Chapter 27:
Emergency Virtual
or
Remote Instruction Programs
2025-2026

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As outlined by the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE), the following plan would be implemented due to the following:

- *District closure lasting more than three consecutive school days due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure.*

Once approved by the NJDOE, a day of virtual or remote instruction will constitute the equivalency of a full day of school attendance.

Digital Divide: Addressing Network Access

The Middlesex Borough School District will:
- conduct a needs assessment to determine the number of students that will require district provided devices and/or internet access in order to access remote education. The district will consider the technological needs of all students, including those with learning disabilities, assistive technology needs, and language barriers.

- consider the attendant needs associated with deployment of needed technology, including student and parent training and acceptable use policy implementation.

- prioritize the purchase and roll-out of devices and/or connectivity that may improve learning based on the results of the needs assessment.

- for students with special needs, accommodations according to their instructional program will be addressed as appropriate for each student.

Meal Security: Safe Delivery of Meals

Normal meal service will be provided at all school locations for the entire 2025-2026 school year. In the event of an emergency school or district closure (as outlined by the NJDOE), the district will revert to a grab-and-go meal service for any school closed during the emergency closure period only.

If necessary, Grab and Go service will be utilized only during an emergency closure as follows:

- Grab and Go meals will be provided on Mondays and Thursdays.

- Grab and Go pick up will be at the Middlesex High School main entrance between the hours of 1:30 PM and 3:00 PM.
- Breakfast and Lunch will be provided as follows:
  - Mondays - three meals each, breakfast and lunch.
  - Thursday - two meals each, breakfast and lunch. If weekends are included, then four meals each, breakfast and lunch.

Length of Virtual School Day

- High School: Teachers: 7:45am - 3:00pm; Students: 8:00am - 2:26pm (enrichment is 2:30pm until 3:00pm)
- Middle School: Teachers: 7:55am - 3:05pm; Students: 8:15am - 2:45pm (extra help available 2:45pm-3:15pm)
- Intermediate School: Teachers: 8:05am - 3:15pm; Students: 8:25am - 2:55pm (extra help available 2:55 pm-3:25pm)
- Elementary Schools: Teachers: 8:20am - 3:40pm: Students: 8:35am - 3:10pm
- Prekindergarten (Hazelwood, Baby Spa, and Big Hugs): Teachers: 8:15am - 3:00pm; Students: 8:30am - 2:30pm
- Prekindergarten (My Very Own School): Teachers: 8:30am - 3:15pm; Students: 8:45am - 2:45pm

Professional Learning

To support all staff members during times of remote learning, the district calendar for curriculum meetings and faculty meetings will remain in place and the time will be used to provide professional learning on those items outlined in Chapter 27 guidance (culturally responsive teaching and learning, socio-emotional learning, and trauma-informed teaching for students affected by forced migration from their home country).

Maintaining Buildings

Identified essential workers will ensure that buildings are maintained and remain operational in the event that they are to be reopened.

Curriculum and Instruction

In order to ensure educational continuity in the event of an extended emergency, the teaching staff will implement the following steps with the assistance of district and school-based administration. Please note, paper copies will be provided only as necessary, as assignments will be posted to the district's ADA compliant website and/or Google Classroom, and live instruction will be provided to students in a virtual setting following the hours listed above. Where necessary, all special education students' assignments will contain appropriate modifications and accommodations per IEPs. For counseling, support will be provided, virtually, if needed. For students with Section 504 plans, school counselors will monitor and provide additional support per individual plans. As noted below, Should a teacher use an alternate location for posting work and/or directions, he/she will communicate the change to families, accordingly.

Pre-K - Grade 3

- **English/Language Arts** –Lessons, including Interdisciplinary Projects (including Science and Social Studies concepts), consistent with the students' current units of study, will be posted to the teacher webpages for each grade. Directions will be included.

- **Mathematics** – Lessons and projects consistent with the current scope and sequence will be placed using an easily identifiable tab on the school websites and the teacher webpages for each grade.

- **Science/Social Studies:** Reading and comprehension assignments related to current science and/or social studies units will be posted via Google Classroom.

- **Special Areas (art, music, technology, health/PE):** Lessons will continue to be implemented as close to the scope and sequence as possible. Content will be delivered using a combination of live virtual instruction and prerecorded lessons. Staff will be available to answer questions.

- **English Language Learners:** Differentiation strategies may include, but are not limited to, learning centers and cooperative learning activities, to the extent possible within a virtual environment, in either heterogeneous or homogeneous groups. This will depend on the learning objectives and the number of students who need further support and scaffolding, versus those who need more challenge and enrichment.

