

SY 2021-22 Continuous Education Plan (CEP)

LEA Name: Meridian PCS

LEA Head of School Name: Matthew McCrea

LEA Type: Pre-K;Elementary;Middle School

Date Generated: 08/24/2021

Background and Purpose

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) asked all local education agencies (LEAs) to develop **Continuous Education Plans (CEPs)** for the 2021-22 school year in order to communicate a detailed explanation of their plans to provide both a full 6-hour day of in-person instruction for all students five days a week and to offer distance learning under limited circumstances, including to students with medical certifications; to accommodate staff or students needing to quarantine; and in response to changes in public health conditions. Additionally, LEAs will use the CEPs to communicate to OSSE and the public their plan for supporting a **Safe Reopening, Student and Staff Well-Being, and Accelerated Learning**. For LEAs receiving ESSER III-ARP funds, the CEPs also satisfy US Department of Education requirements for developing plans for a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services, as well as plans for the use of ESSER III-ARP funds. **The plan below has been approved for these purposes.**

The CEP application was 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 Safe Reopening, 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.

LEAs receiving ESSER III-ARP funds must update their plan every six months, at a minimum, between the date of publication and Sept. 30, 2023. LEAs not receiving ESSER III-ARP funds may choose to periodically update their plans based on the evolving nature of the District's response to the pandemic. Additional questions pertaining to the implementation of these plans should be directed to the school and LEA.

Application Questions

Safe Reopening

1.B: Support Across Learning Environments

1. For LEAs serving PK-12 grades: **Delivering Full-Time In-Person Learning: Describe the LEA's operational plan to offer five full days of in-person learning to all students, including:**
 - a. Whether the LEA can accommodate all students in person five days per week in its current physical space, and, if not, the LEA's plan for securing additional space; while on school grounds, on school buses and while participating in any school-related activities, including physical education and sports; and
 - b. Whether the LEA can accommodate all students in person five days per week with its current staffing levels, and, if not, the LEA's plan for securing additional staff; and
 - c. The LEA's operational plan for providing time-limited distance learning in the following situations. Describe, in detail, student and staff schedules and the plan for distributing educational materials:
 - i. For students or staff excluded from school due to confirmed or suspected coronavirus (COVID-19), exposure to COVID-19, or any other exclusionary criteria in DC Health and OSSE guidance; and
 - ii. For closure of an entire campus due to an outbreak of COVID-19 or evolving public health conditions.

Operation Plan for Meridian PCS allows for on-site learning for all students for 180 days. On Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, we offer 7 hours of instruction per day, and on Wednesdays, we offer 4.5 hours of instruction per day through a waiver approved by OSSE. In total, we offer 1170 hours of instruction over the course of our academic year. On Wednesdays, we provide professional development for staff to ensure a healthy and safe learning environment. Our school calendar can be found [here](#). The Operation plan adheres to [OSSE's Health Guidance of May 21, 2021](#) through the following means:

Students will be placed into cohorts by grade level and by classroom, depending on the grade. We will maintain cohorting where possible through the following methods:

- Physical Space: PK will enter the building through our front ADA ramp, K-2 students will enter through our front door, and 3-5 students will enter through our V St entrance. Middle school students will be housed in our middle school campus. Additionally, students in most grades will eat lunch in their classrooms, and students will stay in their classrooms for all classes during the day except for physical education at the elementary campus.
- Scheduling: Students will have staggered recess and lunch times throughout the day.
- Staffing: Additional staff (counselors, apprentice teachers, and interventionists) will allow for additional lunch periods throughout the day.

Our LEA will require all students and staff to wear CDC-approved masks/facial coverings, and we will provide two multi-layer cloth masks to all students and staff for use during the day. Our LEA will adhere to the 3' social distancing guidance within classrooms and therefore limit the spread by arranging desks into rows in K-8 classrooms.

During times when masks are not worn by students, students will remain 6' apart. We will use the following

areas during these times:

- Classrooms, cafeteria, gymnasium

In the event of a positive COVID-19 case within our school, we will follow the guidelines of quarantining all individuals who are not vaccinated for 10 days. For staff and students who are vaccinated, they will be able to attend school in their cohort. For those students who must quarantine, we will follow the following school extended absence policies for staff and for students:

- All students will be provided with laptops at home and will follow the same schedule at home that they follow at school to ensure consistency and maintenance of a regular routine.
- If the entirety of a teacher's students are also under quarantine, then the teacher will teach remotely for the length of the quarantine. If the teacher must quarantine but students are still learning in-person and do not need to quarantine, then the teacher will take school-approved leave and we will utilize either preplanned substitute lessons or the services of one of our in-house substitute teachers to ensure continuity of instruction.

In the event of an unexpected closure or partial closure, we will communicate with families using the following methods and timeline:

Families will be notified through text message and email of the closure as soon as is practicable, and we strive to notify families within several hours of our own notice of the positive case and necessary closure. Families will be able to respond directly to the email with any questions, and the email address they respond to is monitored by the Head of School and the Manager of School, Family, and Community Engagement.

Key to a smooth year is uninterrupted learning is the dissemination of materials: We will distribute laptops prior to the school year or in the first few weeks of school to new students, and the laptops will be kept at home permanently throughout the school year. PK students will have tablets instead of laptops to ensure ease of use. If additional materials need to be distributed, then we will conduct distributions outdoors or by mailing or delivering the instructional materials to parents using Meridian staff members.

