Return to School Guidance

Kindergarten through grade 6
Although teachers have built routines and relationships virtually, as Prince George’s County Public School students return to school face-to-face in the second semester, the Department of Curriculum and Instruction would like to provide reminders and resources for teachers welcoming students into their physical classrooms. This resource document, although not all inclusive, outlines guiding principles, strategies, and resources that will assist teachers with safe and effective transition to full in person teaching and learning. These resources take into consideration the convergence of virtual and in-person learners in a common space.
General Routines and Procedure Considerations

Students learn best in classrooms with clear and consistent routines and procedures that are woven throughout the school year. It is essential to revisit these routines frequently as well as ensure that all students have an understanding of how classrooms and schools operate when everyone is in person.

Blending Virtual and In-Person Students

Both virtual and face-to-face students may experience adjustments as we return to full in-person instruction. Check out the routines that will help all students work together in their classrooms.

Instructional Resources & Protocols

Social/Emotional Considerations

As all learners in PGCPS transition to in-person learning, it is important to stay in tune with the social-emotional health of students. Social-emotional well being is the backdrop to all learning. Students whose needs are met in this area are better equipped for learning. There are several helpful resources in helping teachers identify practices to consider to ensure a safe and welcoming environment for all students.

Academic Routine Considerations

Beyond regular and logistical routines and procedures for productive school functioning, there are also academic routine considerations within the school day. These considerations support students during academic content instruction.

Special Considerations

As virtual learners return to in-person learning, it is important that we consider educational implications for the culturally diverse populations within our district as well as students receiving Special Education services. There are many resources available for teachers in Grades K-6.
**General Routines and Procedure Considerations**

**First Day Activities such as:**
- Establish seating that mixes the student up in the room.
- Conduct team-building activities with students.
- Introduce all essential components of the classroom.
- Introduce how to handle all classroom equipment and manipulatives.
- Walk students around the building to introduce all spaces.
- Review daily schedule.
- Review classroom safety protocols and procedures.

**Ensure student understanding of routines and procedures for your classroom, such as:**
- Establish and post positively stated, clear expectations and rules.
- Routines for lining up, going to the nurse, going to restroom
- Arrival/dismissal procedures for walkers and students riding the bus
- Teach and model what to bring to school and home daily in the backpacks. Demonstrate how to unpack and pack backpacks. If visuals are available, post in the area where the item will be located.
- Hand signals - review or establish classroom signals for asking for help, needing restroom, etc?
- Morning procedures for announcements, pledge of allegiance, and late arrivals
- Technology use and storage
- Uniform expectations, if applicable

**Ensure student understanding of the following routines and procedures for your school:**
- Lunchroom rules, procedures for buying lunch
- Recess rules and routines
- Fire drill
- Mask wearing and hand sanitizer usage
- Walking in the hallways
Blending Virtual and In-Person Students

Please remember that students who have been receiving both virtual and face-to-face instruction may experience adjustments as we return to full in-person instruction. Consider the following behaviors and/or routines.

Schools who may create new classes for returning virtual learners: Students who have participated in virtual instruction may not be integrated into an already established classroom. School staff should consider the following routines for this group of students. Click here to view a list of First Week of School Routines.

Considerations
(Refer to the section on Social Emotional Considerations if needed)

- Spend time getting to know the student
- Assign a peer partner/buddy to support the transition
- Student can meet with school counselor if student display signs of anxiety and fatigue

Students who have been receiving virtual instruction may require or need support with the following:

- Adjustments to in-person school
- Adjustments to classroom
- Understanding school rules
- Making new friends
- Signs of anxiety and fatigue
- Tour of school/Orientation
- Lockers (if applicable)
- Lunch and recess routines

Considerations
(Refer to the section on Social Emotional Considerations if needed)

- Assign a welcome/host
- Assign a peer partner/buddy to support the transition
- Students may need adjustment to class routines and spacing
- Review class of rules and spacing

Students who are receiving full in-person instruction may require or need support with the following as they adjust to new classmates:

- Adjustments to spacing
- Relationship building
- Larger class size
- Classroom management

RETURN TO SCHOOL GUIDANCE FOR TEACHERS K-6 | 5
Resources & Protocols

These materials are available for your reference if needed.
Getting to Know Each Other Activities

13 Powerful SEL Activities
A few ways to build social emotional learning into any class.

Establishing Opening and Closing Routines
Routines are a key strategy for creating continuity and predictability in classes.

Look for Signs of Anxiety

8 signs of anxiety:
information to understand why anxiety manifests in these ways by taking a deeper dive into each area below.

- Difficulty Sleeping
- Anger
- Defiance
- Chandeliering
- Lack of Focus
- Avoidance
- Negativity
- Overplanning

Different Types of Anxiety in Children

Symptoms of anxiety disorder

Signs And Symptoms of Anxiety In Children Video

Checklist

Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators

Relationship Building Activities

25 Ways to Integrate Social Emotional Learning
A variety of ways to incorporate SEL in different areas of instruction.

37 Social-Emotional Learning Activities & Games for Teachers & Students
Activities for students differentiated by grade level.

