



Virtual Learning Day Contingency Plan
March 2020

Overview

In Closter Public Schools, we believe:

- all students can learn and thrive academically, socially and emotionally with support from staff, parents and peers;
- skilled, caring teachers are the most important variable in the classroom and we should consistently provide resources to assist them in life-long learning;
- instruction should be differentiated and culturally responsive to address students' learning styles;
- in a strong home-school-community connection and respect Closter's diversity;
- open and honest communication is vital to creating a positive environment for all;
- in the value of diversity and pledge to create a positive culture that safeguards equity, inclusion, dignity and respect for all.

These core beliefs guide the way we operate on a daily basis. In the event instruction must be delivered through online instruction (virtual day), the Closter Public School staff is prepared. Since our instruction includes the use of technology, woven daily into lessons, learning activities and assessment, we are confident that we can provide instruction through a virtual day format. As teachers and students transition to virtual day instruction, we will use great care to ensure that lessons are connected to the New Jersey Student Learning Objectives. We acknowledge that virtual learning days will be used under dire circumstances, such as natural disasters, widespread health threats, so ask for patience and flexibility from all stakeholders.

The plan that follows was created using the Northern Valley Regional High School Online Learning Contingency Plan as a guide. The Closter Public Schools team that worked on developing this plan was also guided by planning questions listed in the *Digital Learning Collaborative Guide to E-Learning Days*. (<https://tinyurl.com/Guidetoelearning>)

District Demographic Profile (as of March 2020):

- Total number of students: 1217 (664 in HES; 533 in TMS)
- Number of students with disabilities: 175 (100 in HES; 75 in TMS)
- Number of English Language Learners: 99
- Number of homeless students: 0
- Number of students eligible for free/reduced meals: 0

Expectations & Requirements

Expectations for Teachers

All teachers will:

- Post assignments on the learning management software by 9:00 am each day. Grade K teachers will email assignments to parents. Grades 1-2 will use Seesaw; Grades 3 will use Google Classroom; and Grades 4-8 will use Schoology. Teachers may develop assignments that take more than one day to complete. Teachers may also create choice boards of activities to complete over the course of a few days.
- Be flexible in the assignments that they develop and assign
 - Teachers are strongly encouraged to assign asynchronous learning tasks to students (i.e. learning tasks that don't have to be completed "live" or in real-time).
 - Example 1: Go Math! activities
 - Example 2: Writing tasks in Google Docs
 - Example 3: Non-electronic assignments, such as reading independently
 - Teachers are strongly encouraged to make any synchronous (i.e. learning tasks that are completed "live" or in real-time) learning tasks available in an asynchronous format.
 - Example 1: If a teacher provides direct instruction online, the video should be recorded so that students can watch at any time.
 - Example 2: If the class participates in a live chat-style discussion, within the discussion board feature in Schoology. Using this feature will allow students to go back and view questions and responses even if they weren't there live.
 - All assignments must be authentic and linked to New Jersey Student Learning Standards.
 - All assignments must be adapted for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) or Section 504 Plans.
- Recalibrate expectations for timing, pacing, and rigor in the online environment
 - Teachers are strongly encouraged to post students' assignments and deadlines for the week, rather than posting new work every single day.

- This will provide students and teachers the opportunity to manage their time appropriately, and will help to keep students from feeling overwhelmed with a new daily workload.
 - The total amount of work provided should be equivalent to approximately two hours per day.
- Embrace simplicity in online learning tasks and lesson plans; in an online learning environment, less is often *more*.
 - Teachers are strongly encouraged to simplify lesson plans. (What is the focused learning outcome? How will you know students learned it?)
 - Teachers are strongly encouraged to limit the online tools and platforms to those that are already commonly used in class
 - Teachers are strongly encouraged to optimize high quality resources that are already at their disposal.
 - Teachers can find high quality content on YouTube, BrainPOP, Khan Academy, and other digital video libraries
 - Teachers are strongly encouraged to collaborate with colleagues, to co-plan, to co-design lessons, and to pool resources.

