

FREEHOLD BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
280 Park Avenue
Freehold, NJ 07728
Monmouth County



Chapter 27
Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Programs
School Year 2024 - 2025

Board of Education Adoption Date: July 22, 2024

Freehold Borough Board of Education

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Freehold Borough School District

District Mission

We will inspire the creativity and imagination of all students and empower them as knowledgeable, skillful, and confident learners who flourish and contribute willingly in a changing world.

Core Beliefs

We believe that:

- All people have inherent worth.
- Life-long learning is basic to the survival and advancement of society.
- The primary influence on the individual's development is the family in all its forms.
- Valuing diversity is essential to individual growth and the advancement of society.
- All individuals have strengths and human potential has no known limits.
- Democracy thrives when individuals accept responsibility for their choices.
- Being trustworthy builds trust.
- Creativity and imagination are essential for society to flourish.
- A safe environment is essential for the well-being of the individual and for society to flourish

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Goal and Purpose

The goal and purpose of this plan is to satisfy requirements of the state legislation A-3904. In April 2020, Governor Murphy signed A-3904 into law (P.L.2020, c.27, or “Chapter 27”), which in part requires each school district, charter school, renaissance school project, and Approved Private School for Students with Disabilities, hereinafter referred to as Local Educational Agencies (LEA), to annually submit a proposed program for emergency virtual or remote instruction (Plan) to the New Jersey Department of Education (Department). This law provides for the continuity of instruction in the event of a public health-related district closure by permitting LEAs to utilize virtual or remote instruction to satisfy the 180-day requirement pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.

This plan will be implemented during a district closure lasting more than three consecutive school days 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. A day of virtual or remote instruction, if instituted under the 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.

General Information about Virtual or Remote Instruction

The district will continue to provide academic instruction in the event that schools are closed for a long period of time due to emergency or health-related reasons. Continued instruction will take place through virtual or remote instruction, also known as **Virtual Learning**. Virtual Learning is an educational experience that is enhanced through utilizing computers and/or the internet to provide instruction in an online environment. This is helpful when access to school facilities become limited or unavailable.

Staff and students will continue to follow their regular bell schedule to fully immerse and engage in virtual learning.

Information for Students and Parents

1. District and school websites will serve as the main hub for sharing updates, information, and directions for students and parents to complete schoolwork and assignments.
2. Specific updates and information for instruction and schoolwork should be accessed through their Teacher's Page, available within the school's website.
3. Students and parents can and should communicate with teachers via email and/or Google Classroom.
4. All students are provided opportunities to bring home technology device and/or access to the internet.
5. All students are expected to be virtually on standby following their regular schedule and ready to receive instruction, support, ask questions, and interact with their teachers. Students and parents should consult with teachers if unable to participate in virtual learning following their regular schedule to discuss how to complete work assignments.
6. District **attendance policy** will be in full effect during virtual or hybrid learning. Please click on the link for full details:

<https://www.freeholdboro.k12.nj.us/Domain/402>

Additional Information on Attendance

- a. Homeroom Teachers at FLC and PAE will complete attendance in the morning via Genesis. FIS teachers will complete attendance in the beginning of each block.
- b. Phone calls to students' homes will be made for those who are marked absent, late, not participating in virtual learning, and not submitting school work and assignments.
- c. Prolonged or repeated absences, excused or unexcused, from school or from class, deprive students of the classroom experience deemed essential to learning and may result in the following: failing class, possible retention at grade level, and not fulfilling graduation requirements for 8th grade students. A warning notice will be given to any student, and to the parent/legal guardian of any minor student, who has demonstrated excessive absences.

- d. We will adhere to the attendance procedures listed below:
 - i. First reminder letter at 5 tardies/5 absences.
 - ii. Second reminder letter at 10 tardies/10 absences and meeting with the Principal
 - iii. Third and final notification letter at 15 tardies/15 absences and an official complaint will be filed in order to comply with the State law.

