

ACA Educational Continuity Plan

As ACA plans to open for the 2020-2021 school year, they are making educational considerations to ensure each student is challenged, prepared and empowered for his or her future by way of an excellent kindergarten through 12th grade education. These educational considerations include foundational knowledge and skills, well-rounded content including biblical knowledge, leadership and reasoning skills, and social-emotional learning. In designing the educational experience for the reopening of school, ACA holds the needs of students as paramount. Continual academic progress will be a priority for all students as well as family engagement.

Assessment of Student Educational Levels

In order for ACA teachers to be able to better differentiate instruction and continue to set high expectations for all students, they will need to understand where students are in terms of their mastery of content standards and other skills and abilities.

Teachers and staff will be using diagnostic tools and resources in their assessment of students as they return (in the first 3-6 weeks of school). Teachers will be trained on the use and administration of these assessments before school starts. Benchmarks for learning for each individual student will be determined from these assessments. This understanding then will help inform their differentiated approaches to instruction.

Once assessments are completed, teachers will use the data to inform and differentiate instruction. Specific teacher training related to the use of data will also take place.

Curriculum Approaches

The use of concept mapping can support schools, teachers and parents in making connections across the years. Also, the school will use high quality instructional materials that are conducive to remote learning of the essential curriculum, in case a switch to remote learning is required or if students have excessive absences.

ACA will take the opportunity to reflect on the extent to which they want to support a more focused or streamlined curriculum. This will take place through teacher training sessions and curriculum mapping workshops. An essential curriculum is one that is focused on the most essential concepts within individual subject areas. In early grades, teachers will be particularly attentive to meeting essential literacy and numeracy learning needs of students.

Depending on the skill level needed for each student at each grade level after the initial assessments take place, teachers will design lessons to differentiate instruction. Project-based and mastery-based learning opportunities will be the focus, and will help make a smooth transition to remote learning, if needed.

Use of Space and Time

The impact of the health and safety guidelines will drive the need for creative and solutions-oriented approaches to planning the use of space and time. Students will be grouped in ways that minimize movement between rooms and into common spaces. Teachers will move from class to class to minimize the number of interactions (consistent with promoting social distancing), while the students stay within their homeroom, as much as possible.

Each classroom has been analyzed for square footage and then the maximum number of students and staff who can occupy it at any given time to remain within determined health guidelines.

Transitions: The manner in which students and staff move throughout the building during the school day will be deserving of deliberate design. Each class will follow a strict and staggered schedule of using the hallways and other communal areas.

Modes of Teaching and Learning

While classroom learning is still the preferred learning method, more discussions are underway about remote learning, in the context of being forced to move online in the future.

Because of continuing uncertainty and the need for flexibility due to some students' excessive absences, the school is planning to embrace multiple approaches (in class and remote only, no blended learning option. Remote learning will only be an option: a. School building closure or b. Excessive individual student absences).

Classroom Learning:

ACA is planning on a return to a traditional classroom experience. For the families ACA serves, this is the most appropriate and effective environment for teaching and learning.

For those who may have excessive absences due to COVID-19 exposure, etc, classroom learning will not be an option for up to 2 weeks at a time. In those cases, students will have continued access to missed assignments/school work, and teachers will deliver all work and communication through the LMS and family email addresses. The school will work with families who need access to technology or internet access so students will have continuous access to assignments. When a student is out of school for COVID-19 related matters, the remote learning attendance policy will apply.

Personalized Learning

More than ever before teachers need to focus on making learning joyful and engaging in a personalized way. Recognizing each child is different should motivate efforts to embrace those differences and create a learning experience that leverages a student's aspirations, passions and interests, while also supporting them in tackling subject areas that may be more intimidating to them.

The delivery of instruction will need to become much more personalized. This is a good practice to promote in the long term regardless of the circumstance — especially given the variability that will exist among students returning to school. Student success and personalized learning go together in both traditional and online educational environments. Personalized learning fits well with tiered interventions based upon individual needs.

Personalized learning can be enabled by project-based learning approaches or the Future Ready Framework. Competency- and mastery-based models also can include elements of personalization and student choice. A well-designed and implemented multi-tiered system of supports can assist efforts to personalize learning to meet the needs of each child.

Personalized learning sometimes requires more active “management” of a student's learning experience and will require specific PD for teachers to implement. Training will take place on this topic before school starts.

