

Pitt County Schools Safe Return to School Plan

Pitt County Schools returned to school under Plan B on Monday, August 17, 2020

2022-2023 COVID Guidelines

Effective June 24 (2022), NCDHHS discontinued the NC StrongSchools Toolkit. Schools are recommended to follow CDC guidelines and of their local health director. Pitt County Schools will operate under the following guidelines.

- Management of Student Illness
- Students who are sick should be managed per pre-Covid-19 illness protocols and may return to school when they are well.
- Students must be fever free for at least 24 hours (without fever-reducing medication).
- The student should have no vomiting or diarrhea for at least 12 hours from the last episode.
- Students should feel well enough to fully participate in school activities.
- Students are no longer required to be "cleared" to return to school ~ no Covid test or MD clearance is required to return following illness.
- Students who become sick while at school should be directed home by their supervising teacher/staff member.
- Students and staff who test Covid Positive
- Students/staff who have a positive Covid test result should isolate from others for 5 days following the start of symptoms, then must wear a mask for 5 additional days to return to school/work.
- Individuals should continue to isolate themselves from others until fever-free and symptoms have significantly improved.
- No covid re-testing is required for return to school/work for positive individuals.
- Students and staff who are exposed to someone with Covid
- Students/staff identified as exposed to a Covid positive individual (regardless of where exposure occurs - home, school, community, etc.) may continue to attend school/work.
- Contact tracing and notification of an exposure is no longer required.
- It is recommended that students/staff who have a direct exposure and develop symptoms of Covid be tested.

Pitt County Schools will continue to partner with NC DHHS and Mako Medical to provide antigen testing for Covid-19 to students and staff upon request. Parents and staff will need to complete a new registration for 2022-2023 should they choose to opt-in for testing. Please contact your school regarding registration information.

For more information, please visit the Center for Disease Control (CDC) link.

SPECIAL NOTE: What follows this page is previous PCS COVID guidance (August 2020).



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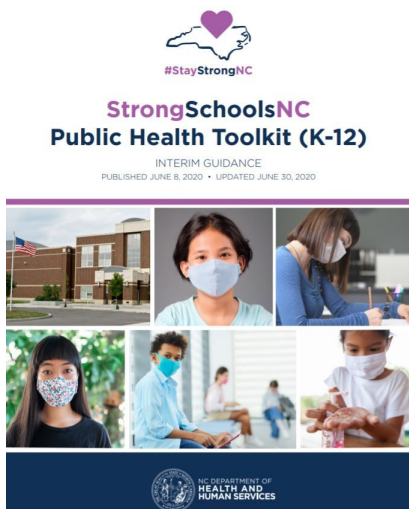


2020-2021 Reopening Plan

Our Commitment

Pitt County Schools has been preparing for the opening of schools in the Fall of 2020 since schools closed on March 16, 2020, due to the outbreak of COVID-19, or the coronavirus. Our teams, including administrative leadership and our departments of Educational Programming and Services, Transportation, Facilities, School Nutrition, Student Services, Human Resources, Finance, and Public Information are committed to beginning the 2020-2021 school year schools with the utmost safety, academic excellence, and provision of vital resources in mind.

Our Guiding Documents



Left: Public School Toolkit/Guidance from the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

Above: K-12 School Reopening Guidance from the NC Department of Public Instruction and State Board of Education

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Facilities Services

Considerations



Products and Cleaning

Facilities Staff members are working diligently to secure appropriate products for safety, sanitation, and cleaning based on the most recent state guidelines. Facilities will provide additional hand sanitizer, soap, paper towels, rags, and disinfectant to schools and sites. Sanitation stations are also being secured. PPE requirements and products are also being reviewed and vetted. NCDPI will be providing PPE for employees conducting symptom checks and monitoring during the beginning of school. PCS will be responsible for some required PPE afterwards. Employees and students will need to provide their own daily PPE. Washable, cloth PPE is suggested for everyday use. Extra staff may need to be contracted for cleaning requirements. Also, full staff participation will be needed for each site to meet the cleaning and sanitizing requirements.

Classroom Modifications

Model classrooms are being set up to determine the safest way to conduct authentic learning in each classroom area. Desks and tables are being arranged in both individual and group setups, with and without barriers. Classroom guidance will be passed along to all schools once safety protocols are finalized. All soft materials and personal items will need to be removed from classrooms. Only items that can be appropriately sanitized should be used for instruction.

