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MISSION

Every single one of our students thrives — not by accident, but by design. Our students graduate ready for college and career because our schools are joyful places that create excellence for all, especially for our students of color. Our children experience both meaningful rigor and support from teachers, support providers and leaders. Students, families and staff work together to build vibrant school cultures designed to ensure our community thrives.
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In planning for the 2020-21 return to school, DPS has updated the Remote Learning Plan based on learnings from the Spring 2020 period of remote learning due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. This updated plan explains how DPS will approach remote learning so our students can continue learning in the event of health guidance requiring students not attend school in person. This plan is also applicable for students and families who choose the fully Virtual Program this fall. This plan represents DPS’ commitment to making every effort to ensure the learning of each and every Denver student, especially our most systemically marginalized, continues to be successful.

The Remote Learning plan is founded on the following principles:

1. **Accelerating unfinished teaching/learning**
2. **Providing fluidity across scenarios**
   (the in-person and remote learning experiences)
3. **Engaging students who need additional academic support**

DPS teachers will continue to provide students with instruction that is designed to continue and build upon the learning trajectory already established in the classroom.

We are working closely with our charter schools, and they are building virtual learning plans from similar options. We’re all in this together.
OUR APPROACH TO REMOTE LEARNING

Our approach to remote learning is based on findings from the Remote Learning Plan in the spring and in service of continuously improving services for schools and students, with a focus on engaging our students that need the most academic support.
Equity as Our Core Identity
Our Approach to Remote Learning

Equity remains our foundational cornerstone for remote learning. As such DPS remains committed to a holistic approach to our remote learning. We commit to providing high quality, culturally and linguistically responsive academic support for all of our learners, especially our students of color, with a focus on the intersection of our English Learners and students with disabilities. In addition to academic support, DPS will continue to support students and families with their physical, mental, and emotional health during this unprecedented time. More details on this holistic approach are provided throughout this plan.
What We Learned in the Spring
Based on Survey Data and Stakeholder Feedback

• CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS
  Remote learning requires the same strong commitment to culturally responsive practices as in-person learning in order to engage students that need the most academic support.

• DEVICES AND INTERNET ACCESS
  Many families had difficulty getting stable internet access.

• STUDENTS WITH IEPS
  Remote learning needs to be specialized to fit the individual needs of students, particularly for our students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs).

• COMMUNICATION AND LIVE DAILY INSTRUCTION
  It’s important for students to engage in live daily instruction (synchronous instruction) and communication with their teacher and other school staff.

• FAMILY SUPPORT FOR REMOTE LEARNING
  Many families expressed difficulty with supporting students with remote learning, especially when they had not typically used devices for core instruction previously.

• LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LMS)
  Families and teachers working with multiple classes reported difficulty in navigating different LMS’s across content areas.

• ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
  English Language Development teachers reported the highest levels of well-being, which equated to higher ratings of reported student engagement.
What We’re Doing Differently

Based on These Learnings

• **CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS**
  Curriculum for remote learning will include all district-wide curriculum revisions to address culturally responsive practices.

• **DEVICES AND INTERNET ACCESS**
  We are focusing on closing the gaps for students on access to devices and internet. We are providing resources in multiple languages and partnering with our FACE team to ensure we are reaching all students.

• **STUDENTS WITH IEPS AND/OR 504 PLANS**
  Students will continue to receive special education services outlined by their Individual Education Program (IEP) during virtual learning. School teams and parents will collaboratively develop plans to ensure that the student receives a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

• **COMMUNICATION AND LIVE DAILY INSTRUCTION**
  Students will receive live daily instruction from their teacher(s); common expectations across DPS set for grading and attendance.

• **FAMILY SUPPORT FOR REMOTE LEARNING**
  Preparing for remote lessons and engagement that require less at-home adult assistance; including prioritizing synchronous instruction opportunities for students. Starting in-person learning with the use of learning management systems and computers for each and every DPS student.

• **LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LMS)**
  Ensuring consistency in learning management systems (Seesaw for K-5 and Schoology for 6-12).

• **ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS**
  Continue providing differentiated supports for teachers teaching English Language Development (ELD) and instruction in Spanish.
The Remote Learning Plan
Leverages Distance Learning to Foster Sustained Student Growth

ACCELERATING UNFINISHED TEACHING AND LEARNING

DPS has engaged with stakeholders nationally to determine how to approach unfinished teaching and learning and adaptations of the scope and sequence for 2020-21. The district will support instruction through a variety of digital and non-digital materials to address learning loss and social emotional/mental health challenges prompted or exacerbated by the COVID crisis. This will include DPS support for the whole child through culturally responsive education (CRE) and social-emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) best practices.

