2020-2021 Recovery Plan Update

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Date: June 30, 2020
Presentation Purpose

● Why is this topic on the Board agenda?
   ○ To provide the Board and community with an update on APS’s Recovery Plan for returning to learning and operations during the 2020-21 school year in the context of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

● What are we asking the Board to do with this information?
   ○ We are asking the Board to:
     ○ provide feedback on these updates
     ○ approve changes in student start dates for the 2020-21 school year

● How is this linked to the Strategic Plan, Vision, Mission, Goals & Core Beliefs?
   ○ The Recovery Plan is focused on returning to learning and operations for the 2020-21 school year so that APS can carry out its Strategic Plan Vision, Mission and Goals

● Which Board policy does the presentation address?
   ○ This presentation covers a wide range of policies including, but not limited to the following: IC/ICA: School Year/School Calendar and ID: School Day
In preparing to continue learning and operations for the 2020-21 school year, APS will continue to follow:

Health Expertise
APS will follow the guidance of the Tri-County Health Department to support the health and safety of our students, staff, families and community.

Educational Expertise
APS will follow the requirements from the Colorado Department of Education to support the education of our students.

APS Strategic Plan
APS will also continue to be driven by the Vision, Mission and Goals of its Strategic Plan. APS Mission: In partnership with our community, we accelerate learning for all students to develop the knowledge, skills and character necessary to shape successful futures.

Additionally APS will also take into account guidelines and guidance from the following, as applicable:
- State: Executive Orders from the Governor, Colorado Department of Public Health and the Environment (CDPHE).
- Local: Colorado High School Athletics Association (CHSAA), City of Aurora, APS Board of Education Policies, APS Master Agreement.
Updated Health Guidance

- On June 25, 2020 the Metro Denver Partnership for Health (MDPH) published new health guidance, [COVID-19 Strategies for Schools: Recommendations from the Metro Denver Partnership for Health](#).
- MDPH is a collaboration of the six local public health agencies serving the seven-county Denver metro area, including Tri-County Health Department which serves Adams, Arapahoe, and Douglas counties.

“Given the growing data on low transmission potential from children to others and the relative harms of keeping kids out of school, we believe that schools can implement a suite of complementary infection control and prevention measures that can provide a comparably safe environment for students and staff.”
Updated Health Guidance: Background

- “Children appear to have lower rates of infection than do older persons and, when infection does occur, are much less likely to have serious complications.”
- “While children can transmit COVID-19, emerging evidence indicates that children are not the primary drivers of transmission and that school reopening is likely to have minimal impact on transmission between students or between students and staff.”
  - “Much of the decision-making regarding school closures in March was based on the decades of research showing that schools are a major venue for influenza transmission. However, the emerging evidence is that COVID-19 transmission among children is quite different from influenza.”
- “On balance, we think the benefits of in-person school attendance outweigh the health risks.”
### Updated Health Guidance: Key Areas

- Starting Dates
- Masks and Other Protective Equipment
- Vaccination
- Cohort Grouping
- Physical Distancing
- Bus Transportation
- Hand washing and Sanitizing
- Temperature and Symptom Screening
- Building Entry/Exit

- Ventilation
- Cleaning Procedures
- Testing
- Protocols for Positive Cases and Return to School
- Comorbidities
School for the 2020-2021 School Year

**In-Person**
*(Conditions: Vaccine/Health Guidelines)*

- Learning is able to take place in-person with minimal requirements to mitigate the risk of infection.
- More like the traditional schooling approach.

**Cohort**
*(Conditions: Health Guidelines)*

- Student learning occurs with a set group of students during the school day.
- This allows for more in-person learning and the potential to reduce the spread of disease.

**Hybrid In-Person & Remote**
*(Conditions: Social Distancing in Schools/Health Guidelines)*

**Remote**
*(Conditions: Health Guidelines, such as Stay at Home; As needed under other circumstance, such as high staff absences)*

**In-Person**

- Learning occurs online through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning.

**Cohort**

- Students would engage in learning through a combination of in-person learning and remote learning.

**Hybrid In-Person/Remote**

- Learning occurs online through a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning.
Students and families will be able to opt-in to a temporary fully online option for the 2020-21 School Year.
Cohort Model: A consistent group of students will stay together all day while in school to limit the exposure of students and reduce the impact of spread.

What could this look like?

- This could mean the same group of students are with the same group of peers for classes, lunch, recess, arrival/dismissal, movement within the school, etc.
Cohort Grouping Health Guidance

Guidance

- **Students and teachers**: Keep same group together each day.
- Use technology if/when new teachers need to join a classroom for a time-limited period.
- Common space such as libraries and cafeterias should be accessed as a cohort.
- Limit or discontinue use of lockers and locker rooms.

