



Watertown City School District

Emergency Remote Instruction Plan: 2026-2027

Updated 8/24/2026

1. Policies and procedures to ensure computing devices will be made available to students or other means by which students will participate in synchronous instruction.

§155.17(c)(1)(xxi)(a)

1. How will the district ensure that all students have access to a computing device?

As schools shut down in an emergency closure in March 2020, Watertown City School District recognized the need to accelerate its 1:1 initiative designed to provide every student with a device to support the technologically-based world we are preparing them to enter. By May of 2020, the district had provided every student K-12 with a device, and offered hotspots to any family and/or staff member in need. Students in grades 9-12 currently take their devices home each day. Devices in grades K-8 would be deployed to students in the event of a remote instruction situation is warranted. The IT Department along with cooperation from other District resources to include home-school coordinators, social workers, and counselors would work collaboratively to deliver the devices to the student's homes. Each building would have pick-up hours whereby families could pick up *Chromebooks* from their child's school. This procedure worked effectively during the COVID-19 pandemic. The district has added a question about home Internet connectivity to its enrollment form for new students so that hotspots can be provided.

2. How will devices be serviced and/or replaced?

The District has a hardware placement plan and allocates a line in the budget each year for annual hardware replacements. This ensures that students have fully functioning *Chromebooks* that are conducive to online learning. The IT department would be accessible and in contact with any parents or students that are having issues with their devices so that they can be repaired or replaced if needed. The IT department would provide assistance with *Chromebook* repair/troubleshooting. They would utilize an online "job ticket" system.

3. If not using computing devices, how will students participate in synchronous instruction?

The District realizes that some students may be unable to access instructional delivery via technology; therefore, students will be provided with instructional materials and would be able to contact teachers. The district will provide offline learning materials such as printed worksheets, textbooks, or instructional packets to students without Internet access. These materials will align with the synchronous instruction being delivered to other students and allow them to engage in learning activities offline. Delivery of these materials would be accomplished by home-school coordinators, social workers, and counselors

4. How will the district communicate with families about the dissemination of computing devices?

The District utilizes *Parent Square* to communicate with the school community. This platform would be used to communicate with parents and guardians to arrange the pickup/delivery of the devices.

5. Is your plan consistent with the information provided by families in the Student Digital Resources data collection?

This plan is consistent with the information that has been provided by families in the Student Digital Resources data collection survey.

2. Policies and procedures to ensure students receiving remote instruction under emergency conditions will access internet connectivity. §155.17(c)(1)(xxi)(a)

1. How will the district determine the need for access to internet in students' places of residence?

In March 2020, prior to the COVID-19 emergency closure, the district surveyed all students in grades 3-12 to determine who had high-speed, reliable internet access at home.

Approximately 91% of the students responded that they did have internet access. The district has added a question about home Internet connectivity to its enrollment form for new students so that hotspots can be provided.

2. How will the district ensure that all students have access to the Internet?

By May of 2020 (during the COVID-19 pandemic), the district had provided every student K-12 with a device, and offered hotspots to any family and/or staff member in need. Many families and staff live in areas where the internet is still not available, so this was critical to the implementation of online learning. Any family or staff member who has a need for Internet access may contact their building's principal any time throughout the school year.

3. How will the district work with community organizations and local public spaces to ensure students have access to Wi-Fi access points?

The District has several close ties with our community partners. Entities such as the Flower Memorial Library offer free Wi-Fi for the general public, and the District will utilize *ParentSquare* to communicate Wi-Fi locations to our families.

4. Is your plan consistent with the information provided by families in the Student Digital Resources data collection?

This plan is consistent with the information that has been provided by families in the Student Digital Resources data collection survey.

3. Expectations for school staff as to the proportion of time spent in synchronous and asynchronous instruction of students on days of remote instruction under emergency conditions with an expectation that asynchronous instruction is supplementary to synchronous instruction. §155.17(c)(1)(xxi)(b)

1. How will the district ensure that school staff has the necessary tools, including device and Wi-Fi, to deliver emergency remote instruction from their places of residence?

Teachers will log on to *Zoom* from home each day with a District-provided *Chromebook*. If

home Internet connectivity is lacking, the staff member will complete a job ticket through the IT Helpdesk, and they can coordinate with the IT department to arrange for a WiFi hotspot.

