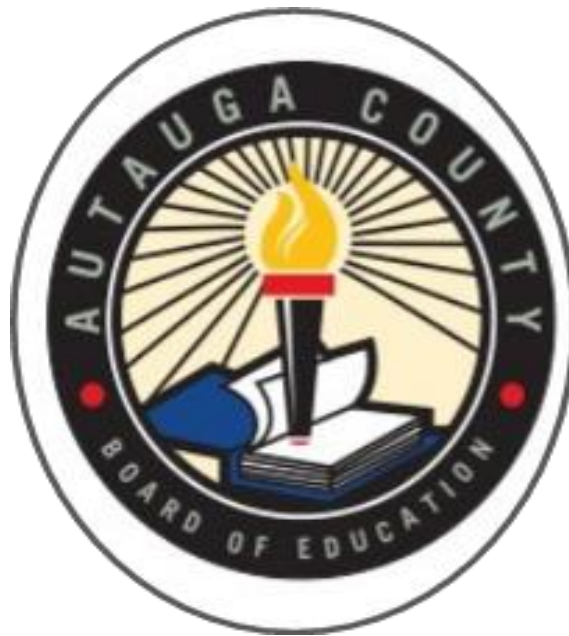# Autauga County Schools
Roadmap to Reopening Schools
School Year 2020-2021

Learning Today…Leading Tomorrow

Autauga County Schools Roadmap to Reopening

This document provides guidance for Autauga County Schools in reopening schools for the 2020-2021 school year in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. This document follows guidance provided by the *Alabama State Department of Education's Roadmap to Opening Schools,* the ADPH, and the CDC. Information from other state plans was also taken into consideration in the development of this plan.

Guiding Principles
These five principles are set forth by the ALSDE.

1. We will be transparent. We will share what we know and what we don't know and be clear about what we can control and what is outside of our control.
2. We will be equitable. We will center decisions on what is best for all students, families, and educators.
3. We will listen. We will bring together devise stakeholders and experts to understand realities on the ground and to surface creative solutions.
4. We will put safety first. We will leverage data and public health leadership to inform the choices we make.
5. We will be decisive. Given the size and scope of the challenge, we must move deliberately and make tough choices. We may need to adapt and if so, we will adapt quickly.

Focus areas of Wellness, Operations & Facilities, and Instruction & Technology are embedded throughout this document as they are addressed through communication, prevention protocols, student transportation, entry/exit of school campus, breakfast/lunch meals, transitions, large group gatherings, student learning environment and pedagogy, physical education and physical activity, vulnerable populations, staff or student illness at school, and health services.

DISCLAIMER
This plan/guidance is intended to offer Autauga County employees guidance in the reopening and operation of Autauga County schools and/or facilities in an effort to prevent and slow the spread of COVID-19 on its local school campuses, facilities and school buses. This document provides a framework with considerations that the District and school leaders can utilize as preparation for the 2020-2021 school year continues.   Adherence to this plan/guidance does not guarantee the prevention and/or spread of the disease.

This document does not, and is not intended to constitute legal advice or other profession advice. This plan is provided for informational and educational purposes only. For legal or other professional advice readers should consult an attorney or other professional advisor.

Student Learning Environments
1. **Modified Traditional**
   Virtual Learning will be incorporated (blended) continuously throughout the traditional learning environment to ensure all staff and students are prepared to transition to virtual learning in response to directives by the Governor of Alabama, Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), local health officials, and the Autauga County Board of Education (ACBOE).

2. **Virtual Learning**
   Students must have Internet connectivity and a device to choose this option over the modified traditional setting. Students approved for a technology hardship exception will be eligible to receive a laptop on loan from Autauga County Schools (ACS).

Attendance will be taken for both learning environments and all Alabama truancy laws apply.
Students working in the virtual learning environment are expected to work at least 6 hours a day/and or complete all their daily work. A waiver of the procedures/requirement for attendance as outlined in the ACBOE Parent-Student Code of Conduct Handbook will be utilized as needed.

In the event that class/school closures occur, virtual learning guidelines will be followed.

