

**Bergenfield Public Schools**



**Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan  
2024-2025**

**Policy 2425**

"The Board of Education is committed to providing a high quality educational program, virtually or remotely, in the event 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. In addition, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.b. the Commissioner of Education shall allow the district to apply to the 180-day requirement established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.a., one or more days of virtual or remote instruction provided to students on the day or days the schools of the district were closed if the program of virtual or remote instruction meets such criteria as may be established by the Commissioner."

## **Access to Technology**

Students who attend Bergenfield High School and Roy W. Brown Middle School have all been assigned an electronic device, such as a Chrome book, which they are to bring to school each day and take home each evening. In the event that students did not take home their device, both of these schools will have assigned days and specified hours for families to drive up to the school and receive their child's device and charger.

Elementary students have assigned devices that they use each school day, but do not bring home in the evening. In the event that ample notice has not been given and students do not have their devices at home, each elementary school will have designated pick up times for parents to drive up to the school building to pick up their child's device, charger and any other supplies that might be warranted at this time. Every effort will be made to coordinate these pick-up times with the middle and high school to make the process as easy as possible for the families in Bergenfield.

Those families who do not have adequate access to the internet will also be provided with a hotspot, which will be picked up at the same time as the students' devices. Principals will survey their students to measure and confirm sufficient access to the internet, network access, and to devices.

In the event that a family is unable to come to the school to secure the needed devices, parents will be asked to contact the building principal or designee, and every effort will be made to drop off the device as well as hotspot, to ensure equitable access to online instruction.

## **Breakfast and Lunch Distribution**

In the event that one or more buildings within the school district must provide virtual learning for its students, free breakfast and lunch will still be provided. Eligible families will be able to pick up their meals between 11:00 and 1:00 at Bergenfield High School. Additional sites will be established when and if the need arises.

All food items will be Grab-and-Go and can be obtained by using the student's identification number. All meals will meet the nutritional guidelines whereas breakfast will include one bread/bread grain equivalent along with a fruit and milk, and lunch will include a full serving of protein, grain, vegetable, fruit and dairy.

Families who qualify for this service but are unable to obtain their meals should contact their building principal so that alternate arrangements can be made.

## **Attendance Procedures**

Parents/Guardians are required to call the absentee line to inform the school if their child will not be available for learning on that particular day. Building personnel will mark that student absent in the student management system.

If a student is **not** called in as absent, but fails to attend classes or is not participating virtually on that day, the school personnel will make every effort to contact the family by phone and email and document these attempts.

If the above attempts do not lead to contact and the safety and welfare of the student is unknown, the local police and/or child protective services will be contacted as outlined in policy.

Attendance will be reflected in a student's performance following district policies and procedures.

## **Academic Schedule**

Students at Bergenfield High School will follow their daily schedule without modification. They are to log into their class at the time designated on their schedule in accordance with the eight-day cycle. All students and staff have time for lunch between 11:32 - 12:17 daily.

Students at Roy W. Brown Middle School will follow their daily schedule without modification. They are to log into their class at the time designated and all students and staff will have a 45-minute lunch period at the time indicated on their original schedule.

Elementary students will attend virtual instruction and follow a modified schedule. Students will attend their core instructional classes via Zoom between 8:30 - 12:45. All students will have a working snack during this time period, and all students and staff will have time for lunch between 12:45 - 1:30 daily. Students must be available until 3:10 daily, as teachers will utilize the afternoon for small group differentiated instruction, additional specials courses, gifted and talented programming, basic skills instruction and other items specific to the needs of the individual child. This afternoon schedule will be communicated to parents either via email or through Google classroom.

## **Academic Program Delivery**

Instruction will be delivered via Zoom, or a comparable, board approved video conferencing software to all students. The district will also utilize Google Classroom for the posting and collection of assignments, as well as a way to communicate with all students and families. In addition to the electronic software that accompanies core texts in all grade areas, such as the district elementary math and science programs, additional approved software will be utilized to help with the delivery and differentiation of instruction, assessment, and student engagement. Our lessons and program are designed to maximize student growth and learning to the greatest extent possible. A comprehensive list of these approved programs is on file in the district's Curriculum Office.

