

Combined Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction, Continuity of Services And Plan for Use of Grant Funds



Dr. Robert Arnold, Superintendent

Christi Lambert, Grant Writer

Section 1: Introduction

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Fund is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' **academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs**. This plan describes how Amherst County Public Schools (ACPS) will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and division staff during and following the return to full in-person instruction. Any questions pertaining to health and safety should be directed to Dr. William Wells, Assistant Superintendent at wwells@amherst.k12.va.us and questions pertaining to in-person instruction and continuity of services please contact Dr. Dana B. Norman, Chief Academic Officer at dnorman@amherst.k12.va.us.

Guiding Principles

ACPS is dedicated to ensuring a safe learning environment that provides equitable experiences and meets the needs of Every Child, Every Day. ACPS is committed to stand by the following principles:

1. Provide a clean and safe environment for all students and staff to engage in learning.
2. Set a purposeful focus on the 5 C's profile for Virginia Graduates (Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, and Citizenship).
3. Confirm the content aligns with the Virginia Standards of Learning.
4. Use performance assessments to connect student learning to real world experiences.
5. Establish and maintain tiered instruction to support learning loss.

ACPS Response to COVID-19

Looking back at the 2020-2021 school year, ACPS made two things top priority: 1) to ensure the physical and social emotional well-being of all students were maintained, and 2) to provide the most effective and supportive instruction possible during this time of continual change. ACPS introduced distance learning to all students in an effort to reduce learning loss in content and

skills during the state-wide school closure. We offered students three instructional options during the pandemic: a hybrid learning model, an in-person learning model and a 100% remote learning model. We successfully continued instruction to our students and supported the community in reducing the spread of COVID-19.

End of Year 2020-2021 Data showed the following:

- ACPS, like all other school divisions across the state, Accreditation was Waived for the 2021-2022 school year. No remote tests that were administered in 2020-2021 were not factored into the overall pass rates and parents who chose to Opt-Out their student from taking a Standards of Learning Assessment counted against the overall school pass rate, but not against the student.
- Master schedule for secondary was a semester Block which allowed for student in-person learning twice a week, while all other instruction was conducted remotely. While elementary students received the opportunity for 4 days of in-person learning with one day conducted remotely.
- There were 1,414 students who received all of their instruction remotely, while a total of 1,585 students at some point during the school year were quarantined.
- Overall data shows that ACPS students across all grade levels, content and subgroups experienced a decrease in student performance from the 18-19 school year. Specifically ACPS scores similarly to those across the state in reading, but was below the state average in the area of math.
- It is evident by the use of Measures of Academic Progress assessments during the 2020-2021 school year that over 70% of all students in ACPS have suffered learning loss to the point of at least a grade level or more behind.

As a division, ACPS established and promoted a multitude of safety and hygiene training using guidelines from the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and [Virginia Department of Health](#) (VDH). We disbursed on the first day of returning to the buildings, all the safety and hygiene training documents, videos and building signage (all of which promoted screening protocols, spread prevention, social distancing, proper use, type and style of face coverings, and other mitigation strategies) to all division employees, students, visitors and shareholders. Additionally, the school custodial staff were trained on the updated CDC guidelines on cleaning and sanitizing high traffic areas during a pandemic. Throughout the course of the year, the trainings were revisited and communicated often to ensure the fidelity of implementation and many of those materials still remain in circulation today.

Shortly before the start of the 2021-2022 school year, the Commonwealth of Virginia passed Senate Bill 1303, which legally requires school divisions in Virginia to offer five days of in-person instruction to all students effective July 1, 2021. ACPS transitioned from the current model of half virtual learning and half in-person learning to all students, to a 5 days in-person learning as required by the Governor's most recent Executive Order. Returning to five days, in-person instruction presented certain challenges, but it also provided opportunities for improvement. ACPS continues to strive to meet the needs of Every Child, Every Day, by offering academic,

social, emotional, and mental health support to all students and employees as they return to the buildings.

