

SY 2022-23 Continuous Education Plan (CEP)

LEA Name: Digital Pioneers Academy PCS
LEA Head of School Name: Mashea Ashton
LEA Type: Middle School ; High School
Date Generated: 08/22/2022

Background and Purpose

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) required all local education agencies (LEAs) to develop **Continuous Education Plans (CEPs)** for the 2022-23 school year in order to communicate to OSSE and the public their plan for supporting **situational preparedness, student and staff well-being** and **accelerated learning**. For LEAs receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III-American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds, the CEPs also satisfy US Department of Education (USED) requirements for updating plans for a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. LEAs receiving ESSER III-ARP funds must review and update (as necessary) their plan every six months, at a minimum, between the date of publication and Sept. 30, 2023. **The plan below has been approved as an update for these purposes.**

The CEP application is closely aligned to OSSE's [Guiding Principles for Continuous Education](#). These guiding principles are intended to help LEAs develop effective and equitable CEPs that support situational preparedness, student and staff well-being, and accelerated learning for all students, especially those with the most significant learning gaps and students typically furthest from opportunity.

To inform the public of LEAs' responses, the CEPs will be publicly posted on OSSE's website and all LEAs and independent schools must share them directly with their families upon approval by OSSE. Additional questions pertaining to the implementation of these plans should be directed to the school and LEA.

Support Across Learning Environments

In the 2022-23 school year, there may be reasons that a group of students, a school or an LEA might need to transition from in-person learning to situational distance learning. Acknowledging this reality, OSSE is allowing LEAs to convert up to five days of their academic calendar to situational distance learning without needing to get approval from OSSE. The reasons for the transition to situational distance learning might vary greatly including but not limited to strains on a school's operational posture due to disease, inclement weather or other event and are ultimately up to each LEA's discretion. The following section is meant to engage and assess the LEA's ability to move to situational distance learning at any point in the school year. At a minimum, an LEA "ready" to transition to situational distance learning will have plans addressing the following listed provisions.

Q1. To be prepared for situational distance learning, the LEA has a plan for:

a. Provisions for learning

a. The provision of situational distance learning through either: (Select all applicable strategies below and complete only the questions associated with the selected options)

- 1. Provision of 1:1 learning devices.
- 2. Distribution of learning materials that are not digital, such as paper packets and other related learning materials.
- 3. Other

1. Provision of 1:1 learning devices

a1. As of the submission of this plan, the LEA has ___ learning devices.

120

a2. Distribution Strategy:

The devices are:

Are distributed to all students at the beginning of the school year.

a3. An accurate assessment of current student access to broadband internet/WIFI.

a4. Approximately ___% of our students have access to broadband internet/WIFI at their situational distance place of learning.

95%

a5. In the space below, please describe the LEA's plan to provide internet access to students who do not currently

have it in the event of the need to move to situational distance learning.

In the event of a move to distance learning (or in general), Digital Pioneers Academy will ensure access to hot spots for any families without internet access. We have demonstrated experience doing this from March 2020 and the 2020-21 school year. We also plan to have all students have access to Chromebook at their home place of learning from the start of this school year so that they can complete homework online. With this plan, we will have visibility on any connectivity issues for our scholars and families, and our operations and dean teams will work to ensure families have everything they need.

a6. In the space below, please describe in detail the LEA's plan to distribute learning devices to students.

We will distribute learning devices (Chromebooks) to each scholar at the start of this school year through student orientation. Each Chromebook will have a unique identifier as well as software to support in the tracking and safe use of each device. Chromebooks and student logins will include access to core curriculum resources including Google Classroom, LearnZillion, Zoom and other education resources. The program will offer the core academic content for students through a combination of Google Classroom, LearnZillion and other education resources.

2. Distribution of Non-Digital Materials

1. In the space below, please describe in detail the LEA's plan to distribute materials such as paper packets, manipulatives, or other supplies to students.

3. Other

Please describe, Other

b. Communication with Stakeholders

b. Communicating with all interested stakeholders, including:

i. Method for family engagement (including communication) during situational distance learning.

Describe the LEA's method for family engagement during situational distance learning in the space below.

During situational distance learning, we will engage families through a variety of means, including

- Safe / physically distant home visits
- Weekly parent bulletins
- Email communications (both individualized and to entire school community)
- Phone and text communications (both individualized and to entire school community)
- Updates to our website
- Updates to our social media pages
- Remote community meetings (at least quarterly, but as needed) via Zoom

- Family surveys via Google

ii. Means of communication to reach all students enrolled in a given school to alert them of a move to situational distance learning in a timely manner.

Describe the LEA's communication plan to alert students, educators and families of a move to situational distance learning in a timely manner in the space below.

