

Remote Learning**Goals of the Remote Learning Program**

The Superintendent establishes the following goals for the remote learning program:

1. To ensure the continuity of instruction if and when an emergency health situation negatively impacts the Bethany Public School District's (District) ability to maintain daily operations.
2. To continue to provide students with an authentic, meaningful, and comprehensive school experience.
3. To mitigate or completely eliminate possible exposure to and spread of pandemic infection among students, parents/guardians, employees, and community members.
4. To ensure compliance with all federal and state statutes and regulations and Bethany Board of Education (Board) policies and administrative regulations, as may be amended by state and federal authorities.

Key Components of the Remote Learning Program

The Superintendent establishes the following key components for the remote learning program:

1. Equitable Access

To provide equitable instruction, the District will ensure that all students have access to instructional materials and electronic devices.

- a. All students will be provided with appropriate instructional and electronic resources to be used for remote learning.
- b. Information provided on the District website will be available in a number of language choices.

2. Communication

- a. Upon a directive from the Governor of Connecticut and/or Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) notification will be sent to parents/guardians utilizing the District's notification system. This information will also be posted on the District website.
- b. On the first day of closure, the building may remain open for a portion of the day to allow staff to gather personal items and collect necessary learning materials. Instruction will not occur.
- c. On the second day of closure, the school will be closed until further notice to students, parents/guardians, staff, and the public. No entry will be allowed unless deemed necessary by the Superintendent. Distance learning will commence. In the event an immediate directive from a State official is provided, the District will provide additional guidance, as necessary, at that time.

3. Attendance

The Superintendent recognizes that during a prolonged school closure it may be problematic to compile attendance statistics. The District will treat a student's attendance record for the year in conformity with any "Attendance Guidance" provided by the Connecticut Commission of Education and the CSDE. Parents/Guardians will be notified of the means of reporting absences.

4. Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

During remote learning days, the District will adhere to all aspects of harassment, intimidation and bullying policies and administrative regulations.

5. Time Schedules

Teachers will be available via email during a remote learning day. Teachers will be available in accordance with the Remote Learning Schedule determined by administration which will allow time for planning and/or lunch.

6. School Nutrition Benefits

Any student who receives free or reduced-price school lunch shall be afforded the opportunity to pick up a nutritional school lunch prepared by the school cafeteria. The schedule for availability and location of pickup will be posted on the District website and through the District's notification system.

7. Resources to Support Instruction

The District shall utilize varied resources to support student learning. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. The posting on the website a webpage devoted to relevant online resources and digital subscriptions.
- b. Teacher utilization of Google Classroom, District email, and other online platforms for instruction.

8. Student Responsibilities

- a. Participate in synchronous learning opportunities.
- b. View asynchronous learning opportunities.
- c. Utilize available online resources.
- d. Complete assigned tasks.
- e. Seek guidance and assistance when needed.

9. Special Education

- a. The District will provide remote learning options to address the provision of appropriate special education and related services for identified students with disabilities. Programs and services will be provided to students ages three (3) through twenty-one (21), in concert with requirements of federal and state law; such requirements which may be amended by governmental action, with modification that may be unavoidable due to the health crisis. It is recognized that the District may not be able to provide all services in the same manner as they are typically provided.

INSTRUCTION

Regulation 6172.61(c)

- b. Students will continue to receive provisions of their Individualized Education Program (IEP) requirements and will be provided a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) encompassing special education and related services to the greatest extent possible under the circumstances. What is appropriate and reasonable will include the student's circumstances as well as the circumstances related to the emergency health crisis.
- c. Appropriately certified professional staff members will continue to implement these programs through remote learning opportunities. All special education programming will be consistent with the student's IEP to the extent appropriate.
- d. All identified special education students with an in-class/push-in special education services/supports documented in the IEP will be provided with modifications to meet their needs based on the remote learning options afforded to their general education counterparts to the greatest extent possible.
- e. All identified special education students with pull out special education services/supports documented in the IEP will be provided with appropriate materials and instruction by their special education teachers to meet their needs to the greatest extent possible based on the remote learning options appropriate to their IEPs and learning abilities.
- f. All students with self-contained programs documented in the IEP will be provided with appropriate materials and instruction by their special education teachers to meet their needs to the greatest extent possible based on the remote learning options appropriate to their IEPs and learning abilities.
- g. The District acknowledges that classroom and one-to-one support staff may not be available to support a student during a health-related closure.
- h. Related services such as speech and language, physical therapy, occupational therapy will be scheduled and provided based on individualized needs using available virtual resources to the greatest extent possible.
- i. Out of District Programs. In the event that the District school is closed and a private out of district school remains open, students who are transported by a private company should attend school unless otherwise indicated by the out of district placement. In the event that the student is transported to the out of district placement by district transportation and the buses remain non-operational due to the closing, the parent/guardian will be asked to drive their child to the school and will be reimbursed for transportation according to Board policy for days the child is in attendance during this health-related closure.

