

# Alamance-Burlington Schools



**Back to School**  
A Guide for 2020-2021

## Letter from Superintendent Benson

As educators, we are always planning. Even before this school year ended, we were working on plans for the 2020-2021 school year. It is likely that our return to school next year will be unlike any start of school we have experienced, but we will be ready.

ABSS is actively collaborating with our school district neighbors all across the Piedmont Triad in sharing expertise and best practices with each other to ensure we all are well prepared and strongly positioned for a safe, highly successful return to school in August.

Work groups in our district have been planning for reopening our schools for several weeks already. Our top priority is the health and safety of our students, staff and families. Our commitment to our community is that we will not place students and employees in learning environments that pose significant health risks.

Our goal is to be well prepared for any situation that our community may be facing in August with restrictions related to COVID-19. All school districts in North Carolina must develop three plans including a normal school schedule, a modified schedule at reduced capacity because of constraints due to social distancing requirements, and a learning-at-home format (Plans A, B, C). The guidance provided by the state will continue to be updated and we will adjust our plans for back to school as situations warrant.

Currently, ABSS personnel are carefully reviewing our district's preliminary plans and tweaking them to ensure compliance with all health and safety requirements outlined in the state guidance documents. We've surveyed our school communities on remote learning during our mandated school shutdown. For now, our main focus is on the essential actions outlined in these documents to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for students, staff, and families. The Governor's Office and public health experts at NCDHHS will decide which plan school districts must follow based on state or regional metrics regarding COVID-19. An announcement is expected by July 1.

ABSS is preparing by developing extra cleaning protocols for schools, implementing new procedures to ensure appropriate social distancing and other safety guidelines for our classrooms and schools, and ordering needed supplies as outlined in the two state guidance documents.

This document includes our *preliminary* back to school plans. We will continue to make adjustments as needed. There is no doubt about it: our school routines will be different, but we will be prepared and ready.

It will be challenging to meet the guidelines from the state. It will also be challenging to meet the academic and social/emotional needs of our students when we return after being apart since March. But ABSS will be prepared for those challenges and we look forward to launching our new school year with solid plans to implement that will protect the health and safety of our school families. We don't have all of the answers yet and we are looking to the state for additional guidance, but we are planning now for a variety of situations with our highest priority on the health and safety of our students and colleagues.

Public schools are a vital part of our community. Looking forward to a new school year gives us all hope, as well as a sense of returning to some normalcy. As our plans are developed and as more information from the state is available, we will continue to share important information and guidelines about our return to school in August. With everyone's support and input, I am confident we will be successful together.

Sincerely,



Bruce Benson  
Superintendent



## Framework for Moving Forward

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and state of emergency declared by Governor Cooper, our schools have been closed since March 16, 2020. Education as we know it today will likely be changed tremendously in numerous unprecedented ways. It is incumbent upon school systems to begin taking concrete steps to restore, reconstruct, and re-design education as we know it today. The COVID-19 pandemic has in many ways changed our educational, economic, societal, and everyday way of life. As a result, we are now faced with an extraordinary challenge that will require the deployment of our individual and collective expertise to address the needs of students, families, staff, faculty, and school communities. Now is the time for each and every one of us to show conviction and courage in the decisions that are made, based upon historic changes.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the landscape of education more dramatically than any other phenomenon in history. An event of this magnitude will definitely impact how we provide education to students. The new normal of school operations may be measured in terms of before and after the pandemic. Today, daily school operations will likely include increased health and hygiene measures such as wearing masks, temperature checks, hand-washing, frequent sanitation, and social distancing. In addition, elementary playground areas may be marked for social distancing along with areas within schools. Enhanced cleaning procedures and sanitation measures will likely be necessary on a more frequent basis. Reduced class sizes may be expected to become the norm, consisting of students placed in the smallest classes possible with desks that are placed six feet apart. Additional considerations will be given to holding classes outdoors, in the gymnasium, and other spaces when possible. Large school assemblies may not be possible and school dances and other school functions reduced. Special areas such as art, health, and physical education may be offered remotely via video chat along with parent/teacher conferences, discipline conferences, 504, and IEP meetings. Considerations and adjustments in parental involvement in school activities may occur, along with a reduction or elimination in the liberty of parents entering schools.

## Phases to Consider

- 1** Gearing Up Over the Summer Break (June-July)  
Jumpstart and Remote Learning Plan Development
- 2** Launching the 2020-21 School Year (August-September)  
In-school Orientation Week, transition to Hybrid Distance Learning
- 3** Possible School Re-closures Due to a Second Surge in Covid-19 Infections (mid-Fall)

## State Guidance

Recently, all school districts received initial guidance and requirements about school reopening from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) and from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

[Strong Schools NC Public Health Toolkit](#)

[Strong Schools NC Public Health Toolkit - Spanish](#)

[Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 \(K-12\)](#)

[Lighting Our Way Forward Reopening NC Public Schools](#)

## Guiding Principles and Core Values

Making decisions and developing plans that serve to:

- Achieve equity and equality of education opportunities by eliminating the digital divide
- Create a culture of connectivity and collaboration in a new school environment
- Provide families with educational options
- Support the physical safety with a healthy learning/teaching environment
- Strengthen the social emotional health and well-being of students and staff
- Adequately feed our students nutritious meals
- Inform and engage stakeholders with timely, reliable and accurate information

