

UPDATED RETURN TO SCHOOL PROPOSAL

Provo City School District

This proposal is based on the Return to School Plans from several districts along the Wasatch front. It includes adjustments to our original plan to meet the changing circumstances in the Provo City School District.

CURRENT SITUATION

The priorities of our Return to School Plan include **1) protecting the health and safety of our students and staff**, and **2) engaging students in meaningful learning opportunities**. Schools present a unique challenge in easing the current health concerns given the overall size of our schools and the numerous interactions that students have with each other daily. Each interaction increases the potential exposure and spread of the virus. An overall reduction in the daily number of interactions of students and staff will provide a safer learning environment.

As COVID-19 continues to spread in our community, families, and staff are anxious about the return to school. The district has presented two options for the fall, full-time online or in-person learning. A third option has now been developed that will allow for greater social distancing, reduction in the number of students in our buildings at any given time, and continuation of face-to-face instruction when necessary. We are calling this third option Home Study. As conditions continue to change in our community, we recognize the need to closely monitor and adjust this plan when needed.

PROPOSAL

Schools will open in three phases to allow students and staff to adjust to new health and safety procedures. The first phase will emphasize the establishment of new routines as well as training on how Home Study will work. We will initially start school with half of the students in the building each day, to provide for a safer transition back to school. Students in elementary schools will be grouped alphabetically by the last name and assigned to attend on alternating days. Secondary students will also be grouped and assigned alphabetically to ensure that families with multiple students are on the same schedule. Secondary students attending schools with block schedules will remain on a block schedule during this first phase.

Once routines are established and community conditions improve, schools may move to the second phase, bringing all students back to school daily. As community spread of the virus continues to decline, buildings will eventually return to regular schedules at full capacity. The district administration will coordinate with the county health department to monitor closely the conditions within each school and community and adjust the phases according to the health conditions.

Phases for Return to School

1. Early dismissal schedule, 50% building capacity, students are grouped by alphabet districtwide to ensure that families with multiple children in the district are on the same schedule – emphasis on teaching health and hygiene procedures, and accessing Home Study materials.
2. Early dismissal schedule, 100% building capacity (once conditions & routines stabilize)
3. Regular schedule, 100% building capacity (as permitted by health conditions)

In addition to a phased opening to schools, families will have greater flexibility to meet their student's learning needs. Families will continue to have the option of enrolling full-time online in our eSchool

program. Elementary students will receive their curriculum through a program called K-12. Secondary students will receive their curriculum through BYU Independent Study taught by Provo City School District teachers.

Students that return to our schools for in-person instruction will be provided with the added flexibility of Home Study, which will allow a student to access course materials online through a classroom teacher's Canvas site. This will allow parents to determine when a student will attend or miss in-person classes while at the same time permitting the student to stay current in coursework. The district's Compulsory Attendance Policy will be suspended for the 2020-21 school year, recognizing that the health and safety of students may require an extended period of absence from school. School counselors and social workers will pay particular attention to students and families that have extended absences or health concerns and will follow up with families on a case by case basis.

Three Options of Students Instruction

1. Online Option
 - a. Students may choose to enroll in eSchool full time each quarter. Once enrolled, students will need to remain in the online course until the end of the quarter.
 - b. Students access the curriculum on their schedule, and teachers provide directions, feedback, and assessment as needed. Teachers do not necessarily provide direct instruction through Zoom or any other synchronized online tool.
 - c. Teachers who may be at high risk of the virus, as determined by Human Resource, from across the district are assigned to teach solely online.
 - d. Students who want to attend ½ time in school for Dual Language Immersion and want to be online ½ time through full eSchool will need to dual enroll. (Dual enrollment form may be obtained through Student Services)
2. In-Person Option
 - a. Schools will provide in-person instruction on a reduced schedule Monday through Thursday (e.g. normal start times with dismissal at HS at 12:20, MS at 1:00, & ES at 1:40).
 - b. Fridays are provided for teacher planning. With prior arrangements, students may attend for a limited time in the morning for additional support and intervention.
 - c. The curriculum is limited to Essential Learnings. All Essential Learnings and activities should be accessible through Canvas. Teachers align course Learning Essentials to allow students to move back and forth from In-person to Home Study. Students are provided the flexibility to attend as needed.
 - d. Teachers use the afternoons for consultation, planning, and feedback for Home Study Option.
 - e. Deep cleaning and disinfecting may begin after the early dismissal when fewer individuals are in the building.
 - f. Breakfast and lunch are provided.
3. Home Study Option
 - a. Home Study is an extension of the In-Person Option.
 - b. Students are assigned to an in-person course. Whenever a student is unable to attend a class in person, the student may stay current in the course by accessing materials through Canvas. Students are encouraged to move back and forth between in-person and online as needed and without penalty.

