

Union County Educational Services Commission
Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan for 2026 - 2027

August 31, 2026

Introduction

Union County Educational Services Commission is fully committed to providing full-day, full-time, in-person instruction for all students enrolled in Commission schools and programs during the 2026-2027 school year.

In accordance with P.L. 2020, c.27, this plan was developed to ensure that all students continue to receive high-quality, standards-based virtual and/or remote instruction in the event of district closure lasting more than three consecutive days due to a declared state of emergency, a declared public health emergency, or a directive to institute a public health-related closure.

The plan also provides guidelines for virtual and/or remote instruction for students who are temporarily excluded from school due to other health-related reasons. When buildings are open for in-person instruction, parents or guardians are not able to opt out of in-person instruction.

Length of School Day

Students enrolled in virtual and/or remote learning programs will participate in a minimum of four hours of instruction a day, excluding lunch and recess. This plan details the schedules for each UCESC school and program.

With the approval of the Commissioner of Education, all virtual or remote instruction provided in this plan will be considered the equivalent of a full day of school attendance for purposes of satisfying the 180-day requirement, awarding course credits, and meeting State and local graduation requirements.

School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

UCESC will coordinate with sending school districts and the Board-approved food services vendor (Maschios, Inc.) to ensure seamless and uninterrupted provision of meals for students temporarily assigned to virtual or remote learning. Social Workers will serve as liaisons to sending school districts to ensure parents are aware of the procedures for receiving breakfast and lunch. Parents will also have the option to pick up “grab and go” meals on a daily/weekly basis at the applicable receiving school.

Access to Technology and Broadband Internet Connectivity

UCESC developed procedures to ensure equitable access to virtual and/or remote instruction for all students enrolled in district schools and programs. In September, a survey will be distributed to parents and guardians to determine the availability of broadband connectivity and internet-enabled devices within the home. In the event of an emergency school or district closure, the Commission will deploy Chromebooks and/or Wifi Hotspots to any student unable to access virtual or remote instruction. Chromebooks and/or Wifi Hotspots will also be deployed to individual students during periods of self-quarantine.

Special Education Considerations

UCESC will coordinate with Sending Districts to ensure Special Education services are implemented in accordance with the IEP and that all IEP Meetings, Special Education Evaluations, and Progress Reports are up to date. UCESC Social Workers will coordinate with Sending District Case Managers to schedule Google Meets when in-person meetings are unable to take place. If evaluations need to take place remotely, the Social Worker will work with the Sending District and Classroom Teacher to arrange for a time for a virtual evaluation. When appropriate, space can be provided in our Central Office for evaluations as well.

Facilities Plan

In the event of an emergency that causes an extended period of closure, UCESC's Buildings and Grounds Supervisor will work closely with the Superintendent and Business Administrator to create a schedule for school maintenance. This will include general upkeep, building and grounds safety, and deep cleaning in the event of a health emergency. In addition, the Superintendent and Business Administrator will create a list of Essential Employees who are permitted to visit the buildings during the closure. This list will include the Superintendent, Business Administrator, Transportation Coordinator, Payroll Clerk, Building Principals, Buildings and Grounds Supervisor, and Custodians.

Nonpublic School Services

In the event of a building-specific closure, all Nonpublic staff will continue to report to their Nonpublic schools. In the event of a state or nationally mandated closure, Nonpublic staff will follow the procedures of their Nonpublic schools related to remote and/or hybrid learning opportunities. The Director of Nonpublic Services will be in close contact with Nonpublic School principals to ensure compliance.

Transportation

In the event of a partial or complete closure, the Transportation Director, in consultation with the Superintendent, will ensure all bus companies are notified of the closure and predicted return date. In addition, all UCESC buses and school vehicles will be regularly cleaned based on the specifications noted in the Safe Return Plan. If individual bus routes are impacted, those students will be permitted to participate in remote learning following the conditions set forth in the following pages.

