



DCPS Outdoor Instructional Programming Guidance

Updated March 17, 2021

Overview

Outdoor instructional programming is a promising strategy for DC Public Schools (DCPS) as we prepare for Term 4, Summer 2021, and SY21-22. This document is focused on plans for Term 4 and summer. While we encourage schools to take advantage of this opportunity to enhance the student's experience in current programming, adopting outdoor instructional programming is optional for schools. We are cognizant of the operational lift this can be, particularly if used to implement a completely new instructional model, and it is important to continue to prioritize stability and consistency of programming into Term 4.

This document provides key guidance on relevant outdoor instructional programming topics and a menu of options for schools to support schools with successfully implementing outdoor instructional programming.

Before moving forward with an outdoor instructional plan, there are several key factors to evaluate and consider as part of the Recovery Community Corps (RCC) process and internally with school staff:

1. Determine your program structure.
2. Determine staff availability.
3. Determine student/family interest.
4. Understand schedule and cohort implications.
5. Understand operational requirements and resource needs.

This document includes overarching considerations and sample program models with considerations specific to each model.

Program Options/Schedules

- Outdoor learning can range from a short period of time outdoors, during which all student cohorts have the ability to experience outdoor education, to a full day, dedicated outdoor classroom experience for students. A list of sample program types can be found below.
- For Term 4, there will be limited to no outdoor technology available for students and staff. If schools are interested in outdoor learning, they should plan their approach around low to no technology access.
- All proposed special education programming should be reviewed by the Division of Specialized Instruction through your instructional superintendent prior to implementation.
- Schools need to consider outdoor space availability and use due to students' recess and outdoor Physical Education (PE) needs.
- If you are interested in a Student Support Center (SSC) model to support virtual learners, please contact your instructional superintendent for review and approval of your proposed plan.



Staffing Considerations

- DCPS staff will be responsible for staffing all non-SSC outdoor learning programs.
- DCPS cannot require staff members to support the outdoor learning program for half- and full-day options.
- All staff opting to support a dedicated half- or full-day outdoor learning classroom must volunteer on their own to support.
- The ability for a school to offer outdoor learning relies upon staffing considerations outlined above.

Student Registration Considerations

- When planning for outdoor programming, consider taking advantage of outdoor spaces for existing cohorts of IPL and CARE. If existing IPL and CARE classrooms use outdoor spaces for Health and Physical Education (Model #1) or for Rotational Outdoor Instruction (Model #2), then family permission is not required, however families should be notified of the outdoor scheduling components.
- If using outdoor spaces to *add* IPL seats in which students will be outside for half days (Model #3) or full days (Model #4), then schools should use existing IPL waitlists and extend outdoor IPL seat offers to the next students on the waitlist in the relevant grade. When making seat offers for outdoor IPL seats under Model #3 or Model #4, schools should ensure families are aware of the outdoor learning component.

Operations

- In planning for outdoor instruction programming, previously issued cohort guidance must be followed, please reference “Outdoor Space Use” section.
 - If schools plan to utilize corresponding indoor space for outdoor cohorts during inclement weather, a plan must be in place to safely transition students inside.
- All staff and students will still be required to follow entry health screening procedures.
- Social distancing must be adhered to in the outdoor setting, for suggested outdoor classroom configurations, please [view this resource for suggestions](#). The OCOO Facilities team can support with space planning for your specific school context.
- Staff and students must wear face masks as outlined in the Personal Protective Equipment Use Policy.
- For the non-rotational model options, food will be provided outdoors.
- Inclement weather decisions will be made by DCPS Central Office and will be communicated in accordance with the inclement weather protocol, but broadly, outdoor instructional programming must adhere to the following weather protocol:
 - During times of cold temperatures, precautions to prevent cold related illness will be taken. If temperatures are below 35°F, outdoor instructional programming will be pivoted indoors. Schools should identify a corresponding indoor classroom for use during inclement weather.
 - During times of heat, precautions to prevent heat related illness should be taken for all outdoor activities. DCPS will follow Air Quality Index (AQI) which encourages:



- 80-90°F: Outdoor activities allowed.
- 90-100°F: Outdoor activities to include rest in shade and water breaks every 15 minutes.
- 100+°F: No outdoor activities.

