SOMERSET COUNTY VOCATIONAL & TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Emergency Virtual/Remote Instruction Programs for 2026-2027



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County: Somerset
Name of District: Somerset County Vocational and Technical School
Chief School Administrator: Robert Presuto
Phone Number: 908-526-8900, ext. 7212

Equitable Access and Opportunity to Instruction

The Superintendent shall develop, maintain, and supervise a remote educational program consistent with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1. The remote educational program shall provide an opportunity for students to participate in an educational program delivered by the District in a location outside of a school. The remote educational program shall align its curriculum with the NJ State Learning Standards and Board policies.

In the event that the school district has to close, the district will follow Policy 8220 - School Day, and Regulation 8220 - School Closings.

The district will enact the following Home Instruction Due to Health Conditions Policy 2412 to ensure that the educational process is not disrupted for ill students:

1. The District has administered a technology accessibility survey so we have (and if need be, will again) determine home Wi-Fi/Internet access and digital device availability. We also will provide instructions on how publicly available hotspots (e.g.: Optimum) can be accessed.

2. All full-time students receive a district-issued Chromebook at the start of the school year. The district also has a database of the various technologies that share-time students are supplied with by their home district which was developed during the COVID-19 pandemic. If said technologies change, we will update/modify our database to ensure a seamless use of other district's provided device(s). Fortunately, all Somerset county sending high schools are using Chromebooks which makes this process significantly easier.

3. Somerset County Vocational and Technical School will review making modifications to the school schedule depending on length of remote learning in order to help teachers and students with the delivery of virtual instruction.

4. The district will make preparations through digital applications such as Google Classroom and/or learning packets and various online learning resources. Instructors may provide instructional video, post assessments and initiate discussions on Google Classrooms.

5. Synchronous instruction will be provided through the use of the Zoom platform which SCVTS has an educational license for.

6. When a student is not participating in online instruction and/or submitting assignments, teachers will communicate their concerns to their counselors/CST members by email, phone call or in-person meeting with the student and parent via Zoom. Supervisors call home on an as-needed basis. In addition, counselors/case managers and Director of Special Services will reach out to sending district counterparts for added support.

7. SCVTS will measure student growth and learning when placed in a virtual or remote environment via online tasks, assessments or synchronous student work delivered via Zoom or Google Classroom.

Addressing Special Education Needs

Somerset County Vocational and Technical School uses in-class resource teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities. These teachers are responsible for modifying lesson assignments consistent with in school instruction. The school will switch to an A/B schedule if needed to prevent students from being overwhelmed with assignments. The administrative staff checks in with teachers regularly to identify struggling students. These students will then receive follow up emails or calls from the school's child study team and/or pupil services department to determine the best course of action. CST Members will also reach out to parents by email, phone-call or in-person meeting with the student and parent via Zoom. In addition, counselors/case managers and Director of Special Services will reach out to sending district counterparts for added support.

Following a No Harm Policy, the school district will extend marking periods so that students can better meet assigned deadlines. Students cannot get a score lower than what they achieved prior to remote instruction. The school will consider a Pass/Fail system and/or extended time for the students to hand in work, if needed. The school will continue to rely on the Linkages mental health program for students needing additional mental health or related support.

The special education teachers use breakout sessions to meet with students to discuss subject area difficulties. When administering tests and quizzes, the teachers invite the students into small Zoom group meetings. In addition, teachers call home and take oral instead of written tests. Teachers will modify assignments to align with "quality over quantity" methodologies.

Modifications are added to the teacher lesson plans in order to track progress and implementation. The special education teachers track services via Google Classroom, Zoom meetings, email communications and telephone calls. Similarly, case managers/school counselors are following up with students. Student progress is monitored by the teachers who will make adjustments to assignments on an as needed basis.

The case managers will host virtual annual reviews. Parents have been very receptive to the process in the past. The CST secretary makes initial contact with the parents and ensures e-signatures of parents are collected and maintained. Parents receive a copy of the updated document in their parent portal.

IEP meetings, evaluation or related functions will be conducted via Zoom meetings.

Addressing English Language Learners (ELL) Plan Needs

Somerset County Vocational and Technical School has instructors who are trained in teaching ELL students. These teachers will either push into the classroom or work with the instructional teacher on providing additional support after school. ELL teachers will modify instruction as necessary. This includes getting handouts previous to class and making modifications so it is easier for the ELL students to follow along with their non-ELL peers. When possible ELL teachers will review vocabulary terms prior to class starting so the students have an easier time following along.

We have staff members who are able to assist with native Spanish speaking families and who are able to help translate documents into their native language. We also rely on Google Translate to help translate documents. Publishing as much material online in native HTML (versus static PDF documents) will allow ELL families to be able to translate school related information "on the fly" on their device's browser.