PROVIDING FLUIDITY ACROSS SCENARIOS

DPS is committed to providing fluidity of instruction between remote and rejoin scenarios as students potentially move from in-person to virtual programming. This includes improved readiness for hybrid learning and improving the quality and effectiveness of our virtual programming strategies. We are committed to transition students from one scenario to the other without significant loss or disruption of learning.

ENGAGING STUDENTS WHO NEED ADDITIONAL ACADEMIC SUPPORT

The district will ensure that regardless of whether students are in person or remote they will receive the academic support they need to make adequate progress. We commit to re-engaging students that need the most academic support, including students who did not participate in Remote Learning in Spring 2020. We will improve on our digital engagement to ensure that every student who needs academic support will receive additional touch points from adults.
Best Practices for Remote Learning

General Guidance

• PRIMARY GOAL
  Provide students with opportunities to continue their trajectory of learning (e.g., scope and sequence; ELD/transitional native language instruction (TNLI) models; Advanced Placement (AP); Concurrent Enrollment (CE); Career and Technical Education (CTE). This should consist of providing students with access to content, support, and feedback.

• DEEPEN CRE MINDSETS
  With the Culturally Responsive Education Mindsets as a frame, examine what to consider starting and stopping within classroom practice so that teacher and school bias is checked and changed in support of all students.

• ESTABLISH STRUCTURE
  Begin by orienting students and families to the new environment, creating structure, with a focus on maintaining human interaction.

• CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT
  Maintain a focus on continuous improvement. Practices should evolve and improve as we continue to learn.

• SUPPORTING TEACHERS
  School leaders should work to ensure all teachers have the resources, support, and flexibility needed to promote student learning to the best of their ability. Support should include adjusting expectations based on the mental and physical health of our staff and their families.

• SUPPORTING STUDENTS AND FAMILIES
  Teachers should be flexible regarding expectations and processes for student learning, with an understanding remote learning conditions will vary across students.
In order to provide fluidity across scenarios, our approach to remote learning remains consistent regardless of the scenario students and educators experience. This section highlights the various scenarios students may experience across the 2020-21 school year as a result of change health conditions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.
Remote Learning
During COVID Resurgence and Quarantine Periods

In the event of a COVID resurgence where a cohort, school, region, or full district have to go back into fully remote instruction.

- Full digital instruction provided by their in-person teacher from their home school.

- Teachers design the sequence of learning based on where they left off in person and what their students are working on (typically the district-supported curricula).

- Learning management systems (LMSs) used in person will be used online: Seesaw (K-5) and Schoology (6-12) (i.e., videos, live instruction).

- Student communication and instruction to continue digitally through synchronous instruction which will include scheduled classes or specific times on a daily basis.
Fully Virtual/100% Remote Program

Students and families who select remote will be enrolled for a full semester or the entire 2020-21 school year. Movement between in person and the fully Virtual Program can only happen at semester break or through the admin transfer process.

- Full digital instruction provided by a teacher assigned to deliver fully remote instruction for the full semester/school year.

- Teachers design the sequence of learning based on the centrally-supported curriculum and trajectory of learning (scope and sequence).

- Learning management systems (LMSs) will be the same as all other programming: Seesaw (K-5) and Schoology (6-12) (i.e., videos, live instruction).

- Student communication and instruction to continue digitally through synchronous instruction, which will include scheduled classes or specific times on a daily basis.

- Students will maintain their home school enrollment so they do not lose their spot in their home school while attending the fully Virtual Program.
In order to accelerate unfinished teaching and learning, DPS has developed scope and sequence documents for our district-supported curriculum that address places in the curriculum where teachers can provide “just-in-time” learning for students. All district-supported curricula will be available digitally through SeeSaw (K-5) and Schoology (6-12).
Learning Management Systems (LMS) for 2020-21

In order to better align our efforts and meet the needs of students and families, we will be limiting our learning management systems to **Seesaw for grades K-5** and **Schoology for grades 6-12** moving forward. The fully licensed versions of each LMS will be purchased centrally.

- We chose these programs based on the ability for DPS to purchase school-wide equitable access for all students and provide consistent professional learning for administrators, staff, students and families.

- By streamlining the use of our learning management systems across DPS, we will be able to better track student data and progress. It will also allow Specialized Service Providers (SSPs) and other educators to support multiple students across many different schools, all within one system. Families will also have an easier time with fewer systems.