10 SEL Activities for Upper Elementary
Easy ways to add SEL to any class for older elementary students.
Calming Sensory Items in the Room

**Calm Space in the Classroom:**
Steps for Creating a Calm Space in the Classroom

**Calm Space Resources:**
Digital Calm Space Links and Free Printable Calm Space Tools

**PGCPS Virtual Calming Room:**
This site is designed to promote students' ability to manage their emotions and behaviors in order to participate in activities that they need to do and want to do.

**List of Calm Space Tools:**
Descriptions and Purpose

**Establish a “Safe Spot”**
Create a classroom calming corner for breaks. Have “safe spots” or calming areas clearly marked so teacher direction is not required in order for students to benefit from the opportunity to calm.

**Modeling Matters**
Students will learn from watching you. Model the behaviors you want to see from your students. Model following procedures, using calming areas, etc.

Building Safe Culture

**Greet Your Students at the Door** —
Take the time to connect with each student each day. Acknowledge each student; offer daily positive greetings; use kind language; smile with your eyes; greet students with your name, their name and a smile.

Self Advocacy

SEL Templates — Pear Deck

Parent/Engagement

Social and Emotional Learning Activities for Families and Educators
Collaborative Conversation Protocols

“To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner.”

- Ensure that both verbal and non-verbal cues are explained to students in order to support collaborative conversations. See supporting resources below.
  - Speaking and Listening Toolkit
  - Active Listening Information and Anchor Chart
  - Accountable Talk Protocol
  - Turn and Talk Protocol
  - Think/Pair/Share Protocol
  - Pair/Square Protocol
  - Effective Questioning Techniques (for mathematics and other content areas)

Listening Protocols

Listening is an integral aspect of learning, and therefore it is important to ensure students are familiar with the information below.

- Ensure that both verbal and non-verbal cues are explained to students in order to support collaborative conversations. See supporting resources below.
  - Speaking and Listening Toolkit
    - Active Listening Protocol

Cooperative Learning Group Roles

Having clear roles for cooperative groups helps support collaboration and productiveness of the group. Click the link for possible role descriptions.

- Sample cooperative group roles
- Jigsaw
- Project-Based Learning
Various Academic Protocol Considerations

Below are some considerations to think about as you ensure a smooth transition for students who had been learning in the virtual academy.

Notebook Protocols
To ensure familiarity and proper use of academic notebooks, review what headings should go on papers/google docs, the labeling of notebooks, and how and when to turn them in.

Other considerations:
- How are students expected to move around the room during academic routines such as learning centers, reading groups, and cooperative group times?
- How are students expected to move to, and use such areas as computer tables, learning stations, centers, etc.?
- When students complete work, how and when do they turn it in?
- What should students do if and when they are finished with their work?
- What are the protocols for the classroom library?

Reading Considerations

- Continue using the CIM for daily whole group instruction - check the pacing calendar to see where students should be at this time of year
- Grouping Considerations - revisit the CIM Overview document for options for teaching small groups and addressing learning gaps
- Coordinate with textbook coordinators to determine whether all students have their textbooks (My Reading and Writing student textbook for Grades K-1 or the mybook student text for Grades 2-5)
- Annotating Text - ensure all learners have an understanding of how to annotate their thoughts while reading in the physical textbook
- Visit the Elementary Reading/English Language Arts Google Site
Mathematics Considerations

- **Unit 0 – First Five Days**
  This unit establishes a positive mathematics classroom environment and can be found in the Math Portal linked in the Curriculum Framework Progress Guide. Reviewing aspects of Unit 0 will help to emphasize the signature strategies as well as the Math Norms that are ongoing.

- **Continue using the Curriculum Framework Progress Guide** for unit and daily instruction.

- **Ensure use of the Math Teaching Toolkit** – a practical resource of teaching strategies and tools that support the PGCPS Mathematics curriculum.

- **Mathematics Manipulatives** – the benefit of using manipulatives in mathematics is key for student understanding. Click to read 7 Musts for Using Manipulatives.

- **Click here** for the Elementary Mathematics Google Site for resources as well as recordings of professional development sessions.

Science Considerations

- **Click here** to access Elementary Science Instructional Guidelines.

- **Click here** for the Elementary Science Expectations

- **Science K-12 Instructional Essentials**

- The Elementary Science Google site includes monthly updates, STEM Fair guidance, Grade 5 MISA preparation, Grade level curriculum documents, and other elementary science information for Grades K-5. The Elementary Science Google Site can be found here.
Social Studies Considerations

- Click here to access the Elementary Social Studies Instructional Guidance-Quarter 3.
- Click here to access the Elementary Social Studies Instructional Guidance-Quarter 4.
- Social Studies Literacy Toolkit:
  - Chart Definitions of Historical Thinking Skills
  - Student-Led Discussion Protocols Toolkit
  - Elementary Annotation Marks
  - Speaking, Listening, and Reasoning Toolkit
- The Elementary Social Studies Google Site can be found here.