Outdoor Instructional Programming Models & Considerations

DCPS is proposing four primary outdoor instruction models:

1. Health & Physical Education Outdoor Instruction Model
2. Rotational Outdoor Instruction Model
3. Half-Day Outdoor Instruction Model
4. Full Day Outdoor Instruction Model

Different outdoor instructional options support different outdoor learning goals, ranging from support of single outdoor classes to full- day outdoor learning. Cost to support each classroom model ranges from approximately \$2,000 to \$10,000 per classroom.

1) Health and Physical Education (HPE) Outdoor Instruction Model

At present, there are no additional procurement needs for HPE outdoor learning.

2) Rotational Outdoor Instruction Model

This option builds on previously issued DCPS and OSSE guidance related to outdoor learning opportunities for students, and it is designed for students in “in-building” programs to rotate through the outdoor learning area like a traditional inner-core rotation. Operationally, students would spend much of their day in an indoor classroom, but sections would rotate through outdoor learning areas. There are health and wellbeing benefits to being outside, and this option provides the most flexibility and ensures that all students have equal access to outdoor learning opportunities.

TEAMS	CONSIDERATIONS			
Instructional	IPL: Teachers would plan for scheduled time for meaningful, non-tech learning and engagement outdoors. May not work for combined model classrooms.	CARE: Not allowed with this option given technology limitations.	SEAD: N/A due to lack of tech, unless this is outside of regularly scheduled class times to support students.	SELF-CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS: Must be reviewed by the Division of Specialized Instruction prior to implementation.
Scheduling	Outdoor learning would be scheduled on a rotation, similar to traditional inner-core classes.			
Staffing	In-building staff would rotate with the students.			



Student Selection	No new students added. Existing IPL/CARE students will rotate through.
Operations	<p>For details on the required supplies and furniture to support the rotational outdoor instruction model, please reference the Cost Estimates -Rotational Outdoor Learning Model section. Schools are welcome to purchase additional items that may best support their outdoor programming.</p> <p>This model does not include additional tent procurement as a requirement and is heavily influenced by inclement weather. In the event of inclement weather, the class would pivot to their assigned indoor space for instruction.</p>

3) Half Day Outdoor Instruction Model

This option increases the time outdoors for a designated cohort of students and is designed for students to be outdoors for approximately half of the day. Bathroom breaks will be provided indoors.

TEAMS	CONSIDERATIONS			
Instructional	IPL: This model will work for hybrid or fully in person classrooms. It will not work for combined model, due to lack of tech access outdoors. Teachers will need to rely on paper-based materials.	CARE: Not allowed with this option given technology limitations.	SEAD: N/A due to lack of tech, unless this is outside of regularly scheduled class times to support students. (e.g. half day Wednesdays)	SELF- CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS: Must be reviewed by the Division of Specialized Instruction prior to implementation.
Scheduling	Students will be scheduled for half-day programming. The rest of their learning day would be virtual or asynchronous.			
Staffing	WTU staff are required to staff this program type, and they must volunteer to support this effort.			
Student Selection	Schools should offer half day outdoor IPL seats to the next students on the IPL waitlists. Families should be informed of the outdoor learning components when receiving the offer. OSSE transportation is not available for half day programming and that should be accounted for in planning.			
Operations	For details on the required supplies and furniture to support the half-day outdoor instruction model, please reference the Outdoor Instruction Models- Classroom Cost			



	<p><u>Estimate</u> section. Schools are welcome to purchase additional items that may best support their outdoor programming.</p> <p>This model requires procurement of a tent to support inclement weather. This model can proceed with outdoor instruction during rain but schools should pivot to learning indoors in the presence of thunder or lightening. The class cohort must have an assigned indoor space for instruction.</p>
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4) Full Day Outdoor Instruction Model

This option is designed for students in a particular cohort to be outdoors for the entire school day; bathroom breaks would be indoors.

