at-risk educators must be provided safe options.
- Educator evaluations must be relaxed and made flexible- uploading evidence and measurement are not the priority in this crisis.
- Live faculty meetings, department meetings, IEP meetings should not be required and can be held remotely.

Teacher Expectations

- Curriculum will not look the way it has in the past, tailored to frameworks. Instead it must be tailored by educators to match what they determine the needs of their students are.
- Educators are not responsible for lunch clean-up, disinfecting rooms, etc.
- Educator Evaluations: must be limited, changed or eliminated to allow educators to adapt to whatever happens before we take on the added burden and stress of meeting new expectations for us. Student engagement is drastically different and nearly immeasurable. Our expectations of such must be put on hold or considered with much flexibility.
- Attitudes about academic rigor have to change: again, more flexibility is required of educators and students, and rating educators on this aspect of the job is problematic. Faculty will need more built-in time to adjust curriculum, teaming and lesson materials.
- Must be clear protocol for steps classroom educators take with students who display symptoms, especially coughing?
- Faculty must define parameters of actual learning and simple task completion.
- Parent and educator communication parameters must be defined- educators are not “on-demand.”

Student Expectations

- Remote Learning/Video concerns regarding student presence, privacy, and norms must be addressed with educator input.
- SEL concerns – remote learning effects on socialization, cyber bullying, and participation must be addressed and handled consistency.

- Educators must participate in developing a Grading system with accountability and feedback.
- District must examine different models of transitional or phased reopening for different grade level: possibilities could include starting year with previous year's students, min- meet and greet events... etc.

Elementary and Middle School Schedule

- **Safe Entry and Exit** – Entering/leaving the buildings may take 45-60 minutes across the schools – staggered movement and occupancy must be monitored.
- **Safe Specialists Spaces/Teaching** - Specialists will need spaces to operate if classes are occurring- passing time must be extended.
- **Curriculum Adjustment** – Additional time needed for transitions must mean that time-on-learning is flexible/relaxed.
- **Technology Training** – There is a need do a better training for students in terms of using technology in school so that they are better prepared for remote learning if necessary.
- **Delivery and Instruction** – District must provide time for grade level team-planning to ensure consistent instruction across grades and schools at elementary and middle levels.

High School Schedule

- Schedule must be a hybrid model: synchronous and asynchronous- must be a simple schedule that students and teachers can follow and be successful.
- We need some in-person interaction/teaching with teachers in a small groups, and built in time in the schedule for specialists/services/IEP compliance.
- District must preserve teacher prep time and duty-free lunch time.
- We need time for collaboration for regular ed and special ed and team-based inclusion support.

The schedule should reflect logistical, safety, learning, and well-being of students and teachers:

Possibilities for schedules

1. Use a 4 x 4 block schedule/semester schedule: will allow us to stay with kids longer
 B days: one cohort of students
 G days: one cohort of students
 Teachers every day
 Eliminates much of the movement- *see Lexington model: every other week.*

2. 8 classes every day/one third of students every day

3. Half day in morning, Half day in afternoon, Break at noon for lunch and cleaning.
4. Two or three intensive classes over the course of one month
5. Synchronous learning and asynchronous remote access during this time of in class learning
 - Day 1 A-M
 - Day 2 N-Z
 - Asynchronous would be homework time

IA Expectations and Roles

- Job security- IAs and other support staff should be given notice of their position in APS in a timely and clear manner.
- IAs should have clear, consistent directives and roles in case we go remote again. We need to be fully and properly utilized.
- The district must provide IA PD training that is meaningful, relevant, and informed by need. We were never properly trained on how to do our jobs as it is. We are capable and adaptable, so we have learned on the job, but we shouldn't have to.
- District should provide **Hazard pay for IAs in close proximity to students**, and a consistently applied pay differential for IAs who take over teacher duties.
- There needs to be scheduled time for IAs to meet with, learn from, and support other IAs.

Standardized Testing Moratorium

- **State level: Moratorium on MCAS for 4 years** to preserve as much learning time as possible, recognize flawed data collection, and acknowledge exacerbations of the crisis on an already ineffective tool for measuring school success.
- **APS district level: task force to look at standardized testing including:**
 - Prohibit use of testing data in any form of teacher evaluation
 - Student cohorts- testing is disruptive:
 - Special Education
 - ELL
 - SEL
 - District must reduce testing that's in district "control"
 - Cost of testing - could that money be spent in "better ways"
 - MCAS, MAP, IAAT loss of time on learning - We are losing close to 10% of teaching time in testing each year.
 - Even when testing identifies students in need of intervention there is nothing systemic in place to provide this type of instruction (Title 1 varies, lack of intervention specialists for math, Tier 2 support missing).
 - Look at AP testing. Should students be required to take the test in order to get the AP Distinction on transcript? Should AP be encouraged at the rate it has during pandemic?

Social Emotional Concerns - Students and Families

- Teachers need support (and time) to be able to provide SEL opportunities and how/when/where to refer students for mental health support.
- We need a multi-tiered system of supports to monitor the social and emotional well-being of our students (always) but especially during the pandemic. This should include criteria for concerns, as well as specific and targeted interventions.
- We need a way to gather student input across the district on their experiences and how we can best support them.
- There needs to be regular communication and ways to seek feedback from families in order to best support them and provide resources.