

Rockaway Borough School District



Health-Related Closure Preparedness Plan

Created March 2020

Revised May 2020

Rockaway Borough School District

Health-Related Closure Plan



District Contact Information

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Overview

A Flexible Instructional Day (FID) Program or more commonly referred to as Distance Learning is an option now available to New Jersey public Schools entities to be used as an alternate approach to delivering instruction if a circumstance arises that prevents instruction in a customary manner, such as a health related school closure. The delivery of instruction can and will be a combination of varied online learning as well as traditional paper and pencil practice based on grade level, student needs and availability of resources. These days are not intended to supplant regular school day instruction, but rather help schools support continuity in learning and instruction when an emergency arises. While keeping students engaged during this challenging time is important, it is equally important regarding the circumstances, to be flexible and understanding regarding expectations for students, their families and our staff.

The following document was created to detail how the Rockaway Borough School District plans to provide distance learning to all its students in a fair and equitable manner in the event of a health related school closure. Key features taken into consideration in developing this plan include the following:

- Providing staff with ample prep time and resources necessary to develop viable lessons as well as deliver virtual instruction if a closure is necessary
- Developing expectations to keep all parties accountable, while still being flexible considering the situation at hand
- Creating an effective means to communicate with all stakeholders
- Ensuring continuity in instruction and keeping students connected during the closure
- Making sure instruction and services are equitable for all students
- Maintaining safe and clean facilities in anticipation of partial or full return of staff and students

Communication

In the event of a school closure and a need to begin Distance learning, the district will utilize the following means of communication to notify parents, staff and the community at large. These platforms will also be used to continually update all parties with relevant information throughout and after the closure.

- The District website—www.rockboro.org
- The district emergency alert system K-12 alerts
- The Constant Contact platform
- District and building social media pages such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

Essential Personnel Needed to Execute this Plan

In order to execute this plan under the most extreme circumstances, the following essential personnel will be responsible to keep the district viable and support instruction during a prolonged closure. While working remotely is encouraged, these individuals may also be required to be on site to successfully carry out their responsibilities pending guidance from local health officials.

- Superintendent of Schools (1)—Coordinate and manage all district operations and personnel
- Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent (1)—Assist the Superintendent in all pertinent matters
- Building Principals (2)—Responsible for supervising staff and ensuring continuity of instruction for students
- Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction (1)—Responsible for managing district Distance Learning Site and working with teaching staff in planning the delivery of instruction
- District Technology Coordinator (1)—Responsible for coordinating and overseeing the delivery and repair of devices for students and staff as well as assisting families in need with internet and web access
- Business Administrator (1)—Oversee and manage all financial responsibilities of the district and pertinent staff
- Business Office Staff—Payroll and Accounts Payable (2)—Responsible for carrying out the necessary functions pertinent to compensating staff and paying vendors
- Buildings and Ground Supervisor (1)—Responsible for continued upkeep of district facilities including necessary cleaning and disinfecting of all buildings as well as supervision of custodial staff if and when needed

Instructional Essentials during Distance Learning

During distance learning days, the delivery of instruction along with accompanying instructional materials will be available to students via a Distance Learning Site on the district website www.rockboro.org. Assignments will be available in grade level folders that include core academic subjects (English Language Arts, Math, Science and Social Studies) along with grade level specials and posted weekly. In addition, students receiving supplementary instruction will find links to their assignments and their accompanying resources. These instructional templates will provide central access to daily and weekly assignments and be accessible to students, parents and teachers. To help students in managing their time, teachers have included suggested and approximate time for designated subjects and tasks as well as created Internet Safety Reminders and Chromebook Acceptable Use policies to promote digital safety. Traditional paper syllabuses and materials will also be available for those without access to the internet or where it is most appropriate.

During the closure, lessons will be differentiated and provided to meet the needs of all students including the following:

- Special Education
- ESL/ELL

- At Risk
- On-grade level
- Gifted and Talented

District interventionists will provide tiered interventions for students in conjunction with current intervention plans. Students receiving ESL services (5% of the district population) will be provided with specific assignments that meet their designated programs and will be monitored by the district ESL teachers with targeted staff available to help with translations for non-English speaking families if needed. In addition, district communications posted on the website will be translated into Spanish and other necessary languages. Gifted and Talented teachers will also include classwork and assignments for their designated students. Additionally, Intervention and Referral Services teams will continue to meet virtually as needed to support students.

In addition to instructional materials, the district Distance Learning Site will also provide additional resources regarding health related issues, communications from the county, state and national sources as well as a wealth of other material intended to support students and their families during the closure. A parallel site will also be created to support staff with applicable resources.

Once created, the assignments in the distance learning site will be updated when and as needed, especially if the time out of school is extended. Overall revisions to the site and posting of assignments will also be made in response to parent, student and staff input. Staff as well as students and their families will be kept informed in regards to communications from local health officials and any perceived district timelines.

