

## 2020-21 School Year LEA Continuous Education & School Recovery Plans

**LEA Name: The Next Step/El Proximo Paso PCS**

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**LEA Type: Adult**

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### Background and Purpose

The District's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the continued use of social distance measures to protect public health will require schools to be prepared to provide both in-person and distance learning for the 2020-21 school year. In preparation for this, the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) and the District of Columbia Public Charter School Board (DC PCSB) asked LEAs to develop Continuous Education and School Recovery Plans for the 2020-21 school year.

OSSE required all LEAs in the District of Columbia that serve students in grades K-12 to submit continuous education plans in order to waive the requirement that a school year include a minimum of 180 instructional days at 6 hours per day as prescribed in 5-A DCMR §2100.3. DC PCSB required all public charter school LEAs to submit continuous education plans to capture school academic and operational changes during the 2020-21 school year in response to COVID-19. These plans must meet certain baseline requirements—namely, completion, clarity, alignment with applicable laws and policies delineated throughout this application, and for public charter schools, alignment with their approved charters. In addition, all plans must align with public health guidelines. **The plan below has been approved for these purposes.**

This plan is intended to provide the public with information on how the LEA has prepared for the 2020-21 school year in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. LEAs have the flexibility to design continuous education and school recovery plans to best fit their individual or specific needs. LEAs may periodically update 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.

<sup>1</sup>Term used to describe situations in which students access instruction from a location outside of the physical school building, whether delivered synchronously or asynchronously; distance learning is synonymous with remote learning.

<sup>2</sup>These policies are intended to capture school academic and operational changes during the 2020-21 school year in response to COVID-19. If a charter LEA intends to make any major academic or operational shifts for future school years (2021-22 or beyond), please reach out to DC PCSB staff to discuss memorializing those changes in a charter amendment.

<sup>3</sup>Refer to health guidance for child care and schools, available here: <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance>. Note that this guidance is subject to change due to the need to respond effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic. LEAs are responsible for incorporating additional public health guidance into their policies as such guidance is released.

### School Recovery Operations Plan

#### 1. Describe the LEA's plan to keep buildings clean, including:

- What is the cleaning schedule? For example, what happens weekly, daily, and multiple times per day?; and
- How you will ensure buildings are clean if/when an individual in a school community tests positive for COVID-19 (e.g., work with an outside vendor specializing in deep cleaning or train in-house janitorial staff to ensure cleaning standards are met)?

##### a. *Cleaning Protocols: Regular Maintenance*

The Operations Division at The Next Step PCS has defined a comprehensive plan to provide scheduled maintenance (cleaning and sanitizing) for our school building. As we define cleaning efforts, this includes: cleaning all surfaces with disposable paper towels and/or cloths, soap/detergent and water removing all dirt and debris that may be present. Once the surfaces are thoroughly cleaned then the surfaces will be sanitized by using disinfectant chemicals/ materials such as Virucide, Bactericide, Fungicide and other products containing bleach such as Lysol/ Clorox wipes and sprays to kill any germs that may be present on surfaces.

Prior to the start of the day, the maintenance team will clean and sanitize the entire building, beginning at 6:30am. This includes the cleaning of all floors, the main lobby, cafeteria, student desks, teacher desks, all doors and accessible windows. Additionally, the building maintenance team will sanitize remote controls and other devices that have high-touch—remotes for smart boards and other devices, as well as all hard surfaces: railings, stairwell floors, elevator and buttons.

In addition, a protocol for cleaning the bathrooms will be completed. This includes the cleaning of toilets, handicap railings, faucets, paper towel dispensers and the floors. The middle sinks and faucets of all bathrooms will be inoperable to ensure social distancing.

Throughout the day, the bathrooms will be cleaned three times. Trash removal will occur following the lunch hour. Teachers and staff will be instrumental in ensuring that desks are disinfected several times a day as well. Teachers will be asked to integrate the disinfecting of desks into their classroom arrival and departure activities.

At the close of the Day Program (shortly after 3:00pm), the maintenance team will provide transition cleaning and sanitizing prior to the start of the Night Program. This cleaning rotation includes sanitizing classroom surfaces used during the Day Program, including mopping floors and cleaning of bathrooms. This cleaning protocol will be completed on the following days: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday.

On Wednesdays and Saturdays, the maintenance team will execute a full day cleaning and sanitizing protocol of the entire school building, including all classrooms, bathrooms, cafeteria and shared office spaces. We will fog each classroom and office with a virucide product every Wednesday and Saturday and thoroughly clean and wipe down each classroom and office after the fogging.

##### b. *Cleaning Protocols: Following Positive COVID-19 Test Result*

Should there be a positive test result for a member of The Next Step PCS community, our Operations Division will engage with an external vendor. The Next Step PCS has partnered with an external vendor who specializes in deep cleaning and sanitizing; this service can be provided within a relatively quick window of time. In a proactive effort, The Next Step PCS has already engaged this service to clean and sanitize our entire building prior to the start of June 2020.

We anticipate our building maintenance team will remain aware and informed of cleaning tools, protocols and resources to ensure that we continue to deliver industry-normed and accepted practices for our community. A daily log will be kept in the maintenance office detailing what rooms were cleaned, at what time of day, and which chemicals were used during the cleaning process. The Building Manager will be notified when cleaning supplies need to be replenished and those supplies will be ordered the same day.

## **2. Describe physical changes to the environment to ensure or promote social distancing.**

### *Physical Spaces and Changes to Support Social Distancing*

The Operations Division at The Next Step PCS has implemented a number of strategies and best practices to support safety and wellness in our environment. To create awareness and promote social distancing, public health and wellness, the following activities and efforts have been implemented:

- Installation of 6-foot floor distancing signs on all floors and walls throughout building;
- Placement of signs and notices expressing requirement of facemasks;
- Articulated traffic flow for stairwells—dedicated up/down stairwells, as well as dedicated entrance and exit to and from the building;
- Installation of two additional hand sanitizing stations on each floor of building;
- Secured a tent to be located outside of the building to support temperature checks and review of personal health self-assessment questionnaires; and
- All classrooms have been assessed for the 6-foot social distancing, thus creating new limits for classroom occupancy.

Additional considerations specific to The Next Step PCS include the use of the Teachers' Lounge and our Drinking Faucets and Water Dispensers. As for the Teachers' Lounge, we will restrict use for only the heating of food, placing items in or getting things out of the refrigerator. Eating and congregating in the Teachers' Lounge will not be permitted. We will also have to consider the communal coffee maker/supports.

As for Drinking Faucets and Water Dispensers, all of our water fountains and dispensers will be shut down to alleviate places for virus contamination. Bottled water will be ordered weekly by the pallet, to support keeping students, faculty and staff hydrated throughout their time in the building.

## **3. What have you done to ensure adequacy of ventilation at the school?**

### *Ventilation Efforts at The Next Step PCS*

The physical building at The Next Step PCS does not have operable windows. Therefore, to support adequacy of ventilation, we have had our HVAC system flushed and cleaned, and increased our frequency of cleaning schedule from once annually, to two scheduled cleanings with the option for on-demand cleaning. In addition, we are installing MERV-14 air filters, which are a level above the industry standard (MERV-13), which provides better filtration of the air that circulates throughout the building.

We will continue to investigate additional options to promote adequate ventilation of air throughout our school building. We have extended the run times of all of our current HVAC systems to increase air exchanges per day—the removing of the air within the building and discharging it outside, to be replaced with fresh, external air. This is a function of the automatic function of our current HVAC system.

- 4. Outline the LEA’s plan for 2020-21 school year school operations to ensure all students have safe access to instruction, either in person or at home. Describe, in detail, student and staff schedules, arrival/dismissal procedures, plan for distributing educational materials, plan to oversee before/after care and extracurricular activities, plan to provide meals, and plan to provide personal protective equipment (PPE). Be sure to follow the public health guidance.**

*Refer to health guidance for childcare and schools, available here: <https://coronavirus.dc.gov/healthguidance>.*

### ***Student and Staff Schedules***

The Next Step PCS will implement staggered and interlocked cohort schedules to minimize contact and maintain physical distancing, when we return to in-person and hybrid instructional models. School assemblies, staff meetings, monthly events, team sessions and staff development training will all be conducted virtually. Students and staff will physically attend school on reduced days or alternating schedules. Examples of all of our schedules and models are provided within the supporting documentations to this plan.

Following our virtual learning posture, our Day Program students will report to school four days a week—Cohorts 1 and 2 attend physically Monday and Tuesday. Cohorts 3 and 4 attend physically Thursday and Friday. The building is closed on Wednesdays for deep cleaning, one-on-one virtual or small-group targeted instruction, connecting with families, teacher planning, and professional learning communities.

Evening Program students report to school three days a week—Cohorts 1 and 2 attend physically Monday and Tuesday. Cohorts 3 and 4 attend physically on Thursday. The building is closed on Wednesdays for deep cleaning as well as full virtual asynchronous and synchronous instruction, including targeted interventions and professional learning. Teachers plan and prepare lessons remotely on Fridays, per our usual structure.

### ***Arrival/Dismissal Procedures***

All students, staff and visitors will be provided instructions for completing a self-assessment health screening prior to entering the school building. The health screening will consist of the following questions, as detailed in the guidance from DC Health: (1) Have you been exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days?; (2) Have you felt like you had a fever in the past day?; (3) Do you have a new or worsening cough today? (3) Do you have a new or worsening cough today? [Fever; Cough; Congestion; Sore throat; Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; Diarrhea; Nausea or vomiting; Fatigue; Headache; Muscle or Body aches; New loss of taste or smell; Or otherwise

feeling unwell].