- Uninterrupted instruction through remote learning: Students will all have access to either a laptop (K-8) or tablet (PK) for use at home. Meridian currently pays for a number of internet subscriptions and hotspots for use by our families, and we keep a backup supply of hotspots available in the school that can be rapidly deployed to families when needed.

For an isolated case where an unvaccinated student was exposed to COVID-19 outside of school, the school will follow the following plan:

- Communication with families: Families will be able to email our COVID point of contact, Lakeisha James, to notify us of the exposure. If the student has not yet tested positive, then we will follow

OSSE guidelines and monitor the situation closely. If the student has tested positive, then we will notify our community of the positive case along with our response to the case depending on guidance received from DC Health.

- Dissemination of materials: We will follow the same procedure for the dissemination of materials in this case that we have listed previously.
- Uninterrupted instruction through remote learning: We will follow the same procedure listed previously.

[The operations plan can be implemented in our current facilities.](#)

[The operations plan can be implemented using our current staff and anticipated hires.](#)

2. For LEAs serving PK-12 grades: Distance Learning for Students with Medical Certifications: Please share more about the LEA's plans to offer distance learning for students with medical certifications, including:

- **a. Who will deliver the LEA's distance learning program for students with medical certifications (select one):**

- The LEA itself
- Another District LEA (please select name)
- One of a consortium or partnership of District LEAs sharing staff and/or resources to deliver distance learning (please select name(s) of partner LEAs)

- **b. How the LEA will deliver its distance learning program (select one):**

- Centrally at the LEA level
- By campus/at the school level
- Both (please describe the LEA's approach)

- **c. District regulations require a 6-hour instructional day for all students. Describe the LEA's approach to ensuring that students participating in distance learning receive comparable instructional time and coursework as students attending school in person, with access to real-time, synchronous instruction and support from teachers.**

Meridian recognizes that there is a great deal of uncertainty at this time around the number of students that may need to learn virtually due to a medically certified exemption from in-person learning. Medical exemption forms were released by the city on June 11, and while we have been diligent about gathering information from families, it is unreasonable to expect that they will be able to return the forms until later in the summer. Further, while we can make some estimations on the number of students that will learn virtually, we cannot anticipate what healthcare providers will do in processing requests from families. The number of students learning virtually will impact our plans. The plans that follow are based on a best guess from informal polling of families as we reopened our building throughout the Spring, and as we gather more information, we expect to continually adjust our plans to meet the needs of our community.

Our LEA chooses to offer a remote learning program through our own in-house program. The program will offer the core academic content for students through Schoology. We plan to use our standard curriculum for daily instruction along with i-Ready, Lexia, and other intervention programs as needed. We have found that the following remote learning practices provide the most effective instruction - limiting screen time for our youngest students, checks for understanding in multiple modalities, and providing multiple opportunities for students to revise work, among others. We will tailor instruction depending on the students' needs. The schedule will mirror that of the students who attend on-site learning option with the following anticipated modifications: PK students will only attend the morning meeting, math, and ELA class, and K-2 students will only attend the direct instruction portion of lessons to limit screen time over the course of the day and will have supplemental instructional materials to cover the remaining time during the day that do not require screen time.

- **d. Describe how the LEA will ensure that students with medical certifications have access to the technology necessary to actively participate in distance learning environments;**

As with SY21, students in K-8 will all receive a Chromebook for use at home (whether or not they have a medical exemption from in-person learning) and PK students will receive a Kindle Fire Tablet for use at home. Technology will be distributed before school begins and we will continue to distribute and replace technology for students throughout the school year as needed. Families can contact the school directly to receive a new computer.

- **e. Describe how the LEA will continue to provide resources to families of students with medical certifications to support distance learning, including materials, set-up of effective spaces for learning and technology training for families; and**

Meridian will have regular materials pickups that differ by grade level that fit the flow of our curriculum throughout the year. We will also hold regular virtual parent trainings for technology support and teachers have been trained to troubleshoot common errors that families might experience.

- **f. Describe in detail the model for the distance learning program for students with medical certifications, including the instructional methods (e.g., student-guided instruction, etc.), and platforms**

(e.g., the product name if using a learning management system (LMS)), and materials (e.g., textbooks, teacher-generated resources, computer software, etc.) in the program.

Our LEA chooses to offer a remote learning program through our own in-house program. The program will offer the core academic content for students through Schoology. We plan to use our standard curriculum for daily instruction along with i-Ready, Lexia, and other intervention programs as needed. We have found that the following remote learning practices provide the most effective instruction - limiting screen time for our youngest students, checks for understanding in multiple modalities, and providing multiple opportunities for students to revise work, among others. We will tailor instruction depending on the students' needs. The schedule will mirror that of the students who attend on-site learning option with the following anticipated modifications: PK students will only attend the morning meeting, math, and ELA class, and K-2 students will only attend the direct instruction portion of lessons to limit screen time over the course of the day and will have supplemental instructional materials to cover the remaining time during the day that do not require screen time.