College Credit

Students in HS who maintain a good academic record will still have College Credit Plus opportunities to earn credit, either on or off campus or online. This will also assist with helping students meet graduation requirements, as attendance in the classroom might be fluid.

Attendance, Participation and Engagement

In a traditional brick and mortar situation, in-person attendance is important and conducive to learning. However, in the current pandemic environment, a focus on student attendance must be balanced with a priority for keeping students and employees safe and healthy. Rather than recognizing students for perfect attendance, ACA will encourage consistent participation in schoolwork, but not at the expense of health. ACA will focus on finding ways to keep students engaged in their learning regardless of the instructional delivery method.

Absences

A medically excused absence occurs any time a student is out of school due to illness or medical visit (physician, dentist, mental health, etc.). Medical excuses will be accepted in the form of doctor's note within five school days of the absence or parent call-in/email on the day of the absence due to illness or doctor's visit. A student may have up to 10 medically excused absences without a doctor's note, but with a parent call-in. Medically excused absences will be accepted through this process for students participating both in-person and remotely. This policy will be extended beyond 10 days if the student or someone in the student's family is in quarantine due to COVID-19 or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.

Short term absences. Anytime a student misses school a day or two, teachers will have a set plan for how make up work will be handled. Ex: IXI math, uploaded worksheets/assignments in the LMS, etc., and all make up work will be posted to the LMS by 4:00 by the teacher. Students will have 1 day per day of absence to turn in the work.

Field Trips

At this time, true field trips present too many risks that could compromise the health of participants. Therefore, field trips that involve students being in close proximity to each other, navigating large crowds, increased interactions with strangers and unpredictable circumstances should be avoided. Highly managed outings to settings that allow for safe distancing (such as nature preserves or isolated outdoor locations) can be included as part of the educational experience. Virtual field trips are an option to broaden the student experience without taking undue risk.

Remote Learning

The education community's experience with remote learning over the past months has been eye opening. Educators found themselves needing to learn how to use new technology and gaining an understanding of how technology can form a meaningful component of a child's learning experience.

Remote learning may continue to play a role in the education experiences of ACA students in some manner. Should ACA find it must close due to a flare-up of COVID-19, or should a student need to be quarantined, remote learning will be an important contributor to sustaining educational opportunities. IF the school building is closed for 5 or more school days, education will continue as a structured, planned, remote learning experience. This experience will be vastly different from the emergency remote learning that took place in March-May 2020.

In other teacher PD meetings and in those 5 days of advanced school building closure notice, teachers will have the opportunity to use their experiences from the spring and plan for those remote learning approaches which are most effective.

ACA teachers will consider how to support students to ensure learning builds on previously gained knowledge. Using a data-driven approach to learning, instruction will meet the individual student's needs. Teachers will establish clear expectations to guide students as they engage in learning and will offer students flexibility (to the extent possible) on the pace of coursework or activities.

Priorities in Remote Learning

- Streamlined curriculum
- Training teachers, students, and parents would need to have a successful learning experience
- Ensure all families have the access they need (devices and internet)
- Seniors and graduation requirements

If a switch to remote learning takes place, teachers will establish clear expectations to guide students as they engage in non-classroom-based learning. Students may be offered flexibility on the pace of when the non-teacher-led instruction will occur, which could provide flexibility to students as they navigate the demands on their time when they are not in the classroom. If so, the teacher will be sure to clearly communicate these expectations with families through the already established communication channels.

Assignments during Remote Learning:

At the beginning of each remote learning week, teachers will upload the full week's worth of assignments and videos, etc into the LMS (or Dojo, for K). Assignments that will need to be turned in and graded will have a due date assigned and be connected to the gradebook. Teachers will grade assignments within 48 hours of submission and all student/parent questions about assignments will be responded to within 24 hours.

Technology during Remote Learning:

All students (grades 1-12) will have access to the LMS to access lesson content & assignment information and they will be able to use this avenue to submit their assignments. All students grades 6-12 will also have access to a school Chromebook to use at home. This will allow learners who have internet availability to access their work via the internet. In the rare event that we have a learner who has absolutely no access to an internet connection, ACA will provide a hot spot so they can have equal access to educational opportunities as all other students.

During the first week of remote learning, teachers/school will focus on student access to technology. All families will be contacted individually to ensure they have the access and technology they need for all of their children to be successful in the remote learning environment.