Site Responsibilities and Checklists

Facilities Services will depend on principals and site directors to determine staff members responsible for facility protocol. Each site will need a COVID-19 contact for disseminating information and as a quick contact for Facilities and Communications staff. Each site will also be responsible for safety guidelines and checklists. Checklists will include ensuring that 6 feet of space is clearly marked and provided for in all high-traffic student areas (includes restrooms and locker rooms) and public waiting areas, which may mean removing or reconfiguring furniture. Site administrators will be responsible for determining the appropriate areas in the building to conduct symptom screenings for employees and students.



Notes

- All protocols are subject to change based on the allowance of Plan A, Plan B, or Plan C throughout the school year
- Under Plan B, 50% occupancy, note that occupancy is based on ADM and not room capacity based on fire codes.

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Facilities Services

Considerations



COVID-19 Protocols

Facilities staff will determine COVID-19 protocols including symptom screening for all who enter the school building or transportation vehicles. Site administrators will designate a schedule and the most reasonable protocol for the site to conduct daily temperature checks and symptom screening. Schedules may need to be adjusted to provide ample time for efficient screenings. Areas to enter each building must be secured to ensure that only entrances where temperature and symptom screenings are being conducted will be utilized. Site administrators must determine appropriate staff and adjust staff scheduling for temperature and symptom checks. Dual employees (ie. TAs who also drive buses) must be considered and work hours and responsibilities may need to be adjusted. School and site administrators must define areas, with proper supervision, to isolate individuals who are symptomatic. Every effort must be made to secure transport home for these individuals and may require the use of school buses to transport safely.

Education and Training

Education and training for staff will need to occur. Training on COVID-19, transmission, prevention of spread, and what to do when exposed is important for all staff members to understand and is a part of the requirements of the NC Return to School Toolkit from the NC Department of Health and Human Services. School safety protocols, proper symptom screening, supervision of students, cleaning procedures and classroom modifications must also be high priority. Some modules will be accessed through Safe Schools modules. Other training will be the responsibility of the site administrator.

Communications

Unified messages will be created by Facilities and Communications. CDC or NCDHHS posters for display will be copied and provided to sites by the central office print shop. It is the responsibility of the site administrator to communicate all site-specific protocols to the public as necessary through signage, in-person direction and electronic messaging through social media and direct messaging.

Notes



- School systems may choose a more restrictive plan of operation (Plan A, B, or C), but may not choose a less restrictive plan.
- Facilities Services is working with environmental agencies to vet all products and services necessary for full operation of any PCS site.

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Transportation

Considerations



Number of Students on a Bus

Transportation will determine, utilizing state recommendations, the number of students safely allowed on a traditional bus at one time. Current regulations refer to one student per seat, excluding family groups, which may sit together.

Bus Routes

Bus Routes will be determined utilizing safety concerns and traffic patterns under new conditions. Community stops must be utilized more often. TIMS routes must be followed to the letter. Abrupt transportation changes by parents must be eliminated. Route times must be adjusted to account for sanitizing buses between routes. Community routes (ie. Boys and Girls Clubs) will be

Symptom Screening

Drivers must be screened before leaving for routes. This includes early morning routes. Schools must determine screeners for drivers. Students will be screened upon entering the bus using the plan most current at the time of the route. If temperature checks are required, thermometers will be provided to the bus driver. Also, bus monitors are being considered in order to assist bus drivers and keep drivers in the driver's seat at all times. If parent attestations are required, the bus driver is responsible for collecting and turning in attestations for each student. Community stops may be utilized more often to account for safety concerns

Special Needs Transportation

Medically Fragile students and vulnerable populations will be considered when determining bus routes and bus capacity. Special needs routes are usually longer routes, but not multiple routes. New routes to determine the best scenarios for these students will be considered.

Parent Communication

Parent Communication will be key. It is possible that parent reservations may need to be made for buses well ahead of bus routes. This is to maintain the proper requirements for social distancing on buses. Parents will need early communication regarding new bus routes, stops and procedures due to COVID-19 precautions and considerations for transportation services.



Notes

- Every 400 miles costs \$1000.
- A 25-50% increase is expected
- Procedures are subject to change based on the state's determination of Plan A, B, or C.

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School Nutrition

Considerations



Safe Food Service

Safe food service is a top priority for our School Nutrition Department and procedures will be based on the most current guidelines provided by NCDPI. If students are in school, use of self-service food or beverage distribution will be discontinued. Meals may be served in the classroom to accommodate safe procedures. Kiosks may be used to deliver meals to classrooms.

Additional Staffing Needs

Many school nutrition employees are dual employees who also may drive a bus or perform other staff duties. With new safety procedures, screening, and other precautions, employee hours may be adjusted. Additional staffing may be required for preparing and delivering meals.

