

**Health Related Closure
Preparedness &
Continuity of Operations Plan**



March 2020

Guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education.

On March 2, the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) published guidance for childcare facilities and K-12 schools regarding the impact that the current outbreak of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) might have on their communities. That guidance is available on the NJDOH's COVID-19 Information for Schools and Businesses webpage at https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/covid2019_schoolbusiness.shtml, along with updates, and was disseminated by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) via special Broadcast on March 3, 2020 and updates can be found at <https://www.nj.gov/education/topics/index.shtml>. The guidance emphasizes that the most important thing for schools to do is plan and prepare. Among other planning procedures, the guidance advises that schools may be asked to close preemptively or reactively, therefore schools should make plans for what to do if there are recommendations for closing or cancelling events.

NJDOH guidance identifies school closure as a potential strategy to limit transmission within a community. In the event a board of education is provided a written directive by either the NJDOH or the health officer of the jurisdiction to institute a public health-related closure, the board of education may utilize home instruction to provide instructional services to enrolled students. The provision of home instruction services should be guided by N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1 and may include direct services, online instruction, services provided through contract with another district board of education, or any other means developed by the district to meet the needs of its students. Any day in which students impacted by a public health-related closure have access to home instruction services provided consistent with the guidance in this memo will count as a day in which the board of education has provided public school facilities toward its compliance with the 180-day requirement in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.

To be clear, this flexibility to count a day on which public school facilities are closed toward the board of education's statutory 180-day requirement applies strictly to public health-related school closures and not to any other type of closure or other days on which public school facilities are not made available. Closures made absent a written directive from either the NJDOH or the health officer of the jurisdiction will not count.

All boards of education should develop a school health-related closure preparedness plan to provide home instruction in the event of such a closure. The planned services should include equitable access to instruction for all students. Each preparedness plan should also address the provision of appropriate special education and related services for students with disabilities and the provision of school nutrition benefits or services for eligible students. The preparedness plans should be submitted to the Executive County Superintendent.

The Mount Laurel School District's Health Related Closure Preparedness & Continuity of Operations Plan

The school district is prepared to educate its students during a health related closure. We have developed protocols and procedures for remote learning for students in preschool through 8th grade, in accordance with home instruction policies and following the NJDOE Guidelines for public health related school closures. The preparedness and continuity plan meets the three most important criteria: *(1) equitable access to instruction for all students, (2) provisions for appropriate special education and related services for students with disabilities, and (3) provisions for school nutrition services for eligible students.*

In the event of a health related school closure for 3 days or less, the district will not implement the preparedness and continuity plan. The Mount Laurel School District follows a 182 student and 186 staff day school calendar. Two of the students' days in the calendar will be used to prepare the launch all aspects of the NJDOE requirements for home services.

If a long-term school closure (more than 3 days) is necessary for public health related reasons, the district will implement the preparedness and continuity plan on day 3 of the closure. Day 1 and 2 of the long-term school closure will be either an in or out of school, depending on the health department guidelines at the time of closure, professional development days for staff to prepare for remote learning, equitable access, special education provisions, and food services. Remote learning will continue beginning on day 3 and last until the district is permitted to reopen.

Each day of remote learning will count toward the school district's 180 day school calendar.

Demographic Overview

The Mount Laurel School District services 4, 250 students in Preschool through 8th grade, with 14.6 % of our student population found eligible for free and reduced lunch. Furthermore, our student with disabilities compose 17% of our student population, while 2.6% of our students are designated as English Language Learners. Currently our school district provides preschool for students with disabilities only, with the option for parents of typically developing children to attend on a tuition basis, selected by lottery. Finally, 27 students with disabilities of the nearly 721 identified students with disabilities served attend out of district placements. The district out of district placement rate is just over 3% and well below the state threshold.

Technology Needs of All Students.

The Mount Laurel Schools provides a Chromebook to every student in grades 1 through 8. We also survey and communicate with our parents about home connectivity for Wi-Fi and internet

access on a regular basis. The district through our schools have provisions in place to lend additional available technology to preschoolers and kindergarteners who do not possess devices at home. Based on our current assessment, 80% of our kindergarteners and preschoolers possess technology at home, leaving an estimated 100 families based on our enrollment in need of a device. For this amount of families in need we have approximately 200 laptops district wide to inventory and loan to families in need.

Special Student Populations

Special Education Out of District School Placements

District child study team case managers will be communicating with parents of students in out of district placements as well as those schools for educational programming purposes and reviewing any transportation needs should they exist. We will be working with all vendors to coordinate services and consultative services for parents. Compensatory services for any direct related services like speech, occupational and physical therapies, counseling and any others as listed in student IEPs are planned for by keeping a record and developing a plan to implement following a closure.