- The DPS Educational Technology Team will provide professional learning and Schoology courses to support teachers and leaders with making this transition.
Supports for Remote Learning

For the fully Virtual Program, we will use district-adopted curriculum and provide links to these online/digital resources through the grade-level designated Learning Management System. These supports will also be available for teachers to use during any period of remote learning. In service of equity, this decision to use district-provided curriculum was made based on the following factors:

- Courses are available in both English and Spanish per language allocation guidelines. Resources have language parity.
- English Language Development courses are available.
- Integrated Content Language Development supports are embedded in content and include supports for completing capstone tasks in secondary math and English.
- Curriculum has more culturally responsive materials through revisions and ongoing curriculum work.
- District-adopted curricula will allow for students to move more fluidly across scenarios.
- DPS Scope and Sequence documents identify potential areas of unfinished teaching, how to assess the unfinished learning, and provide guidance on how to support.
- DPS curricula meet grade-level rigor expectations and are aligned to Colorado standards.

For curriculum materials that teachers would need and/or teacher guides/materials not available digitally, teachers should follow the provided guidelines.

Additional courses (i.e., elective courses for secondary), will be available through the BOCES [paid for by the district].
## Digital Curriculum for Core Subject Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>District-Supported Curricula</th>
<th>District-Created Curricula</th>
<th>Supplemental Materials</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Language Arts*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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*Teacher and student-facing materials are available digitally. Books/texts are not.

**High School Biology is the only course available in Spanish.
Attendance Expectations

During any period of remote learning, students will be considered in attendance when there is at least a “touchpoint” between the teacher of record and the student.

- The prioritized definition of a “touchpoint” is the student attending a synchronous class during the time they would typically be in their in-person class.

- Should a student be unable to participate in synchronous instruction due to extenuating circumstances, other examples of a “touchpoint” may include but are not limited to an email exchange with the teacher, an exit ticket/work completion, attendance at an online meeting/office hours session, a text message exchange with the teacher, or a phone call with the teacher.

The minimum requirements for attendance are as follows by grade level:

- 6-12: Attendance must be taken every scheduled period of the day.
- K-5: Attendance must be taken daily.

Learn more: [www.tinyurl.com/AttendanceGuidance](http://www.tinyurl.com/AttendanceGuidance)
Assessment and Accountability Implications

Current guidance is that all state and federal assessment requirements will remain in place for all students.

- At this time, state guidance is that assessments such as SAT, PSAT, ACCESS and CMAS are assessments that must be taken in person.
- DPS believes these assessment experiences are valuable for all students and therefore, we are working on a plan to safely accommodate students for opportunities to access testing experiences throughout the school year.
- Parents do have the opportunity to opt out of state assessments, as with previous years.

Teachers and students will be able to access all additional district-supported assessments digitally.

- District-supported assessments (e.g., unit assessments, Istation) include diagnostic items to provide teachers with additional data to support unfinished teaching and learning.
- Assessments such as Istation and district-created interim assessments can be taken digitally from home.

At this time, implications for state and district accountability are still being determined.
Grading Policies

Grading students during remote learning will remain consistent with the in-person grading policy. For the 2020-21 school year, the following adjustments will be made to support students with the challenges associated with this year’s context:

• 6th-12th grade teachers should not give “F” grades.

• Instead, teachers should enter a grade of “Incomplete” for 6th-12th graders. This “incomplete” will have a neutral GPA impact. 9th-12th grade students will have to recover the credit via credit recovery.

District partners will continue contingency planning around grading, as needed.

Teachers will utilize descriptive feedback within their learning management system to provide continuity and ensure equitable feedback on learning.

The district will ensure digital report cards are available in various portals with any necessary flags/additional information.

For students who experience challenges accessing course content, whether due to personal or familial illness, internet or other challenges, the program/school will work individually to support those students and adjust grading practices, as needed.
Physical and Mental Health Considerations

Mental Health (School Psychologist/Social Workers)

- School mental health teams will provide school safety services (SRR, TA etc.) remotely.
- See special education for assessment services.
- Minutes of services for students with disabilities under 504 and IEPs provided remotely.
- Suicide prevention curriculums for grades 5, 6 and 9 can be done remotely.
- Have access to digital interventions.

District Crisis Recovery Team is available remotely.

Nurses in a Remote Setting

- Nurses will coordinate culturally congruent care virtually.
- Establish and/or reinforce relationships with students and family members regarding the health needs of students.
- Connection and coordination with school staff and families regarding the health needs of students, including, but not limited to, immunization clinics, referrals to School Based Health Clinics, Free or reduced cost health care, telehealth, etc.
- Provide virtual health education to support the Whole Child Reengagement plan when appropriate.
- DPS Nursing and the state are currently developing a plan for universal screening (hearing and vision only) for required grades.
  - Established screening teams will conduct based on the school of origin and will follow all safety procedures as established by CDPHE and DDPHE.
  - Students opting into the fully Virtual Program will be expected to meet these requirements throughout the year.

