Mountainside School District
Emergency Preparedness Plan
March 2020

Board of Education

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Plan Introduction

The purpose of this plan is to implement a home-instruction, remote learning model so that school days missed for a pandemic crisis can be counted towards the required days of instruction for the calendar school year. The Mountainside School District in Union County encompasses grades PK - 8 in attendance. This plan is based upon establishing guidelines for ten instructional hours a week for all students in order to fulfill the necessary requirements for the home instruction administrative code. The Mountainside School District has reviewed Policy #2412 - Home Instruction Due to Health Condition (M) and will follow language of the policy and regulation in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:16-10.1. The district has also reviewed and been guided by Policy #8451 - Control of Communicable Disease (M).

Background Information

On March 3, 2020, the New Jersey Department of Education prepared a special broadcast to disseminate information regarding the potential impact that the current outbreak of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) may have on school communities. The primary focus of this and subsequent communication from the NJDOE has emphasized preparedness and planning. On March 5, 2020, a NJDOE broadcast advised that "schools may be asked to close preemptively or reactively, therefore schools should be making plans for what to do if there are recommendations for closing schools or cancelling events." (NJDOE Special Broadcast, March 5, 2020).

The New Jersey Department of Health identifies school closure as a potential strategy to limit transmission within a community. Any prolonged school closure must be initiated via a written directive from the Department of Health in consultation with district Superintendents and the Union County Executive Superintendent. According to the March 5, 2020 special broadcast, any day in which students impacted by a public health-related school closure have access to home instruction services aligned with the guidance in the 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.

Per the memo: *"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. The NJDOE also encourages boards of education to adopt enhanced school cleanliness and disinfection protocols, including disinfection of frequently touched surfaces and objects"* (NJDOE Special Broadcast, March 5, 2020).

Demographic Information

The Mountainside School District serves a total of 748 students enrolled in 1 elementary school (PreK-2), and 1 elementary/middle school (3-8). In addition, we utilize a sending relationship with Governor Livingston High School in Berkeley Heights for regular and special education students in grades 9-12. The Pre-K program consists of 25 students in total, with 17 General Education students, and 8 receiving Special Education Services. Our school district comprises a varied demographic population of students; 10% Asian, 2% Black/African- American, .005% Hispanic, 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, .005% Hawaiian Native/ Pacific Islander, and 85% White.

Mountainside Schools are composed of 0.02% Economically Disadvantaged Students, 0.005% English Language Learners, 0% homeless, and 0% students in foster care. The District services

86 Special Education students, and 6 students with Speech Pathology services, totaling at 92 students eligible for and receiving services.

The Mountainside School District is committed to providing continuity of education to all students in the event of a Public Health Related Closure. To this end, we have planned and created opportunities for our staff, students, and families in the following ways:

Equitable Access to Instruction for All Students

The Mountainside School District is committed to ensuring equitable access to instruction for all students in the event of a school closure due to COVID-19 or any other communicable disease.

Technology:
Our 6th through 8th grade students are already working in a 1:1 environment with Chromebooks. A technology/internet accessibility survey was sent out to the rest of the school community. Any student who does not have ability to access technology from home in grades K-5 will be provided a device from the district to help ensure access. In addition to Chromebooks, our students in Preschool through 8th grade may also receive paper/pencil activities to complete from home. Whenever possible, these materials will be provided to students prior to the school closure. In the event of an unplanned closure, efforts will be made to provide pick-up opportunities at designated locations in the district in order to ensure that students receive any necessary materials and technology.

In addition:
1. Guidance and support has been provided to staff to assist them with any technology needs such as student logins, tutorials for programs, training of creating distance lessons, etc.
2. Parent and staff information and support can be found under a "Distance Learning Resources" tab on our District Webpage:
   https://www.mountainsideschools.org/Page/1337
3. Parent tutorials and directions have been created to be sent out via teachers or email to help them know how to access teacher lessons.

Instruction
Teaching staff has planned developmentally appropriate "distance learning" lessons which will be provided to all students in Preschool through 8th grade. Lessons will be delivered in various ways based upon student developmental levels and existing exposure to technology. Lessons may take the form of the following:
   a. Google classroom; teacher created digital lessons; online programs currently utilized by the district including MobyMax, RazKids, Think Central, FlipGrid, Screen-cast-o-matic, and others; teacher created packets and home activities.

b. Staff has been directed to include all curricular areas, including the related arts and PE, within their planning structure. Instructional activities for these areas will be shared within a schedule that aligns with the student's current schedule.
c. Planning and delivery will be ongoing throughout the length of any closure.

All staff will be required to work at their home computers, or district issued technology, from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm each day. During this time, they will respond to emails, monitor online learning i.e. google classroom assignments, online student learning platforms, as well as respond to students and/or families asking for instructional assistance with their assignments or other educational supports relevant to specific positions (administrative assistants, team members, nurse, etc. In addition, building administrators will schedule regular "team/grade level" meetings through the use of Google Hangouts/Chats to discuss/assess staff needs as well as student progress.

