

## **NEW INSTRUCTION FOR ALL STUDENTS**

### **OVERVIEW**

In March 2020, when schools across the Commonwealth of Virginia closed by emergency order, Fauquier County Public Schools were thrust into the world of remote learning. While virtual classroom participation was declared optional to provide as much flexibility as possible for our students and their families, many students continued their education. Whether through formally assigned work, or practicing life skills at home, learning took place in a variety of ways during this unique and unprecedented time.

With the reopening of schools in the fall of 2020, we have an opportunity to build upon the strengths of our faculty, students, and their families. Rather than approaching our instruction based on possible deficits, we will work to meet all students where they are and move forward. Our implementation of instruction during this time will need to be adaptable to best meet the needs of our community and in preparation for any additional challenges we may face.

First and foremost, we will need to address the social and emotional well being of our staff and students. All good instruction starts with building relationships, and our academic instruction will be enhanced with opportunities for social-emotional learning. We want to avoid formal assessments right when students return and instead help our students successfully transition back to school with the help of support staff such as school counselors and social workers as needed.

It is also extremely important to preserve our goal of developing well-rounded students with a love for learning. To ensure access to a wide variety of learning experiences, all students will be provided with new instruction in all subject areas. This includes electives at the middle and high school levels and specials/resource classes at the elementary level. It is our goal to offer all courses that are offered during a regular school year. (See possible barrier note at end of this document.) Teachers, instructional supervisors and administration will adjust pacing guides as needed and it will not be assumed that all students will need to start at the same place. Meeting each student's individual needs will be more important than ever.

To ensure equitable access to learning experiences for all students, synchronous, asynchronous, blended, digital, and physical methods of instruction will be utilized to best suit the needs of our community. Every student will have access to quality instruction regardless of their current living situation, access to the internet or technology, or their previous academic background. We will work with each student and family to make sure they have all the tools needed for success. In addition, these known vulnerable groups of students will have their needs addressed in specific ways outlined here:

#### **I. Students with Disabilities:**

Students with a disability on the Standards of Learning curriculum, grades K-12, will follow the same guidelines as other students.

Students with a disability on the Alternative Standards of Learning (ASOL) curriculum, grades K-12, will receive face to face instruction on all days the school buildings are open. If

schools would close, then instruction would then be required to occur virtually as described in the contingency plan.

Students with a disability who are enrolled in FCPS Transition Program will follow the same guidelines as other students except attendance will be at 50% capacity at all times.

IEP teams will review and revise plans, addressing students' needs in the IEP. IEP teams will consider appropriate accommodations and related services.

Extended School Year, (ESY) continued for students who qualified for this service during the summer, although this instruction was delivered virtually. For those students who could not attend virtually for various reasons, they were provided instruction through other methods such as work packets and phone contacts.

## **II. Students with Economic Disadvantages:**

Fauquier County Public Schools is working to provide extended learning and planning for blended learning, remote learning, and/or the possibility of another long term closure. In order to meet the needs of all learners, students are/will be served in the following ways with students with economic disadvantages being in the forefront of these decisions:

- Grab and go meals are distributed once each week (families are given 5 days of breakfast and lunch for each child) during summer
- Students needing a device are provided with one
- Students without internet access are provided with a hotspot with unlimited data usage
- Buses equipped with hotspots are parked in various locations throughout the division for families to access for free
- In select buildings, chosen geographically, a booster for the wireless internet signal will be extended, allowing families to connect to the wireless network from the parking lot
- A variety of no-tech activities are provided for students
- Students participating in summer learning were provided all materials needed to complete activities
- Students participating in summer learning were provided printed copies of activities
- Over the duration of the 2020-2021 school year and beyond, all students in grades 3-12 will be provided with a device and ensured access to connectivity
- The Universal Screener, Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) will help to identify students who need intervention services provided by Title I and Non-Title I Reading Specialists.
- Title I Schools are those schools identified to have the greatest number of students receiving free or reduced lunch services. These schools are required to provide 2 ½ hours of additional support to students who did not reach the benchmark score on the PALS Assessment.

- In addition, Title I Reading Specialists are sending learners new books, journals, pencils, and other supplies to their home addresses this summer for continued learning.

### **III. English Learners:**

All students who have been identified as English Learners (EL) are eligible for ESL services and must receive instruction that provides meaningful access to the same curriculum and educational opportunities as all students.

As a screener, 2020 WIDA ACCESS or WIDA proficiency levels will be used to determine appropriate instructional supports.

ESL Teachers will support all eligible ESL students by providing instruction to students who receive ESL services through a pull-out or inclusion model and by continuing to collaborate with content teachers to ensure that the appropriate supports and accommodations are provided to the ELs in their classes.