Students Learning Remotely

If students are learning remotely, School Nutrition will determine the needs of the community and if food service can or will be provided. If students are both in school and learning remotely, students in the school buildings will be priority. Meal distribution to remote learning students will become secondary. School Nutrition will continue to seek funding and grants to serve as many children in Pitt County as possible. If students are not allowed in school buildings, School Nutrition will determine if grab and go sites will be utilized for meal distribution or if transportation routes will be utilized.

Free/Reduced Meal Services

School Nutrition will work with parents to advertise and process free and reduced meal applications for eligible students at eligible schools. Understanding that a parent's needs may change due to the pandemic, School Nutrition will continue to advertise the application process and to distribute and manage applications.

Parent Communication

Parents will continue to be notified of meal status, of meal delivery options, of meal distribution opportunities and of community involvement in feeding the children of Pitt



Notes

- Since March 16, School nutrition has served over ONE MILLION MEALS
- School Nutrition, Administration, and other staff members have worked in tandem to provide for the nutritional needs of PCS Students.

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Educational Programming

EPS Considerations

Remote Learning Plan

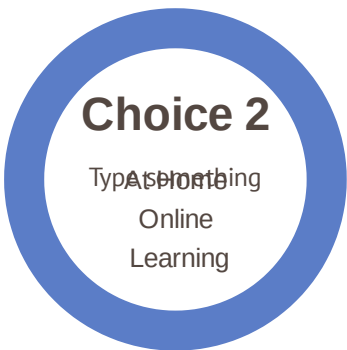
EPS directors, coordinators and educators have been working diligently to adjust curriculum and pacing guides to make every attempt to recover missed learning due to COVID-19 related school closures. General Assembly statutes also require a robust and highly-effective remote learning plan to be developed by all NC school systems in order to face the varied possibilities NC schools may face during the 2020-21 academic school year. Currently, FIVE remote learning days are built into the school year. These days will be structured according to the PCS remote learning plan. However, the remote learning plan may be utilized if more than 5 days are missed due to natural disasters, weather, or more school closures due to COVID-19. Questions about the specifics of the PCS Remote Learning Plan can be directed to the EPS office.

Parent/Student Choice for Instruction

Plans A, B, or C are dictated by the recommendation of NCDHHS and the Office of the Governor. As these plans can change throughout the year, PCS is developing several different options for parents that account for the comfort level of the parent/student in returning to school.



Plan A or B



Plan A, B, or C



Notes

- The State Board of Education was required to create remote learning plans, per Senate Bill 704.
- The law directs school systems to consult with teachers, administrators and instructional support staff, parents, students, community partners, and other stakeholders' in developing remote learning plans.

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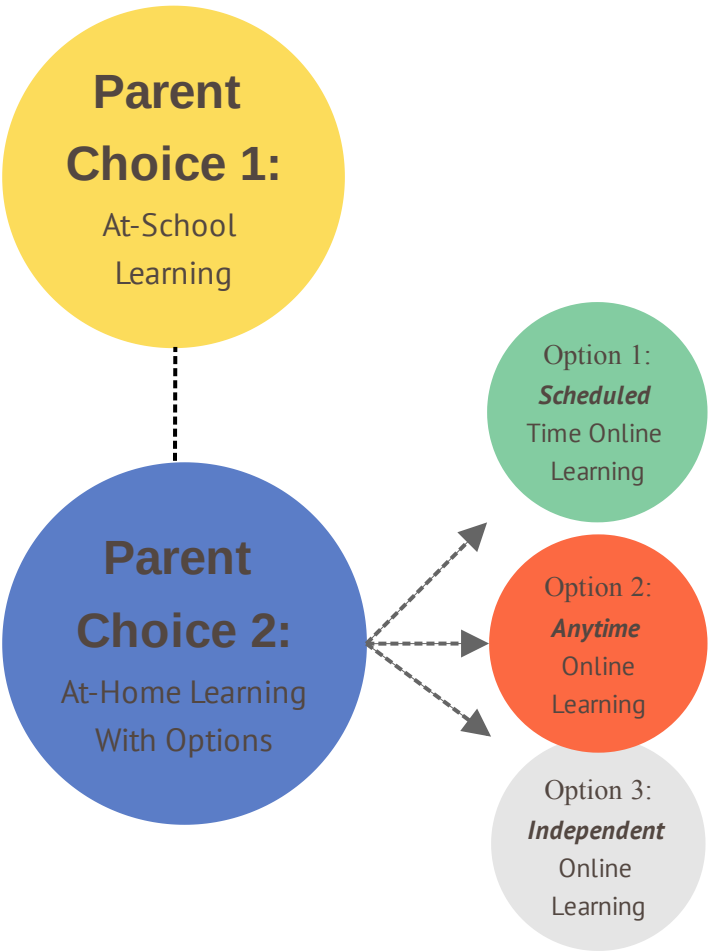