After the completion of initial distance learning weeks and in response to both student, parent and staff feedback, the district revised the platform and designated each Friday as a “Flexible Friday” that will be devoted to remedial or catch-up work. Since no new work will be introduced on “Flexible Fridays”, the district will also use the day to provide enrichment opportunities for interested students. In addition, the district will use the last week of school as an additional for 4th quarter make up work.

While academics are important, the district will also look to serve the social emotional needs of students and their families during a health related closure. As a result, if needed, the district will consider modifying its grading procedures for targeted marking periods to a process similar to the one used for progress reports that would apply to all content areas as well as special area subjects. Traditional number and letter grades may be replaced with four broad categories that were intended to provide the necessary flexibility in assessing students and their work during the pandemic. Teachers will be using any grades recorded prior to the closure as well as feedback collected during weeks when distance learning is in effect to calculate the given grade.

The key for grading will be as follows:

- E--Excellent
- S—Satisfactory
- N—Needs Improvement
- NE—Not Evaluated--Teachers could not accurately assess a student’s work to calculate a grade as sufficient material was not completed or handed in for the 3rd marking period. This grade can, however, be adjusted based on future completion and submission of work.

Decisions such as this to modify grading will be made on a as need basis and will be communicated to parents, students and staff in a timely manner.

In addition, administration will support staff and in turn, students and their families by providing them with appropriate guidance, applicable resources and professional development as deemed needed.

School Schedule

Teachers will work remotely, but be responsible for the following virtual “office hours” to monitor student activity, progress and work as well as field questions from students and their families: 8:30am to 1:30pm with lunch from 11:30am-12:30pm. Students, however, may complete their assigned work sometime during the day at the family’s discretion. Grade level teachers will work as a team unit so in the case of a staff emergency, students and their parents will always have multiple people to contact for guidance and help. If needed, district floating subs will also be available to cover virtual classes and support the continuity of instruction.

Student Responsibilities

Student responsibilities will vary by grade level and ability.

Elementary students in Preschool through 3rd grade will be provided with instructional packets, but also have access to the Distance Learning Site and all its resources. Instruction and assignments will be a blend of various learning materials and hands-on approaches to promote student engagement and continuity of skills similar to delivery used regularly by grade level teachers. Technology will be used to supplement the overall learning experience may vary in use by grade level.

Students in grades 4-8 will be expected to log in daily through a Google form accessible on the District’s Distance Learning Site to view their daily and weekly assignments as all students will have access to devices. Collaboration and interaction with fellow students and teachers will be an integral part of the virtual learning experience with initial emphasis on the practice and remediation of already acquired skills. Assignments should be completed in a timely manner and may be handed in electronically throughout the closure or in person depending upon the media upon the return to school. Teacher feedback will be provided periodically to support learning.

**All students will be encouraged to take part in at least 30 minutes each day for physical activity as recommended by Physical Education and Health teachers.*

Attendance

Student attendance will be taken daily via a Google form that can be accessed on the district Distance Learning website. Students will be asked to login by 9:00am each day and can find all instructions as well as a blank form on the website. Parent tutorials are also available on the website if needed. If students are unable to log in electronically, teachers will assume they are “present” unless a phone call is made to their respective school’s main office or nurse to report the absence. Information pertaining to any potential illness should also be shared with the nurses who will also be available via email for consultation and to provide health updates. If there are concerns regarding a particular student’s absence or participation, someone from the given school (teachers, front office, guidance counselors, building principals, etc.) will reach out to the family via GoGuardian (the district Student Information System) by email, or by phone. In case of extreme emergencies, the Rockaway Borough Police Department will assist with a Wellness visit. Staff will also be able to track student attendance through online presence and submission of work.

Below is appropriate contact information for each school.

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|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| • Lincoln Elementary | Mrs. Kim Stockstill (front office) | 973-625-8602 |
| | Mrs. Denise Jacobus (nurse) | 973-625-8602 x204 |
| • Thomas Jefferson MS | Mrs. Nicole Fernandez (front office) | 973-625-8603 |
| | Mrs. Jenn Vogelegang (front office) | 973-625-8603 |
| | Mrs. Linda Savercool (nurse) | 973-625-8603 x305 |

Equitable Access to Technology

In creating this preparedness plan for a potential health related closure, parents and families were surveyed to determine internet access and availability for all students so resources could be selected appropriately. In addition, a number of other provisions were taken to ensure equitable access for all students.