Medically Fragile

The Mound Laurel School District serves a number of students who are medically fragile or who have special medical needs. All school nurses and our medical professionals that work with our students and schools will be coordinating and communicating together and working with our families to serve the needs of these children. School nurses will be communicating with families and making their consultative services available during any closure.

Health and Wellness

Nutrition for students eligible for free and reduced meals is a priority for the school district. The district and its food vendor, Nutri-Serve, recognize the importance of a healthy, nutritious breakfast and lunch as a necessary component to student learning, achievement, and overall well-being. We have developed a school nutrition services plan for the remote learning days.

- The district has Identified one or more schools to serve food. The sites have been determined by the Superintendent and School Business Administrator in cooperation with our food service provider and health officials.
- We will communicate with families about the site location(s), operation times, and procedures for participating when implemented.
- The School Business Administrator directs and manages daily food services, provides oversight to organize staff and works with our school vendor to implement.
- Food services are planned for at this same time, one time during the day.

- Meals will be prepared and packaged for students ‘to go’.
- Parents and/or students can pick up the food. Parent(s) either need ID, PIN number, or have a child present to receive the food.

Learning

Based on home instruction policies, the school district is required to receive 10 hours of academic support from a certified teacher. It is expected that teachers are online, available for students and parents for at least 2 hours per day.

“The home or out-of-school instruction shall meet the minimum standards as required in N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1(c). For a student with disabilities, the home instruction shall be consistent with the student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to the extent appropriate, and shall meet the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. For a student without disability, the home instruction shall meet the New Jersey Student Learning Standards and the requirements of the Board for promotion to the next grade level.”

Learning Plan Development

In the event of a long-term school closure the Mount Laurel Township School District has developed a state approved home instruction remote learning plan. Our goal is to ensure that instruction continues. Teachers have prepared both digital and offline lessons that are intended to continue student learning remotely.

Every teacher has developed a 5-day emergency instructional plan, with a framework designed to post lessons daily and provide live instruction as well as materials and pre-prepared teacher videos for instruction.

Remote Learning Plan Guidelines for students in grades 1 through 8

- Daily teaching Lessons will not cumulatively exceed 120 minutes daily.
- Lessons will include:
 - NJ Learning Standard(s)
 - Lesson Objective
 - Procedures
 - Learning Activity
 - Offline Option
- All remote lessons will be shared as Google Docs.
 - All links will be accessible to families (i.e. Google Docs should be shared with “Anyone with the link.”)

- All remote lessons will be assigned via Google Classrooms
 - All assignments in the Google Classroom can be turned-in through the Google Classroom.
 - Lessons must not require students to use additional resources beyond their school-issued Chromebook (i.e. printer, poster board paper, glue, markers, etc.).

Remote Learning Plan Guidelines for students in Preschool and Kindergarten.

Learning for preschoolers and kindergarteners will be mindful of their developmental level and employ best practices for delivering instruction regarding task difficulty, time, and modality in a developmentally appropriate manner.

Preschool daily lessons will be limited to not cumulatively exceed more than 30 minutes daily, for Kindergarten students lessons will be 60 minutes. Students will be provided with learning materials to complete independently beyond those times however direct student to teacher live instruction will be provided in a developmentally appropriate way .

- Each lesson must include:
 - NJ Learning Standard(s)
 - Lesson Objective
 - Procedures
 - Learning Activity
 - Offline Option
- All remote lessons will be shared as Google Docs.
 - All links are accessible to families (i.e. Google Docs should be shared with “Anyone with the link.”)
 - Lessons will consider minimizing the use of additional resources (i.e. printer, poster board paper, glue, markers, etc.)
- Lessons will be provided through a mix modality of virtual live read alouds and teacher prepared learning videos using the teacher’s voice and presence.

** Special Education. Teachers will create modified assignments based on the IEP requirements for students in the in-class resource programs. Special Education Teachers who are assigned to pull out resource or self-contained settings will create lessons commensurate with the needs of students in their classroom. In these cases, Remote Lesson Plans will appear different than general education counterparts.*

*** Equity. Offline options should fulfill the same requirements as online lessons. Each teacher will prepare a master copy of the needed documents for each offline lesson. These master copies will be submitted to your building principal for them to warehouse for future use. Parents or*

students can request hard copies at any time. The district will provide hard copies within 48 hours of the request.

Dissemination of Lessons and Responsibilities for All Teaching Staff

Teachers will provide instructional materials via Google Classroom and use Google Hangout Meets for communicating with students as well as phone and email. Principals will instruct teachers via email to and have access to staff Google Classrooms and provide administrative oversight. Regular meetings with staff will be held with teachers and staff through Google Hangouts Meet to communicate ongoing expectations and discuss concerns/questions for supporting our staff.

