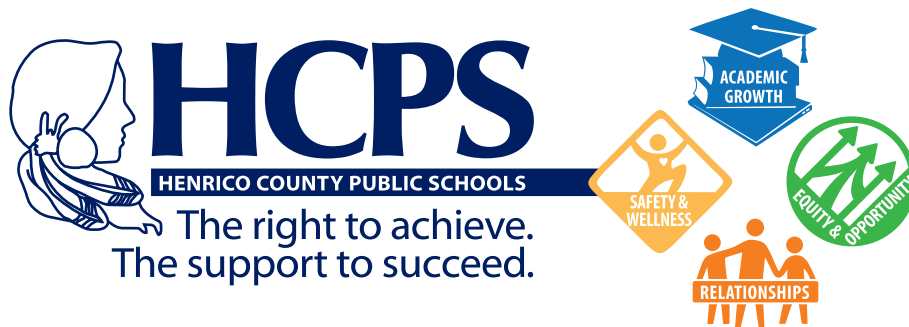


Henrico County Public Schools

Safe Return to In-Person Learning and Continuity of Services



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This document exists in compliance with Section 2001(1)(1) of the ARP Act and U.S. Department of Education's Interim Final Rule requiring each LEA that receives ARP ESSER III funds to submit a plan that describes how it will safely return to in-person instruction and ensure continuity of services, including LEAs that have already returned to in-person instruction.

*Original June 1, 2021
Revised December 1, 2022*

Section 1: Introduction

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) 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 Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) will maintain the health and safety of students, educators and staff; and provide effective instruction and support to students that is responsive to their academic, social, emotional and mental health needs.

Questions about this plan should be directed to the appropriate member of the HCPS leadership team:

- Holly Coy, Chief of Staff | 804-652-3260
- Dr. Ingrid Grant, Chief of School Leadership | 804-652-3676
- Dr. Lesley Hughes, Chief of Learning | 804-652-3754
- Lenny Pritchard, Chief of Operations | 804-652-3620
- Francine Bouldin, Chief of Human Resources | 804-652-3656

Section 2: Maintaining Health and Safety

Henrico County Public Schools continues to work in close collaboration with the Richmond and Henrico Health Districts (RHHD) and Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to monitor transmission of communicable diseases and local public health conditions, coordinate responses, and implement necessary operational adjustments based on public health guidance. The partners meet frequently on an as needed basis, and as such the division has now retired the COVID-19 Task Force, which over the last two years was primarily responsible for providing guidance, information and support in all areas related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

HCPS collaborates with RHHD to implement containment strategies for communicable diseases, including the adoption of protocols listed below, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Wearing of Masks

Henrico County Public Schools follows the latest available guidance provided by the CDC and the Virginia Department of Health with regard to mask-wearing. Masks are available at each school for any students or staff who request them.

Communicable Disease and Illness Prevention

HCPS educates staff, students and families on effective illness prevention strategies, including reminders about hand hygiene, respiratory etiquette and staying home when sick.

Additionally, each school received a supply of personal protective equipment (PPE) at the beginning of the 2022-23 school year.

Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities, including Improving Ventilation

HCPS uses cleaning protocols consistent with CDC recommendations, to include using cleaning products identified as approved disinfectants for the SAR-CoV-2 virus.

All the HVAC systems have been reviewed and adjusted for optimal ventilation in accordance with CDC and ASHRAE recommendations. Exhaust fans have been checked and repaired as required. System filters have been upgraded wherever possible and all remaining systems have filters changed on a more frequent basis.

Data Tracking and Reporting

Positive COVID-19 outbreaks are reported by the school to the Richmond and Henrico Health Districts (RHHD) on a weekly basis.

Diagnostic Testing

Diagnostic at-home COVID-19 tests are available at all school locations for students and staff who need them.

Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities with Respect to Health and Safety Policies

HCPS School Health Services collaborates with students, families, schools and providers to meet the medical, health, and safety needs of our students. School Health Services participates in 504 and IEP meetings to address health related concerns.

Section 3: Continuity of Services

Henrico 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.

Academic Needs

- During the 2022-23 school year, all HCPS students have the opportunity to learn in-person or enroll in virtual options through Henrico Virtual Academy, Henrico's first k-12 fully virtual school, or Virtual Virginia, a statewide virtual learning program.
- The Division of Teaching, Learning and Innovation supports high quality teaching and learning with the following:
 - o Use of of Henrico's Teaching and Learning Framework, including a detailed understanding of the HCPS Instructional Model.
 - o Implementation of the HCPS Literacy Plan.
 - o Development and awareness of the HCPS Numeracy Plan.
 - o Integration of digital resources within the aligned curriculum.
 - o Expanded use of Schoology, the learning management system used by HCPS.