Childcare

If a school or daycare of a staff member's child is closed due to a declared emergency, that staff member will be instructed to contact their direct supervisor to discuss options for an extended leave of absence. The building administrator will then consult with the Superintendent's Office, who will make a determination on a leave of absence for childcare purposes.

Virtual or Remote Instruction

In the event of Virtual and/or Remote instruction, all courses will continue to operate as noted below. Students will receive individualized support as they would during in-person learning. This will take place through one-on-one Google Meets and/or Google Voice calls. Students will continue to participate in credit recovery programs. Students who travel to community sites for CBI or SLE opportunities will be provided with a virtual option to fulfill this requirement. Specifics about the learning opportunities for all students are set forth in the following pages.

Hillcrest Academy – North and South Campuses Virtual and Remote Instruction

Scenario One: Individual Student Exclusions (9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

All Hillcrest Academy teachers will utilize Google Classroom for in-person instruction. In the event a student is excluded from school due to the NJDOH's Exclusion Criteria, students will be expected to complete the day's assignments on Google Classroom. Each day the student is excluded from school, the building secretary will call the student by 9:00 a.m. to review the daily schedule and record attendance. Students will take part in two Google Meets each day at 10:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Certified paraprofessionals will be assigned to cover the content area teacher while he/she is providing live instruction to the excluded student. Live sessions will be scheduled as follows:

- English - Monday and Wednesday at 10 a.m.
- Social Studies - Monday and Wednesday at 1:30 p.m.
- Math - Tuesday and Thursday at 10 a.m.
- Science - Tuesday and Thursday at 1:30 p.m.
- Specials - Friday at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

All student assignments will be submitted electronically by 2:30 p.m. each day. Classroom teachers will be responsible for grading student work and providing feedback during the next scheduled Google Meet. Paraprofessionals will be on call to assist the student as needed throughout the day. The Social Worker and/or Guidance Counselor will schedule one meeting with the student each week he/she is excluded from school to provide social/emotional support.

Scenario Two: Single/Multiple Class Exclusion (9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

In the event that group(s) of students are excluded from school due to the NJDOH Exclusion Criteria, each of those students will complete their daily assignments and meet with their individual teachers based on the following schedule:

- English - Monday and Wednesday at 10 a.m.
- Social Studies - Monday and Wednesday at 1:30 p.m.
- Math - Tuesday and Thursday at 10 a.m.
- Science - Tuesday and Thursday at 1:30 p.m.
- Specials - Friday at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

In the event that an entire class is excluded, the period where the exposure occurred will be offered on Google Meet during the regularly scheduled time period.

In the event that a teacher is excluded, a substitute teacher will be assigned to cover the assignment. In addition to providing live instruction to that group of students during their regularly scheduled meeting time, the teacher will also meet remotely with each student once each day to assist them with their assignments and help to keep them on task with their other classes. All student assignments will be submitted electronically by 2:30 p.m. each day.

Scenario Three: School Closed – Full-Time Remote Learning (8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

In the event of an emergency school closure due to the NJDOH's Exclusion Criteria, Hillcrest Academy will continue to follow all regular schedules via remote instruction. Students will attend each class via Google Meet at their regularly scheduled times. At 8:30 a.m. advocates will call their assigned students to review the daily schedule and record attendance. Advocacy groups will also meet each day at 2:10 to reflect on progress and plan for the next day's instruction. Advocacy teachers are responsible for sending daily attendance to the school secretary by 9:00 a.m. All staff are required to complete the Daily Sign-In Sheet found on the school's webpage or the day will be recorded as an absence.