In the event of a move to situational distance learning, we will reach all students enrolled at our school through large scale email, phone and text communities to the entire school community. We also will update our website and social media pages. For any families that we understand to not have received those communications - or that do not immediately participate in situational learning - we will follow up individually with phone, text, email and home visits as needed.

c. Additional Considerations

i. Family training and support.

Describe the LEA's situational distance learning training and support for families in the space below.

- Families will receive distance learning training and support from the school via Zoom.
- We will lead an orientation that is recorded and shared to give families an overview of expectations and guidance for how to support their scholar.
- We will additionally have a tech hotline that families can call with connectivity, access or training needs.
- We also will have periodic family surveys to collect feedback on how we can continue to, or improve our, support our families
- Because our staff will also be actively involved in distance learning, they will be positioned to identify when specific scholars and families are struggling with distance learning and we individually follow up as needed.

ii. Teacher training on technology, tools, and remote instruction models before the school year.

Describe the training for teachers on the LEA's technology, tools, and remote instruction model in the space below.

Our teachers will receive training during summer professional development on all of our technology tools: Chromebook devices, Google Classroom, and all curricular resources and communication tools. The coordination of tools and access will be led by our operations team, and the trainings will be led by our instructional leaders. Our summer PD lasts for three weeks, allowing ample time to cover this content and follow up as needed. During the school year, we have professional development every Wednesday which also provides time to follow up as needed.

For training, we will support teachers with logistics of preparing for remote instruction, including Google Classroom set up to ensure that scholars have access to all of the materials they need, and clear methods of collecting homework and taking attendance. Because students will be utilizing Google Classroom daily as part of our traditional instruction model, we are confident they will be well prepared in this area. We will also support teachers by providing them with an understanding of how our model changes and remains the same in remote instruction (e.g. how does our schedule change, what remains the same), and resources and training on how to best engage students through remote instruction. We have found that the following remote learning practices provide the most effective instruction: Use of targeted questioning, engagement through Nearpod and other devices, constant feedback and games to keep students

engaged.

iii. Articulation of clearly communicated student, teacher, and family situational distance learning expectations.

Describe the LEA's expectations in the space below.

In situational distance learning, we expect the following from our different stakeholders:

- Family: identifying and supporting scholar with a quiet place to participate in school learning (our dean team can support families in thinking about this as needed); ensuring scholars are present for distance learning each day, responding and engaging with our school staff as needed to ensure their scholar has everything they need to thrive academically, physically, emotionally and mentally.
- Scholars: 100%, timely attendance to each class with cameras on so that teachers can best monitor for engagement and participation. Timely submission of class and homework assignments.
- Teachers: Taking attendance at the start of each class, partnering with our dean team in the event of any attendance concerns, creating and leading engaging classes that mirror the content and rigor of traditional classes, tracking and evaluating student coursework and homework and providing feedback as needed, adjusting lessons as needed based on scholar needs, and communicating frequently with families on their scholars' participation and academic progress.

iv. Established schedule and expectations for a situational distance learning day, including how attendance and engagement will be measured.

Describe the LEA's schedule and expectations for a situational distance learning day, including how attendance and engagement will be measured, in the space below.

In the event of a situational distance learning day, our school schedule will be modeled off of our 20-21 remote learning plan which included:

- Virtual staff team huddle (before day with scholars starts)
- Virtual home room or community meeting
- Middle School: ELA, Writing, Math and Computer Science blocks
- High School: ELA, History, Science, Math and Computer Science blocks
- Breaks between class blocks and for lunch
- Asynchronous learning time and small group interventions near the end of the day
- Optional electives

During remote learning, our teachers are expected to take attendance during each class using trackers created in Google. This will ensure as a school we are able to understand student presence in each course of the day. We also will also measure student engagement through seeing students via Zoom, verbal participation and participation through Zoom Chat, digital exit tickets using Google, and student submission of classwork and homework.

Student and Staff Well-Being

Beyond 2022-23 Health and Safety Plans, OSSE is not asking LEAs to submit further plans for student and staff well-being in SY22-23. This does not discount the pandemic's impact on the physical, social-emotional, mental and

behavioral well-being of those in the community. LEAs should continue to pursue strategies to promote the health of students, staff and families, and OSSE stands ready with support and technical assistance. To learn more about how LEAs should promote student and staff well-being, see [OSSE's 2022-23 Guiding Principles for Continuous Education](#).

If the LEA is interested in additional technical assistance from OSSE, please select the checkbox below.

- The LEA is interested in receiving additional technical assistance related to student and staff well-being.

2022-23 Health and Safety Plans

LEAs should have a publicly accessible health and safety plan outlining its approach to help prevent and respond to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission among students, staff and visitors in the 2022-2023 school year. If helpful, as of the release of the current continuous education plan survey, current DC Health guidance for schools can be found [here](#).