In the event that the District school is open and private out of district schools are closed, the District will collaborate with the out of district placement to offer appropriate meaningful learning activities for completion at home.
- j. Referrals and Evaluations. Traditional timelines will be adhered to via the Director of Special Services and meetings will be held remotely. The District will make every effort to ensure that evaluations are completed within the statutory timelines. Timelines may be impacted due to extended school closures. (Days that schools are closed are not counted as "school days" for the initial evaluation timeline. The timeline pauses during the school closure.) Child Study Team members will contact parents/guardians if evaluations fall outside of the legally mandated timeframes.

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Regulation 6172.61(d)

- k. Annual Reviews and Reevaluations. These shall take place once the District school reopens. Parents/guardians may agree in writing that a reevaluation is not necessary. IEPs that lapse during the school closure will remain in effect until a new IEP is developed. When school personnel and parents/guardians agree that a Planning and Placement Team (PPT) meeting is necessary during the time of school closure, it shall be held via alternate means such as video conferencing or conference call.
- l. Due Process Hearings/Activities. The District will comply with and operate within any extension provided by the Commissioner of Education for all state statutory and regulatory time requirements related to special education due process activities.
- m. Communication. The District's special education staff shall provide information through a variety of methods including family phone calls, emails, and video conferences. Also, at least one (1) member of a child's team is to be in contact with the respective parent/guardian at least weekly unless less frequent contacts have been requested.

10. Staff Responsibilities

The Superintendent expects the teaching staff to be available through email and online between the posted times; to read and respond to emails during noted hours; and to adhere to all policies, procedures, and administrative regulations as may be modified due to the nature and length of the emergency health crisis and to report any instances of students at risk, threats made or any other meaningful information to District Administrators.

Student support staff and paraprofessionals will receive instructions from their appropriate supervisor.

District administrators will receive instructions to assist in the daily operation of all aspects of remote learning from the Superintendent.

All other support staff will receive instructions from their supervisor or Superintendent.

Any staff that is unable to meet their responsibilities must contact the Superintendent.

11. Monitoring Student Engagement

The Superintendent considers student engagement extremely important. It is important to ensure that all students are engaged and are connected to the resources they need. Administrators will have regular connections with students and families. School staff shall check-in and confirm whether families have access to information and services; are safe and supported, and are prepared to support their child's learning through the District's continued efforts.

In order to monitor student engagement in continued learning, the Superintendent expects the following actions to take place:

- a. Teachers and support staff are to connect with all students to maintain their relationships, assist with issues related to assignments, and encourage full participation in the continued learning opportunities. Connections should be documented and tracked as appropriate.

INSTRUCTION

Regulation 6172.61(e)

- b. Student support staff shall identify students who were chronically absent prior to the school closure/cancellation of classes or otherwise identified as needing additional support to determine if such supports can continue virtually. The option to refer a student exhibiting inadequate engagement to the District's team responsible for school attendance should be considered as necessary.
- c. Administrators and support staff are to reach out to students who are not signing into online learning or engaging in other continued learning opportunities. Families are to be contacted by school staff to ensure safety and well being and connect students to the continued learning opportunities and technology they may require.

12. Assessment

Student assessments to be used shall be developed by the administration and faculty and is subject to approval by the Superintendent.

13. Grading

The grading and reporting systems to be used shall be developed by the administration and faculty and is subject to approval by the Superintendent.

Legal References: Connecticut General Statutes § 10-221
 18 U.S.C. §§ 2510-2522
 Public Law No. 110-385

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