

## TAB 1: LEA Details

LEA Name: Digital Pioneers Academy PCS LEA Head of School Name: Mashea Ashton LEA Type: Middle School ; High School Date Generated: 08/31/2023

Background and Purpose The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) required all local education agencies (LEAs) to develop Continuous Education Plans (CEPs) for the 2022-23 school year in order to communicate to OSSE and the public their plan for supporting situational preparedness, student and staff well-being and accelerated learning. For LEAs receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III-American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds, the CEPs also satisfy US Department of Education (USED) requirements for updating plans for a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. LEAs receiving ESSER III-ARP funds must review and update (as necessary) their plan every six months, at a minimum, between the date of publication and Sept. 30, 2023. The plan below has been approved as an update for these purposes. The CEP application is closely aligned to OSSE's Guiding Principles for Continuous Education. These guiding principles are intended to help LEAs develop effective and equitable CEPs that support situational preparedness, student and staff well-being, and accelerated learning for all students, especially those with the most significant learning gaps and students typically furthest from opportunity. To inform the public of LEAs' responses, the CEPs will be publicly posted on OSSE's website and all LEAs and independent schools must share them directly with their families upon approval by OSSE. Additional questions pertaining to the implementation of these plans should be directed to the school and LEA.

## **TAB 2: SUPPORT ACROSS LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

### **1a. PROVISION OF 1:1 LEARNING DEVICES**

1. As of the submission of this plan, the LEA has 900 learning devices.

3. An accurate assessment of current student access to broadband internet/WIFI. (YES/NO)

YES

4. Approximately 80% of our students have access to broadband internet/WIFI at their situational distance place of learning.

5. In the space below, please describe the LEA's plan to provide internet access to students who do not currently have it in the event of the need to move to situational distance learning.

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

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

Scholars will have an assigned chromebook in every class. Chromebooks and student logins will include access to core curriculum resources including Google Classroom, LearnZillion, Zoom and other education resources. The program will offer the core academic content for students through a combination of Google Classroom, LearnZillion and other education resources.

### **1b. COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **1c. COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS**

**i. Family training and support.**

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

- Families will receive distance learning training and support from the school via Zoom.
- We also will have periodic family surveys to collect feedback on how we can continue to, or improve our, support our families
- Because our staff will also be actively involved in distance learning, they will be positioned to identify when specific scholars and families are struggling with distance learning and we individually follow up as needed.

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

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

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

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

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

**Describe the LEA's expectations in the space below.**

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

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

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

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

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

- Virtual staff team huddle (before day with scholars starts)
- Virtual home room or community meeting

- Middle School: ELA, Writing, Math and Computer Science blocks
- High School: ELA, History, Science, Math and Computer Science blocks
- Breaks between class blocks and for lunch
- Asynchronous learning time and small group interventions near the end of the day
- Optional electives

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

### **TAB 3: STUDENT AND STAFF WELLBEING**

**Beyond 2022-23 Health and Safety Plans, OSSE is not asking LEAs to submit further plans for student and staff well-being in the pandemic's impact on the physical, social-emotional, mental and behavioral well-being of those in the community.**

**LEAs should continue to pursue strategies to promote the health of students, staff and families, and OSSE stands ready with assistance.**

### **TAB 4: 2022-23 HEALTH AND SAFETY PLANS**

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

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vfZHaO5Gyq6zwnTlim3jS9isOBE1UTZi\\_DvOmBl28c/edit#](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vfZHaO5Gyq6zwnTlim3jS9isOBE1UTZi_DvOmBl28c/edit#)

### **TAB 5: ACCELERATED LEARNING**

#### **Employing Intentional Strategies for Accelerating Learning**

**e. In the space below, please describe in detail the LEA's approach to implementing each strategy selected above and how it will accelerate student learning.**

Adjusted class/block/bell schedules

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

After-school programming

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

Longer school day

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

Summer programming

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

#### High-impact tutoring

We hope to partner with high-impact tutoring programs in the fall, as well as leverage our special education teachers to ensure high impact opportunities next year.

#### New intervention program or support

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

#### New uses of staff planning time for accelerated learning

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

#### New professional development for staff on accelerated learning

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

#### Additional vendor and/or community partner support

We are partnering with ANet, Whitman Consulting, TNTP, New Leaders, National Summer School initiative, Leaderlab, and CodeHS to build capacity in our leadership team and to support our teachers. We are also partnering with the community to provide our scholars with more enrichment opportunities.

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

##### **Identify:**

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

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

##### **ii. The LEA's plan to address those barriers**

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

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

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

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

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

We are taking a school-wide approach to compensate for the impact of school closures/distance learning with intentional development on best Tier 1 practices (including UDL), our intervention blocks, additional supports (high impact tutoring and afterschool programming). For scholars with IEPs, we will be doing constant data monitoring

(data from intervention program platforms, MAP, and grade-level unit formative assessments) to adjust their individualized learning pathway and necessary supports. We will implement new interventions based on the data to ensure all scholars with IEPs accelerate.

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

We will communicate to families of scholar eligibility as soon as the IEP team has gathered enough data to clearly inform families; we will then follow up with the plan for services and support that has been drafted to get family feedback. Once everyone agrees, we will monitor progress quarterly with progress reports with input from the scholar, general education teachers, special education teachers, related service providers and family members.