TEAMS	CONSIDERATIONS			
Instructional	<p>IPL: Outdoor learning is possible for hybrid or fully in person elementary classrooms. It will not work for combined model, due to lack of technology access outdoors. Teachers will need to rely on paper-based materials. Would likely not be possible for secondary unless space allows for at least 4 cohorts so students can rotate to their 4 classes.</p>	<p>CARE: Not feasible given technology limitations.</p>	<p>SEAD: N/A due to lack of tech.</p>	<p>SELF- CONTAINED SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS: Must be reviewed by the Division of Specialized Instruction prior to implementation.</p>
Scheduling	<p>Students would be scheduled for a full day of instruction outdoors. This may be a half day on Wednesday to account for inner core courses that are not scheduled to take place in person. Students will not have access to devices outdoors.</p>			
Staffing	<p>WTU staff are required to staff this program type, and they must volunteer to support this effort.</p>			



Student Selection	Schools should offer full day outdoor IPL seats to the next students on the IPL waitlists. Families should be informed of the outdoor learning components when receiving the offer.
Operations	<p>For details on the required supplies and furniture to support the full-day outdoor instruction mode, please reference the Outdoor Instruction Models- Classroom Cost Estimate section. Schools are welcome to purchase additional items that may best support their outdoor programming.</p> <p>This model requires procurement of a tent to support inclement weather. This model should proceed with outdoor instruction in the event of rain. However, because this model is full day outdoor instruction, class cohorts may not have an assigned indoor space for instruction, so these classes must be cancelled and pivoted to virtual learning if there is inclement weather that would not support safe outdoor learning. Schools could utilize a predetermined indoor space if one is available during inclement weather.</p>

Outdoor Instruction Models – Classroom Cost Estimates

The below tables estimate costs for one outdoor classroom comprised of 11 students and 1 staff member per outdoor instruction model. Costs estimates are broken down by elementary vs. secondary grade levels.

Elementary Grades- Estimated Costs per Outdoor Instruction Classroom Model

1. Elementary Health & Physical Education Outdoor Instruction Model

There are no additional procurement considerations or costs to support HPE outdoor learning.

2. Elementary Rotational Outdoor Instruction Model

At a minimum, to support a rotational outdoor instruction model, schools must provide student and staff seating surfaces, student and staff working surfaces, a storage cart (for supplies), and funds for miscellaneous supplies, such as sunscreen. Additional items, such as whiteboards are suggested. Procurement of these supplies is anticipated to cost around \$2,500 per rotational outdoor instruction classroom. The linked items below are of the material and quality recommended by the OCOO Facilities team and costs are estimates based on the current market. All referenced items are examples and schools are encouraged to buy comparable products.

Item	Cost	Quantity	Total	Referenced Items
Portable 2-side Whiteboard	\$250	1	\$250	Whiteboard
Student Seat— Carpet Squares	\$150	1 (set of 24)	\$150	Carpet For Kids Carpet Kits On The Go - Squares *schools can elect to procure additional seating options
Student Work Surface – Lap Desk	\$35	11	\$385	ECR4Kids Surf Portable Work Surface
Staff Seating	\$160	1 (set of 4)	\$160	Entourage Stack Chairs



Staff Work Surface	\$249	1	\$249	Sky Square Table 31 inch
Storage	\$445	1	\$445	Smith System Utility Cart
Misc. Supplies Cost	\$300	N/A	\$300	Additional items to support programming, i.e., supplies, sunscreen, etc.
Total Estimated Classroom Costs			\$1,939	
Total + 20% shipping, delivery, labor			\$2,327	

3. Elementary Half- Day & Full- Day Instruction Model

At a minimum, to support a half-day outdoor instruction model, schools must provide student and staff seating surfaces, student and staff working surfaces, a storage cart (for supplies), a tent, space heaters, and funds for miscellaneous supplies, such as sunscreen. Additional items, such as whiteboards are suggested. Procurement of these supplies is anticipated to cost around \$9,400 per half-day or full-day outdoor instruction classroom. The linked items below are of the material and quality recommended by the OCOO Facilities team and costs are estimates based on the current market. All referenced items are examples and schools are encouraged to buy comparable products.