All members of the school community continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic and as we moved forward into the 2021-2022 school year, various supports will be needed. Along with our focus on physical safety, support for the well-being of our students and staff is of the utmost importance. As in-person instruction opened to all students five days a week, ACPSI continued to nurture the relationships that have been established with all stakeholders, while consistently providing a safe, effective, and equitable learning environment for our students, families, and employees.

As ACPS moves forward into the 2022-2023 school year our focus will remain to provide a safe learning environment for all students and staff. We will continue to abide by the requirements under the Code of Virginia and any legislation taken by the General Assembly to determine the implementation of K-12 educational programs in the state of Virginia.

Section 2: Maintaining Health and Safety

ARP Act ESSER III funds may be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning. Amherst County Public Schools will use approximately \$1,461,375.09 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds to implement prevention and mitigation strategies as described below.

ACPS has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and division staff during and following the return to full in-person instruction. A description of actions already taken and additional actions planned is below. The following actions were implemented during the 2020-2021, 2021-2022 school years and will continue into the 2022-2023 school year.

Absenteeism:

ACPS monitored student absenteeism using already established attendance procedures. When the rate of absenteeism increased in our schools, the Superintendent was made aware of this by the attendance clerk and consulted with the Central Virginia Health District regarding possible causes and next steps. Additionally, ACPS led contact tracing efforts to keep schools safe and will continue to notify students and staff who have been exposed to an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19.

ACPS initiated the following protocols to monitor employee health and absenteeism:

- Required employees to complete a health screening protocol before reporting to work each day. The results of the individual health screening will be reviewed and documented by the employee's immediate supervisor.
- Tracked employee absenteeism at the school and district levels using a time management software that required staff to enter their absences.

Communication:

As part of the completion of the COVID-19 Mitigation Health Plan for the 2021-2022 school year, a Health Procedures Summary Document was developed based on the most recent guidance from the CDC, VDH, AAP, VDOE, and Governor's Executive Orders. This document served as the foundation for all communication regarding health mitigation strategies for employees, students, and parents.

Mitigation Strategies: Proper Hygiene and Cleaning

Frequently touched surfaces will be cleaned and sprayed with an approved EPA List N disinfectant. Food service areas will be sanitized utilizing solutions that are approved for use in those areas.

- Door handles, water fountains, sinks, toilet handles, etc. will be cleaned with a sanitizing solution on a regular basis.
- Surfaces that are frequently touched by students and non-cafeteria staff in food service areas will be sanitized between each rotation of students. Food will be pulled from the line and the area will be cleaned in accordance with VDH and USDA guidance.
- Principals will develop cleaning schedules for routine cleaning, as appropriate for their buildings. The routine cleaning schedule will be fluid and adjustable to meet the needs as circumstances change. Routine cleaning will include disinfecting frequently touched surfaces and high volume areas nightly.
- Building level custodians will notify their building administrators of the need for any necessary cleaning and sanitizing supplies. The school administrator will requisition supplies from the Supervisor of Maintenance and Operations.
- The Supervisor of Maintenance and Operations will ensure building level administrators, custodians, and transportation specialists are trained in the proper usage and storage of cleaning and sanitizing supplies.
- Hand Sanitizing stations will be located at entrances to the buildings, outside of restrooms, and food service locations. Each classroom, office, and clinic will have hand sanitizer available and located in a visible and accessible location.

Minimize Sharing of Resources

- Computers and Electronics: All students in grades Pre-K through 12 will be assigned a Chromebook that they can take with them to all classes and for use at home. Teachers will ensure that students do not share electronics or computers. Any device that may be shared will be cleaned between uses. Calculators will be assigned to individual students and cleaned at the end of the class period in which they were used.
- Supplies: All classrooms will be set up so that students have adequate supplies (writing utensils, art supplies, calculators, etc) assigned to them eliminating the need for community supplies. Teachers will ensure that students do not share supplies.

