

Somerset Hills School District (SHSD)
Chapter 27
Emergency Virtual/Remote Instruction Plan
2026-2027 School Year

Pursuant to New Jersey Public Law 2020 Chapter 27, public school districts must annually submit their emergency virtual/remote learning plans, with Board of Education approval, to the Commissioner of Education.

This plan would be implemented during a school 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 of Schools will submit the board-approved emergency virtual/remote learning plan and a corresponding virtual/remote learning instruction plan checklist/attestation form to the county office of education by July 31, 2026.

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A. Equitable Access and Opportunity for all Students

1. The district is committed to ensuring equitable access and opportunity to instruction for all students. The district's technology department partners with building-level administrators across all schools to ensure that all *SHSD* students have access to computing devices and network/broadband connectivity. Students/families may be surveyed to determine needs and will also be provided contact information for assistance. The district has purchased enough Chromebooks and iPads to meet students' needs. All students in grades K-12 are provided district-owned devices (iPads or Chromebooks, depending on grade level) to ensure connectivity. In the event that a student's home does not have broadband access, the IT department distributes district-owned hotspots. The IT department prioritizes needs and educates families about connectivity options.

2. Each school day will be a minimum of four hours excluding any time designated for lunch and/or recess. Virtual/remote schedules for each grade/school level across the K-12 continuum have been devised to ensure that students' varied and age-appropriate needs are met. School-specific learning plans contained herein reflect baselines and may be modified by building principals as needed.

*** Bedwell Elementary School Remote Learning Plan**

Learning Activities and Platforms	Classroom teachers will provide a daily message and overview of the day's tasks, activities, and assignments. Students will have the flexibility to complete tasks, activities, and assignments in the order they choose. Parents whose students are unable to participate in remote learning activities should contact your child's teacher. All tasks, activities, and assignments will be posted daily via SeeSaw (PreK - Gr 1) and Google Classroom (Grades 2 - 4). Core subjects will include ELA, Math, Science, or Social Studies. Lesson formats may include various Google Apps for Education (Docs, Forms, Sheets, Slides, Meet, Gmail), Screencastify, Seesaw or Flipgrid. Students' learning activities may include live/interactive opportunities, as well as links to instructional video recordings. Teachers will provide links to resources that can be used to support instructional activities or as extensions. Teachers may request students to submit their assignments via Google
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	Classroom or SeeSaw. Some activities may be daily, and others may be longer-term projects spanning multiple days. Students will also receive instructional activities and engage with other staff from whom they receive services, such as reading specialists, counseling, speech, and math support.
Related Arts	Related Arts “Specials” classes will be linked to a specific day of the week for all grade levels. ○ Monday - Music ○ Tuesday - PE and World Language ○ Wednesday - Art ○ Thursday - Library/Enrichment ○ Friday - Technology Related Arts teachers will communicate their activities through your child’s homeroom teacher’s Google Classroom or SeeSaw.
Attendance	If your child is sick, please follow regular absence procedures and notify the school by 9:15 am by calling the Absence Verification number at (908) 204- 1920 and pressing option #1. Please listen to the message and provide the requested information, including as much detail as possible when describing your child’s illness symptoms, including any positive medical test results for Strep, Flu, COVID-19, or other contagious illnesses.

Communication and Feedback	Email is the best form of communication. All Bedwell teachers/staff members will be available via email during regular school hours (8:45 am - 3:45 pm). If you need to speak to a teacher/staff member over the phone, please email the teacher to set up a time to speak. Teacher/staff members may utilize *67 to make outgoing calls from their personal cell phones. These calls will appear as “Restricted” or “Private Call” or “No Caller ID.” Please keep that in mind when anticipating a phone call from a teacher. Teachers/staff members will be available to coordinate with families to provide support during the school day as students work to complete assignments. Support and feedback during the school day can be done in several ways. ○ Teachers/staff members may comment through Google Classroom (Gr 2-4) or SeeSaw (PreK - Gr 1) on a student’s work to provide feedback. ○ Students/parents can correspond with teachers via email, SeeSaw, and/or Google Classroom. ○ Teachers/staff members may opt to schedule Google Meet
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	and/or Zoom sessions with students on an as-needed basis.
Technology Resources and Support	Requests for tech support can be communicated through the Covid-19 link on the shsd.org homepage. Teachers will answer questions specific to technology they are utilizing with their instruction.