The Next Step PCS has designed three different platforms to allow students and staff to self-report on the status of their health in relation to the COVID-19 virus. Staff will be instructed to complete the screening online, via an app in QuickBase. For students, the health screening will be accessed via a student link on the school's main webpage. Essential visitors will receive an email link to the health screening and be instructed to complete the screening before coming to the school building.

For students and staff, the health screenings will be required on a daily basis prior to their designated arrival time. For essential visitors, health screenings will be required each time they need to come into the building. All students, staff and essential visitors who successfully pass the health screening will receive an automated message indicating that they are clear and may enter the building following the established protocols.

Any student, staff member, or essential visitor who fails the screening by answering "yes" to any of the screening questions will receive an automated response informing them that based on their responses, they may not enter the building. The automated response will also instruct them to seek medical guidance from their health care provider to determine next steps, as well as to stay at home until they have a doctor's note/fitness for duty declaration, indicating that they may return to the building.

All health screening data will be collected and stored in a confidential database. A report will be generated with the names of all staff, students, and visitors who have passed the screening prior to their arrival. The Security Team will check the names of all persons entering the building against the health screening report, prior to the individual's participation in the daily temperature check process, and access to the mandatory security scan process.

When a staff member does not pass the health screening, an email alert will be automatically generated and sent to the Executive Director, Chief of Operations, and Director of Human Resources so that adequate support is offered to that employee and the appropriate steps are taken in accordance with DC Health guidelines.

When a student does not pass the health screening, an email alert will be automatically generated and sent to the Executive Director, Chief of Operations and Chief of Student Support and Engagement to ensure that adequate support is offered to that student and the appropriate steps are taken in accordance with DC Health guidelines.

If a student, staff member, or essential visitor experience technical difficulties and are unable to complete the survey prior to coming to the school, upon their arrival, they will be instructed to complete the screening onsite, using designated tablet kiosks that will be located in a private and separate location away from the main entrance.

With regard to The Next Step PCS's Temperature Check Protocol, our personal health screeners will become familiar with the No-Touch (Non-Contact) Thermometer, first, in order to properly execute the following protocol.

The screener will:

- Greet Faculty, Staff, Student or Guest (individual) and review the process they are about to experience;

- Take individual’s temperature in a controlled environment—honoring social distancing and with the temperature taken one individual at a time, whether inside or outside the building, prior to the arrival in the building;
- Point the No-Touch thermometer, at arm’s length, in order to take individual’s temperature:
  - Point the Take Temperature: At arm’s length, using the infrared non-contact thermometer, point to the person’s forehead about 1 to 2” away and activate thermometer;
  - If the individual has hair overlapping on forehead, please ask that the individual lift up hair in order to expose skin on forehead;
- Remember important reminders:
  - Do not touch the individual’s skin;
  - Be mindful of necessary “rest” time in-between tests to ensure accuracy;
  - In order for accurate reading, skin must be dry;
  - If temperature is less than 100.4 (**100.3 and BELOW**), allow individual access to the building and **NO FURTHER ACTION** is needed.
- **If temperature is 100.4 or greater:**
  - If the individual does not have a mask, please provide them one and ask that they take a sit and allow for an additional temperature reading;
  - If less than 100.4 then allow individual to enter site;
- **If 100.4 or greater, the individual is NOT permitted to enter the building.**
- Please share with the individual: “At this time, your screening does not meet the school-site personal health criteria and they will not be allowed into the building.”
  - For faculty and staff, they are required to contact the HR department by email immediately after their departure from the building.
  - For students, they are required to contact their **Case Manager/Service Provider** via phone or email; the ATC should also be notified to assist follow-up and any necessary notification to the Chief of Student Support and Engagement.

### ***Plan for Distributing Educational Materials***

The application and enrollment processes at The Next Step PCS will include an initial assessment of students’ needs, as it pertains to access and the distribution of educational materials. The Next Step PCS Enrollment Team will inquire about a students’ access to technology and Internet; this data will be shared with the leadership of Operations and Academics to have those needs addressed. From this data, staff from the IT and Instructional leadership teams will coordinate technology and supplies pick-up dates, either Tuesdays or Thursdays, with the expectation that all social distancing and personal protective equipment (PPE) protocols are met, and the temperature check is also completed.

As we further detail our efforts for our virtual learning environment, we will also describe key elements of our hybrid and in-person learning considerations (for a future date). In case of our initial virtual learning operating approach:

- The Enrollment and Attendance teams have created a log of all student communication, outreach, and identification of connectivity needs;
- Staff at The Next Step PCS will ensure that students are able to connect and engage in learning scenarios (synchronous and asynchronous) with ease, and supplemental materials as necessary;
- Upon approval, faculty, staff and students would have limited and controlled access to the building, during the virtual learning operating status. In order to limit access to the building, The Next Step PCS has implemented the following considerations for practice:
  - If teachers need supplies for their virtual class, they will complete an order form; materials will be shipped directly to their shipping address;

- If students need certain school supplies or materials to access learning, these will be directly shipped to their shipping address.
  - If teachers or any instructional staff need to retrieve educational materials and supplies from the school, they will work with their direct supervisors to express the need and facilitate a discussion with the Operations team.
- Any student who does not have access to a laptop and/or has limited or non-existent Internet access, will be supported by The Next Step PCS. Our supports will include laptop loaners, as well as MiFis; Case Managers/Service Providers will support the Instructional Leadership Team to connect students to community-based resources to support internet access and engagement.
  - Distribution dates for laptops and MiFis will be established and announced by the IT Department in order for students to pick up the device(s), sign the Student Technology Lending Agreement, and receive one-on-one technical support.

In case of hybrid or in-person learning setting, we are likely to first execute the considerations for virtual learning. In addition, we have included the following:

- Every student will be provided an individualized set of supplies—the exact items will depend on their academic track and level. Each student will be provided a small pouch, labeled with their names, and stored within a designated classroom.
- Supplies should stay in a designated shelving system within the classroom, and limited access only to students in that specific cohort;
- Supplies that cannot be individualized for students (electric pencil sharpeners, etc.) should be disinfected after each use;
- Each student is assigned a laptop for the start of the school year; this laptop will be assigned only to one student and should travel to and from school daily in case of immediate closure. Charging stations would be available in each classroom if students forget to charge them overnight.

### ***Provision of Meal Services***

In accordance with reimbursement compliance for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and At-Risk Child and Adult Care Foods Program (CACFP), The Next Step PCS defines a few strategies that will be implemented for the provision of meals for our students. As we begin the fall 2020 academic term with a 100% distance learning model, meal provision will include a multi-faceted approach. As we focus solely on reimbursable meal options, while also honor all of the public health guidance pertaining to social distancing and congregating, we have defined three avenues for meal services: (1) Meal Provision: Bulk Items; (2) Meal Provision: Home Delivery; and (3) Meal Provision: Grab and Go.

Our Meal Provision: Bulk Items distribution strategy is an approach that will require our staff to complete a weekly inventory of students who request meals; students would need to initiate the process independently, or with the assistance of a Case Manager, or other member of the Student Support and Engagement (SSE) division. The Next Step PCS would provide students with access to a Google Form in order to capture essential details to support any dietary needs, as well as support for logistics and the sharing of personal information. This option will provide items

in bulk, thereby creating a resource that the student can pick up from a designated retailer and utilize throughout a week.

The second approach, Meal Provision: Home Delivery, will also require staff at The Next Step PCS to complete a weekly inventory of students who make request for meals, in a given week. As with the Bulk Items, Home Delivery will be facilitated by an external vendor. The caveat here is that Home Delivery groceries will account for seven breakfast meals and seven lunch/dinner meal configurations. These groceries will be scheduled for delivery, with the expressed permission of the student. However, the Home Delivery approach—with the planned meal configuration, can also be structured for a grocery store pick up.

The third meal provision, Grab and Go, requires staff at The Next Step PCS to complete a weekly inventory of students who request meals. As a result, there will be a one-day distribution of multiple, pre-packaged meals (5 to 7 meals) to students of The Next Step PCS. These meals can be frozen, hot or cold options with consideration of dietary needs. For this option, there is a need for further nuanced support with our current food vendor, as we continue to explore feasibility and limitations of facility access and student engagement.

To ensure safe and effective requests, all efforts described here will be facilitated through a secure template for data collection. We will be able to furnish inventories for meal distribution and expenses to support reimbursement and compliance with NSLP and CACFP. The Next Step PCS in general, and the Student Support and Engagement Division in particular, will continue to operate with comprehensive supports and interventions to advance the health and safety of our learners. Therefore, as needed, we will operate our food security initiatives to supplement student needs, which includes but is not limited to allocation of food pantry resources, reloadable grocery store gift cards and/or grocery store pick-ups, while also directing students to community-based resources, such as Martha's Table, to augment the meal services provided.

### ***Provision of Personal Protective Equipment***

As we begin the 2020-21 academic year, our hybrid approach will limit access to the building. Although we will not fully utilize the building for some time, we do consider unique ways to distribute supplies for our faculty, staff and students, in particular PPE.

The Next Step PCS has and continues to acquire Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to provide for all students, faculty and staff. To date, we have acquired over 600 reusable, washable facemasks branded with the school logo, as well as over 2,000 disposable facemasks. To ensure significant inventory, we anticipate daily/weekly inquiry to determine availability of these resources. We are in the process of acquiring over 100 face-shields for staff who engage in close proximity with staff, students and visitors. Additionally, 600 pair of disposable gloves have been acquired to support frontline staff. For those workstations that have great traffic (Front Entrance Desk; Enrollment Center; Case Manager Desks), we have secured Plexiglas shields for additional protective measures.

As we prepare for a return to the building, a *TNS Welcome Bag* will be created for faculty and staff. This bag should include resources for each individual faculty and staff member, and resources that are dedicated to the maintenance of their workspace and/or classroom space.