## Planning Assumptions

- Schools must operate within social distancing and health precautions until a vaccine is available.
- Schools will be required to provide health screenings, PPE, and assist with infection tracing.
- Equity concerns to close the digital divide (access to technology and Internet) must be addressed.
- Large gatherings may have to be cancelled or postponed (sports, events, assemblies, business travel, field trips, extracurriculars).
- Infrastructure, classroom configurations, space, and design may not adequately accommodate social distancing at full student capacity.
- Some employees and families may be reluctant to return to campus for in-class instruction and will seek alternatives.
- The learning needs of all students must be addressed.
- Demand will continue for schools to provide food and social-emotional support services.
- Disruptions to the supply chain for cleaning, food, technology, PPE, and other products might linger into the fall.
- Enrollment projections may be impacted.
- Professional development for staff and tech support for distance learning will need to be enhanced to ensure consistency of instruction.
- There will be greater demand on nutrition, child care, and social services.
- Economic downturn will have an impact on revenue.
- Educators will need to address the trauma, depression, emotional distress, and adverse experiences that children and adults may have experienced during the school shutdown.

# Compliance with the new North Carolina Law

## Remote Instruction Plans

Public school units must develop Remote Instruction Plans for the 2020-2021 school year and submit the Plans to the SBE by July 20, 2020. The plans must include information as to how the units will deliver quality remote instruction to all students in the 2020-2021 school year as well as information on how to train teachers, support students and families, and engage with community stakeholders.

## School Calendar




All ABSS schools operate on the same calendar with the exception of the Early College. Students will return to school on August 17, 2020 (Early College students will return on August 5, 2020).



## Planning Options



*All school systems in NC are required to develop three plans to return to school in the fall. It is expected that Governor Cooper will announce which plan will be in effect for the 2020-21 school year by July 1, 2020.*

-  **Plan A All Schools Reopen and Classroom Instruction Resumes**  
*Issues: Staff, student and parental fear of infection, employee grievances, opt-out demands, expenses for enhanced screening and cleaning, social distancing set-up, avoiding large gatherings.*
-  **Plan B Hybrid, Blended Instructional Program at 50% Student Capacity**  
Alternating Days (M/W, T/TH in-Class with Friday alternating every other week)  
*Issues: Teacher workload, content pacing, child care demands.*
-  **Plan C Schools Remain Closed with 100% Remote Learning**  
*Issues: Student self-motivation, parental home, schooling success, negative social-emotional impact, equity issues and digital divide obstacles, duration, attendance, learning loss.*

### Family Choice

*Under Plan A and Plan B, ABSS will offer a remote learning option for any family that would prefer to take advantage of an at-home learning opportunity. Families will commit to remote learning for the first semester. More details to follow.*

# Planning Areas that Must be Addressed

## Operations & Administration

- Continuity of Operations
- Budgeting, reserves, and financial forecast from state, local and federal sources
- Employee relations, personnel issues, retirements, substitutes

## Instructional Delivery & Curriculum

- Blending classroom instruction with distance learning techniques
- Professional development for teachers and principals
- Individual study options
- School scheduling
- Grading policies
- Learning progressions for online and onsite instruction

## Special Education

- Compliance with IEPs
- Special accommodations

## Communications & Stakeholder Engagement

- Integration of mass notification systems, surveys and feedback loops
- Update student information databases
- Advocacy with state, federal, and local officials and agencies
- Press relations and social media
- Adapting to rapid changes in state, federal and local situations and public statement

## Health & Safety Support

- Parent and student awareness of personal hygiene prevention techniques
- Vaccine requirements for admission to school
- Face coverings
- Checking for symptoms
- Mental Health counseling
- Trauma informed activities

## Facilities, Maintenance, and Transportation

- Cleaning schedules, standards and specifications, quality control
- Transportation protocols
- Maintenance and installation of safety equipment
- Construction and modernization projects
- Social distancing markers and directional signage, staggered dismissal bells, student drop off/pick-up

## Emergency Preparedness

- Criteria and data points needed to trigger re-closure
- Re-supply PPE and learning materials, contracts
- Handling a Covid-19 infection at a school

## Technology

- One-to-one technology
- WiFi connectivity and access
- Technology support and training



All students return with minimal social distancing requirements. Regular student hours and weekly schedule aligned to the 2020-21 board approved academic calendar.

## NCDHHS Requirements

- Provide social distancing floor/seating markings in waiting and reception areas; Mark 6 feet of spacing to remind students and staff to always stay 6 feet apart; Provide marks on the floors of restrooms and locker rooms.
- Limit nonessential visitors and activities.
- Have staff monitor arrival and dismissal to discourage congregating.
- Discontinue the use of any self-service food or beverage distribution in the cafeteria.
- View all requirements and procedures outlined by the state in the [StrongSchoolNC Public Health Toolkit](#) and the [Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 \(K-12\)](#).

## Teaching and Learning

### Teacher Expectations

- Use Google Classroom (K-5) and Canvas (6-12) as the Teaching & Learning Platform.
- Engage students in the ABSS learning pathways/courses aligned with the NCDPI SCOS through personalization of the K-5 Google Slide Decks & 6-12 Canvas Blueprints and other in class aligned tasks/assessments.
- Provide students with timely feedback on assigned tasks and assessment using the ABSS Teaching & Learning Platforms.
- Provide students with daily SEL activities to build relationships with their teacher and peers.
- Report student attendance and reach out to families who are not participating.
- Attend scheduled virtual content area/grade level district PLCs (scheduled in the afternoons) in order to participate in professional learning and standards-based collaboration across the district throughout the 2020-2021 academic year.
- Attend scheduled sessions to support the Remote Learning Platforms: Google Classroom (K-5) and Canvas (6-12).