## **Assessments**

The district will continue to assess student learning and understanding during remote instruction. Benchmark assessments, including STAR Renaissance, will continue as well so that educators can use this valuable data to gain insight into student strengths and struggles.

Standardized assessments such as the SAT and AP assessments will be delivered in accordance with the testing organization's guidelines. Whenever safely possible, students will test on campus. In the event that this cannot be done, the district will follow all regulations for remote testing. The same will be done for state assessments. All procedures will be in accordance with the state regulations for standardized testing.

The district will use virtual exit tickets and other classroom or program specific assessments for teachers to measure student growth in a remote or virtual environment.

## **Special Populations**

**ELL Services for Students and Families:** The following will be done to help support ELL and bilingual families throughout the Bergenfield community. The following is aligned with State and Federal requirements to meet the needs of the ELL's.

- Staff members call and/or email families directly with any concerns pertaining to their academic, social and emotional wellbeing. These communications are made by staff members who are proficient in the family's native language.

- The district offers translation services to help teachers communicate with families of Bilingual and English Language Learners. The services are provided by bilingual teachers, counselors, paraprofessionals, administrators and contracted translators as needed.
- Resources specific to the needs of Bergenfield's ELL families are posted on the district website. Such resources include but are not limited to translated How To videos for parents on topics such as using video conferencing platforms, navigating Google Classroom, accessing a variety of online programs such as Study Island and Raz Kids.
- ELL parent support group meetings are offered through video conferencing programs on a weekly basis and hosted by a district ELL instructor. These meetings allow the instructor to help problem-solve any difficulties that the parents have with programming and take a proactive approach to any language needs that the family may have.

The following is being done to help support ELLs and bilingual students enrolled in the Bergenfield school district. ESL and Bilingual teachers and staff will:

- Provide lessons and assignments virtually via video conferencing programs, Google Classroom and Screencastify.
- Push in to mainstream classes during video-conferencing sessions and follow-up on lessons delivered in these classes with small group video-conferencing sessions to ensure clarity.
- Collaborate with mainstream teachers to help ensure that their assignments consider modifications for ELLs.
- Differentiate the focus of video-conferencing sessions based on teacher observations, student and parent feedback and students' language proficiency and learning needs - Provide flexibility with due dates and assignment deadlines, allow students to submit work through alternative means, such as taking a picture of work and emailing it to the teacher, and create assignments that do not require printing.
- Meet weekly as a department to address and troubleshoot ELL challenges with the distance learning format.

- Professional development for teachers, administrators, and counselors will be provided to learn strategies related to culturally responsive teaching and learning, socio-emotional learning, and trauma-informed teaching for this population of students.

### **Gifted and Talented Program**

The district will continue to provide access to accelerated learning opportunities for students identified in our Gifted and Talented Program.

### **Special Education Services for Students and Families**

The materials provided for special education students will vary based on age, classification and individual need and all activities and assignments are designed in accordance with the modifications/accommodations outlined in each student's IEP. Programs include instruction delivered through live and recorded lessons, and offer individual and small group lessons as needed. Print materials are made available to those populations for which they are required and most beneficial. This program will provide virtual or remote instruction for students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible, including materials and platforms.

### **Inclusion**

Inclusion classes continue as general and special education teachers plan together and co-host video conferencing meetings to deliver direct instruction to their students. Both teachers work with all students in the large class as well as small group instruction to ensure student understanding. Paraprofessionals continue to support students in these live sessions and check in with students to offer guidance in areas specified in the IEP, such as organizational skills and time management, two areas that are difficult under traditional circumstances, let alone during distance learning.

### **Resource Room Classes**

Special education and general education teachers continue to consult with one another to develop programs that will deliver support in the appropriate content areas. Teachers continue to differentiate their lessons and offer individualized support through video conferencing programs. Paraprofessionals continue to offer support in the resource room setting.

## **BD, LLD and Multiple Disabilities Classes**

Instruction is delivered within these classes through direct instruction delivered through video conferencing programs as well as through pre-recorded lessons. Students are provided with opportunities for more individualized instruction through invitations to small group lessons and activities in addition to the whole class instructional model. Once again, paraprofessionals continue to offer support in the large class and small group sessions.

