

Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction Program Plan



Readington Township Public Schools
Approved by the Board of Education: July 23, 2024

Table of Contents

Introduction and Demographics	2
Equitable Access and Opportunity to Instruction	2
Internet Access Outside of the District	3
Meal Service and Meal Delivery in the Case of a School Closure	3
Special Education Needs	4
English Language Learners	5
Attendance Plan	5
Facilities/Grounds	6
Communication	6
Accelerated Learning and Summer Program	6
Employee Support & Student Support	6
Appendix: Summary Chart of Essential Personnel	7

Introduction and Demographics

In accordance with the requirements of P.L. 2020, ch.27, the Readington Township Public School District offers this school health-related closure plan for emergency virtual or remote instruction. This plan guides of emergency closures for the Readington Township Public School District in the event of a health related closure that requires virtual or remote instruction

In order to provide transparency and ensure that New Jersey students continue to receive high quality, standards-based instruction, each school district, charter school, renaissance school project and Approved Private School for Students with Disabilities (APSSDs) must annually submit its proposed program for virtual or remote instruction (Plan) to the New Jersey Commissioner of Education. This plan is subject to revision in response to evolving guidance.

The Readington Township Public Schools demographic profile as of October 15, 2023 is as follows:

Total enrollment: 1,390

Students with disabilities: 241

Students identified as low SES: 159

English Language Learners: 29

Homeless: 2

State Funded Pre-School: 0

Equitable Access and Opportunity to Instruction

The Readington Township School District maintains 1:1 Chromebooks for all students in grades 1-8. Students in all grades have the ability to take Chromebooks home for homework assignments or virtual instruction, but students in grades 6-8 do this on a regular basis. Students in grades 1-5 do not ordinarily take Chromebooks home but will be permitted to should online learning occur. Students in Kindergarten are assigned an iPad on a 1:1 basis. In order to ensure all students will have access to online/remote learning the Readington Township School District will:

- Identify students who do not have a device or access to the Internet in the home. This will be done through the registration process in the form of an Internet Connectivity Form.
- Use a Readington-developed SOP to troubleshoot any home that does not have internet connectivity. This does include purchase of a Hot-Spot for students to use in the home.

Teachers and students in all grades have used and are familiar with Google Classroom, Google Meet, Zoom and other online tools. Teachers use Google Classroom to provide links to other digital tools the students have used in the past (i.e. IXL, i-Ready, RazKids, etc.) Google or Zoom meetings are the primary platform in the event of a school closure. Teachers will use these platforms to deliver the grade-level curriculum. At the beginning of each school year, the staff instruct students regarding log-on information for Google Meet/Zoom meetings. This is important as Google and Zoom are the platforms used for virtual instruction in the event of a closure.

Student growth is measured through a variety of assessment tools. These tools include: teacher made assessments, classroom observations, attendance in virtual learning, i-Ready diagnostic assessments, and running records using online software. Many of these student assessment tools are online and can be administered in the event remote instruction becomes necessary.

Preschool Students. In the 2023-2024 school year the district expanded preschool and will continue the program in the 2024-2025 school year using both in-district facilities and private providers. All preschool programs provide students with at-home activities to be completed with parents/caregivers. There will be a component of live instruction for preschool classes as scheduled by the private preschool directors and principals.

Internet Access Outside of the District

Internet access while home is a critical component of any virtual learning environment. In the 2020-2021 school year the Readington Township Technology Department developed Standard Operating Protocols for Student Internet Access Assistance. This document included protocols for the following:

- Distributing devices to all students, our district is a 1-to-1 district providing iPads to all students in Kindergarten and Chromebooks for all students grades 1-8;
- Ensuring that all students and parents are aware of district policies regarding devices;
- Providing assistance through cable or satellite providers, the local library, or a mobile phone hotspot;
- Loaning a district-owned mobile WiFi hotspot provider should the connectivity issue continue;
- Further, our district Business Office considers the free/reduced lunch population and the need for accessibility as well. This review is part of our protocol to ensure families in need have internet access.

Meal Service and Meal Delivery in the Case of a School Closure

In the event of a full school closure for an extended period of time, the district will use our school bus drivers to deliver pre-packaged meals for eligible students who opt into the meal delivery program. Meals will be prepared by our food service vendor, who will all be trained on safe food handling protocols. The program will operate similarly to meal delivery in the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years. This will involve coordination with our school meal service provider, Maschio's.

