

Dear Rappahannock Families,

Thank you to our entire school family for your valuable input by completing surveys and volunteering for our planning committees. Based on your feedback, along with data from the Virginia Department of Education, Virginia Department of Health, World Health Organization, CDC, and other reputable organizations, we have created a comprehensive proposal. Our planning teams have worked diligently to think of every possible scenario for safely reopening schools in the following nine areas: Space Utilization/Schedule for Instruction, Health & Safety Mitigation, Social Emotional Learning Supports for Students and Staff, Connectivity and Remote Learning Resources, Human Resources Policies and Implications, Transportation & Bus Routing, Instructional Delivery and Staff Development, Meals and Feeding Programs, and Athletics & Activities. We are also closely monitoring our health district data to ensure we have all the tools needed to make the best decision for our students and staff. We hope that this bulletin provides key information to you as we move ahead with our plans to continue to serve our students, families, and community in the new school year.

At Your Service,

Dr. Shannon Grimsley, RCPS Superintendent

Inside this Bulletin:

- Health & Safety Mitigation
- Social Emotional Learning Supports
- Scheduling for Instruction & Space Utilization
- Transportation & Bus Routing
- Meals & Feeding Program
- Connectivity & Remote Learning
- Instructional Delivery & Staff Development
- Athletics/Activities
- Human Resources

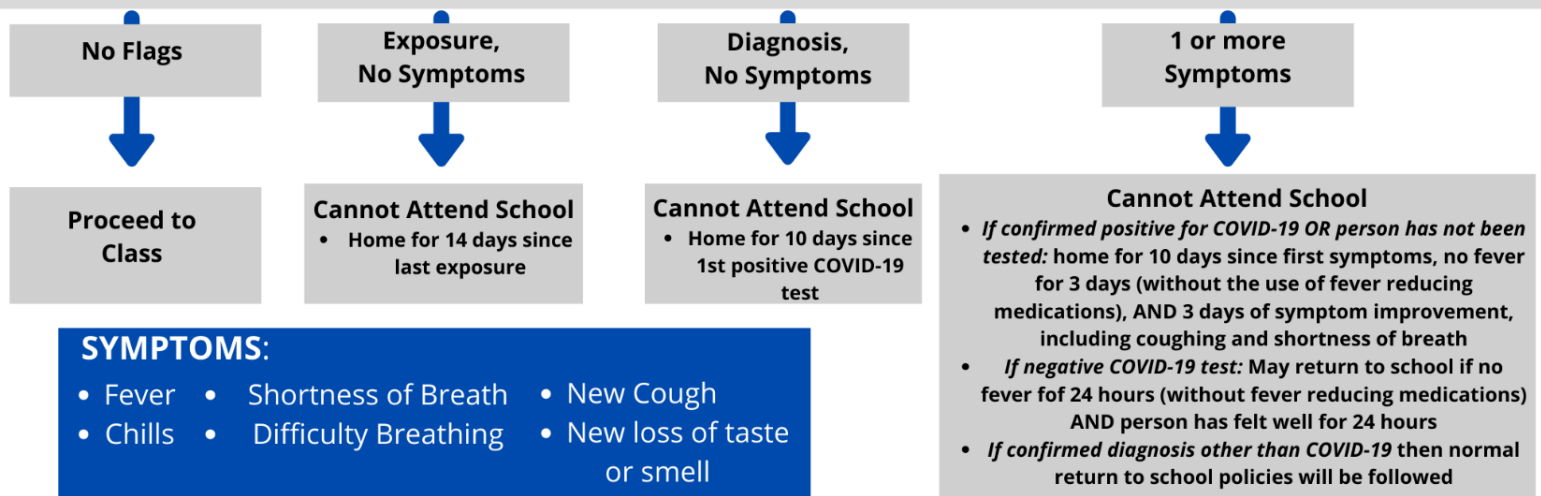


Health & Safety Mitigations

Our first priority will be the health and safety of our students, staff, and community. Mitigation strategies will be implemented to ensure a healthy and successful return to school during Phase 3 of the Forward Virginia Plan. The following mitigation plan is subject to change per the guidance of Governor Northam, state health officials, and/or at the discretion of school administration.

Health Screening

Student/Staff Screening Assessment for COVID-19



- RCPS has developed health screening procedures for all students, employees & visitors for our school division.
- Parents are asked to monitor their child's temperature and any signs of COVID-19 symptoms at home prior to sending them to school. Parents are asked to keep their child at home if any COVID-19 related or general illness symptoms appear. Refer to helpful, daily checklist graphic below.
- Screening of Visitors- Only essential visitors will be permitted to enter the school facilities. Visits to the school will require an appointment unless it is an emergency. All essential visitors will be asked to complete a health assessment questionnaire and possible body temperature check prior to entering. Visitors will be required to wear a face mask in the building. Parents, guardians, or family members who need to pick up a student during instruction will need to call ahead and wait outside in their vehicles.