- Early-childhood: Toys, games, and soft items that cannot be cleaned will be removed from classrooms. Any manipulatives or toys that can be easily cleaned will be used by only one student at a time and cleaned between use. When possible, additional 4 manipulatives and other instructional items will be purchased so that each student will have their own assigned to them and stored with their supplies.
- CTE: Students in CTE classes using tools will be required to wear gloves. Ten (10) minutes will be scheduled at the end of each class period to sanitize all tools. Protective eye wear will be individually assigned and sanitized using UV boxes.
- Sensory classrooms: Sensory rooms will be limited to students who require this accommodation as part of their IEP. Sensory equipment that cannot be wiped clean will be removed from the classroom. All equipment will be sanitized in between uses.

Operations Training:

ACPS is broadly recruiting substitute employees to increase the availability of staff to ensure continuity of operations across departments. All current and newly hired substitutes will be provided with targeted professional development to ensure that they are prepared to seamlessly transition into their role as a substitute employee. Additionally, ACPS is including Instructional Assistants in selected professional development activities so that they may transition as necessary.

Each school building will have at least two lay responders who are trained in all duties and expectations of School Nurses to ensure there is a point person for COVID-19 related questions and tasks. These lay responders will be able to contact division personnel and health department resources, as needed, to ensure compliance to all guidelines.

Addressing Positive Cases *Updated Guidelines:*

Employees:

- Staff who are sick with COVID-19 symptoms should remain at home.
- Staff should immediately notify their administrator that they are being tested and then of the results of the test. Administrator will notify and update the division COVID Response Team.
- Staff who test positive must isolate for 5 days from symptom onset. Contact tracing will occur. They cannot return until symptom free for 24 hours (excluding long-term symptoms).

Students:

- Students who are sick with COVID-19 symptoms should stay home.
- Families should immediately notify the school if a student is being tested or tests positive. Rapid tests are available at the school.
- The COVID team will conduct contact tracing and notify contacts of exposure.
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette [Handwashing Video](#)
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation. School division maintenance staff and school based custodians will conduct daily cleaning and disinfecting surfaces in all facilities. Hand sanitizing stations have been established in all

facilities. All classrooms and common areas are equipped with hand sanitizer. Water fountains have been disabled and water bottle filling stations have been installed in every school. Students and staff are encouraged to bring their own water bottles to school. Buses are sanitized between runs and at the end of the day.

o HVAC

- ACPS renovated the HVAC system in all school facilities over the past five years and all systems are ASHRAE compliant for the mixing of outdoor air.
- All renovated systems use bipolar ionization to treat the air.
- ACPS has a service contract with an HVAC contractor to provide required maintenance and cleaning of HVAC equipment.

● **Contact training and notification** ACPS Nursing staff will continue to contact trace positive cases that have been in a school building. Individuals who have been exposed to a positive case will be notified of their exposure.

● **Diagnostic and screening testing** All staff must complete a daily screening form before reporting to work each day. The screening will consist of the following:

Answer Yes or No since my last day in the building, Have I had any of the following:

- A new fever (100.4 or higher) or a sense of having a fever?
- A new cough that cannot be attributed to another health condition?
- New shortness of breath that cannot be attributed to another health condition?
- New chills that cannot be attributed to another health condition? · A new sore throat that cannot be attributed to another health condition?
- New muscle aches (myalgia) that cannot be attributed to another health condition or specific activity (such as physical exercise)?

If a staff member answers YES to any of the screening questions before arriving, they should stay home and not enter the building. Tests are available by staff upon request.

All screening services for students (vision, hearing, dental) will continue to be offered. Organizations that volunteer their assistance, such as the Lion's Club and James River Dental Clinic, will be subject to the ACPS Employee Health Screening prior to entering the schools.

● **Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities** ACPS employees were offered the opportunity to be vaccinated and more than 75% of employees did so. Students were also offered the opportunity to be vaccinated. The Amherst community has multiple vendors offering free vaccinations to students and community members.

● **Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies** All students with Individualized Health Plans, 504 Plans, Individualized Education Plans

accommodations, or doctor's orders for medical services will receive the services as normal. All individual healthcare plans will address COVID-19 risks for students with health needs. VA Association of School Nurses recommendations will be adopted for these medical services.