Requirements for Teachers

Teachers must:

- Clearly post online learning expectations for all of their classes on the Learning Management System used by the grade level (Seesaw, Google Classroom, or Schoology). Assignments should be posted by 9:00 a.m. each weekday.
- Adhere to the aforementioned guidelines and best practices as closely as possible.
- Online instruction shall be consistent with students' individualized education plans (IEP) and Section 504 plans to the extent appropriate and shall meet the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.
- Be available to respond to student questions via email or messages from 8:30 a.m. to 3:10 p.m. each weekday.
- Be available online for two hours each weekday to provide real time assistance to students and parents, either through email or online availability. Teachers may use [Google Hangout / Google Meet](#) to have online availability through video conferences, and to share the corresponding link with their classes in the Learning Management System (Seesaw, Google Classroom or Schoology).
 - This is time for students and parents to connect with teachers, but students cannot be required to be on at this time. (Think of this as "office hours.")
 - This is also time to connect as teams and departments.
 - Be "present" in the online learning tasks assigned to students -- through continuous feedback, discussion posts, and other pertinent online communication practices.

- Submit lesson plans each Monday in OnCourse.
- Enter personal absences in Frontline Attendance (formerly Aesop) and notify the principal immediately. The teacher should post that he/she will not be available for real-time assistance to students.

Taking Attendance

- Students must sign-in on the attendance page by 10:00 am, however, they may complete work at any time during the day or evening. Students must submit any daily assignment by 8:00 am the day after it was assigned. If assignments take multiple days to complete, the teacher must designate a due date and time.
 - Attendance will be reported daily in Genesis by the assigned secretary.
 - Teachers should reach out to the school counselor about students who are not attending or participating as well so they can follow up with that student from a place of support.
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Expectations for Guidance Counselors

All counselors will:

- Continue to check in with the students they know will need support during this time.
- Take referrals from teachers about who to follow up with and check in on.
- Make personal connections with classes to let them know they are being supported.
- Focus on Parent Education – what support do our parent's need, what resources can be provided to them? What more can we do and think about to support our parents?
- Due to the very nature of an online learning environment, the provision of online counseling for significant emotional / mental health concerns presents serious logistical and ethical challenges. Many of our school counselors are currently in accommodations where they are unable to privately and confidentially meet with students or quickly access mental health services. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) does not provide guidelines for school counselors in providing online counseling. In most cases, school counselors do not have immediate access to resources or a team in order to intervene quickly when needed in the online environment.
- Therefore, school counselors will refrain from providing individual online counseling for students experiencing significant mental health symptoms. In the event of a serious concern about a student (i.e. self-harm, suicidal thoughts/threats, severe anxiety, Child Protection situation, etc.) the school counselor will immediately refer

the concern to their school principal and the school psychologist. The principal and school psychologist will follow protocol in terms of Child Protection.

- Assist with the compliance with 504, IEP, and Free and Reduced Lunch.
- Perform as many traditional tasks as possible.

Requirements for Counselors

Counselors must:

- Reach out to students to continue planned meetings if such meetings can be effectively conducted via phone or other real-time communication (Google Hangout).
- Monitor and respond to student / parent email.
- Monitor and respond to voicemail.
- Allow for additional meetings via phone or other real-time communication (Google Hangout).
- Continue to support referrals to outside counseling if higher-tiered mental health support is advised.

Expectations for Administrators

All administrators will:

- Support teachers in the development and implementation of online instruction.
- Ensure classes are staffed properly and that assignments are posted, especially in the event of teacher absences.
- Facilitate collaboration, especially in the development of common online instructional resources.
- Monitor attendance data and lessons.
- Communicate with staff, parents, and students.
- Continue to work on attainment of goals.
- Prepare for the return-to-school transition.
- Perform as many traditional tasks as possible.

Requirements for Administrators

Administrators:

- Consistently and proactively communicate with our entire learning community.
- Designate predetermined blocks of time each weekday (a minimum of three hours) during which the learning community knows all critical emails and concerns will be addressed.

- Be available online for two hours each weekday to provide real time assistance to teachers, either through email or online availability. Administrators may use [Google Hangout / Google Meet](#) to have online availability through video conferences, and to share the corresponding link with teachers via e-mail.
- Assist teachers with lesson and activity pacing and planning.

Expectations for Secretaries/Office Staff

All secretaries/office staff will:

- Maintain daily communication with administrators.
- Reply to all email correspondence.
- Perform as many traditional tasks as possible.

Requirements for Secretaries/Office Staff

Secretaries/Office Staff:

- Continue to manage reports as well as other work delegated to them by administrators.