Q2. In the space below, please provide the exact URL where the LEA's current health and safety plan can be found. The plan should take applicable DC Health guidance into consideration and describe how the LEA will reduce the risk of transmission of the COVID-19 virus in its facilities.

<https://www.digitalpioneersacademy.org/about-us/covid-19-response>

Accelerated Learning

Employing Intentional Strategies for Accelerating Learning

Q3. Describe how the LEA will maximize accelerated learning opportunities for students by indicating the specific strategies that the LEA plans to use (select all that apply).

a. Adjusted Scheduling

i. Adjusted class/block/bell schedules ; ii. After-school programming ; iii. Longer school day ; v. Summer programming

b. Instructional Changes

High-impact tutoring ; New intervention program or support ; New uses of staff planning time for accelerated learning ; New professional development for staff -accelerated learning

c. Staffing and Related Support

Additional vendor and/or community partner support

d. Any Other, Please Describe

e. In the space below, please describe in detail the LEA's approach to implementing each strategy selected above

and how it will accelerate student learning.

Adjusted class/block/bell schedules

We have always had tremendous flexibility with our schedule, in large part due to our semi-self contained model (one Humanities and one STEM teacher). Now, we will just leverage the different blocks we have as we analyze data and support scholar needs. Specifically, we have added a guided reading block on top of our reading intervention block. At the high school level, too, we are able to adjust our focus areas based on what we are seeing for most urgent needs.

After-school programming

We will try to incorporate academic support during after-school for families that opt-in.

Longer school day

We have always had a longer school day (~8+ hours each day). We will continue this and maximize our daily schedule to meet scholars where they are.

Summer programming

This year, we held a coding program for students who opted in to strengthen their computer science skills. Next summer we will likely hold mandatory summer school for scholars not meeting our growth and/or grade-level expectations, while also providing enrichment opportunities for all scholars.

High-impact tutoring

We hope to partner with high-impact tutoring programs in the fall, as well as leverage our special education teachers to ensure high impact opportunities next year. This past year, we worked with MathCorps and likely will use their program again.

New intervention program or support

Our intervention program for ELA will include independent pathways targeting both fluency, comprehension and language for grade-level content. Our intervention program will include independent pathways for math targeting fluency and problem solving (with a numeracy focus). Our guided reading block will ensure all scholars rapidly grow in reading level proficiency through small group reading strategies.

New uses of staff planning time for accelerated learning

We will leverage both weekly intellectual preparation and weekly data meetings to keep a laser focus on scholar mastery and growth and develop teachers pedagogy to close scholar gaps.

New professional development for staff on accelerated learning

We will continue to leverage both weekly PD and monthly PD days to support teacher skill development. Our leaders are constantly developing to better support teachers (we have new contracts with leader instructional development - see below).

Additional vendor and/or community partner support

We are partnering with ANet, Rethinc, All Means All, the Teaching Well and Relay NPAF to build capacity in our leadership team and to support our teachers. We are also partnering with the community to provide our scholars with more enrichment opportunities.

Q4. Describe the LEA's plan to ensure that students who require initial or reevaluation for special education service eligibility receive timely assessments and final eligibility determinations as required by IDEA and local special education requirements.

Identify:

i. Any barriers that the LEA has in meeting these requirements

DPA continues to meet OSSE timeline metrics to ensure that students who require initial or reevaluation for special education service eligibility receive timely assessments and final eligibility determinations as required by IDEA and local special education requirements. At times, family communication and schedules can be a barrier to meeting requirements. Last year, we also had difficulties finding available evaluations within our timelines (which was commonplace in DC), but we worked to fix any delays we had.

ii. The LEA's plan to address those barriers

Family schedules and communication preferences are considered when scheduling initial or reevaluation for special education service eligibility. DPA also communicates important information changes as it pertains to OSSE, CDC, DCCSB and the LEA through email, homeroom teacher weekly communications and Family Community Meetings. In a case where there may be a parent with a visual impairment DPA will identify a supporting adult within the home and connect with them to support the scholar. Additional audio-conferencing provisions would be made for the scholar and the parent.

We are hoping to hire internally with someone with the expertise to evaluate scholars directly to remove the need for external support.

iii. The LEA's plan for communication with families to ensure completion of evaluation requirements.

We communicate closely (email, call and text) with families and send several reminders to ensure families are aware of the requirements and next steps.

Q5. Describe the LEA's plan to ensure IEP teams make individualized decisions (whether and to what extent) for students with disabilities who are eligible for special education services under IDEA, who have compensatory services necessary to mitigate the impact of periods of school closure or distance instruction in the 2020-21 or 2021-22 school year.