2. What portion of the school day will be spent on synchronous instruction?

On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, K-12 instruction will be synchronous, and teachers will follow their regular class schedules. For K-12 classes, teachers and students should open *Zoom* at start of day and follow their regular schedule (direct instruction, work time, and breaks should occur as normal). 7-12 teachers should initiate instruction, following their regular period schedule. Teachers should turn off video and sound during lunch and planning times. In the event of a teacher absence, instead of daily substitute plans, the teacher is to cancel *Zoom* meetings for that day and post “substitute lessons or materials” for students. Teachers will be encouraged that one direct instruction lesson for each subject/course be recorded daily and posted for students unable to attend the live *Zoom* session. Students in grades K-6 will check in for the purpose of attendance using *ParentSquare*. Students in grades 7-12 should complete an ungraded daily check-in in their *Google Classrooms* from which attendance will be noted. Ideally, teachers may have students complete this as a bell ringer each time they log in to class. Students will not be penalized for not attending *Zoom* classes as scheduled, provided they complete the classwork as assigned and meet performance expectations.

3. What portion of the school day will be spent on asynchronous instruction?

Wednesdays will serve as virtual posting days and as such, asynchronous (as they did during the COVID-19 pandemic), and time for individual student support/office hours. Assignments will be posted weekly on Wednesdays. Students are to work through assignments as direct instruction is provided through the week. The due date for all assignments, other than long-term essays and projects, quizzes and tests (which are due as directed by the teacher), is the following Tuesday evening.

4. How will instruction be personalized to support students individualized needs, including supporting ELL/ML students?

Instructional practice will mirror what occurs in the classroom. Teachers will follow the same instructional model as outlined above with small group, push-in, and pull-out instruction being implemented via *Zoom*.

5. What training is provided to teachers in order to help adapt their instruction to the district expectations?

The Watertown City School District has five instructional coaches and two technology integration specialist who provide professional development to our K-12 teachers. These individuals provided whole-group and individualized instruction to teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally and also during the COVID-19 pandemic, hundreds of “Empower Hour” sessions were held in areas ranging from online instructional practice to effective communication with families during remote instruction. These trainings were

facilitated by the coaches, specialists, and several District teachers. These practices would continue in the event of an emergency closure.

4. A description of how instruction will occur for those students for whom remote instruction by digital technology is not available or appropriate.

§155.17(c)(1)(xxi)(c)

How will the district determine which students for whom remote instruction via digital technology is not appropriate?

In March 2020, prior to the COVID-19 emergency closure, the district surveyed all students in grades 3-12 to determine who had high-speed, reliable internet access at home.

Approximately 91% of the students responded that they did have internet access. The district has added a question about home Internet connectivity to its enrollment form for new students so that hotspots can be provided.

How will the district provide synchronous instruction for those students for whom remote instruction by digital technology is not appropriate?

The district will provide offline learning materials such as printed worksheets, textbooks, or instructional packets to students without Internet access. These materials will align with the synchronous instruction being delivered to other students and allow them to engage in learning activities offline. Delivery of these materials would be accomplished by home-school coordinators, social workers, and counselors

How will the district provide synchronous instruction for those students who do not have adequate internet access?

By May of 2020 (during the COVID-19 pandemic), the district had provided every student K-12 with a device, and offered hotspots to any family and/or staff member in need. Many families and staff live in areas where the internet is still not available, so this was critical to the implementation of online learning. Any family or staff member who has a need for internet access may contact their building's principal any time throughout the school year.

5. A description of how special education and related services will be provided to students with disabilities and preschool students with disabilities, as applicable, in accordance with their individualized education programs to ensure the continued provision of a free appropriate public education.

§155.17(c)(1)(xxi)(d)

How will the district ensure that special education and related services will be provided remotely?

Special education students will receive a free and appropriate education as far as they will receive instruction five days per week under the auspices of all procedures and protocols inherent in this plan. Special education staff will be assigned to students to provide instruction to students per their IEPs, via virtual means. Special education services for

students with disabilities will include synchronous instruction and explicit expectations for greater consistency.

How has the district coordinated with special education teachers, support staff, and service providers in the district to ensure that each student with an IEP is receiving the same quality of services that would occur in an in-person environment?

Special education teachers will collaborate with general education teachers to adapt and modify instruction to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Co-teaching models will be implemented remotely, with special education teachers and general education teachers working together to provide inclusive instruction and support for students. Services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy and counseling will be provided via *Zoom*.

Teachers and staff will communicate regularly via virtual meetings, telephone, and email to ensure that all instructional staff are aligned in their approach to providing services remotely. By fostering effective communication, providing targeted professional development, and implementing individualized educational plans, the District will support special education teachers, support staff, and service providers in delivering high-quality services to students with IEPs in a remote environment. Special education service providers, support staff, and teachers will follow their daily schedule as closely as possible. Teacher assistants and teacher aides will have access to the classroom teachers via *Zoom* in order to follow their schedule in order to provide support to students. Break-out rooms will be utilized to provide one-on-one or small group support when necessary.

6. For school districts that receive foundation aid, the estimated number of instructional hours the school district intends to claim for State aid purposes for each day spent in remote instruction due to emergency conditions pursuant to section 175.5 of this Chapter.

The district will claim the normal day of instruction on remote learning days for students in grades K-12 (six hours).