### Student Expectations

- Participate and attend school daily.
- Complete assigned tasks and submit these tasks to the teacher using either Google Classroom (K-5) or Canvas (6-12) as well as submit assigned tasks to teacher that are provided in a paper version.

### Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Expectations

- Ensure your child attends school daily.
- Use the parent/guardian/caregiver directions and resources in the grade level/content area learning progressions to assist your child with their assigned tasks/assessment.
- Meet with your child's teacher during virtual office hours and/or at school office hours as needed for any assistance along the way.

Schools operate at 50% student capacity with moderate social distancing.

### NCDHHS Requirements

- Provide social distancing floor/seating markings in waiting and reception areas; Mark 6 feet of spacing to remind students and staff to always stay 6 feet apart; Provide marks on the floors of restrooms and locker rooms
- Limit nonessential visitors and activities
- Have staff monitor arrival and dismissal to discourage congregating
- Discontinue the use of any self-service food or beverage distribution in the cafeteria
- Ensure sufficient social distancing with at least 6 feet between people at all times in school facilities and on school transportation vehicles.
- Limit density of people in school facilities and transportation vehicles to no greater than 50% maximum occupancy to ensure social distancing of at least 6 feet apart between people.
- Ensure that all students from kindergarten through 12th grade, and all teachers, staff and adult visitors, wear face coverings.
- View all requirements and procedures outlined by the state in the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit \(K-12\)](#) and the [Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 \(K-12\)](#).

### Students with Last Name A-K

Will attend Monday and Wednesday of each week.  
Friday will alternate every other week.

### Students with Last Name L-Z

Will attend Tuesday and Thursday of each week.  
Friday will alternate every other week.

We will rotate Fridays unless there is a holiday or Teacher Workday during that week. We will then use Friday for a make-up day for students. (ex: Labor Day - Students who miss Monday will now attend on Friday)

- ABSS has [provided a calendar on the website](#), that will be easy to read for all students and staff.
- All days students are not in-class are still considered instructional days and students will complete work at-home.
- If we have inclement weather and need to miss school, it will become a remote learning day and we will pick-up the regular schedule once we can return.
- Middle and high school courses will be scheduled to meet in their regular class schedules.
- Elementary classes will use a cohort model to reduce potential exposure between classes.

#### *Exceptions to the attendance rules:*

- Students in the CNA program at CTEC will attend this class daily in order to get their hours for clinicals.
- Students who take CCP courses on ACC's campus will continue with their protocols for learning.

There will be a process shared with families who need students in the same house to attend on the same days due to childcare if they have different last names. The Elementary and Secondary Office will support this process from their office. This process will be electronic.

We recognize that ABSS employees who are required to work daily have children who are unable to stay home alone and may need arrangements so the employee can work. Employees with current students in Elementary and Middle schools can send their children to school everyday.





## Plan B

### Teaching and Learning

#### Teacher Expectations

##### *In the Classroom*

- Use Google Classroom (K-5) and Canvas (6-12) as the Teaching & Learning Platform.
- Facilitate the daily schedule using face-to-face instruction.
- Engage students in the ABSS learning pathways/courses aligned with the NCDPI SCOS through personalization of the K-5 Google Slide Decks & 6-12 Canvas Blueprints and other in tasks/assessment in the classroom setting.
- Provide students with timely feedback on assigned tasks and assessment using the ABSS Teaching & Learning Platforms.
- Provide students with daily SEL activities to build relationships with their teacher and peers.
- Report student attendance and reach out to families who are not participating.

##### *Remote Learning Days (from home)*

- Use Google Classroom (K-5) and Canvas (6-12) as the Teaching & Learning Platform.
- Provide students with timely feedback on assigned tasks and assessment using the ABSS Teaching & Learning Platforms.
- Report student attendance and reach out to families who are not participating.
- Schedule daily virtual office hours for students and parents during planning time.

#### Student Expectations

##### *In the Classroom*

- Participate on your assigned days in the classroom.
- Log into your assigned class/courses daily.
- Complete assigned tasks and submit these tasks to the teacher using Google Classroom (K-5) or Canvas (6-12) and/or in class assignments.
- Meet with teacher during daily virtual office hours as needed.

##### *Remote Learning Days (from home)*

- Log into your assigned class/courses daily.
- Complete assigned tasks and submit these tasks to the teacher using Google Classroom (K-5) or Canvas (6-12).
- Meet with teacher during daily virtual office hours as needed.

#### Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Expectations

- Use the parent/guardian/caregiver directions and resources in the grade level/content area learning progressions to assist your child with their assigned tasks/assessment.
- Ensure your child has access to instructional materials and participates daily aligned to the provided schedule from the school.
- Meet with your child's teacher during virtual office hours and/or at school office hours as needed for any assistance along the way.
- Parents should communicate any conflicts with the daily remote schedule to the teacher.

#### School Expectations

- Provide families with a detailed alternating schedule.
- Schedule grade level/school parent/guardian sessions on a regular basis to assist families with the alternating schedule as well as access to resource both at school and home.