- **Communication** - Parents/Guardians may expect and continue to communicate with their child's teacher and/or the principal via the normal channels of email and/or phone messages.

- **Attendance:** Classroom teachers either distribute a daily survey for students to complete as attendance or take live attendance during virtual meetings. Work completion is an additional indication of attendance. Should a student not attend school, the teacher will first message the family to inquire about attendance. Attendance is submitted in Genesis daily and the school secretary follows up with any unverified absence. Should attendance become a concern, it will be escalated to the building administration who will reach out to the families, and district policy will be followed. Classroom teachers will follow up with the student and then the parent if work is not completed/submitted. Should this continue, building administration will be informed and will contact the student/family.

Grades 4-8

- **English Language Arts:** Students will access and submit assignments through Google Classroom. Assignments and updates regarding instruction will be placed within the online classroom. Students will use Google Meet to participate in lessons and receive instruction. Teachers will use Google Meet to hold Reading and Writing conferences and Skills Groups. Assignments will coincide with the curricula's current scope and sequence.

- **Mathematics**: Students will access and submit assignments through Google Classroom. Assignments and updates regarding instruction will be placed within the online classroom. Students will use Google Meet to participate in lessons and receive instruction. Students should be given a reference guide for how to access the online textbook. Teachers will use online assessments and activities as provided by their current Math programs to assess students. Reference videos for how to complete problems should be placed within the class for students to access. Teachers should assign students interactive projects and online assignments that coincide with the current scope and sequence. Teachers should focus on the main standards that are critical to each student's grade level and make adjustments as necessary.

- **Science**: Students will access and submit assignments through Google Classroom. Assignments and updates regarding instruction will be placed within the online classroom. Students will use Google Meet to participate in lessons and receive instruction. Students should be given a reference guide for how to access the online textbook. Teachers will use online assessments and activities as provided by their current Science programs to assess students. Teachers should assign reading comprehension activities, virtual labs, projects, and other assignments deemed appropriate by the teacher.

- **Social Studies**: Students will access and submit assignments through Google Classroom. Assignments and updates regarding instruction will be placed within the online classroom. Students will use Google Meet to participate in lessons and receive instruction. Students have access to the online textbook.

- **Health/PE**: Students will access and submit assignments through Google Classroom. Assignments and updates regarding instruction will be placed within the online classroom. Students will use Google Meet to participate in lessons and receive instruction. Assignments should be designed to measure a student's understanding of physical education activities, as well as provide them with an opportunity to participate in activities that require movement (IE: Workout/Physical Activity Logs). Students participating in health class should work on comprehension assignments, projects, and use interactive diagrams when deemed appropriate. Teachers should focus on the main standards that are critical to each student's grade level and make adjustments as necessary.

- **Specials:** Students will access and submit assignments through Google Classroom. Assignments and updates regarding instruction will be placed within the online classroom. Students will use Google Meet to participate in lessons and receive instruction. Teachers should focus on the main standards that are critical to each student's grade level and make adjustments as necessary.

- **English Language Learners:** Differentiation strategies may include, but are not limited to, learning centers and cooperative learning activities, to the extent possible within a virtual environment, in either heterogeneous or homogeneous groups. This will depend on the learning objectives and the number of students who need further support and scaffolding, versus those who need more challenge and enrichment.

- **Communication** - Parents/Guardians may expect and continue to communicate with their child's teacher and/or the principal using e-mail and/or phone messages.

- **Attendance:** Attendance is taken during the student's first-period class. Students who are present during the Google Meet are marked as present. Students with extenuating circumstances are marked present if they have turned work in for the day. They may or may not have attended the initial Google Meet. Students that have not attended a Google Meet or turned work in are marked absent for the day. Attendance is submitted to the VEM secretaries and each secretary follows up with the student's family via phone call and/or email. Counselors follow up with students that have been marked absent for two days or more to determine what the issue is.
  - Students who have not been participating in online instruction are identified in multiple ways:
    - Secretaries identify students that have been frequently absent or absent for at least two days or more. They communicate concerns to administration and counselors. Teachers will email administration, counselors, and secretaries to inform them that a student has not been participating in class. If a teacher has determined that the student is present, but has not been attending class, he/she has been instructed to contact the family through email or phone call to explain the situation and ask that the student attend class. If the teacher is not successful in getting the student to attend class, the counselors and administration are informed. Counselors will follow up with the student and the student's family to develop a plan for the student to attend class. If the student continues to fail to attend class, the assistant principal will contact the student's parent/guardian to discuss the student's participation. If the assistant principal is not successful, the principal will reach out to the student's parents.