Nurses/Clinic Visits

The following steps will be followed with sick persons arriving in clinic.

1. Nursing assessment (question about symptoms, body temperature, physical exam)
2. If a fever is present, the individual will be sent home.
3. If individual presents 1 or more COVID symptoms, they will be masked and isolated in designated area with supervision until they can be dismissed home with a family member or guardian.
4. Any medically unstable individuals will be transported by EMS to a local emergency health care facility.

Daily Checklist for Parents

Does Your Child Have Any of These Symptoms?

- ☒ Fever
- ☒ Chills
- ☒ New Cough
- ☒ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- ☒ New loss of taste or smell

☒ Proceed to School

Parents are asked to keep their child at home if any of the above symptoms appear.

Cleaning & Disinfecting

RCPS will follow standard operating procedures and CDC recommendations and guidelines for sanitization of school facilities. RCPS will ensure that the facilities are as sanitary as possible to promote a healthy environment for students, staff, and any other essential visitors.

- Proper sanitation supplies such as soap, water, hand sanitizer, masks, and gloves will be accessible to all persons in RCPS facilities.
- HVAC filters will be changed more frequently.
- Air purifying devices will be used in school buildings.
- A disinfectant, EnviroOx, will be used to mist the classrooms. EnviroOx is odorless and dries within 15 minutes.
- Touchless sanitizer stations and touchless air dryers are being installed.
- High touch areas such as bathrooms and door knobs will be frequently cleaned.
- There will be a cleaning schedule of communal areas such as the cafeteria.
- There will be cleaning procedures for PE equipment and playground equipment.

Health & Hygiene Education

- Hygiene protocol training will be conducted for all staff prior to the school opening. This is to include, but not limited to proper handwashing or use of hand sanitizers, respiratory etiquette, and proper use of PPE.
- Proper hygiene methods will be reinforced with students by all staff.
- Proper signage promoting good hygiene practices will be posted as part of instructional process for students and staff.

Keeping the School Safe

Encourage your faculty, staff, and students to...



Practice good hygiene

- Stop handshaking- use other noncontact methods of greeting
- Clean hands at the door and at regular intervals
- Create habits and reminders to avoid touching their faces and cover coughs and sneezes
- Disinfect surfaces like doorknobs, tables, desks, and handrails regularly
- Increase ventilation by opening window or adjusting air conditioning



Consider rearranging large activities and gatherings

- Consider adjusting or postponing gatherings that mix between classes and grades
- Adjust after-school arrangements to avoid mixing between classes and grades
- When possible, hold classes outdoors or in open, well-ventilated spaces



Handle food carefully

- Limit food sharing
- Strengthen health screening for cafeteria staff and their close contacts
- Ensure cafeteria staff and their close contacts practice strict hygiene



Stay home if...

- They are feeling sick
- They have a sick family member in their home

Face Masks/Shields

- Masks or face coverings are not recommended for younger children ages 10 and under, especially for prolonged use.
- Masks or face coverings are *required for staff* when in contact with students, parents, and other staff. Adaptations will be made for those who are unable to wear a cloth face covering.
- Additionally, face masks or face coverings are *encouraged for older students* specifically during transition periods or transportation when proper distancing cannot be achieved.

Safe Water Availability

There will be no use of water fountains/communal watering stations. Drink machines will also be unavailable. RCPS will create a plan for providing drinking water to staff and students such as bottled water.

KEY POINTS FOR PARENTS

*RCPS has developed health screening procedures for everyone who enters the buildings.

*Parents are asked to conduct a health checklist before sending child to school. If any symptoms or a fever are present, please keep him/her at home.

*Thorough sanitization practices will be in place.

*Personal hygiene, such as hand washing, will be emphasized.

*Face masks are required by staff. Additionally, they are recommended for older students during transitions.

*Water fountains will be closed.



Social Emotional Learning Supports

Re-engaging our students, building relationships and creating an environment that is conducive to learning will be paramount. Furthermore, educators and staff will need to be strong with the likelihood of the onset of compassion fatigue. Allowing teachers a day to process their feelings, manage stress, and regroup will ensure more success in being emotionally prepared to meet the needs of students and families.

Social Emotional Learning Supports

- Availability of professional outpatient counseling and mentoring services for staff and students
- Implementation and training for all staff in social emotional learning curriculum
- An increase in extracurricular opportunities for students (fine arts, recess, athletics, mindfulness, P.R.I.D.E., etc.)
- Monthly Mental Health Innovators (MHI) meetings for the sole purpose of monitoring the needs of our students and staff
- Pop-up trainings and support as needed throughout the year



KEY POINTS FOR PARENTS

*Counseling and services available to students and staff

*New SEL curriculum

*Increased extracurricular activities

*Additional staff trainings as needed throughout the year

Scheduling of Instruction & Space Utilization

The primary driver for the recommendations made by the Space Utilization & Scheduling for Instruction Committee were the safety and health concerns for students and staff. This was in accordance with the direction of both staff and parent committee members. The committee recognized the need to return students to school, articulated in great and data supported detail by the American Association of Pediatrics report, while maintaining all possible safety and health practices, as strongly suggested by multiple CDC and VDOE documents. Stakeholder input in the form of parent and teacher survey responses was also strongly considered, with many of those suggestions in line with the guidelines provided by the aforementioned government and private agency reports.