Audio/ Video Guidelines	As the state's health-related school closure continues, Somerset Hills School District recognizes that there are teachers and students who would like to participate in video/audio conferencing. Building principals are working with staff members to ensure that teachers have a common understanding of the benefits and drawbacks of these mechanisms. Our hope is that this information will similarly help ensure a common understanding at home regarding students' responsibilities for engaging in these experiences appropriately. Online conferences are intended for instructional purposes only. Please remember that students will be visible/audible to other participants (i.e., students and district staff) during these conferences. It is also possible that others in participants' households may see or hear student and staff participants. We must accept that these additional educational opportunities bring increased responsibilities. All of the district's expectations regarding appropriate use of technology continue to apply, and participants are expected to act in a school-appropriate manner throughout these experiences. We encourage you to review Policy and Regulation 2361 – Acceptable Use of Computer Network / Computers and Resources, as well as your school's Code of Conduct. In the unfortunate event of inappropriate behavior, a student may be removed from a conference/meeting and disciplinary action may be taken. Please note that students are forbidden to record sessions and should <u>not</u> create their own Zoom accounts. If a teacher is using Zoom, they will invite students to the Zoom conference or meeting. Please be reminded that by allowing your students to join and participate in educational audio/video conferences, your family agrees that students are expected to act in accordance with the rules/policies/procedures of the district and the school. Your child will have access to these recorded audio/video conferences for subsequent viewing should he/she be unable or unwilling to participate. It is our hope that teachers and students who choose to explore this experience will find it both academically rewarding and engaging.
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Audio/ Video Conferencing Considerations	As stated in the audio/video guidelines above, teachers may wish to use video/audio conferencing tools to engage with students. We cannot require teachers or students to use software for live conferencing, but we are allowing its use. Please be mindful of the following considerations when using Audio/video conferencing tools such as Zoom or Google Meet: Audio/video conferencing allows teachers to create and share a "meeting" via email or Google Classroom. Students will then follow teacher directions. Video conferences should be conducted in a well-lit area. Students and parents should make other people in the home aware that the student is participating in an audio/video conference for school and that other people should not appear in the video scene or on the audio. Students and parents should be aware of what appears behind the individual in the conference. Some items visible in the background may reveal private information about the individual, or may not be appropriate for a school meeting. Locations chosen for a video conference should take these things into consideration. Headphones may be a good option to help staff members and students to hear the conversations better. Headphones with a built-in microphone can help prevent unwanted background audio from being picked up. Students and parents should check to make sure they have hung up and closed the videoconferencing window at the end of a meeting so that the videoconference does not remain active.
Recommended Roles and Responsibilities	
Students	Identify a comfortable, quiet space to do your schoolwork. Log in to Google Classroom or SeeSaw for information about activities from your teachers. Contact your teachers if you have questions or need help. Be a good digital citizen by acting respectfully online. Do your best and remember to take frequent brain and body breaks. Be sure to get outside every day and get a good night's sleep.

Parents	To the extent possible, designate a quiet place where your child will work with the fewest distractions. Encourage students to complete activities to the best of their abilities and/or your family schedule. Check in with your child daily about their remote learning activities. Students will complete activities at varying rates. Please communicate with your child's teacher(s) if the workload needs to be adjusted to meet the student's and/or family's needs. Take care of yourselves. These are unprecedented times for all of us. We know the balance of school, work, home, and health is difficult to manage even in the best of times.
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Bernardsville Middle School Remote Learning Plan

Each day school is closed, the schedule will rotate through *one of the four* schedules listed below. A reminder announcement indicating *which schedule to follow* will be posted on the 5th-, 6th-, 7th-, and 8th-grade classroom pages in Google Classroom at the start of each day that school is closed.

Related Arts Classes and PE

Students should plan to complete course activities during Related Arts Classes (Art, Tech, Music, etc.) and PE, according to the schedule below.