Each classroom will be supplied with disinfectant spray, wipes, facial tissue and hand sanitizer. Teachers and staff are asked to be responsible for cleaning their classroom work spaces and desks intermittently throughout the day while class is in session. This would include wiping down desks and other frequently used surfaces. After dismissal the maintenance will perform an additional cleaning and sanitizing of the classrooms as specified under the cleaning protocols.

## **Instructional Delivery Plan**

5. Describe how the LEA will deliver instruction in order to achieve continuous learning during the 2020-21 school year.
- Identify the instructional methods (e.g., 100 percent synchronous instruction, 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.) your schools will use during the 2020-21 school year to ensure rigor across settings;
  - Explain the total instructional hours per day for the typical student participating in your distance learning program. Provide a breakdown of anticipated hours spent in a synchronous learning environment (learning that happens in real time with the student and teacher together) and asynchronous learning environment (independent learning that takes place without real-time input from the teacher);
  - Describe the training and professional development for school staff to support the effective implementation of this instructional plan; and
  - Describe the manner in which the LEA will ensure the plan is routinely monitored and adjusted, as needed, to address the needs of every student in the LEA across learning environments.

### **Instructional Delivery Plan**

In what follows, we describe how The Next Step PCS will deliver instruction in order to achieve continuous learning for our students. As we begin the Fall 2020 academic term, The Next Step PCS will maintain a 100% virtual operating status with Distance Learning as our core focus. The use of spaces within the building will be limited to the execution of essential functions and pre-approved exceptions (albeit limited and under rare circumstances). In practice, this means that our students, faculty and staff will be expected to engage virtually; a mid-course assessment will be conducted to determine how and when we pivot at the mid-way point of the semester (following the interim assessments, at the 9/10 week mark of instruction).

As we consider the design and implementation of our instructional delivery plan, it is important to acknowledge that The Next Step PCS operates three dynamic academic programs—GED in English, GED in Spanish, as well as English as a Second Language (ESL)—in both a Day and Evening Program format. Our instructional delivery plan is designed to meet the needs of students across all three programs.

#### ***a. Instructional Methods, Platforms and Resources***

The Next Step PCS will operate a hybrid approach, of both synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences. These approaches will support both direct and supplemental instruction, as well as interventions to support student achievement based on their individual needs. Our academic experience will be managed and delivered through Schoology, our learning management system (LMS). Schoology serves as an essential tool for our distance learning experience, as well as our in-person learning experience. This LMS represents the electronic hub to store and share

information, documents, and manage academic items such as lesson plans, tasks and assignments, formative assessments, as well as links to synchronous sessions.

Our use of Schoology also includes providing students (and teachers) with additional app-based tools to support asynchronous learning experiences, student-led interventions and supplemental instruction: Brain Pop; EdPuzzle; Quizlet; and embedded YouTube resources and tools. Through Schoology, students also have access to Achieve3000 (Spark) for supplemental support in the area of literacy, as well as Study Island, in support of math skills development. Study Island has proven to be a great platform, also, for formative assessments and diagnostics for our GED/TABE students.

Our Talent and Outcomes division, in support of the Academic and Student Support colleagues, built out a unique website to house and support distance learning for our entire community—TNS@Home. This resource provides a single website where students, faculty and staff can access our LMS; where Student Support and Engagement can host virtual programming and share resources; where Management and other leaders can share important announcements and supports. TNS@Home supports the dissemination of information and links to access other sites and specific classes pertaining to distance learning.

### ***b. Instructional Experience: Distance Learning Instructional Hours and Engagement***

Students enrolled in the **Day Program at The Next Step PCS** will have access to five hours of instruction on a daily basis, as described below. In addition, these five hours of instruction are complemented with focused sessions on digital literacy, student-led reflective experiences to promote the development of agency, self-management, metacognition and self-efficacy.

The instructional experience for the Day Program at The Next Step PCS includes:

- 90-minute asynchronous, individual student support time and blended learning;
- 90-minute synchronous group lessons/instruction;
- 60-minute synchronous supplemental instruction—specified by passion projects, student-interest courses, electives;
- 60-minute literacy experience;
- End-of-week reflective experiences, to include learning assessments and conferencing cycles—feedback, reflection, restorative practices, group and/or community dialogue sessions.

We acknowledge that the end-of-week reflections might produce content that will result in artifacts that students can showcase as evidence of their academic achievements, as aligned with their individualized goals.

Students enrolled in the **Evening Program at The Next Step PCS** will have access to three hours of instruction on a daily, as described below. In addition, these three hours of instruction are complemented with access to electives provided at the close of the Day Program, and before the start of instruction for the Evening Program. As with the Day Program, instruction is also complemented with focused sessions on digital literacy, student-led reflective experiences to promote the development of agency, self-management, metacognition and self-efficacy.

The instructional experience for the Evening Program at The Next Step PCS includes:

- 60-minute asynchronous, individual student support time and blended learning;
- 60-minute synchronous group lessons/instruction;
- 60-minute synchronous supplemental instruction—specified by passion projects, student-interest courses and/or literacy experiences;
- Mid-week reflective experiences, to include learning assessments and conferencing cycles—feedback, reflection, restorative practices, group and/or community dialogue sessions.

For both the Day and Evening Programs, these asynchronous sessions might include any of the following: video-based lessons; auxiliary instructional technology tools and platforms (educational apps accessible through Schoology, Spark, Study Island); independent student assignments, teacher-created activities and formative assessments; student-directed and produced project-based learning experiences; student-led journaling—application of new knowledge, and/or knowledge transfer. For the execution of the instructional delivery efforts, our instructional team has and continues to utilize the following means to reach and support student achievement and growth: Zoom; WhatsApp; Text Messaging; Phone Calls; YouTube; Google Drive; and, most importantly, Schoology.

### ***c. Training and Professional Development***

The Talent and Outcomes Division at The Next Step PCS aggregates and maintains our comprehensive Professional Development experiences for our workforce.

As guided by the Principal’s instructional expectations, the professional development experiences for faculty include topics such as: Effective Uses and Management of Schoology; Efficiency and Effectiveness of Student Information Systems; Supporting Student’s Socio-emotional Development and Mental Health in Virtual Spaces; Instructional Design for Distance Learning; Independent and Collaborative Planning for Virtual Instruction; Trauma-informed Instructional and Supports Efforts; Analysis and Decision-Making: Student-level and Class Academic Achievement Data; Instructional Coaching; Best Practices for Special Education and Differentiation; and Cyber-bullying and Other Best Prevention Practices in Virtual Spaces.

For the non-instructional staff, training and professional development will include topics such as: Effective Uses and Management of Schoology; Efficiency and Effectiveness of Student Information Systems; Supporting Student’s Socio-emotional Development and Mental Health in Virtual Spaces; Building Resilience Through Socio-emotional Health and Wellness; Equity, Educational Access and Success; Trauma-informed Instructional and Supports Efforts; Cyber-bullying and Other Best Prevention Practices in Virtual Spaces; Whole student Approaches and Topics—such as supporting transgender and gender-non-conforming students; Renewed Attention to Signs and Signals of Abuse, Neglect, Mandated Reporting; Implementing Restorative Practices; and Community Building.

### ***Continuous Improvement: Student Achievement, Staff Performance and Needed Supports***

The Management Team of The Next Step PCS will conduct weekly meetings to review critical topics and emerging

themes that may require additional attention and support across the entire organization. In addition, the Executive Director leads monthly meetings of cross-functional leaders in both the instructional and non-instructional teams across the organization, entitled *TNS Leaders' Summit*. During *Summit*, we tackle comprehensive strategy and planning efforts that touch all facets of the organization.

Our academic leadership includes the Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) members—Chief Academic Officer, Principals, Directors of Curriculum and Instruction, Instructional Coaches, Special Education Coordinator, and Director of Testing Administration and Support. The Curriculum and Instruction Department designs and delivers weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) sessions to capture and tackle challenges that might emerge from feedback and observations.

The IT Manager collaborates closely with the Instructional Leadership Team, especially with Instructional Coaches as they provide ongoing support to teachers, by identifying instructional needs, technological needs, student academic needs, and continuing to motivate and uphold teacher accountability.

With the leadership of our Chief of Student Support and Engagement division, our team will continue to build out virtual strategies to support our ongoing *Students of Concern* interdisciplinary intervention structure. This is to include teacher engagement and direct dialogue with an individual student and/or parent/guardian. We recognize the importance of family and “natural supports” in a virtual setting, and will honor creative and innovative interventions in this approach to continuous education.

As students complete their pre-tests, our Data team will continue to collaborate with the Instructional Leadership Team and teachers with the design and delivery of class profiles. These profiles will help inform data-driven instruction to support student achievements and their academic needs, whether in-person or virtual. With the completion of interim exams, our teachers and Instructional Leadership Team will be able to define and implement strategies and supplemental instruction to support student achievement and mastery of content to ensure movement to the next academic level within their program. The interim exams, as further defined in our assessments section, will occur half-way through the delivery of instruction for the academic term.

As a measure of accountability and trustee engagement, The Next Step PCS will continue its reporting cycle with its Board of Trustees. As a function of board governance, the Academic Excellence Committee and full board will receive our tri-annual report measuring The Next Step PCS's current achievements against our charter goals and measures pertaining to the Adult PMF, as authored by DC PCSB. These conversations will remain at the close of each semester of instruction.

## Assessment and Promotion Policy

### A. Assessment

**6a. Describe the LEA's policy for identifying and administering assessments during the 2020-21 school year, including:**

- **Which formative assessment(s) the LEA will use to measure student learning (and learning loss) at the start of the 2020-21 school year?**

Other (identify vendor)

**6b. Describe the LEA's policy for identifying and administering assessments during SY 2020-21, including:**

- **How the LEA will plan to assess students who either do not attend school regularly in person, or who participate exclusively in distance learning. Describe the specific modalities you plan to use to ensure every student is assessed (e.g., at-home diagnostic assessments, online proctoring, physically in the building). Describe if modalities differ by grade bands; and**
- **When the LEA intends to administer these assessments during the school year, specifying for each assessment.**

As described in the Instructional Delivery Plan, The Next Step PCS delivers three academic programs for our students: GED in English, GED in Spanish, and English as a Second Language (ESL). As we define our school-wide efforts as it pertains to assessments, it is imperative that we tease apart our efforts based on the specific academic program.