Start Date & Initial Learning Format

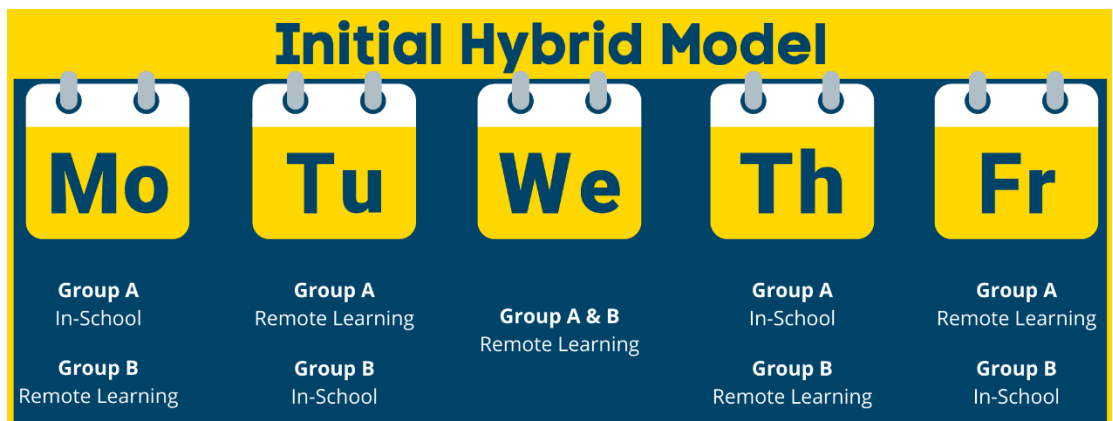
RCPS will tentatively move the first day of school for students to August 24, 2020 to allow for additional training for all staff on the new policies and procedures.

Initially, school will resume on a blended/hybrid model with 50% of students in school on any given day. On the days that your student is at home, they will be engaged in remote learning. Wednesday will be a remote learning day for all students. Depending upon the success and effectiveness of the soft reopening model, the transition to the 4-day hybrid model may be a matter of weeks, months, or may even last the entire first semester. RCPS will carefully monitor all strategies and local health data, as well as guidance from the state to make the determination to switch to the 4 day models.

Benefits

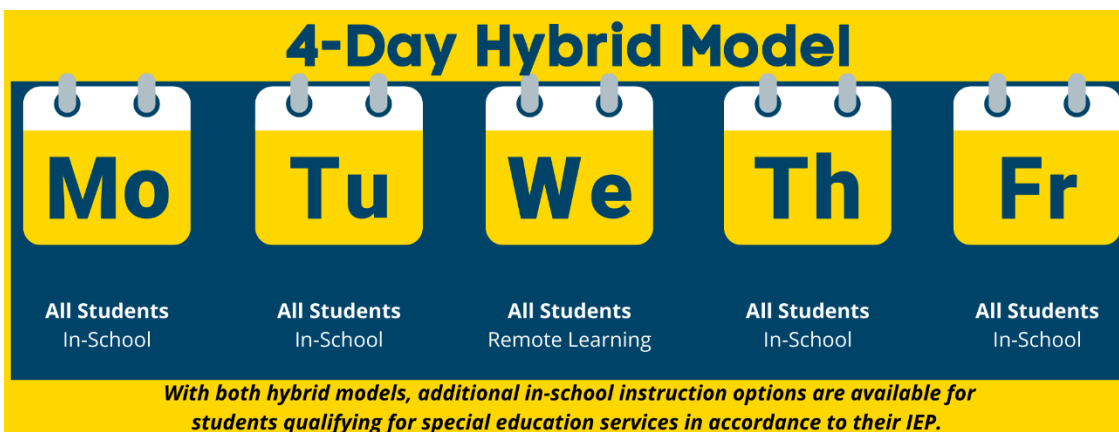
Allows staff to implement new safety mitigation measures and practices

Allows teachers and families to be better prepared if it becomes necessary to switch to a 100% remote learning model.



4-Day Hybrid Model

Following this initial phase, we will shift to a second hybrid model in which all students will be in the school building four days a week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday) with one day of remote learning occurring on Wednesdays.



Benefits

Allows for thorough sanitization of the schools during the middle of the week.

Continues to promote remote learning practices in the event we had to switch to a full distance learning model.

Parents have the ability to apply for more or less in-school instruction depending upon individual situations.

Scheduling of Instruction & Space Utilization (continued)

Mitigations

The following mitigations will be in place to promote physical distancing among students.