## Remote Learning Only Option

Under Plan B, ABSS will offer a remote learning option for any family that would prefer to take advantage of an at-home learning opportunity.

Families will committ to remote learning for the first semester. The first semester ends after the second nine weeks in January 2021.

For each class, teachers, schools, and the district will work with students to ensure access to reliable resources that support remote learning. Technology devices, including Chromebooks and hotspots, will be available to any student that needs these resources.

Under Plan B, students who choose the remote learning only option, will still follow the A/B day schedule. On days when they would have gone into the classroom, they will have the same instructional day/time. On the days they would have been virtual, they will complete their assignments as given by teachers. The remote learning only option is blended and will consist of some time on Zoom with teachers and some online assignments via Google Classroom (Elementary) or Canvas (Middle and High School).

Students and families who would like to choose the remote learning only option will need to communicate their intentions with their school.

## Transportation

Under Plan B, Bus Drivers run the assigned route with 50% capacity

Only one student per seat (unless)

- i. 72 Passenger max capacity--24 students
- ii. 66 Passenger max capacity--22 students
- iii. 54 Passenger max capacity---18 students minus removed seats for wheelchairs

a. Siblings living in the same household will be required to sit together (Increasing maximum student seating capacity) Example---Two siblings ride same HS/MS/Elem. Bus -the bus capacity is now increased from 24/22/18 to 25/23/19.

b. Students will be loaded starting from the back of the school bus forward.



School facilities remain closed to students with 100% remote learning.

## NCDHHS Requirements

- Follow all social distancing requirements for anyone entering the building.
- View all requirements and procedures outlined by the state in the [StrongSchoolNC Public Health Toolkit](#) and the [Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 \(K-12\)](#).

## Required Remote Learning Plan

All students will be provided with access to technology to include wifi access as needed in order to log in and engage in learning with their teacher using the video communication tool ZOOM. The ABSS remote learning schedule will provide a balance between academic growth and social emotional development. Operating on a two hour delay will reduce screen time by shortening class periods to provide more time for offline independent learning as well as virtual PLCs for teachers. Using the ABSS learning progressions students will be provided with quality tasks/assessments aligned to the cognitive demand of the standards and will provide a greater impact on teaching and learning outcomes. Parents will also be provided with directions and resources to support their student through each learning progression. These directions are also provided in Spanish for our families. Students and parents will have daily access to teachers through daily virtual office hours.

Remote Learning Plan due to NCDPI by July 20, 2020.

Required Remote Learning Plan Components:

- Conduct stakeholder survey.
- Provide training for teachers on remote learning.
- Define staff roles and expectations with remote learning (ABSS Instructional Frameworks/ Daily Instructional Schedule)
- Survey student and home connectivity
- Involve community partners in services
- Develop lessons in PLCs
- Provide opportunities for students to practice remote learning access in the classroom (need for a blended learning instructional framework)
- Communicate student learning targets
- Ensure instructional time and tasks are aligned to mastery of the standards (teacher clarity)
- Ensure students with exceptionalities have equal access
- Report attendance on remote instruction days
- Provide contact options (online and offline) for students to communicate with teachers/ staff for remote instruction days not used as teacher workdays
- Provide technology support to students experiencing technical difficulty
- Ensure the needs of EL, AIG, and students served under the McKinney-Vento Act will be met during remote instruction.
- Identify limitations that exist for implementing quality remote learning.
- All students return with minimal social distancing requirements.



## Plan C

*continued*

### Teaching and Learning

#### Teacher Expectations

- Use Google Classroom (K-5) and Canvas (6-12) as the Teaching & Learning Platform.
- Facilitate the daily 2 hour delay schedule.
- Engage students in the ABSS learning pathways/courses aligned with the NCDPI SCOS through personalization of the K-5 Google Slide Decks & 6-12 Canvas Blueprints.
- Provide a consistent schedule for daily face to face interaction via Zoom.
- Teachers are encouraged to provide alternative opportunities for students to receive face to face instruction if they are unable to join the regularly scheduled class times.
- Provide students with timely feedback on assigned tasks and assessment using the ABSS Teaching & Learning Platforms.
- Provide students with timely SEL activities to build relationships with their teacher and peers.
- Report student attendance and reach out to families who are not participating.
- Schedule daily virtual office hours for students and parents.
- Teachers will facilitate both a synchronous and asynchronous daily teaching and learning schedule. Students will be expected to participate daily and attendance/engagement will be recorded daily.
- The synchronous learning schedule times are as follows:
  - Elementary: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm
  - Middle School: 8:30 am - 2:45 pm
  - High School: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Students and teachers will log on daily using ZOOM during their designated times where teachers will provide students with direct instruction. Students will then work on assigned tasks for the remainder of the time and submit their work using either Google Classroom (K-5) or Canvas (6-12).

- The asynchronous learning option will accommodate students/families who have scheduling conflicts with the synchronous schedule above. Teachers will post daily ZOOM recordings and lessons for students to access. Students will access these resources and daily assignments outside of the synchronous daily schedule above under the guidance of their caregiver in order to complete one or more the following daily learning requirements:
  - Submit assigned learning tasks each day and/or
  - Log into an assigned instructional program or learning platform each day and/or
  - Contact teacher via email, phone or during virtual office hours for assistance with completing and/or submitting assigned learning tasks each day



## Plan C

*continued*

### Teaching and Learning

#### **Student Expectations**

- Participate daily in the ABSS remote learning schedule following the 2020-2021 academic calendar for student days.
- Log into assigned class/courses daily.
- Complete assigned tasks and submit these tasks to the teacher using Google Classroom (K-5) or Canvas (6-12).
- Meet with teacher during daily virtual office hours as needed.