Instructional Plan

1. Teachers and students will follow their regular schedule during virtual learning. That means ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, and VAPA lessons are taking place during their normal scheduled times.
2. Teacher Pages are updated daily, and instructions/directions for virtual learning are provided.
3. Students can utilize their textbooks and workbooks with specific guidance from teachers.
4. Students will utilize online resources with specific guidance from teachers.
5. Grades PK – 1: Students in this grade band may not be fully developmentally competent in utilizing computers and technology to support virtual learning. Therefore, teachers and staff may send home students and parents with work packets, textbooks, and workbooks. Specific instructions and directions are addressed to parents/guardian, explaining what schoolwork needs to be completed and what resources to use to support their children. Teacher Pages are utilized to outline and explain schoolwork and assignments. Parents should get in touch with teachers when needed about any of the assignments.
6. Grades 2 – 8: Students in this grade band are fully competent in utilizing computers and technology to support virtual learning. Teacher Pages include link to their Google Classroom, the main platform for virtual learning.

Grade Specific Information

Grade PreK - 1

Staff members in PreK – 1 may provide students and parents with work packets, textbooks, and/or workbooks to support Virtual Learning. Information regarding pick up of work packets and materials will be shared via Teacher Pages (website) and School Website. Teacher Pages (website) will be utilized to outline and explain schoolwork and assignments, reflecting their full day (bell) schedule. Staff members ensure that parents are able to get in touch with them when needed through email and use of appropriate phone apps such as Class Dojo and Talking Points. Student login information for all online resources will be provided to parents/guardians for those who have access to internet and technology devices. Through Teacher Pages, specific instructions and directions will be addressed to parents/guardian explaining what schoolwork needs to be completed and what resources to use to support their children.

Grade 2 - 8

Staff members in Grades 2 - 8 will follow their full day (bell) schedule and provide differentiated approach during virtual learning using synchronous and asynchronous learning. These varied approaches to virtual learning help in introducing and explicitly covering new topics and contents to students while giving them opportunities to complete their work independently. This approach to virtual learning also allows teachers to differentiate and individualized instruction based on students' needs.

1. Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

Following their full bell schedule, teachers are available to provide instructions.

Synchronous learning entails teachers engaging all students in a lesson simultaneously.

Asynchronous learning entails teachers giving students time to work in groups and/or independent work while he/she checks in with students for differentiation and additional instructional support.

2. Synchronous Learning

Synchronous learning involves the teacher and the entire class (students) engaging in instruction via a web conferencing tool. It creates a virtual classroom that allows students

to ask questions and the teacher to answer them instantly. Teachers who implement synchronous learning allow students to participate and learn in real time and to involve in live discussions. Examples of synchronous learning include the following: video/web conferencing (Google Meet), live chat through Google Meet, and Google Classroom.

3. Asynchronous Learning

Asynchronous learning is a self-study and student-centered approach. The teacher and students are not involved in real time virtual interaction or discussion. The teacher may post lectures, recorded videos/tutorials, assignments and classwork electronically for students to complete and submit on a set time. Students do the work on their own and at their own pace. In doing the work, students may seek teacher guidance through email, video conferencing, phone conferencing, and real time comments in Google applications. Examples of asynchronous learning include the following: pre-recorded videos/webinar, email, and Google Classroom discussion boards.

4. When to Use Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

A combination of Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning will best support student success in a virtual learning setting. But understanding when to use each approach is the key. Teachers are available at all times, following their bell schedule, to provide instructions.

When to Use Synchronous Learning

- Whole-class Discussion
 - Starting a new topic or content – This serves as the time for direct and explicit instruction. The teacher covers new topics and content with detailed explanations and examples. The entire class participates actively and should be engaged in virtual discussion.
 - Going over new assignments – The teacher provides detailed instructions on the assignments and work that the whole class is expected to complete. Students have the opportunity to ask questions and clarifications.

- Other uses: Morning Meetings and Class Meetings

When to Use Asynchronous Learning

- Small Group Work and Independent Work
 - Giving students time to complete work – After giving direct instruction and explicit directions on assignments, students complete the work on their own, or with their peers as assigned by teachers. But students know how to access and reach out to teachers when needed and vice versa.
- One-on-one or Small Group Support
 - Individual or small group conferencing – The teacher should reach out to students who need additional support for one-on-one or small group instruction after whole-class discussion. The rest of the class is working on their own.

Enhancements for Basic Skills/At Risk Students

The district will continue to monitor social, emotional, and academic wellbeing of all students, and provide additional support to those identified as “at risk”. Staff will be trained to carefully identify and help address students who need the most support in a virtual or hybrid environment.