- To safely accommodate a classroom of students, desks will have barrier shields installed.
- Transitions will be held on a staggered schedule to minimize hallway traffic.
- Alternate transition routes (ex. sidewalks) may be utilized, weather permitting.
- Students will load and unload buses on a staggered schedule to minimize groups in the hallways.
- At the high school, the lockers will not be used.
- Elementary school teachers will travel to classrooms and visit student cohorts.
- Students will switch classrooms at the high school level. After transitions, exploratory teachers and classrooms teachers will be in rooms prepping (cleaning) for the next class. Teachers with planning after transitions along with all other available staff will help monitor hallway transition traffic to ensure social distancing. Directional arrows will be placed in hallways.
- Teachers will record face-to-face lessons/instruction for the benefit of absent students/students kept home due to COVID concerns or the possibility of moving to virtual learning. Each teacher will have a google classroom.



KEY POINTS FOR PARENTS

- *The first day of school for students is tentatively scheduled for August 24th.
- *RCPS will begin with an Initial Hybrid Model and switch to a 4-Day Hybrid Model.
- *Parents have the ability to apply for more or less in school instruction depending upon individual situations.
- *Desks will be outfitted with barrier shields if closer than 6 ft. apart.
- *Transitions will be staggered to reduce hallway traffic.
- *Elementary school teachers will travel to classrooms to visit student cohorts.
- *High school students will switch classrooms but will not utilize lockers.
- *Teachers will record face-to-face lessons for students that are at home.

Transportation & Bus Routing

Bus Routes & Safety Mitigations

With the mitigation strategy of wearing masks of all 4th through 12th graders and seating siblings together, we will be able to run most, if not all, routes as normal. Bus drivers will assign specific seats to all students and log pick up times and drop off times.

Bus drivers will be required to wear face mask or shield while transporting students. However, it may become necessary for a driver to remove his/her face mask or shield if they fog up or make it difficult to see.

Bus Sanitization

RCPS will follow the latest guidelines provided by the CDC, and Virginia Department of Education as well as the VDH for maintaining a safe and clean environment on the school bus, cars, and vans. Each driver will be responsible for sanitizing his/her bus, car, and van after all runs. All sanitizing chemicals are CDC chemicals. Windows on the bus, if weather permits, will be opened at least half way to improve air flow.

