

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



Board Approved: Tuesday, May 19, 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 regulations for home instruction due to temporary or chronic health conditions (N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1) as cited by the NJDOE as guidance for public health related school closures. Our initial plan addressed the requirements of the NJDOE guidelines for a health related school closure which included, (1) ensuring the equitable access to remote instruction for all students, (2) the provisions for the delivery of special education and related services, and (3) the provisioning for school nutrition services for eligible students. The revised preparedness and continuity plan addresses the continuity of the following critical school services as specified in the May 5, 2020 directive from the NJDOE:

- (1) Delivery of virtual and remote instruction,*
- (2) Attendance,*
- (3) Students with Disabilities,*
- (4) English Language Learners,*
- (5) Safe Delivery of Meals,*
- (6) Facilities, and*
- (7) Summer programming*

In response to 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 followed a 182 student and 186 staff day school calendar for the 2019-2020 school year. Two of the students' days in the calendar were used this year to assign our educators time to prepare the launch of all aspects of the NJDOE requirements for home services upon the initial closure.

In regard to a long-term school closure (more than 3 days) 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 used as professional development days for staff to prepare for remote learning, equitable access, special education provisions, and food services. Remote learning will begin on day 3 and remain in effect until the district is permitted to reopen.

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

The plan addresses all the key elements in the NJDOE Checklist for School Health Related Closures (NJDOE May 4, 2020).

Equitable Access to Instruction Plan

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 assessment, 80% of our kindergarteners and preschoolers already possess technology at home, leaving an estimated 100 families based on our enrollment in need of a device. We have used district inventory of additional devices to loan to families in need. As a result, 100% of Mount Laurel students and families are in possession of technology for learning.

In regard to Wi-Fi connectivity a limited number of families, less than 20 families, were identified. These families were provided a portable hotspot device with a data plan to access district provided distance learning. We are proud to report that 100% of our students in preschool through eighth grade have access to devices and Wi-Fi for virtual and remote learning, *there is no digital divide in our schools.*

Plan for Addressing Special Education Needs

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.

Verification of IEP Services

Remote IEP Annual Reviews/Evaluation/Re-Evaluation/Eligibility:

The district is conducting all identification meetings, referrals, evaluations, re-evaluations and IEP's remotely, in order to avoid any delay in services. Parents are contacted to discuss specific implementation procedures. Timelines as established by N.J. Special Education Regulations are maintained under restrictions due to the COVID-19 crisis. All required attendees of IEP meetings are participating in these meetings.

Provision and Documentation of All Remote Special Education Services

The district is providing all special education and related services via live virtual and remote learning. Case managers, related services providers, and special education teachers are documenting their delivery of services through the remote learning platform and with contact logs. Parents are communicated with often and regularly to assess their satisfaction with services by related services staff, teachers, and via survey. The continuum of special education and related services are being delivered via live virtual and remote learning.

The district also utilizes its special education software to develop and document all meetings and IEP meetings.

Case managers have been directed to reach out to all families regularly regardless to solicit parent input. Case managers and all related services providers were provided Google phone numbers tied to their district email accounts so they can use their personal cell phones at home to contact parents and follow up on services without having to disclose their personal cell numbers. These Google phone numbers also keep a record of all contacts. District email is another way staff are documenting their contacts and communications with parents.

Special Education Teachers

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 meet the needs of student IEPs.

Plan for Addressing ELL Needs

All ESL students have online access to daily instruction as part of the district's distance learning platform. ESL teachers meet with students to provide direct, live instruction and support the district's ESL curriculum as well as content area instruction for mainstream coursework. These are organized by grade level as follows:

- Grades K-4
 - Push-in/co-teaching by ESL teachers during daily online lessons with classroom teachers.
 - Pull-out/Small group instruction during virtual "Office Hours"
- Grades 5-8
 - ESL classes online as part of regular school schedules
 - Virtual "office hours" to meet and support students with individual/differentiated needs.