Continuity of instruction is a critical factor in the academic success of all students. Transferring from one learning environment to another in the middle of a grading period could adversely affect a student's grade and overall success. Therefore, a request for a change from one learning environment to another must be submitted to the school's leadership team. The school leadership team will carefully consider all requests to change learning environments and determine the best course of action for each individual student.

Autauga County Schools will provide parent information utilizing a variety of communication tools:
- ✓ School Messenger (Superintendent/Principal)
- ✓ Websites (District/School)
- ✓ Social Media (Face Book, etc.)
- ✓ Newsletters

A dedicated email address has been established to allow stakeholders to submit questions regarding the reopening of schools. Central Office staff will address all questions submitted through the following email address. parents@acboe.net

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Roadmap Recommendations
The Alabama State Department of Education (ALSDE) is providing recommended strategies that school systems may choose to implement to protect the health of staff and students and minimize the spread of COVID-19. Recommendations are divided into three categories: • Essential – required by law, policy, or governmental order, or a critical practice. • Guidance – best practices gleaned from research and long-term experience and highly recommended for implementation when feasible. • Consideration – additional best practices informed by emerging research, recent studies, and practical experience to be considered for implementation when feasible. ALSDE recognizes that all recommended guidelines will not be possible in all settings and should be amended based on the needs of each school system and school as appropriate. *Autauga County Board of Education has the authority and flexibility to close school buildings and utilize virtual learning as needed.*

Communication	☐ Utilize a variety of communication tools: ✓ School Messenger (Superintendent/ Principal) ✓ Websites (District/ School) ✓ Social Media (Face Book, etc.) ✓ Newsletters ☐ Establish COVID-19 Task Force comprised of diverse stakeholders to provide input regarding the development and implementation of the Autauga County Roadmap to Reopening ☐ Conduct parent survey about challenges to online learning (devices/connectivity)

	☐ Conduct parent survey about student learning environment choice: Modified Traditional Learning or Virtual Learning ☐ Communicate with families on how to identify COVID-19 symptoms that indicate staff and students must stay at home and encourage families to self-report symptoms to health care officials (Procedures/guidelines forthcoming) ☐ Post information on district and school websites to communicate how to stop the spread, COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols ☐ Post signage on buses and in car pool areas to communicate how to stop the spread, COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols
Prevention Protocols	☐ Inventory and order sanitizing supplies and equipment ☐ Install touch-free hand-sanitizing stations in several designated common areas ☐ Ensure all restrooms are equipped with working dispensers for soap, paper towels, and hand dryers (ensure adequate supply of soap and paper towels) ☐ Teach and reinforce good hygiene measures such as handwashing, covering coughs, and wearing face masks/coverings ☐ Provide hand soap and hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, paper towels, and no-touch trash cans in all bathrooms, classrooms, and frequently trafficked areas ☐ Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread, COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols ☐ Post signage in restrooms on proper hand washing practices ☐ Post signage in areas where masks are required (ex. health room when treating staff/student with COVID-like symptoms, etc.)

- ☐ Clean/disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily and shared objects after each use
- ☐ Provide masks, face shields, and other appropriate PPE to staff
- ☐ Allow students and staff to bring hand sanitizer and face masks/coverings to use from home
- ☐ Take steps to ensure all water systems and features are safe
- ☐ Establish water stations/ allow students to bring water bottles from home
- ☐ Conduct daily cleaning utilizing guidelines from CDC and OSHA (Procedures/guidelines forthcoming)
- ☐ Conduct deep cleaning of schools prior to students/staff returning; schedule additional cleanings during weekends or school holidays/breaks (Procedures/guidelines forthcoming)
- ☐ Limit number of staff utilizing common workspaces (i.e. work room, copier room, etc.)
  - ✓ Ensure staff disinfects common equipment after use
- ☐ Install plastic or glass barriers in reception areas (i.e. office, student center, etc.)