Student and Staff Well-Being

2.A: Whole Child Supports

3. Describe the LEA's plan for supporting students' social-emotional, mental and behavioral health needs during continuous learning and school recovery, including:

- **a. How the LEA will provide opportunities for social-emotional learning, relationship building and mental health awareness for all students;**
- **b. How the LEA will screen and refer students for mental and behavioral health needs, whether the LEA will employ a universal screening approach, and how it will be implemented if so; and**
- **c. How the LEA will provide direct mental and behavioral health services for students in need.**

We are considering the following assessments to determine the social-emotional well-being of students when they return for the 2021-22 school year: Panorama SEL student surveys. In grades PK-2, teachers will respond to short surveys describing their perceptions of student SEL competencies, and in 3-8, students will take the surveys themselves. Understanding at the student level how students are experiencing reentry into school is critical to our success overall. Based on student responses at the group and individual level, our LEA is prepared to offer support through the following means:

- **Crew:** Meridian's implementation of Crew as part of our EL Education partnership will provide a space for students to develop strengths in our school's core values and work on relationships with their peers and with their teachers to create a safe space for learning. Compared to SY19-20, Meridian has added time for Crew to be held on a daily basis at both campuses. The curriculum for Crew is being developed in partnership with EL Education and is based on our core values.
- **Counseling:** Meridian added an additional school counselor to each of our campuses, providing for a roughly 160:1 student to counselor ratio at our elementary campus and 80:1 student to counselor ratio at our middle school campus, both well under the recommended 250:1 student to counselor ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association. Our low student to counselor ratios will allow for many more small counseling groups and individual counseling sessions to support our students.
- **Response to Intervention (RTI):** For students identified as needing additional behavioral support, we will maintain a robust RTI program to monitor the growth of targeted students on behavioral competencies and provide escalating levels of support as needed.
- **Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS):** Meridian implements a PBIS system aligned to our school's core values using the DeansList platform to track points that students can earn for positive

behavior. Those points can be redeemed for attendance at events or items at our school store.

For students who are showing the need for more intensive, one-on-one supports, the LEA will provide individual counseling using our own school counselors and our partnership with Hillcrest Children and Family Center. Hillcrest is also equipped to provide families with additional support and counseling outside of the school environment. We are also exploring additional external partnerships for support for students with organizations like Higher Achievement.

Referrals (from staff or families) for socioemotional support can be sent to our wellness team, consisting of our school counselors, or the school principal. Our referral process will be included in beginning of the year communication along with newsletters and will also be posted on our school website. Self-referrals can be done through speaking with the student's school counselor for their grade level or by asking their teacher, and students will all be introduced to their counselors at the beginning of the year so they are aware of this avenue for support.

- 4. Describe the LEA's proactive approach to behavior and discipline that accounts for the challenge of transitioning from distance learning back to the school building, as well as how the LEA will use positive, relevant and developmentally appropriate discipline practices, including possibly using a trauma-informed and/or restorative justice framework for discipline.**

Our approach to behavior and discipline is outlined in our student code of conduct found here - <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/597a2b11579fb3cca0abbcfaf/5f97182b421c761ce6793ed7/1603737644429/Meridian+PCS+Student+Code+of+Conduct+-+SY21.pdf>

- 5. For LEAs serving PK-12 grades: Describe how the LEA will ensure access to nutritious food for all qualifying students regardless of their learning environment, either through meal service managed by the school and/or through referral to community resources.**

Our LEA contracts with Luncherias to provide meals. Meridian's food service team provides each classroom with a certain number of meals based on the classroom enrollment/attendance. Meals are then distributed one by one from the classroom monitor to ensure meals are handled by only one individual. This same plan is implemented inside of our cafeteria and/or gym space which are flexible spaces for serving meals.

For our students who access our school through remote learning options, meals will be available for pick up.

Students/Families are allowed to pick-up meals 2 days a week during our bulk meal distribution day. Families will access meals by coming to our Elementary School exterior cafeteria door to pick-up meals (breakfast, lunch and fresh fruits/veggies) that are prepacked for 2-3 days. All bulk meal bags are properly prepared by our food service management company along with instructions on handling. This procedure will

be done for students with a long-term medical exemption and for students under a temporary quarantine.

In the event our entire LEA or a campus is unable to operate an on-site educational program for a finite period of time, meals will be made available to all qualifying families through our bulk meal distribution plan.

2.B: Educator Wellness

6. Describe the LEA's plan for supporting teacher and staff social-emotional and mental health needs during continuous learning and school recovery, including:

- **a. Applicable professional development opportunities in the areas of trauma-informed practices, including grief and loss, to support educators' own social-emotional and mental health; and**
- **b. How the LEA might offer access to mental health supports for staff internally or through established partnerships with community organizations.**

Our LEA plans to support teacher and staff social-emotional and mental health needs by making available the following to all interested staff:

- **Crew:** Implementation of Staff Crew aligned with our program of EL Education will promote building relationships among staff and will provide the space for processing socioemotional difficulties with each other.
- **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Meridian's Employee Assistance Program provides confidential counseling and other employee support services to all Meridian employees at no cost.
- **Hillcrest:** In addition to supporting our staff and families, Hillcrest also supports our staff through regular mental health sessions.

For staff in crisis or needing acute care, such as grief, depression, or trauma, our LEA offers immediate support through our Employee Assistance Program.

We also are providing on-site support through numerous programs and initiatives, including:

- Crew for staff
- Instructional coaches
- Formal and informal staff mentorships
- Monthly staff fellowship events
- Regular mental health events allowing for staff choice (e.g., yoga, staff art club, etc.)
- Staff-led weekly wellness program focusing on nutrition and regular exercise

During our professional development Wednesdays, our preservice training, and other professional development days, staff will be trained in a wide variety of trauma-informed practices based in our ongoing work with Conscious Discipline that began in SY20.