The district communicates with ELL families, including translated materials and directions as follows:

- District provides ESL students and families with special support through translated materials and translators as needed. This includes work done in conjunction with child study teams and meetings with school administration for disciplinary and/or instructional matters.
- Translation of materials and communications from district and schools is facilitated by the ESL teacher. Teachers translate using their fluency in foreign languages, as well as tools such as Google Translate, Class Dojo, and Remind where necessary.
- ESL teachers maintain ongoing communication with the families of ELLs and establish additional support for families in need of translation services.
- District website offers translation options in multiple languages.

The district addresses alternate methods of instruction, differentiation, access to technology and strategies to troubleshoot ELL access challenges as follows:

- All ESL students are provided Chromebooks by the district in order to access and participate in our online learning platform
- Support is available for all families in need of internet access
- ESL teachers maintain constant communication with ELLs and their families to monitor attendance/participation and academic performance. ESL teachers are in regular communication with their building principal and department supervisor to update on any concerns or issues. School administrators follow up with families to work with families to provide additional opportunities for access.
- Individual support is arranged as necessary for students unable to attend scheduled lessons. Additional offline materials can be provided to students where issues with technology prevent instruction.

Safe Delivery of Meals

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 to implement during the closure.

- The district has Identified one school 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.
 - **SFA Name:** Mount Laurel School District
 - **Agreement #:** 00503440
 - **Date Meal Distribution will begin:** 3/18/2020
 - **Date Meal Distribution will end:** 6/19/2020
 - **Schools/Site where distribution of meals will take place:** The Hartford School, 397 Hartford Road, Mount Laurel, NJ 08054.
 - **Meals to be claimed for reimbursement per day:** (up to two meals, or one meal and one snack, per child per day) One Meal Lunch.
 - **Please outline the SFA’s method(s) for meal distribution, including meal content and meal counting and claiming procedure:** Lunch will be available to be picked up between 10:30AM & 12:00PM five days a week. The menu choices are Turkey & Cheese, Ham and Cheese, Bagel and Yogurt or PB& J. On the order form the Student’s name, ID# and school are requested. Roster will be checked off upon receiving the meal.
 - If the SFA plans to provide meals for multiple days, please outline the plan below. Include how all food safety requirements will be met.

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. Mount Laurel has and continues to make live instruction a major component of student learning. Students adhere to an instructional schedule and join in with their classmates and teachers for live learning lessons. In addition, there is a remote learning component for allowing teachers to post work beyond live teaching for student enrichment and growth.

Every teacher implements the district emergency instructional plan, within a framework designed to post lessons daily, provide live instruction as well as materials and prepared teacher instructional videos for student learning.

Length of Virtual or Remote Instructions Day

Based on home instruction policies, except for preschoolers with disabilities, in which case services are delivered as per their IEP, the school district provides 10 hours of academic support for students from a certified teacher or teachers per week. Teachers are online, available for students and parents for at least 2 hours per day. When virtual live instruction is not being delivered, academic and enrichment activities are posted for student learning, reviewed and assessed by the teacher. All virtual learning schedules are posted on each school's webpage.

“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.”

Below is a description of the grade band expectations based on developmental expectations. The curriculum is designed to meet the grade level expectation for students. In all grade bands students receive instruction in all the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS).

In addition to the remote learning described below, the district is providing after school clubs and activities virtually for all schools. In the middle school grades, students are meeting with their coaches virtually via either Google Meet and/or Zoom for discussions and activities related to their sport. These enrichment and high interest offerings allow for students and teachers to stay connected during the closure and continued to build and maintain meaningful connections with their students.

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 virtual and remote learning lessons will be designed for no more than 30 minutes, for Kindergarten students these lessons will be 60 minutes. Students will be provided with learning materials to complete independently, however direct student to teacher live instruction will be provided in a developmentally appropriate way utilizing district curriculum to ensure student growth and understanding of material.

- 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.

Remote Learning Plan Guidelines for students in grades 1 through 8

- Daily virtual and remote learning 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 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.).

Dissemination of Lessons and Responsibilities for All Teaching Staff

Teachers will provide instructional materials via Google Classroom and use Google Hangout or Meet & Zoom 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.