Current State Guidance requires hearing and vision screening requirements will remain in place in the fall. CDE Nursing is developing additional guidance for virtual settings and we will continue to update this document as necessary.
Social Emotional Learning

At DPS, we are committed to creating socially and emotionally safe environments where students and educators can thrive using trauma informed, healing-centered and culturally responsive practices.

What is Social Emotional Learning?

• The process through which children and adults name and understand emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make decisions.

Why SEL?

• SEL is an opportunity to improve outcomes for students by creating participatory and equitable learning environments when our students can thrive socially, emotionally, and academically. See the video, Five Keys to Successful Social Emotional Learning, to learn more.

DPS SEL Partners:
Promoting Social Emotional Learning in a Remote Environment

Supporting remote classrooms

- Inclusive communities, sense of belonging, and emotional safety.
- Honoring and acknowledging cultural assets, contributions, and needs of all students.

Teaching evidence-based curriculums

- 20 minutes a day of explicit Social Emotional Learning instruction.
  - Examples include: 2nd Step, Random Acts of Kindness

Elevating student voice

- Creating opportunity for students to share their perspectives.

Integrating Social Emotional Learning into academic lessons

- Connected to our Culturally Responsive Education mindsets, Academic objectives, and interactive teaching strategies.
Professional Learning Supports

Teachers will be provided with ongoing professional learning to support delivering remote instruction.

- Learning Management System professional learning.
- School Culture and Social-Emotional Learning professional learning, including Virtual Parent Teacher Home Visit Training.
- Accessing curriculum and leveraging resources for fully digital instruction professional learning.
Roles in Supporting Remote Learning

**Students**

**STUDENTS WILL PREPARE FOR REMOTE LEARNING BY:**

- Attending classes as scheduled during the normal instructional school day.
- Ensuring that they know the usernames and passwords for instructional resources that are accessible via the district portal and/or website.
- Ensuring they set up a work space at home and calendar to manage their time.
- Attending office hours to connect with the teacher and receive additional support as needed.

**Families**

**FAMILIES WILL PREPARE FOR REMOTE LEARNING BY:**

- Assuring that a device and internet access are available at home; reaching out to the Department of Technology Services if they don’t have the needed resources.
- Ensuring students attend classes as scheduled during the normal instructional school day.
- Engaging with the students’ teacher on a regular basis to understand student progress.
- Ensuring that they know their students’ usernames and passwords for instructional resources that are accessible via the district portal and/or this website.
Roles in Supporting Remote Learning

**Leaders**

LEADERS WILL PREPARE FOR REMOTE LEARNING BY:

- Leading for providing socio-emotional support and an overall positive culture for remote learning.
- Coaching teachers to ensure they provide rigorous, culturally and linguistically responsive instruction in a remote environment; leveraging district and regional resources for coaching and supporting teachers in remote learning.
- Setting office hours to connect with parents and students to support remote learning for students as applicable.
- Participating in professional learning and attending remote learning sessions.
- Ensuring teachers and teacher leaders maintain collaborative teacher planning, data analysis, coaching and support structures during remote learning.
- Ensuring teachers and students are prepared to pivot to the fully Virtual Program in the event of resurgence and/or periods of quarantine including:
  - Using the learning management system in person for assigning tasks and turning in assignments.
  - Taking device to and from school daily.

**Teachers**

TEACHERS AND OTHER SCHOOL-BASED STAFF, SUPPORTED BY EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND LIBRARY SERVICES (ETLS) AND DISTRICT DIGITAL COACHES, WILL PREPARE FOR REMOTE LEARNING BY:

- Follow district supported and/or school based curricula and trajectory of learning (i.e., scope and sequence).
- Offer synchronous instruction during designated periods based on student enrollment and the teacher’s assigned course schedules.
- Internalizing district-supported remote learning materials.
- Setting office hours to connect with students and support their learning remotely.
- Participating in designated professional learning and attending remote learning sessions.
- Following guidance from their Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) regarding instructional delivery to students.
SPECIALIZED PROGRAMMING

In order to best engage students who need additional academic support, DPS is intentionally planning for how to deliver specialized programming in a remote environment.
**Best Practices and Supports**

**English Learners**

Continue with ELA will include:

- Daily English Language Development (ELD) instruction.
- Native language instruction in alignment with the Language Allocation Guidelines for all English Language Acquisition-Spanish (ELA-S) students.