Screening of Staff and Students
- ☐ Implement a three-pronged approach:
  - ✓ **Home**: Communicate to families that home is the initial point of screening each day (Provide parents with information on how to stop the spread, COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols (Procedures/guidelines forthcoming)
  - ✓ **Transportation:** Post signage on buses that any student with COVID-like symptoms may not be transported to school/ Post signage car pool areas indicating any student with COVID-like symptoms may not be dropped off at school
  - ✓ **School:** Train staff in visual screening of students (appearance: flushed cheeks, lack of pallor in cheeks etc.)

Student Transportation	☐ Post signage on buses that any student with COVID-like symptoms may not be transported to school/ Post signage car pool areas indicating any student with COVID-like symptoms may not be dropped off at school ☐ Place floor decals or tape to indicate where students should sit and to mark 6 feet distances in aisles. ☐ Train drivers (and aides) in safety protocol ☐ Adjust route times ☐ Consider chunking route into smaller runs to reduce number on bus ☐ Establish additional stops to adhere to social distancing guidelines ☐ Install plastic, clear safety shield behind driver and /or utilize PPE (face shield) ☐ Provide hand sanitizer for students and bus drivers ☐ Recommend students to wear face masks/coverings upon boarding or exiting bus ☐ Assign spaced seating (to the extent practicable) ☐ Require siblings/members of same household to sit together ☐ Eliminate field trips ☐ Equip buses with cleaning supplies and secure from students ☐ Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces on the bus after each route ☐ Establish protocols for bus stops ☐ Communicate student/family responsibilities at bus stop and on the bus ride ☐ Establish protocol for loading/unloading students to minimize congregation: Load bus from back to front/ unload bus from front to back ☐ Wait to exit the bus, student should stay seated and not congregate in the aisle ☐ Increase air flow/ ventilation, windows should be opened to the maximum extent possible (as weather permits) ☐ Wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfecting a bus/transport vehicle that transported a student, driver, or other passenger that tests positive for COVID-19 or exhibited symptoms of COVID-19

	☐ Provide replacement a bus in the event a bus must be pulled from route service due to a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19

Entry/Exit School Campus	☐ Post signage at car pool areas indicating any student with COVID-like symptoms may not be dropped off at school
	☐ Post signs at all entrances informing all who enter that they must:
	   ✓ Not enter if they have a cough or fever
	   ✓ Maintain a minimum of 6 feet distance from one another
	   ✓ Refrain from shaking hands or engaging in any unnecessary physical contact
	☐ Place hand-sanitizing stations at the entrances of the building and other designated common areas
	☐ Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread, COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocol
	☐ Establish a protocol for students/staff who feel ill/experience symptoms when they come to school (Procedures/guidelines forthcoming)
	☐ Mark spaced lines to enter the building and designate entrance and exit flow paths
	☐ Restrict nonessential visitors and volunteers
	☐ Recommend students to wear face masks/coverings upon entering or exiting building
	☐ Require face masks/coverings for adults who arrive to transport staff or students who become ill while at school (communicate this requirement when contact is made)
	☐ Establish a protocol for student pick/drop up: staggered entry and release (by grade, class, or bus numbers), marked spacing for pickup

Breakfast/Lunch Meals	☐ Determine room capacity based on social distancing guidelines ☐ Mark seating to ensure social distancing ☐ Designate entrances and exits flow paths

	☐ Put tape marks on the floor 6 feet apart to promote social distancing while waiting in line at any time during lunchroom visit (waiting for food, waiting to throw away trash, waiting to exit) ☐ Ensure sneeze guards are in place in the serving area ☐ Prevent student/staff from self-serving food items ☐ Distribute napkins and silverware directly by staff, not for individuals to grab ☐ Use disposable plates, utensils, etc. ☐ Require students to eat with classmates in the lunchroom and not mingle with other classes (secondary) ☐ Prohibit food-sharing ☐ Allow student hand washing before and after meal service ☐ Provide hand sanitizer for students and staff ☐ Plan to serve high-risk students separately from other students ☐ Conduct cleaning of lunchroom high-touch surfaces throughout the school day (Procedures/guidelines forthcoming) ☐ Ensure cleaning of every table between groups of students and between meal serving times ☐ Post signage in classrooms, hallways, and entrances to communicate how to stop the spread, COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocol ☐ Ensure adequate supplies are readily available for staff and students (soap, towels, sanitizer, gloves, masks, disposable aprons, etc.) ☐ Utilize outdoor seating (when feasible) ☐ Utilize large spaces for eating if needed (i.e. gym, multi-purpose rooms, etc.)
Transitions	Plan for class changes/other transitions throughout the school day: ☐ Limit mixing between groups of students