Educational Programming

EPS Considerations

Parent/Student Choice for Instruction

In Plan A or B, parents can choose for a student to attend school physically. See *Facilities Services* section for safety precautions. Under Plans A, B, or C, parents can choose for students to attend school utilizing three options. Scheduled time (synchronous) learning, Anytime (asynchronous) learning, or independent learning.



Notes

- If the state dictates the implementation of Plan B, or 50% capacity for school sites, PCS is considering alternating weeks of instruction for students.

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Educational Programming

EPS Considerations

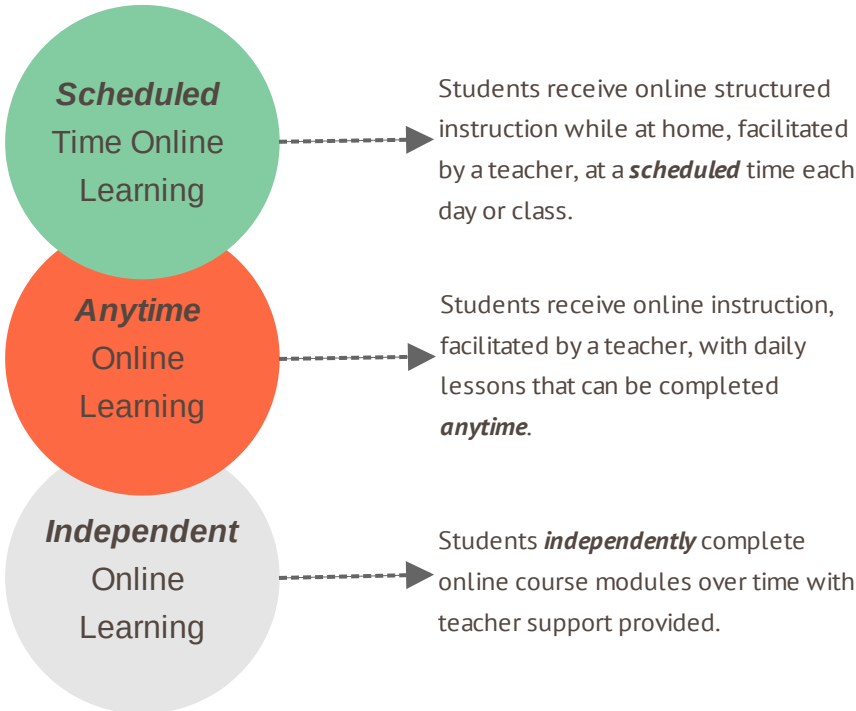


Parent/Student Choice for Instruction

Under Plans A, B, or C, if a parent chooses online learning, there are three options in order to accommodate a variety of learning styles, family situations, and scheduling restrictions.

Scheduled Time learning is synchronous, where students receive online instruction directly from a PCS teacher during a routine, scheduled time online. *Anytime* learning, or asynchronous learning, is meant for students whose parents may need more flexibility in scheduling for.

Lessons are still directly facilitated by a teacher, but assignments can be completed anytime during the week. Finally, *Independent* learning requires students to enroll in online modules or courses through platforms like Pitt County Virtual Academy and Edmentum. Assignments are self-paced by students, and teacher support is also provided.



Notes

- K-2 will utilize the SeeSaw platform, while grades 3-12 will utilize Canvas
- Parent support for SeeSaw or Canvas are available.

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Student Services

Considerations



Staff Roles

Student Services staff at each school will be vital in the team efforts required to operate schools safely and to care for the social and emotional needs of students. Through CARES Act funding, additional social workers may be utilized, and school nurses will be leading the team efforts in COVID-19 monitoring, symptom checks and protocols.

Coping and Resiliency

Assisting students and staff with coping and resiliency during this unprecedented time is now a priority outlined in the NCDHHS School Toolkit. PCS will continue with the Resiliency work already begun within the system and will also work to provide coping strategies and education to students, staff and parents.

