



Virginia's Return to School Plan

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State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Schools will open for all students next year,
but instruction will look very different.

Virginia schools are required to deliver

new instruction to all students for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Some of that will happen in-person, and some will take place via remote learning.

The VDH and VDOE have provided extensive guidance on how to open through Virginia's Phase Guidance for Schools which were based on the Governor's metrics for the Forward Virginia Blueprint

Virginia's Return to School Plan

- Aligns school reopening phases with the Forward Virginia Blueprint and phases.
- Scales up opportunities for in-person instruction.
- Addresses the health and social, emotional, and physical well being of students and staff.
- Prioritizes the needs of our most vulnerable learners, for whom in-person instruction is most essential.



The Three Phase Plan

The Phase Guidance for Virginia Schools recommends the following programmatic options:

Phase I - special education programs and child care for working families

Phase II- Phase I options plus preschool - third grade students; English learners; and summer camps in school buildings

Phase III - all students may receive in-person instruction as can be accommodated with strict social distancing measures in place

Beyond Phase III - divisions will resume “new-normal” operations under future guidance



School Plan Submission

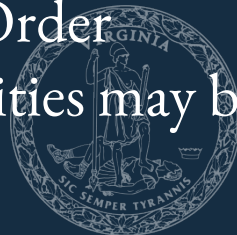
Before entering Phase II or III, all schools must submit plans to VDOE outlining plans for implementation of VDH and CDC mitigation strategies, per an order from the State Health Commissioner. Public school divisions will also be required to submit a plan for providing new instruction to all students in the 2020-2021 academic year, regardless of phase or the operational status of the school at the time.

If a division intends to deviate from the Phase Guidance, they should report such local variability to VDOE.



Phase I Looks Like This:

- Instruction will be predominately remote.
- In-person instruction may be offered for special education programs with social distancing measures; students will only attend such programs if all parties agree it is appropriate.
- Child care for working families can continue to be offered in schools.
- Social distancing measures should be implemented on buses and in buildings, including but not limited to:
 - ✓ A maximum of 10 people per bus or classroom
 - ✓ 6 foot separation whenever possible or 3 foot separation when combined with a face covering
 - ✓ Restrict mixing groups of students
 - ✓ Close communal spaces
 - ✓ No large gatherings per Executive Order
 - ✓ No athletics or extracurricular activities may be offered.



Phase II Looks Like This:

- Instruction will still be predominately remote.
- Phase I options continue. Additionally, in-person instruction may be offered for special education programs, preschool - third grade students, and/or English learners.
- Summer camps in school settings may be offered to students of any age.
- Social distancing measures should be implemented on buses and buildings, including but not limited to:
 - ✓ 6 foot separation whenever possible or 3 foot separation when combined with a face covering
 - ✓ Restrict mixing groups of students
 - ✓ 50 person limit on large gatherings, assemblies, graduations, etc.
 - ✓ Close communal spaces if possible; otherwise stagger use and disinfect in between use
 - ✓ Limited extracurricular activities and athletics with mitigation strategies.



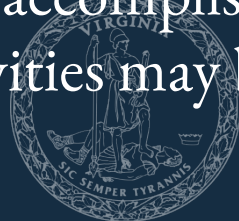
Athletics in Phase II:

- Athletics should be limited to activities that allow maintenance of physical distancing (10 feet) at all times.
- Competition that involves contact with other athletes should be avoided. Physically distanced (10 feet) competitions are permitted under the following guidance:
 - Outdoor recreational sports should provide for 10 feet of physical distance by all participants and spectators at all times and all shared items should be disinfected between uses. The total number of attendees should not exceed the lesser of 50% of the occupancy load of the venue (if an occupancy load exists) or 50 persons.
 - Indoor recreational sports should provide for 10 feet of physical distance by all participants at all items and all shared items should be disinfected between uses. The total number of attendees should not exceed the lesser of 30% of the occupancy load of the room in which the sport is being held or 50 persons. Spectators should be distanced (10 feet) from others, should not include anyone other than parents or guardians, and should wear face coverings per relevant EO.
 - Additional guidance is forthcoming from VHSL.



Phase III Looks Like This:

- Instruction will shift to include more in-person instruction, for any student. Remote instruction will supplement in person instruction for students.
- Child care and/or before and after care in schools may be offered.
- In order to accomplish social distancing, school plans may need to include staggered schedules for students.
- Social distancing measures should be implemented on buses and buildings, including:
 - ✓ 6 foot separation whenever possible or 3 foot separation when combined with a face covering
 - ✓ Large gathering limit, subject to updated Executive Order at the time
 - ✓ Consider restricting mixing groups of students, adjusting schedules, transitions, recess options, and instruction to accomplish this.
 - ✓ Athletics and extracurricular activities may be expanded with mitigation measures.



Some Precautions Apply To All Phases

All schools should follow the CDC Guidance for Schools, including enhanced social and physical distancing, health and hygiene procedures, cleaning and disinfecting measures, and other mitigation strategies. These precautions should include, but are not limited to:

- Daily health screenings of students and staff
- Providing remote learning exceptions and teleworking for students and staff who are at a higher risk of severe illness.
- The use of cloth face coverings by staff when at least 6 feet physical distancing cannot be maintained.
- Encouraging the use of face coverings in students, as developmentally appropriate, in settings where physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Centering Equity

The extended period of school closures have exacerbated previously existing differences in student experiences, levels of support and access to resources. As we begin planning for return to school, our commitment is to ensure the public education system is one that provides equitable educational opportunities to all students is unwavering. We have identified key steps to ensuring equity:

- Meet Student Needs First
- Ensure Equitable Access and Adequate Supports
- Centralize Communication to ALL Families
- Develop and Implement a Return to Learning Equity Audit
 - http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/covid-19/recover-redesign-restart-2020.pdf

Detailed Guidance Documents

- **Virginia Phase Guidance for Schools** includes detailed guidance for each phase. Guidance is designed to mitigate the risks associated with COVID-19.
- The **May 2020 CDC Guidance for Schools** is the foundational public health guidance which should guide school plans
- **Recover, Redesign, Restart** is a comprehensive document released by the Virginia Department of Education, informed by diverse education stakeholders, for schools to utilize in their planning.
- Ongoing work to develop a dashboard with metrics for local decision-making