Other Considerations

- Create schedules that decrease opportunities for group of students to mix such as limiting passing periods and in-between class times.
- For mixed cohorts (A/B, morning and afternoon cohorts) that cannot be physically distant: disinfect shared spaces/classrooms between cohort changes; require face coverings as feasible under previous guidance; monitor daily symptom screening checks; and promote hand hygiene.
- Indoor extracurricular programs should work to adhere to physical distancing and masking guidelines if cohorts are mixed.

Resources

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) School Guidelines
- Colorado High School Activities Association Athletics Guidance
Cohort Model

**Strengths**

- More students have a place to go during the school day
- Attempts to limit the spread of COVID-19
- Makes possible the idea of bringing back to school as many students as possible or at least more often
- If there is confirmed COVID-19 infection, this model allows for easier contact tracing and may have less disruption on student learning by limiting the number of students who need to shift to remote learning

**Challenges**

- May be difficult to address scheduling with cohorts of students
- Limitations still needed on transportation, given health guidance
- Students will likely be in the same room all day
- At the secondary level, students may not have access to all the courses they might otherwise in a typical model in person
- May require staffing adjustments
- May need to limit after-school programming or other opportunities that mix cohorts
Given the current Health Guidance as of June 30, 2020 and provided that health guidance for schools continues to allow for implementation of a cohort model, APS plans to start school in a cohort model as follows:

- PK-8th grade students attend every day in a cohort model.
- High School students will engage in learning through a combination of in-person and remote learning.
- Students in K-12 will have the option to enroll in a fully online learning option.
APS Mask Wearing Protocols Under the Cohort Model

- **Adults:**
  - Required to wear masks or face coverings.

- **Students**
  - 6-12: Required to wear masks or face-coverings.
  - P-5: Masks or face coverings are required when social distancing cannot be maintained.

*For all of the above except where doing so would inhibit the individual’s health*
Throughout the 2020-21, school individual classes, cohorts, schools or the entire district may find itself transitioning between scenarios. For example:

- School starts in a cohort model
- Cohort of students is exposed to COVID-19 and needs to isolate
- There is a return to a Stay-at-Home order
- Health guidance revised to allow for in-person learning but with social distancing or with specific precautions for the cohort model
Transitioning from Cohort to Remote Scenario

• **Conditions:**
  – Transition will be made when necessary per guidelines from Tri-County Health or other State/Federal orders or under unique circumstances that make the cohort approach difficult, such as a high number of staff absences.
  – May be applied to individual or multiple classrooms, cohorts, schools, or the district as a whole depending on the guidelines from Tri-County and circumstance of the situation, such as potential exposure, increased outbreaks.

• **Timeline:**
  – Families and staff will have immediate access to remote learning materials through the APS remote learning platform.
  – APS anticipates that students and families will be able to re-engage with synchronous remote learning within 48 hours following the announcement. This may be adjusted depending on the scope of classrooms, cohorts, or schools shifting to remote and the anticipated length of time.

• **Communication:**
  – APS will continue to use its traditional communication mechanisms notify staff and families should such a transition be necessary. This includes School Messenger phone calls, emails, and posting on school website, with communication available in APS’ top ten languages.
Transitioning from Cohort Scenario to Remote Scenario

- **Materials:** APS will define a process for collecting materials (electronic, supplies, etc.) needed to operate remotely
  - Home-based Materials: In order to quickly transition to a remote scenario, APS encourages having access to the following materials at home.
    - School-based Staff: Internet access; Electronic device to engage with students and staff remotely
    - Students: Internet access; Electronic device to participate in remote learning; pen/pencil; paper
  - Materials Collection: In order to make sure that staff and students have access to the necessary materials to engage in remote learning
    - School-based Staff: Staff will be admitted to buildings to retrieve essential materials, following guidance from Tri-County Health Department
    - Students: When possible, students/families will be able to collect essential materials outside of the school building

- **Learning:** Learning will continue to provide students rigorous, grade-level content aligned with the timeline above via online tools.
  - Students: Specific school and classroom based-expectations will be provided around how learning will occur. Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will continue to receive services consistent with their IEP.
  - Staff: Specific district and school based-expectations will be provided around how learning will occur.
  - Families: Specific district, school, and classroom based-expectations will be provided around how learning will occur.
Transitioning from Cohort Scenario to Remote Scenario

- **Social/Behavioral Supports**: Social/behavioral supports will continue to provide students with access to social and behavioral supports. These supports will transition to an online environment and specific supports and approaches will be communicated individually.