All staff members will employ the following SEL principles: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision. These principles will be embedded in each school’s climate and culture initiatives led by building principals and their guidance counselors. Each school has a comprehensive procedures and guidelines involving all stakeholders in addressing social and emotional needs of every student.

In addition to supporting at risk students with their social and emotional well-being, the district will continue to identify students who are academically at risk using multiple measures or data. These data will include measures such as the most current NJSLA scores, Benchmark, Teacher Recommendations, Report Card Grades, etc.

At the elementary level, a Basic Skills teacher will provide at-risk students additional academic support. This support may be a push in or pull out for about 30 minutes during their in-person class schedule (hybrid) or virtually following their regular bell schedule. This intensive

support will focus on English Language Arts, particularly the Reading Foundational Skills as outlined in the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. Basic Skills teachers will work closely with classroom teachers to monitor student progress.

At the middle school level, an Interventionist will work closely with at-risk students to support them in their English Language Arts and Math skills. This support may be push-in or pull out depending on class size and level of academic support needed. Both Interventionist and classroom teacher will closely monitor progress of students.

Title I Extended Day programs will be offered virtually to further support struggling and at-risk students. Multiple measures will be used to identify students in need of appropriate academic support.

Supporting Special Education Needs

The district will support its educators, related service providers and advocacy groups to implement best practices and consider policies to support the Freehold Borough School District in providing services to students with disabilities in virtual or hybrid learning environments. Consistent with guidance from the United States Department of Education, the district will continue to meet its obligations to students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible. The district will stay abreast of all NJDOE and USDE updates and guidance on the implementation of IDEA. The district will focus on and support specific strategies and considerations for students with disabilities which must be critical points of discussion for all types of return-to-school scenarios. This will be done through IEP meetings, CST member consultation and consistent communication with staff, students and families.

The Freehold Borough School District will consider the following when addressing the education of students with disabilities for the current school year:

- The district will address the return to school of medically fragile students and students with physical or health impairments who may require accommodations and modifications as part of a 504 Plan.
- The district will communicate frequently with the families of students with significant medical risk factors to determine if additional precautions or unique measures are necessary prior to a student's return to school.

- The district IEP teams will review student data/student progress to determine whether critical skills were lost during the period in which remote instruction was being provided to students and determine the need for additional services to address learning loss.
- The district IEP teams will consider the impact of missed services on student progress towards meeting IEP goals and objectives, and determine if additional or compensatory services are needed to address regression and recoupment of skills within a reasonable length of time.
- The district IEP teams will develop procedures to complete overdue and/or incomplete evaluations to determine eligibility for special education services.
- The district will utilize guidance counselors and child study team members to identify students whose educational plans may have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and provide support, resources, and assistance, which may include facilitating connection to community organizations, scholarship programs, county, state, and federal opportunities to access support.
- The district guidance counselors, child study team members, teachers and related services members will effectively communicate with parents/guardians regarding the procedures for student referrals and evaluations to determine the eligibility for special education and related services or a 504 Plan as required by federal and state law.

Supporting English Language Learners

In an effort to ensure students are identified for English language services, upon registration, parents/guardians whose home language is not English are contacted to discuss the home language use and language needs of their child(ren). At that time, virtual ESL screening may take place if appropriate. This provides valuable information regarding students' linguistic ability and informs tentative placements in the Bilingual/ESL program. Formal language testing will take place either virtually or in person to confirm placement and parents/guardians will be notified of the students' official placement within established NJDOE timelines.

In order to deliver continuity of services, ESL students will have the opportunity to partake in virtual ESL supplementation before/after school programs via Title III federal funds. ESL parent involvement workshops and ESL parent learning academies will also be available to parents in the virtual setting.

Teachers and students will continue to follow their schedule to allow for the continuity of ESL push in/pull out services either in the hybrid or full virtual setting. Instructional differentiation continues to be based on student need and language proficiency level. Teachers differentiate instruction by providing scaffolded instruction and instructional materials, allowing additional time to complete in person or online assignments, and by scheduling individual student conferences, either virtually or in-person. Teachers will also continue to utilize their teacher pages to communicate and inform their parents and students. Students and parents can also email teachers directly as needed.