The following information is provided to ensure this preparedness plan meets requirements set for by the New Jersey Department of Agriculture to provide food service for families in need:

SFA Name: Readington Township Public Schools

Agreement #: 01904350

Date Meal Distribution will begin if closure occurs: September 5, 2024

Date Meal Distribution will end if closure occurs: June 20, 2025 (the anticipated last day of school)

Schools/Site where distribution of meals will take place: Holland Brook School

Meals to be claimed for reimbursement per day: Two meals per child per day (breakfast and lunch).

Special Education Needs

Virtual Instruction. Students who receive special education services will attend virtual learning sessions via Google Meet/Zoom and complete the virtual learning assignments posted online. Lessons will include modifications, accommodations, and materials as specified in the student's individual education plan (IEP). Resource center teachers and self-contained special education classroom teachers are responsible for providing online instructional activities for students assigned to those courses. Students who require additional reinforcement of instruction will be supported by instructional aides via Google Meet/Zoom. The instructional aides will be present during initial instruction and, under the direction of the teacher, conduct follow-up sessions with students during individual work time.

Related Services. Students who receive related services (i.e. PT, OT, Speech, Counseling, Behavior Services) will receive services through a virtual format. Therapists have consulted with parents to collaboratively schedule sessions. In addition to direct therapy, parent consultation and coaching is provided by the therapist to foster skill acquisition and generalization. Therapists maintain a service log and are recording data on student performance.

IEP Implementation. Special education teachers and related service providers will track student progress toward identified goals and objectives in their IEPs and this data will be utilized to complete quarterly IEP progress reports. Completed work and data probes will be utilized by teachers and therapists to determine student progress during the fourth marking period.

Meetings/Child Study Team Case Management. Case managers participate in virtual common planning time (CPT) with teachers to monitor student attendance, progress, and address any issues that arise. They maintain email and telephone contact with parents and out of district schools on an as needed basis. The district is utilizing the Google Meet/Zoom platforms to hold all required referral, eligibility, and IEP meetings. The meetings are scheduled collaboratively with the parents. Documents which will be discussed are shared with the parent prior to the start of the meeting. Attendance of meeting participants is maintained by the case manager. Parent consent, where required, is being accepted via email. For students who are referred for an evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services and students who are due for a triennial reevaluation, once consent for the evaluation is received the child study team is conducting those assessments that do not require direct student contact such as: behavior checklists, social histories, review of records, etc. Parents are advised that once schools resume operations, the outstanding components of the evaluation plan will be conducted.

Nursing Services and Medically Fragile Children. If school is in session during a pandemic and a child is identified as medically fragile, the case manager will contact the district's school physician. The school physician, in collaboration with the district, will develop protocols to protect the medical needs of the child. If the parent opts to keep the child home on home instruction, a note from the child's physician will be presented to the school physician as in consideration for home instruction. In the event of a school closure, the school nurse will provide back to the parent, upon request, any medication being stored at the school for student use.

English Language Learners

ESL services are provided to students in grades K-8 in the same manner as educational services are provided to all students. The ESL teacher, through Google Meet/Zoom, will provide virtual instructional activities for students and provide links to other digital tools the students are familiar with (i.e. Raz Kids, Vocabulary A-Z, Writing A-Z, etc.) These digital tools allow the teacher to differentiate extension activities appropriate to the student's proficiency level. Instruction is provided in small group and individual sessions through the Google Meet and Zoom platforms and is differentiated based on each student's proficiency levels. Alternative methods of instruction may be used through differentiation and best-practices in second language acquisition for ELL students.

The ESL teacher is the point of contact for families of eligible students. The teacher communicates with parents through email, the Remind App, telephone calls, Google Hangout and Zoom meetings. The teachers have regular office hours that are posted in Google Classroom. Voice translation is provided by our foreign language teachers on an as needed basis. The district uses a document translation service when appropriate.

A first cohort of teachers have been trained using the Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) model to engage English learners in classroom activities during their general class instruction. An additional cohort of teachers will be training during the 2024-2025 school year. This provides additional continuity of instruction to MLs given that general education teachers have intensive training in English instruction for MLs.

