

Mountainside School District

Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan 2026-2027



Mountainside School District Fully Remote Instructional Plan

This plan will be implemented in the event of 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. The superintendent will 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 this 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.

Instruction

- Students and teachers will start and end their day at the regular time scheduled for each school in the district and will adhere to the length of the school day requirements pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-8.3.
- Teachers will record daily attendance for each class and report all absences to the school attendance officer. The attendance officer will communicate with parents regarding excessive absences.
- Students and teachers will follow their in-person schedule. Any alterations to the schedule will be communicated by the school principal or the students' teacher.
- All existing programs including special education, gifted and talented, ELL, AIM will continue to be held within the remote structure.
- Daily instruction will be a blend of instructional resources and teaching practices, including (but not limited to): live lessons with staff members, pre-recorded videos, on-line textbooks, instructional web-based platforms, and teacher created assignments.
 - Instruction will be modified and differentiated as necessary to meet developmental and instructional needs of students in grades PreK-8.
 - Individualized assessments will be utilized to measure student understanding and mastery.
- Students in grades PreK-8 will use a district issued Chromebook to receive instruction and communication from their teachers via Zoom and/or Google Meet.
- Teachers will utilize Google Classroom as the platform for posting assignments and communicating with students and families in grades PreK-8.
- Support services (ML, AIM, and Special Education) teachers will utilize their own Google Classroom and Zoom/Google Meet sessions to work with students.
- Grade level teams, administrators, and instructional specialists will meet regularly to analyze student data, measure progress and identify students that are in need of academic support. Teachers will monitor growth through formative and summative assessments.
- Full Time remote learning protocols will follow the Board's attendance policy, Board's Student Code of Conduct, Board's HIB policy, Board's acceptable use policy, and all other policies governing delivery of services and District expectations of students
- Teachers will follow all existing district protocols to notify parents of student progress, participation, attendance concerns, and missing assignments.
- Whenever possible, before/after school extended learning & extra-curricular programs will take place in a remote format.

Multilingual Learners

- Students eligible for ML services will continue to receive instruction and any necessary modifications via Zoom/Google Meet sessions with their identified teachers.
- The District will communicate information regarding school closing, instruction, and other procedures in the family's identified language.
- Staff will be provided with any necessary training and support in order to best meet the needs of students.

Internet Access and Technology

- Students will be provided with a school issued Chromebook, or alternate device, to allow for timely access to lessons and programming if needed
- Technology support will be available to address any access or technology needs.
- The District will work with students who do not have internet access in their home to identify and provide alternative accessibility measures as available.
- In the event that a device is broken or not working properly, arrangements will be made to provide a replacement device.

Special Education Services

Child Study Team Meetings

- CST and other necessary meetings will be held virtually through Zoom.
- Electronic signatures will be considered acceptable for all documents.
- Evaluations may be conducted in-person as long as safety and health protocols can be followed during the evaluation process.
- Case managers will contact parents to discuss any supports that may be needed for implementation of child's IEP to the greatest extent possible.

Instruction

- Student programming will align with grade level peers who are also on Remote Learning. Instructional support will be provided by special education and paraprofessional staff as identified within student IEPs.
 - Individual and small group instruction and support will be provided via full group Zoom/Google Meet sessions and/or small group breakout sessions.
- Special education teachers will create their own Google Classrooms to post modified assignments as needed.
- Hard copies of lessons/activities will be made available as determined by a student's IEP.
- Collection of data (behavior plans, student progress towards goals and objectives) will be maintained as appropriate and specified in the child's IEP.
- Structured learning experiences will continue to occur to the greatest extent possible.

Delivery of Services

- Speech-Language Services, Occupational/Physical Therapy, Counseling & Social Skills
 - Lessons, activities, and related materials can be posted through Google Classrooms.
 - Teletherapy will be provided to the greatest extent possible for all therapy sessions.
- Behavior Analyst (BCBA)
 - Support teachers with planning for maintenance of skills, updating programs, collection and analysis of data
 - Provide ongoing paraprofessional training
- Paraprofessionals
 - Paraprofessionals will provide support to students within the Zoom/Google Meet sessions and provide organizational and behavioral support.
- Students on Home Instruction will be included in their normally scheduled Zoom/Google Meet sessions and will receive support virtually as determined by their individual needs

Additional Support Staff

Nurses

- Track student and staff illness during closure and report to local health department as appropriate
- Monitor NJDOH and CDC guidelines regarding the public health emergency and communicate information to students and staff as appropriate
- Assist community wide efforts to support families
- Prepare health and safety efforts for an eventual return to in person instruction

School Counselors

- Monitor student attendance and following up with students and families regarding any attendance issues
- Utilize Zoom/Google Meet to continue the delivery of lessons and support services for staff & students in K-8
- Reach out to students identified by administrators, teachers, and RTI Committee regularly and document contacts
- Develop resources that can be shared with parents and students to assist with virtual learning
- Individual virtual counseling provided for students on an as-needed basis

Meal Service Plan

In order to continue meal service while moving to fully remote instruction, we have developed the following plan in association with the district's Food Service Management Company, Maschio's:

Meal Distribution

Meals will be available for all students who qualify for free or reduced lunch.

- All meals will be prepared and available daily at Deerfield School for students to pick up a grab-and-go lunch
- Distribution will begin on the second day of school closure
- Distribution will end on the last day of school closure
- Distribution times will be between 10 am and 12 pm, Monday through Friday except for school holidays and closures

Kitchen Safety / Food Safety

- Kitchen cleanliness and sanitizing will take place daily. Maschio's staff will complete a review course on the proper food handling techniques and avoiding the spread of illness. The training is in line with the ServSafe standards.

Additional Information

Building Maintenance

- Custodians will continue to maintain buildings and school grounds during the emergency closure as long as safety & health protocols can be followed.

Essential Employees

- The District will identify employees who are essential to the continuation of day-to-day functions of the district in order to ensure a smooth transition to virtual/remote instruction. This list will be provided to the Union County Executive Superintendent in the event that the District needs to transition to virtual/remote instruction.

Transportation

- District transportation is provided by an independent contractor. The district will notify the company that no transportation will be necessary during an emergency closure, and when it should resume upon reopening.

Childcare and Community Programming

- The District's before/after care programming is operated independently by the Westfield Area YMCA. They will be notified in the event of an emergency closure, and any information or possible alternate options for childcare will be provided to parents.
- Community programs will be offered and coordinated with the district's PTO whenever appropriate