As PreK and Kindergarten students will have the use of iPads, and 1st through 8th grade students are provided with Chromebooks, the Bilingual/ESL department teachers will utilize Google Classrooms and/or other age and developmentally appropriate platforms, according to their schedules and established groups. Online translation resources as well as district translators, are available to translate instructions and/or materials for students. In addition to co-teaching where feasible via Google classrooms, teachers use separate Google classrooms for each level of proficiency within a classroom. Teachers also use the Clever Portal, ELL related online resources, such as RAZ Kids ELL's, BrainPop ELL, and other web resources as warranted for students and families.

To troubleshoot ELL access challenges, staff monitor student attendance, participation in Google classroom, and student submission of assignments. Follow-up via parent call or email enable staff to create a plan to meet any access challenges. Technical support is also readily available to troubleshoot technical issues as they arise.

In order to further address English learners and school personnel needs, the district will conduct virtual trainings and/or meetings with stakeholders to ensure best practices related to culturally responsiveness, socio-emotional learning, as well as trauma-informed teaching are applied and supported within the context of the virtual learning and living environment. Training for culturally responsiveness may include topics such as, how to create a responsive environment, how to create social inclusion opportunities for English learners, and how to honor multilingualism. Social-emotional learning topics that may be addressed include how to identify stressors affecting learning, how to create and deploy a team of support to address student socio-emotional experiences, and how to engage family with community resources for the purposes of socio-emotional wellness. Topics for trauma informed training may include how to identify

trauma and respond in culturally sensitive ways, how to deliver trauma informed mini-lessons, and how to help families navigate mental health opportunities in a non-invasive or non-stigmatizing manner.

Social Emotional Learning and School Culture and Climate

The district will effectively plan for supportive and equitable learning environments that promote social, emotional, and academic learning for all students.

Educator Well-being:

- Provide time and space for individuals to process traumatic events, re-establish connections with each other, and receive support that promotes their healing.
- Prioritize educator self-care and wellness for the school year.
 - ✓ Professional Development for all staff focusing on SEL training
 - ✓ Providing resources for all staff needing support for SEL services
 - ✓ Provide support for educators' on how to access mental and behavioral resources and encourage them to utilize these services. (CST, Counselors, nurses will be available to all staff)
 - ✓ 5 Strategies for Teacher Self-Care (ASCD)
 - ✓ Educator Stress Spectrum
 - ✓ Educator Resilience and Trauma-Informed Self Care
 - ✓ Handout: Supporting Healthy Mindsets and Behaviors
 - ✓ NJEA's Member Helpline
 - ✓ Resiliency Resources at Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care
 - ✓ Supporting Teachers Through Stress Management (NASP)

Trauma-Informed Social and Emotional Learning:

The district will organize and prepare for the school year acknowledging the potential trauma that staff and students have faced during the health-related school closures. The district will directly address staff and student challenges to ensure that social and emotional learning are embedded into the daily school setting. The district will establish clear communication and routines and prioritize the well-being of staff and students to support the safety and security of all stakeholders.

- ✓ Communicate the importance of SEL and how it relates to student success with staff, students and families.
- ✓ Provide qualified staff and individuals to support the SEL of all stakeholders.
- ✓ Provide opportunity for connections among staff, students and families, as needed (virtual town-halls, small group online meetings, surveys, etc.).
- ✓ Integration of SEL into teaching, instruction, and daily learning environments. (through both in person and virtual instruction).
- ✓ Establish protocols for identifying and supporting students with social, emotional, behavioral and mental health challenges. (Support staff will be available daily to address staff and student needs).
- ✓ Provide community partnerships such as the YMCA and outside agencies to supplement services as needed.
- ✓ Provide opportunities for staff and students to practice and reflect on their social and emotional competencies.
- ✓ Create instructional practices to support SEL (small groups, mentors, breaks)
- ✓ Provide opportunity to discuss impacts of COVID-19
- ✓ Provide safe space for all discussions to take place (topics may included but are not limited to: bullying, grief, loss, mental health, hope resiliency)
- ✓ Provide counseling and mental health support as needed to both staff and students

Technology and Internet Connectivity Support

All students are provided with technology device to engage in Virtual Learning. Students in PreK and Kindergarten are provided with iPads and students in Grades 1 – 8 are provided with Chromebooks. In addition, family members who need internet connectivity have access to one of the district’s hot spots. For any question or information regarding technology and/or internet connectivity, please send an email to techstaff@freeholdboro.k12.nj.us. You may also visit the district’s Technology website at <https://www.freeholdboro.k12.nj.us/Domain/41>.