Grades 9 -12

- **Delivery of MHS Course Curriculum (ELA/Soc.Stud./Sci./Math/WL/VAPA/Business/Culinary Arts./PE-HE)**
  - All instructional staff prepared lessons and learning activities are communicated to all students via Google Classrooms that teachers already employ in their class. The lessons and learning activities are structured to be both asynchronous and synchronous. Teachers can deliver asynchronous instruction via Google Meet.

- **Assessment of Student Learning:**
  - Google Meet is used to collect student assignments and offer online quizzes.

  - Student assignments are collected electronically using the Google Classroom assignment tool (e.g., homework, assignments, or written reflections).

  - Each class will follow the regular school schedule. Weekly planning and projects were highly encouraged but scaffolded for students. The start and end time for distance learning will follow the building schedule or will be communicated by the building principal if a change is necessary.

- All lessons will be aligned with district-approved curriculum and New Jersey Student Learning Standards. All lessons will have a student learning objective as per district instructional guidelines. All lessons will have the means to check for student understanding of that objective and offer specific student feedback.

- Middlesex HS has a 1-to-1 Chromebook program. All students are provided with a district-issued Chromebook. Teachers have received extensive professional development over the years in using educational technology and have implemented it frequently. To keep the approach as manageable as possible for the educational community, the district will continue to provide instructional tools in which students and teachers are already proficient.

- Tiered systems of support involving CST, Counselors, teachers, and administration were put in place for struggling students or those with additional learning needs. Teachers also have the option to require students to attend individual or small group remediation sessions either during class time or "before" or "after" school hours. Additionally, it is reasonable to expect that if a student communicates with the teacher via email, that the teacher would respond either during their regular class time or within a fair amount of time via email during the school day. The goal of the day is student-teacher interaction and peer-to-peer collaboration.

- **Attendance:** To ensure that students get credit for "attendance," students log in or communicate with their teacher via an attendance link in the Google Classrooms, the teacher will mark that student "present" in Genesis. If the student does not log in, report to their classrooms at their regularly scheduled time, the student shall be marked "absent."

- **Related Services & Students Receiving Eligible for Speech & Language Services:**
  - Classroom lessons will be assigned by related services staff to target IEP goals and objectives. These will be posted to each staff member's website. Students will continue to have access to their assistive technology. Compensatory services may be provided upon return to school. Students with disabilities will have their Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) implemented in the least restrictive environment, to the extent that the district is able to do so from a remote environment. This includes accessible materials and platforms for adaptive software.

- **English Language Learners**
  - We ensure all English Language Learners have internet access at home; all students have a Chromebook. The ESL Teacher will hold live, virtual classes each day using Google Meet for all students during the designated time period. Teachers will continue to meet with and support ESL students throughout distance learning. The ESL Teacher and Principal are monitoring on a weekly basis all students who do not turn in work or have not been responsive. The ESL teacher and Principal have followed up with different teachers to modify assignment expectations and break down tasks for students. The ESL Teacher and Principal meet weekly to discuss student progress.

Special Education

- **PreK:** Combination of paper-based and virtual instruction with lessons assigned by the special education teacher with modifications and accommodations provided in accordance with the student's IEP. Students referred to the Child Study Team via Early Intervention or parent referral

will conduct identification meetings and eligibility meetings per code. Teams will use existing evaluation data available to determine eligibility and to provide virtual instruction as designated in the evaluation plan pending completion of eligibility. Currently, students in Part C have services maintained as they rise to Kindergarten. Their current classification of Preschool Disabled (PSD) will remain until appropriate evaluations can take place. Teachers utilize the virtual platforms of Google Meet and Google Classroom to conduct class and small group lessons.Teachers log attendance/participation and all phone and email contact with families. Progress is monitored on frequency as per IEP.

- **K-5 Special Education ICA, ICR, RR, and Self-contained Settings:** Combination of paper-based and virtual instruction with language arts, math, science, and social studies lessons assigned by the special education teacher with modifications/accommodations provided in accordance with students' IEPs. Teachers are able to meet with students in small groups to differentiate instruction. ReThink Ed will be utilized to its maximum extent for students in self-contained classes.Teachers utilize the virtual platforms of Google Meet and Google Classroom to conduct class and small group lessons.Teachers log attendance/participation and all phone and email contact with families. Progress is monitored on frequency as per IEP.

