

Atlanta Public Schools Three-Year Academic Recovery Plan Fact Sheet: School Years 2021, 2022, and 2023

Summary

- In Atlanta Public Schools (APS), all means all. When we say all means all, we mean the success of all students.
- Most recently, our focus on academic intervention during the pandemic began when we brought our special needs and early learners in first for face-to-face learning in October 2020 to ensure we met their needs.
- The additional 30 minutes in the elementary school schedule allows for schools to have dedicated time to effectively implement the intervention/enrichment block while protecting the integrity of the other core (extended core) curriculum, signature programming, etc.
- The needs of all of our students have always been at the forefront of every decision we make.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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).
- We know this decision brings about a change for many of our families, but in making this decision, the administration thoroughly reviewed several scenarios including an earlier start to the elementary school day. However, we did not want our youngest learners waiting for buses in the early morning hours.

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 block 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

An overview of the district's Academic Recovery and School-Based Intervention Plan was shared at the February 1, 2021, [Atlanta Board of Education meeting](#) (watch it on demand on the [Board's Facebook page](#)).

- 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.

Why the Bell Schedule is Changing

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 on other areas, including charter and partner schools, athletics, and after-school programming.

APS has a tiered transportation system as follows:

- Tier 1: Elementary School
- Tier 2: High School
- Tier 3: Middle School

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.

The new APS transportation tiers for the 2021, 2022, and 2023 school years are as follows:

- Tier 1: High School
- Tier 2: Elementary School
- Tier 3: Middle School

New Bell Schedule

As a result, the district's bell schedule will be as follows:

- Elementary School: 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (changed from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.)
- Middle School: 9:05 a.m. – 4:05 a.m. (no change)
- High School: 7:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m. (changed from 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m)

New Transportation Schedule

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. 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.

References

- [APS' Academic Recovery and School-Based Intervention Plan](#) - February 1, 2021
- Atlanta Board of Education [Meeting and Discussion of APS' Academic Recovery and School-Based Intervention Plan](#) (Begins at 59 minute, 16-second mark).
- [Superintendent's Memo](#) to APS Families - April 2, 2021
- [Superintendent's Memo](#) to APS Families - April 16, 2021
- [Superintendent's Memo](#) to APS Families - May 7, 2021