

**Appomattox Regional Governor's School**  
**Instructional Learning Plan for the start of the 2020-2021 School Year.**  
**Under Virginia's Phased Reopening Plan**

**Introductory note:**

The Appomattox Regional Governor's School for Arts & Technology (hereafter referred to as ARGs) is a regional Academic Year Governor's School program serving Amelia County, Charles City County, Chesterfield County, Colonial Heights City, Dinwiddie County, Franklin City, Hopewell City, Petersburg City, Powhatan County, Prince George County, Richmond City, Southampton County, Surry County, and Sussex County. The school is closely associated with its fiscal agent, Chesterfield County Public Schools (hereafter referred to as CCPS), and primarily follows policies and procedures of the district. Due to the program's regional nature, there are some areas of divergence from standard procedures of the program and CCPS and governance of the program falls under the authority of the Regional Board (comprised of one member from each participating district School Board) with input from the committee of Superintendents. In the context of the highly specialized curriculum and nature of this program and significant differences from the CCPS Instructional Plan, ARGs is providing this stand-alone Instructional Plan.

**Operational Infrastructure to Support Learning**

**Calendar and Start of School Year**

ARGs will begin instruction on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020, following a virtual schedule. This mode is anticipated to last until at least November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020, which is the end of the first quarter. (See Appendix 1). Further decisions and announcements will be made before that point.

**School Schedule**

In short, the Appomattox Regional Governor's School Virtual Learning Model will require all students and instructors to follow their master schedule from Monday through Thursday and then work independently on Fridays with the possibility of scheduling a Virtual "Office Hours" meeting with their instructors.

See below for details:

| Monday                       | Tuesday                      | Wednesday                    | Thursday                     | Friday  |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| A-Day                        | B-Day                        | A-Day                        | B-Day                        | Office Hours  |
| 8:30 am<br><b>1st Block</b>  | 8:30 am<br><b>5th Block</b>  | 8:30 am<br><b>1st Block</b>  | 8:30 am<br><b>5th Block</b>  | All students work independently on work assigned virtually through Schoology<br><br>Any student can schedule an "Office Hours" virtual consultation with their teacher. |
| 10:00 am<br><b>2nd Block</b> | 10:00 am<br><b>6th Block</b> | 10:00 am<br><b>2nd Block</b> | 10:00 am<br><b>6th Block</b> |   |
| 12:30 pm<br><b>3rd Block</b> | 12:30 pm<br><b>7th Block</b> | 12:30 pm<br><b>3rd Block</b> | 12:30 pm<br><b>7th Block</b> |   |
| 2:00pm<br><b>4th Block</b>   | 2:00pm<br><b>8th Block</b>   | 2:00pm<br><b>4th Block</b>   | 2:00pm<br><b>8th Block</b>   |   |

Each block will operate as follows:

- Students and teachers sign in to Google Meet a few minutes before posted time.
- The teacher takes attendance
- The teacher teaches a 30-minute mini-lesson
- After the mini-lesson, students may sign off and then work independently on work assigned, until time for the commencement of the next block. Alternately, they may arrange to work in groups independently or request a follow-up from their teacher, if availability allows.

Participation in this learning model will be compulsory as all teachers will be fully engaged in teaching students to the best of their ability within the confines of this model.

The Appomattox Regional Governor's School has a Hybrid Learning Plan which may be a possibility as the next phase to returning to learning.

In short, the Appomattox Regional Governor's School Hybrid Learning Model will require all students to attend school for two days of the week, according to their last name, and then work virtually from home for the remaining three days of the week. On Fridays, students will have the possibility of scheduling a Virtual "Office Hours" meeting with their instructors.

See below for details:

| Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday  | Thursday   | Friday   |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| <b>A-Day</b>   | <b>B-Day</b>   | <b>A-Day</b>   | <b>B-Day</b>   | <b>Office Hours</b>  |
| Last Name A-J attend<br><br>A-J Students follow A-day schedule<br><br>Last Name K-Z remain at home and do work assigned on Schoology | Last Name A-J attend<br><br>A-J Students follow B-day schedule<br><br>Last Name K-Z remain at home and do work assigned on Schoology | Last Name K-Z attend<br><br>K-Z Students follow A-day schedule<br><br>Last Name A-J remain at home and do work assigned on Schoology | Last Name K-Z attend<br><br>K-Z Students follow B-day schedule<br><br>Last Name A-J remain at home and do work assigned on Schoology | All students remain at home<br><br>Any student can schedule an "Office Hours" virtual consultation with their teacher.<br><br>Deep antibacterial cleaning will occur |

Participation in this learning model will be compulsory as all teachers will be fully engaged in teaching in-person from Monday to Thursday and ARGs logistical capacity does now include the possibility of a personal virtual choice. Only students and staff who have a verified medical note stating a testing or diagnosis of COVID-19 will be exempt from participating in on-site learning.