- **6-8 Special Education ICA, ICR, RR, and Self-contained Settings:** Virtual instruction with assignments in ELA, math, science, and social studies assigned by the special education teacher with modifications/accommodations provided in accordance with the student's IEPs. ReThink Ed will be utilized to its maximum extent for students in self-contained classes.Teachers utilize the virtual platforms of Google Meet and Google Classroom to conduct class and small group lessons.Teachers log attendance/participation and all phone and email contact with families. Progress is monitored on frequency as per IEP.

- **9-12+ Special Education and Self-Contained Settings:** Virtual instruction with assignments in core academic areas and study skills assigned by the special education teacher with modifications/accommodations provided in accordance with the student's IEPs. Instruction and assignments are individually modified based on the student's ability level.Teachers utilize the virtual platforms of Google Meet and Google Classroom to conduct class and small group lessons.Teachers log attendance/participation and all phone and email contact with families. Progress is monitored on frequency as per IEP.

- **Related Services:** Services provided virtually designed to target students' goals and objectives in the IEP. Sessions are conducted based on the IEP to the extent possible during distance learning. Service providers use Google Classroom to post lessons and activities for students and families. Google Meet, email and phone are used to maintain contact with students and families. Service providers log attendance/participation and all phone and email contact with families. Progress is monitored on frequency as per IEP. Compensatory services as needed will be evaluated on an individual basis upon return to school.

- **Counseling:** Counseling services are provided virtually or via the phone as per the student's IEP. Consultation with contracted BCBA on a needed basis. Both individual and group sessions will be conducted based on the IEP to the maximum extent possible during the extended school closure.The Special Services Department website hosts resources for families and students to address mental health and behavioral issues. Service providers log attendance/participation and all phone and email contact with families. Progress is monitored as per the student's IEP.

- **Students Attending Out of District Schools:** OOD schools are providing distance learning to their students and have provided districts with their distance learning plans and updates on students' progress. District CST checks in frequently with OOD students on their caseload to assess their progress and to determine any further needs for the families. Child study team case managers maintain contact via email and/or phone with OOD schools on distance learning plans and remain in contact with families to monitor student's progress and determine further need for assistance to families.

- **Child Study Team Case Management and Compliance:** Mandated meetings per N.J.A.C. 6A:14: The CST will conduct all meetings including, but not limited to, Initial Planning Meetings, Eligibility Determination Meetings, Reevaluation Meetings, and Annual Reviews in accordance with mandated timelines. When evaluations are warranted, the CST will complete any and all that can be completed virtually. Any child study evaluations that cannot be completed remotely will be completed when schools return to a traditional learning environment, and thus eligibility conferences will occur following the completion of all evaluations. All meetings are documented in Frontline IEP. Progress reports are sent out to parents via the district's parent portal as usual.CST invites parents to participate in all meetings by phone or virtually. CST remains in contact with parents via email, phone, or virtual platform to discuss parents' concerns and answer questions.CST members, related services providers and teachers will hold mandated meetings, when appropriate, using an online video conference platform or phone conference. In the event a required member of the IEP Team is not available, the case manager, in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A: 14 will receive written consent to proceed with the meeting if the parent/guardian is in agreement. All related documents, including PRISE, will be shared electronically to the parent. In the event the meeting cannot be facilitated as noted above, the meeting will be rescheduled.

Other Considerations

a. **Accelerated learning opportunities**

   Accelerated learning opportunities will be offered through the Afterschool Academic Advancement Program. This program personalizes instruction for students by identifying areas in which additional support is needed in both ELA and Mathematics. Targeted instruction in foundational and/or prerequisite skills is provided to students in the program. In grades K-8 the iReady program in conjunction with small group instruction is utilized. At the high school level, small group instruction is also provided to accelerate learning.

b. **Social and emotional health of staff and students**

   The district has established a partnership with Rutgers Behavioral Health, and since the onset of COVID, the BRIGHT program has been implemented in the district. This program will continue to be in place during times of remote or virtual learning to address the social and emotional needs of both staff and students.

c. **Title I Extended Learning Programs**

   At this time the district does not have these programs.

d. 21st Century Community Learning Center programs

At this time the district does not have these programs.

e. Credit recovery
Online credit recovery programs will be offered to students.

f. Other extended student learning opportunities
At this time the district does not have these programs.

g. Transportation
N/A

h. Extra-curricular programs
If practical, extra-curricular activities will be offered virtually.

i. Childcare
Currently, the district offers before and after-school care for students in grades K-8. If the district was to go virtual or remote, this service would not be available.

j. Community programming
When practical, community programming will be offered virtually.

Essential Employees

The district has identified all essential employees and a list will be provided to the county office at the time of the LEA's transition to remote or virtual instruction.