Lamberts Mill Academy
Virtual and Remote Instruction

Scenario One: Individual Student Exclusions (9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

Daily assignments will be posted by each classroom teacher on Google Classroom by 9:00 a.m. Each day the student is excluded from school, the student's clinician will call the student by 9:00 a.m. to review the daily schedule and record attendance. Students will meet with each teacher during that teacher's Learning Link period as follows:

- Period 2: English
- Period 3: Science
- Period 4: Math
- Period 7: Social Studies

In accordance with IEP mandates, students will participate in all related services and daily therapy sessions via Google Meet at their regularly scheduled times or through a remote assignment delivered via email. Classroom teachers are responsible for grading student work and providing feedback during the next scheduled Google Meet. Paraprofessionals will be on call to assist the student as needed throughout the day. All student work will be submitted electronically by 2:30 p.m. each day.

Scenario Two: Single/Multiple Class Exclusion (9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

In the event that a cohort of students is excluded from school due to the NJDOH's Exclusion Criteria, students will meet with their teachers via Google Meet as a group during their regularly scheduled class period. In accordance with IEP mandates, students will participate in all related services and daily therapy sessions via Google Meet at their regularly scheduled times or through a remote assignment delivered via email.

In the event that a portion of the class is excluded due to the NJDOH's Exclusion Criteria, students will complete assignments posted on Google Classroom and meet with their teachers during the Learning Link Period as follows:

- Period 2: English
- Period 3: Science
- Period 4: Math
- Period 7: Social Studies

In the event that the teacher is also excluded, a substitute teacher will be assigned to cover his/her schedule. In addition to providing live instruction to the cohort of students that is excluded during their regularly scheduled meeting time, the teacher will also meet remotely with each student once each day to assist them with their assignments and help to keep them on task with their other classes. All student work will be submitted electronically by 2:30 p.m. each day.

Scenario Three: School Closed – Full-Time Remote Learning (8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

In the event of a school closure due to the NJDOH's Exclusion Criteria, all students will attend each class via Google Meet at their regularly scheduled times. In accordance with IEP mandates, students will participate in all related services and daily therapy sessions via Google Meet at their regularly scheduled times or through a remote assignment delivered via email. At 8:30 a.m. advocates will call each of their assigned students to review daily schedules and record daily attendance. Advocacy teachers are responsible for sending attendance to the school secretary by 9:00 a.m. All staff are required to complete the Daily Sign-In Sheet found on the school's webpage or the day will be recorded as an absence.

Crossroads School/Westlake School
Virtual and Remote Instruction

Scenario One: Student Exclusions (9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

Classroom teachers of students excluded from school due to the NJDOH's Exclusion Criteria will provide the daily assignments to a paraprofessional. That paraprofessional will call the student by 9:00 a.m. to record daily attendance and review the daily schedule. He or she will then follow up with an email to the family with the daily assignments attached. The classroom teacher will meet with the student via Google Meet at 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. In accordance with IEP mandates, students will participate in all related services and daily therapy sessions via Google Meet at their regularly scheduled times or through a remote assignment delivered via email. All student work will be submitted electronically by 2:30 p.m. each day.

Scenario Two: Single/Multiple Class Exclusion (9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

In the event that an entire classroom of students in a cohort are excluded from school due to the NJDOH's Exclusion Criteria, the classroom teacher will provide the paraprofessional with the daily assignments. The paraprofessional will call the home of each student by 9:00 a.m. to record daily attendance and review the daily schedule. The paraprofessional will then follow up with an email to the family with the daily assignments attached. Students will meet with their teachers via Google Meet as a group at 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. In addition, teachers will meet with each student individually throughout the day. In accordance with IEP mandates, students will participate in all related services and daily therapy sessions via Google Meet at their regularly scheduled times or through a remote assignment delivered via email. Specials will occur via Google Meet at their regularly scheduled times.

In the event that the teacher is absent, a substitute teacher will be assigned to cover his/her schedule. Student assignments will be taken from the Google Folder that contains substitute assignments. This folder must be kept up to date by certified staff at all times. All student work will be submitted electronically by 2:30 p.m. each day.