2.C: Family Engagement

7. Describe how the LEA will communicate with families about safe reopening, student well-being and accelerated learning, including:

- **a. How the LEA will solicit and incorporate student/family feedback on these plans, both before the school year starts and consistently as the school year progresses;**
- **b. How the LEA will communicate its CEP to families, specifically its approach to safe reopening, ensuring student well-being, addressing interrupted instruction, and accelerating learning, including how the LEA will reach families who speak a language other than English; and**
- **c. How and when the LEA will communicate with families their student’s status and progress with learning as informed by LEA-selected assessments.**

Our LEA plans to communicate with families about safe reopening, student wellbeing, and accelerated learning clearly and consistently through regular town hall meetings, newsletters, and through our school website updates. We will also have reopening sessions similar to the reopening sessions we have had throughout the 2020-21 school year to give both re-enrolling and new families the time and space to ask questions about Meridian’s reopening plan, and we will also address reopening during our annual Back to School Night and related parent orientation events. We have also held numerous tours for returning and new families and will continue to do so over the summer. To meet the needs of our diverse community, details on these topics will be available in all languages that our community requires as indicated on student/Family Home Language Surveys. We also have translators available during each of our major events and translate our newsletters into our primary languages spoken by families.

Our community of staff will solicit and incorporate student and family feedback on these plans through both the Town Hall format and through welcoming feedback on our plans through regularly monitored email address. We have also sent several surveys to families throughout this year and will send another to families asking for additional feedback on our plans along with support that families and students may need to successfully transition into the building. Since we have had nearly half of our students in our building for the last several months of the year, we feel we are well-equipped to continue to build on the feedback already included in our operational plans.

Our team will solicit, review and incorporate feedback at least monthly so that we can maintain a safe learning environment, especially during moments of interrupted instruction and accelerated learning. In order to monitor student progress and adjust supports, our LEA will hold family-teacher conferences at least twice a trimester, send progress reports twice a trimester and report cards at the end of each trimester, and connect families with our LMS to allow families to check on student progress at their convenience.

2.D: Attendance and Re-Engagement

8. Describe the LEA’s approach to re-engaging students who were consistently less engaged with distance learning in the 2020-21 school year, including how the LEA is identifying these students and conducting individualized outreach to students and families to reengage them in learning in the 2021-22 school year.

In school year (SY) 2020-21, we identified students as being consistently less engaged with distance learning based on the following behaviors:

- Student attendance
- Work completion rates
- Responsiveness to outreach from staff and teachers

- Student grades
- Performance on formative assessments

All students had access to school-provided equipment by September 4, 2020 and technology issues were addressed by our IT support team on an on-going basis when families brought up the concern with a teacher or staff member or they filled out our online survey indicating they needed support. In addition, when we noticed students were disengaged, a staff member reached out to determine the root cause of the disengagement, and if the root cause was a technology issue, it was immediately addressed. In August, the LEA first began offering on-site learning options to students. We prioritized spots for disengaged students. Of those identified, most returned to on-site learning, leaving many students as consistently less engaged with learning in the 2020-21 school year. Since Meridian steadily increased the number of students learning in-person as the year progressed, we consistently decreased the number of chronically disengaged students throughout the academic year.

For these students who were consistently less engaged with learning, the school is considering the following strategies:

- Enrollment in Meridian’s summer school program
- Priority enrollment in Meridian’s out-of-school time program
- Targeted tutoring during the school day

The LEA will review data on student engagement on the following basis: Monthly.

Parents will be notified about engagement monthly during family-teacher conferences and progress reports/report cards.

Accelerated Learning

3.A: Set Clear Goals and High Expectations for All Students

9. How did the LEA adjust its approach to standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessments due to the pandemic in the 2020-21 school year? Please select all that apply:

- Taught fewer standards than in a typical school year / not able to teach all the standards
- Taught a narrowed or prioritized set of standards relative to a typical school year
- Did not adjust standards / Taught the same standards as a typical year
- Adjusted curricular scope
- Adjusted curricular sequence

- Did not adjust curriculum / followed same curricular scope and sequence as a typical year
- Adjusted types of assessments administered
- Adjusted assessment administration schedule and/or frequency
- Adjusted use of assessment data for planning instruction

10. Describe the LEA’s approach to assessing the extent of interrupted instruction in the upcoming 2021-22 school year, including:

- **a. For which content areas do your schools plan to administer non-state summative assessments in the 2021-22 school year?**

- English language arts (ELA)
- Math
- Science
- English language proficiency

- **b. Which assessment tools the LEA will use to measure student learning and interrupted instruction throughout the 2021-22 school year for all grade levels, including details on the content areas and grade levels for which each will be used. This list of assessment tools may include, but is not limited to, diagnostic, screener, interim, benchmark, end-of-course and end-of-year assessments;**

Our LEA will offer, at a minimum, the following summative assessments to eligible students in the 2021-22 school year.

- NWEA MAP (ELA and Math)
- i-Ready Spring Diagnostic (ELA and Math)

As these are summative assessments, they will be conducted in May of 2021. Results will be used internally and with families but will not be part of school accountability except for NWEA MAP data.