#### **Parent/Guardian/Caregiver Expectations**

- Use the parent/guardian/caregiver directions and resources in the grade level/content area learning progressions to assist your child with their assigned tasks/assessment.
- Ensure your child has access to instructional materials and participates daily aligned to the provided schedule from the school.
- Meet with your child's teacher during virtual office hours and/or at school office hours as needed for any assistance along the way.
- Parents should communicate any conflicts with the daily remote schedule to the teacher.

#### **School Expectations**

- Provide families with a detailed remote learning schedule using the 2 hour delay time frames.
- Schedule grade level/school parent/guardian sessions on a regular basis to assist families with the alternating schedule as well as access to resource both at school and home.
- Provide daily access to students and families needing assistance during remote learning days.

## Process, Procedure and Policies for Schools

- Protocol for an identified or suspected COVID-19 case: Action will be based upon contact tracing. If no potential exposure is limited, single class or individual school closure will be considered.
- General protective equipment: Face coverings will be required when social distancing is not possible.
- Wellness Checks: Wellness checks, including temperature checks will be conducted for all students and staff.
- Refer to requirements on page 9-10 of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit](#) and the [Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19](#).

### ABSS Procedures During Social Distancing

- No visitors with the exception of individual parent conferences.
- There will be no in-person guest speakers.
- There will be no field trips.
- After school extra-curricular activities will be allowed if athletics are allowed. The decision regarding athletics will be informed by guidance from NCHSAA.
- Afterschool Care will be available.

### Special Activities

- Back to School Nights/Meet the Teacher events will be conducted via Zoom.
- New Student Visits will be conducted via Zoom.

#### *Guidance from Central Office*

- *Limit as much interaction as possible.*
- *Use virtual events as much as possible.*

### Hallway and Stairwell movement

- Administrators will review their building to design a traffic flow pattern that helps promote social distancing.
- Signage and floor decals will be used to direct traffic flow and inform social distancing.
- Schools will establish direction of traffic, up and down stairwells, and common area processes that are used before and after school.
- Routines and practices will be built into their PBIS matrix in order to model for students.

### Breakfast and Lunch Options

- In order to get students fed in a timely manner, administrators will work on a schedule that allows children to eat in the classroom if they cannot social distance in the cafeteria. Meal service will be limited to Grab and Go.
- Signs and floor decals will be posted that allow the flow of traffic to move smoothly.
- Cafeteria routines will be built into the PBIS matrix in order to model for students the proper way to move and work in the cafeteria.

### Symptomatic Students

- PPE will be provided for medical assessments as well as students exhibiting signs of illness.
- Assessments will be conducted in a space with limited access to others in the building.
- Refer to requirements on page 9-10 of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit](#) and the [Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19](#).

# Process, Procedure and Policies for Schools

## Technology Distribution

- Technology will be distributed in a staged manner with social distancing and PPE (e.g. gloves and masks).
- New students and rising first graders will be surveyed to gather information on devices and internet access at home.
- Internet access will be available to instructional staff who do not have it.

## Elective/Encore Course Considerations

- PE will need to look different without physical contact or sharing of equipment. During a modified schedule, there will be no dressing out to eliminate the potential of non-social distancing.
- Weight Training will need to have a clear process of how to clean equipment once a student has completed using the equipment.
- Music/Band/Chorus will need to make sure they have moved students six feet apart on the side and from front to back. They will make sure there is no sharing of instruments.
- CTE Courses (e.g. Foods, EMT, etc) will follow protocols developed specifically for each course.

## General Cleaning for Schools

- Continuous wiping down of common areas and touch points (e.g. door handles, sitting areas, restrooms, etc.) School checklists will be developed to ensure consistency.
- Additional custodial personnel will be available to increase frequency of cleaning.
- Hand sanitizer will be placed throughout school that can be used by students, staff, and parents.
- Buses will be cleaned prior to each route.
- Refer to requirements on page 7 of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit](#).

## Transportation

- Buses will be cleaned prior to each route.
- All students and staff using school transportation will be required to wear a face mask.
- No more than one passenger can be seated per school bus seat (considerations for family members to share one seat).
- Refer to requirements on page 12 of the [StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit](#).

# Frequently Asked Questions

## PARENTS

**What is the school calendar going to look like for next year?**

*All ABSS schools, with the exception of the Early College, will operate on a common traditional calendar with a start date for students of August 17, 2020. Calendars are posted on the ABSS district website.*

**How many students will be in my child's class with social distancing guidelines in place?**

*Classes will operate at reduced capacity on a daily basis. Masks will be available and required inside the classrooms.*

**What will be available for parents who don't want to send their child back to school when it reopens?**

*While we believe we are most effective in producing outcomes for students in a classroom setting, we understand that some parents/guardians may have concerns about their children returning to school. ABSS will offer a remote learning option for families who may not feel comfortable sending students back to school. Schools will provide families with information about choosing this option. Remote learning will be a blend between Zoom sessions with their teacher and assignments on Google Classroom (Elementary) and Canvas (Middle and High School).*