- **Coordination with state and local health officials** ACPS will coordinate with local agencies and organizations to include Central Virginia Health Department, Department of Social Services, VA Department of Health, Amherst County Emergency Management Services, Amherst County Sheriff's Office, The Town of Amherst Police Department, Amherst County Administrator, Town of Amherst Administrator, local civic organizations, local medical providers, and local churches in the community response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

ACPS employees have served on multiple health and safety related committees with the community organizations listed above. The Central Virginia Health Department partnered with ACPS during two different outbreak events during the 2021-22 school year, holding a testing clinic for all secondary students and staff. Amherst County Emergency Management Services has partnered with ACPS in providing free vaccinations and boosters to staff and students.

ACPS has recognized the toll of the pandemic on student mental health. In response, ACPS has partnered with Harvest Outreach for outpatient therapy and other mental health services in our schools. Life Push has provided mentoring and supportive-level counseling services to students who have received office discipline referrals. ACPS has also partnered with Horizon Behavioral Health, Lynchburg Continuum of Care, and Amherst County Trauma-Informed Community Network to conduct needs assessments and plan future interventions for at-risk students.

Section 3: Continuity of Services

Amherst County Public Schools has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health and other needs.

Description of steps taken to address each area of academic, social, emotional, mental health, student health and food services by ACPS.

Academic Services

ACPS advances an instructional model that prioritizes student engagement and a focus on the 5 C's of Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, and Citizenship. As we moved into the 2021-2022 school year, we reaffirmed our commitment to providing instructional opportunities that prepare students for their future. A *Life Ready Student* is given frequent opportunities to investigate college or career paths, experience real world challenges, and participate in meaningful learning that leads to authentic assessments. By prioritizing this instructional model, ACPS affords students avenues for recouping learning loss and strengthening the relationships that were forged during the modified school year of 2020-2021.

As ACPS begins to transition with a new Superintendent for the 2022-2023 school year, efforts that have been made regarding the provision of creating quality instruction for all students will remain at the forefront of our mission. Providing opportunities for all students to engage in

real-life experiences as they move throughout their academic career is essential to re-engaging students in school.

- **Communication Efforts**

- As we entered into the 2020-2021 school year, the defining attribute for the success in transitioning back to school was the communication out to the community by the Division Superintendent. Dr. Robert Arnold's forward approach will continue to be the cornerstone as we move into the 2021-2022 school year.
- ACPS is committed to providing transparent communication on a regular basis to all school and community members (families, employees, business partners, etc.) in an effort to support students and their academic success.
- The Superintendent as the point person for the division, disseminates information to the appropriate group(s), in a timely manner, utilizing the following methods:
 - Superintendent's Video Messages
 - School Messenger calls, texts, letters, and emails
 - ACPS Leadership Meetings
 - ACPS Board Meetings
 - ACPS and School(s) Website, Facebook Page, Twitter Account, Instagram Account, and YouTube Channel
 - ACPS Employee Email System
 - Surveys for two-way communication will continue to be utilized
- In an effort to keep families informed on all aspects of the school learning environment, School Administrators and teachers will regularly communicate regarding events and student progress.
- Parent Portal will continue to be utilized as an access point for all parents to check on student progress.
- As always parents, community partners, and citizens may contact any school, or the School Administrative Offices, by phone to provide input or seek clarification on topics associated with the school division. If a specific person has been identified, an email can also be used for corresponding.

- **Daily Schedules**

- All secondary schools (ACHS/AEC, AMS, & MMS) will attend in-person all five days on a traditional seven period-a-day schedule that was utilized prior to COVID-19
- All elementary schools (AES, AMEL, CES, ELON, MHES, & TES) will attend in-person all five days with no hybrid placement.
- Student schedules will be released on Parent Portal over the summer.