#### *c. English GED Students*

Students enrolled in the English GED academic program will be able to complete the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE®) 11/12 assessment, online, to measure student learning, academic placement, and growth. TABE, as a vendor, has moved this assessment online allowing The Next Step PCS the ability to execute the TABE® Online assessment in a distance learning format, with the support of the vendors partner, DRC INSIGHT™. With the support of DRC INSIGHT™ we are able to execute a secure, web-based assessment that will support test administration, academic diagnostics and the level of assurance needed for this high-stakes accountability measure. DRC INSIGHT™ has designed their platform to be operable even in testing environments where there may be a lowered bandwidth accessible to the learner/test-taker. For more information, visit the following website: <https://tabetest.com/insight/>. The TABE® 11/12 assessment will be administered at the close of every academic term, as well as a function following the completion of a student's enrollment documentation.

#### *Spanish GED Students*

Unlike the English GED program, and what is described below for the ESL program, TABE® has not extended any further development of the TABE Español to the online format as delivered through DRC INSIGHT™. The vendor has only maintained a paper-pencil-answer key option for this assessment, thus limiting its ability for a virtual environment. As such, The Next Step PCS intends to utilize two approaches to assess student achievement and growth. First, The Next Step PCS has created internal interim assessments that are standards-aligned. These assessments can be delivered through the Schoology LMS, and supported with our use of Safe Exam Browser (SEB). Online proctoring can be facilitated by members of our testing administration team, and will be described below.

Secondly, students can be scheduled for the completion of the in-person, paper-pencil-answer key assessment for the TABE Español. An in-person assessment will follow all appropriate social distancing norms and requirements. Although this is not a permanent solution for the assessment of Spanish GED students, it will support our team as we investigate other appropriate, virtual assessments for this program.

We will offer the Spanish GED interim assessment and/or the TABE® Español at the close of every academic term, as well as a function following the completion of a student's enrollment documentation.

### *ESL Students*

Like students enrolled in the English GED program at The Next Step PCS, our students enrolled in the ESL academic program will also be able to complete the TABE® CLAS-E assessment online, utilizing the DRC INSIGHT™ platform. In addition to what was described above in the description of the English GED assessment, the DRC INSIGHT™ allows for various tools in support of accessibility and accommodation: line guide; highlighter; answer eliminator; magnifier/zoom; digital notepad; calculators; color overlays; contrasting colors; reverse contrast; masking; text-to-speech; online large print; measurement tools; and reference materials. The TABE® CLAS-E will be administered at the close of every academic term, as well as a function following the completion of a student's enrollment documentation.

### ***b. Online Test Proctoring Protocols***

The Testing Administration and Support department (*formerly the Assessments Department*) has designed an online proctoring protocol to support students in the ongoing measurement of academic growth and achievement. This department has orchestrated a process that utilizes Zoom to conduct proctoring, and has completed training with all appropriate staff for the support of online testing experiences.

At the time of an assessment, the online testing sessions are recorded and stored within the assigned Recordings folder. Teachers use their Zoom teacher accounts to invite students to the testing room using the assigned passcode. Students, then use Zoom on their phones to capture the testing environment and assure the proctor there are no assistive tools or technologies compromising the testing environment. Students will be recorded while completing the assessment.

Teachers and members of the instructional staff serve as test proctors. They will be responsible for monitoring students and testing environment throughout the duration of the exam. Test proctors protect the integrity of the

testing environment and ensure that all rules and requirements are followed.

The Next Step PCS will not tolerate any form of issues of integrity or dishonesty within the testing experience. We, as a learning community, are committed to protecting the rigor and integrity of all assessments. The test content and material must be secured at all times.

Should there be an issue of test integrity, faculty and instructional staff members are offered the following course of actions: End the test immediately and contact the Testing Administration and Support Department; Completion of an Incident Report; Participation in all relevant aspects during the investigation process; and Engagement in a Restorative Circle dialogue, when deemed appropriate. The Testing Administration and Support Department and principals maintain the right to review the test recording/environment, interview the persons involved, request a Restorative Circle dialogue with all parties involved, and decide to invalidate the test or retest the student.

Further, the Testing Administration and Supports department has defined the following test integrity and online proctoring test security measures to be followed by all proctors:

- Students will test in small testing groups of five to six to allow the proctor to observe the student behavior and working area throughout the duration of the test;
- Testing Sessions will be recorded at all times;
- Students will sign an online proctoring agreement to ensure they are aware and understand the rules;
- Students are required to download the appropriate software for testing that would prevent web-browsing, screenshots, and the use of other apps during the test;
- Online Proctoring will be available to students that meet all the testing requirements:
  - Access to laptop computer, phone and a stable Internet connection;
  - Adequate space with minimal distraction;
  - Downloaded and introductory sessions with testing software; and
  - Signed online proctoring agreement
- The proctor will have the authority to discontinue the test if any un-allowed activity is observed.

\*The Testing Administration and Support department will work diligently to support students who may or may not have adequate testing conditions. We will ensure that all possible avenues are explored prior to testing administrations, including if absolutely necessary, accommodations for an in-person testing experience.

As described in the measures above, all students sign the Student Online Testing Agreement as a precursor to participation in our virtual testing experience. This agreement emphasizes the importance of academic honesty and severity of any misconduct during testing. Likewise, teachers explicitly define, teach, and promote academic honesty and online learning discipline to students through ongoing practice with daily assignments as well as through visual reminders such as academic flyers before taking formative assessments.

## **B. Promotion and Graduation**

- 7. Describe if/how student grading and promotion policies will be altered in light of distance learning. If the LEA is not changing its grading and promotion policy to accommodate distance learning, the LEA may provide a link to the policy or describe the existing policy.**
- 8. Public Charter High Schools Only: If a high school in your charter LEA has any school specific graduation**

## *GED Ready at The Next Step*

Students in the GED program will continue to take the GED Ready practice test(s) in the subjects for which they are eligible at the dates and times scheduled by the assessments department. Any student who earns a score of NRS level 5 or 6 on the Reading section of the TABE will be eligible to take the GED Ready in Language Arts and Social Studies. Any student who earns a score of NRS level 5 or 6 on the Total Math section of the TABE will be eligible to take the GED Ready in Math and Science. If they pass the GED Ready, they will be eligible to take the Official GED, but if not, they will need to continue to work on their TABE and pre-GED skills using online practice tools until they reach needed mastery.

Level 5 and 6 GED track students take GED Ready on site. For students immune compromised, the school will test them in a clear and prepared room with a test proctor practicing social distancing.

- Practice GED online
- Interim assessments via Schoology Assessment Management Platform (AMP)
- Study Island Math and GED practice in other content areas
- GED Flash
- Spark 3000 reading in Higher ESL, Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies classes
- Open-book group assessments
- Essays and journaling
- Short answer, showing work required

All assessments are submitted via Schoology, and also via email, WhatsApp, and/or Zoom. With each assignment, students will complete a Student Daily/Weekly Reflection self-evaluation, identifying how they approached the assessment and their feedback for continuous improvement.

Level 5 and 6 GED track students take GED Ready online following established online proctoring guidelines. For students needing quiet testing space, the school will provide testing in a clear and prepared room with a test proctor practicing social distancing.

Zoom is used for online GED Ready proctoring. At the beginning of the semester, the Testing and Administration department releases the GED Assessment spreadsheet to communicate the students and their current scores to become eligible in Math, Science, Language Arts, and Social Studies. The spreadsheet includes the Zoom GED Ready online proctoring schedule, dates, rosters, special schedules for students needing accommodations, and one-on-one meeting schedules.

## *On-Going School-wide Assessments*

The Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) and faculty of The Next Step PCS will implement a wide-range of authentic and formative assessments throughout the instructional delivery experience. Students will execute assignments, receiving grades and feedback, as a means to promote self-directed learning. All of the graded assessments will be standards-based, and students should receive two grades per week (formative and summative). Teachers will be providing students with regular, timely feedback on Schoology assignments, participation and all

**requirements (i.e., courses, projects, or presentations) that exceed the requirements in 5-A DCMR §2203 and**



completed assignments. These assessments and assignments will be delivered through Schoology, WhatsApp, Zoom, Google forms, among other venues.

The Next Step PCS will continue the delivery of our interim assessments at the half-point of the fall and spring semesters, typically in November and April. These assessments will be executed via the Schoology LMS and will include the necessary virtual proctoring tools as defined above.

### *Interim Assessments at The Next Step PCS*

Standards-based Interim Assessments are created at The Next Step to provide students and teachers with specific feedback related to student growth and achievement on assessments during the semester, to inform student-centered adjustments in teacher planning based on strengths and gaps identified, and to provide a realistic test-taking experience for students. The tests focus on standards that drive instruction and mimicking the form of the official GED for social studies and science interim tests, TABE 11 & 12 for reading and math, and CLAS-E for ESL, available in English and Spanish languages. All ESL levels and English GED and Spanish GED levels 1-4 participate in the interim assessments. Students in GED level 5/6 classes do NOT participate because they have their own set of specific assessments (GED Ready and Official GED).

are outlined in your school's charter that you plan to waive for SY 2020-21, describe those waived requirements.

