
Edison Public Schools



EMERGENCY VIRTUAL INSTRUCTION PLAN

Approved by Edison BOE on October 26, 2021
Submitted to Middlesex County DOE on October 27, 2021

“Nothing Less than Excellence”

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Emergency Virtual Instruction Plan

Preface

In June of 2021, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) released guidance on the safe return to school for the 2021-22 school year called [The Road Forward](#). Within that guidance, it states that school districts must deliver some form of virtual instruction for children who are required to quarantine as a result of testing positive for COVID-19 or because they were determined to be a “close or proximate contact” to an infected person. On August 11, 2021, the NJDOE provided further guidance in a Broadcast memo entitled [Educating Students During Quarantine](#). Within that memorandum, the NJDOE clarified that when an individual student, group of students or entire class(es) are excluded from school due to meeting the NJDOH’s COVID-19 exclusion criteria, school districts are to provide virtual or remote instruction to those students in a manner commensurate with in-person instruction. Furthermore, the NJDOE encouraged school districts to continue to employ the same strategies of the previous year to ensure that students are able to continue their educational progress even when excluded from school due to COVID-19.

On August 18, 2021, the NJDOE provided further guidance in a memorandum entitled [Local Educational Agency Guidance for Chapter 27 Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Programs for the 2021-2022 School Year](#). Within it, the NJDOE states that school districts must submit a proposed program or plan for virtual or remote instruction to the Commissioner of Education and that the plan should be implemented during a district closure lasting more than three consecutive school days due to a declared state of emergency, declared a public health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure. Furthermore, it states that the Superintendent must consult with the board of education, if practicable, prior to implementing the school district’s plan of virtual or remote instruction. A day of virtual or remote instruction, if instituted under a plan approved by the Commissioner of Education, is considered the equivalent of a full day of school attendance for the purposes of meeting state and local graduation requirements, awarding of course credit, and such other matters as determined by the Commissioner of Education. However, the NJDOE states that school districts must include the statutory requirements listed in the aforementioned “LEA Guidance for Chapter 27 Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Programs for the 2021-2022 SY,” in their plans for virtual or remote instruction for the 2021-2022 school year. Lastly, the 2021-2022 plans must be approved by the school district’s board of education, submitted to the county office of education for review and approval, and posted on the school district’s website by **October 29, 2021**. In the event that the school district is directed to provide virtual or remote instruction before garnering county office approval, the approval date will be retroactive.

Quarantining of Students and Staff

In accordance with the Edison Public Schools [Safe Return Plan](#), under the authority of the Superintendent, the school district and/or building administration may issue the mandatory isolation and quarantining of any students or staff identified as posing a health risk to the school community, as defined by guidelines established by the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), Center for Disease Control (CDC), and/or other appropriate local, state, or federal health agencies. In the event that a mandatory quarantine directive for students or staff members is issued, the process for evaluating remote learning/work eligibility will automatically be initiated and identified. An isolation or quarantine may be issued in the event that a student or staff member:

1. Fails a health screening (where applicable) AND is not cleared by a medical professional to return to school.
2. Tests positive for COVID-19 (isolation).
3. Is unvaccinated and directly exposed to COVID-19 as defined by “close contact” or “proximate contact” guidelines provided by the NJDOH, CDC, and/or other appropriate government health agencies.

4. Is unvaccinated and exposed to a symptomatic individual in the home (residential). If a sibling or other family member is symptomatic, the individual and other family members are quarantined pending the outcomes of the symptomatic individual's test.
5. Is unvaccinated and travels internationally.

All contact tracing procedures will be completed in accordance with CDC/NJDOH guidelines and in cooperation with the Edison DOH. Notification to staff, students, and/or parents will be provided under the guidance of the NJDOH, while diligently ensuring that all applicable privacy policies and laws are adhered to.

Remote Virtual Instruction for Students Required to Quarantine Due to Infection or Close Contact Exposure

Students who have to isolate because they test positive for COVID-19 or who have to quarantine because they were determined by the administration to be in “**close contact**” with an infected individual will receive **virtual supplemental instruction** for the duration of their isolation and/or quarantine period. During the quarantine, instruction will be provided virtually by district staff.

Home Instruction for Students Due to Suspension, or Application for Medical or Other Home Instruction

In accordance with the New Jersey Administrative Code and Edison BOE policy, students who are suspended from school for a code of conduct infraction will receive Administrative Home Instruction beginning on the **fifth school day** of their suspension. Lastly, students whose parents/guardians apply for home instruction due to medical or other acceptable reasons will be eligible to receive home instruction once **approved** by the **district in conjunction with the school district physician and/or the child's individualized education program 504 assistance plan team**. In all these cases, parents/guardians must provide **medical documentation** and **permission for the school district physician to speak with the private physician authoring the medical documentation**. Similar to Administrative Home Instruction, once permission for medical or other-based home instruction is approved by the administration, it will begin on the **third school day** after permission is granted so that the district can identify home instructors and so that those teachers can adequately prepare. In all of these cases and any other reason for absences from school, students will be encouraged to complete all assignments listed on their teacher's learning management system (LMS) independently.