	☐ Provide additional time for transitions to attempt social distancing ☐ Designate areas of the hallway as flow paths to minimize congregation of students ☐ Plan staggered class changes (ex: by hall, odd/even room numbers) to decrease number of students in hallways at one time ☐ Keep cohorts of students with the same staff (all day for young children and as much as feasible for older children) ☐ Provide frequent reminders, including signage, for students and staff to stay at least 6 feet apart from one another ☐ Post directional reminders on the walls and/or floor ☐ Recommend students to wear face masks/coverings during transitions ☐ Create protocol to minimize students being sent on errands to submit or collect items, early dismissals, etc. (e.g. office, lunchroom, media center) ☐ Designate entrance and exit doors for front office, lunchroom, gym, multipurpose rooms, etc. to reduce the chance that people meet face to face ☐ Ensure students traveling to different buildings to receive services are aware of safety protocol (ex. students traveling from school to ACTC) ☐ Ensure employees from traveling between buildings are aware of safety protocol ☐ Prohibit use of lockers ☐ Utilize hand-sanitizing stations placed in halls and other designated common areas
Large Group Gatherings	☐ Discourage the congregation of students in parking lots and common areas ☐ Limit the unnecessary congregations of staff and students ☐ Discontinue activities that involve bringing together large groups of people or activities that do not allow for social distancing, including assemblies, in-person field trips, large groups using playground equipment simultaneously, etc. ☐ Stagger schedule for large group gatherings (i.e. recess, lunch, physical education and assemblies)

	□ Utilize large spaces (i.e. gym, auditoriums, outside spaces-as weather permits) for social distancing □ Follow ACS COVID-19 Athletic Implementation Plan for sporting events and practices □ Follow ACS COVID-19 Extra-Curricular Implementation Plan for after-school events and practices □ Provide frequent reminders, including signage, for students and staff to stay at least 6 feet apart from one another □ Arrange seating to be at least 6 feet apart □ Post directional reminders on the walls and/or floor. □ Designate entrance and exit doors for common areas to reduce the chance that people meet face to face
Student Learning Environments and Pedagogy	**Modified Traditional (Face-to Face) Learning:** □ Utilize parent survey data to identify students participating in traditional learning □ Utilize attendance waiver if needed □ Stagger start times for grade levels/spans to extent possible □ Incorporate virtual learning components in weekly lessons □ Incorporate eLearning days during first semester (September 4 and October 12) □ Consider utilizing modified block schedules (Secondary Schools) □ Arrange desks to increase space in between students to extent possible (Goal: 6 feet) ✓ Turn desks facing in the same direction □ Remove large pieces of furniture from room to allow for social distancing □ Establish distance between teacher's desk and students' desks □ Utilize outdoor space (when feasible) □ Require students to remain seated in the classroom and assign seats (seat assignments will help with contact tracing if needed)

