

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 28, 2020
TO: Board of Education
FROM: Dr. Karen Gaborik, Superintendent
SUBJECT: Academic Support Phase-In Plan



District administration has developed the following plan to provide in-school academic support for students identified by the Student Support Services and Special Education departments. Once the plan is approved by the Board of Education, staff will begin communication and implementation. This plan applies to the Green and Yellow Operational Zones. If the Medical Advisory Committee determines specific schools or the entire district needs to move into the Red Operational Zone, services will be stopped and re-evaluated to meet DHSS and CDC Red Zone health and safety requirements. It may be determined that some students can continue to access school buildings for services while in the Red Operational Zone.

Special Education

Over the course of the 2020-2021 school year, there will be times when Fairbanks students and staff will be participating in remote instruction due to building closures or the proposed A/B cohort schedules for secondary schools that have groups of students alternating days on campus. The nature or severity of disability for some of our special education students may make it uniquely difficult for them to fully benefit from these remote educational opportunities to address their overall learning and developmental needs.

To address overall learning and developmental needs of students with disabilities, Student Education Teams will convene to review individual student education plans (IEP) and identify the extent to which individual students with disabilities may require more access to in-person learning opportunities than their peers. Teams should consider the following:

1. Documented daily/weekly aggressive physical behavior directed at self or others.
2. Daily repetition and training of a critical life skill listed as a need in IEP in order for the student to progress through goals.
3. Demonstrated inability to meaningfully engage in remote, eLearning formats based on the nature and severity of their disability.

After review of each student's individualized learning plan and the above considerations, teams will discuss return to in-classroom instruction based on the student's individual needs. Case managers will compile a list of students identified by Student Education Teams for in-person classroom instruction which will be forwarded to the Special Education and Transportation departments.

It is estimated the total number of students in the first phase of Special Education student return would encompass approximately 380 students. This number includes students enrolled in neighborhood schools, as well as the students from both BRIDGE and Project Search, whose program activities are heavily reliant upon work in the community. Enrollment numbers are still fluid and subject to change if eLearning or homeschool student enrollments increase.

Note: The considerations above will be based on the individual needs identified by the IEP Team. Additionally, IEP teams should meet to consider individual needs or circumstances beyond these considerations above.

Phase I

Starting as early as September 8, pending family notifications and transportation, identified students will have the option to return to in-person, campus-based learning regardless of whether school buildings are open to the general population. Depending on the status of general student access to the building as a whole, high-needs classes may spend some portion of a return-to-campus transition with a limited rotation of students. This will result in reduced student numbers to allow for practice and problem solving of safety protocols and procedures prior to full classes. Special education access to campus will mirror general education if campuses are open to in-person learning for all students.

Phase II

Elementary: According to the current Yellow Zone school schedules, elementary students would be in buildings five days per week for five hours. When campuses are open all in-person/blended learning students, including those with disabilities, would be on campus.

Secondary: If secondary school students are in an A/B or other cohort model for a return to buildings, students identified by their education teams for in-classroom instruction (and who choose to pursue this option) would attend on both A and B cohort days eliminating most of the need for remote learning.

Other considerations if the General School Closure is Long Term

Special education students who benefit from remote opportunities, but whose education team recommends some other type of support for a portion of their week that cannot be accommodated remotely, may be brought into buildings to receive these services as IEP teams deem necessary.

Students who are able to benefit from remote or distance-delivered options may receive their direct special education support in these distance formats. If the student was not initially identified as requiring access to school campuses, but is not being successful in the current scheduling situation, interventions should be attempted, results documented, and an IEP team meeting held to discuss data, student needs, and accommodations or adjustments.

Student Support Services

Identification

Step 1: Data review through a districtwide PowerSchool report of students that includes: Early Warning System dropout risk status, support program enrollments, and student support logs.

Step 2: Referral accompanied by data review.

Step 3: Dialogue with educators and families regarding learning support needs.

Step 4: Student Support Team meeting, if needed, to determine in-building support options at the school.

Contact with Families

In coordination with the school Student Support Team (SST), contact will be made by the appropriate student support services staff member, which could include:

- counselor
- social services manager
- prevention intervention specialist
- behavior intervention aide
- Alaska Native education tutor
- After school program coordinator
- English language tutor or specialist
- Migrant education tutor
- McKinney-Vento tutor
- school safety assistant

In some cases, as led by the principal, it may be decided by the school SST process that it's best for the principal, classroom teacher, or a special education staff member to make the family contact.

Approximate Numbers

150 for connectivity only

444 inclusive of connectivity needs

Timeline

Determinations will be continuous throughout the school year as student engagement and progress is monitored. Student supports will be put in place on a rolling basis as determinations are made.

Frequency of In-Person Supports

Dependent upon each student's individual need.

Service Providers

The Student Support Services department has over 115 school-based staff who are available to provide support as service providers. Determination of the exact service provider will be informed by the Student Support Team process at each school and assigned by the appropriate administrator.