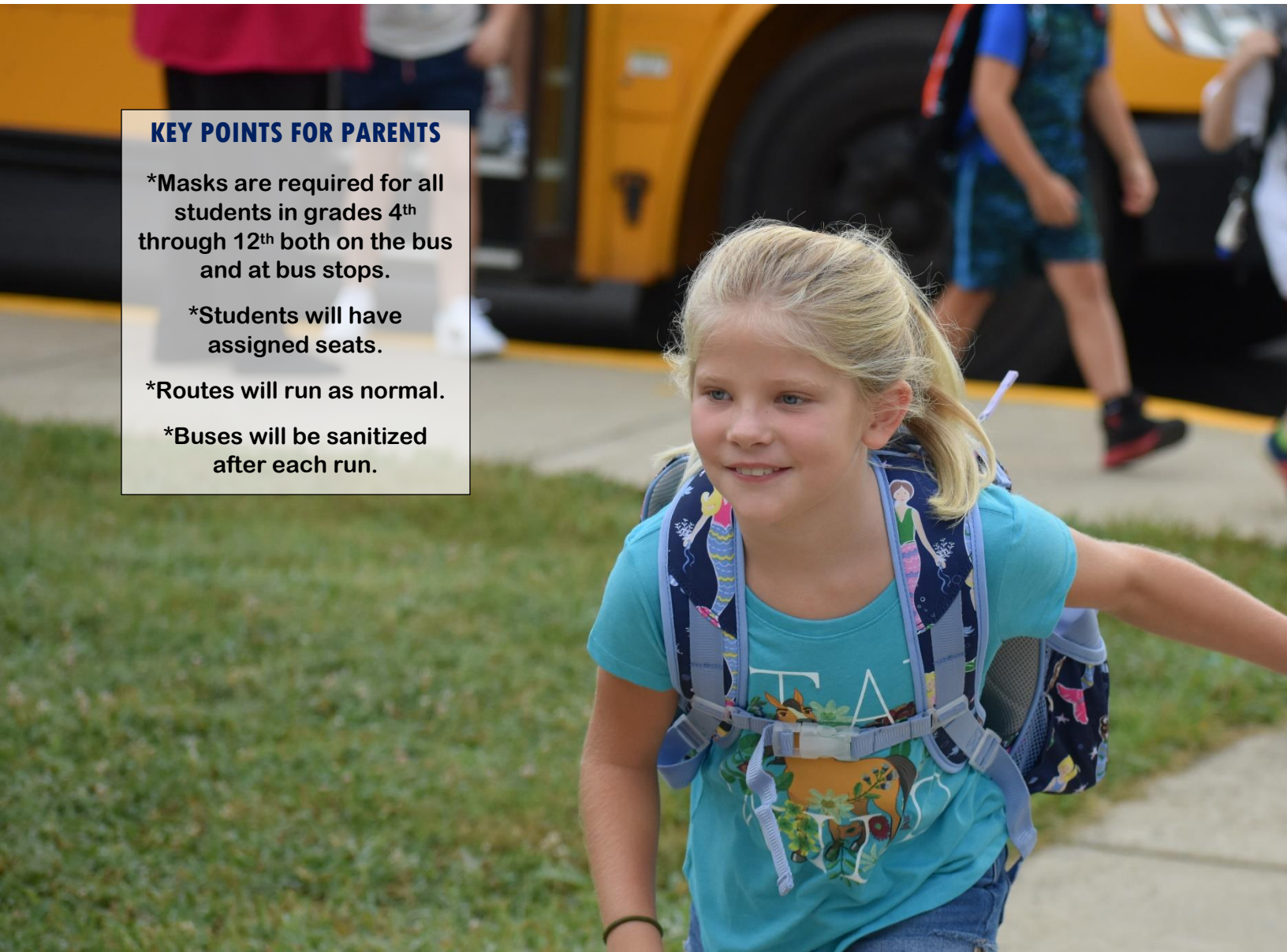
KEY POINTS FOR PARENTS

***Masks are required for all students in grades 4th through 12th both on the bus and at bus stops.**

***Students will have assigned seats.**

***Routes will run as normal.**

***Buses will be sanitized after each run.**



Meals in the Classrooms

Rappahannock County School Nutrition Department remains dedicated to ensuring that all of our students are nourished and ready to learn. In alignment with current CDC guidelines, we feel that the classroom is the safest place for students to eat their meals. The classroom will be designed to allow for safe physical distances and will prevent the mixing of cohort groups as the cafeteria would. Students in grades Pre-K through 2nd will have the opportunity to preorder and their meals will be delivered directly to the classroom. Students in grades 3rd through 12th will have the opportunity to go through the service line to make their meal selection.

Mitigation Strategies

- Students will be encouraged to wash their hands before and after mealtime in addition to using the automatic hand sanitizer station at the beginning of the line.
- Students will come through the line on a staggered schedule with their class and the line will be sanitized after each group. Students will move through the line 6 ft apart by following the fun fruit and vegetables floor decals.
- All food items will be individually packaged to increase both food and travel safety.
- Staff will place all items, including milk and silverware packets, onto trays and students will scan an ID card with the cashier instead of touching a pin pad. We encourage parents to add money to their child's account electronically but we will still be accepting cash/check.
- On virtual learning days, students will have the opportunity to receive school meals in the same pick-up or delivery options as our Summer Food Service Program. Our staff will all be smiling underneath their masks and excited to serve our students safe and nutritious meals in school again.



KEY POINTS FOR PARENTS

- *All students will eat in the classroom.
- *Staff members will place all items on tray.
- *Students will have an ID card to scan for payment.
- *Meals will be available during remote learning days.