- **c. A calendar or timeline showing when the LEA intends to administer each local assessment during the school year (please provide estimated date ranges if the calendar is not yet set);**

Subject Area and Goal	Content Area Details	Grade level(s)	Assessment	Administration schedule
ELA: Every student will be a proficient reader upon exiting the school.	Reading as measured by increases in RIT score.	K-8 (all students)	NWEA MAP	Sept 13-24; Dec 6-17; March 7-18 (for grade 3-8); May 31-June 10 (grades K-2)
ELA: Every student will be a proficient reader upon exiting the school.	Reading as measured by increases in scale score	3-8 (all students)	i-Ready	Sept 27-Oct 7; Jan 3-14; March 28-April 8
Math: Every student will master grade-level math standards.	Math proficiency as measured by increases in RIT score.	K-8 (all students)	NWEA MAP	Sept 13-24; Dec 6-17; March 7-18 (for grade 3-8); May 31 - June 10 (grades K-2)
Math: Every student will master grade-level math standards.	Math proficiency as measured by increases in scale score	3-8 (all students)	i-Ready	Sept 27-Oct 7; Jan 3 - 14; March 28 - April 18
Science: All students demonstrate mastery on state science exam.	Science proficiency as measured by mastery on unit tests	4-8 (all students)	Curriculum-based assessments	At the conclusion of each unit of study
English language proficiency: Every student will demonstrate proficiency in English within five years of entering our program.	English proficiency as measured by WIDA scale scores.	K-8 (all ELL students)	WIDA MODEL assessment	October - November 2021

- **d. Whether you set goals³ for performance on non-state summative assessments, and, if so, for each assessment, content area, and grade level:**
 - i. Whether these goals are set by the assessment provider or are determined by the LEA; and**
 - ii. How you set and track on these goals over time and, in particular, this year (2021-22) if you are introducing new approaches, including whether there are any new procedures or processes you are using and whether there are differences across schools, specific groups of students, content areas and/or grades; and**

Our vision is for students to matriculate from our school prepared for rigorous high school programs at the best schools in the city. We monitor their progress towards meeting the goals as follows:

ELA

For ELA, we expect students in grades K-8 to meet their expected growth targets in NWEA MAP and i-Ready. Monitoring progress will be similar to previous years. Our calendar allows for diagnostic testing at the beginning of the year, interim testing near the middle of the year, and summative exams at the end of the year. This schedule allows teachers to adjust instructional techniques as needed throughout the year and to plan additional support for students not making progress that would allow them to meet their goals. To support teachers in leading students to meet rigorous growth goals, we will provide instructional coaching, grade level team meetings, department meetings and planning, an ELA interventionist, and training and professional development throughout the school year.

Math

For Math, we expect students in grades K-8 to meet their expected growth targets in NWEA MAP and i-Ready. Monitoring progress will be similar to previous years. Our calendar allows for diagnostic testing at the beginning of the year, interim testing near the middle of the year, and summative exams at the end of the year. This schedule allows teachers to adjust instructional techniques as needed throughout the year and to plan additional support for students not making progress that would allow them to meet their goals. To support teachers in leading students to meet rigorous growth goals, we will provide instructional coaching, grade level team meetings, department meetings and planning, a math interventionist, and training and professional development throughout the school year.

Science

For math, we expect students in grades 4-8 to master science content by earning at least an 80% on end-of-unit curriculum exams, matching the approach we have taken in past years. To support teachers in leading students to meet rigorous growth goals, we will provide instructional coaching, grade level team meetings, department meetings and planning, a math interventionist, and training and professional development throughout the school year.

English language proficiency

For students who indicate that English is not their home language and who are classified as an English

learner by OSSE's WIDA assessments, our goal is for them to reach full proficiency after 5 years through our program of tiered supports, including sheltered instruction for newcomer students, language immersion for students working towards proficiency, and push-in and pull-out instructional strategies aligned to our core curriculum. To support teachers in leading students to meet rigorous growth goals, we will provide instructional coaching, grade level team meetings, department meetings and planning, a math interventionist, and training and professional development throughout the school year.

- **e. How the LEA will use this non-state summative assessment data to monitor student progress and adjust instruction across learning environments throughout the 2021-22 school year, including whether and how this approach differs across schools, specific groups of students, content areas and/or grades; and**

Meridian's approach to monitoring student learning is not different for students learning at home or in-person, and our approach is described in (e).

- **f. For LEAs with students attending non-public special education schools: Please describe how you are collaborating with the non-public school to assess the extent of interrupted instruction for students.**

We currently have 3 students enrolled in non-public schools. They are enrolled in Kennedy Krieger, Children's Guild, and Sheppard Pratt, per OSSE's placement process. We collaborate with Kennedy Krieger, Children's Guild, and Sheppard Pratt, regarding disruptions in student learning that occurred in school year 2020-21 in the following ways: we maintain regular, consistent communication between IEP teams from each of the schools and our student support team. Additionally, we collaborate with the families to ensure students' Individualized Education Plan's goals reflect this disruption. We remain connected with families and open to receiving communication with them regarding their students' current placements.

3.B: Employing Intentional Strategies for Accelerating Learning

11. Describe the LEA's overall approach to addressing interrupted instruction and the need to accelerate learning for students in the coming 2021-22 school year, including how it will collect, analyze and use data from multiple sources to inform instruction.

As described in question 10, the LEA has an extensive plan for assessing students through multiple means, monitoring their progress, and providing additional support. In addition, we will use our internal data systems and our data manager alongside support from TenSquare to collect, analyze and support our staff in addressing student learning needs.

The plan includes student-level data from diagnostic and formative assessments that provides information on mastery of particular skills and standards aligned to each grade level. Teachers will analyze the data during coaching sessions with an instructional coach or a school leader and will also develop plans for support during professional development or during grade-level or departmental meetings. We will provide teacher support through coaching and data analysis support from school leaders and instructional coaches. For students that are not mastering content through regular classroom instruction, we will provide support

through a robust MTSS program supported by content-specific interventionists at each school campus and intervention blocks built into the daily schedule.