- **School Calendar**

- ***Open House for All Schools will be held on Wednesday, August 10, 2022 1:00-7:00 PM***
- First day of school for all students is August 17, 2022
- New teachers to the division report on July 28, 2022
- Teachers/Instructional Assistance return on August 8, 2022

ESCUELAS PÚBLICAS DEL CONDADO DE AMHERST
 Calendario escolar 2022-2023
 El calendario anual de EPSCA comienza el 1 de julio de 2022 y terminará el 30 de junio de 2023

JULIO 2022							AGOSTO 2022							SEPTIEMBRE 2022						
D	L	M	MI	J	V	S	D	L	M	MI	J	V	S	D	L	M	MI	J	V	S
							1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31				

● **Transportation**

- Providing safe transport to and from school will continue to be a priority for ACPS. Throughout the school year we have encouraged families to provide transportation and will continue to make that request for the 2022-2023 school year. The specifics are as follows:
- Car Riders
 - ACPS encourages parents to provide transportation to their students if possible.
 - ACPS will follow normal school routines for student drop off and pick up.
- Buses/Vans
 - Students will sit two per seat.
 - Students will be assigned seats and will not be able to move between seats.
 - Weather permitting, windows will be open to allow for increased ventilation.

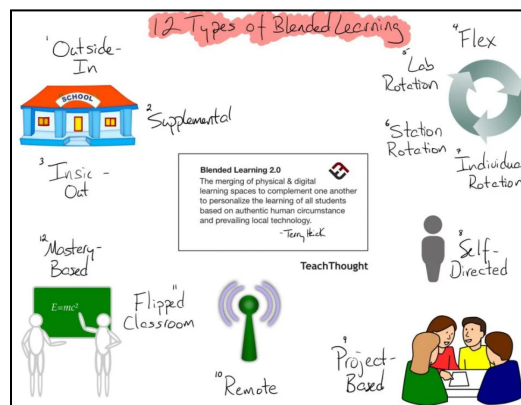
● **Technology**

- During the Fall of 2020, ACPS issued all students Pre-K through 12th Grade/Early College a Chromebook in order for students to access instructional materials and resources, as well as attend synchronous classes for direct instruction.
- During the Winter of 2021, ACPS issued to any student who did not have Internet access a hotspot, paid for by ACPS in order for students to access instructional materials and resources, as well as attend synchronous classes for direct instruction.
- During the Spring of 2021, ACPS issued to any teacher who did not have Internet access at home a hotspot, paid for by ACPS, in order for them to provide instructional materials and resources to students, as well as provide synchronous instruction to their students, if the school was to close due to COVID-19 conditions.

- For the 2022-2023 school year, ACPS will continue to provide all students a Chromebook, as well as a hotspot for those who do not have Internet access, in order to access instructional materials and resources while not at school.
- ACPS will also continue to provide to faculty and staff a laptop for remote work and a hotspot for Internet access if needed.
- Parents, students, and employees will sign the Acceptable Use Policy in order to utilize services.
- Wi-Fi Internet access will continue to be made available to the community at the front of each school building, as guest access, for the 2022-2023 school year.

- **Student Learning**

- There will be a purposeful focus on incorporating the Profile of a Virginia Graduate~5 C's into each content area and classroom, in order to engage students in their learning.
- A limited amount of performance tasks were utilized during the 2020-2021 school year and teachers and students saw success in students' level of performance. To capitalize on that structure, the division will be incorporating Performance Based Learning (PBL) Modules and Performance Based Assessments (PBA) into the *curriculum pacing guides* for teachers to utilize during the 2022-2023 school year. PBL Modules will continue to be added as resources for teachers to utilize during their instruction.
- To assist in filling in the instructional gaps, the division and schools will also provide additional training and support to teachers in the area of differentiation, transitioning in the block, and tiering of services for students based on data.
- The direct instruction model will be a combination of whole group, small group, and center based instruction. During the 2021-2022 school year teachers used aspects of blended learning such as; flipped classrooms, asynchronous and synchronous learning, as well as mastery or project based learning. (see diagram below)



- Teachers will continue to have these instructional models as options for students as we enter into the 2022-2023 school year.
- Teachers will use diagnostic formative assessments in math and reading to pre-assess students prior to instruction in order to determine the individual needs and gaps in learning that each student has.

