



Date: June 11, 2020
To: Navigator Schools Board
From: Kevin Sved, CEO
Subject: 2020-21 Planning

The COVID-19 crisis is having and will continue to have a major impact on public schools. Navigator Schools created a Task Force to plan for operating in 2020-21 based on the best information we have available to us at this time. [This guidance](#) from the California Department of Education (CDE) was released on June 8, 2020 and is still under review. Our commitment is to provide the best education possible under the difficult circumstances while adhering to state and county health department requirements to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and keep our students, staff, and school communities as safe as possible.

We are planning to operate with the following scenarios:

- 1) Continue with distance learning. This may be required if it is not deemed safe to reopen, if we have confirmed cases that necessitate closing after reopening, or for families who prefer to have children in a distance learning program until they deem it safe.
- 2) Operating a hybrid model with social distancing in place, with 12-15 students in a classroom at a time. This would require staggered scheduling on school sites (such as an AM group and a PM group), with distance learning for the remainder of the student's schedule.

It is important to note that information and guidance related to COVID-19 can change quickly. Additionally, we must also be able to adapt to changing situations in the local context.

Task Force work was distributed among the following committees: Academics, Fiscal Impact, Stakeholder Engagement, Human Resources, and Operations. The result from the Fiscal Impact committee was the development of the proposed 2020-21 budget that incorporates a 10% reduction in Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) per pupil funding and additional expenses related to COVID-19 such as personal protective equipment. The Operations committee developed a draft [manual](#) to operate schools in the fall, and is now focused on implementing that plan. Reports from the Academics, Stakeholder Engagement, and Human Resources committees are attached.

Our plan for the June 16 Board meeting is to engage Board members in discussion around three specific topics which will help guide staff in preparing a final set of recommendations to come back to the board for consideration during a special Board meeting on June 30, 2020.

1) Hybrid schedule with AM and PM sessions four days a week

Staff have considered and analyzed a variety of options for providing instruction with social distancing guidelines that limit the number of students per classroom to 12-15. Ultimately, the model we are currently leaning towards is a half-day model so that we can engage students in person as many days as possible with the highest leverage face-to-face instruction taking place

four days per week. Full-day models with two days of instruction each week are easier for logistics, including transportation and cleaning, but will not be as effective instructionally.

In this model, students in each grade will be divided into four groups (usually we have two classes per grade level). Two groups would attend class in the morning and the two other groups would attend in the afternoon. A simplistic example is in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Sample half-day schedule: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

| | 2nd Grade Group 1 | 2nd Grade Group 2 | 2nd Grade Group 3 | 2nd Grade Group 4 |
|-------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 8:15-11:30 | Face-to-Face on Campus | Face-to-Face on Campus | Distance Learning | Distance Learning |
| 11:30-12:30 | AM groups: pick up Classrooms: CLEANING and DISINFECTING PM groups drop off | | | |
| 12:30-3:30 | Distance Learning | Distance Learning | Face-to-Face on Campus | Face-to-Face on Campus |

In this scenario, school sites would be closed to students and most staff on Wednesdays, so that deep cleaning can take place. Students will be engaged with distance learning. Professional development, coaching, and planning time for teachers would also be scheduled on Wednesdays.

2) Core Subject Teaching vs. Self-Contained

We currently have two teachers at each grade level, dividing curriculum into two core areas. One teaches math and science as part of STEM. The other teaches reading, writing, and social studies as part of humanities. By dividing the curriculum up this way, we decrease the amount of intellectual prep time required from the teachers. Teachers are able to deliver curriculum more effectively when they are able to focus their preparation on fewer subjects.

This model has been a key part of the success of Navigator students. However, in the COVID-19 environment, it is necessary to consider a self-contained model as a way to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. While the core subject model requires teachers to interact with up to 60 students each day, a self-contained class will reduce that number by half. Guidelines regarding cohorts recommend that teachers and students be limited to “the extent practicable.” We believe that changing our subject-based model is not practicable, particularly when considering the new curriculum that is being added to adjust to the distance learning and hybrid environment. We will minimize the risk of infection by having our students stay in cohorts and in the same room, with teachers moving from class to class as described in Table 2.

Table 2. Students stay in same room with teacher moving (Showing AM group only)

| | 2nd Grade Group 1, Room A | 2nd Grade Group 2, Room B |
|------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| 8:15-9:45 | STEM Teacher | Humanities Teacher |
| 9:45-9:55 | Break | |
| 9:55-11:15 | Humanities Teacher | STEM Teacher |

In the COVID-19 environment, most middle and high schools will continue to have single-subject teachers teaching multiple groups of students (often as many as 180). Most of these schools will also be minimizing spread by keeping student cohorts together and keeping students in the same classroom while teachers change rooms throughout the day. Table 3 shows a more detailed schedule.

Table 3. Detailed sample schedule

| | Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday | | Wednesday |
|------------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| AM Group (8:15-11:15) | Community Meeting | Community Meeting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher Planning • Distance Learning • Clubs |
| | Group A1 ELA | Group A2 STEM | |
| | Group A1 STEM | Group A2 ELA | |
| | Cleaning/ Staff Lunch | Cleaning/ Staff Lunch | |
| PM Group (12:15 -3:15) | Community Meeting | Community Meeting | |
| | Group B1 ELA | Group B2 STEM | |
| | Group B1 STEM | Group B2 ELA | |
| | Cleaning | | |
| | Home Study (Blended and Reading Primarily) | | Cleaning |

3) Adjusting to Local Conditions

Navigator’s three schools operate in three different districts and counties. While we have been able to effectively operate as one network with common school calendars and professional development, COVID-19 will likely create situations where we will need to respond differently based on local circumstances. For example, there may be multiple active cases at one campus which could require that campus to temporarily close and shift to distance learning. Closing other campuses in that scenario would not be necessary. A more challenging scenario might be if each county or district (where we share campuses) adopt different standards for operating and managing risk. A question to consider is whether we would align our standards to the most stringent standards or adjust our approach to align with the local district. For example, one district school might have a strict adherence to the six-foot social distancing requirements in each classroom while another may be more flexible when interpreting the “to the extent practicable” guidelines.

I look forward to discussing these topics and any others you may have as we move toward developing our educational and operational plans for 2020-21.