- District officials will coordinate with the Regional High School, and surrounding sending districts in regards to the purchase and placement of “hot spots” around the community.
- Local libraries will be contacted regarding the availability of possible internet services for students in need.
- Information regarding free internet service will be shared with parents and if needed, the district will assist with its delivery especially for non-English speaking parents.
- Provisions taken for providing devices to students:
 - All 6th-8th graders already have Chromebooks as part of the district 1:1 initiative
 - All 4th-5th graders have designated devices that can be immobilized for distribution pending a mandated closure. To assist with this endeavor, the appropriate paperwork will be prepared in advance and ready to share with parents.
 - Students in K-3 will for the most part rely upon their own personal devices as planned instruction will be based upon results of the district survey and be geared to student and grade level needs with materials and resources supplemented as needed.
- The District IT Coordinator will be prepared to go virtual and be available for tech support during given school hours via gentech@org for both students and staff.
- In addition to Google Classroom, the attached list of software and tech platforms already in use within the district will be available to both students and staff from home with the possibility of adding additional resources when needed.
- Students without access to devices and/or internet will receive instructional packets and have the opportunity to complete assignments on paper. Depending upon the length of the closure, and the individualized needs of specific students, additional materials and devices will be made available to students and their families, and delivered to their homes by district personnel.

Special and Support Services

In the event that the district is closed due to a health-related situation, Rockaway Borough will provide distance learning options to address the provision of appropriate special education and related services for students with disabilities which compose 22% of the overall district population.

Programs and services shall be provided to students ages three through 21 according to NJAC 6A:14 requirements with modifications that may be unavoidable due to the health related closure. Students will continue to receive provisions of their IEP requirements and will be provided with a free and appropriate program encompassing special education and related services. Appropriately certified and qualified professional staff members will continue to implement these programs through distance learning opportunities, as the use of on-campus facilities will not be available.

Special Education Programming

All special education programming will be consistent with the student’s Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to the extent appropriate and shall meet all New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

In-Class Resource Center Programs

All students receiving in-class support as documented in their IEPs will be provided with modifications to meet their needs based on the distance learning options afforded to the general education counterparts.

Pull-Out Replacement Programs

All students with pull out replacement programs documented in their IEPs will be provided with appropriate materials and instruction by their special education teachers to meet their needs based on the distance learning options appropriate to their IEPs and learning abilities.

Self-Contained Programs

All students with self-contained programs documented in their IEPs will be provided with appropriate materials and instruction by their special education teachers to meet the needs based on the distance learning options appropriate to their IEPs and learning abilities.

Related Services (Counseling, Speech-Language, Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy)

In addition to instruction, special education services will be coordinated and provided in conjunction with the regional Child Study Team based at Morris Hills Regional High School which serves classified students in Rockaway Borough as well as other surrounding school districts. Counseling, Speech, Physical and Occupational activities will be provided to students by therapist(s) via email, videos or home-based packets that have been individualized based on IEP goals. Parents will work in conjunction with therapists to monitor activity and data as well as progress on goals. Like the teaching staff, therapists and counselors will also be available during daily virtual "office hours" and can be reached via email or other electronic means. In addition, Counselors will be conducting virtual 504 meetings and making sure students have access to wellness checks as determined by the individualized Health plans, 504s or IEPs.

Additional activities or conferences will be scheduled and provided based on individualized student needs.

Behavioral Services

The Behaviorist will provide specific behavioral strategies and support for students whose IEPs dictate those services and be available for consultation via email. The Behaviorist will also provide guidance to special education staff in developing instruction as well as training to paraprofessional during closure through the use of remote programs or technology.

Supplementary Aides and Services

Support staff, both personal 1:1 and instructional aides, will be required to check in with their respective teachers and to join them in assisting students when needed during the closure under the supervision of certified staff. Paraprofessionals will also complete assigned professional development or any other training deemed appropriate by school administration.

Any device accommodation or supplementary equipment and services that can continue to be provided to students in the distance learning setting will continue to be accessible during the closure.

Out of District Placement

In the event that Rockaway Borough District is closed and private out-of-district schools remain open, students will be transported to their given schools. The placement, however, will be responsible for coordinating services if the school were to close.

Referrals and Evaluations

The referral process will continue as usual as per district Policy 2460 – Special Education. At that time, the traditional timelines will be adhered to via the Child Study Team with meetings held remotely. The district will make every effort to ensure evaluations are completed within the timelines set forth in code. Given that evaluations can only be conducted under standardized conditions; timelines may be impacted due to extended school closures. Child Study Team members will contact parents regarding evaluations and keep them informed if the evaluations and procedures fall outside of the legally mandated timeframes.

Child Study Team members will be available as needed for phone or virtual conferences as well as remotely for all required IEP meetings.