12. 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**

- Adjusted class/block/bell schedules
- After-school programming
- Longer school day
- Longer school year
- Summer 2021 programming
- Summer 2022 programming
- School break/holiday programming
- Weekend programming (e.g., Saturday school)

• **b. Instructional Changes**

- High-dosage tutoring
- New curriculum purchase
- New intervention program or support
- New uses of staff planning time for accelerated learning
- New professional development for staff on accelerated learning

• **c. Staffing and Related Supports**

- Additional staffing
- Additional vendor and/or community partner support

New hardware purchase

New software purchase

• d. Other

- 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.

Section	Activity	Yes	Explanation of approach and expected impact on student learning
Schedule Adjustments	Adjusted class/block/bell schedules	Y	We've aligned planning periods to free up adults to provide high-dosage tutoring opportunities to other grade levels, primarily in K-2. We expect that this will allow us to keep groups less than 4 students for each adult during our intervention block, allowing for student learning acceleration in line with best practices of high-dosage tutoring.
	After-school programming	Y	We will provide a robust after-school tutoring and support program aligned to best practices in high-dosage tutoring that will accelerate learning for identified students in the program.
	Longer school day	N	
	Longer school year	N	

	Summer 2021 programming	Y	We have identified nearly 100 students for a summer school program in which they receive academic support in the mornings to catch up on missed and vital grade level content from this year and develop socioemotional skills in the afternoon.
	Summer 2022 programming	Y	We will build on our summer programming from this year and expand the program beyond 100 students with a similar model.
	School break/holiday programming	N	
	Weekend programming (e.g., Saturday school)	N	
Instructional Changes	High-dosage tutoring ⁵	Y	Meridian will be delivering high-dosage tutoring to targeted students in K-8 both during the school day and during afterschool programming.
	New curriculum purchase	N	
	New intervention program or support	Y	Meridian will be using Lexia in K-2 to support our previous implementation of i-Ready in grades 3-8.
	New uses of staff planning time for accelerated learning	Y	Meridian will be adjusting its coaching cycles and departmental planning to reflect planning shifts needed

			to support accelerated learning.
	New professional development for staff on accelerated learning	Y	Meridian will be launching its professional development cycle around accelerated learning with teachers during preservice training and will return to the topic throughout the year during Wednesday PD/early release.
Staffing and Related Supports	Additional staffing	Y	Meridian added numerous staff to support students, including two additional school counselors, an ELL teacher, an ELL apprentice teacher, six apprentice teachers for grades 1 and 2, and an interventionist for middle school.
	Additional vendor and/or community partner support	Y	Meridian is exploring a partnership with Higher Achievement for our middle school to augment our ongoing partnership with YMCA Anthony Bowen and MOMIES.
	New hardware purchase	Y	Meridian purchased an additional 300 Chromebooks to supplement our 1:1 program both at home and at school for all students in grades K-8.

13. Describe the LEA’s approach to reviewing and revising its staff professional learning plan to account for lessons learned during the pandemic and to build skills for staff to meet new and emerging student needs around safe reopening, well-being and accelerated learning.

We are in the process of creating our staff professional learning plan to account for lessons learned during the pandemic and build skills for staff to meet new and emerging student needs around safe reopening, well-being, and accelerated learning. The process is being lead by our Head of School, principals, Director of

Student Support, and instructional coaches and school-based leaders at each campus in consultation with our teachers and feedback received from several parent surveys conducted throughout the year. We are identifying what would well by looking at a variety of factors gather through feedback from family surveys, teacher surveys, assessment results from this year and previous years, and based on those surveys and observations and data collected from our extensive in-person learning program during our third trimester, we are making decisions about which practices to include moving forward. Using information gleaned from school year 2020-21, we are planning on supporting teachers through two weeks of preservice training and professional development Wednesday afternoons each week, along with several professional development days throughout the year. During those PD events, teachers will engage in content-specific PD, pedagogical strategies, and how to identify areas for accelerated learning. The calendar is still under development and will be completed by the end of July. Strategies will continue to be added to our repertoire once we understand students' actual needs after the start of the year. As the year continues, we will use results from interim assessments, student behavior logs, student climate surveys, teacher surveys, student engagement, and other metrics to improve our practices to respond to emerging student needs.

14. Describe how the LEA plans to extend effective practices introduced during distance learning to enhance students' academic and/or social-emotional progress.

At this point, we have been able to identify the following strategies as being exceptionally helpful during distance learning and will be continued throughout the 2021-22 school year.

- Holding family/teacher conferences remotely to provide access to classrooms and teachers to families that have a challenging time coming to our campus
- Providing students with technology for use at home (Chromebooks in K-8, tablets in PK)
- Use of Schoology as an LMS to house learning materials for students to access both at home and at school
- Identifying a primary point of contact on staff for all students to facilitate home/school communication

15. For LEAs serving students in grades 9-12: Describe how the LEA will adjust its approaches to credit attainment, recovery and support for postsecondary transitions to ensure all students are on track to graduate.

3.C: Special Populations

Students with Disabilities

LEAs must include students with disabilities in the general application of these guiding principles. After doing so, LEAs are additionally responsible for reviewing and conducting the following activities to ensure the continued provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities. OSSE encourages LEAs to conduct individualized review of student data to identify appropriate accelerated learning instructional approaches. LEAs should also consider whether or not a student's individualized education program (IEP) is designed to support accelerated learning and should engage families in information sharing regarding the LEA's plan for the delivery of accelerated learning, IEP services designed to support accelerated learning, and the delivery of FAPE.

