



Preparing for School Year 2020-2021: Instructional Principles & Programming Guidance Fall 2020

To ensure that every student has equitable access to culturally responsive, high quality instruction regardless of how they attend school, it is critical to illustrate how teaching and learning can be implemented in both remote and blended learning settings.

Schools can use the instructional principles outlined in this document (and forthcoming instructional guidance), along with information about which students and teachers are attending remotely and which are attending in-person, to determine the best ways to program teachers and students to ensure high quality instruction for all learners.

Forthcoming instructional guidance will:

- Clarify expectations for teaching and learning in both remote and blended learning settings that should be applied as schools create teacher schedules and student programs
- Contain sample teacher and student schedules that schools may use to guide their decision-making process
- Identify elements of high-quality remote instruction
 - Define *synchronous* and *asynchronous* instruction
 - List activities best suited for synchronous instruction
 - Provide expected time ranges for daily synchronous instruction for teachers and students
- Contain considerations for special education services for students with disabilities
- Contain considerations for language instruction for English Language Learners (ELLs)

As we return to school in the fall, instruction for all students should focus on the key elements below:

- **Begin with Knowing Students Well:** Students across the NYC DOE will return to school this fall with unfinished learning. Coupled with this, many students will also return to school with considerable anxiety and trauma. This fall, knowing students well will be more important than ever. While our first instinct may be to begin with traditional measures to assess academic levels and potential learning loss, getting to know students on a personal level, understanding their background, culture and life experiences as well as creating safe, trusting learning environments is the first step in re-engaging with students upon their return to school.
- **Integrate Academic and Social Emotional Learning:** Elements of social emotional learning are essential levers in supporting academic development, particularly as students persevere through difficult academic and social situations. As we prepare for the upcoming academic year, teachers will need to restore relationships with students and build community so students feel safe to take risks in their thinking, engage in learning new concepts and take on challenges beyond what is academically comfortable. To grow academically, students need to know their schools and classrooms, both in-person and virtually, are safe environments with caring adults that believe in their ability to learn and grow.
- **Ensure Continuity of Learning:** It is critical to provide students with opportunities to make connections to prior learning and build on existing knowledge to learn new concepts. For students attending school in a

blended learning setting, teachers must take extra care to ensure that their remote learning is a continuation of their in-person learning. Implementing a shared and inclusive curriculum that is culturally responsive and digitally accessible across grade levels will support schools in ensuring that there is continuity of instruction for every student. A common, standards aligned trajectory of learning for the four core content areas (ELA, math, science and social studies) will be released quarterly to support continuity of instruction across the NYC DOE and serve as a complement to each school's shared and inclusive digital curriculum.

- **Focus on Priority Learning:** In the 2020-21 school year, it will be of the utmost importance to attend to unfinished learning. Next week, information about priority learning in ELA and math will be released and can be used by educators at each grade level to design strategic instruction and intervention for all learners that addresses unfinished learning in the context of grade level standards.

Principles for Scheduling and Programming for Grades 3K to 12 for the 2020-2021 School Year

1. All staff will have a daily 30 -minute Instructional Coordination period before the students' instructional day begins to coordinate instruction and plan together.

To ensure continuity of learning, teachers need time to coordinate instruction and plan together. Planning periods will provide teachers who are working together to support a group of students (e.g. in person and all-remote, ICT, SETSS and, etc.) time to plan for a coordinated, seamless instructional approach. School staff will have time at the beginning of the day for coordinating instruction to address continuity of learning for all students (in-person and all-remote) and services/supports (e.g., SWDs, MLLs). This will take place for 30 minutes before the students' instructional day begins. For example, teachers might be scheduled for 30 minutes for collaborative planning time from 8:00 AM – 8:30 AM, with students starting the school day at 8:30 AM. A menu of options will be shared for what this collaborative time may be used for, but an emphasis should be placed on the collaboration and planning between remote teachers and in-person teachers who share students.

2. Teachers will receive a 30-minute prep period at the end of the school day. In-person teachers will not be required to be in the school building and can engage in their prep time activities remotely.

Schools will end the teacher workday with a prep period, which shall be 30 minutes with the condition that in-person teachers are not expected to remain on site during the prep period. It is expected that typical planning and preparation that occurs during a teacher's prep be conducted flexibly in these cases so all teachers are prepared for collaborative planning with colleagues that occurs each morning.

3. Remote instruction for all students will include both synchronous and asynchronous instruction, with synchronous instruction occurring daily.