- **School-Level Expectations**: School Leadership will outline their school-specific expectations for transitioning to a remote environment.

- **Food Services**: Food services will continue to be offered through Grab and Go.

- **Child Care**: Given that this transition may result from a Stay-at-Home order or need for quarantining of a group of students, APS does not anticipate being able to provide childcare under this circumstance. Families will be responsible for ensuring their students are cared for during remote learning days.
Transitioning from Remote to a Hybrid/Cohort Scenario

- **Conditions:**
  - Transition will be made per guidelines from Tri-County Health or other State/Federal order or other circumstances that required the shift to the remote learning are resolved thus allowing for a return to in-person learning.
  - Depending on health guidance, may lead to a cohort or a hybrid model to be implemented.
  - May be applied to individual or multiple classrooms, cohorts, schools, or the district as a whole depending on the guidelines from Tri-County and circumstance of the situation

- **Timeline:**
  - Students would likely continue remote learning until the restart date determined for returning to the hybrid or cohort scenario.
  - Exact timeline depends on the scope of classrooms, cohorts, or schools shifting; the cause of the shift; and the length of time

- **Communication:**
  - APS will continue to use its traditional communication mechanisms notify staff and families should such a transition be necessary. This includes School Messenger phone calls, emails, and posting on school website, with communication available in APS’ top ten languages.

- **Schedule:**
  - APS will work to align hybrid learning schedules for families in the same household, when possible.
  - Schools will communicate with families around their assigned day to attend in-person learning.
Transitioning from Remote to Cohort/Hybrid Scenario

- **Materials:** APS will define a process for obtaining or replacing any materials (electronic, supplies, etc.) needed to operate remotely in the hybrid scenario
  - Home-based Materials: In order to operate in a hybrid scenario and/or quickly transition to a remote scenario, APS encourages having access to the following materials at home.
    - School-based Staff: Internet access; Electronic device to engage with students and staff remotely
    - Students: Internet access; Electronic device to participate in remote learning; Paper; Pen/Pencil
  - Materials Checkout/Return: Students will need to retain any electronic devices or other materials to be able to continue remote learning In order to make sure that staff and students have access to the necessary materials to engage in remote learning

- **Learning:** Learning will continue to provide students rigorous, grade-level content aligned with the timeline above via online tools.
  - Students: Specific school and classroom based-expectations will be provided around how learning will occur. Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) will continue to receive services consistent with their IEP.
  - Staff: Specific district and school based-expectations will be provided around how learning will occur.
  - Families: Specific district, school, and classroom based-expectations will be provided around how learning will occur.
Transitioning from Remote to a Hybrid/Cohort Scenario

• **Social/Behavioral Supports:** Social/behavioral supports will continue to provide students with access to social and behavioral supports. These supports will transition to the hybrid or cohort approach, with student specific supports communicated individually.

• **School-Level Expectations:** School Leadership will outline their school-specific expectations for transitioning to a hybrid or cohort scenario.

• **Remaining in Temporary Online Learning:** Families may have the opportunity to transition to the temporary online learning approach should they wish to remain in remote learning under this circumstance

• **Transportation:** APS will review and communicate to families about any changes to transportation.

• **Food Services:** Food services will continue to be offered through Grab and Go.

• **Child Care:** In the case of the hybrid model, APS will work to connect families, particularly children of staff, to childcare opportunities. However, given space limitations and staff capacity, APS may not be able to provide childcare opportunities for families on remote learning days. Families will be responsible for ensuring their students are cared for during remote learning days.
Recommendation: Delay Start of School for Students by 1 week

- Delay the start of school for students by 1 week to provide staff with training and support to provide high quality instruction in the new structures and implement health protocols.

- This would mean the following changes to the start of the school for the 2020-21 calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Original Calendar</th>
<th>Recommended Calendar</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students in Grades 1-12</td>
<td>Tuesday, August 11</td>
<td>Tuesday, August 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students in Kindergarten &amp; Preschool</td>
<td>Monday, August 17</td>
<td>Monday, August 24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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- All staff would be expected to return as originally planned per their contract.
Next Steps

- Communicate with staff and families about the change in the start of school
- Continue to develop:
  - Cohort approach
  - Health and safety protocols for students, staff, and families
  - Instructional approach
  - Support and training for staff to adjust to schedule and remote teaching
  - Transportation
- Finalize additional recommended changes regarding 2020-21 calendar
- Identify any additional policy changes, such as:
  - changes to calendar
  - transportation
  - graduation requirements
Submitted Questions
Thank You!