



# READY FOR LEARNING PLAN

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# READY FOR LEARNING



## INTRODUCTION

eStem Public Charter School's Ready for Learning Plan is intended to aid in guiding the reopening of our school buildings. This plan was crafted with input from parents, students, teachers, administrators, and district-level staff. The guidelines in this plan are based on *the most recent* guidance from the Arkansas Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and Arkansas Department of Health (ADH). The plan will be regularly updated based on information provided by the ADH, DESE, and applicable federal, state and local agencies.

In order to ensure the continued well-being of our eStem community, the following essential principles have been put in place:

- Create and ensure a safe learning environment for our students and staff based on the most current guidance from the Arkansas Department of Health (ADH).
- Ensure learning continues through blended and virtual instruction using research-based curriculum and data-driven practices.
- Provide support and professional development for faculty and staff in technology, blended and virtual delivery of instruction.
- Provide guidance and support for educators, parents and students in the areas of health, safety, and social emotional learning.
- Engage educators, parents, students, and the community to ensure the success of our students

# ACADEMICS



## CURRICULUM

eStem will implement a blended learning system utilizing online components that are accessible to teachers and students, virtually and face to face. All components are aligned to Arkansas state standards and to the instructional practices and goals of eStem. Learning platforms like Lincoln Learning (K-9) and itsLearning (10-12) will be utilized for blended and virtual students. For organization and ease of use, Google Classroom will be used with added tools to engage the learner, examples of these online tools are Nearpod, Peardeck, Powtoon. On-line curriculum resources like StemScope, In Focus Math, Rocket Math, Newsela, Reading A to Z, and Lexia5 provide opportunities for teachers and students to access lessons both virtually and face to face. These resources provide opportunities for cyclic practice of skills with various media formats, as well as, provide lessons that are individualized for each student that can be accessed virtually or face to face.

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## ASSESSMENT

NWEA provides data that identifies gaps in a student's learning and assists with the creation of an individualized, student-driven learning path through Edgenuity. IXL provides a comprehensive curriculum with real-time diagnostics and analytical data that allow teachers to create personalized lessons and assist with learning gaps. Both assessment programs help identify unfinished learning from the prior year and help plan pathways of learning to address those gaps. Handouts and copied materials will be provided in both a hardcopy and digital copy. Manipulatives and resources used by students in the classroom are provided for students to keep at home. Laptops are distributed to all students as needed. Teachers livestream their lessons in the classroom setting utilizing Zoom, and these lessons will be recorded daily. Recorded lessons will be stored and a shared link gives access to students who may miss that lesson or utilized as a review lesson for additional instruction.

# ACADEMICS



## MODELS OF LEARNING

### TRADITIONAL

This option is full time in-person learning on school campuses. For families who choose to return to school five days a week, all state required safety protocols will be in place to the best of ability - physical distancing, masks, hand-washing and sanitizing, and extensive cleaning measures.

### BLENDED

For the blended learning option, students will receive a combination of on-site learning and virtual learning for the fall 2020 semester. Students will be assigned specific days each week for normal on-site learning at the school building with the remaining days spent participating in classes virtually.

### VIRTUAL

Families who choose the virtual option for their child/children will not send their children to school. The virtual students will be expected to join their teacher and on-site classmates in regularly scheduled zoom classes on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday of each week.

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## LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS (LMS)

eStem Elementary and Junior High Schools use Google Classroom, and eStem High School uses itsLearning. These Learning Management Systems will ensure students have access to learning opportunities anytime and anywhere. Teachers will monitor student learning in Google Classroom (K-9) or ItsLearning (High School) as well as hold in-person and virtual sessions with students in whole group, small group, and/or one-on-one settings. Teachers will provide daily assignments and assessments. Grades will be taken on assignments required by their teacher. During Professional Development, prior to students return, teachers were trained extensively on the use of the appropriate LMS, curriculum resources, and on-line tools, as well as delivering instruction through blended learning. Teachers also received training on the hardware that each classroom was given to provide adequate access for virtual learning; mobile digital camera, document camera, and interactive whiteboard.

# ACADEMICS



## STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Students who receive special services such as Special Education, 504, English Language Learners, or Dyslexia services will receive their instruction in both the virtual and in-person environments. It is important to work with parents and students to identify barriers during this transition.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION

- All students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will receive special education services.
- Parents or guardians are encouraged to contact their child's teacher, school administrator, or Special Education LEA Supervisor with concerns.
- Parents/teachers may request conferences at any time to discuss programming.
- Parent notifications regarding IEPs will follow due process procedures as outlined in procedural safeguards.
- Parents of children who receive special education services will be notified of any district-wide processes or changes as would all students.