- o Ongoing review and response to student progress data from a variety of sources: SOLs, digital resources, PowerSchool, etc.
- o Professional learning for Tier I instructional practices.
- o The School Quality Planning process to identify needs and monitor the school quality indicators that drive accreditation at all 73 schools and program centers.
- o Addition of 15 new elementary reading specialists and the elementary reading intervention framework to provide consistent targeted practices and resources to address learning loss.
- o Intervention and/or remediation for pre-K through 12th grade students.

Students' Social and Emotional Needs

Students have access to a wide variety of resources to support social emotional learning including:

- A comprehensive school counseling program that includes a preventative school counseling curriculum, small-group counseling, individual counseling, and crisis response.
- School counselors, school psychologists and school social workers through a defined referral system when students need more intensive services. This includes 37 new school counseling positions since the start of the 2021-22 school year; two new social work positions and 21 full-time student Support and Wellness Positions for the 2022-23 school year.
- A research-based social-emotional learning curricula and lessons at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
 - o At the elementary level, all students participate in daily morning meetings with a social-emotional learning focus, and receive weekly curriculum instruction from the Harmony social-emotional learning program to foster communication, understanding, connection and community, inside and outside of school hours.
 - o Middle and high school students receive weekly instruction from the “Second Step” social-emotional learning curriculum and/or direct instruction during advisory periods.
- Opportunity to provide feedback on social-emotional learning support through optional surveys administered to students multiple times a year. This allows the Student Support and Wellness team to gather feedback and actionable data related to student well-being and social emotional learning to inform future supports.

Staff Social and Emotional Needs and Training

It is imperative that HCPS also address the social and emotional wellness of HCPS employees. To do this, all staff members have access to:

- Two Wellness Days built into the annual work calendar.
- A “Social-Emotional Learning” group in Schoology to help employees find resources to support and facilitate social-emotional learning for themselves and their students.
- A “Wellness, Self-Care and Community Resources” group in Schoology to support personal wellness and self-care. Among these resources is an adult SEL toolkit,

containing adult SEL measures, strategies and activities, along with additional materials focused specifically on anxiety, stress, self-care, mindfulness, and coping skills for teachers and staff.

- Employee Assistance Program services and counseling through Optima Health.
- Targeted professional development to employees related to mental health and wellness concerns, offered based on staff surveys and input.

To ensure that HCPS faculty and staff are prepared to prioritize social-emotional learning throughout the 2022-23 school year, all staff require a basic level of exposure to trauma awareness or trauma-informed strategies.

- Last year, 100% of school employees completed one of two trauma modules in SafeSchools 7 (Trauma Awareness or Trauma-Informed Strategies) based on their position with HCPS. Any HCPS employee hired since then has also completed this trauma training as part of their onboarding process.
- Staff also had the opportunity to complete an in-depth virtual course, “Building Community & Supporting [Social-Emotional Learning] Online,” through HCPS U, the school division’s virtual learning campus. Staff continue to have access to the “Surviving and Thriving: Trauma and Resilience” Schoology module developed by Jon Richardson-Lauve with ChildSavers to enhance knowledge and application of trauma-informed practices.
- The Trauma Advisory Committee meets regularly and actively supports schools choosing to prioritize work related to trauma-informed practices.
- In addition, elementary and middle school staff receive an annual refresher in training on positive behavioral interventions and support. This focuses on the increased importance of Tier 1 classroom practices and how to incorporate the school’s intervention team to help students in need of Tier-2 practices. Elementary and middle schools’ school-based intervention teams receive annual training on how to help staff members use their teams when they think a student may require more targeted or intensive support.
- In the fall of 2022 all schools and programs were asked to complete the Trauma Responsive School Implementation Assessment. This follows HCPS’ initial implementation of the tool in January 2021. This annual assessment monitors school and school division progress toward becoming more trauma-informed.
- Numerous staff on the school-based mental health teams hold the status of certified trauma practitioner, or the equivalent, a designation which allows them to provide expert guidance in trauma-informed practices. Many others have completed the coursework as well as other targeted trauma response training.

Mental Health Needs

HCPS’ current model of school-based mental health identifies the individuals assigned to each building who are uniquely qualified to provide these services in a way that is appropriate to the

learning environment. HCPS school-based mental health providers (school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers) are clinically trained to provide counseling and other services to students within a school setting. All HCPS school-based mental health providers are uniquely qualified to provide mental and behavioral health prevention services, early identification and intervention, as well as crisis referral and follow-up services to students and their families.

