Stafford Township Board of Education Regulation

R 2425 EMERGENCY VIRTUAL OR REMOTE INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

A. Definitions

1. "Remote instruction" means the provision of instruction occurring when the student and the instructor are in different locations due to the closure of the facility(ies) of the Board of Education, charter school, renaissance school project, or approved private school for students with disabilities. The closure of the facility(ies) shall be pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9 or 18A:46-21.1 and for more than three consecutive school days due to a declared state of emergency, a declared public health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure.

2. "Virtual instruction" means the provision of active instruction when the student and the instructor are in different locations and instruction is facilitated through the internet and computer technologies due to the closure of the facility(ies) of the Board of Education, charter school, renaissance school project, or approved private school for students with disabilities. The closure of the facility(ies) shall be pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9 or 18A:46-21.1 and for more than three consecutive school days due to a declared state of emergency, a declared public-health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure.

B. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-13.1, if the State or local health department determines that it is advisable to close, or mandates closure of, the schools of a school district due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure for more than three consecutive school days, the Superintendent shall have the authority to implement the school district's program of virtual or remote instruction, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.

1. If implemented by the Superintendent, the school district's program of virtual or remote instruction shall be provided to an enrolled student, whether a general education student in preschool through grade twelve or a student with a disability aged three to twenty-one.

a. The school district shall provide students with a disability with the same educational opportunities provided to general education students to the extent appropriate and practicable.

b. Related services may be delivered to general education students and students with a disability through the use of electronic communication or a virtual or online platform, as appropriate.

2. The Board of Education may apply to the 180-day requirement established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.b., one or more days of virtual or remote instruction under the following conditions and in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:32-13.1(c)1. through 4. and B.2.a. through d. below:

a. Virtual or remote instruction is provided to students on the day(s) that some or all of the programs of instruction of the district were closed to in-person instruction;

b. The virtual or remote instruction meets the Commissioner-established criteria for the occurrence of one of the events at N.J.A.C. 6A:32-13.1(b) and B. above;

c. The school district's program of virtual or remote instruction:

(1) Explains, to the greatest extent possible, the equitable delivery of, and access to, virtual and remote instruction, including descriptions of the following:

(a) The design of synchronous and/or asynchronous virtual or remote learning plans that will maximize student growth and learning;

(b) How the school district will continuously measure student growth and learning in a virtual or remote instruction environment; and

(c) The school district's plan for measuring and addressing any ongoing digital divide issue(s), including a lack of access to the internet, network access, or devices;

(2) Addresses the needs of students with disabilities and includes descriptions of the following:

(a) The delivery of virtual or remote instruction in order to implement, to the greatest extent possible, students' individualized education programs (IEPs), including material and platform access;

(b) The methods used to document IEP implementation, including the tracking of student progress, accommodations, and modifications;

(c) How case managers follow up with parents to ensure services are implemented, to the greatest extent possible, in accordance with IEPs; and

(d) How the school district plans to conduct IEP meetings, evaluations, and other meetings to identify, evaluate, and/or reevaluate students with disabilities;

(3) Addresses the needs of English language learners (ELLs) and includes descriptions of the following:

(a) How the school district includes an English as a Second Language and/or bilingual education program aligned with State and Federal requirements to meet the needs of ELLs;

(b) The process to communicate with parents of ELLs, including providing translation materials, interpretative services, and information available at the parent's literacy level;

(c) The use of instructional adaptations, for example, differentiation, sheltered instruction, Universal Design for Learning, access to technology, and strategies to ensure that ELLs access the same standard of education as non-ELL peers; and

(d) The training for teachers, administrators, and counselors to learn strategies related to culturally responsive teaching and learning, social-emotional learning, and trauma-informed teaching for students affected by forced migration from their home country;

(4) Accounts for student attendance in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:32-13.1(d) and B.3. below and include the following:

(a) A description or copy of the school district's attendance policies, including how the school district will determine whether a student is present or absent during virtual or remote instruction, and how a student's attendance will factor into promotion, retention, graduation, discipline, and any other decisions that will reflect the student's performance;

(5) Describes how the school district is communicating with the parents when a student is not participating in virtual or remote instruction and/or submitting assignments;

(6) Includes a plan for the continued safe delivery of meals to eligible students;

(7) Includes an outline of how buildings will be maintained throughout an extended period of closure; and

(8) Includes district-specific factors, including, but not limited to, considerations for Title I extended learning programs, 21st Century Community

Learning Center Programs, credit recovery, other extended student learning opportunities, accelerated learning, and social and emotional health of staff and students, transportation, extra-curricular programs, childcare, and community programming; and

d. The Board of Education submitted a proposed program of virtual or remote instruction to the Commissioner annually.

(1) If the Board is unable to complete and submit a proposed program annually in accordance with the timeline established by the Commissioner, and the school district is required to close its schools for a declared state of emergency, declared public-health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure, the Commissioner may retroactively approve the program.

3. If provided under the Board's program that has been approved by the Commissioner, student attendance for a day of virtual or remote instruction shall be accounted for in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.4 for the purpose of meeting State and local graduation requirements, the awarding of course credit, and other matters as determined by the Commissioner.

Adopted: October 10, 2022