



Atlantic City Public Schools

Chapter 27 Emergency Virtual or Remote Instruction

ATLANTIC CITY
NEW JERSEY

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Dear Atlantic City Public Schools Staff, Students, Families and Community:

We understand that school closure raises several questions and presents many challenges for our students and families. Our teachers and school staff are committed to ensure that student progress is a priority and they continue to develop the skills they need to advance to the next grade level. The Atlantic City Public Schools District is required annually to submit its proposed plan for virtual or remote instruction to the New Jersey Commissioner of Education.

This plan would be implemented during a mandated 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. In the event that we are required to pivot to virtual learning, our goal is to ensure that our students continue to receive high quality, standards-based instruction.

A day of virtual or remote instruction instituted under our approved plan is considered the equivalent of a full day of school attendance. Mandatory attendance requires active student participation and serves the purpose of meeting state and local graduation requirements, awarding of course credit, and such other matters as determined by the Commissioner of Education.

The Emergency Remote Learning Plan will be placed on our district website, Facebook, and Instagram pages to help you better understand the health and safety measures that will be implemented in the event of a school closure.

As always, remember to observe all recommended health measures to ensure you and your family remain healthy and safe during any emergency school closure.

Dr. La'Quetta S. Small

Dr. La'Quetta S. Small

Superintendent of Schools

In April 2020, Governor Murphy issued an executive order that became P.L. 2020, c.27. This law provides for the continuity of instruction in the event of a public-health related district closure so that the Local Education Association (LEA) can utilize virtual or remote instruction to satisfy the 180-day requirement pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9. In order to provide transparency and ensure that New Jersey students continue to receive high quality, standards-based instruction, each school district, charter school, renaissance school project and Approved Private School for Students with Disabilities (APSSDs) must annually submit its proposed program for virtual or remote instruction (Plan).

Emergency Remote Learning at a Glance

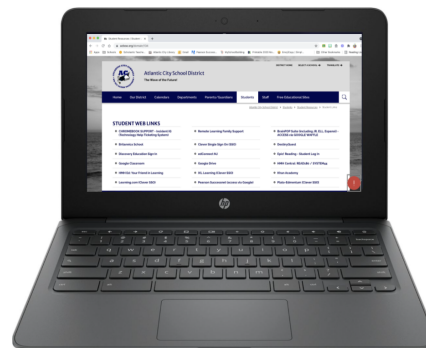
Schools play a crucial role in facilitating learning. The recent experience of widespread school closures has highlighted the importance of having a well-prepared Emergency Remote Learning Plan. In the event of future school closures and the transition to a fully remote learning model, the following practices should be implemented to ensure effective education continuity:

What do you need to know?

Scheduling

Full Remote

- Full remote: Students stay at home and receive a minimum of 2.5 hours of instruction remotely in Pre-K and Kindergarten, and a minimum of 4 hours of instruction in grades 1-12.
- [ACPS Full Remote Schedule](#)



Calendar

[2023-2024 Year At a Glance](#)

Food Service and Distribution

- Atlantic City Public Schools will continue to distribute food to all students.
- Students will be able to pick up breakfast and lunch from their designated school during specific times allotted.



Continuity of Learning

Scheduling: Continuous Learning Throughout the School Year

The Atlantic City Public Schools will:

- adhere to the instructional time requirements remotely and ensure that students engage in standards-based instruction.
- continue to provide individualized support for Special Education and ML students.
- provide teachers with common planning time and continuous professional development focusing on various topics, tools, and strategies.
- provide meals for all students:
 - Full remote learning students will be provided meals on a weekly basis.
 - A scheduled pick-up day and time will be announced.

Ensuring the Delivery of Special Education and Related Services to Students with Disabilities

Special education services for students with disabilities will include increased time for synchronous instruction and explicit expectations for greater consistency. Instructional delivery will be designed to ensure the least restrictive environment (LRE) as required by students' IEP. This will include in-person specialized instruction based on IEP goals. Students will continue to receive access to instructional materials for use at home, as needed, including assistive technology tools. The student support model will be complemented by enhanced professional development for staff and training for caregivers. When necessary, virtual meetings will be used to convene special education procedural meetings, eligibility, IEP teams, etc.

Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and New Jersey state special education regulations, students with disabilities are entitled to special education and related services, such as accommodations and modifications to instruction, speech-language services, occupational therapy (OT), physical therapy (PT), and counseling. Consistent with guidance from the United States Department of Education (USDE), Atlantic City Public Schools will continue to meet their obligations to students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible.



The district will continue to stay informed of additional guidance from the USDE on implementation of IDEA. Specific strategies and considerations for students with disabilities will remain critical points of discussion for both in-person and remote learning environments.

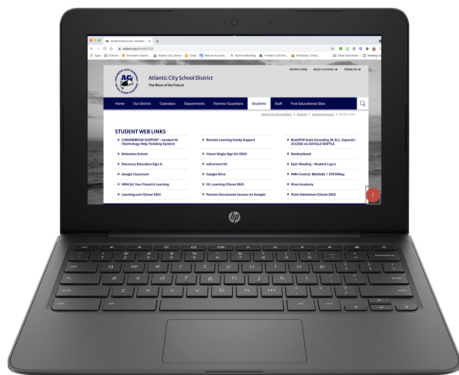
- The Child Study Team will continue to communicate with families of students with significant medical risk factors to determine if additional precautions or unique measures are necessary.
- School nurses and case managers will discuss any medical needs and create a health plan, when needed, to share with staff who service students with special needs.
- Students will have digital access to classroom materials. This may include videos or links to video lessons, notes and assignments.
- Teachers will review IEPs at the beginning of the school year. The IEP Team reviews all available data to determine the need for additional instruction and/or compensatory services. Using pre-assessments and collaborative work in Professional Learning Communities, teachers will determine whether critical skills were lost during the period in which remote instruction was being provided to students.
- Special education staff will ensure that students with IEPs are assessed using district available resources to decide the best course for each student (i.e. i-Ready, MAP Growth, Unique Learning System, STAR, Phonics First, Structures, discrete trials and district benchmark assessments).
- Students will be provided with remediation for skills using the various platforms available.
- Child Study Team members have an established process for completing annual reviews. A schedule will be created to start the evaluation process. The Child Study Team will contact parents to schedule in-person evaluations. All communication will be documented in IEP Direct.
- The Guidance Departments and Child Study Teams will work collaboratively to identify students whose postsecondary plans may have been adversely affected by the pandemic and provide support, resources, and assistance (i.e. surveys, college enrollment, scholarship programs, community organizations, etc.).
- The district will promote resources for student and parent assistance (i.e. district homepage resources, work study program, Career and Technical Education (CTE) program, etc.)
- As required by federal and state law, parents and guardians will be notified of all procedures for student referrals and evaluations to determine student eligibility for special education and related services or 504 plans. A copy of the Parental Rights in Special Education (PRISE) booklet will be given to parents/guardians.

Technology and Connectivity

Atlantic City Public Schools is dedicated to guaranteeing that every student participates in a comprehensive and demanding educational journey. Regardless of the setting, whether it be traditional, hybrid, or fully remote—the district recognizes the indispensability of digital learning in the teaching and learning process. By leveraging digital tools, students are granted equal access to technology, facilitating the creation of personalized learning experiences while utilizing data to inform instruction. As we progress, ACPS will persist in its One-to-One Initiative, providing training for all individuals involved, and fostering technology-integrated teaching and learning.

Distribution of Devices and Connection to the Internet

Atlantic City Public Schools remains committed to its One-to-One Initiative, which aims to integrate technology into daily instruction. ACPS has taken measures to ensure that every student, including those with learning disabilities, assistive technology requirements, and language barriers, has the necessary equipment and connectivity to thrive in any learning environment.



ACPS will continue to:

- ensure every student has a working device,
- distribute devices to newly registered students,
- provide temporary internet connectivity in the absence of connectivity in the home, a mobile device will be provided,
- maintain inventory to replace any damaged or non-working devices to prevent lapses in student access to instruction.
- provide students who are new to the district a scheduled pick-up time to receive a device during closure.