9. OSSE has issued [guidance on the collection of student attendance for SY 2020-21. Describe the LEA's policy for student attendance through distance learning.](#) In your response, be sure to identify whether the LEA is using Option A and/or Option B. The LEA should respond to the questions associated with each response. In crafting your response, note the following:

- Schools are expected to implement their normal, in-person attendance policies and procedures when students are on school grounds
- LEAs that serve students that are not compulsory age (pre-K 3, pre-K 4, and Adult) are not required to abide by the above attendance policy. However, they should describe their attendance expectations and policies for students.

- Option A: The LEA is using a learning management system (LMS) for distance learning.
- How is the student's presence authenticated daily using the LMS?
  - What constitutes sufficient engagement in the LMS for the student to be marked present?

#### **OPTION A:**

##### **Part A:**

**Students are authenticated by logging password protected platforms such as:**

- **Logging into Schoology. Students' use of Schoology is password protected; all staff-based security measures are managed by our Data Systems team and aligned with our student information system, QuickBase. Students sessions are tracked by the application to ensure that the student who is engaging with the platform is indeed the intended student.**
- **Log into any online platform, including but not limited to Google Docs/Forms, teacher-created**

websites, supplemental instruction education apps, or virtual play-back of recorded lessons or presentations, in order to complete school-related work;

- Respond via email or text committed to completing school-related work;
- Log in to virtual sessions with the Student Support and Engagement team
- Log into any online platforms for virtual conferencing, instruction and/or programming, via our LMS.

#### Part B:

Students prove engagement by:

- Submit journaling and reflective prompts aligned with or extensions of demonstrations of learning, acquisition or transfer of new knowledge;
- Complete and submit asynchronous learning assignments (as accessed through our LMS and defined by submission date—timestamp, and/or date of assignment); and/or
- Engage in Testing Administration and Supports department pre-test conferencing, peer-support networks, and/or on-site support for testing administration or virtual proctoring experiences;
- Engage in Student Support and Engagement academic, social-emotional and/or wellness interventions, counseling sessions, including but not limited to group counseling sessions, Career and Life Skills Department programming, Childcare parental workshops and supports, among others

Students are considered present when their presence is authenticated and they complete an approved engagement activity.

**Special Note:** It is important to note that The Next Step PCS fully expects students who are engaged in asynchronous learning to utilize Schoology to access the assignments, supporting materials, and ultimately the submission of the task. Schoology, our LMS, will be the Hub of all activity for students, academic, student support services and otherwise. Therefore, as stated, students will become familiar with and will fully utilize our LMS as a means of facilitation of learning in both synchronous and asynchronous environments and experiences.

Option B: The LEA is not using a learning management system (LMS) for distance learning.

- What is the complete listing of acceptable methods for making one-on-one contact with the student authenticate a student's presence?
- What is the procedure the LEA will use to make one-on-one contact with the student to authenticate a student's presence?
- What constitutes evidence of education engagement daily for the student to be marked present?

**10. How will the LEA collect, verify, enter, and store supporting data (based on its selection[s] above) to ensure that the official attendance records of students are accurate? What student-level data specifically would be furnished to OSSE in the event of an audit of attendance records?**

#### *Data Collection, Verification, Authentication and Storage*

The Next Step PCS faculty will record student attendance and participation in Schoology. In collaboration with the Student Support and Engagement (SSE) Division (Attendance and Transportation Coordinators) and the Talent and Outcomes Division (Data Analysts), attendance data will be consistently monitored and reported to OSSE, PCSB and Management of The Next Step PCS. These teams will monitor student attendance and engagement status, which

is recorded in our student information system: QuickBase.

In addition, daily attendance reporting will be furnished in an internal suite of Google documents for the ease of faculty access—Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Forms and Gmail. With these measures, we create internal checks and balances, reporting systems and structures and the like to support a 100% distance learning and/or a hybrid approach to instruction. These measures would allow The Next Step PCS to provide cohort, program, and demographic specific measures in the event of an audit of attendance records.

### ***Attendance Strategies During Distance Learning***

The Attendance and Transportation Coordinators (ATCs) maintain weekly attendance strategies and interventions in support of students. Our ATCs execute phone calls, text messages, voicemail, emails and text blasts to connect with our students. Our ATCs also maintain a posture of proactivity. ATCs maintain electronic versions of student excuse note sheets, transportation card replacement request, as well as DC One Card replacement request forms. Students are also provided with a demonstration experience that models how students should complete these necessary forms.

In addition, there is collaboration across SSE includes routine outreach on a weekly basis. Members of SSE conduct START meetings, a cross-functional team that focuses on interventions to support attendance and engagement, and includes the following staff: Principals, School Social Worker, Case Managers, ATCs, Special Education Coordinator, Registrar, Director of Childcare and Director of Student Support Services. ATCs maintain open lines of communication with our faculty to ensure consistent updates regarding outreach updates. Lastly, ATCs support our attendance efforts through outreach to OSSE, CFSA and DDOT, including the completion of truancy reports for the purposes of compliance for OSSE and Courts.

## **Whole Student Support**

### **A. Student Support**

- 11. Describe the LEA's plan for supporting students' social-emotional and mental health needs during continuous learning and school recovery. Also describe how, during your planning, the LEA will identify and provide academic intervention to students who have lost the most learning due to COVID-19.**

#### ***Student Support***

The Next Step PCS maintains a robust Student Support and Engagement Division, which includes full-time Case Managers and a School Social Worker. As a part of program design, all students are assigned to a Case Manager. Our team of Case Managers, along with the School Social Worker, maintain regular contact and outreach to our students. This outreach is on a weekly basis, as assigned per individual caseload. This outreach includes an assessment of basic and mental health status, and/or needs.

Following this assessment, referrals are being accepted, on a rolling basis, by the School Social Worker (SSW). Our SSW provides school-based, virtual mental health services. These appointments—whether in the form of support or intervention—are scheduled by the SSW based on student availability on a weekly basis. When school-based Social Work services reach capacity, students are being referred to community organizations for mental health services, to

include accessing the District's "Warm Line"—for the provision of mental health resources.

In addition to the individual-based supports and interventions, our SSW and Case Managers will continue to create virtual group therapy sessions for students. Our efforts here will offer students another option for a safe space for peer-to-peer supports. These group therapy sessions may focus on particular topics of interest to students, or ongoing themes that emerge from the data collected from Case Managers and the Chief of Student Support and Engagement.

Our Student Support and Engagement Division has also begun to pilot and plan for mindfulness activities on a weekly basis. Our idea of *Mindfulness Wednesdays*, a few times a month, will include unique, virtual activities to create a sense of peace and balance. We envision that our Case Managers and team members anticipate offering workshops and mid-week check-ins for our students, while also modeling what these sorts of mindfulness activities might look like to support work at the departmental level, as well. These workshops include: Anxiety, Stress and Attachment; Self-care; Mindfulness for Staff—Addressing Secondary Trauma; and Mindfulness Workshops for Parents and Children.

To complement the SSW and Case Managers, our Attendance and Transportation Coordinators are also conducting outreach to students on a weekly basis to assess challenges with engaging in online learning (including access to technology, childcare challenges, mental health needs, to name a few). Our Attendance and Transportation Coordinators work closely with and provide necessary referrals to Case Managers to further support students and their needs.

Should a minor or adult learner be unresponsive to phone calls, text messages, emails or online learning, the Attendance and Transportation Coordinators, along with Case Managers and/or SSW will initiate safety checks via referral MPD and/or Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA). Our primary communication has been most frequent with CFSA.

As we turn our attention to support for basic needs, the Student Support and Engagement Division will continue to connect students to community-based resources for the provision of basic needs. In particular, The Next Step PCS will continue to steward our connection and relationships with agencies such as the DC Diaper Bank and Martha's Table. We want to be sure to connect our students and their respective families to resources such as food, basic toiletries and the like. We speak more, specifically, about our supports for parenting students in the next portion.

### ***TNS Supports for Parenting Students***

The Student Support and Engagement Division has designed several unique offerings for parenting students, including but not limited to those who participate in our Child Care offerings. The four key examples we have selected to highlight here are as follows: Child Care Specific YouTube Channel; Virtual Classes for Child Care Students; Care Packages; and Virtual Workshops. The Child Care Specific YouTube Channel includes content produced, recorded and posted by members of the Child Care staff members. The focus on fine motor, gross motor, language acquisition, art, math and language arts.

The Virtual Classes would provide an opportunity for parenting students to engage their children in safe social activities via Zoom or Google Classrooms. Our Child Care Staff are engaging children and parents through story

time and providing opportunities for the children and parents to express themselves through diverse activities. With regard to Care Packages, our staff are securing resources and materials to help parents keep their children engaged and excited about learning. These resources have included crayons, glue sticks, markers, construction paper, as well as listings of activities that can be facilitated with the items inside the care package. In addition to these academic tools and resources, SSE leaders have dedicated a day, once a month, to organize and assemble diaper/toiletries boxes for parenting students, to then be shipped directly to their residence.

Lastly, the Virtual Workshops for parents will include topics such as developmental milestones for children and positive behavior management techniques. These sessions are aimed to provide parenting students with information on what is developmentally appropriate for children at varying ages, while also providing resources that are available if the parents notice the child has not yet met the milestone.

Emphasis: As described in our Instructional Delivery and Assessments content, The Next Step PCS maintains an academic program that assesses where students are, highlighting academic areas of focus and develops an individualized approach to instruction to ensure success on the GED and growth in ESL. The identification of academic support is determined and documented as a function of the start of each academic semester. Through our Testing Administration and Supports department, our teachers, instructional coaches and Student Support and Engagement Division will gain insights on each student's academic needs, coupled with the identification of tutors, individualized support plans, supplemental instruction by way of elective courses, and other one-on-one or small group supports as defined by the teacher and an individual student's learning profile.