Expectations for Secretary Monitoring Attendance

This secretary will:

- Keep administration team informed about any absences lasting more than one day
- Review the student sign-in lists from the Google Forms
- Enter absences in Genesis
- Remember the default setting is "Present."
 - A student should be marked absent if he/she has not signed-in on the district Google form and if he/she has not engaged in the online learning activities the teacher has posted by the dates/deadlines communicated.

Requirements for Attendance Secretaries

Attendance Secretaries:

- Consistently monitor student attendance through the logging in of Google Forms and Genesis
- Communicate teacher attendance to supervisory team daily

Expectations for Child Study Team (CST) Members

All Child Study Team members will:

- Case Management:
 - Conduct scheduled meetings via conference call, Google Meet or Skype
 - Reschedule meetings with parent consent to extend compliance deadlines.
 - Complete open IEPs.
 - Schedule upcoming meetings, send requests for Letters of Invitation to Special Services Secretary, and send letters of invitation via email.
 - Counseling sessions will be suspended.
 - Social Skills: communicate skills to parents/students via email with links to videos and other interactive skill-based lessons.
- Evaluations:
 - Complete any outstanding evaluation reports.
 - Depending on the length of school closure, evaluations may need to be scheduled at local libraries or another public place.
 - Perform as many traditional tasks as possible.

Requirements for Child Study Team Members (CST)

CST Members:

If any tasks are specific to certain members of the team, these will be specified.

- Case Management:
 - Conduct scheduled meetings via conference call, Google Meet or Skype.
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- Evaluations:
 - Complete any outstanding evaluation reports.
 - Depending on the length of school closure, evaluations may need to be scheduled at local libraries or another public place.

Expectations for Nurses

All nurses will:

- Communicate with the principal or superintendent regarding any health issues.
- Coordinate with the school physician.
- Assist the administration with communication about health issues, as needed.
- Reply to email from families.
- Perform as many traditional tasks as possible.

Requirements for Nurses

Nurses:

- Consistent coordination of medical communications with New Jersey Department of Health, CDC, school community, and administration.

Expectations for Media Specialists

All media specialists will:

- Support teachers, where appropriate, in finding instructional materials for students.
- Perform as many traditional tasks as possible.

Requirements for Media Specialist

Media Specialist:

- Analyze collection and develop a "weeding list" to implement upon return.
- Research to find gaps in the collection in order to make data-driven purchasing decisions.
- Continue to complete as many annual tasks as possible.

Expectations for Paraprofessionals

All paraprofessionals will:

- Maintain communication with the teachers they work with on a daily basis.
- Engage in electronic-based professional development.

Requirements for Paraprofessionals

Paraprofessionals:

- Consistently communicate with the teacher to determine how best to support students.
- Engage in electronic-based professional development
 - Safe Schools
 - MasterTeacher Para Training

Expectations for Network Engineer

The Network Engineer will:

- Provide remote support for faculty, staff, and students via email, phone, and screen-sharing.
- Document tech support provided.
- Maintain real-time communication with the administration and teachers.
- Perform as many traditional tasks as possible.

Requirements for Network Engineer (Remote Support)

Technicians:

- Monitor and respond to email
- Monitor and respond to phone calls and voicemail
- Provide remote support for faculty, staff, and students via email, phone
- Document tech support provided

Expectations for Maintenance and Custodial Staff

All maintenance and custodial staff will:

- Most likely these staff members will be asked to report to work on a modified schedule.
- Clean classrooms, perform building checks, etc.
- Maintain boiler logs, as required.
- Disinfect and sanitize school buildings.

Requirements for Custodial Staff

Custodial Staff:

- Boilers must be checked every three hours, as per NJ State law.
- Check email daily for any updates from administration.
- Collaborate on a reinstatement plan to address all sanitation concerns.

Ideas & Exemplars

Ideas for Online Learning

- Students read and comment on a text, and respond to each others' comments, in Google Docs
- Students collaborate on Google Docs, Sheets, Slides, etc.
 - This might be a collaborative writing assignment, a peer review task, research project, etc.
- Students watch a video with comprehension questions via [EDpuzzle](#)
- Students create presentations using Google Slides or interactive presentations
- Students collaborate using Padlet
- Students participate in online assessments -- or, create their own online assessments -- using Kahoot, Quizziz, and Quizlet.
- Students create an audio or video (iMovie / GarageBand) and publish
 - This might be a podcast, a documentary, or an innovative representation of information via digital storytelling
- Students create visual representations via Google Docs, Slides, Wixie, etc.