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	☐ Minimize class sizes to extent possible
	☐ Revise activities that combine classes or grade levels
	☐ Ensure students traveling to different buildings to receive services are aware of safety protocol (ex. students traveling from school to ACTC)
	☐ Ensure employees from traveling between buildings are aware of safety protocol
	☐ Implement a home-room stay where the teachers rotate, as opposed to the students (to include library media staff, counseling, music, art, etc. to the extent possible)
	☐ Limit staff that have access to classrooms-instructional purposes (student interns are allowed and will follow all safety protocol established by the school)
	☐ Ensure to greatest extent practicable that staff wear masks/face coverings –covering nostrils and mouth at all times when in regular interaction within 6 feet of students (consider appropriateness based on individual needs: age, medical conditions, etc.)
	☐ Utilize face shield for interaction that requires student to see teacher's mouth as part of instruction
	☐ Utilize individual storage bins for schools supplies to eliminate community share
	☐ Prohibit use of lockers
	☐ Utilize virtual lab experiences or teacher demonstrations as much as possible
	☐ Ensure adequate art supplies or educational tools to minimize sharing
	☐ When sharing is necessary, minimize the numbers of students having contact and teach disinfecting techniques
	☐ Limit physical interaction through partner or group work
	☐ Issue each student their own set of textbooks (refrain from using classroom sets of textbooks)
	☐ Utilize large spaces for instruction (i.e. gym, library, multipurpose room, etc)
	☐ Clean and sanitize frequent touch areas often throughout day
	☐ Minimize movement within the classroom
	☐ Teach and remind students of good hygiene practices

☐ Utilize Alabama Teaching and Learning Framework (Refer to framework)

Identifying and Addressing Learning Gaps:
- ☐ Utilize Performance Series, Early Reading and Math assessments and other benchmarks to identify learning gaps
- ☐ Notify families regarding students who have been identified with reading deficiencies within 15 days of identification (in accordance with the Alabama Literacy Act)
- ☐ Utilize intervention program to address learning gaps
- ☐ Establish and implement tutoring (after-school, Saturday school , summer programs) to address learning gaps

Virtual Learning
- ☐ Utilize parent survey data, health needs, a virtual learning criteria to identify students participating in online learning
- ☐ Inform parents on how to enroll students in virtual learning
- ☐ Ensure devices are provided to special populations first then to other students as needed and available
- ☐ Provide training to staff on how to use Learning Management System (LMS): Schoology for teaching
- ☐ Provide training to parents on how to use Learning Management System (LMS): Schoology for learning
- ☐ Provide training to staff on accessing and using course/subject content provided by the ALSDE
- ☐ Implement eLearning days during the first semester (staff reports to schools) (September 4 and October 12)
- ☐ Consult with Board attorney, CSFO, human resources, and others in reviewing and amending any staffing policies or procedures
- ☐ Assign Virtual Teaching Staff will be assigned based on student needs

	☐ Utilize attendance waiver if needed
	☐ Utilize Alabama Teaching and Learning Framework (Refer to framework)
	Identifying and Addressing Learning Gaps:
	☐ Utilize Performance Series, Early Reading and Math assessments and other benchmarks to identify learning gaps
	☐ Require students to report to designated location to take benchmark assessments
	☐ Notify families regarding students who have been identified with reading deficiencies within 15 days of identification (in accordance with the Alabama Literacy Act)
	☐ Utilize intervention program to address learning gaps
Physical Education and Physical Activity	Physical Education
	☐ Reorganize to allow for smaller classes and social distancing (Goal: 6 feet).
	☐ Alternate schedule - minimize numbers of students in gym, require social distancing (Goal: 6 feet)
	☐ Designate entrance and exits-if available, utilize outside entry doors as much as possible
	☐ Schedule outdoor activities as much as possible as allowed by weather conditions
	☐ Use partitions, cones, etc. in open spaces; utilize markings on gym floor/wall/field (student sections/work stations) to ensure social distancing or congregating of students
	☐ Manage social distancing when moving students to gym/field.
	☐ Disinfect equipment between classes
	☐ Students disinfect hands in and out of PE class (hand-sanitizing stations)
	☐ Prohibit use of Locker Rooms. (utilize hallway restrooms if necessary)
	☐ Refrain from requiring students to dress out
	☐ Utilize technology platforms for concepts and skills relating to each standard
	☐ Ensure teachers have access to technology to broadcast instruction due to increased social distancing (ex. megaphone or microphone)