### SERVICES

- Resource services will be provided according to a student's IEP. Resource teachers will provide/send modifications to general education teachers. General education teachers are required to implement/apply the modifications to the assigned classwork.
- Co-teachers should plan with the general education teachers in order to assist with instruction and modifications for students. Co-teachers will attend in person and virtual classes to assist special education students.

### THERAPIES

- Speech and OT/PT will be provided according to student IEPs. Tele-therapy will be provided for students who choose the virtual instruction only. A blended approach of tele-therapy and school-based therapy will be provided for students who chose the blended option for classroom instruction.

# ACADEMICS



## SPECIAL EDUCATION, CON'T.

- Therapists will provide/send modifications to the general education teacher.

### OTHER

- There will NOT be off-site field trips during the school year. This directive will be revisited should current conditions regarding the spread of COVID-19 improve during the 2020-21 school year.

## ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)

Students receiving ESOL services will continue to receive those in both the on-site and virtual settings. These services are differentiated based on the student's level of English proficiency as measured with the ELPA 21 Screener or Summative results from 2020. The types of adaptations and modifications individual students receive are articulated in each English Learner's Annual Review. All data and review information is recorded in Ellevation Education. All supports are outlined in the student's Language Proficiency Assessment Committee's (LPAC) plan. Teachers will provide the supports outlined either on-site or virtually for students receiving ESOL services.

## DYSLEXIA

The Dyslexia Intervention programs used by eStem PCS are Connections OG in 3D and Heggerty Phonemic Awareness. Intervention is provided by trained eStem interventionists, whether students are in-person or virtual learners. Several special adaptations are being implemented to continue providing safe, quality instruction. Students with characteristics of dyslexia typically struggle with deficits in phonological awareness. They are unaware of tongue and lip positioning in order to correctly make sounds. This makes it crucial for students to see the interventionist's mouth. To accommodate for this, eStem is providing interventionists with masks that have a clear insert. In non-COVID times, Intervention groups can have up to four students.

# ACADEMICS



## DYSLEXIA, CON'T.

To ensure safety for in-person intervention, divided plexiglass shields have been purchased. The design of the shield separates the interventionist and up to three students. Given eStem's hybrid model of learning, all students (whether blended or 100% virtual), will be virtual at some point during the week. In their virtual environment, students will participate in live instruction with scheduled video Zoom sessions. Desktop computers in the classrooms are being equipped with external cameras and Interventionists are also receiving document cameras to project lesson components to the students at home. Each student is also being provided a Remote Connections Kit. This kit contains an Intervention Binder, magnetic lowercase alphabet letters, a magnetic white board, a plastic multi-sensory canvas and multi-sensory box with lid to practice new sounds and words, a plastic pocket holder to practice handwriting, markers and crayons, and a short vowel book with matching manipulatives. Kits will be distributed to students by their interventionist. In the event of school closure, interventionists are equipped to seamlessly transition all students into 100% virtual learners. eStem is committed to working with families to meet the needs of all students.

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# TECHNOLOGY



## INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

Given eStem's hybrid model of learning, many students (whether blended or 100% virtual), will be virtual at some point during the week. All classrooms will be equipped with web cameras to ensure a seamless transition for students who are learning on-site or virtually. Teachers will utilize Zoom for virtual students to be active participants in daily lessons. All teachers will have the capabilities to share their screen, utilize document cameras virtually, upload new material, and share documents and materials. Lessons will be recorded daily and available for review or if a student is absent. Training in technology resources for teachers will be provided during professional development prior to the start of school and as needed throughout the year. During each school's Virtual Orientation Week, parents and students will have the opportunity to test their technology at home with guidance from their teachers to ensure they are prepared for the start of school.

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## STUDENT DEVICES

We believe it is very important that we ensure every student is equipped with a personal device that he/she will be able to use during virtual learning. eStem does not consider smartphones appropriate devices for virtual learning. We also recommend that the device a student is using for virtual instruction is not shared by anyone else in the home during the school day if at all possible. To help accommodate families, parents had multiple opportunities to request a school laptop for their child and can contact their child's school Director if they should need a device at any point throughout the fall semester. Most of the devices have been distributed so that families could test their technology at home during our Virtual Orientation Week to ensure they are prepared for the start of school. At any time throughout the semester, parents can request a school device to ensure their child's learning is not interrupted due to a lack of technology.



# COMMUNICATION



## HOW WILL WE CONNECT WITH FAMILIES?

Communication between our families and our schools has never been more important than it is now. As we begin the 2020-21 school year, we want to ensure all families have multiple opportunities to stay informed of important information from their child's school. We ask that parents check all contact information in the Home Access Center (HAC) prior to the start of school to ensure that we have the most up-to-date contact information on file. Teachers and school Directors will send out weekly newsletters to communicate important information, reminders, and updates. We will also post important information on our website and social media pages. Parents can also download our school app to receive push notifications, SMS text messages, and voice calls to ensure that they are up-to-date on all necessary information and announcements.