Scenario Three: Full-Time Remote Learning (9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

In the event of a school closure due to the NJDOH's Exclusion Criteria, all students and staff will follow the schedule distributed by their building principal on the first day of school. The daily schedule will include a minimum of one teacher-facilitated morning and one afternoon session of group instruction via Google Meet; a daily individual meeting with the classroom teacher via Google Meet; and all related arts periods during their regularly scheduled times. Paraprofessionals will participate in all Google Meets with their assigned student or classroom. In accordance with IEP mandates, students will participate in all related services and daily therapy sessions via Google Meet at their regularly scheduled times or through a remote assignment delivered via email. Individual Aides will provide direct assistance to students throughout the school day via Google Meet and/or teleconference. All student work will be submitted electronically by 2:30 p.m. each day.

At 8:30 a.m. each day, paraprofessionals will call each of their assigned students to review the schedule and record daily attendance. Paraprofessionals are responsible for sending daily attendance to the classroom teacher by 9:00 a.m. All staff are required to complete the Daily Sign-In Sheet found on the school's webpage or the day will be recorded as an absence.

Work Readiness Academy/Project SEARCH Program Virtual and Remote Instruction

Scenario One: Individual Student Exclusions (9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

Work Readiness Academy students excluded from school due to the NJDOH's Exclusion Criteria will participate live in the first-period class via Google Meet while supervised by a paraprofessional. The student will complete activities as assigned on Google Classroom remotely during the school day with feedback and support provided by a paraprofessional. In accordance with IEP mandates, students will participate in all related services and daily therapy sessions via Google Meet at their regularly scheduled times or through a remote assignment delivered via email. Excluded students will meet with the classroom teacher daily at 11:30 a.m. All student work will be submitted electronically on a daily basis by 2:30 p.m.

Project SEARCH students excluded from school due to the NJDOH's Exclusion Criteria will participate in a Google Meet with the classroom teacher at 9:00 a.m. and again at 2:00 p.m. At this meeting, an assignment will be given to the student in lieu of his/her internship responsibilities. The paraprofessional will check in with the student throughout the day. All student work is due by 2:30 p.m. each day.

Scenario Two: Full-Time Remote Learning (8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.)

In the event of a school closure due to the NJDOH's Exclusion Criteria, all students and staff will follow the schedule below. In accordance with IEP mandates, students will participate in all related services and daily therapy sessions via Google Meet at their regularly scheduled time or through a remote assignment delivered via email. All staff are required to complete the Daily Sign-In Sheet found on the school's webpage or the day will be recorded as an absence.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:30-9:00	Teacher Prep	Teacher Prep	Teacher Prep	Teacher Prep	Teacher Prep
9:00 - 9:15	Do Now posted to Google Classroom	Do Now posted to Google Classroom	Do Now posted to Google Classroom	Do Now posted to Google Classroom	Do Now posted to Google Classroom
9:15 - 10:45	Live Instruction (Google Meeting)	Live Instruction (Google Meeting)	Live Instruction (Google Meeting)	Live Instruction (Google Meeting)	Live Instruction (Google Meeting)
10:45 - 12:00	Independent Work (via Google Classroom)	Independent Work (via Google Classroom)	Independent Work (via Google Classroom)	Independent Work (via Google Classroom)	Independent Work (via Google Classroom)
12:00-12:30	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break
12:30 - 1:30	Live Instruction (Google Meeting)	Live Instruction (Google Meeting)	Live Instruction (Google Meeting)	Live Instruction (Google Meeting)	Live Instruction (Google Meeting)
1:30-2:00	Individual Student Support or Parent Consult	Individual Student Support or Parent Consult	Individual Student Support or Parent Consult	Individual Student Support or Parent Consult	Individual Student Support or Parent Consult
2:00 - 2:40	Time for Recording or Posting to Google Classroom	Time for Recording or Posting to Google Classroom	Time for Recording or Posting to Google Classroom	Time for Recording or Posting to Google Classroom	Time for Recording or Posting to Google Classroom