Special Education and Related Services

Questions & Answers

Q: · Does the plan include adapted materials and assignments to meet student needs?

A: The Closter Public Schools Virtual Learning Day Plan includes student assignments which are posted for students on a daily basis. These assignments are modified for each students' individual needs as outlined in their IEP. These personalized assignments are adapted and modified by the student's classroom teacher; certified special education teachers communicate with their students (and parents) on a daily basis to ensure the successful completion of assignments, further modifying and accommodating for students if necessary. Special education students will be supplied with electronic devices, if needed, and materials (digital and hard copies) which are sent home with students will be modified to address each student's individual needs.

Q: Does the plan prepare for how evaluations, Individualized Education Program (IEP) reviews, eligibility meetings and reevaluation meetings will be rescheduled?

A: Our plan includes the provision for IEP review, eligibility meetings and reevaluation meetings to be held via telephone conference call, adhering to all federal, and state timelines as closely as possible. The student's case manager will email to parents all documents in a PDF format, both pre and post meeting. Parents will review and return the documents, either electronically or through the United States Postal Service. All meetings that require face-to-face assessments will be scheduled upon the recommencement of school. The Special Services secretaries will maintain a list of those requiring face-to-face assessments and will schedule meetings, in chronological order, when schools reopen.

Q: Does the plan include communication with all parents, including those of students in out-of-district schools and contracted providers (e.g., Head Start and private preschool provides), in their native language?

A: Our plan includes the provision for parents to participate in their student's special education meetings in their native language, if necessary. Native translators are on staff. Translation agencies are accessible to the Child Study Team and will be available to participate in conference calls, as needed.

Q: Does the plan consider the needs of students who are medically fragile?

A: Our plan provides for medically fragile students in a variety of ways. Those students who receive support from outside agencies (e.g. nursing) will continue to receive these services. District staff will be in contact with these agencies to ensure the safety and

well-being of students. Teachers of medically fragile students will be in contact with the students and parents and will provide appropriately modified assignments and ongoing support.

Q: Does the plan outline the determination of how related services will be provided or how compensatory services for related services will be provided?

A: Our plan provides the continuation of related services for students via electronic communication and personally-tailored assignments which align to sessions described in students' IEPs. Speech therapists will create videos for individual students to model mouth movements and tongue placement; Occupational therapists will create activities for students to complete and parents to video record and email to the therapist for assessment and follow-up. Students will be treated in accordance with their IEPs and therapists will have ongoing, continuous monitoring with parents. If compensatory services are required, the numbers and types of services required by each student will be maintained within the Special Services Office and will be delivered at the appropriate time.

Q: Does the plan include communication with out-of-district schools where district students are attending, including what will happen if the district is closed and the school is not?

A: Our plan provides that each student's case manager will be in contact with the out-of-district schools of the students in their care and with the students' parents. Case managers will ensure that out-of-district students are receiving appropriate assignments and will address the concerns of the parents. If the Closter School District is closed and an out-of-district school is not, the Closter School District will ensure that the students will be transported to their out-of-district school.

Q: Does the plan consider transportation for students attending out-of-district schools and when and how to inform vendors if schools close?

A: Our plan is to continue working with Region III to inform transportation companies of school closings. Further, we will keep open the lines of communication with out-of-district schools and transportation vendors to reinstitute transportation when schools reopen.

Additional Resources

Frequently Asked Questions

Note: This section of our manual will be **continuously** updated in the event of a school closure. As questions come in, they will be posted here and answered!

Q: What if teachers are absent?

A: Teachers are to report absences using Frontline Attendance (formerly AESOP). The teacher should notify the principal of the absence. It would be advisable for the teacher to notify a grade level or department colleague to assist with posting assignments for students. The teacher should post for students that he/she will not be available for real-time assistance.

Q: What should my lessons look like?

A: The lesson should be aligned to New Jersey Student Learning Standards. The activities should be varied over the course of time. Students should be engaged using multiple modalities. Modifications should be made for students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and Section 504 plans.

Q: If I have technology questions, is there someone I can call?

A: If you have technology-based questions, please consult with your grade-level or department colleagues. You may also email your principal, supervisor of curriculum & instruction, or the network administrator.

Q: What about homework?