Community Partnerships

Community partnerships have been crucial in serving students and families in Pitt County since schools closed in March of 2020. Moving forward, NCDPI and the State Board of Education recognize the continued need for the community to share resources along with carry the load together of adjusting to life, family school and work during the pandemic. As part of the remote learning plan developed by PCS, a formal invitation to local and regional partners is a must in order to begin and continue serving the needs of others. PCS will formally address the public and organizations through a Community Resources survey. Informal conversations have already begun as several schools have been in touch with

COVID-Related Procedures

Student Services will update the student/parent handbook to include additional information or policies related to COVID-19. Discipline procedures are also being discussed and must be balanced to accommodate for the unprecedented times. Discipline for non-compliant students is a concern as we work to balance order, safety, and human nature.



Notes

- Since schools closed in March of 2020, Student Services and other departments have witnessed a welcomed surge in community offers for assistance. Student Services has worked with numerous organizations to provide for students physical, nutritional or emotional needs while out of school.

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Finance and HR

Considerations



Funding

In March, the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed, providing much needed economic relief for COVID-19 related financial burdens. NC House Bill 1043, signed on May 4, 2020, allocates federal funding from the CARES act. The majority of allocations are for student nutrition, summer bridge programs, and remote learning costs (devices, connectivity, etc.). Additional financial support comes from state funding comprised of unused funds from the current and previous school year as well as State Emergency Response and Relief Funds. The Governor authorized the NC State Board of Education and NC DPI to allocate the funds. NC SBE and DPI voted on spending formulas for school systems.

Spending

PCS Finance, Facilities, School Nutrition, EPS and other departments have been working closely together to determine spending plans for CARES Act monies that most efficiently address the needs of PCS students through the 2020-2021 school year. Some spending may differ depending on the operational plans dictated by NC (A, B, or C). For example, spending on transportation and school sanitation procedures will be significantly higher under in-person instruction plans A and B than online instruction plan C. Also, spending deadlines are balanced with competing and flooded markets for products such as the technology industry.

Employee Procedures

Procedures for the work environment are under development and will include all school buildings as well as the Central Office, DEEL building, Moye Annex, Transportation offices, Facilities offices, Sadie Saulter, and the CM Eppes Annex. HR and school administrators will survey staff members regarding their intentions to return to work. HR will determine the scope of duties for certified and non-certified staff and for monitoring students. HR will also create a plan for staff with medical conditions and those who are at risk (age 65+) and those caring for other at-risk individuals at home. Appropriate leave options will be communicated

Masks and Employee Screening

Following the Governor's order in June requiring masks in public places and the direction from NCDPI, masks are required by employees on PCS schools and sites beginning July 6th. Capacity limits and symptom check procedures for employees are being developed.

Notes

- The Raptor check-in system and the TACS sign-in system are being modified to include screening questions for employees.

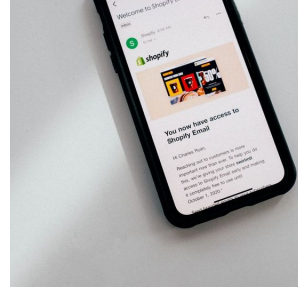


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Public Information

Considerations



Communication with Stakeholders

A summer campaign, *Road to Reopening*, aimed at keeping the staff, students, parents and community members informed is being implemented. Weekly updates in the form of videos and digital messages are posted through our internal staff email, social media and the website. Messages vary from updates on Plans A, B, C to parent preparation tips such as making sure child immunizations are up to date.

Public Education

Educating the public about COVID-19, prevention of spread, and proper safety precautions will also be a responsibility of the school system. The Public Information office, will work with Facilities staff and site administrators to disseminate such information through signage and media

COVID-19 Cases and Protocol

The Public Information Office, with Facilities staff, will create a unified chain of command and common procedures for the communication and handling of COVID-positive cases. These will include adding templates for letters in the PCS crisis manual and creating efficient plans of action for site administrators. The Public Information and Facilities offices will also work with designated COVID-19 school and site contacts to distribute necessary information to the staff, students and community members as needed.

Community Partnerships and Advertisers

The Public Information office will work with advertisers to channel vital information to varied audiences as necessary. Community partnerships such as with the Census Bureau and with Parents for Public Schools are also vital to a healthy information exchange.

Parent Surveys and Feedback

The Public Information office will help develop vital feedback tools such as surveys in order to include parent voice in decision-making. Parent surveys during the spring, in partnership with ECU and Parents for Public Schools, gathered valuable feedback regarding remote learning for the spring. Summer surveys include parent intentions for student return to school, transportation needs, learning preferences and more.



Notes

- Parent surveys through ECU during the spring received a 25% return rate. Parent stress was also measured in this survey along with performance ratings for school nutrition, communications and equity issues

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