### Transportation

Being a Regional Program, students are transported to the Appomattox Regional Governor's School by its 14 participating school divisions. Each school division will be liaised with on a transportation plan once school returns an in-school mode.

### Technology

The Appomattox Regional Governor's school is in the process of transitioning to become a "1-to-1" Chromebook school. We have ordered Chromebooks for

every students and have purchased Schoology and our primary Learning Management System. Teachers will be professionally developed in the usage of Schoology. How to videos will be shared with all parents and students.

The school has made the purchase of Kajeet Hotspots for families who express a challenge in being able to access reliable internet for their student.

### **Systems and processes**

- ARGS will follow and maintain the majority of our existing school procedures, except where specific adjustments are needed due to COVID-19, for staff who enter the building and families for instructional material pickup.
- Course expectations, grading scale, assignments, and other student expectations will mirror normal operations. In terms of curriculum, all instructors have been tasked with focusing on theoretical topics at this time of the year.
- As performance tasks are a central feature to ARGS, special precautions will be taken to allow this work to continue safely through web-conferencing software.

### **Communication**

- Communication will be maintained with each of our participating school districts through email, phone calls, and virtual meetings with our district liaisons, Superintendents, and Regional Board members.
- Communication with parents/families will be maintained through the Schoology platform, virtual community meetings, email, and traditional mailing.
- Communication with students will be through the Schoology platform, virtual community meetings, email, and on-campus communication.

### **Freshmen**

On September 8<sup>th</sup>, the Appomattox Regional Governor's School will hold two in-person freshman orientation sessions for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students and their parents to familiarize them with the school, its personnel, and systems and to complete all entry and registration requirements.

### **New Instruction for All Students**

ARGS has a diverse population when compared to other regional gifted and specialty centres, serving only 9th-12th grade students. ARGS students have been determined as extraordinarily talented in their specific performance field by the competitive application process. ARGS values and attends to students' individual needs with an eclectic approach to curriculum offerings and instructional programs which makes defining a single streamlined approach impossible.

### **New Instruction:**

- All students have been scheduled in the appropriate new courses for this year.
- Each course will feature new instruction following the same core and focus learning areas that traditionally guide instruction at ARGS.
- Pacing and instructional expectations will mirror a typical school year and we anticipate minimal interruptions to instructional progress based on the school's success in the spring of 2020.

### **Equitable support:**

As stated, the student body has a fairly uniform background and instructional ability, but ARGS will appropriately meet accommodations provided in IEP and 504 plans.

- A deep level of technological support will mitigate impact of economic disadvantage.
- Online tutoring options will be available to all students to supplement their lack of direct access to teachers, to any student during the sixty minute independent block or during virtual office hours on Fridays.

### **Professional development**

- Administration has worked with faculty leadership to develop a framework of priorities and best practices for virtual and hybrid instruction, lab practices in the context of COVID-19, and modified group work/student activities.
- This work has generated a set of guidelines which will feature heavily during teacher back to school professional development.
- All returning staff have some familiarity with online course management system. Training on Schoology is provided from ARGS instructional

technology in a self-guided tutorial and a follow up in-person and will be employed with our staff.

- Training regarding health risks and COVID-19 will be provided, as described in our Health Plan submission.
- All staff will receive a virtual professional development in the area of equity in education from a sub group of our strategic plan team who attended the EdEquity training put on by the VDoE.

### **Communication with stakeholders**

- Our instructional and operational plans have been shared with students and families through a series of emails, website postings and publicly available information. Detailed information will be provided to staff and freshman families, in-person.

### **Identification of Instructional Gaps and Student Needs**

#### **Review of Spring 2020 instruction:**

- ARGGS did not have a plan prepared and in-place for transition to online instruction in the spring prior to the Governor's order to close schools. We quickly adapted and provided an option for families to opt-in to graded learning.
- Starting on March 13th, ARGGS implemented virtual classes for all students following asynchronous instruction from faculty.
- Our teachers were able to complete the key required elements in all courses, and considerable success and progress was demonstrated by the students.

### **Identification of Learning Needs**

- Due to the success of our instructional program in the spring (discussed above), we should not be faced with substantial learning gaps associated with COVID-related closures for our returning students. While some gaps in Spring learning will be small, instructors have been asked to modify autumn 2020 learning to cover some of that materials that may not have been "opted in" to.
- Our teachers will be guided to conduct informal assessment to determine levels of loss from the prior school year.

- Students who finished the year with a course grade less than a D were provided virtual tutoring during the summer, through Chesterfield online summer school.

### **Supports for student success and well-being**

- Students will have access to teacher assistance before and after school.
- The School Counseling department will actively provide support to students in-person and through virtual meetings.
- ARGS will continue its student well-being program and related efforts such as the technology/sleep pledge, learning strategy lessons, and growth mindset messaging.
- ARGS is developing its mental and emotional well-being plan by following the template provided by the Virginia Department of Education.