- Teachers will use the 2021-2022 SOL Assessment and VDOE Student Growth Assessment data in order to begin the 2022-2023 school year. Once identification of specific instructional needs have been determined, the teacher will provide research based strategies to help close the learning gaps.
- Additional assessments to provide teachers with direction for instructional support will include VA Kindergarten Readiness Program (VKRP), Phonological Awareness & Literacy Screening (PALS), running records, Algebra Readiness & Diagnostic Testing (ARDT), VDOE Through Course Assessments, and teacher created formative assessments.
- ACPS will focus on Core Tier I instruction and utilize remediation in a limited amount. This ensures that every student is being provided quality instruction that meets their specific needs.
- **Equitable Services for Identified Populations** (Students with Disabilities, English Learners, Economically Disadvantaged Students, and Gifted Students)
 - Students with Disabilities will continue to have their individual learning needs addressed as prescribed in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Instruction will be differentiated during small groups or in a collaborative setting and tasks assigned in order to meet students' needs. The incorporation of modifications and accommodations that best benefit students as they participate in the in-person learning environment will be determined by the IEP Team.
 - All English Learners (EL) will continue to be offered services based on their educational needs, as determined by their WIDA 2022 assessment score. Data from assessment results will be used to guide all tiers of instruction for EL students who are designated at proficiency level 1 or 2.
 - ACPS continues to focus on assessing learning gaps, providing targeted instruction, and additional time for our economically disadvantaged students. Reading specialists in all Title I schools will focus overall on Phonological and Phonemic Awareness and Word Recognition, based on data from PALS and Phonemic Awareness inventories. Reading Specialists will also gear individual and small group instruction to meet that group/student specific needs.
 - All students participating in the Talented and Gifted program in ACPS will continue to receive small group and individual instruction from the (2) Gifted Instructional Specialists at each level. Elementary students will continue to receive pull-out services, while secondary students will be provided an opportunity with a specified time during their regular schedule in order to meet and receive support. All services provided will be aligned to each students' Gifted Education Plan (GEP).
- **Professional Development**
 - During the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school year teachers were provided continuous opportunities to attend targeted professional development/training sessions related to: COVID Crosswalks, CANVAS, Google Classroom, Instructional Delivery for Hybrid, Remote and Block, Morning Meeting/Advisory, Attendance, Student Engagement, Building Relationships, and Social Emotional Support for Students.
 - As we begin the 2022-2023 school year, teachers will once again be provided with professional development/training sessions in each of the areas implemented in 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, as a refresher.

- Beginning with school leadership, additional training will be provided in the areas of Problem Based Learning, Innovation in the Classroom, and 5 C's of Collaboration, Communication, Critical Thinking, Creative Thinking, and Citizenship. Specific content training also will be provided to support areas of need as identified through various data reviews.

Social & Emotional Services

With such an abrupt school closure that began March 13, 2020, which moved into limited summer offerings and a modified school year for 2020-2021, the school community experienced unexpected challenges. During the 2020-2021 school year it was ensured that all students and employees were provided with support during their return to school. These services will continue into the 2022-2023 school year.

- **Employee Social/Emotional Supports**
 - The division partnered with Harvest Outreach to offer synchronous sessions, both individual and small groups, that allowed employees to discuss the hardships and/or opportunities they were experiencing during the pandemic. This same service will be offered once again.
 - All Points Employee Assistance Program was also offered to each employee if they requested assistance and wanted to remain anonymous.
 - Seminars and training documents were provided explaining the support granted to each employee that experienced COVID-19 symptoms, or who was diagnosed with COVID-19 and needed to be out of work. (ACPS granted sick time to all employees impacted by COVID-19, this will end and VDOE/VDH guidance will be adhered to during the 2021-2022 school year.)
- **Student Social/Emotional Supports**
 - Students participated in Social/Emotional Learning Lessons the first two weeks of school during 2020-2021 that were aligned with meeting the needs of all students, whether it was focused on re-socialization, fear of the unexpected, etc.
 - During the 2021-2022 and into the 2022-2023 school year, ACPS will prioritize our support for students and provide them a safe learning environment where we model a positive social school climate.
 - Continuing to build positive relationships with all students and an awareness of our differences will be at the forefront of the School Counseling Program.
 - Research based strategies in teaching and promoting resilience will also be a focus during the 2021-2022 and continue into the 2022-2023 school year.