	☐ Ensure teachers have the ability to communicate for safety purposes (ex. walkie-talkie).
	☐ Eliminate games and sport activities that require close guarding and potential contact with another player:
	✓ Provide lessons that include no contact activities and no or limited equipment (e.g. shadow tag, jumping rope, running, etc.)
	✓ Set-up workstation equipment with consideration of strategies for social distancing throughout activity
	☐ Conduct Varsity Athletics: Refer to the ACS COVID-19 Athletic Implementation Plan
	☐ Inform students that they should wear clothing that is appropriate for weather conditions, allows for full movement and safe for participation when scheduled for physical education
	Physical Activity
	☐ Alternate recess to minimize the numbers of students on the playground, require social distancing, and disinfect equipment between classes
	☐ Refrain from using larger playground equipment that cannot be disinfected between uses until social distancing requirement can be eased
	☐ Utilize classroom activities (energizers) that so that students can stay at or near their assigned desks
	☐ Provide regular classroom breaks for outdoor /hallway walking and movement activities
Vulnerable Populations	☐ Survey families with vulnerable children to gauge their intentions in returning to a traditional school setting while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws

	☐ Review and update as needed all current individualized plans (i.e. IEP, 504, Healthcare) to decrease their risk for exposure to COVID-19
	☐ Provide remote/distance learning opportunities for vulnerable student populations in consultation with parents and public health officials
	☐ Survey at-risk staff members to gauge their intentions in returning to work while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws
	☐ Consult with local board attorneys and district human resources officials to offer reasonable accommodations for vulnerable personnel
	☐ Adhere to FERPA and HIPPA requirements
	☐ Adhere to state and federal employment law and extended leave allowances
	☐ Offer an Employee Assistance Program to all staff members
Staff or Student Illness at School	☐ Implement the ACS COVID-19 Recovery Plan
	☐ Utilize additional health room to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms (ensure adequate supervision of an isolated student or staff member)
	☐ Use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions when caring for sick people (school nurses and other healthcare providers)
	☐ Notify local health officials, staff, and families immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality consistent with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable federal and state privacy laws
	☐ Close off areas used by a sick person and do not use before cleaning and disinfection. ✓ Wait 24 hours before you clean and disinfect. ✓ If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. ✓ Ensure safe and correct application of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children

	☐ Advise sick staff members and children not to return until they have met state ADPH criteria to discontinue home isolation (Procedures/guidelines forthcoming) ☐ Inform those who have had close contact to a person diagnosed with COVID-19 to stay home and follow state ADPH guidance if symptoms develop. If a person does not have symptoms, follow appropriate state ADPH guidance for home quarantine
Health Services	☐ Train nursing personnel in safety protocol (Procedures/guidelines forthcoming) ☐ Train school staff in safety protocol (Procedures/guidelines forthcoming) ☐ Review and update as needed all current individualized plans (i.e. IEP, 504, Healthcare) to decrease their risk for exposure to COVID-19 ☐ Create protocol for when students should go to the nurse's office ☐ Provide small first aid kit (Ziploc bag) for teachers with Band-Aids, 4x4 gauze, gloves, and other pertinent supplies for minor first aid to prevent high traffic in nurse's office) ☐ Provide frequent reminders, including signage, for students and staff to stay at least 6 feet apart from one another when feasible ☐ Space seating to be at least 6 feet apart for nursing staff and waiting areas ☐ Post directional reminders on the walls and/or floor ☐ Establish an additional health room to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms (ensure adequate supervision of an isolated student or staff member) ☐ Monitor compliance of guidelines for health room (Refer to ALSDE Health Room checklist) ☐ Communicate to families that home is the initial point of screening each day (Provide parents with information on how to stop the spread, COVID-19 symptoms, preventative measures (including staying home when sick), good hygiene, and school/district specific protocols (Procedures/guidelines forthcoming) ☐ Designate a mental health liaison (school-based who will work with the district, local public health agencies, and community partners)

	☐ Require a physician release before an employee or student who was diagnosed with COVID-19 or flu returns to work or school ☐ Stay current and knowledgeable of local health department, ADPH, and CDC guidance regarding the most current COVID-19 guidance ☐ Notify local, district and state personnel of confirmed positive cases of student or staff and communicate next steps (Refer to Notification Chart in ACS COVID-19 Recovery Plan)