Tracking Participation Rates

To promote student engagement in learning, Atlantic City Public Schools employs a range of strategies. These initiatives aim to address potential obstacles that students and families may face during remote learning. Specifically, the school has carefully chosen digital tools to aid staff in enhancing teaching and learning interactions with students, such as online chat, email, and video communication.

Learning Platforms

The digital platforms are utilized for lesson planning, implementation, and assessing effectiveness throughout the learning process. We actively encourage our staff to consistently evaluate and choose digital resources that will effectively support students in their educational journey.



Training and Technical Assistance

ACPS guarantees that all stakeholders receive the necessary training, tools, and resources to uphold a consistent and high-quality educational experience. Support will be offered through various mediums, including live learning sessions, instructional videos, and easily accessible quick guides found on our district webpage.

Parent/Guardian & Student Training

- Scheduled and on-demand training for digital applications will be supported by the Title I Parent Center. Additional support will be made available for family members who are limited English proficient or have a disability.
- Instructional Teacher Technology Coaches and Title I Digital Implementation Specialists will provide training to Parent Center staff in district digital applications.
- Maintain a digital learning site to house resources to help parents/guardians support their students' learning.
- Continue the technical assistance protocols, currently in place. Parents/Guardians can contact chromebooksupport@acboe.org if they experience a technical problem with their device.

Staff Training

- The Instructional Teacher Technology Coaches and Title I Digital Implementation Specialists will provide support via scheduled, on-demand, and embedded training for digital applications.
 - Voluntary workshops will be available after school for staff members.
 - ETTC professional development is available.
- Continue updating the [ACPS Remote Learning Staff Support Site](#) which houses resources to assist teachers in using digital applications that support their students' learning.
- Continue the technical assistance protocols, currently in place for staff members.
 - Hardware technicians are on staff to provide remote desktop service to staff members.
- Technology Integration Plan for Instruction
 - Please refer to the Professional Learning section of this document.



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Curriculum, Instruction and Assessments

In the event of an emergency school closure, a swift transition to virtual instruction and learning will be necessary. The district's prior experience has greatly influenced its approach to student learning and engagement, support for teachers, instructional expectations, differentiation, and the necessary accommodations and modifications to meet students' instructional needs. Ensuring consistency across the district has been a key focus. The instructional design implemented will prioritize flexibility, allowing for effective planning and instruction for both students and teachers, while minimizing disruptions to the academic program during unexpected closures.

Key Design Elements

Teachers will provide grade-level instruction, with the appropriate accommodations and/or modifications to engage all students in learning through the remote learning model. Grade-level instruction may include whole group instruction, small group instruction, modeling, guided practice, approved videos, and presentations aligned to the grade-level content. Additional student support will be identified via individualized education plans, ESL services, and intervention services.

Virtual Learning Environment - Curriculum

The academic calendar will be divided into four marking periods throughout the year. Teachers will be provided with comprehensive curricular documents and grade-level daily instruction materials that outline the standards, skills, project-based learning, scoring rubrics, competencies, and formative assessments. The primary focus will be on essential and priority standards for the current grade level and the preceding grade level. Teachers will utilize a combination of digital and print resources, including the Atlantic City Public Schools curriculum guide, to ensure comprehensive coverage of the standards. The Office of Curriculum and Instruction will furnish approved and recommended resources to support various subjects, such as English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, English as a Second Language (ESL), Science, Social Studies, Art, Music, Physical Education, Health, World Language, Career & Technical Education, Post-Secondary Readiness, Advanced Placement (AP) Courses, and elective courses.

Annually, Atlantic City Public Schools will assemble a collaborative team comprising teachers and administrators to address the teaching and learning needs required to support instruction across all learning platforms. The district has established a systematic approach to structure the curriculum, taking into account any learning loss that may have occurred due to emergency school closures. To ensure consistency and equity across grades and subjects, as well as allow ample time for preparation, educators will engage in the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) process. This will provide teachers with opportunities to delve into the standards and the district's scope and sequence, gaining a deeper understanding of which skills and content knowledge will be taught, when they will be taught, and how students will demonstrate their understanding of these standards.



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Virtual Learning Environment - Instruction

Learning Model Continuum

The uncertainty around unexpected closures requires a safe shift into remote learning. Professional development, resources, and additional support will be provided to ensure these shifts are successful and uninterrupted teaching and learning is maintained.