## **Preschool Disabilities**

Students in these classes receive instruction through several avenues. When and where appropriate, teachers with paraprofessionals host online lessons that utilize video conferencing programs that help students continue to learn verbal communication and socialization. Morning meeting activities are often done through live lessons as well. Academic work packets include creative, interdisciplinary lessons that help introduce students to foundational skills in literacy and mathematics, but also encourage activities to keep students engaged. Students may be asked to complete activities that require them to draw a picture of their favorite part of a story, or complete a scavenger hunt in their homes to find five items that begin with the letter c.

## **Autism**

Students who are enrolled in an ABA program continue to receive instruction in this manner whenever possible. These lessons are done with videoconferencing programs and teachers communicate program information directly to parents on a daily basis as they would typically do through a student's communication log. Additionally, academic work packets for these students may include ABA curriculum program templates for ABA programs currently in maintenance. A list of activities completed in the various teaching centers (i.e, fine motor, social/play, and self help) that could be practiced at home should also be provided.

## **Related Services**

*The services outlined below can occur individually or in a small group as in accordance with student IEPs. When applicable and appropriate, the therapist may push in to live video conferencing classroom sessions for additional support.*

### **Speech Therapy**

Students entitled to speech sessions will receive these through teletherapy and video conferencing. Speech therapists work with the students to continue to address the individual student goals. Additionally, therapists communicate with parents consistently throughout the week to provide progress notes and strategies that can be used at home to continue to build on the skills addressed in the individual or small group session. Examples of some of these supplementary activities that can be done at home include but are not limited to oral motor activities, articulation activities, and/or worksheets that provide any suitable speech activities to practice.

### **Occupational Therapy**

Occupational therapy is delivered through video conferencing programs as well. The occupational therapist works directly with the students, as well as with parents, to provide appropriate activities that help students maintain and build upon the progress they have made. In addition to the weekly sessions outlined in a student's IEP, the occupational therapist will consult with parents and provide appropriate activities that can be done at home, including but not limited to fine motor activities, sensorimotor activities, and/or worksheets that provide any suitable OT activities to practice in the home.

### **Physical Therapy**

Physical therapy is delivered through video conferencing programs as well. The physical therapist works directly with the student, as well as with parents, to provide appropriate activities that help students maintain and build upon the progress they have made. In addition to the weekly sessions outlined in a student's IEP, the physical therapist will consult with parents and provide appropriate activities that can be done at home, including but not limited to balance activities, gross motor activities, and/or worksheets that provide any suitable physical therapy activities to practice in the home.

## **Behavioral Therapy**

Behaviorist consults continue to occur through telephone or video communication. Behaviorists have offered support to both teachers as well as worked closely with parents to help establish a structure and format that will minimize behaviors as well as provide strategies and resources to address these behaviors should they occur. This is a critical component of the special services provided for many of the autistic and multiply-disabled students within the district.

## **Hearing Impaired Services**

Audio-verbal therapy continues to occur for those students who have this service itemized in their IEP, and it is provided through established teletherapy sessions as required. Teacher of the Deaf services also continue through video-conferencing with parents and students as needed.

## **Counseling**

Counseling sessions are provided by telephone or video conferencing programs in accordance with each student's IEP. Additionally, case managers and parents have been provided with resources to address crisis situations and immediate concerns.

## **Child Study Team Process and Procedures**

### **Meetings**

- The district continues to hold IEP meetings throughout school closure. Eligibility meetings have continued for students who were tested prior to school closure, and new testing items, approved by the state, have been purchased so that evaluations of preschool aged students can continue during distance learning (DAYC2). Additionally, the district continues to hold its annual review meetings whenever possible and provide parents with a draft of an IEP for the next school year.
- Meetings are held in a "live" atmosphere through video conferencing programs. Attendance at these meetings is tracked through email correspondence as well as through an electronic signature form offered through Power School.
- Upon return to school, case managers, teachers and related service providers will conduct individualized assessments based on IEP goals to determine if the

student has regressed during the school closure. Data will be used to outline the frequency and duration of compensatory services.