Instructional playlist videos have been used to create Canvas modules. Teachers at schools using Canvas can access the ready to go modules from the Canvas Commons.

- All curriculum documents and instructional resources for Social Studies are housed in Canvas.
- Directions are below. Here is an image for how to access it Canvas.
  - Login to Canvas via the Staff Portal
  - Select Curr. Hub on the blue navigation menu on the left.
  - Once on the hub select Social Studies to access the desired curriculum grades.

The expectations for Social Studies are included in the Instructional Guidance Document. Here is the link for Elementary.
Equity and Cultural Responsiveness

Culturally Responsive Teaching
The process of using familiar cultural information and processes to scaffold learning and not just implementing a few strategies. It emphasizes communal orientation and focuses on relationships, cognitive scaffolding, and critical social awareness.

The following are considerations to ensure culturally responsive teaching:

- Consider the various backgrounds and cultures in the classroom
- Encourage all students to have a voice
- Use materials that represent diversity
- Connect with parents and the community
- Meet diverse learning needs
- Celebrate diversity

ESOL Considerations

Use the following resources and considerations to support students who are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse.

Resources

Click here to access the ESOL Google Site
Click here to access ESOL Elementary K-5 Curriculum and Instructional Supports
Click here to access the Bilingual Assessment Team (BAT) Google Site

The BAT team assists school teams in the referral and assessment process for students who are culturally and linguistically diverse and may require special education and/or related services. BAT provides consultation services and assessment assistance including bilingual educational and Speech and Language assessments.
Click here to access Language Links
Language Links telephone interpreting is available in instances where language access is needed immediately. Staff is connected to a human interpreter for immediate communication on-site, or for third party calls to parents or guardians who are not primary English speakers.

Instructional Considerations
(Click this link for additional ESOL Resources)

- ESOL services should continue and are based on students proficiency level
- Consider assigning students a peer buddy or partner to assist with making friends and learning classroom and school routines.

Supporting Dually Identified Learners

- Dually Identified Learners are English Learners who are identified with a disability and are receiving Special Education services.
- ESOL students who also have IEPs should continue to receive both ESOL and Special Education services. Teachers should work collaboratively to develop Specifically Designed instruction (SDI).
- Click here to access the Specifically Designed Instruction Video Overview

Google Classroom with Resources for supporting Dually Identified Learners

Students with Autism
- Elementary Autism Resources
- Elementary Autism Program Class Code: x2sjwy7

Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities participating in Alternate Instructional Framework and Assessments
- CRI & Regional Teachers Google Classroom
- Elementary Resource Google Classroom, Class code: 6e6ulwk
- Twice Exceptional Resources Classroom Class code: yrkwouj
- Kindergarten Special Education Behavior Supports Class code: Qp23pa
Special Education Instructional Planning Considerations

Effective specially designed instruction (SDI) is collaboratively developed, implemented, and evaluated by a team that includes teachers, other service providers, and the student and family. The instructional practices used, the instructional setting, and the intensity of intervention are customized to meet the student’s individual needs. Instruction for students receiving special education services must be specially designed.

Instructional Resources:
- Click here to access the Specifically Designed Instruction Video Overview
- Special Education Instructional Planning Considerations SY22
- SDI Development Tool
- Creative Arts - UDL, Differentiation, and SDI in Creative Arts Classrooms
- Goalbook App Instructional and Behavior Resources - Downloads for use during instruction
  - Behavior Resources
  - Math Resources
  - Reading Resources
  - Writing Resources
- Creative Arts - UDL, Differentiation, and SDI in Creative Arts Classrooms
- Elementary Special Education Instructional Considerations

Accommodations: Supporting Resources
- What Should Teachers Know about accommodations for students with disabilities?
- PGCPS Accommodations Labels/Stamps
- Accommodations/Supplementary Aids Matrix

Elementary Autism Program Resources

Google Classrooms with Resources
- Elementary Resource Google Classroom, Class code: 6ehulwk
- Twice Exceptional Resources Classroom, Class code: yrkvwoj
- Kindergarten Special Education Behavior Supports Class code: Qp23pa
- Elementary Autism Program Class Code: x2sjwy7
Students with Significant Cognitive Disabilities participating in Alternate Instructional Framework and Assessments

**Supporting Resources:**

- [COMPASS-PGCPS](#): All resources related to instruction and assessment, including links to the Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) site.
- [The Navigator Newsletter 2020-21](#)
- [The Navigator Newsletter 2019-20](#)
- [CRI & Regional Teachers Google Classroom](#)