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

Attendance Plan

During distance learning, our teachers and principals are carefully staying in communication with all students. Students who are not present in the learning platform are contacted by the

teacher. If the parents are not reached, the principal reaches out. In addition, if no contact can be made the schools utilize our School Resource Officers, who are full time Mount Laurel Police, to conduct a well-ness check on the family. Additional steps taken include the use of school guidance counselors as well as child study team case managers and school nurses, when appropriate. Participation and attendance in the learning platform is expected.

We realize that during this health related school closure, many of our families have been impacted differently and some more severely than others. Attendance is way for our schools to monitor the health and well-being of our students and families and help them as much as possible. All teachers work with individual families to ensure they are submitting assignments.

Facilities Plan

All buildings are continuously staffed with custodians daily for cleaning and monitoring all systems. Building systems (e.g. fire alarms; HVAC; plumbing) are inspected regularly to make sure they remain operational by custodial and maintenance staff. Building facilities pertaining to water and sewer usage are tested to ensure they are remain operational. Communications with the local fire as well as the township water and sewer officials is ongoing and regular. All school building remain staffed with custodial and maintenance personnel.

Summer Programming Plan

Access to Technology for Continued Summer Learning

The Mount Laurel School District is committed to allowing our students to have continued access to their technology and distance learning hotspots over the summer. Besides, the extended school year services described and planned below for special populations of students, the school district is committed to providing learning access for student through virtual STEM camps, Library Media Services, as well as enrichment learning options. The district has previously offered learning camps in the summer for 1-2 week duration through our community education and recreation department. These programs are being considered for virtual formats to enrich student learning over the summer.

Extended School Year for Students with Disabilities

The district will be providing Extended School Year (ESY) services via a virtual and remote learning platform. Individual decisions regarding recommendations for ESY will be made via the IEP process as required by the N.J. Special Education Regulations. All IEP meetings are being conducted live and remotely at this time. ESY schedules and programming is being developed at this time and will include the provision of special education and related services through both live virtual instruction and remote learning activities.

An Assessment for Student Learning Loss

All compensatory education services decisions will be made on an individual basis via the IEP process in consideration of student needs and the district's comprehensive educational transition

plan for all students during the re-opening process. The assessment of loss of learning for all students is an essential plan for re-entry and remediation measures that will be taken. Meanwhile for summer planning, an extensive ESY program will be provided for students with disabilities and IEP teams will be mindful of the flexibility and inclusiveness necessary for eligibility determination at this time. Once students are able to re-enter school the district plans to implement a full scale reassessment process in which all students will be assessed with all available district benchmarks to gain an understanding how best to redesign instruction to meet students' needs.

Title 1 Extended Summer Learning Programming

The district is currently serving all Title 1 eligible students remotely and through live instructional programming at this time. The district plans to continue services through an extended school year program for these eligible students this summer. Available ESEA: Title 1 Grant funds will be allocated for this program.

English as a Second Language Services

Eligible English Language Learners (ELL) are currently receiving services via live virtual and remote learning by certified ESL teachers and extended school year services are planned for eligible ELLs for this summers as well. The program will be delivered via virtual and remote learning. Available ESEA: Title III grant and local funds will be allocated for this programming.

8th Grade Virtual Promotion Ceremony

The Thomas E. Harrington Middle School serves approximately 500 8th grade students schedule to be promoted to High School. The district has planned virtual graduation ceremonies for these students that will align to the structure of past ceremonies, will be in a virtual format. All students will receive a congratulatory lawn, their promotion gown, and diploma cover in advance. Following photos of the students in their gowns holding their diploma cover will be taken by them and sent to the school to incorporate into their virtual celebration. Student and staff speeches, awards, and music will be a part of the virtual celebration, then streamed out on our YouTube channel once completed for all to view. No in-person live components or group gatherings will be a part of the school's ceremony.

Role of District Staff

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 to three hours per day for grades 1 though 8, according our developed schedule.
- Facilitate live virtual instruction and remote learning
- Engage and motivate students to learn remotely

- Lesson planning using district determined framework
- Managing and maintaining district determined online platform (Google Meet; Zoom)
- 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
- Technology support is provided remotely but also on-site two days per week.

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.