As we continue to support our adult learners, one of the main obstacles this plan addresses is a readiness to learn. We seek to address, as best as possible, access to and utility of basic needs and supports to ensure our students can learn. Our Student Support and Engagement Division is instrumental in providing case management, as well as mental health resources and supports to equip and empower students as they navigate the unique challenges the pandemic has introduced in their lives. Our Child Care Department also seeks to equip our parenting with an understanding as to how they can best support the continuation of learning, thereby serving as a resource and reinforcement for our Pre K-3-8 counterparts and colleagues.

## **B. Behavior**

**12. Describe the LEA's policy for monitoring student behavior during distance learning. All parts of the distance learning discipline policy must be compliant with applicable local and federal law (e.g., limits on total days excluded, restrictions on reasons a student may be excluded). Your policy must include:**

- **A list of behaviors that could result in a student being excluded from distance learning (e.g., inappropriate conduct on virtual platforms);**
- **The manner in which the LEA will communicate with families of students who are excluded from distance learning; and**
- **The manner in which you will ensure that students who are excluded from distance learning have access to missed work.**

*Schools are expected to implement their normal, in-person discipline policies and procedures when students are on school grounds. Per the [Student Fair Access to School Amendment Act of 2018](#), a suspension is defined as a student not being permitted on school grounds. An exclusion is defined as excluding the student from the school's educational program. Students who are not permitted to participate in synchronous learning must still be allowed to complete all assignments and access all educational materials.*

### ***Behavior***

The Next Step PCS will continue to advance our implementation of our Code of Conduct policies, as described within the The Next Step School Policies Handbook. Restorative practices, collaborative discourse, and ongoing reflection are incorporated into the school culture and adapted in either in-person or distance learning. Students who have missed work can login to their Schoology account and access the Online curriculum with all assignments, lessons, and academic resources for the class that they are assigned. Teachers also connect and check-in with their students on a daily basis to provide additional individualized academic interventions.

Teachers, along with our Case Managers and Attendance and Transportation Coordinators, will work together to reach out to all students consistently. It remains our expectation that the use of Restorative Practices will serve as a key outcome of any necessary behavioral interventions.

We expect that our teachers will still implement classroom norms, and with the support of Case Managers and Service Providers, we will continue to advance these unique characteristics within the virtual setting. Case Managers will remain instrumental in capturing student goals within and outside of the classroom, and we expect that these conversations will continue to advance our proactive approach to behavior management.

## **Special Populations**

### **13. Describe the LEA's plan to serve students with disabilities, including:**

- **A description of how the LEA is maintaining IDEA timelines in collaboration with families and documenting delivered services;**
- **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; and**
- **The manner in which LEA deliver related services for students in distance learning;**
- **The manner in which the LEA will support parent training for students receiving related services through distance learning;**
- **The manner in which LEAs will deliver recovery services to students with disabilities during the 2020-21 school year and how LEAs will communicate those services to families;**
- **The steps LEAs will take to ensure that students with disabilities are assessed upon return to school to determine the nature and severity of the impact of learning loss on their receipt of educational benefit; and**
- **The steps LEAs will take to support the delivery of recovery services to students in the care of the District of Columbia and students experiencing homelessness.**

*LEAs' obligations to serve the District's English Learners (ELs) are outlined in [U.S. Department of Education Fact Sheet](#), [District Municipal Regulations 5-E3101](#), [OSSE's state EL policies and procedures](#), and [DC PCSB EL Services Assurance Letter](#), and [OSSE's Serving English Learners During Distance Learning FAQ](#).*

## *Students with Disabilities*

The Special Education Department at The Next Step PCS maintains a very intentional, collaborative approach to supporting students with disabilities, and best practices for differentiation across all student ability groups. The Special Education teachers collaborate with general education teachers to ensure appropriate accommodations and modifications are made, and, throughout the distance learning and/or hybrid experiences, will continue to determine what additional modifications and/or adjustments can be made to instruction, resources and assessments to best support student learning and achievement.

We note that our Special Education teachers will provide home-based activities (materials to be provided by Special Education teachers, either modified classroom materials or materials specific to a student's IEP goals and objectives), while also providing alternative and/or additional online assessments, when appropriate. This will allow Special Education teachers the ability to monitor student progress by utilizing Education Modified platform and SEDS portal.

As it relates to IEP/evaluation meetings: If personnel are available and parents are agreeable to completing the meetings via distance options (e.g., phone, Zoom, etc.), we will continue to conduct these meetings to the extent possible. If a meeting is not possible, then the special education coordinator should document that a meeting is not possible and set the IEP/evaluation aside for when normal school operations resume.

Our Special Education sessions will be split between online service time—including but not limited to video-chat, Google Docs, Zoom, and the like—, and differentiated/modified home-based activities. The services provided will be in alignment with the total number of sessions outlined in a student's IEP.

As it pertains to related services—Speech/Language, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Social Work, Psychology, and BCBA support—our providers will define and assign weekly tasks and activities for the student. In addition, they are expected to provide email support to parents and students, and direct instruction through video conferencing when appropriate and when possible.

As it pertains to correspondence with students and/or caregivers, we maintain the following expectations for our Special Education Teachers:

- Weekly service time on IEP up to 5 hours per week: 1-2 contacts per week via phone, email or Google Hangouts. Contact information will be documented in the SEDs portal;
- Weekly service time on the IEP of greater than 5 hours per week: 2-3 contacts per week via phone, email or Google Hangouts. Contact information will be documented in the SEDS portal;
- Special Education teachers provide guidance to caregivers via phone and/or email a minimum of twice weekly, providing additional resources as needed;
- Special Education teachers are available via email for questions relating to student learning activities during the school day at designated office hours;
- All related service providers have an aggregate account with our SEDS portal so that they will be able to create Service Trackers for all of the teletherapy sessions with our students. Providers are encouraged to review the following: Getting Started with SEDS: Related Service Provision 101 (webinar recording).

<https://osse.dc.gov/node/1288166>:

- Service Logs should be completed weekly in the SEDs portal. Service Trackers should be completed monthly in the SEDs portal as well as printed, signed and given to the Special Education Coordinator via scan and email;
- Progress Reports, located in SEDS, are due quarterly, for all Related Service Providers and Case managers. The Related Service Provider is responsible for inputting all progress notes in the SEDs portal. Word docs, via email etc. are not acceptable. Gentle reminders will support this effort.

As it pertains to SLPs and School Social Worker, the provider is expected to deliver contact time with the students/caregivers via email, feedback on work completed, via technology platforms, as follows:

- If IEP service is 1x/week, contact time is 1x/week;
- If IEP service is 2x/week, contact time is 2x/week;
- If IEP service is 3 x/week, contact time is 3x/week

It is important to note that the provider will provide home-based materials according to the same structure above (materials to be provided by SLPs and Social Worker, either modified classroom materials or materials specific to a student's IEP goals and objectives). It is also expected that the providers will consult with the Special Education Coordinator.

Our Student Support and Engagement (SSE) Division—Case Managers and School Social Workers—provide various forms of support, in collaboration with the Special Education Coordinator. Specifically, SSE participates in weekly Special Education meetings to review student progress and needs and problem solve approaches to address challenges. These challenges might include the student not being responsive to Related Service Providers, confusion about their schedule as it pertains to services, obtaining necessary resources, including but not limited to a government issued ID in order to access other state services such as WIC, Rehabilitation services, among others. SSE conducts outreach to students and families to assist the Special Education Department in engaging students with their related service providers: OT, Talk therapist/Contracted Social Worker, tutors, Speech Therapist, among others. SSE also participates in IEP meetings and document student and family interactions, in support of the Special Education department.

As it pertains to OT and PT, it is expected that Home-based motor activities are provided by the specialists via technology. The Occupational and Physical Therapists are expected to consult with families and the student's school team via email or phone as follows:

- If IEP service is 1x/week, contact time is 1x/week;
- If IEP service is 2x/week, contact time is 2x/week;
- If IEP service is 3 x/week, contact time is 3x/week

It is also expected that the providers consult with Special Education Coordinator.

As it pertains to assessments of students with disabilities, the Special Education team will need to look at each individual student to determine whether compensatory services are needed. The extent of a student's compensatory



services, if needed, will be an individualized determination made by the team. Some illustrative, non-exclusive elements include:

- If special education and related services could not be modified to a continuous learning/distance learning environment;
- If some special education and related services were modified but did not fully meet the student's education needs;
- The student's IEPs: pre-extended closure, amended, and revised;
- The duration and circumstances of the school closure (e.g. full closure or continuous learning/distance learning).

As guided by our Charter Goals, and the aforementioned content throughout our Continuous Education and School Recovery Plan, The Next Step PCS operates a robust English as Second Language (ESL) curricular focus, in support of our English Language Learners. Our charter goals articulate the manner in which we establish language goals across the four language domains, and our use of TABE CLAS-E, as defined in our response to the Assessments Policy of this Continuous Education and School Recovery Plan, detail how we are able to determine student growth, and thereby create supplemental instructional experiences as well as placement for our ELL students.

As defined in our Instructional Delivery response to this Continuous Education and School Recovery Plan, The Next Step PCS has detailed what synchronous and asynchronous instruction will look like for all learners. To revisit this content, we offer the following as reference: As we consider the design and implementation of our instructional delivery plan, it is important to acknowledge that The Next Step PCS operates three dynamic academic programs—GED in English, GED in Spanish, as well as English as a Second Language (ESL)—in both a Day and Evening Program format. Our instructional delivery plan is designed to meet the needs of students across all three programs.

### ***Instructional Methods, Platforms and Resources***

The Next Step PCS will operate a hybrid approach, of both synchronous and asynchronous learning experiences. These approaches will support both direct and supplemental instruction, as well as interventions to support student achievement based on their individual needs. Our academic experience will be managed and delivered through Schoology, our learning management system (LMS). Schoology serves as an essential tool for our distance learning experience, as well as our in-person learning experience. This LMS represents the electronic hub to store and share information, documents, and manage academic items such as lesson plans, tasks and assignments, formative assessments, as well as links to synchronous sessions.