16. Describe the LEA's plan to serve students with disabilities, including students the LEA has placed in non-public special education schools and students participating in distance learning, including:

- **a. The steps the LEA will take to ensure that students with disabilities are assessed upon return to school to determine the nature and extent of interrupted instruction on their receipt of educational**

benefit and to update IEPs as appropriate to ensure supports designed to ensure access to accelerated learning;

- **b. At the campus and LEA level, how the LEA will evaluate the need for, determine or design appropriate services, schedule and deliver accelerated learning to students with disabilities, and how LEAs will communicate those instructional approaches to families;**
- **c. How the LEA will ensure equitable access to educational opportunity across learning environments, including how the LEA will ensure that students receive equal access to interventions and least restrictive environment (LRE) continuum, and that accelerated or distance learning approaches are not used to place them in more restrictive environments;**
- **d. How the LEA will continue to support parent training for students receiving related services through distance learning as needed; and**
- **e. The steps the LEA is taking to ensure that family members with disabilities (e.g., a guardian with visual impairment) can access content to support their students' learning.**

The LEA will take the following steps to ensure that students with disabilities are assessed upon return to school to determine the nature and extent of interrupted instruction on their receipt of educational benefit: Meridian will administer beginning-of-year universal assessments and screeners within 30 days.

Additionally, the LEA will take the following steps to update IEPs as appropriate to ensure supports design to ensure access to accelerated learning are made available to all students with disabilities: After assessing students at the beginning of the year, Meridian will use that data to make instructional decisions based on individual student need and will track the growth/progress of students using a variety of databases and platforms.

Element	LEA
How the need for accelerated learning for students with disabilities will be evaluated	Meridian will administer BOY diagnostic assessments in reading, writing, math using a variety of appropriate assessments (i.e. NWEA MAP, iReady, Lexia, F&P, Brigance.)
How appropriate services will be determined or designed for students with disabilities	Meridian will use BOY data to determine the instructional needs of students individually (i.e. smaller intervention groups, Wilson instruction, Lexia, guided reading, etc.)
How accelerated learning will be scheduled and delivered to students with disabilities	Students with disabilities will have the same access to accelerated learning as all students by determining where students are performing, what their needs are, and delivering appropriate instructions and interventions to accommodate individual needs.

<p>How instructional approaches used for accelerated learning of students with disabilities will be communicated to families</p>	<p>Meridian will maintain regular and frequent communication with families by phone, text, and email. Meridian will assess and establish instructional plans after BOY data is collected and communicate the learning plans for students with parents.</p>
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The LEA will ensure equitable access to educational opportunities across learning environments by maintaining a continuum of service delivery models that offer all levels of support, including but not limited to inclusion support, pull-out support, resource room support, and full-time self-contained classroom support. The LEA will ensure that students with disabilities receive equal access to interventions by tracking delivery and usage of interventions and disaggregating by subgroup while also ensuring that required instructional support service hours are met for each student. The LEA will also ensure that each student is receiving those interventions in the least restrictive environment (and that accelerated or distance learning approaches are not used to place students in more restrictive environments) by implementing an LRE oversight process in which IEP teams have direct oversight and guidance for following the legal guidelines of maintaining LRE and placement decisions.

The LEA will continue to support parent training for students receiving related services through distance learning by maintaining frequent, consistent, and transparent communication between school team members and parents. Meridian will host workshops for parents, make asynchronous training videos available, and ensure parents have a direct point-of-contact so that the POC can connect the parent with any other staff members or resources that may be required for the student.

The LEA will take the following steps to ensure that family members with disabilities can access content to support their students' learning: Meridian PCS will maintain frequent, consistent, and transparent communication between school-team members and parents. The POC for each student will communicate with the Director of Student Support regarding any parents with disabilities and what needs they may need. The DSS and SST Department will accommodate each parent as necessary to ensure they can access the content to support their students' learning.

17. For correctional facilities only: Describe the LEA/State Public Agency's plan to serve students with disabilities in correctional facilities, including:

- **a. The steps the LEA/State Public Agency will take to ensure that students with disabilities in correctional facilities are assessed to determine the nature and extent of interrupted instruction on their receipt of educational benefit;**
- **b. How the LEA/State Public Agency will evaluate the need for, determine or design appropriate services, schedule and deliver accelerated learning to students with disabilities in correctional facilities, and how LEAs will communicate those instructional approaches to families;**
- **c. The steps the LEA/State Public Agency is taking to ensure that family members with disabilities (e.g.,**

- a guardian with visual impairment) can access content to support their students' learning;
- **d. The manner in which the LEA/State Public Agency will deliver accelerated learning to students with disabilities during the 2020-21 school year and how LEA/State Public Agency will communicate those instructional approaches to families;**
- **e. How the LEA/State Public Agency is maintaining Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) timelines in collaboration with families and documenting delivered IEP services in correctional facilities; and**
- **f. The manner in which the LEA/State Public Agency delivers specialized instruction and related services for students across all settings.**

English Learners

18. For LEAs serving PK-12 grades: Describe the LEA's plan to serve English learners, including students participating in distance learning, including:

- **a. The LEA's approach to screening English learners across all grade levels, including a system for re-screening students screened provisionally during distance learning and providing parent notification; and**
- **b. The LEA's English learner program plans to provide effective language development and academic instruction that will accelerate learning for English learners across all learning environments, including what data the LEA will use to establish and monitor language learning goals for accelerated learning and how the LEA will determine if the student is making progress towards those goals.**

English learners will take the Pre-IPT Oral assessment (PK) or the WIDA screener (K-8) within the first month of the beginning of the school year to determine English proficiency, and English learners will also take the i-Ready, NWEA MAP, and WIDA MODEL assessments within the first 60 days of the school year to determine overall academic needs. For students who are medically fragile and, therefore, not attending school in person, they will engage in a one-on-one virtual screening or a one-on-one in-person screening by working with the families to determine logistical arrangements for screening and assigning EL teachers to complete assessments with students.