- Teacher and child study team members will track services, student progress, and accommodations/modifications via the online IEP software.

### **Communication**

- Case managers will reach out to parents and teachers to assess student needs and progress during distance learning; this communication is via video conference, email and/or phone and is as frequent as needed.
- Case managers will reach out to parents of medically fragile children to ensure required medical services continue.
- Translation services are provided to families by a staff member or district provided translator as needed

### **Transportation**

- Transportation decisions for out of district placement will be made in conjunction with the school and will be based upon the safety of the students and staff involved.

### **Surveys**

The district has worked in consultation with families to develop and disseminate a survey as it pertains to the specific needs of special education students during this time of school closure to ensure that the high level and quality of service to which our families are accustomed, continues.

### **Guidance Processes and Procedures**

The guidance department continues to offer a variety of leveled services throughout school closure. Guidance staff members:

- Continue to check in with students and families that have received services this year and/or are known to need support at this time.
- Meet with already established support groups at the elementary, middle and high school level as well as establish new groups to support students and families as the need arises.

- Join class lessons at the elementary level to continue to teach the guidance curriculum
- Take referrals from staff regarding student well-being and check in with student/family
- Provide parents with supports for their children
- Refer families with a child(ren) experiencing significant mental health symptoms to the appropriate agency - CarePlus, Mobile Crisis, etc.
- Assist teachers with maintaining compliance to 504/I&RS plans
- In addition to providing mental health services, the counseling department will
- Continue to hold virtual scheduling meetings when possible
- Assist students with the completion of scholarship applications
- Work with teachers and administrators to address students who are in danger of failing or being retained.

### **Facilities Plan**

The district will continue to staff and maintain facilities and grounds during any extended period of closure. Staff may be assigned on as needed basis which will be determined by the School Business Administrator and Superintendent on a case by case basis.

### **Social and Emotional Health of Staff and Students**

The district will continue to measure the social and emotional health of staff and students using survey data obtained via our Panorama software program. In addition, the data will be reviewed by school administrators to develop programs that will meet the social and emotional needs of their students and staff.

### **Title I Extended Learning Programs**

The district will continue to deliver instruction, programs, and services to students our Title I population during a short or extended closure. These extended programs will be delivered virtually via Zoom and Google Classroom and progress will be measured using multiple measures (ie..short cycle assessments, exit tickets, and other teacher developed assessments).

## **21st Century Community Learning Center Programs**

The district will continue to offer access to academic enrichment programs, enrichment activities and recreation opportunities, family literacy and enrichment programs, and support services (drug and youth prevention programs, including character education after school via remote technologies in the event of an extended school closure.

## **Accelerated Learning Opportunities**

The district provides a variety of programs, including but not limited to small group instruction provided during the school day as well as after traditional hours, designed to help both students who are struggling, and those who are seeking enrichment opportunities for academic advancement. Among these opportunities is the ability to take online courses through an accredited program to earn additional credits that will allow for credit advancement. This includes traditional coursework as well as AP courses.

## **Credit Recovery**

The district will continue to provide credit recovery opportunities who require this level of support during times of extended school closure using Board approved online service providers.

## **Other Extended Student Learning Opportunities**

The district will continue to offer extended day learning opportunities that include but are not limited to Big Brothers Big Sisters, virtual field trips, and other college and career virtual opportunities during an extended school closure.

## **Extra-Curricular Programs**

The district will continue to offer extra-curricular opportunities via Zoom and other online platforms during an extended school closure.

## **Childcare**

The district maintains a partnership with the Bergenfield SACC program to provide childcare services to the children of Bergenfield. The district will work closely with Bergenfield SACC to provide childcare services to families to the greatest extent possible during an extended school closure.

## **Community Programming**

The district will continue to provide community programming opportunities to our families utilizing partnerships with the Borough of Bergenfield and the Bergenfield Public Library. Examples may include providing access to facilities, sharing of remote

technologies to allow for community programs to continue during a time of extended school closure.

### **Essential Employees**

The superintendent will maintain a list of essential employees who will report to work during times of an extended school closure and will share this list with the county office when the district transitions to remote or virtual instruction.