Training for teachers regarding social emotional learning and trauma-informed teaching occurs via Safe Schools at the onset of each school year. Teachers and staff are required to complete this training by October 31 annually.

Attendance Plan

Attendance is governed by Policy 5200 - Attendance. Teachers will mark students present if they attend the virtual lesson held via Google Meet/Zoom. The district will follow the attendance policy, 5200, in terms of making determinations for promotion, retention and graduation. Attendance is taken when students log on to virtual classrooms. If a student is logged on for the class period s/he is considered present.

The district has a variety of methods to communicate with families during a pandemic if a child is not regularly attending school. These are:

- Phone call
- Email
- School nurse, counselor or CST intervention
- Local police contact

Facilities/Grounds

During a school closure, all buildings will be maintained by our maintenance staff and custodial crew. As long as it is safe, these essential staff will be on-site to work on maintenance projects and clean the buildings. They will also conduct walk-throughs of the buildings to ensure there are no issues with any part of the building.

At the outset of closure, Readington Township Public Schools will complete deep cleaning of all facilities, and then reduce its Facilities Department active workforces to small crews tasked with supporting daily required maintenance operations, active projects on campus (such as food distribution, technology support, Business Office operations, and others), off-site meal delivery, and other necessary tasks and functions.

At all times, and as public health officials dictate, face coverings, gloves, and any other personal protective equipment necessitated by the circumstances of closure will be available to all essential staff reporting to our schools, in compliance with and recommendations or requirements from the Department of Health and other agencies.

Communication

Readington Township Public Schools will continue to utilize its website to communicate updates to the community. We will also leverage email, our YouTube Channel, official District social media outlets, and our School Messenger text/voice message system to communicate updates and information. All announcements made on our website will be available in multiple languages.

Accelerated Learning and Summer Program

In years past the district identified and engaged students in accelerated learning programs and specialized summer learning opportunities. Student achievement data analysis will be conducted in the event of an extended school closure due to a pandemic. The results of such an analysis will be used to determine the need for accelerated learning supports or summer programs. Further, the district provides after-school tutoring and academic clubs using ESSER funding to support student learning.

Special education Extended School Year (ESY) programs will continue in-person unless a health related closure extends into the summer. In the event of a health related closure, all students eligible for ESY will attend in a virtual format in order to meet IEP goals.

Employee Support & Student Support

The district is committed to mental health and well-being and providing resources to navigate these uncertain COVID times should you choose. Starting April 1, 2021, a confidential, no cost Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to all employees through Hunterdon Prevention Services. Additional resources can also be found on the district SEL website.

School Counselors maintain active case loads for students who require social and emotional services. In addition, the district employs a behavioral health counselor to provide higher-tier interventions for students with

school-based mental and behavioral health needs. These staff members will continue to engage with students via Google Meet/Zoom based on the student's individualized counseling plan.

Appendix: Summary Chart of Essential Personnel

Category	Role	Duties	Approx. Number of Staff
Administration	Oversight and Direction	Direct essential district operations, supervisor and monitor instruction, facilitate student programs	13 employees 1 superintendent, 1 BA, 4 principals, 1 VP, 5 supervisors, 1 tech coordinator, 1 facilities manager
Facilities	Custodial and Maintenance	Clean and sanitize facilities, building walkthroughs, grounds maintenance, support on-site staff	6 custodians 3 maintenance
Certificated instructional staff	Provide online home instruction	Provide remote instruction and services to students	190
Certificated educational services (counseling, CST, nurses, speech)	Provide support, special education, and nursing services	Provide remote counseling, IEP meetings, and case management	6 counselors 9 CST 5 nurses 5 speech 3 behaviorists
Technical (IT) Support	Online technical support	Provide remote and in-person technology support. Office hours are available for tech	6 staff (technicians, database, and network admin)
Secretarial	Clerical support	Provide support to instructional and administrative staff.	19 staff
Food Services	Meal preparation	Prepare and package meals to be distributed	2-3 Maschio's employees
Transportation	Meal delivery	Distribute/deliver meals on a rotating basis	1 supervisor 2 staff delivering meals
Paraprofessionals	Teacher and student support	Provide supports to teachers and students during remote instruction	51 staff

Note: Subject to change