Lessons will be put in Google Classroom, school website pages (teacher pages), via email and/or sent home prior to closure. Students will submit their completed work the same way it was sent to them or via a way requested by the teacher. Teachers will review assignments and provide feedback.

Teachers of Preschool:
Preschool plans will be written with a parent audience in mind, and consist of developmentally-appropriate play-based activities for parents to engage their children. Online activities and screen time should be minimized, and staff will be mindful about recommending activities that require specialized materials or objects.

All lessons are to include:
- Purpose/objective of the lesson/assignment and the NJSLA Standards addressed in the lesson/assignment;
- Description of the tasks, including the directions/resources required to complete the assignments
  - -online resource links
  - -rubrics, if applicable
  - -hard copies if needed
- Assignment submissions process/expectation and date/timeline for the assignment to be completed (upon return to school or via Google Classroom)
- Modifications/Accommodations will be provided for all individual students needing services: 504; IEP; ESL. This could mean extended time to complete assignments, study guides, word banks, etc.

Nurses:
The nurses will oversee student attendance emails and share with appropriate teachers. They will check in on families with students who have serious illnesses that require daily follow ups.

The nurse will also remain available via email during designated hours to provide assistance and support as needed. A log will be submitted outlining work that was completed from home.

Secretaries/Administrative Assistants:
Secretaries and Administrative Assistants will be required to submit a daily log of their activities pertaining to their respective jobs as well as progress made towards tasks provided by administration.

Additional Roles and Responsibilities: Specific information related to roles and responsibilities for essential staff can be found here: Roles and Responsibilities

Parent/Student Communication: In the event of a closure staff will communicate with parents and students on a regular basis through:

> Teachers -- email, class websites, and Google Classroom. They will be responsible to support parents and students regularly during the "school day" in order to clarify questions, help provide guidance, and provide feedback on student work.
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> Technology -- Remote technology support will also be provided for parents/students as needed. Information on this support can be located within the "Distance Learning Tab" of the District Webpage: https://sites.google.com/a/mountainsideschools.org/dltech/students-parents
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> Administration -- Regular updates provided to all staff and families through email, E-blast, Honeywell/School Messenger system, website and Social Media.

Extracurricular Activities and Field Trips:
All extracurricular activities and field-trips will be canceled on any date on which the district is closed for a public health-related school closure. Future field trips that are to occur upon return to normal operations will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Special Education, English Language Learners and Related Services

Planned services for equitable access to instruction also address the provision of appropriate special education, ESL, and related services for students with disabilities. The following protocol will be followed in the event of a school closure:

- Special education, ESL, and AIM teachers will follow all instructional guidelines outlined previously.
- Special education teachers in grades PreK-8 will provide appropriate accommodations and modifications in emergency instructional plans. As needed, special education teachers may need to make separate upload and/or provision of modified materials.
- Speech Teachers and Related Services will provide packets of activities for students to complete at home in order to maintain skills and progress. They will maintain regular communication with parents to support student needs.

- CST members and counselors will be online and available to support parents of students with disabilities in the event of an emergency school closure. A log will be submitted outlining work that was completed from home.
- If a student is in crisis, their parents/guardians should notify Perform Care and insist on a home visit to assist with the student in need of mental health assistance.
- **Please see our detailed [Special Education Plan](#) which outlines specific support and procedures for additional areas.**

Provision of School Nutrition Benefits

a. Maschio's Food Service -- We have been in contact with our Food Service provider, Maschio's. They have informed us that they *are prepared to deliver meals for eligible students to our district upon request. We would provide them with the delivery time and the location for these meals to be delivered for our district to distribute. These meals would be cold and packaged in a grab-and-go style for ease of delivery and pick up by students or parents/guardians. Maschio's will be delivering from their central commissary location.*

b. Distribution -- Food would be distributed through the following means: Maschio's will deliver premade meals at a specified time to our Deerfield School. Eligible families will be notified of the timeframe for pick up of these meals each day. This process will be overseen by Maschio's personnel.

Enhanced School Cleanliness and Disinfection Protocol

In addition to the district's routine cleaning protocol, the custodial staff will be directed to begin a frequent disinfection treatment in high-traffic and high-touch areas (desks, doorknobs, stair railings, sinks, tables, keyboards, water fountains, lunch tables, dispensers, etc.).

In the event of a school closure, custodial crew will work to properly deep clean and sanitize all environments within the school building. Cleaning protocols will be outlined by district administration based on recommendations made by the Center for Disease Control and local Department of Health officials. Their work hours and job responsibilities will be overseen by the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds and the district Business Administrator.