

Newton Public Schools

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Health-Related School Closure Preparedness Plan issued March 11, 2020

Per NJDOE Special Broadcast on March 5, 2020:

- In the event a board of education is provided a written directive by either the NJDOH or the health officer of the jurisdiction to institute a public health-related closure, the board of education may utilize home instruction to provide instructional services to enrolled students.
- The provision of home instruction services should be guided by N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1 and may include direct services, online instruction, services provided through contract with another district board of education, or any other means developed by the district to meet the needs of its students.
- All boards of education should develop a school health-related closure preparedness plan to provide home instruction in the event of such a closure. The planned services should include equitable access to instruction for all students.
- Each preparedness plan should also address the provision of appropriate special education and related services for students with disabilities and the provision of school nutrition benefits or services for eligible students. The preparedness plans should be submitted to the Executive County Superintendent.
- NJDOE encourages all educators and members of the public to recommit to raising awareness of the deep educational and personal harm brought by stigma, bullying and harassment in our schools, and to spreading factual public health information without fear or stigmatization.
- NJDOE also encourages boards of education to adopt enhanced school cleanliness and disinfection protocols, including disinfection of frequently touched surfaces and objects.

Per N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1 (home or out-of-school instruction due to a temporary or chronic health condition):

- The school district shall establish a written plan for delivery of instruction to continue the student's academic progress and to maintain a record of delivery of instructional services and student progress.
- The teacher providing instruction shall be a certified teacher.
- The teacher shall provide instruction for the number of days and length of time sufficient to continue the student's academic progress and dependent upon the student's ability to participate.

- For a student with disabilities, the home instruction shall be consistent with the student's individualized education plan (IEP) to the extent appropriate and shall meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards. When the provision of home instruction will exceed 30 consecutive school days in a school year, the IEP team shall convene a meeting to review and, if appropriate, revise the student's IEP.
- For a student without disability, the home instruction shall meet the Core Curriculum Content Standards, and the requirements of the district board of education for promotion to the next grade level. When the provision of home instruction will exceed 60 calendar days, the school physician shall refer the student to the child study team for evaluation, pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:14.

Elements of the Plan

1. Planning

The Newton Public Schools will operate on an early dismissal schedule on Friday March 13, 2020, and Monday March 16, 2020, in order to provide teaching staff the opportunity to plan for up to two weeks of guided learning experiences in case a health-related school closure should become necessary.

2. Instructional Time

Each student will be provided 10-20 hours of guided learning experiences per week as designed by the school's teaching staff. Guided learning experiences will be delivered on the first morning of a health-related school closure for the entire week and continue until school reopens.

3. Grade Level Expectations

a. Students in grade pre-K at Camp Auxilium and grade K at Merriam Avenue School

- i. Students will bring home hard copies of guided learning experiences, textbooks, and other print materials as identified by their teachers, if possible, prior to a health-related school closure.
- ii. If not, the district will arrange for those learning resources to be picked up or delivered home.

b. Students in grades 1-4 at Merriam Avenue School

- i. Students will access guided learning experiences in ELA and Math remotely through i-Ready in addition to using currently available online resources as identified by their teachers.
- ii. For all other subjects, students will bring home hard copies of guided learning experiences and use currently available online resources as identified by their teachers.

- iii. Students will bring home textbooks and other print materials, if possible, prior to a health-related school closure. If not, the district will arrange for those learning resources to be picked up or delivered home.
 - iv. Continue reading below for information for students who do not have home internet or computer access, and for students with special learning needs.
- c. Students in grades 5-8 at Halsted Middle School and grades 9-12 at Newton High School
- i. Students will access guided learning experiences remotely through Google Apps for Education in addition to using currently available online resources as identified by their teachers.
 - ii. Students will bring home textbooks and other print materials, if possible, prior to a health-related school closure. If not, the district will arrange for those learning resources to be picked up or delivered home.
 - iii. Continue reading below for information for students who do not have home internet or computer access, and for students with special learning needs.

4. Internet Access/Digital Device Survey

- a. Students in Grades pK-4 will be asked to bring home a survey to their parents to provide information to assist the staff in providing appropriate resources. Students in Grades 5-12 students will be asked to take the survey in school.
- b. Students in grades 1-12 whose families do not have a computing device at home will be encouraged to use a district-provided device.
- c. Students in grades 1-12 whose families do not have internet access will bring home hard copies of guided learning experiences in addition to textbooks and other print materials prior to a health-related school closure if possible. If not possible, the district will arrange for those learning resources to be picked up or delivered home.

5. Special Learning Needs and Student Support Services

- a. Any student with special learning needs who cannot participate successfully in remote learning will bring home hard copies of guided learning experiences in addition to textbooks and other print materials prior to a health-related school closure if possible. If not possible, the district will arrange for those learning resources to be picked up or delivered home.
- b. Student support services (i.e., OT, PT, speech, CST, counseling, nursing) will be provided if possible, and individual needs will be addressed after the school closure has ended.

6. Free and Reduced Price Meals

Students on free or reduced price meals will have 5 days of breakfast and lunch ready for pick-up or delivered home on the first day of school closure. Another 5 days of breakfast and lunch will be prepared and ready on the first day of any additional week(s) of closure.

7. Extracurricular Activities and Field Trips

All before and after school programs, social trips, field trips, athletic contests, and other extracurricular activities would be cancelled during a health-related school closure.

Parents are advised not to make down payments on non-essential social trips and field trips for the remainder of this school year. Any trips are subject to being cancelled on short notice due to health-related considerations.

8. Attendance

Student attendance will be based on participation in guided learning experiences. Attendance calls will be received by our usual procedure in the event that a student is ill and unable to participate on any given day.

9. Communication

Information will continue to be disseminated to families through the SwiftK12 Alert System, district website, and social media (Facebook and Twitter).

10. Disinfection / Sanitation Procedures

Enhanced cleaning procedures include daily disinfection of all desks, tabletop surfaces, and touch points (door knobs, handles, handrails, sinks, faucets, toilets, urinals, etc.). These procedures are used during normal cold and flu seasons and are effective preventive measures in the current situation. They will continue to be used during a health-related school closure.

Additional Information

This plan may require adjustments during its implementation. If revisions become necessary, the revised plan will be resubmitted to the Sussex County Executive Superintendent for review and communicated as noted above.

A health-related school closure should not be cause for alarm or speculation. It should also not be cause for fear, stigma, or discrimination based on a population or nationality from a region that may be especially at risk for the disease.

For up-to-date information on coronavirus and other health issues, please go to the State of New Jersey's website at <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>.

Feel free to contact the district office at 973-383-7392 if you have any questions or concerns.