Our use of Schoology also includes providing students (and teachers) with additional app-based tools to support asynchronous learning experiences, student-led interventions and supplemental instruction: Brain Pop; EdPuzzle; Quizlet; and embedded YouTube resources and tools. Through Schoology, students also have access to Achieve3000 (Spark) for supplemental support in the area of literacy, as well as Study Island, in support of math skills development. Study Island has proven to be a great platform, also, for formative assessments and diagnostics for our GED/TABE students.

Our Talent and Outcomes division, in support of the Academic and Student Support colleagues, built out a unique website to house and support distance learning for our entire community—TNS@Home. This resource provides a single website where students, faculty and staff can access our LMS; where Student Support and Engagement can host virtual programming and share resources; where Management and other leaders can share important announcements and supports. TNS@Home supports the dissemination of information and links to access other sites

and specific classes pertaining to distance learning.

### ***Instructional Experience: Distance Learning Instructional Hours and Engagement***

Students enrolled in the **Day Program at The Next Step PCS** will have access to five hours of instruction on a daily basis, as described below. In addition, these five hours of instruction are complemented with focused sessions on digital literacy, student-led reflective experiences to promote the development of agency, self-management, metacognition and self-efficacy.

The instructional experience for the Day Program at The Next Step PCS includes:

- 90-minute asynchronous, individual student support time and blended learning;
- 90-minute synchronous group lessons/instruction;
- 60-minute synchronous supplemental instruction—specified by passion projects, student-interest courses, electives;
- 60-minute literacy experience;
- End-of-week reflective experiences, to include learning assessments and conferencing cycles—feedback, reflection, restorative practices, group and/or community dialogue sessions.

We acknowledge that the end-of-week reflections might produce content that will result in artifacts that students can showcase as evidence of their academic achievements, as aligned with their individualized goals.

Students enrolled in the **Evening Program at The Next Step PCS** will have access to three hours of instruction on a daily, as described below. In addition, these three hours of instruction are complemented with access to electives provided at the close of the Day Program, and before the start of instruction for the Evening Program. As with the Day Program, instruction is also complemented with focused sessions on digital literacy, student-led reflective experiences to promote the development of agency, self-management, metacognition and self-efficacy.

The instructional experience for the Evening Program at The Next Step PCS includes:

- 60-minute asynchronous, individual student support time and blended learning;
- 60-minute synchronous group lessons/instruction;
- 60-minute synchronous supplemental instruction—specified by passion projects, student-interest courses and/or literacy experiences;
- Mid-week reflective experiences, to include learning assessments and conferencing cycles—feedback, reflection, restorative practices, group and/or community dialogue sessions.

For both the Day and Evening Programs, these asynchronous sessions might include any of the following: video-based lessons; auxiliary instructional technology tools and platforms (educational apps accessible through Schoology, Spark, Study Island); independent student assignments, teacher-created activities and formative assessments; student-directed and produced project-based learning experiences; student-led journaling—application of new knowledge, and/or knowledge transfer. For the execution of the instructional delivery efforts, our instructional team has and continues to utilize the following means to reach and support student achievement and growth: Zoom; WhatsApp; Text Messaging; Phone Calls; YouTube; Google Drive; and, most importantly, Schoology.

To provide even further clarity, our ELL students are placed according to their performance on the TABE-CLAS E. Our instructional program is tailored to the standards and strands associated with each level, and our focus remains growth demonstrated across all language domains. As described throughout our response to the Continuous Education and School Recovery Plan, we are interested in the success of each individual learner, and our ELL students receive comprehensive supports in ESL coursework, ESL electives, and with supplemental instruction led by Instructional Coaches, teachers and tutors.

**14. Describe the LEA’s plan to serve ELs, including:**

- **A description of the EL program model and how it will maintain fidelity across in-person, distance learning and hybrid learning environments;**
- **The manner in which the LEA will set language goals across the four language domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking to advance your EL students’ English proficiency;**
- **The manner in which the LEA will provide language instruction in reading, writing, listening, and speaking to EL students during distance learning/hybrid learning environments by grade and by proficiency level; and**
- **The manner in which the LEA will provide EL students access to academic content by grade and proficiency level.**

*English Language Learners*

The Next Step PCS implements a model of Adult Basic Education and General Education Development preparation courses (ABE/GED) that is designed to meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELLs) at all proficiency levels according to TABE CLAS-E. This effort is executed through our provision of courses in three tracks:

- ABE/GED courses in Spanish;
- ABE/GED courses in English (for English dominant students and students who have demonstrated proficiency in the English language measured by TABE CLAS-E); and
- English as a Second Language (ESL) courses focused on the development of language skills not specifically related to ABE/GED content areas or subjects.

As a school, we follow a student-focused teaching using three core instructional initiatives which all TNS teachers actively implement in the classroom and online—Differentiation, Gradual Release of Responsibility, and Literacy Across the Curriculum. Applying differentiated teaching, for example, teachers not only continue to adapt to the diverse learning needs, styles, and readiness of students but also personalize the delivery and pace of lessons aligning to their proficiency as well as personal situation. Development and practice of literacy domains plus numeracy are embedded in all subject areas.

The services provided by the Student Support and Engagement department are available in English and Spanish. We also have access to interpretation services in the top five mostly spoken languages in the city. This includes communications with parents of minor students when necessary.

## **Technology Policy**

### **15. Describe the LEA's policy for technology use during distance learning, including:**

- **Expectations for student access to devices and technical training;**
- **The manner in which the LEA will assess student/family technology needs;**
- **The supports that will be provided to students who do not have access to internet or devices due to circumstances beyond their control;**
- **The plan for replacing/repairing devices;**
- **Expectations for student access to internet and safeguarding personally identifiable information (PII);**
- **What limitations, if any, you are putting on LEA device use at home (e.g., prohibiting social media, video games, etc.) and how you are enforcing them; and**
- **If/how the school's technology policy differs by grade level.**

## **Technology Policy**

### *Access and Appropriate Use*

The Next Step PCS will continue to work to ensure all students have access to laptops and the Internet. Only authorized students have the privilege of accessing and using The Next Step PCS's technological resources. Access and use is limited to the purposes that are consistent with the instructional, research and administrative goals of the school.

Students are expected to uphold the standards and principles of the school while using the technology resources and are required to respect the rights and privacy of others at all times. Students are prohibited from using any portion of the technology resources to post or transmit any information, including data, text, files, links, software, chat, collaboration, communication or other content that is abusive, disparaging, discriminatory, hostile, combative, threatening, harassing, intimidating, defamatory, pornographic, or obscene. Students who do not respect these standards and expectations may be held in violation of this appropriate use policy.

We have increased our inventory of laptops and supply of Mobile Internet Fidelity (MiFi) devices in order to provide mobile hot-spots for direct Internet access for our students, in support of distance learning. Additionally, we have designated two new faculty leadership roles that focus on digital literacy. Our faculty colleagues have created an outline and suite of programming in support of student access and appropriate use of technology, and the various learning platforms necessary to advance and sustain academic success and access. These resources include virtual training sessions, paper-based instructions (distributed when the device is provided).

For every device provided by the IT department, the IT Manager provides a training session including proper use

and care, for the recipient. This training also includes detailed information for the recipient regarding how they might access technical support for malfunctioning equipment, software or other needs. The IT Manager remains accessible for ongoing support via TNS@Home online platform and our school's website. Students are able to click on the IT Support link and communicate their specific technology-related support needs.

### ***Assessing and Addressing Student Technology Needs***

A collaboration among the Chief Operating Officer, Chief Academic Officer and Chief of Student Support and Engagement helps to define and ensure ongoing assessment of student needs, as it pertains to technological access and appropriate use of devices. With the support of teachers, case managers, and the enrollment team, The Next Step PCS will be able to solicit necessary information to inform technological resources to be distributed to students. As a function of enrollment, all new and returning students will provide detailed information pertaining to their current levels of access to laptops and the Internet. This assessment of students' needs will then inform how we deploy resources. The Chief Operating Officer, Chief Academic Officer and Chief of Student Support and Engagement will report out, weekly, regarding any new needs or concerns that are rising pertaining to access and appropriate use of technology during Management Team and/or staff meetings.

For students who communicate that they do not have access to the Internet and/or a computer, The Next Step PCS will provide them with the appropriate devices to support their access and success in distance learning. Our IT Manager will continue to play an integral role in the distribution and outfitting of these devices to ensure ease of use for the students, including downloading all appropriate software resources and bookmarks to support student learning.

During the month of September, the IT Department, with support from Digital Literacy faculty leads, will have extended office hours on Thursdays each week, from 10:00am—6:00pm. For the remainder of the semester, the IT Department will resume normal office hours on Thursdays, from 3:00pm—6:00pm. During those times, the IT Department will be performing on-site and remote support to students and staff members, which include but is not limited to the following: on-site school technology pick-up; on-site/remote equipment trouble-shooting and support; on-site/remote training on how to use and access school hardware and software; and on-site equipment replacement or software installation.

### ***Repairing and Replacing Devices***

Students at The Next Step PCS who receive electronic devices will be required to return the laptops and MiFis to the school at the close of the academic term, for inspection and ensuring pertinent updating of the equipment. The student will complete a questionnaire upon return of the laptop in order to assist in the assessment of performance of the device. Should the device be reported and assessed as defective beyond the student's control, it will be replaced by the school (and exited the inventory as damaged).

If the device has become defective due to student negligence and/or abuse, students will need to describe the conditions that led to the device's defective state, providing this information to the IT Manager. A follow-up conversation will be led with the student's Case Manager and the IT Manager to better understand the circumstances of the negligence and abuse. If the student is at fault, the student would be expected to pay for the cost of repair or

replacement of the device. The Next Step PCS will replace the device to ensure inventory is accessible for future students and the continuity of learning. The Next Step PCS will reserve the right to refuse lending technological equipment to students and/or staff member with pending damages and debt to the school, unless authorized by the Chief Operating Officer.