**What about attendance?**

*Guidance from DPI is forthcoming.*

**What about buses and how many children can ride?**

*Buses will transport students, one student per seat in a staggered manner. Face coverings will be required.*

**How will you know what students need catching up to close gaps?**

*The student learning progressions will contain both pre and post assessments to determine student learning, identify gaps and measure student progress in order to respond appropriately through interventions as necessary.*

**How are we going to ensure that students are on academic grade level?**

*The student learning progressions are aligned to grade level and content standards in order to provide at grade instruction and assessments. ABSS will continue to use various forms of data to personalize learning for students. In doing so, various forms of data will be used (knowledge of 19-20 content, foundational skills, familiarity with upcoming content, etc.) to determine how to best respond to students' academic needs.*

**What are plans for remediation?**

*Teachers will provide small group instruction and intervention plans will be implemented as needed. These interventions and small group practices will continue to access and use previous grade level and content skills necessary to assist students at being successful at the current grade level or content area. Plans A, B, and C will allow for this remediation time.*

**How will we balance at-home learning with in-class learning?**

*As the state releases guidelines for attendance and openings, ABSS will communicate a consistent schedule. Elementary will use Google classroom and our Secondary Schools will utilize Canvas. Teachers are working this summer to build our learning progressions that will ensure our students are engaged with curriculum standards.*

**With full time virtual learning, how many hours a day are the kids required to work?**

*There are not specific required hours for students. However, students will during Plan C (all remote learning), teachers will facilitate a daily synchronous schedule where students will log in at designated times via ZOOM to engage in direct instruction. Following this instruction, they will assigned tasks to complete and submit using their learning platform.*

**If we choose the remote learning option under Plan B, can we change to the in-class A/B schedule (or vice versa)?**

*If families feel the need to change their method of instruction they should reach out directly to their student's school.*



## **PARENT FAQs continued**

### **What are we doing to clean/disinfect schools, buses on a regular basis?**

*The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services have issued specific guidance for all NC K-12 public schools including cleaning protocols for school buildings and for buses. ABSS will adhere to those requirements and recommendations.*

*Buses will be cleaned on a daily basis to remove any trash and items left behind by students. Each bus will be disinfected twice daily using a battery powered sprayer designed to apply a disinfectant. Frequently touched areas will be wiped down between routes with a disinfectant. Every student that enters the bus will be required to wear a mask as well as provide an attestation letter. Each student will also be provided hand sanitizer once boarded.*

*During the nightly cleaning the schools will be disinfected. Each school will be provided an additional employee that will focus on wiping down frequently touched areas. During the day classrooms and bathrooms will be cleaned as often as the schedule will allow. Foam hand sanitizer dispensers will be located at all entry points. Each classroom will have hand sanitizer available for student use.*

### **What will remote learning look like and when will that be utilized?**

*Remote learning will be used in Plan B and Plan C. In both of these instances, remote learning can include digital, online, and pencil/paper resources to support the learning process. For each class, teachers, schools, and the district will work with students to ensure access to reliable resources that support remote learning. Technology devices will be available to any student that needs remote learning resources under Plan B and Plan C.*

*Under Plan B, students who choose the remote learning only option, will still follow the A/B day schedule. On days when they would have gone into the classroom, they will have the same instructional day/time. On the days they would have been virtual, they will complete their assignments as given by teachers. The remote learning only option is blended and will consist of some time on Zoom with teachers and some online assignments via Google Classroom (Elementary) or Canvas (Middle and High School).*

### **What are the protocols when positive case is identified for student and for staff?**

*We work closely with the Alamance County Health Department (ACHD) and follow their guidance based on each individual case. ACHD guidance is based on public health information provided by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and the national Centers for Disease Control. Please see the reference guide provided by the state. [Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 \(K-12\)](#).*

*If positive symptoms are discovered during the screening process, students and or staff must immediately return home. They may return to school after 14 days after last close contact, if no symptoms develop nor do they have a positive test. Students and or staff may participate in remote learning and teaching if applicable while they are out.*

### **If a student or staff members tests positive for COVID-19, at what point would you close a classroom, grade, or entire school?**

*In the event there is a positive case of COVID-19, we will work with our local health department officials to determine appropriate action based upon contact tracing. The extent of closure will be determined based upon extent of contact.*

### **What about help for students who need social/emotional assistance?**

*Schools are required to provide staff, families and students (if age-appropriate) with information on how to access resources for mental health and wellness (e.g. 211 and Hope4NC helpline 1-855-587-3463). Families should also reach out to the school counselor at their student's school for additional resources and information.*

### **What about help for students who medical needs?**

*Staff should contact the school nurse related to any student medical needs. The school nurse will collaborate with the family to develop an Individualized Health Care Plan. The nurse should be notified immediately upon the parent reporting a concern. See page 6 of the [Strong Schools NC Public Health Toolkit](#).*

## **PARENT FAQs continued**

**Will electives, AIG, and AP courses be available under the remote learning option?**

*Yes, all courses provided face-to-face are available to students who choose the remote learning option.*

**Under Plan B planning, did you consider a AA/BB schedule or an A week/B week schedule?**

*District administrators and principals considered many options under the Plan B requirements. The alternating day model was preferred by our educational leaders to allow our students more regular access to meals, and increased face-to-face instruction. In the alternating day model teachers will be able to provide content and new concepts and students will be able to review (with given assignments) on the days that are at home, instead of learning new content at home.*