Thereafter, all communication from the principal will dictate further action.

Staff Availability

Teachers are required to be minimally be available during our prescribed schedule to respond to student questions, parent comments, and monitor Google Classroom and student assignments and learning activities. Any changes to the schedule will be approved by the administration in the event conditions warrant. During this time it is highly important for our teachers and staff to engage students through comments and live lessons, chats, and active work review and discussion.

Specific students who are not logging on to complete the assignments, teacher and school staff will email and/call their parent(s)/guardian(s), and investigate there is any issues and then communicate the need for their student to complete work with parent(s)/ guardian(s). This expectation is no different than if students aren't completing work when school is in session.

All work is to be reviewed and appropriate feedback provided to students and parents in a timely manner. We are following appropriate evaluation rubrics and assessment criterion procedures for giving student feedback on assignments. The offline work will be collected and reviewed upon students returning to school or other means if available, like photos of work, emails, or submission to school. Again, this work will be reviewed as well. **All hard copies of lessons will be available upon request.*

Preschool

- Creative Curriculum: Math, Reading, and Social Emotional lessons will be available on our District's Web Page and through Google Classroom. The Creative Curriculum parent portal and learning resources will be fully implemented.
- All hard copies of lessons will be available upon request

Kindergarten

- Creative Curriculum: Social Emotional lessons will be provided on our Web Page; Google Classroom; Hangouts Meeting; YouTube videos prepared by teachers and provided by curriculum sources.

- Math and Language Arts lessons and other NJSLs curricular areas will be addressed.
- All hard copies of lessons will be available upon request

Workforce

Mount Laurel Schools has outlined roles and responsibilities for all district staff. All district staff are to ‘report to work’ during normal business hours. Unless otherwise specified, all district staff will receive communication daily from their direct supervisor whether to report to work in person or remotely. All decisions for work locations will be made in cooperation with the NJDOH and NJDOE.

Teachers

- Daily instruction five days per week for one (Preschoolers and Kindergarteners) to two hours per day for grades 1 through 8, according to a developed schedule.
- Facilitate remote learning
- Engage and motivate students to learn remotely
- Lesson planning using district determined framework
- Managing and maintaining district determined online platform
- Frequent grading and formative feedback
- Daily communication with students and parents

School Administrators

- Oversee food services program
- Oversee instructional learning plan
- Lead parent and school communication
- Be available to assist with student and parent questions
- Be available to facilitate resources as needed for teachers, students, and parents
- Support teachers with developing learning activities

Central Administrators

- Oversee specific departments
- Oversee district operations
- Oversee special education, IEP, 504, I&RS provisions
- Oversee equity provisions
- Assist school administrators

Counselors, Nurses, CST Members, Master Teacher, CPIS

- Be available to assist with student and parent questions, concerns, needs.
- Be available to facilitate resources as needed for students with limited technology.
- Prepare a plan for student return (especially at-risk students or those who may be impacted by the closure, mentally or physically)
- Organize online or phone conferences to meet IEP, 504, I&RS, or Health protocols

- Support special education teachers to meet IEP provisions
- Support teachers and administrators to meet equity provisions

Related services (Speech, OT, PT)

- Create a plan to provide compensatory sessions during the month of June and/or July (for students who are eligible to attend ESY); while implementing compensatory services once school reopens.
- Provide a specific list of related activities students can work on at home
- Be available to communicate and consult with parents.
- Call and check in with parents regarding their child’s related services on a regular basis.

Secretarial Staff

- Assist direct supervisor and team
- Assist in facilitating “hard” copies of learning activities for those in need
- Assist in coordinating devices for those in need (students and staff)
- Assist in communicating with students and parents
- Assist in organizing and administering online, virtual, phone conferences to meet IEP, 504, I&RS protocols.
- Assist food services, if necessary, in providing breakfast and lunches

Technology Team

- Support all staff with remote learning, virtual meetings, remote phone communication
- Assist with Go Guardian, educational software, online platforms
- Assist in coordinating devices for those in need (students and staff)
- Support families and students with technology needs, as appropriate

Teacher Assistants

- On call for school support, as needed

Cafeteria/Playground Assistants

- On call for school support, as needed

Custodians and Maintenance

- Maintain cleaning protocols
- Maintain maintenance of building and grounds

The preparedness and continuity plan is fluid and subject to change for the district to be as effective and efficient as possible during health related closures. The district is committed to the students and their community, and will make every effort to provide an excellent remote educational experience during unprecedented times in New Jersey’s public schools.