We are taking a school-wide approach to compensate for the impact of school closures/distance learning with intentional development on best Tier 1 practices (including UDL), our intervention blocks, additional supports (high impact tutoring and afterschool programming). For scholars with IEPs, we will be doing constant data monitoring (data from intervention program platforms, MAP, and grade-level unit formative assessments) to adjust their individualized learning pathway and necessary supports. We will implement new interventions based on the data to ensure all scholars with IEPs accelerate.

a. Identify how and when the LEA will communicate IEP team decisions regarding eligibility for compensatory education to families, and how the LEA plans to ensure the delivery of these services to students.

We will communicate to families of scholar eligibility as soon as the IEP team has gathered enough data to clearly inform

families; we will then follow up with the plan for services and support that has been drafted to get family feedback. Once everyone agrees, we will monitor progress quarterly with progress reports with input from the scholar, general education teachers, special education teachers, related service providers and family members.

CEP Assurance Statements

Assurance Statement for Continuous Education Plans (CEPs) :

The LEA attests to the following statements regarding delivery of instruction :

- The LEA grounds instruction in the District of Columbia's approved state academic standards (and/or the LEA s approved standards) in English language arts, math, and science across grades K-12.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding 2022-23 school year attendance:

- The LEA assures that it will collect and report daily attendance through the LEA's student information system (SIS) consistent with OSSE's regulations and policies for 2022-23.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding graduation and promotion for 2022-23

- The LEA assures that it will abide by the statewide graduation requirements enumerated in 5A DCMR § 2203 and/or in accordance with its charter agreement - if applicable.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding serving students with disabilities including students in non-public special education school settings (please check all boxes):

- Students with disabilities have equitable access to situational distance and in-person learning opportunities as possible in accordance with the guidance above and issued by the US Department of Education.
- LEAs will ensure timely completion of IDEA procedures, including but not limited to initial and reevaluation for eligibility and IEP development and revision, in both situational distance and in-person learning models.
- LEAs will ensure that school professionals delivering IEP services to the student regularly communicate with families throughout any periods of situational distance learning. Consistent and clear communication encourages parent and student participation in situational distance learning, in-person learning, recovery service delivery, and other educational opportunities.
- LEAs will ensure recovery planning and implementation includes strategies to assess students with disabilities, formally or informally, to determine a baseline measurement for recovery service delivery, as well as strategies to address any identified student regression and loss of educational benefit. These strategies will take into consideration and seek to address the achievement gap of students with disabilities in comparison to their non-disabled peers prior to loss of services due to school closure.

The LEA attests to the following statements regarding serving English learners (please check all boxes):

- The LEA will ensure that English learner students are identified in a timely manner as required by state policies and guidance identified above.
- The LEA will develop a plan for ensuring continuity of its English learner program and services to all English learner students across both situational distance and in-person learning environments.
- The LEA will monitor implementation to ensure that English learner services and access to grade-level content classes are advancing English learners language and academic goals.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding technology (please check all boxes):

- The LEA will ensure that, to the extent its situational distance learning program uses technology, each student will have access to a device, other needed technology, and internet connectivity sufficient to fully participate in the school's learning program.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding family, stakeholder and public engagement (please check all boxes):

- The LEA has given the public an opportunity to provide input in the development of the CEP and engaged in meaningful consultation with a broad group of stakeholders. Specifically, the LEA has engaged in meaningful consultation with students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); and teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff and their unions; civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migrant students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.
- The LEA has taken comments of the above-named groups into account in the revision of the CEP.
- The LEA will ensure translation of family-facing documents into the major non-English language(s) spoken by families served by the LEA, consistent with DC Code §2-1931, et seq.
- The LEA will provide, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, an alternative format of the plan accessible to that parent.
- The LEA will ensure publication, in a conspicuous place on its website, of the following resources by the beginning of school during the 2022-23 school year and provide families awareness of:
 - An accessible, family-facing description of their continuous education plan for the 2022-23 school year, in an understandable and uniform format; and
 - An accessible, family-facing description of their health and safety plan for the 2022-23 school year, in an understandable and uniform format; and
 - Contact information of key points of contact including technical support, language access, school administrators, faculty and staff.
- Submission of the 2022-23 school year CEP is considered a six-month update of the LEA's 2021-22 CEP, consistent with requirements asked of LEAs receiving ESSER III-ARP funds. The LEA will update the 2022-23 school year CEP every six months, at a minimum, between the date of publication and Sept. 30, 2023.

Health and Safety Assurance

Assurance Statement for Health and Safety Plans :

- The LEA ensures that it will adopt any required measures from applicable DC Health and OSSE COVID-19 guidance to help respond to and reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission among students, staff, families and the community.