**Will there be recess?**

*Yes, there will be time set aside for students to be outdoors and in fresh air. It may look different than in previous school years. Additionally, under state requirements everyone is required to wear masks inside and outside. There is an exception for when students are outside AND socially distanced. Staff will be encouraged to provide opportunities for students to be outside AND socially distanced so that they can have a break from wearing their masks.*

**For the remote learning option, will there be a teacher via Zoom or other platform actually instructing the class and teaching?**

*Under Plan B, students who choose the remote learning only option, will still follow the A/B day schedule. On days when they would have gone into the classroom, they will have the same instructional day/time. On the days they would have been virtual, they will complete their assignments as given by teachers. The remote learning only option is blended and will consist of some time on Zoom with teachers and some online assignments via Google Classroom (Elementary) or Canvas (Middle and High School).*

**When will athletics start for student athletes?**

*Workouts have been suspended indefinitely. The NCHSAA has set September 1st as it's First Official day for Fall Sports practice.*

**Will Middle Schools still have sports as usual?**

*As a result of ABSS opening school with a blended model of face to face and remote learning, middle school sports is suspended indefinitely.*

**What about athletics, field trips, and extracurricular activities?**

*We will use guidance provided by NCHSAA in making decisions regarding athletics based upon social distancing requirements in place at the time. Extracurricular activities will follow suit. Field trips (non-virtual) are suspended in order to reduce risk of exposure.*

## Frequently Asked Questions

### STAFF

**5 extra days mandated by the state—Will I get paid extra?**

*These were counted as five of the 215 days in a ten-month employee's work year.*

**What is the school calendar for staff?**

*The staff calendar is posted on the ABSS website.*

**Are there any emergency leave options for employees for COVID-19 related reasons if needed?**

*Federal leave provisions are outlined in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) - including up to 2-weeks of paid sick leave and 10-weeks of expanded FMLA for COVID-19 related reasons. This federal leave provision is available through December 31, 2020.*

**What are the protocols when a positive case is identified for student and for staff?**

*We work closely with the Alamance County Health Department (ACHD) and follow their guidance based on each individual case. ACHD guidance is based on public health information provided by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and the national Centers for Disease Control.*

**How many students will be in my class?**

*The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services have issued guidance for all public K-12 school districts to follow. The number of students per classroom will be based on the directives included in the school re-entry documents provided by these 2 agencies based on 3 plans: A, B, or C. Plan B, for example, requires schools to operate at a reduced capacity for students while Plan C calls for remote learning only.*

**What will happen if someone has a positive case at my school?**

*We work closely with the Alamance County Health Department (ACHD) and follow their guidance based on each individual case. Positive cases of COVID-19 are required to be shared with the local health department and they contact us with confirmation and instructions. ACHD guidance is based on public health information provided by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and the national Centers for Disease Control.*

**How will our schools and classrooms be cleaned?**

*The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services have issued specific guidance for all NC K-12 public schools including cleaning protocols for school buildings and for buses. ABSS will adhere to those requirements and recommendations. During the nightly cleaning the schools will be disinfected. Each school will be provided an additional employee that will focus on wiping down frequently touched areas. During the day classrooms and bathrooms will be cleaned as often as the schedule will allow. Foam hand sanitizer dispensers will be located at all entry points. Each classroom will have hand sanitizer available for student use.*

**What materials will I have to ensure that my classroom is clean?**

*ABSS will provide cleaning materials for schools and classrooms outlined in the guidance from NCDPI and NC-DHHS. Foam hand sanitizer dispensers will be located at all entry points. Each classroom will have hand sanitizer available for student use. Wipes will be provided for the opportunity for additional cleaning.*

**How will we social distance with the number of students in my class?**

*Administrators are working closely with teachers to set up rooms that allow for social distancing.*

## STAFF continued

**How will we balance at-home learning with in-class learning?**

*As the state releases guidelines for attendance and openings, ABSS will communicate a consistent schedule that will support teachers in their work to provide quality at-home and in-class learning experiences.*

**How will we determine student grade level proficiency?**

*ABSS will continue to use various forms of data to personalize learning for students. In doing so, various forms of data will be used (knowledge of 19-20 content, foundational skills, familiarity with upcoming content, etc.) to determine how to best respond to students' academic needs.*

**Will I be held responsible for student performance?**

*Teachers are always responsible for student performance. While there were adjustments to the accountability model in the 19-20 school year, schools and teachers know that students and families always deserve our best whether there is a test at the end of the school year or not.*

**What about grades?**

*Grades are a form of communication. As such, ABSS will continue to communicate with parents, families, and students about the progress being made throughout the school year. In the event of updated guidance from the state, ABSS will communicate expectations and procedures; otherwise, ABSS schools will continue to ensure that grades are a sources of communication about student learning.*

**What if we have to shutdown—is there a plan for remote learning for a period of time?**

*Each school district in North Carolina has to develop an in-depth remote learning plan and submit it to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in mid-July. ABSS will be prepared to implement the remote learning plan if/when needed.*

**How will I plan lessons for remote learning and in-class learning?**

*ABSS teacher leaders have been selected and are working with our curriculum specialists and digital learning coach to ensure that resources are readily available for teacher implementation. These lessons and resources will be further supported by the continuation of our virtual PLCs throughout the district during the 2020-2021 school year.*