### **Revisions to curriculum, pacing, and instructional delivery**

- The modified format of classes should be expected to slow down instruction to some degree, but we plan to maintain a similar pacing guide compared to past years. Adjustments will be made to depth and practicability of instruction rather than pacing, as ARGS courses traditionally cover content to greater depth than required by SOL, AP, or Dual Enrollment standards.
- The intention is for instructional delivery to adhere as closely as possible to our traditionally high expectations for instruction. This will be achieved by our use of synchronous instruction via live stream of the in-class lesson.

### **Remote Learning**

#### **Continuity of instruction**

- As explained in the previous sections, real-time virtual instruction will be part of our planned instructional delivery.
- If circumstances require a transition to a hybrid learning plan for virtual instruction, ARGS will convert to that plan (see appendix 2) and maintain a normal pace of new instruction.

# Appendix 1: ARGs Academic Year Schedule

## Appomattox Regional Governor's School

2020-2021

| Date           | Event  |
|----------------|--|
| 3-4 Jul        | Holiday - Independence Day   |
| 27-Aug         | New Teacher Workday  |
| 28-Aug         | New Teacher/ Department Heads Workday  |
| 31-Aug - 4 Sep | Teacher Workdays / 2-Sep Staff Professional Development                                |
| 8-Sep          | Freshman First Day of School/Orientation   |
| 9-Sep          | First Day of School (10th, 11th & 12th)  |
| 7-Sep          | Holiday - Labor Day  |
| 16-Oct         | Early Release Students/ Half day staff Professional Development                        |
| 3-Nov          | Student Holiday / Teacher Workday / Parent-Teacher Conferences                         |
| 10-Nov         | Early Release Students/ End of 1st nine weeks (45 instructional days)                  |
| 25-27 Nov      | Holiday - Thanksgiving   |
| 21-Dec - 1-Jan | Winter Break   |
| 18-Jan         | Holiday - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  |
| 25-28 Jan      | Exam Half Days/ Early Release / End of 2nd nine weeks (43 instructional days)          |
| 29-Jan         | Student Holiday / Teacher Workday  |
| 15-Feb         | Holiday - Presidents' Day **   |
| 1-5 Mar        | SOL - English 11 Writing (tentative dates)   |
| 1-Apr          | End of 3rd Nine Weeks (43 instructional days)  |
| 2-Apr          | Student Holiday / Teacher Workday  |
| 5-9 Apr        | Spring Break   |
| 16-Apr         | Early Release Students/ Half day Staff Professional Development                        |
| 30-Apr         | Early Release Students/ Teacher Workday  |
| 3-14 May       | SOLS (tentative dates)   |
| 28-May         | TBD - Holiday (if available from unused snow days)                                     |
| 31-May         | Holiday - Memorial Day   |
| 7-10 Jun       | Senior Exams   |
| 14-17 Jun      | Exam Half Days / Early Release Students/ End of 4th nine weeks (48 instructional days) |
| 18-Jun         | Exam Make-up day/ Teacher Workday/ Graduation  |
|                | 179 Instructional Days   |
|                | 1 Parent/Teacher Conference Day  |
|                | 14 Teacher Workdays & 2 Professional Development                                       |
|                | ** May be used as a makeup day   |
|                | Holidays   |
|                | Teacher Work Week  |
|                | Student Holiday / Teacher Workday or Professional Development                          |
|                | Exam Half Days / Early Release   |
|                | Senior Exams   |
|                | SOLS (tentative dates)   |

Approved 03/12/20  
Amended 7/8/20

## Appendix 2: ARGS optional Hybrid Learning Plan

The Appomattox Regional Governor's School Hybrid Learning Model will require all students to attend school for two days of the week, according to their last name, and then work virtually from home for the remaining three days of the week. On Fridays, students will have the possibility of scheduling a Virtual "Office Hours" meeting with their instructors. See below for details:

| Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday  | Thursday   | Friday  |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| A-Day  | B-Day  | A-Day  | B-Day  | Office Hours  |
| Last Name A-J attend   | Last Name A-J attend   | Last Name K-Z attend   | Last Name K-Z attend   | All students remain at home   |
| A-J Students follow A-day schedule                             | A-J Students follow B-day schedule                             | K-Z Students follow A-day schedule                             | K-Z Students follow B-day schedule                             | Any student can schedule an "Office Hours" virtual consultation with their teacher. |
| Last Name K-Z remain at home and do work assigned on Schoology | Last Name K-Z remain at home and do work assigned on Schoology | Last Name A-J remain at home and do work assigned on Schoology | Last Name A-J remain at home and do work assigned on Schoology | Deep antibacterial cleaning will occur  |

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