Food Service and Distribution

The district will continue to serve breakfast and lunch to eligible students through the Grab and Go Pick-up Procedures. Students and parents will pick up their boxed/bagged breakfast

and lunch on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 8:00 – 12:00nn at Park Avenue Complex Door #15. Each pick up will be for two days: two breakfasts and two lunches. Specific instructions and directions on the times and locations of food distribution will be sent home via email or phone blast. Additional information and procedures regarding food services and distribution schedule will be posted on the district’s website at <https://www.freeholdboro.k12.nj.us/Domain/1>.

Facilities Plan

The conditions for learning addresses students’ and educators’ basic physical safety needs, social and emotional needs, and environmental factors. This includes a policy for screening students and employees for symptoms of COVID-19 and history of exposure, maintaining appropriate social distancing in the classrooms and school buses, and adopting appropriate cleaning and disinfecting procedures. The district will adhere to guidelines from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the state of New Jersey and the Freehold Borough Health Department. Reasonable accommodations for staff and students at high risk for severe illness will be considered following a proper assessment. All schools will continuously promote social distancing, frequent hand washing, and the use of face coverings. These requirements will be folded into staff and student training.

Within the schools and classrooms, use for shared objects will be minimized. Hand washing will be done frequently and hand sanitizing stations will be set up. A supply of disinfecting wipes will be provided in the classrooms. The district will ensure that all HVAC systems are working properly and taking in the designed amount of fresh air.

All school staff and visitors are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual’s health or the individual is under two years of age. Such medical exceptions will require medical certification. Students will be required to wear face coverings when at Level 4, except when eating. District classrooms will be arranged with all students’ desks facing the same direction. Students utilizing district transportation will be required to use a face covering.

Working with Howell Township, the Monmouth/Ocean Educational Services Commission and other private bus contractors, the district will ensure that social distancing is maintained on buses. If not practical, face coverings will be required. The district will require

that all transportation contractors and service providers properly clean and disinfect on a daily basis. Field trips will be severely curtailed until such time aggressive social distancing is no longer necessary.

Student and staff arrival at school will be precisely controlled to allow for proper screening for elevated core body temperatures and other COVID-19 symptoms. Student movement within the buildings will be highly directed to ensure students and staff maintain 6ft distant, where possible.

The district will safely and respectfully screen students and employees for symptoms of and history of exposure to COVID-19. Students and staff with symptoms will be isolated from others. If the district becomes aware that an individual who has spent

With a hybrid instructional model, quality child care will become more of a demand. Parents will need to establish who will care for their students when they are not scheduled in-school. This will include those days that students are working completely virtually from home, but also when they are in-school and need a program from the time school is dismissed to when parents are available. For both Level 1 and Level 4, the district intends to continue with the virtual 21st Century program for students in grades 3 to 8. For students in PK-2, the district intends to work with the YMCA, as it has in the past, and provide child care services at Freehold Learning Center before and after school. Park Ave Elementary will continue with the district run before care program. The district will also provide information on various commercial child care providers in our immediate area for possible use by parents; however, the district will not be able to provide transportation to these providers.

Essential Employees

The following positions are considered essential in the event of emergency district-wide closure. Essential employees will work and follow Board-approved emergency plan to ensure continuity of instruction. The positions are as follow:

- District and school administrators
- Nurses
- Teachers and Paraprofessionals
- Facilities
- Technology
- District and School Secretaries
- Security

Accelerated Learning

Students' academic performance will be closely monitored using multiple measures such as Benchmark Assessments, Classroom performances, Report Card Grades, and Teacher Recommendations. Students who are identified in need of additional support in English Language Arts and Mathematics will be invited to attend a before or after school programs to accelerate their learning and close their achievement gaps. These before/after school programs will be provided via synchronous learning with teacher to student ratio of no more than six students. These programs will be funded using federal grants such as Title I and Title III.