***Appropriate Use of Device: Accessing the Internet, Downloads and Safeguarding Personally Identifiable Information (PII)***

The IT Manager at The Next Step PCS, along with an external vendor, continue to maintain active licenses to provide protection and safeguards for our servers, as well as specific protection software—such as Cisco Umbrella and G-Suite Management Console—that safeguards each computer against any hacking of the laptop equipment. Additionally, the device will be equipped with appropriate use software, which, in effect, prohibits any downloads and/or installations of additional apps, software or tools from being added to the device.

All students (and where applicable, parents/guardians) must sign an agreement prohibiting the use of social media, video games, or other recreational activities on the school-provided device. This agreement details the following:

*The Next Step PCS is providing technology to use outside of school grounds which can be retrieved at any given moment by the school. Students and/or parents/guardian are responsible for all the school's equipment issued to them and ensure such equipment remains at all times in good working order. Should any school equipment need repair or replacement it is their responsibility to inform the information technology department.*

- Student and/or parent/guardian recognized they are financially responsible for all school equipment in case of any damaged, lost or stolen;
- Student and/or parent/guardian understand the school is in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), The Next Step PCS filters and monitor at all times the internet content accessed using the school equipment. They understand whether using the equipment at home or school ground, I must follow The Next Step PCS Student Handbook Policy. They recognized they will be held accountable for all the content accessed and downloaded through school equipment;
- The Next Step PCS reserves the right to limit or restrict, without notice, the use of school systems and equipment to inspect, copy, remove or delete any content that represents unauthorized use of this technology, including but not limited to:
  - Damaging or modifying computers, computer systems, or computer networks.
  - Sending, viewing or displaying offensive messages or pictures (including, but not limited to, pornographic, obscene, or sexually explicit material, sexual comments, and jokes or images that would violate school policies).
  - Using obscene language, bullying, harassing, insulting or attacking others.
  - Employing the network for commercial purposes, financial gain, or fraud.
  - Violating copyright laws or trying to pass off material copied from the Internet as your own.
  - Using others passwords or disclosing your password to an unauthorized person.
  - Using provided equipment and resources network to share personal information about yourself or someone else, such as name, phone number, address or photo, without permission from a staff member and parent/guardian.
  - Misrepresentation of The Next Step PCS.
  - Uploading, downloading, or copying software without proper authorization.

**Family Engagement Policy**

**16. Describe the LEA’s policy for partnering with families and communicating about continuous learning and school operations, including:**

- **How often families can anticipate hearing from the school, and through which methods of communication;**
- **How you are soliciting and incorporating student/family input early and repeatedly about continuous learning;**
- **How you will communicate about unanticipated facility closures and the health/safety of the school community;**
- **How you will share expectations and training for family participation in their student’s learning, including trainings for technology;**
- **How you will facilitate introductions to new teachers and classmates at the beginning of the school year;**
- **How the LEA will ensure that students and families are given routine feedback on their work both formally (e.g., report cards and progress reports) and informally (e.g., graded work and comments).**

### **Family Engagement Policy**

The Next Step PCS will continue to deploy a multifaceted outreach approach to reach our students and their respective families. As we define this section of our application, it is important to again reiterate that our students are 16-30 years old, and we acknowledge that many may have networks of support, as we articulate as “natural supports” that are important contributors and investors in their academic pursuits. As we detail this plan, we differentiate message platforms to keep those constituents informed, as an extension of a student’s “family.”

#### ***Frequency and Delivery of Communication from The Next Step PCS***

The Executive Director, with the support of the Management Team, will commit to regular, monthly communication, with a focus on *looking back, looking forward*, to the entire community of The Next Step PCS. This communication will include a review of data highlights, attendance and engagement anecdotes, and unique services/supports provides, as a means of inspiration and resilience. This correspondence will also speak to forthcoming updates, anticipated changes—whether it be policy or practice—including directing stakeholders to any key COVID-19 updates.

In addition to the regular frequency of this correspondence, both the Day and Evening Program principals will write, produce and deliver weekly messages directly to students and their respective families. These messages will be provided in both English and Spanish, and could be featured as either written or video message, or possibly both. These messages will be available for students via TNS@Home webpage, and, whenever possible and appropriate, the link to the message will be pushed out through the text alert system.

The Next Step PCS will utilize as many communication channels as possible, to ensure access, comprehension and action, as a result of content shared among members of our learning community. We intend to continue our subscription to our text alert platform as a wide-reaching, immediate tool for message planks as well as sharing of links for longer messages. In addition, as mentioned above, we intend to utilize video and written messages, and key spokespeople across the organization, including translation wherever possible. Our faculty and staff continue to utilize WhatsApp and text messages to communicate with students, as well as direct outreach via phone calls and emails. We have centralized our Social Media channels to ensure clarity and consistency of messaging across and on behalf of the organization, thereby providing an opportunity for The Next Step PCS to sharing infographics and digestible chunks of information to keep students and families informed.

### ***Soliciting Data and Input from Students***

As we continue to define, implement, assess and refine our approaches for distance learning, and the forthcoming hybrid and transition back to an operating status of 100% in person, The Next Step PCS will continue to implement various opportunities for the collection of data at the student/family-level. One of the first points of data for The Next Step PCS will be the application and enrollment process. As a function of the application, new and returning students will be able to communicate critical needs or considerations that might need the attention of faculty and staff.

At the start of each enrollment process (at the start of each academic semester), the Student Support and Engagement Division implements a strengths-based assessment which assesses where students see themselves, the types of supports that have and what they might feel they would benefit from, thereby informing action for The Next Step PCS. In addition, a cross-functional team is defining a re-entry survey to assess the needs of students upon their return to school. This survey will inform supports for students in and outside of the classroom. These two data sources will help to define individual-level, and school-wide interventions in support of student learning and achievement.

The Next Step PCS will continue to advance our commitment to restorative practices. As such, within individual classrooms, students will be able to share ideas and asks of faculty and staff, to support their success in the return to and continuation of the academic experience. Teachers, too, will provide daily surveys and weekly reflections to inform practice at the classroom level, and the instructional leadership level.

### ***Unanticipated Facility Closure Communication: Health and Safety of the Community***

In the event of a needed closure, the Executive Director will immediately convene the Management Team of The Next Step PCS to activate the appropriate communication channels. With the support of the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Human Resources, there will be a school-wide memo created and disseminated to students, faculty and staff. Following the distribution of this message, the text alert and social media awareness channels will be activated with the same message, including points of contact should students, faculty or staff have questions. The learning community should expect to hear from the Executive Director, and/or proxy from the Management Team regarding any necessary actions or timelines to support the health and safety measures needing to be implemented. Following these channels, the school's main website and TNS@Home will be updated to reflect any shifts in the operating status.

The Management Team of The Next Step PCS would be, in the case of a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the school building, in close contact with the Offices of the Deputy Mayor of Education and DC Health to ensure all appropriate measures and resources are utilized to best support the learning community.

### ***Communication and Supports for Continuous Learning in Distance and Hybrid Models***



All learners will have access to a variety of digital literacy experiences, including but not limited to accessing individual student data to determine progress and places where the student might need greater support. Students will be able to receive and review feedback via the Schoology LMS, as well as direct correspondence from faculty and staff. As described in the Instructional Delivery section, students will receive regular feedback within the course of any given week; this data, and end-of-week reflections will be instrumental in defining any additional supports and/or resources needed to promote academic growth, student achievement and success.

## SY 2020-21 Continuous Learning Plan Assurance Statement

The LEA attests to the following statements regarding **delivery of instruction** (please check all boxes):

- 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 **SY2020-21 attendance** (please check all boxes):

- 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 SY 2020-21.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding **graduation and promotion** for SY 2020-21 (please check all boxes):

*In SY 2019-20, the Council provided relief to high school students including the graduating class of 2019 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Council, through legislation, amended graduation requirements waiving the community service requirement as well as the Carnegie Unit seat time requirement. OSSE will seek this relief for the graduating class of 2021. However, course requirements will remain as outlined in existing regulations.*

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

The LEA attests to the following statements regarding serving **students with disabilities** (please check all boxes):

- Students with disabilities have equitable access to distance 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 the distance learning period. Consistent and clear communication encourages parent and student participation in distance learning and other educational opportunities.
- LEAs will ensure recovery planning and implementation includes identification of strategies to address 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 base-line measurement for recovery service delivery. 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 2020-21 school year, the LEA will conduct school-wide and student-level recovery planning and implementation efforts to address student loss of services. The LEA's recovery planning and implementation will include convening IEP teams, as appropriate, to review the impact of the lapse in services for students with disabilities including making an individualized determination as to whether or not compensatory education services are needed.

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

- The LEA will ensure that EL students are identified in a timely manner as required by state policies and guidance identified in item 14.
- The LEA will develop a plan for delivering its EL program and services to all EL students across both distance learning and in-person learning environments.
- The LEA will monitor implementation to ensure that EL services and access to grade-level content classes are advancing ELs' 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 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 engagement** (please check all boxes):

- The LEA will ensure the translation of family-facing documents into the major languages spoken consistent with D.C. Code §2-1931, et seq.
- The LEA will ensure publication, in a conspicuous place on its website, of the following resources by the beginning of school during SY 2020-21 and provide families awareness of:
  - An accessible, family-facing description of their continuous education plan; and
  - Contact information of key points of contact including technical support, language access, school administrators, faculty, and staff.

**LEA Name:** The Next Step PCS

**LEA Leader Name:** Jonathan D. Mathis

**Date:** 09-30-2020 05:03 PM