Connectivity & Remote Learning

Access to Equipment & Internet

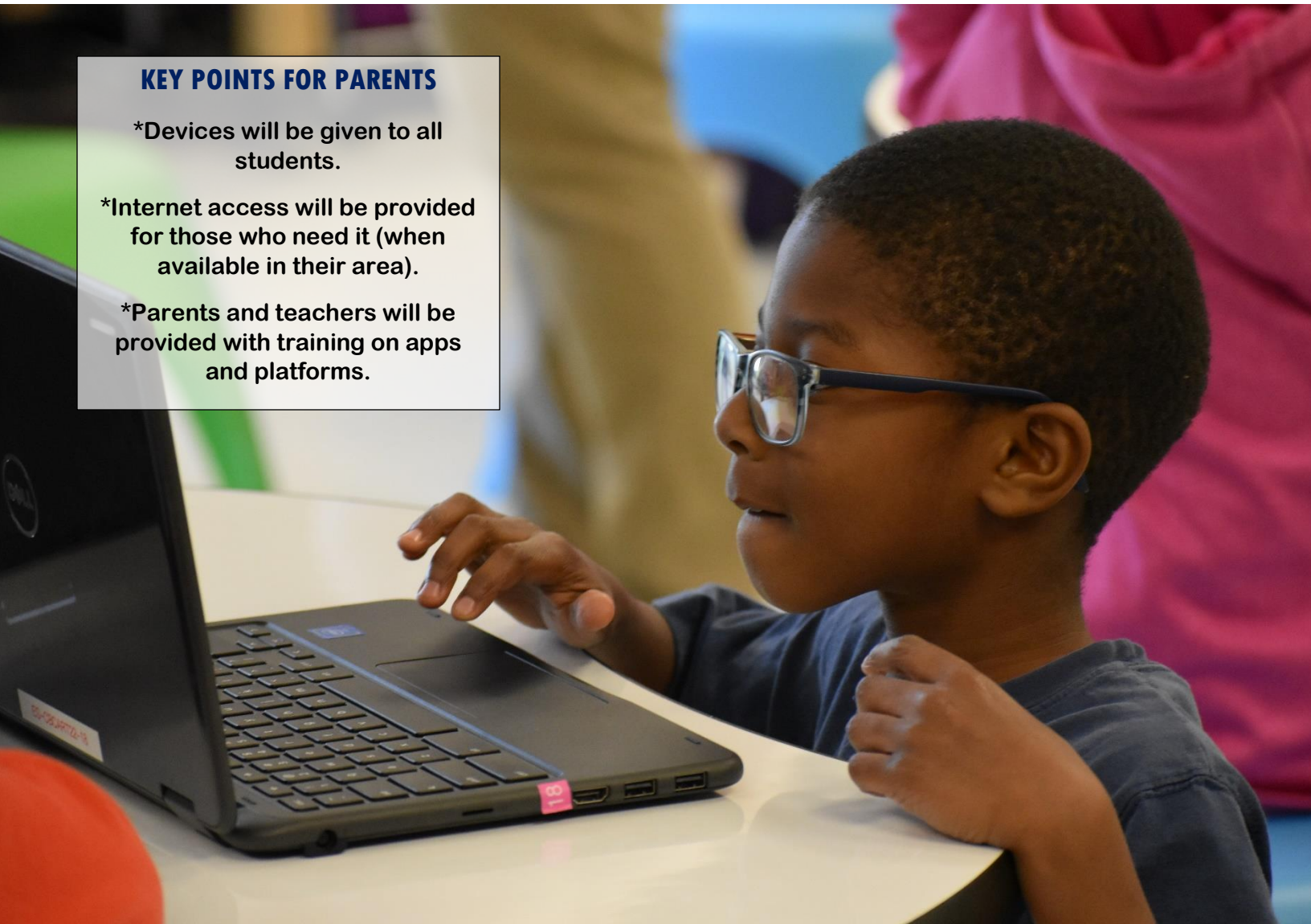
Rappahannock County Public Schools will provide a device to every student. Also, internet access will be supplied for every student who needs it (when available in their area). HP Chromebooks will be provided to students in grades 2-12. Ipad's will be provided to students in grades PK-1. Sprint hotspots will be provided to families needing internet access. Enhanced technical support will be provided to students and families.

Professional Development & Training

Professional development will be provided to teachers, students, and families. Parents will be given a training video or PowerPoint, which includes step by step instructions for various apps and platforms. Parents will also be provided with a device error check sheet. Parents requesting additional assistance will be provided this training via Zoom. Teachers will be requested to use and model various programs in the classroom to ensure students have a familiarity with the program. Also, teachers will be requested to use the district issued devices to the students enabling the students to feel comfortable with their devices. Multiple professional development opportunities will be given to staff to further strengthen remote learning.

KEY POINTS FOR PARENTS

- *Devices will be given to all students.
- *Internet access will be provided for those who need it (when available in their area).
- *Parents and teachers will be provided with training on apps and platforms.



Preparation

Prior to students starting school, teachers will meet in vertical teams to identify learning gaps and make adjustments to pacing guides. Teachers will develop 3-4 weeks of blended coursework prior to the first day of school and will maintain plans 3-4 weeks in advance in order to adequately prepare for unexpected illness or school closure.

Universal Platform

Google will be used as the universal distance learning platform. Teachers will make regular use of online learning tools in the school setting to provide consistency should schools be required to close suddenly. Additionally, students will have access to iXL for core subjects.

Virtual Instruction Time

Grade level teachers shall have consistent virtual instruction and activity time.

The following guidelines are maximum per core content area:

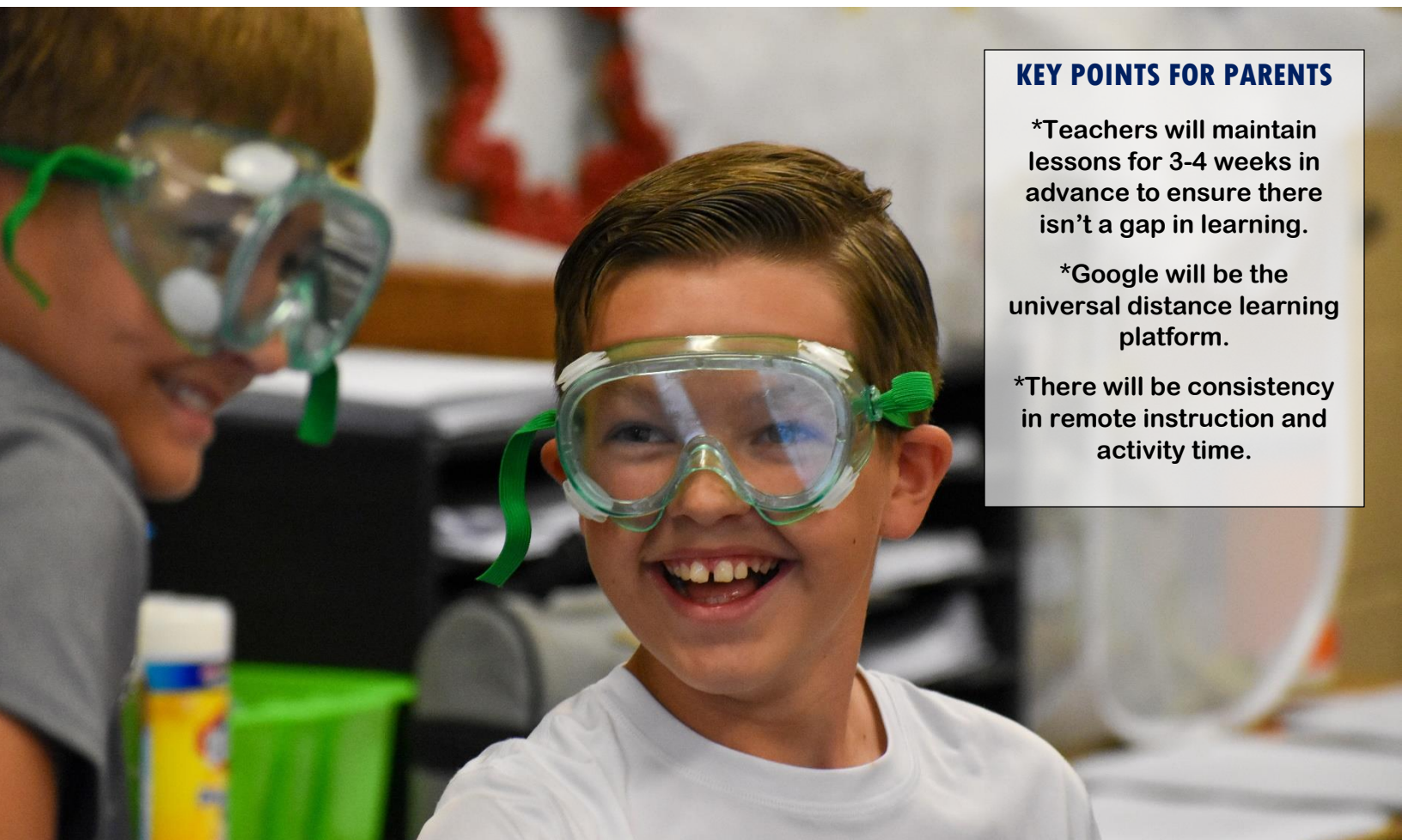
- Elementary School- age +1 minute of instruction (e.g. Kindergarten = 5-6 minutes) with 20-30 minutes of supporting activities
- High School- 10-15 of instruction with 30-40 min of supporting activities

KEY POINTS FOR PARENTS

***Teachers will maintain lessons for 3-4 weeks in advance to ensure there isn't a gap in learning.**

***Google will be the universal distance learning platform.**

***There will be consistency in remote instruction and activity time.**



RCPS understands the important role that extracurricular activities play in the development of our students. We will strive to offer these opportunities in a safe manner that promotes good health and the well-being of everyone involved. RCPS will follow the established guidelines for health, safety, and social distancing set forth by VHSL, NFHS, and our state health officials.

Practices & Competitions

Coaches and staff will be conducting pre-season workouts as state regulations allow to ensure that students are in acceptable physical condition prior to the start of competitions. Students are required to obtain a physical examination from a licensed health care provider before participation in the regular season of a sport. Contests must be permitted by VHSL.

Mitigations

- Newly established enhanced cleaning procedures will be followed.
- RCPS Athletics & Activities will refer to the RCPS Health & Safety Plan for guidance on COVID-19 related concerns.
- All participants will be subject to health assessments prior to every practice, competition and pre-game travel. Coaches will self-screen prior to arrival at any of the above mentioned activities.
- All participants and coaches will be required to wear face coverings when proper distancing cannot be achieved.
- Guidelines for spectators of events will be determined by the regulations of governing bodies. Per executive order, the wearing of face coverings will be required of indoor spectators.
- A complete guidance plan for events will be established when regulations are released from our governing bodies.

KEY POINTS FOR PARENTS

***Practices are allowed following guidelines and state regulations. Competitions are TBD.**

***Strict equipment cleaning procedures are in place.**

***All participants are subject to health assessments prior to practices and games.**

***Competition plans will be available once released by governing bodies.**



Health Screenings & PPE

In order to maintain the safety of our school community, employees will be required to complete the *Employee Symptom Checker Record Form recommended by the Virginia Association of School Nurses (2020)* each day before coming to work on campus.

1. Employee Screening Process:
 - Daily health screenings will be required for all faculty and staff. Each faculty or staff member will self-screen prior to going to work.
 - If a faculty or staff member registers a temperature of 100.4 degrees or more, they will call their administrator to secure a substitute, and they will not report to work.
 - The administrator will record the information and provide it to the school nurse. The school nurse will conduct a follow-up interview by telephone to discuss the next steps the employee should follow.
2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):
 - All staff will be required to wear masks, which will be provided by the school division. Additional PPE will be available based on job duties, including gowns, see-through masks, face shields, and gloves.