Day 1				
Time	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
7:50 - 8:50	Independent work and individually arranged tutorials and teacher planning			
8:50 - 9:50	5A	6	6	5
9:55 - 10:55	7A	7	7	6
11:00 - 12:00	8	8	8A	8
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:45 - 1:45	9	9	9A	9
1:45 - 2:46	Independent work and individually arranged tutorial			

	and teacher planning
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Day 2				
Time	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
7:50 - 8:50	Independent work and individually arranged tutorial and teacher planning			
8:50 - 9:50	1	1	1	1A
9:55 - 10:55	2	2	2	2A
11:00 - 12:00	3	3A	3	3
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:45 - 1:45	4	4A	4	4
1:45 - 2:46	Independent work and individually arranged tutorial and teacher planning			

Day 3				
Time	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
7:50 - 8:50	Independent work and individually arranged tutorial and teacher planning			
8:50 - 9:50	5B	6	6	5
9:55 - 10:55	7B	7	7	6
11:00 - 12:00	8	8	8B	8
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:45 - 1:45	9	9	9B	9
1:45 - 2:46	Independent work and individually arranged tutorial and teacher planning			

Day 4				
Time	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
7:50 - 8:50	Independent work and individually arranged tutorial and teacher planning			
8:50 - 9:50	1	1	1	1B
9:55 - 10:55	2	2	2	2B
11:00 - 12:00	3	3B	3	3
12:00 - 12:45	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
12:45 - 1:45	4	4B	4	4
1:45 - 2:46	Independent work and individually arranged tutorial and teacher planning			

Bernards High School Remote Learning Plan

Students are expected to log in to their SHSD Google Account at the start of period 1 on “A” days and the start of period 6 on “B” days (8:45 am). We recognize that there are times when students may not be able to adhere exactly to this. This schedule is designed to provide students with a framework to guide their day.

Each day the school is closed, the schedule will alternate between “A” day and “B” day. A reminder announcement indicating whether the day will be an A day or a B day will be posted on the 9th-, 10th-, 11th-, and 12th-grade classroom pages in Google Classroom at the start of each day when school is closed. Students are expected to access their teachers’ Google Classroom pages and work on assignments during their scheduled class periods. The time at the start/end of the day, before/after the scheduled class meetings, should be used for independent student work and teacher planning. Here are the schedules for “A” and “B” days:

"A" Day			"B" Day	
Period	Time		Period	Time

Independent work and individually arranged tutorial and teacher planning	7:45 - 8:45		Independent work and individually arranged tutorial and teacher planning	7:45 - 8:45
1	8:45 - 9:45		6	8:45 - 9:45
2	9:50 - 10:50		7	9:50 - 10:50
3	10:55 - 11:55		8	10:55 - 11:55
Lunch	11:55 - 12:35		Lunch	11:55 - 12:35
4	12:35 - 1:35		9	12:35 - 1:35
5	1:40 - 2:41		Independent work and individually arranged tutorial and teacher planning	1:35 - 2:41

3. During emergency virtual/fully-remote instruction, teachers will use a combination of both synchronous and asynchronous activities during scheduled instructional periods. To the greatest extent possible, teachers will devise lessons that maximize opportunities for engagement, with plans that leverage whole-group, small-group, and individual work.

4. Since 2020, staff have had access to and have used a variety of educational software (e.g. Google, PearDeck, Formative, SeeSaw, etc.) to conduct remote assessments to measure student growth and progress towards instructional objectives.

5. The district will communicate procedures to families through its weekly *Friday Folder* to ensure that accessibility issues (lack of internet access, network access, and/or sufficient access to devices) can be addressed in a timely manner.

B. Addressing Special Education Needs

1. In the event that conditions require remote instruction, case managers will support

teachers to ensure that IEPs are being followed. Every effort will be made to continue in-person instruction for special education students in self-contained programs, recognizing that there may come a time when even these students need to pivot to a virtual educational environment. Teachers, special education paraprofessionals, and case managers will support students and families with remote services through platforms such as Google Meet/Zoom to the greatest extent possible. Bell schedules may be customized to meet the needs of each student so that extraordinary services can be scheduled into the child's day.

The education of students with disabilities during remote instruction will be provided "to the most appropriate extent possible" as per the student's IEP or 504 Accommodation Plan. "The provision of FAPE will include, as appropriate, special education and related services as per the student's typical instructional day program." This will include direct instruction virtually, online, or telephonically to the extent that it is safe, practicable, and ethical in light of the circumstances, with the anticipation that parents/guardians will cooperate and participate as needed.

Special education students will participate in daily instruction through a virtual platform. The instruction is to be provided by either a special education teacher or a general education teacher based on students' IEPs and class schedules. Instruction for remote students will take place via Zoom or Google Meet. Instruction and instructional support will be provided based on the accommodations/modifications listed in the student's IEP/504 Accommodation Plan, to the greatest extent possible.