- For students learning in a remote-only setting, synchronous instruction will be directly tied to the asynchronous learning activities in which they engage to promote continuity of instruction and meaningful, connected learning experiences.
- For students learning in a hybrid setting, in-person and remote learning experiences (including both synchronous and asynchronous instruction) should complement each other so that the students experience continuity in learning and instruction. This means there should be fluidity between the

learning, tasks, activities, assessments and projects that the students engage in both remotely and in-person to create one meaningful and integrated learning experience for students.

- Instructional Coordination periods will be used to ensure instruction is coordinated amongst teachers and seamless for students.

4. Class schedules and schedules for synchronous instruction will be posted for families.

As schedules for synchronous instruction are established, schools should keep in mind a number of factors such as feedback that has been received from students and families, the number of students who are more likely to engage at different times of the day, the age and grade level of students, student readiness, etc. with the goal of creating schedules for synchronous instruction that work for students and their families, whether they are learning in an all-remote or blended setting. When scheduling synchronous instruction, schools should provide all students with sufficient time for high-quality interactions with teachers and peers.

An overall class schedule and times designated for synchronous instruction (including both live instruction in whole and small groups as well as individually) should be posted where it is available to all students and parents in the class. If changes need to be made to the synchronous instruction schedule, then teachers should notify the principal and provide adequate notice to students and families, so that they can adjust their schedules as needed.

5. Teachers will have 20 minutes of daily Office Hours scheduled during the workday to communicate virtually with families and students.

To engage students and families, schools will allot time in the teachers' schedules where all teachers are available to meet with students and families via video conference or telephone. This will allow teachers to offer support and guidance to students and families as well as provide updates related to student progress and learning.

6. In-person student lunch can and should be instructional; Teachers will continue to have a duty-free lunch that is separate and apart from any in-person student instructional lunch.

In order to maximize instructional time for in-person students, lunch can and should be instructional. Using our *Breakfast in the Classroom* program as a model, *Lunch in the Classroom* will allow students to eat lunch during one of their regularly scheduled instructional periods. During *Lunch in the Classroom*, students will receive instruction related to the class scheduled for that time. As students are engaged in instruction for this class, they will also eat their lunch, maintaining all health and safety guidelines for in-person learning.

Student lunch can be staggered throughout the school day from 10AM - 2PM. This approach will result in a shorter day for students while not reducing the amount of instruction students receive each day.

Efforts should be made to schedule teachers' lunches at a reasonable time, in cases where possible. To ensure that teachers are provided a duty-free lunch, schools can consider the following:

- In elementary schools, any teacher may be assigned to teach during students' designated instructional lunch period (this may be the classroom or cluster teacher). The cluster teacher can provide the classroom teacher with a duty-free lunch at any time during the school day. During lunch in the classroom, teachers should engage students in an instructional activity that is fun, engaging and enriching (e.g. interactive read alouds, SEL discussions, content through play, music, etc.).

- In middle and high schools, the teacher assigned to teach students during the time designated for lunch will provide students with instruction related to their content area while the students eat lunch (e.g., eat during geometry class). These teachers will also have a duty-free lunch.

7. A teacher's day will be 6 hours and 50-minutes.

Since teacher schedules will follow a traditional 6 hour and 50-minute day, schools will have one faculty and one grade or department conference per month (40 minutes each). These meetings will occur at the end of the school day, immediately prior to the teacher's 30-minute prep. During this time teachers can engage in administrative duties or professional learning as assigned by the principal. We understand there is a need for continued professional learning as an integral part of supporting adult learners. More information about professional learning will be forthcoming.

Schools can utilize the SBO procedure to change the days of the week faculty conferences will occur or to combine the two 40-minute sessions into one 80-minute session.

Instructional Principles to Inform Class Schedules for the 2020-2021 School Year

1. This fall, it will be essential for students and their teachers to connect as a community and to ensure that students have safe and trusting remote and in-person classroom environments. Students should start and close their day with a routine that builds community and sets them up for success whether all-remote or blended. This will allow teachers the flexibility to provide all students with the same type of community and relationship building that is an integral part of a typical school experience. Additionally, social emotional activities should be integrated into academic subjects to the greatest extent possible throughout the school day.
2. Students need regular breaks throughout the school day. Breaks are proven to increase overall productivity and improve focus. There are also benefits associated with physical activity on children's cognitive development and overall academic success. Whether in person or blended, teachers should provide students, especially younger learners, with regular breaks that incorporate movement activities.
3. In elementary schools, class schedules should vary where subjects are scheduled at different times of the day during the week (e.g. reading might occur in the morning on Monday and in the afternoon on Tuesday).
4. Young learners often struggle with staying focused for long periods of time. Teachers should be mindful of this when designing instruction in both all-remote and blended settings. This means synchronous instruction should be delivered in short intervals (e.g., 15-20 minutes) throughout the day, and can increase based on developmental appropriateness and grade-level. Teachers should also be mindful of the number of times young students are logging in for live instruction and determine what is manageable and appropriate based on factors such as developmental appropriateness, the content being taught, student readiness and feedback from families.