Ensure that remote lessons include:

- Multiple opportunities for student talk.
- Explicit academic language instruction.
- Access to rigorous grade level content.
- Extensive use of visuals, videos, graphic organizers and exemplars.
- Culturally relevant texts and videos.
- Opportunities for students to connect the learning to their experiences, culture and home life.
Students with a Disability: Section 504 and Special Education

The Denver Public Schools is committed to supporting students with a disability in accordance with processes established under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Key Considerations for students with a disability:

- Special Education and 504 teams will continue to follow appropriate processes, including working collaboratively with families to determine needs and services in the remote learning environment.
- If services required for a student to receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) require in-person learning or contact, the IEP or 504 team will work with families to develop a plan to meet those needs.
- DPS continues to have a Child Find obligation to evaluate and identify students suspected of having a disability, even while students are in periods of remote learning.
- IEP and 504 teams will continue to case manage those students while they participate in remote learning.
- Detailed guidance for school teams is forthcoming.
Gifted and Talented teachers/itinerants will collaborate with teachers and families around expectations and work load as well as with Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs). This will include meeting with students and families in a remote setting.

**Currently Identified Gifted and Talented Students**
- GT instructional practices for academic and social emotional support will be provided.
- Training and supports for teacher available here: [Student Equity and Opportunity / Gifted and Talented](#).

**Currently Identified Highly Gifted and Talented Students in Magnet Programs**
- An HGT qualified teacher will provide services.
- In order to meet the needs of HGT learners, programming may be multiage or students may be clustered in groups by grade level so that they have a peer group.
- The fully Virtual Program for opt-in families may not meet the specific program model chosen by the family (self-contained, integrated, etc.).

**Gifted and Talented Identification Screenings**
- Universal assessments are available for grades K, 2 and 6.
- Exceptional Children’s Act rules require administrative units to identify gifted learners. The gifted and talented department will work with schools and learners to determine safe administration of assessment throughout the year.

**Twice Exceptional Learners**
- Twice Exceptional Learners will have their ALPs and 504s or IEPs both planned and accommodated for. The GT teacher and the SPED or 504 Coordinator will work together with the student’s teacher.
DEVICE AND INTERNET ACCESS

In service of equity, DPS is committed to ensuring all students across the district have access to a device and Internet access – both during periods of remote and in-person learning.
Providing Access for All Students

Device and Internet Access

- Students can indicate if they are in need of a device or internet during the Annual Family Update.
- If additional needs arise, please work directly with your school staff.

- We will ensure K-12 grade students have devices and will continue working to provide Internet access (both through hot spots and through community-based Internet resources).
At DPS we take data privacy for our students and staff very seriously. We have implemented the Academic Technology Menu so that our families can see the tools and resources that are being used as we implement remote learning in the 2020-21 school year. Also, when we purchase technology tools, we have the vendor sign a Data Privacy Agreement in order to keep our students information safe in a remote learning environment.

- Click on District Usage Reporting.
- Under School Breakdown, choose the school your children attend. Click Go.
- You will see a list of tools and resources your school is using to support instruction in the classroom broken out in four tabs.
- Your school will have already reached out to you to gain consent for those resources requiring parental consent.
- Resources that do not require parental consent have a Data Sharing Agreement in place with DPS.

DPS is narrowing our focus on educational technology tools to support simplifying the experience for students and community. We have a Data Privacy Agreement for these tools:

- **Schoology**
- **Texthelp** (Read/Write, Equatio, WriQ)
- **PearDeck**
- **Newsela**
- **Google Platform**
- **Seesaw** (Parent Permission Required)

Learn more about the ATM: atm.dpsk12.org
Addressing Equity of Access

Internet Access Supports

Comcast Internet Essentials
- Internet program for low-income individuals.
- Two free months for new customers through Dec. 31, 2020.

WiFi Hotspots
- DPS will continue to work with schools to provide students a wifi hotspot, if they do not have internet access.

DPS COVID-19 Response
- Check back on the DPS COVID-19 website for the most updated resources.
APPENDICES
Appendices

Context Regarding DPS-authorized Charter Schools

Like district-managed schools, DPS charter schools have been working incredibly hard to develop and offer high-quality virtual programming as needed during the pandemic.

DPS charter schools operate with largely the same guidelines and resources outlined in this Remote Learning plan.

- For example, charter schools follow the same guidance for special education and English learners, and charter schools will work with the district to ensure access to technology for all students.

At the same time, charters have some additional flexibility given their unique contexts.

In all schools, whether district-managed or charter, families should expect to hear more details from their child’s teachers and school leaders about the specific remote learning program at their school.