Case managers will consult with teachers, special education, and general education to ensure that accommodations/modifications are implemented based on the type of instruction to the greatest extent possible.

Related Services and students Eligible for Speech and Language Services: Sessions will be conducted by related services staff to target IEP goals and objectives. They will be facilitated through an online video conference platform. Both individual and group sessions will be conducted in accordance with the IEP to the maximum extent possible. Teachers will monitor student progress and document student performance and participation. Related service providers will log all services daily.

Counseling: Support will be provided in person and virtually, as dictated by the IEP and as warranted, to address relevant concerns. Counselors will log attendance/participation in all sessions, as well as all phone and email contacts with families.

Section 504: School Counselors to monitor and provide additional support per individual plans, including communication with staff, parents, and students. Support will be provided in person and virtually as warranted to address relevant concerns. Annual conferences will be conducted via video conference platforms within the annual timelines.

- Students will continue to work on their post-secondary plans with the Transition

Coordinator, either in person or virtually, and will ensure that graduating seniors or those students turning 21 will be properly transitioned to state agencies such as DVRS or DDD, or other opportunities that exist for these students.

- Clear and consistent communication will be utilized for communicating with parents and guardians, as always, to ensure that we are aware of issues that arise and that they can be addressed in a timely manner.
- Classroom paraprofessionals will be present in all classrooms where mandated by IEPs and 504s.

2. Case manager's primary responsibility is to ensure that IEPs are being met; as such, they would play an important role in monitoring the services of each of their student's to ensure compliance with the IEP; this work will include, but not be limited to, tracking services, ensuring provision of accommodations and modifications, and gauging progress toward IEP goals. Throughout emergency virtual/remote instruction, case managers will continue to document IEP implementation, including tracking services, student progress, and the provision of accommodations and modifications. Progress Indicators are provided to parents via the IEP program platform in accordance with individual IEPs and NJAC 6A:14. The District will monitor and implement relevant guidance from the NJDOE. Case managers will be available via email, phone, and online video or chat platforms to facilitate meetings, monitor student progress, answer questions, and address all concerns. CST members, related services providers, and teachers will hold mandated meetings, when appropriate, via an online video conference platform or phone conference. In the event that a required member of the IEP Team is not available, the case manager, in accordance with NJAC 6A:14, will obtain written consent to proceed with the meeting if the parent/guardian agrees. All related documents, including *Parental Rights in Special Education (PRISE)*, will be shared electronically or via US Mail. In the event that the meeting cannot be held as noted above, it will be rescheduled.

3. Case managers will communicate with staff frequently regarding student performance and participation. Case managers will ensure families are informed in a timely manner regarding services being implemented in accordance with IEPs, to the greatest extent possible. Case managers will maintain open lines of communication with parents via email, phone, and online video platforms regarding student progress and compliance with IEPs.

4. In addition, case managers would schedule all requisite IEP meetings and conduct them remotely as necessary. Mandated meetings per NJAC 6A:14: CST members, related services providers, and teachers will conduct all meetings, including but not limited to Annual Reviews, Initial Planning Meetings, Reevaluation Planning Meetings, and Eligibility Determination Meetings, in accordance with mandated timelines. When evaluations are warranted, the CST will complete any and all that can be completed to the greatest extent possible. Eligibility conferences will be held following the completion of all evaluations. All meetings are recorded in the IEP program platform.

C. Addressing English Language Learners (ELL) Plan Needs

1. Somerset Hills provides services to ESL students according to a state-approved Bilingual Waiver plan. Depending on the assessed needs of the student, the district provides either a Newcomer Tutorial, High-Intensity English, or Sheltered Instruction program aligned with NJDOE requirements. Bell schedules may be customized to meet the needs of ESL students.

2. In the event that conditions require emergency virtual or remote instruction:

- ESL/bilingual teachers will reach out directly to students' families to ensure students' needs are being met to the greatest degree possible, and that connectivity/technology access is not working properly. Bilingual staff and board-approved interpreters will be available to facilitate communication.
- The district will continue to rely on translated alerts/messages and interpreters to facilitate these efforts.
- School staff, including teachers, counselors, and administration, can request translation for any school document or communication through board-approved translators. Translation services are available in case translation is needed beyond these services.
- Communication expectations that are detailed for all families are expected for families who request communication in a language other than English.