In order to effectively meet the growing mental health needs of students, HCPS has:

- Increased mental health professional staffing levels. In the 2021-22 school year, 30 school counseling positions were added, with another seven added in the 2022-23 school year.

- Secured several additional, evidence-based intervention programs such as Coping Cat, The C.A.T Project, Check & Connect that are coordinated and implemented by existing Student Support and Wellness staff, as appropriate.
- Continued to implement the evidence-based prevention program “Signs of Suicide” or “SOS” in all middle and high schools during the 2022-23 school year, following initial implementation last year.
- Strengthened partnerships with Henrico County Mental Health and Developmental Services and additional community agencies continue to increase students’ access to additional targeted, intensive support as needed. Teaming with community-based providers and agencies ensures that services provided in school are appropriate to the learning context and those that are provided outside of school are appropriately linked to and supported in the school setting, with the goal of reducing the stress on families while supporting and honoring their role as primary caregivers and decision-makers regarding their child’s development.
- Implemented Virginia’s Handle with Care program this school year to identify and support students who may need more trauma-focused mental health intervention at school following an interaction with Henrico County law enforcement or emergency responder during an incident.
- Used the PREPaRE model, HCPS mental health professionals follow a consistent, guided framework to identify and meet the mental health needs of HCPS students and staff in the aftermath of an acute, traumatic stressor or crisis in any HCPS school community. PREPaRE is an acronym for:

P—Prevent and prepare for crises

R—Reaffirm physical health and welfare, and perceptions of safety and security

E—Evaluate psychological trauma risk

P—Provide interventions

a—and

R—Respond to mental health needs

E—Examine the effectiveness of crisis preparedness

School Nutrition Services

Staff remains flexible regarding how food nutrition services are provided to school communities in 2022-23. This includes:

- In-school food service for students learning in person.

- School nutrition hub options for Henrico Virtual Academy (HVA) students to receive meals.
- Continued localized distribution of weekend food bags through HCPS family advocates for targeted schools and families.

The HCPS Division of Family and Community Engagement Department connects with pantries, local food banks and community organizations to link them with families served within HCPS.

Section 4: Opportunity for Public Comment

Staff, families, students and members of the community may provide public comment and feedback through multiple avenues. This includes but is not limited to the following:

- Submitting written public comment online in advance of each School Board meeting, all of which is shared with school board members and division leadership;
- Providing oral public comment in-person at School Board meetings;
- Emailing the School Board, the Superintendent, and/or the Henrico County Public Schools COVID-19 Health Committee; and
- Attending town hall meetings, focus groups, online surveys and other traditional lines of communication between families community members, principals and division leadership.

Additionally, HCPS administered a stakeholder survey during the summer of 2022 soliciting feedback and input on safe in-person learning plans for the 2022-23 school year and is hosting public hearings on spending priorities in advance of the update to the Division's ESSER Spending Plan (December 31, 2022).

The opportunities listed above build upon previous stakeholder engagement and public hearings on safe learning environments and spending priorities throughout the pandemic. Some examples of this are:

- HCPS sought feedback specific to the use of Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) funding prior to the formal acceptance of the funds in June 2020, as the Board of Supervisors conducted a related public hearing prior to their appropriation of the funds to the 2019-20 school year budget on June 9, 2020.
- The School Board received a review of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act and Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief II Funding prior to accepting Henrico County Public Schools' allocation.
- The ESSER II plan was presented to the School Board in April 2021 and the Board of Supervisors in June 2021. There was public comment at each meeting and a public hearing was held by the Board of Supervisors in June 2021.

Section 5: Periodic Review and Revision of Plan

During the period of the ARP ESSER award (until September 2023), HCPS leadership will periodically review and, as needed, revise the school division’s plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services, taking public input into account.. The plan will be reviewed at least every six months, with the most recent review completed in November 2022.

Section 6: Making the Plan Available to the Public

HCPS makes this plan available to the public on the school division website at:

<https://henricoschools.us/backtoschool/>.

It is available in Spanish and can be translated into additional languages (written and verbal) upon request by contacting the Welcome Center, located at J.R. Tucker High School, at 804-527-4604. may also work directly with their school for translation needs.Upon request, a parent or guardian with a disability as defined by the ADA may be provided with the plan in an alternative format, by contacting Heather Allen, HCPS Policy and Constituency Services Liaison, at hmallen@henrico.k12.va.us or 804-652-3714.