Content teachers should continue to accommodate the learning environment and instruction for their ESL students by:

- Establishing routines
- Including instructional supports such as modeling and use of visuals (i.e., pictures, graphic organizers, tables, charts, graphs)
- Intentionally promoting the development of academic vocabulary across content areas
- Modifying assignments by adding visuals and reducing the amount of language required to understand the work expected
- Allowing students to submit various forms of responses in order to demonstrate knowledge of material

### **IV. Students in Gap Groups:**

With the return to school in the fall, all teachers and staff will need to understand that the social and emotional well-being of themselves, their students, and the families is the primary concern. Teachers will be asked to approach the new learning by identifying the instructional gaps that may exist and work with students to meet their needs.

Identifying Learning Needs:

- Review the completed planning charts that were developed by the VDOE for standards taught before the closure, during the closure, and standards not yet taught
- Utilize norm-referenced growth assessments and formative assessments before and during instruction to determine what students know, understand, and are able to do.
- Use data to help design instructional planning, choice activities and develop lessons that encourage creative thinking, collaboration, and problem solving for all students.

**V. Students who did not participate in Spring or Summer Learning Opportunities:**

Fauquier County Public Schools decided to approach the school closure and potential loss of learning in three phases:

- **Phase One** (April 14- May 22) - During this time, educators connected with students and their families to bring the 2019-2020 school year to a close. Activities to extend learning were provided during this time as well as students had opportunities to complete any missing assignments. After the school year ended, it was recorded which students did not receive instruction during this time by choice or due to limited access.
- **Phase Two** (July 6-23) - In May, planning began for a broad outreach Summer Learning Program, which had over 1100 students enrolled. At the close of Phase Two, school communities will be able to cross reference participation and student needs and make recommendations for supporting a variety of students depending on current level of need.
- **Phase Three** (beginning of the 2020-2021 school year) - Once our students return to our schools in the fall and we have more consistent contact with our students and their families, the experiences for students in Phase Three will largely need to be personalized for each student. We will target students who did not participate in Phase One or Phase Two.

**VI. Pre-K Students:**

Preschools students in the VPI program will follow the guidelines as kindergarten students without a disability.

Preschool students with a disability including the preschool autism classroom and the early childhood special education classrooms will receive face to face instruction on all days the school buildings are open. If schools would close, then instruction would then be required to occur virtually as described in the contingency plan.

**VII. Students Identified as Needing Gifted Services:**

Students identified as needing gifted services will continue to receive gifted services through enrichment activities in grade 2 and 3 and advanced instruction in grades 4-12. Teachers will continually monitor these students to look for gaps in learning that may have occurred during the spring but will continue to provide the services as outlined in the county's Local Plan for Gifted Education.

## **PREPARATION & COMMUNICATION**

To successfully meet the diverse needs of our learners in this new setting, FCPS will prepare staff and clearly communicate our intentions to our community. We will utilize the professional learning and communication plans outlined below:

### **Professional Development:**

Since the emergency closure, FCPS faculty and staff have already engaged in an incredible amount of professional learning. In April, May and June, teachers completed close to 3000 hours of professional learning. The offerings have focused on student safety, social emotional wellness, equity, technology incorporation and evolving our instructional practices to meet current student needs. When our school year begins this Fall, then we are committed to continuing the professional learning with faculty and staff to be prepared for blended instructional delivery.

Regardless of our instructional model for the fall, FCPS will provide our educators with intensive professional learning for potential for blended instructional delivery and extensive training surrounding new safety protocols. We know this will require additional days for professional learning at the beginning of the year to prepare. To accomplish this, the calendar was adjusted without extending the teacher contract by moving the start of school later but keeping the original start date for teachers. Our school year will begin with a two week teacher work week that provides professional learning opportunities.

### **Family Engagement:**

The guidance from the state advises that additional professional development be provided to faculty and staff – *but also to students and their families*. Our focus remains that safety and well-being of students and staff at the forefront, complimented with researched and evidenced best instructional practices. We will design and facilitate professional learning that helps all stakeholders feel equipped to succeed. We consider Family Engagement to be a crucial part of our planning and communication. School ITRTs will be integral in hosting opportunities for families and students to learn more to be better prepared for a blended model of instruction. Offerings this summer for staff have focused on: Equity, Diverse Needs of Learners, Social and Emotional Health, Digital Citizenship, Best practices for assessment and online learning, including student empowerment, incorporating the 5 Cs, PBL, and Profile of a Graduate.

### **Communication with Stakeholders:**

At the beginning of the pandemic, Fauquier County Schools developed a page on our website that contained specific information regarding how COVID-19 was affecting our schools and community. That page, along with a new Fall Reopening page accompanied with a FAQ page has provided the greatest source of information for all stakeholders.

Two surveys were sent to all staff and every family asking about reopening and preferences and needs for services regarding different models of instructional delivery for the beginning of school year 2020-2021.

The Superintendent of Fauquier County Public Schools produces a weekly video update (with transcript included) about decisions being made and additionally has a weekly Twitter Questions. Weekly newsletter to stakeholders, and over thirty updates have been released to provide updates.

Barriers to New Instruction for All Students: If an unexpected number of teachers are unable to return to work face to face, we may need to limit the number of courses offered. Likewise, for parents who choose the 100% virtual option, access to certain specialty courses may not be possible, including advanced courses and certain electives.