School Logistics

Once students have been identified as requiring in-person service during remote learning, schools will assign those students to academic support pods at their home school. Academic support pods will be designated by age/grade bands and follow all the COVID-19 appropriate social distancing, cleaning, and cohorting requirements spelled out in CDC, DHSS and Alaska DEED Smart Start guidelines. Students will have access to the breakfast and lunch programs.

While in academic support pods at school, students will:

- Work on remote learning with adult supervision.
- Have limited in-person access to specific special education and other related services, prioritizing those services unable to be provided remotely.
- Have assigned access to tutoring and learning coaching for asynchronous and low tech assignments.
- Have access to school-provided art and learning materials.
- Have access to WiFi and internet connectivity while at school.
- Have access to small pods of similarly aged students for physically-distanced social interaction.
- Elementary students will have an outside learning break supervised by an adult once a day (15-30 minutes).
- Number of students in academic support pods shall be limited by space, and the requirements for 6-ft distancing.

School Based Decisions

- Location of academic support pods within the building.
- Supervision of learning pods arranged by building level administration in consult with Special Education and Student Support Services.
- Grouping of learning pods (to consider age ranges, grades, and size of groups).

Transportation

Special Education Transportation

- Special education routes are ready to begin full operation on September 8.
- One week lead time is needed. If we get the “go ahead” on September 1, we can run them on September 8.
- This includes 35 special education routes. Routes have already been assigned to drivers.
- Students are already routed. We will notify them of their routing information the week prior to starting routes.

Regular Routes

- We currently have the capacity to run 62 regular routes.
 - These drivers are local and available.
 - We estimate a 1.5 week lead time to get a portion, or all of these routes running. Once students are identified, we will construct the routes as needed.
- The number of routes needed will be determined by the number of students identified and where they live.
 - 62 regular routes gives us a capacity to support between 500 and 1,400 students at the 12 passenger capacity (one student per every other seat).
 - 1,000 to 2,800 students at the 24 passenger capacity (one student per seat).
 - These numbers are estimates with the lower part of the range supposing disproportionate need among schools, and the upper number supposing an even distribution across the district.
- Full home to school transportation across the district (normal operation) is planned at 85 routes.
 - We are currently short 29 personnel to provide full scale operations. First Student has committed to sending in the personnel needed to provide 120 routes (35 SPED, 85 regular, and 10% standby).
 - There is a three-week lead time on getting to full scale operations. Once the date is determined, First Student needs a few days to identify personnel and get them on a plane, potentially two weeks of quarantine (depending on test turnaround time), and a few days to get drivers familiar with the area and their routes.
 - Full home to school operations can begin on September 21, if approval is given on September 1.

Nutrition Services

Our plans will be fairly consistent regardless of the number of students attending school. Staff are already working out of their assigned school locations but shift schedules will need to be determined. With the phase-in plan, the challenge for our staff will be to ensure the in-school service and meal distribution can occur simultaneously. Obtaining the numbers of students scheduled to attend at each site will assist in our planning.

The following represents a districtwide approach. There may be variations at some schools.

Elementary Breakfast

- Full menu will be available (possible removal of cereal depending upon feedback from the teachers).
- Three options for breakfast service to assist with social distancing and afford flexibility to ensure an optimum fit for the school environment.
 - #1 - Students will report to the classroom and be dismissed for breakfast after the bell rings. Schools will create a service schedule for release times by either class or by grade (estimated service time per class is five minutes).
 - #2 - During arrival, students who are getting breakfast can line up in a hallway and those not will go directly to their classroom; those wanting breakfast will be escorted to the kitchen for pick up and to their classrooms for eating.
 - #3 - Intermediate students immediately get breakfast and go to the classroom for eating. Primary students go to their classroom and are escorted to get breakfast after the bell rings.

Elementary Lunch

- Full menu will be available with potential modification to packaging on certain items.
- Students will be dismissed for lunch via class or by grade. Afterwards they will go back to the classroom to eat.
- Schools will have to create a service schedule for release times by either class or by grade (estimated service time per class is ten minutes).
- Limited food quantity will be put out per class/ grade dismissed for lunch to limit student “cross contact” points.
- Students purchasing milk only will go through the line first.

Secondary Breakfast

- Full menu will be available with potential modification to packaging on certain items.
- Students will stop by the serving area to pick up a meal prior to the start bell.
- Students will pick up meals and be allowed to eat in approved areas – cafeteria, non-traditional areas (e.g. hallway), classroom.
- Ala carte items will be distributed by cashier upon request.
- Condiment & spork packets will be distributed by the cashier.

Secondary Lunch

- For schools with multiple serving lines and the ability for lines to be moved, lines will be spaced to better help with social distancing.
- Serving areas will be sanitized between lunch periods.
- Full menu will be available with potential modification to packaging on certain items.
- Ala carte items will be distributed by cashier upon request.
- Condiment & spork packets will be distributed by the cashier or a separate condiment & utensil station will be created and staffed.
- Students will pick up meals and be allowed to eat in building approved areas – cafeteria, non-traditional areas (e.g. hallway), classroom.

We would need specific student attendance information if these students will be learning on the non-in-school days so we can correctly plan to offer and provide take away meals.