A: Independent work will be assigned to support student learning; however, it may differ slightly in the sense that it will be due in accordance with our asynchronous learning tasks. There is no requirement for additional "homework."

Q: What about assessments?

A: Assignments and assessments may be given during virtual learning days. Feedback must be provided to students electronically, and when the situation warrants it, grades will be entered into Genesis.

Q: How are we meeting the needs of our students with special needs, including students with IEPs and 504 plans?

A: We will continue to offer students extended time, support, accommodations and modifications for learning as directed by both IEP and 504 plans.

Q: How are we ensuring equitable access to online learning for all students?

A: We will provide all of our students with devices and, in cases where it is needed, Internet access. In February 2020, parents were surveyed about student access to Internet-accessible devices at home. Anyone without a device was able to notify the district and those parents will be contacted if there is an extended school closure.

Q: How are we meeting the requirement to continue to offer school nutrition benefits or services to identified students?

A: Our district has no students who are eligible for free and reduced meals. The district does not have food services. However, if parents identify that their students are in need of food, we will coordinate with the Closter PTO and the community foodbank to provide meals.

Q: What should I do if anyone contacts me from the media?

A: All staff are asked to refrain from speaking to the media and to direct all inquiries to the superintendent's office.

The administrators will communicate information to parents via Genesis, Schoology and email. If emergency calls are necessary, we will use Blackboard Connect. We will update district website and Twitter account as frequently as necessary.

Live Support

In the event that this online learning contingency plan is activated and the staff is asked to stay home, they will have access to *live* support from administrators, tech mentors, instructional coaches, and technicians. Available times and Google Hangout links will be posted in the table below:

Administrators		
Name	Available Times	Google Hangout / Contact Info
Courtney Carmichael <i>Supervisor of Curriculum & Instruction/Assistant Principal, Hillside Elementary School</i>	from 7:30-1;2:30-5 via email	carmichael@nvnet.org 201-768-3001, ext. 41131
Patricia Eichenlaub <i>Director of Special Services</i>	Anytime by email	eichenlaubp@nvnet.org 201-768-3001, ext. 41120
Keith McElroy <i>Assistant Principal, Tenakill Middle School</i>	Anytime by email	mcelroyk@nvnet.org 201-768-3001, ext. 42211
Vincent McHale <i>Superintendent of Schools</i>	Anytime by email	mchalev@nvnet.org 201-768-3001, ext. 41111
Dianne Smith <i>Principal, Hillside Elementary School</i>	Anytime by email	dmsmith@nvnet.org 201-768-3001, ext. 41117
William Tantum <i>Principal, Tenakill Middle School</i>	Anytime by email	tantum@nvnet.org 201-768-3001, ext. 42213
Floro Villanueva <i>Business Administrator</i>	Anytime by email	villanuevaf@nvnet.org 201-768-3001, ext. 41113
Network Engineer		
Name	Available Times	Google Hangout / Contact Info
Vincent Salvati <i>Network Engineer</i>	7:00am - 4:00pm via email	salvati@nvnet.org 201-768-3001, ext. 41134

New Jersey State Requirements

From memo from Lamont O. Repollet, Ed.D. Commissioner of Education, sent on 3/5/20:

Requirements to Implement a Public Health-Related School Closure

NJDOH guidance identifies school closure as a potential strategy to limit transmission within a community. 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. **Any day in which students impacted by a public health-related closure have access to home instruction services provided consistent with the guidance in this memo will count as a day in which the board of education has provided public school facilities toward its compliance with the 180-day requirement in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.**

Minimum Standards	
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.	This online learning contingency plan represents the district’s written plan for continued delivery of instruction, for maintaining records of delivery of instruction, and for monitoring student progress -- specifically, through teachers’ lesson plans, student attendance, and participation in online learning activities.
The teacher providing instruction shall be a certified teacher.	This is consistent with the online learning contingency plan. Certified teachers will be providing instruction.
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.	The online learning contingency plan was designed to enable teachers to continue student learning and academic progress, as per the curriculum and New Jersey State Learning Standards, to the greatest extent possible.
For a student with disabilities, the home instruction shall be consistent	As per the online learning contingency plan, teachers are required to provide online

with the student's individualized education plan (IEP) to the extent appropriate and shall meet the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.

instruction that is consistent with students' individualized education plans (IEPs) to the extent appropriate and shall meet the New Jersey Student Learning Standards.