If a student is deemed eligible for EL services, then the Manager of EL or the student's case manager will notify the family of the students and explain our program's model to them.

Once the student's learning needs are understood, the student will receive English language instruction through a variety of methods, including the strategies listed below:

- Co-taught core content classes
- Pull-out intervention led by general educators and EL teachers
- Priority enrollment in OST programming, including summer school and afterschool tutoring

ELs will have access to accelerated core content, as delivered to all students, through co-taught classes in ELA courses and co-planned lessons in other core content classes. Continued monitoring of language acquisition will occur per our plan as described in question 10.

Meridian uses numerous streams of data to inform language goals for students, including previous ACCESS scores, WIDA MODEL scores, and NWEA-MAP scores, along with anecdotal teacher observation data and performance in core content classes. Goals for students are set according to publisher benchmarks for each assessment.

Effective Use of Funds in the 2021-22 School Year

19. LEAs receiving ESSER III-ARP funds only: Describe the extent to which and how ESSER III-ARP funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent OSSE and DC Health [guidance](#) on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning.

Meridian will purchase PPE for staff and students (multilayered cloth masks, disposable surgical masks when needed) and cleaning supplies for our facilities team. Although additional staff are primarily responsible for numerous other instructional activities and socioemotional support of students, additional staff also allow us to split students up into smaller groups for lunch to allow for effective social distancing when masks cannot be worn.

20. LEAs receiving ESSER III-ARP funds only: Describe how the LEA will use at least 20 percent of its [allocation](#) for evidence-based interventions⁶ to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, such as such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year. Your description should include the planned approach for using at least 20 percent of your total ESSER III-ARP allocation, even if you do not plan to spend all the funds in the 2021-22 school year.

Since Meridian will spend ESSER III funds over the next several years, the plans below are based on the best information we have available now and may change as we gather additional data about student learning loss. In particular, most if not all of our allocation for evidence-based interventions will be dedicated to purchasing additional staff positions, such as apprentice teachers in 1st and 2nd grade, interventionists in math and ELA in our elementary school and ELA in our middle school, and additional counselors at each campus to provide more targeted levels of support.

21. LEAs receiving ESSER III-ARP funds only: Describe how the LEA will spend its remaining ESSER III-ARP funds consistent with the allowable uses⁷ of the funding.

Since Meridian will spend ESSER III funds over the next several years, the plans below are based on the best information we have available now and may change as we gather additional data about student learning loss and student needs. We plan to use funds for additional staffing, including instructional coaches and professional development support for teachers, cleaning supplies, and additional staffing to keep classes small to support social distancing and small class sizes for academic support.

22. LEAs receiving ESSER III-ARP funds only: Describe how the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements to address the academic impact of lost instructional time will respond to the academic, social, emotional and mental health needs of students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care and migrant students.

The vast majority of Meridian's students are in groups disproportionately affected by COVID-19, so we believe that the plans laid out in previous questions also suffice for this question's response.

SY 2021-22 Continuous Learning Plan Assurance Statement

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 completing the ELA curriculum materials survey coinciding with the submission of the CEP.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding 2021-22 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 2021-22.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding graduation and promotion for 2021-22:

- The LEA assures that it will abide by the statewide graduation requirements enumerated in 5A DCMR § 220310 and/or in accordance with its charter agreement - if applicable.

The LEA attests to the following statements 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 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 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 distance learning. Consistent and clear communication encourages parent and student participation in distance learning, in-person learning, recovery service delivery, and other educational opportunities.
- LEAs will ensure recovery planning and implementation includes identification of strategies, systems and protocols to support implementation of all elements of recovery plans, as well as addresses overdue initial and reevaluations for eligibility, IEP revisions and all other IDEA-prescribed timelines delayed due to school closures.
- 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.
- During the 2021-22 school year, the LEA will conduct school-wide and student-level recovery planning and implementation efforts to address student loss of educational benefit for students with disabilities. The LEA's recovery planning and implementation will include convening IEP teams, as appropriate, to review the impact of interrupted instruction for students with disabilities.

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 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:

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

The LEA attests to the following statements 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 development 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 2021-22 school year and provide families awareness of:
 - An accessible, family-facing description of their continuous education plan and health and safety plan for the 2021-22 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.
- The LEA, if receiving ESSER III-ARP funds, will ensure publication on its web site, by June 24, 2021, their CEP from last school year (2020-21), if not already posted.
- The LEA, if receiving ESSER III-ARP funds, will update the 2021-22 school year CEP every six months, at a minimum, between the date of publication and Sept. 30, 2023.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding locally administered assessments:

- The LEA ensures that the information reported herein is accurate to the best of its knowledge, and the LEA will ensure that it will administer assessments equitably to all students and will communicate the results of locally administered assessments to students' families.