Facilities

If buildings need to be closed due to a health related issue, the Custodial staff under the direction of the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds will maintain campus facilities in the following manner:

- Continue with established district facility disinfection procedures.
- Work with administration to limit and/or monitor people in the buildings to only essential workers as well as enforce all necessary social distancing protocols.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, countertops with cleaners that target the virus in preparation for either partial or full return of staff and/or students.
- Maintain an inventory of supplies for disinfecting procedures and the handling of ill students, faculty and staff as well as continue to explore the use of newly introduced products and procedures
- **Keep current with the most updated CDC guidance to identify and revise any designated courses of action as well as share pertinent information with all stakeholders**

Summer Services

In the event that school buildings remain closed during the summer months, the district will address how to best deliver summer services and programs as follows:

- Extended School Year will be delivered virtually online to designated students with IEPs based on the district's Distance Learning model. Decisions will be based on feedback from both student families and staff.
- An online Summer Enrichment Program utilizing Title 1 funds will be created to provide identified students with the necessary small group instruction needed to help close academic gaps possibly developed due to the pandemic. The main focus will be to strengthen and reinforce fundamental grade level skills. Rosters will be developed through teacher recommendation.
- The Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction will coordinate efforts to review and examine curriculum in regards to student progress as well as possible regression, and adjust curriculum pacing accordingly.
- All celebrations for the Class of 2020 as well as other grade levels will be held virtually as per local guidance to support social distancing. Eighth grade class advisors will work with administration to decorate students' homes with signs, provide an online venue for the 8th grade dance and stream a collaborative graduation ceremony to celebrate all students.

School Nutrition Benefit

Rockaway Borough receives federal funding through the National School Lunch Program to provide nutrition benefits to approximately 22% of its school population. The district which is designated as the local School Food Authority (Agreement #02704480) works with Pomptonian the designated Food Service Management

Company. In the event of a school closure, the following steps will be taken to ensure nutrition benefits will continue for all eligible students:

- Meal distribution will begin immediately in conjunction with the start of distance learning (March 17th) and will continue throughout the duration of the closure
- Meals will be prepared either on site or at the local regional High School (Morris Hills Regional District) and distributed daily from 11am-1pm via a kiosk set up in front of the Middle School. Two meals (a self-stable breakfast and lunch) will be distributed per day during the designated hours.
- For students/families who are unable to pick up the meals, meals may be dropped off utilizing district buses and support staff.
- Frequency of distribution, the amount of meals distributed each day, and the designated time frame may vary and will coordinate with the regional high school schedule.
- Meal distribution in general may need to be revised upon directive of USDA and the NJDA and in conjunction with the designated Food service provider and may broaden in scope to include not only Borough students, but all students in need.
- All meals will be prepared pursuant to the district’s Bio Security Management Plan for Food Service.



Summary

This document details the Rockaway Borough School District Preparedness plan to provide distance learning options in the event of a health related school closure. This plan aligns with state required minimum guidelines by providing equitable access to instruction for all students. Additionally, provisions are included for appropriate special education and related services for students with disabilities as well as tiered interventions for General Education, ELL and at risk students. Students eligible for Free and Reduced lunch will also be provided nutritional options.

**Rockaway Borough School District
Resources for Distance Learning**

Paid District Subscriptions/Programs

*For specific log in information/access codes for any of the following programs, please email Jamie Argenziano

Big Ideas	bigideasmath.com	6-8 Math
BrainPop	https://www.brainpop.com	K-8 All Content Areas
Delta Education (FOSS Kits)	https://www.fossweb.com	K-8 Science
Discovery Education	https://www.discoveryeducation.com	K-8 All Content Areas
Envisions	https://www.pearsonrealize.com	K-6 Math
Flocabulary	https://www.flocabulary.com	K-8 All Content Areas
IXL	www.ixl.com/signin/rockboro	K-8 ELA and Math

Membean	https://www.membean.com	6-8 ELA
Nessy	https://www.nessy.com/us/	K & 1 Reading
NoRedInk	https://www.noredink.com	6-8 ELA
Peardeck	https://www.peardeck.com	K-8 All Content Areas
RAZKids	https://www.raz-kids.com	K-6 ELA
Renaissance	https://hosted127.renlearn.com/15848	1-8 ELA and Math
Rockalingua	https://rockalingua.com/user	K-8 Spanish
Schoolwide	https://fundamentals.schoolwide.com	K-6 ELA
STMath	https://www.stmath.com	1, 2, 3, 5, 6 Math
Sumdog	https://sumdog.com	K-3 Math (Paid) Also has a free component (K-8)
Teen Health (McGraw Hill)	https://my.mheducation.com	4-8 Health
Tumblebooks	https://www.tumblebooklibrary.com/	K-5 ELA Also has content specific books

Free Online Platforms

CommonLit

DOGONews

Edhelper

Edpuzzle

Epic Books

eSpark

Flipgrid

Khan academy

Lalilo

Mathplanet (for algebra and prealgebra)

Newsela

Padlet

Prodigy

Readworks

Teachyourmonstertoread

Xtra Math

Additional practice: PARCC/NJSLA Released items: <https://nj.digitalitemlibrary.com/>