**What do I do with my own children if we are on a modified schedule on the days they do not come to school?**

*There will be a process for employees who need their elementary and middle school aged students to attend school daily. This process will come through the District office.*

**Can I be required to submit to health screenings, including temperature checks and questionnaires, prior to entering a worksite?**

*Yes. The ADA permits medical inquires and/or examinations in order to assess whether an employee has a medical condition that may pose a direct threat to health or safety. The EEOC has confirmed that COVID-19 constitutes a direct threat to health and safety of others, and therefore employers may make medical inquires designed to determine whether an employee has symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection.*

## STAFF continued

**Are the results of the health screening confidential?**

*Yes, the information gained from a health screening (temperature check and responses to questions) are confidential records. Each worksite should have a private, secure location where daily health screening records are kept.*

**What if I have an underlying health condition that makes me high risk?**

*Employees that identifies as high risk for severe illness should communicate with their supervisor to consider modified job responsibilities that limit exposure to others, or to telework if possible.*

**If an employee has a fever or otherwise fails a health check required for entry into work:**

**Can I be sent home?**

*Yes. The employee should not be permitted to enter the facility or have direct contact with students or staff.*

**Can I be required to work remotely?**

*Yes, if the employee feels well enough to work and his or her job can be done remotely.*

**What if it is determined I cannot work remotely?**

*The employee may be placed on appropriate leave. If the employee is advised to self-quarantine by the health department or a healthcare provider or is showing symptoms and is seeking a diagnosis, the employee may be eligible for FFCRA federal emergency paid sick leave, up to 80 hours of leave.*

**Could I be required to be tested for COVID-19 before returning to work?**

*Yes, if the employee shows symptoms of COVID-19 but asserts they are fit for work, the employer can require the employee to produce a negative COVID-19 test or note/email from a doctor.*

**What will happen if someone has a positive case at my school?**

*Immediately isolate symptomatic individuals to area of the school designated for them and send them home to isolate. Also refer to the [Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, and Confirmed COVID-19 Cases](#).*

**What will happen if I become a positive case?**

*Notify your supervisor, go home if you are currently on school property. You may return to school 14 days after last close contact, if no symptoms develop nor do you have a positive COVID-19 test. Staff may participate in remote teaching (if applicable) while out. Also refer to the [Reference Guide for Suspected, Presumptive, and Confirmed COVID-19 Cases](#).*

**What about help for students who need social/emotional assistance?**

*Schools are required to provide staff, families and students (if age-appropriate) with information on how to access resources for mental health and wellness (e.g. 211 and Hope4NC helpline 1-855-587-3463). Staff should encourage families should also reach out to the school counselor at their student's school for additional resources and information.*

**What about help for students who medical needs?**

*Staff should contact the school nurse related to any student medical needs. The school nurse will collaborate with the family to develop an Individualized Health Care Plan. The nurse should be notified immediately upon the parent reporting a concern. See page 6 of the [Strong Schools NC Public Health Toolkit](#).*

# Frequently Asked Questions

## COMMUNITY MEMBERS

### How are we cleaning schools to ensure safety?

*The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services have issued specific guidance for all NC K-12 public schools including cleaning protocols for school buildings and for buses. ABSS will adhere to those requirements and recommendations.*

### How are we paying for school needs with reduced county income?

*The school system has received over \$9 million in resources through the CARES Act, NC House Bill 1043 and emergency funding from Governor Cooper to dedicate specifically toward meeting the student learning and operational needs arising as a result of COVID-19.*

### How are children going to get caught up from missed class time/close gaps?

*ABSS will continue to use various forms of data to personalize learning for students. In doing so, various forms of data will be used (knowledge of 19-20 content, foundational skills, familiarity with upcoming content, etc.) to determine how to best respond to students' academic needs.*

### What will happen if there is an outbreak at a school?

*We work closely with the Alamance County Health Department (ACHD) and follow their guidance based on each individual case. Positive cases of COVID-19 are required to be shared with the local health department and they contact us with confirmation and instructions. ACHD guidance is based on public health information provided by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and the national Centers for Disease Control.*

### If there is a shutdown how will children continue learning?

*ABSS is working diligently to complete our remote learning plan and will make every effort to ensure that students have access to the digital resources they need in order to continue learning in the event of another shutdown.*

### What is the school calendar for next year?

*All ABSS schools, with the exception of the Early College, will operate on a common traditional calendar with a start date for students of August 17, 2020. Calendars are posted on the ABSS district website.*

### How are we going to maintain social distancing to protect children?

*The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services have issued specific guidance for all NC K-12 public schools including social distancing guidelines and ABSS will adhere to those requirements and recommendations.*

### How will ABSS clean schools to ensure safety?

*During the nightly cleaning the schools will be disinfected. Each school will be provided an additional employee that will focus on wiping down frequently touched areas. During the day classrooms and bathrooms will be cleaned as often as the schedule will allow. Foam hand sanitizer dispensers will be located at all entry points. Each classroom will have hand sanitizer available for student use.*

### If there is a shutdown, how will children receive food?

*As a district, we are advocating for a waiver from USDA to continue the meal program as it has been throughout the summer. The current waiver expires as of August 31st. In order to continue using the buses to distribute meals flexibility in transportation funding will have to be granted from DPI.*