

Atlanta Public Schools' Three-Year Academic Recovery Plan Frequently Asked Questions

Summary of APS' 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 students have experienced learning loss over the course of the 2020-2021 school year. In response to this academic learning loss and in alignment with the district's commitment to ensuring every child 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).

1. 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 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, 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 close these gaps.
- e. In keeping the success of all of our students at the forefront, APS has decided to implement a three-year academic recovery plan that includes the implementation of a required school-based intervention block over the next three school years: 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024 (effectively June 2021 - May 2024).

2. What is APS' Academic Recovery Plan?

- a. APS' Academic Recovery Plan includes three components:
 1. Adoption and implementation of a new K-12 Universal Screener
 - a. A universal screener helps teachers identify students' learning strengths and needs in reading and mathematics. The district has not yet determined which new universal screener will be used.
 2. Implementation of a Summer Academic Recovery Academy (ARA)
 - a. For more information, visit www.atlantapublicschools.us/summeraps.
 3. Implementation of a required school-based intervention blocks, classes, or courses (enrichment/acceleration) at all schools for all schools:
 - a. Elementary School: minimum of 30 minutes, four days per week

- b. Middle School: minimum of 45 minutes, four days per week
 - c. High School: minimum of 90 minutes, four days per week
 - This plan is aligned with the requirements of [The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund](#).
 - 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, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after school programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that these interventions respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student subgroups.
- 3. How many students qualify for academic intervention?**
- a. Currently, 16,501 of our K-8th grade students qualify for academic intervention out of a total population of 26,165 K-8th grade students.
- 4. 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 academic learning loss as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The district's Academic Recovery and School-Based Intervention 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 59 minute, 16-second mark).
- 5. Why is the Bell Schedule Changing for Elementary School and High School?**
- a. In order to implement the required school-based intervention block, a review of the district's current bell and transportation schedules for elementary school, middle school, and high school was necessary. In addition, the district reviewed the impact implementing the required intervention block would have on other areas, including charter and partner schools, athletics, and after-school programming.
 - b. To ensure that all elementary schools have designated time within their instructional school day to effectively implement the required 30-minute school-based intervention block/enrichment block, and as a result of the district's transportation analysis of multiple bell schedule scenarios, the elementary bell schedule will shift to a later start time with a full seven-hour instructional day and the high school bell schedule will shift to an earlier start to the school day.

6. What is the New Bell Schedule for Elementary School and High School for the 2021, 2022, and 2023 school years?

- a. The district's bell schedule will be as follows:
 - i. Elementary School: 8:30 a.m. to 3:30p.m. (changed from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.)
 - ii. Middle School: 9:05 a.m. – 4:05 a.m. (no change)
 - iii. High School: 7:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m. (changed from 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m)

7. What impact will this change have on bus transportation?

- a. APS has a tiered transportation system as follows:
 - i. Tier 1: Elementary School
 - ii. Tier 2: High School
 - iii. Tier 3: Middle School
- b. The new APS transportation tiers for 2021, 2022, and 2023 school years will be:
 - i. Tier 1: High School
 - ii. Tier 2: Elementary School
 - iii. Tier 3: Middle School

8. What is the new bus transportation schedule?

- a. APS will provide additional updates, including transportation pick-up and drop-off schedules soon. Additional transportation support, including contracted transportation services, will be leveraged to ensure that all clusters are able to effectively implement the new bell schedule changes.
- b. As in previous years, transportation schedules, including bus pick up and drop off times, will also be communicated directly to families prior to the start of the new school year.

9. How will APS pay for its three-year Academic Recovery Plan?

- a. In order to support the district's academic recovery efforts, APS is working to secure funds through [The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund](#).
- b. 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, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after school programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that these interventions respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student subgroups.