Student Health Services (to include mental and nutritional health)

ACPS has been on the forefront of ensuring that students and their families have access to all available health services. Self-care is an important activity that must be taught and acted upon in a deliberate manner. In order to be a *Life Ready Student* taking care of the mental, emotional, and physical health is a priority. Learning how to eat right, reduce stress, exercise regularly, and take a time-out when needed is the way to stay healthy, happy, and resilient.

- **Student Health Supports**
 - During the 2020-2021 school year School Counselors trained staff to assist in the screening of each student regarding mental and nutritional health concerns. Teachers reported to counselors any signs of disengagement or outburst that

would warrant concern. Counselors met with and provided direct support to students and their families, contacting the Supervisor of Student and Family Wellness for additional support with outside agencies if needed.

- Schools Counselors will continue in the 2022-2023 school year to work with all staff to assist in identifying and addressing issues as they arise.
- A licensed clinical counselor will work with at-risk students, as needed and with parent permission.
- Therapeutic Day Treatment services are available to students who qualify due to mental health or behavioral needs.
- All students have access to nursing services provided by EMT, LPN or RN medical professionals.
- **Nutritional Health Supports**
 - Meals were consistently provided to all school-aged children in Amherst County whether they were enrolled in ACPS or not from March 13, 2020 until schools reopened. Meals were provided free of charge to all.
 - During the 2020-2021 and into the 2022-2023 school year all ACPS students were eligible to receive meals free of charge based on the guidelines provided by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).
 - Meals were provided to all students for days that they were both in the building and learning remotely.
 - Meals were also provided to all students who chose to remain throughout the 2020-2021 school year 100% remote.

Plan for Continued Use of Funds

Of the \$7,306,875.43 awarded funds, \$1,461,375.09 (20%) will be set aside to address the academic impact of lost instructional time or learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. These may include, but are not limited to, summer learning or summer enrichment programs, extended school day, comprehensive after school programs, extended school year programs, facilities repair and upgrades, and provide necessary resources to meet identified student needs.

Amherst County Public Schools will use CARES funds to continue the following:

- a. Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment was used in 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 in the areas of reading and math to determine student academic growth. This assessment provided identification of specific instructional needs in areas where students may need research based strategies to close the learning gaps. The VDOE Student Growth Assessment will be used beginning 2022-2023 school year.(Guiding Principle # 5)
- b. ACPS provided instructional support staff at all schools to assist with small group learning opportunities, as well as, provide targeted skill instruction. This instructional support will continue during the 2022-2023 school year in order to provide additional opportunities for students to strengthen academic skill deficits. (Guiding Principle # 5)
- c. Hot-spots were provided for students who do not have at home internet connection in order to access instructional materials and resources outside of the school building.This

began in 2020 and will continue until the end of the grant funding window of 2024. (Guiding Principle #5).

- d. ACPS continues to provide custodial support at all schools to address cleaning and disinfecting the buildings. (Guiding Principle #1)

In addition, Amherst County Public Schools would like to provide supplemental supports to students, staff and principals in the following ways:

- e. In 2021-2022 ACPS provided one Instructional Specialist at the elementary level to address individual and small group instructional needs for students in the area of reading and math, as well as, support teachers in providing strategies to support academic success and close achievement gaps. (Guiding Principles #3 and #5) During 2022-2023 the funding will be moved to support an Instructional Specialist who will support schools in the area of Youth Mental Health.
- f. Funding will continue to be used to provide two Attendance Officers to help facilitate and ensure student attendance and compliance for students in Grades Pre-K through twelve. (Guiding Principle #5)
- g. ACPS will once again provide one math and one literacy Instructional Specialist at the secondary level (Grades 6-12) to address individual and small group instructional needs for students, as well as, support teachers in providing strategies to support academic success and close achievement gaps. (Guiding Principles #3 and #5)
- h. ACPS will continue during the 2022-2023 school year to provide one School Counselor at secondary and one School Counselor for Elementary/Virtual Learning, who will work with students in the division to provide mental, emotional, and physical health supports and assist with issues as they arise. (Guiding Principle #1)
- i. The CTE Specialists position will continue during the 2022-2023 school year to facilitate opportunities for students to investigate college or career paths and participate in meaningful learning experiences in order to develop into a Future Ready Student. (Guiding Principle #2)
- j. In 2021-2022 ACPS provided one CTE position for Health Sciences at the high school that will transfer to the middle school as a Career Awareness teacher for the 2022-2023 school year. This is targeted for students who need to re-engage into the school environment which will support their interest in a career. (Guiding Principle #2)
- k. A Grant Writer will continue to oversee the numerous grants provided through the federal and state governments during the 2022-2023 school year. (All Guiding Principles)