Student Attendance

For students who attend in-person instruction, established attendance policies will apply. Attendance for quarantined students participating in asynchronous instruction periods will also be recorded. Completed assignments for students participating in asynchronous virtual instruction will serve as both evidence of their attendance as well as their completion of assignments. Upon receiving submitted work, teachers will request for an administrative override of student attendance so that absences can be converted to attending. Attendance for students who are suspended or granted virtual home instruction will be recorded as such in accordance with BOE policy and school district attendance procedures.

Technology Equity

The district will ensure that all students are provided with the equity in education they deserve during the 2021-22 school year and beyond. As part of the district's 1:1 instructional device initiative, all students in grades prek-12 received the opportunity to obtain an educational device to take home until they either graduate or transfer out of the district. Students whose families cannot afford, and/or do not have access to internet services will be provided with access via the district upon request and approval, but **it shall be used only for instructional purposes**. Finally, all certificated staff received district laptops in the case that they may need to provide remote, hybrid, or virtual home instruction.

Staff Remote Work

As with students, staff members who have to isolate because they test positive for COVID-19 or who have to quarantine because they were determined by administration to be in “close contact” or “proximate contact” with an infected individual or an immediate family member who is symptomatic, may be granted the opportunity to work remotely from home. Naturally, these employees will also have the option to use available vacation (if applicable), personal, sick and/or deduct (days without pay) days, as well as apply for a paid or an unpaid leave of absence instead of approved remote work. Conversely, staff members who are required to quarantine because they knowingly travel to a location identified by the CDC and/or NJDOH as being “high risk” will **NOT** be eligible to work remotely. Rather, they will be required to use available vacation (if applicable), personal, sick, and/or deduct (days without pay) days. However, staff who travel to a “high risk” location for an emergency or extenuating circumstance may request of the Superintendent of Schools to be permitted to work remotely. Permission for such cases may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

Non-instructional staff who are approved to work remotely and accept this option shall document daily work performed and submit evidence to his/her immediate supervisor using a district-approved process. Staff authorized to work remotely and get this option shall be responsible for all professional responsibilities as defined in their job description as if the employee was on site. Likewise, all staff approved for remote work will still be expected to continue to attend all scheduled meetings using one of the approved virtual conferencing software. However, they will not be eligible to participate in other paid, or volunteer in-person/on-site district sanctioned activities unless the Superintendent gives a special exception.

All employees approved to work remotely shall verify their attendance daily using approved district procedures. If a staff member working remotely shall find the need to take an available sick day, personal, vacation (if applicable) or deduct (day without pay) day, he/she shall report their absence in Frontline Absence Management (Aesop) in accordance with BOE policy and established district procedures. If, for any reason, staff are unable to access Frontline Absence Management, they should follow established district procedures and either email their immediate supervisor or call the office of their school/department. Those staff members reporting to their regular work sites for in-person work shall continue to follow sign-in procedures established by the district and schools.

District--Virtual Instruction

If the entire district shifts to virtual instruction, the students and staff will follow the regular bell schedule.

BELL SCHEDULES	
Elementary	
Grades PS - K	8:55 - 11:30am 12:55 - 3:30pm
Grades 1 - 5	8:55 - 3:30pm
Middle School	
Period 1	8:41 - 9:27
Period 2	9:31 - 10:17
Period 3	10:21 - 11:07
Period 4	11:11 - 11:57
Lunch	12:01 - 12:30
Period 5	12:34 - 1:20
Period 6	1:24 - 2:10
Period 7	2:14 - 3:00
High School	
Period 1	7:50 - 8:32
Period 2	8:37 - 9:19
Period 3	9:24 - 10:06
Period 4/5	10:11 - 10:53
Period 6/7	10:58 - 11:40
Lunch	11:45 - 12:09
Period 9/10	12:14 - 12:56
Period 11	1:01 - 1:43
Period 12	1:48 - 2:30

Students and staff have been provided with a device (MacBook or Chromebook). If a student does not have wifi, the family will be provided a hotspot. All staff will directly connect with students via Zoom and/or Google Meet. Teachers will continue to use Google Classroom to share materials and post assignments.

Food Distribution During Emergency Closings

Should the district need to transition to fully remote instruction for a period of time greater than three days, the district will immediately institute weekly 7-day meal pickups at each high school (Edison High School and John P. Stevens High School). Each high school we have a specific window of time twice per week for 7-day meal pickups (including breakfast and lunch) and differing times to accommodate parent' schedules.