3. The ESL Supervisor will support teachers to ensure that sheltered instruction best practices are leveraged in appropriate courses. The ESL Supervisor will coordinate with the Director of Guidance to be sure that counselors are appropriately focused on the needs of ESL students. Resources and strategies to modify instruction for ESL students of varying proficiencies will continue to be provided through the district ESL learning management system *Ellevation*.

4. Training has been scheduled on culturally responsive teaching in addition to training on sheltered instruction. The district's professional development over the last few years has focused on trauma-informed instruction to help staff be proactive and responsive to the needs of students suffering from traumatic stress, recognizing the importance of fostering a feeling of safety for all students, including those affected by forced migration.

D. Attendance Plan

1. Students will be marked absent or present by their teachers in the student information system (Genesis) as a function of their appearance and participation in Zoom/Google Meet classroom meetings. *SHSD* Board of Education Policy 5200 will continue to apply to students, despite the remote environment. Parents/Guardians of students who are unable to

log in to their Google Account due to illness are expected to call the attendance line to provide pertinent information regarding the child's absence. If a student is not called out sick, the district expects the child to log into Google Classroom for all classes to complete assignments.

2. Teachers, administrators, and counselors will communicate with families whose students are not in attendance, not participating, or not turning in school work. Attendance improvement plans will be instituted as needed.

E. Safe Delivery of Meals Plan

1. The school district participates in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program and administers a Free and Reduced breakfast and lunch program. Any student who qualifies will be provided a daily breakfast and lunch on a free or reduced basis even if the district is closed to in-person instruction and is conducting only virtual/remote instruction; the Business Administrator will facilitate this service with the district's food service provider.

Breakfasts and lunches may be delivered to families' homes or to central locations, and the district may use its transportation services for this purpose. Breakfast and lunch may also be available for pick-up at regular intervals. Eligible families may be surveyed or contacted to determine their delivery preferences.

F. Facilities

1. In the event that a remote learning environment is instituted, the Business Administrator will determine the degree to which contracts with outside services can be put on hold for services not being used. Staff schedules for custodians and maintenance staff may be modified to ensure sufficient staff to monitor safety and security and maintain grounds to prevent deterioration, while their use is greatly reduced and/or suspended during an extended closure. Prior to reopening, all buildings will be deep cleaned and disinfected to establish a baseline level of cleanliness to be maintained throughout the school year.

G. Other Considerations

- A. During emergency virtual or remote instruction, accelerated learning opportunities will continue to the greatest extent possible. These learning opportunities will occur alongside regularly scheduled classes and will be conducted remotely.
- B. On its website, the district maintains online resource hubs of wellness resources for both staff and families. Counselors and mental health professionals will continue to make themselves available to support the social and emotional health of staff and students.
- C. During emergency virtual or remote instruction, the district's Title I teacher will continue to provide services to identified Title I students virtually via Zoom/Google Meet. Services outside the school day will be delivered virtually to the greatest extent

possible.

- D. N/A
- E. Credit recovery will be scheduled as needed through remote opportunities and classes designed to help students earn the credits needed to graduate. Services such as *Educere* may be used to facilitate this work.
- F. To the greatest extent practical, all student learning opportunities will continue regardless of whether they take place during the school day or before/after school.
- G. The Business Administrator will determine whether transportation contracts that are not being used can be suspended.
- H. To the greatest extent practicable, extracurricular programs that can be continued remotely will continue; those that cannot may be suspended.
- I. The district will coordinate with the local YMCA regarding the Before- and Aftercare services normally provided in-district. These may be suspended or relocated if emergency virtual or remote instruction replaces in-person learning.
- J. Community programs, including Board of Education meetings, would be conducted remotely via Zoom/Google Meet and live-streamed via YouTube if in-person meetings are not advised/possible.

H. Essential Employees

- 1. At the time of the district's transition to virtual or remote instruction, the administrative team will identify essential employees and the Superintendent will provide a list of the same to Somerset County's Office of Education, ensuring adherence to any guidance or timelines that have been communicated.

I. Board Approval/Posted on Website

This *Chapter 27 Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan for 2026-2027* will be approved at a public meeting of the Somerset Hills Board of Education on July 15, 2026, and subsequently posted on the district website at www.shsd.org. The Chief School Administrator, Dr. Brian Brotschul, submitted the plan to the County Office on July 31, 2024. If activated, the plan may be shared directly with district staff and families via email.