Section 4 Part A: Other Uses of Funds

The plan also includes the renovations to Amherst County High School. The information below describes how the remaining funds will provide new areas that can assist with additional space for learning opportunities for students. If approved, these projects can be completed within the timeline provided with the new funding. (Guiding Principles #1 and #2)

- A. Auditorium - new auditorium with 1200 seats that seats approx. 470 students (social distancing) to accommodate for standardized testing, assemblies, and presentations. This could be utilized by students and staff for large group events. The current auditorium could seat less than 100 students at one time.
- B. Old Auditorium will be reconfigured into three additional classrooms as well as areas to include the new Commons / Dining / Toilet Rooms - new dining commons with seating for 400 would seat 180 students when social distancing. The current dining room will accommodate approx. 90 students with social distancing. The current gymnasium lobby would hold less than 20 occupants. The New commons would hold approx. 400 as a commons area for the gymnasium and auditorium. New toilet room facilities would permit 4 times the occupants and better social distancing than with the current facilities. Lab space and additional classrooms would make-up the remainder of the old space.
- C. Food Court - new food court will replace the standard serving lines providing more area for student area in the servery and more area for students to stand in point of sale lines and social distance.
- D. Old Cafeteria will be reconfigured into 4 additional classrooms, a new CTE Lab and Collaborative Learning Labs - the space will accommodate a large group of approx. 74 students with social distancing.

Section 4 Part B: Opportunity for Public Comment

In developing the ARP ESSER Plan, Amherst County Public Schools sought public input and took such input into account as described below. During regular School Board meetings, public comment is allowed at the beginning of the meeting in order to provide all citizens an opportunity to have input into the 2022-2023 school year. The Superintendent outlined aspects of the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services portions of the plan. The meeting is conducted in-person and also live-streamed, so that those could attend virtually in order to hear the plan. At the close of the meeting, ACPS posted on its website a survey for any citizen to comment and provide feedback on the Superintendents recommendations. The Amherst County School Board is provided the data and comments from citizens.

Section 5: Periodic Review and Revision of Plan

During the period of the ARP ESSER award, Amherst County Public Schools will periodically review and, as needed, revise its plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. The plan will be reviewed at least every six months, and Amherst County Public Schools will seek and take into account public input during the review process. Plan revisions will address updated CDC guidance on safely reopening schools, if any are issued.

Section 6: Making the Plan Available to the Public

Amherst County Public Schools took the following steps to make this plan available to the public:

- The plan was posted on the Amherst County Public Schools Webpage identified as the Instructional Plan & Continuity of Services. The updated version is posted after each public comment time period ends.
- The plan is available in multiple languages, if needed. Contact the Amherst County Instructional Office at 434-946-9340 and request to speak with Ms. Robin Wheeler, Supervisor of Literacy and Federal Programs for a copy in Spanish.
- The plan is available in oral translation, if needed. Contact Amherst County Instructional Office at 434-946-9340 to request translation of this plan.
- Alternative formats are available for parents with disabilities as defined by ADA. Contact Amherst County Instructional Office at 434-946-9340 and request to speak with Mr. Josh Neighbors, Director of Student Services.

Timeline of Review

Action	Date Required	Date Completed
Initial Plan Presented	August, 2021	August 12, 2021
First Review	December 2021	November 11, 2021
Second Review	June 2022	May 12, 2022
Third Review	December 2022	
Fourth Review	June 2023	
Fifth Review	December 2023	
Final Review	June 2024	