Professional Development

The start of school has been tentatively delayed one week to allow additional time for essential professional development for all employees. Virtual presentations are recommended to cover a variety of topics, including:

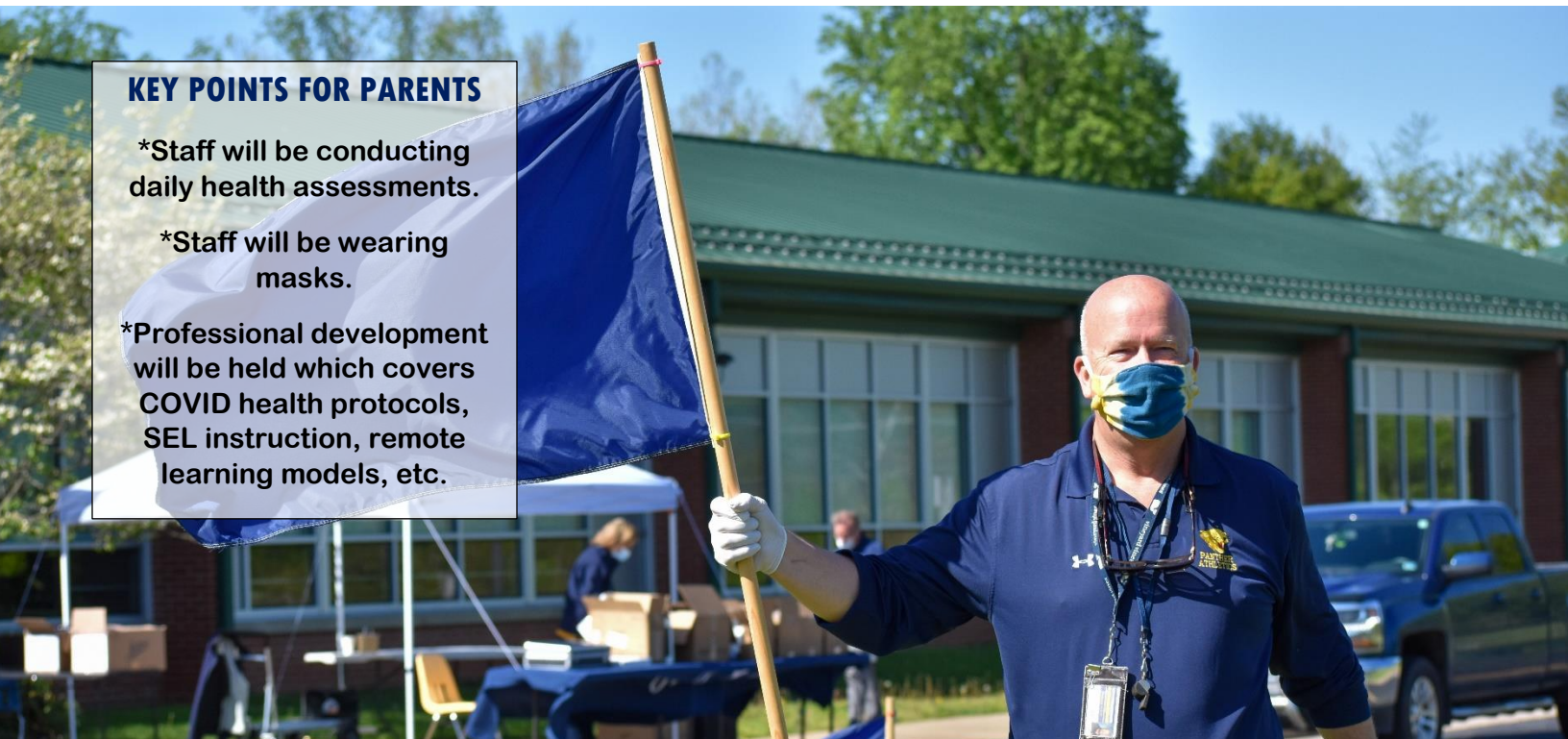
- hygiene and COVID health related protocols
- SEL instruction
- blended learning models
- the use of data to organize flexible groups and identify instructional needs
- utilization of PBA versus standardized achievement benchmarks
- provision of equitable services
- strategies to acknowledge and honor student diversity

KEY POINTS FOR PARENTS

***Staff will be conducting daily health assessments.**

***Staff will be wearing masks.**

***Professional development will be held which covers COVID health protocols, SEL instruction, remote learning models, etc.**



REOPENING PLAN:



A proposal to create an environment where safety, wellbeing, and academic success are paramount

For more detailed information on our entire reopening plan, please visit our website to view the full proposal, which will be shared with the School Board during the July 14th meeting.

