

# Atlanta Public Schools' Three-Year Academic Recovery Plan

## Frequently Asked Questions

*Updated 6.8.2021*

### **Academic Recovery and School-Based Intervention Plan**

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, students in Atlanta Public Schools (APS) have experienced unfinished learning as the district transitioned to virtual learning in March 2020 and learning loss over the course of the 2020-2021 school year. In response to this learning loss and in alignment with the district's commitment to ensuring every student is prepared for college, career, and life, APS has developed an Academic Recovery Plan that spans the next three school years: 2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024 (effectively June 2021 - May 2024).

In finalizing this plan, APS took into consideration the feedback, questions, and concerns generated through community engagement with GO Teams, parents of students with disabilities, APS staff, our various advisories and task forces, our Equity Design Team, our school principals, and the broader APS community through our virtual town hall and survey. [Click here for the survey results.](#)

#### **1. What is the district's Academic Recovery Plan?**

- a. APS' Academic Recovery Plan includes three components:
  - i. A new K-12 universal screener to help identify our students' learning needs in English Language Arts and Math.
  - ii. Our Summer Academic Recovery Academy (ARA), which has enrolled over 11,000 students.
  - iii. Implementation of a required school-based intervention or enrichment block in all schools.
    1. Elementary School: minimum of 30 minutes, four days per week
    2. Middle School: minimum of 45 minutes, four days per week (either a block or an ELA and Math Connections class)
    3. High School: minimum of 90 minutes, four days per week (a class or course only for students identified for intervention).

#### **2. Why is APS Implementing an Academic Recovery Plan?**

- a. Historically, the district has implemented extended day schedules (30 additional minutes) to accommodate the needs of students at various schools, including Morningside Elementary and Springdale Park Elementary schools.
- b. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we know that our students have experienced unfinished learning as we transitioned to virtual learning back in March 2020.

- c. We also know that our students have experienced some levels of learning loss over the course of this school year, and in addition, 60 percent of our students have not been physically present in our school buildings for over a year.
- d. Moreover, even prior to the pandemic, research suggests that at the current rate of growth, it would take 128 years to close the opportunity gaps that currently exist in our system. This, coupled with the imperatives stated above, has created a greater sense of urgency to act immediately to address closing these gaps.

**3. How many students qualify for academic intervention in APS?**

- a. Approximately, 26,165 K-12 students were identified as eligible for academic intervention.

**4. Does every student have to participate in academic recovery?**

- a. Our Academic Recovery Plan is inclusive of three components:
  - i. A new K-12 universal screener to help identify our students' learning needs. All K-12 students will be administered the universal screener in English Language Arts and Math.
  - ii. Our Summer Academic Recovery Academy (ARA), which has enrolled over 11,000 students districtwide.
  - iii. Implementation of a required school-based intervention or enrichment block, class, or course in all schools.
    - 1. Elementary School: minimum of 30 minutes, four days per week
      - a. If your child has not been identified to participate in intervention, your child will participate in an enrichment block during this time.
    - 2. Middle School: minimum of 45 minutes, four days per week
      - a. Middle schools have the option to implement the required school-based intervention in two ways:
        - i. A 45-minute block, four days per week in English Language Arts and Math, or
        - ii. An English Language Arts or Math Connections class where only those students identified for intervention will be scheduled for that intervention as part of their Connections rotation.
    - 3. High School: minimum of 90 minutes, four days per week
      - a. A class or course in English Language Arts or Math only for those students identified for intervention. Those students who are not identified for intervention will continue with their normal class schedule.

- 5. Will Dual Language Immersion students identified for academic intervention receive that intervention in English or Spanish?**
- a. The district will provide intervention in both English and Spanish. The Dual Language Immersion teaching teams will use diagnostic and screening data to determine if Dual Language Immersion students identified for intervention should receive that intervention in English and/or Spanish.
- 6. What does an academic intervention or enrichment block, class, or course look like in elementary, middle, and high school?**
- a. The district has provided guidance for the implementation of the required intervention and enrichment block, class or course, and will work closely with school principals to ensure high-quality intervention/enrichment blocks are implemented for all students in accordance with this guidance.
  - b. Elementary School**
    - i. Academic Intervention: A 30-minute block in intervention in English Language Arts and Math. Teachers will be implementing a district-selected curriculum.
    - ii. Enrichment: Enrichment will be a 30-minute block of learning focused on extending critical thinking, problem-solving, etc.
  - c. Middle School**
    - i. Academic Intervention: A 45-minute block in intervention in English Language Arts and Math. Teachers will be implementing a district-selected curriculum.
    - ii. Enrichment: Enrichment will be a 30-minute block of learning focused on extending critical thinking, problem-solving, etc.
    - iii. If the school chooses the Connections model, the student will be scheduled for a Connections class where the district's curriculum is implemented.
  - d. High School**
    - i. Academic Intervention: Students identified for participation in intervention will be enrolled in an intervention support class for Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, and 9th, 10th, and 11th-Grade Literature and Composition.
    - ii. A student who has not been identified for intervention will not have an intervention course included on their high school schedule.

**7. What is the New Bell Schedule for the 2021, 2022, and 2023 school years as a result of this plan?**

- a. We heard the voice of the community and with your engagement, we have finalized the change to the school bell schedule. The schedule will be as follows:

Elementary School	7:45 am to 2:45 pm (changed from 8 am to 2:30 pm)
High School	8:45 am to 3:45 pm (changed from 8:30 am to 3:30 pm)
Middle School	9:15 am to 4:15 pm (changed from 9:05 am to 4:05 pm)

In reaching this decision, APS engaged with GO Teams, parents of students with disabilities, APS staff, various advisory councils and task forces, our internal Equity Design Team, partners, our school principals, and the broader APS community through our virtual town hall and bell schedule survey. [Click here to see the survey results.](#)

**8. How do I get more information about academic intervention or enrichment at my child's school?**

- a. Please contact your child's principal for a detailed overview of the implementation plan for intervention and enrichment at their school.

**9. What is the new bus transportation schedule?**

- a. As in previous years, transportation schedules, including bus pick-up and drop-off times, will be communicated directly to families before the start of the new school year. Prior to the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, that information will be available online at <https://www.atlantapublicschools.us/domain/11771>.

**10. How will this new high school bell schedule impact high school athletics?**

- a. Atlanta Public Schools Transportation Department has been successful in managing transportation for high school athletics, including for schools like North Atlanta High School, whose bell schedule has been 8:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. for the past seven years. With this change in the bell schedule for all high schools (8:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.), we don't foresee any impediments to getting our athletes to their competition destinations on time. We will work collaboratively with our Athletics Department and schools to encourage coaches to ensure teams are prepared and ready for departure at their scheduled times. We remain committed to the success of our athletic programs and will make the necessary adjustments if needed.

**11. How will APS pay for this plan?**

- a. This district's Academic Recovery Plan is aligned with the requirements of [The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund](#).
- i. This federal funding requires school districts to reserve no less than 20 percent of their total allocation to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. These interventions

include programs such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after-school programs, or extended school year programs. These interventions must respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student subgroups.

**12. When did APS develop its three-year Academic Recovery Plan?**

- a. APS was one of the first school districts in the country to begin developing an academic recovery plan to address unfinished learning and learning loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The district's Academic Recovery Plan was first shared at the Atlanta Board of Education meeting on February 1, 2021. View the PowerPoint presentation here: [APS Academic Recovery and School-Based Intervention Plan](#) or watch the Board meeting on-demand on the [Board's Facebook page](#) (Discussion begins at the 59 minute, 16-second mark).