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## HOW WILL WE COMMUNICATE COVID-19 INFORMATION?

For district-wide or school-wide updates and announcements, emails will be sent from school Directors, updates will be posted on our website & social media, and/or text alerts may be sent via our website. For information pertaining to a specific individual, eStem's Point of Contact will work closely with the Arkansas Department of Health for updates and contact tracing to ensure anyone who needs to be notified of possible exposure will be contacted as soon as possible.

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## WHO SHOULD PARENTS CONTACT FOR COVID-19 RELATED MATTERS?

Parents and families should contact their school Director immediately to report any positive COVID-19 cases, possible exposure, or information related to COVID-19 and their family. The school Director will then work with the Chief Operating Officer and Point of Contact for next steps.

# UPDATES



## CONTINUED SAFETY PRACTICES

We will continue the successful practices that have allowed us to continue with on-site learning throughout the 2020-21 school year. These practices include:

- Continued use of face coverings in all buildings
- Physical distancing
- Contact tracing & quarantining due to exposure of students & staff
- Frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing
- Daily cleaning and sanitizing of each building
- Nightly deep cleaning and disinfecting of each building

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## PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Per ADE, PPE (masks, face coverings) is an effective way to minimize exposure to COVID-19 and protect yourself and others. eStem will continue to require the use of face coverings in all buildings. Parents are encouraged to ensure that students have masks when they arrive at school; however, masks will be provided if someone forgets to bring it to school. Masks are not required to match school dress code colors; however, they may not contain any writing, text, phrases, or languages other than the eStem logo.

## PHYSICAL DISTANCING

We will follow CDC's updated recommendation for physical distancing. With universal masking, students will maintain a distance of at least 3 feet in classroom settings. We will continue to follow the CDC's recommendations of social distancing of 6 feet between adults, as well as adults and students, in common areas, when masks can't be worn (such as while eating), during activities with increased inhalation like sports or physical activity, and in community settings outside the classroom.

# UPDATES



## CLOSE CONTACT DETERMINATION

The definition of "close contact" with an individual who has tested positive for COVID-19 is evolving with the ongoing understanding of COVID-19. The CDC defines a close contact as an individual confirmed to have been within six feet for 15 cumulative minutes or longer within a 24 hour period during the infectious period of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19; however additional factors like masking, vaccination status, and prior infection status may affect this determination.

Under this guidance, proper mask wearing may now prevent individuals from being identified as close contacts in the school setting. This means that if both individuals involved in a school exposure (the person who tests positive for COVID-19 and the person exposed to the positive case) were wearing masks correctly at the time of exposure, the individual exposed does not need to quarantine.

Exposed individuals should self-monitor for symptoms and stay home at the first sign of illness. They should also continue to wear a mask at all times to further reduce the likelihood of transmitting the virus. Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 will still be required to isolate at home.

Individual scenarios will be determined in consultation with the district point of contact and the Arkansas Department of Health.

### QUARANTINE OF A CLOSE CONTACT MANDATORY MASK POLICY

BOTH INDIVIDUALS  
WEARING MASKS  
APPROPRIATELY

CLOSE CONTACT  
NOT REQUIRED TO  
QUARANTINE

AT LEAST ONE  
INDIVIDUAL NOT  
MASKED  
APPROPRIATELY

TRADITIONAL  
QUARANTINE  
GUIDELINES  
APPLY

# UPDATES



## EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES/EVENTS

We will continue to offer extra-curricular activities and events and follow all ADH guidance for AAA and non-AAA activities. In the event of a large gathering, such as graduation, we will follow ADH guidance and observe all mitigation strategies, such as masking, physical distancing, limiting attendance, etc. to decrease the risk of virus spread at the event.

## HAND WASHING/SANITIZING & BUILDING CLEANINGS

We will continue to provide hand sanitizing stations at building entrances, provide hand sanitizer to teachers, students, & staff, and provide times during the day for frequent hand washing. General cleaning and disinfection protocols will continue to be followed regularly by all custodial staff members. Deep cleaning and disinfecting protocols will continue to be done nightly, randomly throughout the school day, and if an employee or student has been identified as positive for COVID-19.

## VISITORS/SCREENINGS

We will do our best to conduct all parent conferences, meetings, etc. either by phone or virtually. During a time when this is not possible, all visitors will be required to follow the virus prevention and mitigation requirements we have in place at each building. We will continue to screen any adult who enters the building by taking their temperature and utilizing screening questions. If an individual does not pass the screening, he or she will not be permitted into the building unless they fall under an exemption (fully vaccinated close contact, etc.).

## FEEDBACK

If you have feedback regarding our updated Ready for Learning plan, please click the link below to submit your comments.

[Ready for Learning Feedback Form](#)