Sample Bell Schedules for the 2020-2021 School Year Fall 2020

There are a variety of ways that a school can program their students and teachers depending on the model selected by the school and the composition of all-remote and blended learning students. Below are sample bell schedules that illustrate key guiding principles.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL – SAMPLE SCHEDULE					
Block Period	Start	End	Length	Teacher 8:00 AM – 2:50 PM 6 hours 50 min day	Student Schedule 8:30 AM – 2:00 PM 5 ½ hours instructional day
0	8:00 AM	8:30 AM	30 min	Instructional Coordination	
1	8:30 AM	9:17 AM	47 min	Morning Meeting/Teaching	Class
2	9:17 AM	10:04 AM	47 min	Teaching	Class
3	10:04 AM	10:51 AM	47 min	Teaching	Class
4	10:51 AM	11:38 AM	47 min	Duty Free Lunch	Class
5	11:38 AM	12:25 PM	47 min	Teaching	Class (with instructional lunch)
6	12:25 PM	1:12 PM	47 min	Teaching	Class
7	1:12 pm	2:00 PM	48 min	Teaching	Class
n/a	2:00 PM	2:20 PM	20 min	Office Hours	
n/a	2:20 PM	2:50 PM	30 min	Teacher preparation period	

Notes:

- Teachers’ preparation periods are remote.
- 40-minute faculty and 40-minute dept/grade level meetings per month.
- Schools should determine if passing time is needed and schedule as applicable.

MIDDLE SCHOOL OR HIGH SCHOOL - SAMPLE SCHEDULE					
Block Period	Start	End	Length	Teacher Schedule 8:00 AM – 2:50 PM 6 hours 50 min day	Student Schedule 8:30 AM – 2:00 PM 5 ½ hours instructional day
0	8:00 AM	8:30 AM	30 min	Instructional Coordination	
1	8:30 AM	9:11 AM	41 min	Teaching	Class
	9:11 AM	9:52 AM	41 min		
2	9:52 AM	10:33 AM	41 min	Teaching	Class
	10:33 AM	11:14 AM	41 min		
3	11:14 AM	11:55 AM	41 min	Duty Free Lunch & Professional Assignment	Class (with instructional lunch)
	11:55 AM	12:36 PM	41 min		
4	12:36 PM	1:17 PM	41 min	Teaching	Class
	1:17 PM	1:58 PM	41 min		
n/a	1:58 PM	2:18 PM	20 min	Office Hours	
n/a	2:18 PM	2:48 PM	30 min	Teacher preparation period	

Notes:

- Teachers' preparation periods are remote.
- 40-minute faculty and 40-minute dept/grade level meetings per month.
- Schools should determine if passing time is needed and schedule as applicable

MIDDLE SCHOOL OR HIGH SCHOOL - SAMPLE SCHEDULE					
Block Period	Start	End	Length	Teacher Schedule 8:00 AM – 2:50 PM 6 hours 50 min day	Student Schedule 8:30 – 2:50 5 ½ hours instructional day
0	8:00 AM	8:30 AM	30 min	Instructional Coordination	
1	8:30 AM	9:17 AM	47 min	Teaching	Class
2	9:17 AM	10:04 AM	47 min	Teaching	Class
3	10:04 AM	10:51 AM	47 min	Teaching	Class
4	10:51 AM	11:38 AM	47 min	Duty Free Lunch	Class (with instructional lunch)
5	11:38 AM	12:25 PM	47 min	Teaching	Class
6	12:25 PM	1:12 PM	47 min	Teaching	Class
7	1:12 PM	1:59 PM	47 min	Professional Period/C6	Class
8	1:59 PM	2:19 PM	20 min	Office Hours	
9	2:19 PM	2:49 PM	30 min	Teacher Preparation Period	

Notes:

Teachers' preparation periods are remote.

40-minute faculty and 40-minute dept/grade level meetings per month.

Schools should determine if passing time is needed and schedule as applicable.