Communication during Remote Learning

Maintaining communication with students and their families — and finding an efficient way to do so — is more important than ever. All families will have a school email address to keep the lines of communication open and clear between the school and the families. Teachers will hold office hours when they are not directly teaching students and will be accessible to families' questions during regular school day hours. Virtual meetings will be offered periodically for parents/guardians, to offer support and/or discuss students progress and participation.

Promotion and Assignment of Credit during Remote Learning

All students working remotely will be monitored daily/weekly for progress. All assignments will be delivered to students in the LMS. Each assignment will have a due date assigned to it and teachers will expect students to submit all work in a timely manner.

Grades will be assigned by the teacher based on the evaluation of student performance on assignments, tests/quizzes, and projects. Teachers will provide feedback to students on formative assessments to enhance understanding and comprehension, prior to taking summative assessments.

During remote learning, the same school grading scale will be used as is used in the classroom. Promotion and credit will be based on successfully completing former school guidelines for promotion and credit assignment.

Attendance during Remote Learning:

Depending on the grade level, teachers will have daily or bi-weekly check ins to determine progress, attendance, and engagement of the students. Students must meet each learning participation benchmark set by the teacher in order to be “present” for each day.

Students who miss a participation benchmark will receive an email from the teacher to see if everything is ok. After missing 2 participation benchmarks in a row, the teacher will call the family. All communication regarding participation and attendance will be documented.

Taking attendance while students are learning from home is less of a punitive measure and more of a way to ensure they have the academic and social-emotional support they need. Teachers will monitor engagement rather than attendance.

As teachers monitor student participation, it might look like (but not limited to):

- Student task completion
- Student check-ins with their teacher
- Student participation in a “live” virtual class session
- Student posts in the LMS (or Dojo for K students)

Live classes or virtual check-ins on Zoom will be encouraged and recommended, esp for grades K-8. Teachers will calculate the amount of time assignments would take for the average learner and assign the following per student:

- 120 min (2 hours) per day K
- 180 min (3 hours) per day in grades 1-4
- 240 min (4 hours per) day in grades 5-12

At the end of the week, students who complete 90-100% of their work and attend the live sessions will be considered present for all 5 days that week. If students only complete 70-89% of their work, they will have the equivalent of 1 absence for the week; 50-69% of completed work will equate to being present for 3 days and absent for 2. Students who complete 40-59% of their assigned work/live sessions will be considered present for 2 days and absent for 3 days. Completed work of 10-39% will be the equivalent of 4 absences and 1 present and any work that is less than 10% of assigned work/live sessions will be a full week of absences.

Teachers may create their own make-up work policies to allow students to recover up to 5 absences.

Students with more than 15 absences per semester may be required to repeat their current grade/subject.

Assessments during Remote Learning:

During the 5-day building closure leading up to remote learning, training will take place on how to understand formative and summative assessment in a remote environment.

Some initial items to think about how to handle with remote assessment include:

• Student environment

The student may have poor internet quality, distractions in his/her environment, or someone providing inappropriate assistance during testing.

• Choice of assessment

Consideration should be given to the trade-offs between ease of administering a particular assessment in a remote environment and the usefulness of that assessment's results.

- **Formative Assessments in Remote Learning**

To check students' progress, teachers can use tools like Quizlet and Kahoot to do checks on their content knowledge before moving onto new areas of teaching. Also, specific feedback, focused on the individual student and his/her progress, will help students learn and grow. Feedback can be written, or done in synchronous video sessions or even recorded videos/sound files that are shared with the students.

Teachers should track progress over time to see how much learning is taking place and to find ways to fill in the gaps before summative assessments are given.

- **Summative Assessments in Remote Learning**

In remote learning, not everything a student does needs to have a grade associated with it. However, students do need to have a measure of how he/she is performing and teachers need to be measuring the learning standards associated with the topic being presented. When determining whether to assess in remote learning, the teacher can target specific standards and learning outcomes. Before school starts, teachers will make high level curriculum maps that target the specific learning objectives for the year in that subject. If remote learning takes place, the teacher will be able to prioritize learning by focusing only on those standards and objectives to teach the essential curriculum. All students will be required to complete all summative assessments. Any summative assessment not completed will result in a 0 in the gradebook. Teachers will

use these summative assessments as benchmarks to determine if students are ready to be promoted to the next grade level (students must have a passing grade). Teachers will be able to determine if students may retake assessments, based on the circumstances.

Professional Development Plan for Teachers to Prepare for the 2020-2021 School Year

See [teacher training document](#)