Item	Cost	Quantity	Total	Referenced Items
Portable, 2-sided Whiteboard	\$250	1	\$250	Whiteboard
Canopy Tent 20' x 30'	\$3522	1	\$3522	20x30 Frame Tent
Student Seating – Stools (hexagonal)	\$150	11	\$1650	Tenjam Large Hexagon StackFLEX
Carpet Squares	\$150	1 (set of 24)	\$150	Carpet For Kids Carpet Kits On The Go - Squares
Student Work Surface – Lap Desk	\$35	11	\$385	ECR4Kids Surf Portable Work Surface
Staff Seating	\$160	1 (set of 4)	\$160	Entourage Stack Chairs
Staff Work Surface	\$249	1	\$249	Sky Square Table 31 inch
Storage	\$445	1	\$445	Smith System Utility Cart
Propane Space Heater	\$122	3	\$366	Propane Space Heater
Misc. Supplies Cost	\$500	N/A	\$500	Additional items to support programming, i.e., supplies, propane sunscreen, etc.
Total Estimated Classroom Cost			\$7,677	
Total + 20% shipping, delivery, labor			\$9,212	

Secondary Grades- Estimated Costs per Outdoor Instruction Classroom Model

1. Secondary Health & Physical Education Outdoor Instruction Model

There are no additional procurement considerations or costs to support HPE outdoor learning.



2. Secondary Rotational Outdoor Instruction Model

At a minimum, to support a rotational outdoor instruction model, schools must provide student and staff seating surfaces, student and staff working surfaces, a storage cart (for supplies), and funds for miscellaneous supplies, such as sunscreen. Additional items, such as whiteboards are suggested. Procurement of these supplies is anticipated to cost around \$5,700 per rotational outdoor instruction classroom. The linked items below are of the material and quality recommended by the OCOO Facilities team and costs are estimates based on the current market. All referenced items are examples and schools are encouraged to buy comparable products.

Item	Cost	Quantity	Total	Referenced Items
Portable 2-side Whiteboard	\$250	1	\$250	Whiteboard
Student Seating – Chairs	\$160	3 (set of 4)	\$480	Entourage Stack Chairs To add seating options, schools should also consider a few: MooreCo Hierarchy Height-Adjustable Grow Stools (\$160/stool)
Student Work Surfaces	\$249	11	\$2739	Sky Square Table 31 inch
Staff Seating	\$160	1 (set of 4)	\$160	Entourage Stack Chairs
Staff Work Surface	\$249	1	\$249	Sky Square Table 31 inch
Storage	\$445	1	\$445	Smith System Utility Cart
Misc. Supplies Cost	\$300	N/A	\$300	Additional items to support programming, i.e., supplies, sunscreen, etc.
Total Estimated Classroom Cost			\$4,623	
Total + 20% shipping, deliver, labor			\$5,548	

3. Secondary Half-day & Full-day Instruction Model

At a minimum, to support a half-day outdoor instruction model, schools must provide student and staff seating surfaces, student and staff working surfaces, a storage cart (for supplies), a tent, space heaters, and funds for miscellaneous supplies, such as sunscreen. Additional items, such as whiteboards are suggested. . Additional items, such as whiteboards are suggested. Procurement of these supplies is anticipated to cost around \$10,400 per half-day or full day outdoor instruction classroom. The linked items below are of the material and quality recommended by the OCOO Facilities team and costs are estimates based on the current market. All referenced items are examples and students are encouraged to buy comparable products.

Item	Cost	Quantity	Total	Referenced Items
Portable, 2-sided Whiteboard	\$250	1	\$250	Whiteboard
Canopy Tent 20' x 30'	\$3522	1	\$3522	20x30 Frame Tent



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				*We recommend exploring viability of rentals
Student Seating – Chairs	\$160	3 (set of 4)	\$480	Entourage Stack Chairs To add seating options, schools should also consider a few: MooreCo Hierarchy Height-Adjustable Grow Stools (\$160/stool)
Student Work Surface - Tables	\$249	11	\$2739	Sky Square Table 31 inch
Staff Seating	\$160	1 (set of 4)	\$160	Entourage Stack Chairs
Staff Work Surface	\$249	1	\$249	Sky Square Table 31 inch
Storage	\$445	1	\$445	Smith System Utility Cart
Propane Space Heater	\$122	3	\$366	Propane Space Heater
Misc. Supplies Cost	\$500	N/A	\$500	Additional items to support programming, i.e., supplies, propane, sunscreen, etc.
Total Estimated Classroom Cost			\$8,711	
Total + 20% shipping, delivery, labor			\$10,453	