- c. Teachers align course materials with Essential Learnings, activities, readings, etc. The primary focus is on mastering Essential Learnings as determined by the teacher.
- d. Students and teachers are not necessarily online at the same time, but teachers will continue to provide assessment and feedback to students. As students work through the materials in Canvas, students may contact teachers through email and Zoom for additional directions as needed. Teachers are provided with time each afternoon and on Fridays to answer students' questions.
- e. While self-paced, the Home Study is aligned with in-person instruction to allow students to move freely between the two. Teachers will need to provide a calendar of general topics that align with the two options. Students may work in Home Study for as long as needed and determined by the family.

Other Programs

1. **Dual Language Immersion**- classes are typically a half-day of instruction in English and a half-day in the target language. To reduce exposure and ensure the safety of students and staff, the language immersion classes will be once a week and the traditional classes will be once a week to begin the year while on a shortened A/B schedule. Dual Language Immersion classes are best taught in person. Students who opt for the full-time eSchool option will not receive instruction in the second language. We, however, will support students who choose the full-time online option in the following ways:
 - a. Current DLI students will have their spot held for them for the 2020-21 school year. This includes first-grade students who have been accepted into the program but have not yet started.
 - b. Whenever possible, we will provide additional resources to support students in the target language.
 - c. Students will have access to online classroom programs available to them (e.g. Mandarin Matrix).
 - d. A connection to the DLI classroom through Zoom or another online platform once a week.
 - e. Students will have the option of attending DLI in-person and dual enrolling in eSchool. Dual enrollment will be handled through Student Services.
2. **Kindergarten** – students will have the opportunity to attend kindergarten. Schedules will be adjusted based on full-day or half-day sessions.
3. **Pre-School**- Students in our pre-school programs will continue to have access to learning options. Schedules will be adjusted based on the requirements of the program.

NEEDS

1. Students must enroll in either eSchool or home school, but compulsory attendance is waived to permit students to freely move between In-person and Home Study options.
2. Grading policy would need to be amended to accommodate In-person and Home Study options. Emphasis should be on proficiency or mastery of Essential Learnings as noted as a Pass grade. High school students may seek a letter grade of A-C for college and scholarship purposes.
3. Teachers are provided with access to the corresponding BYU Independent Study materials for their courses.

ADVANTAGES

1. Reduces the time and number of students in the building and on buses limiting potential exposure to the virus for students and staff.

2. Families are provided greater flexibility to meet their ever-changing health and learning needs. Students may move freely from In-person and Home Study options.
3. High-risk teachers are provided with the opportunity to transfer to full online instruction at eSchool, depending on student enrollment. High-risk teachers that are not placed at eSchool may be able to move their courses to fully online.
4. All teachers are provided the afternoon to plan, collaborate, and provide student support in-person and online. Collaboration time will be essential for teachers whose courses may not align with the BYU Independent Study as they will need to develop and post Essential Learnings and materials on Canvas.
5. Provides daily face-to-face instruction for English Language Learners and Special Education students to meet their individual goals.
6. Allows school schedules to remain relatively the same. It does not require secondary counselors and registrars to do additional work to place students in an option, limiting the impact on each school's master schedule.
7. It provides more time for district custodial staff to clean and disinfect our buildings.
8. If a full school dismissal is needed due to the spread of the virus, course materials will already be on Canvas.

DISADVANTAGES

1. The proposal assumes that several students will opt for the Full Online or Home Study Options, reducing the number of students in our buildings. If a sufficient number of students do not select one of these two options, it will be difficult to manage and provide enough social distancing in our buildings to limit the spread of the virus.
2. More teachers than needed will likely request to transfer to eSchool or provide full-time online instruction. This will limit our ability to accommodate all of the needs of high-risk teachers. A potential solution is for these teachers' courses to be offered only as online courses at their home school.
3. Not all courses have online resources and materials that align with our current courses. Teachers will have to develop Essential Learning and materials for Canvas in these courses. Collaboration time in the afternoons will support this work.
4. Families with younger students may struggle with daycare due to early dismissal or limited building capacity at the start of the school year.