The school has made a major initiative over the last couple of years to make SEL part of our regular teaching procedures. We currently have a PLC dedicated to this topic which is attended by our ELL teacher(s). We have conducted training at various times throughout the past two school years. The school has also made an effort to be culturally responsive. We are in the process of seeking training for trauma-informed teaching from a qualified provider (e.g.: ASCD) for all staff to better understand the hardships and related challenges that displaced students and their families experience in order to better provide for them both academically and socially-emotionally.

Attendance Plan

Somerset County Vocational and Technical School uses the Genesis Information System to track attendance. All students are marked as present in the system and the teachers will need to go in and switch them to absent if the students fail to show up to class.

When a student is not participating in online instruction and/or submitting assignments, teachers will communicate their concerns to the counselors/CST members by email, phone call or in-person meeting with the student and parent via Zoom.

Letters for attendance are automatically generated through Genesis when set numbers of absences are met and sent out to parents. When a student reaches six absences an attendance officer will contact parents and arrange for a meeting to come up with a plan to make sure the student is attending school. Supervisors are required to have a meeting with a parent and student when the student reaches 10 absences. At this meeting a formal action plan is created for the student.

Attendance will continue to be a factor in student promotion, retention and graduation as the school follows state policy. Allowances may be made for the social and emotional health of the students. This will be determined on a case by case basis as parents are contacted by school staff. Extended school day or school year programs may be used for students who need it.

Safe Delivery of Meals Plan

Due to the unique nature of a vocational high school district (e.g.: having both full and share-time students) our meal delivery plan will be dependent on the type of emergency.

If only SVTHS is compromised due to an emergency situation and our students cannot physically come to our campus (or we have no power), we will coordinate with each student's home district for them to pick up meals at that location. This was also the mode of meal acquisition for us during 100% remote instruction during the COVID pandemic.

If the emergency event is akin to when we and surrounding districts were all on a hybrid schedule (i.e.: students coming to school in-person on certain days of the week, remote learning on others), we will provide meals for our full time students and will again coordinate with sending districts to provide meals for our share-time students.

Facilities Plan

Depending on the nature of the closing the school will remain open to a limited number of people. All people who enter the school will need to have the appropriate approval of their supervisor. The Building and Grounds staff will report to school to maintain the cleaning and maintenance of the school buildings. The B&G staff will follow the cleaning procedures that are laid out by the NJ Department of Health and the CDC.

In the event of the facility(ies) having no power, we do have an on-site generator which will supply power to certain facets of building and network operations deemed mission-critical. It cannot however power the entire campus.

Other Considerations

a. Accelerated learning opportunities

SCVTHS has invested in training over the last couple of years into making SEL part of our standard teaching practices. When we first came back from COVID, we brought willing students in over the summer prior to the regular school year so they could get acclimated. We also conducted professional development training for parents over the summer in order to help them with their children. Students identified as needing extra support were given the opportunity to come in over the summer for extra classes. These are the same strategies we will implement again should the need arise.

b. Social and emotional health of staff and students

Staff members have received professional development training on best practices for Social and Emotional Learning. The school currently has a Professional Learning Community dedicated to sharing SEL practices. During the pandemic the school also held zoom meetings dedicated to the staff who felt isolated and vulnerable so they could share their feelings and experiences.

When a student is not participating in online instruction and/or submitting assignments, teachers will communicate their concerns to their counselors/CST members by email, phone call or in-person meeting with the student and parent via Zoom in order to check on the student. Supervisors call home on an as-needed basis. In addition, counselors/case managers and Director of Special Services will reach out to sending district counterparts for added support. The school will continue to rely on the Linkages mental health program for students needing additional mental health or related support.

If the school is going to be out for an extended period of time, changes to the school schedule and grading system will be adjusted to help promote the social and emotional health of the students.

c. Title I Extended Learning Programs

The school uses Title I funds to provide the students with extra tutoring after school and during the summer. These programs can be provided remotely through the Zoom learning platform.

d. 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs

N/A

e. Credit recovery

The school uses Educere which is an online learning platform for credit recovery. The classes that the students are able to register for are originally approved by administration. The counselors and child study team members make sure that the students sign up for the correct class.

f. Other extended student learning opportunities

Depending upon the duration of the virtualized learning period and/or the availability of additional funds, SCVTS would provide remote learning opportunities beyond the school day as we did during the pandemic.

g. Transportation

As a county vocational school transportation is provided by the sending districts. We are able to provide transportation for athletic events.

h. Extra-curricular programs

The school is a member of the New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association and the Greater Middlesex Conference and will follow the guidance that they provide in relation to athletic activities. Any other extra-curricular programs that are able to will be switched to Zoom.

i. Childcare

SCVTS does not offer any childcare services as a county vocational high school district.

j. Community programming

SCVTS does not offer community programs in our district at this time.

Essential Employees

In the event that the school needs to switch to remote learning the Superintendent will identify the essential employees and make that list available to the county office.