The goal is to deliver high-quality instruction seamlessly to all students. The district, along with staff, recognizes the impact and challenges of transitioning from in-person to remote learning. This shift may have an effect on students' learning and emotional well-being. Therefore, the district is committed to addressing both the social-emotional and academic needs of our students, with the support of staff.

Instructional Design:

Facilitation of standards-aligned instruction to ensure students demonstrate mastery of grade-level outcomes:

- Intentional focus on priority and essential New Jersey Student Learning standards while connecting prior and current learning.
- Differentiated support, accommodations, and modifications to support students with diverse learning needs.
- Application of key learning concepts to reach a deeper understanding of content.
- Monitoring of student progress and targeted intervention tailored to students' needs.

Design for student engagement and foster student ownership of learning: Leverage students' strengths.

- Foster student voice and choice to promote engagement and independent learning.
- Scaffold to meet the unique needs of all students and accelerate learning without reducing rigor or sacrificing grade-level material.
- Identify effective methods to differentiate student learning (e.g., small group instruction, different tools/products).
- Provide effective feedback that helps students anticipate and be successful on next steps.

Develop the whole student.

- Incorporate time for self-reflection, pre-assessments at the start of units, and formative assessments throughout units.
- Set reasonable expectations, build collaborative skills (peer-peer learning).
 - Reserve time to help students develop skills such as self-management, self-awareness, time management, goal setting, and effective teamwork.
- Provide clear and flexible expectations:
 - Type and length of activities
 - Interactions:
 - Small group instruction, regular check-ins, office hours (for students and/or family and caregivers).
 - How students will demonstrate learning (process over product):

- Identify criteria to demonstrate mastery of standard(s) or grades on projects.
- Identify and address learning gaps.
- Address different learning needs and interests.
- Evaluate which resources will be effective based on the learning environment:
- Consider potential needs for professional learning related to the selection of high-quality resources.

Credit Recovery (Grades 9-12)

Our Credit Recovery program, Edmentum, helps students get back on track for graduation. Edmentum allows educators to assign tailored lessons and create specific recovery assignments for students to regain lost credits as well as for students simply in need of additional practice to achieve proficiency. Edmentum provides teachers with detailed data to drive targeted instruction, including tracking time on task, attempts made, concepts mastered, and areas where they are still struggling.

Other elements of our instructional design will include:

- Direct instruction in grade-level content with outcomes, tasks, and strategies that will meet the needs of students.
- Consistent observation and progress monitoring of student's learning and processing of information.
- Individualized instruction, with environments for students to apply learned skills and maximize instructional time with the teacher.
- This approach enables teachers to assess the whole class, individuals, or groups of students, and incorporate concept development strategies to ensure students reach grade-level expectations. An environment that enables independent and group work, with flexibility in timelines and assessments of learning.
- An understanding of how trauma and other challenges are related to students' social and emotional needs and how this can impact learning.
- Title I Supplemental support programs - offered before and/or after school focusing specifically on the district's identified standards in ELA and mathematics.
- Title IV Supplemental enrichment programs - offered before and/or after school in visual and performing arts and STEM.
- Athletics and Extracurricular Activities - Atlantic City Public Schools will adhere to NJSIAA Protocols and Guidelines.

Virtual Learning Environment - Assessment



Atlantic City Public Schools will utilize the following strategies with respect to student assessment in an emergency virtual or remote environment:

- **Communication:** Provide clear and consistent communications with students and families regarding data, assessments, and attendance.
- **Professional Development:** Provide educators with guidance to support the administration of assessments and data analysis. Assist grade level teams in the utilization of the PLC process; working collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results for students.

- Educator Planning Time: Educators will have opportunities to collaborate and develop standard based formative assessments which will complement the instructional units.
- Inventory Sources of Current Student Performance Data: Multiple sources of student data will be utilized. Sources may include, but are not limited to formative classroom assessments (quizzes, exit tickets, etc.), student observations, student self-assessments, district benchmark assessments, projects, etc.

Remote Instruction	
Students with Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In grades Pre-K-12, teachers will address special education accommodations and modifications to the best of their ability, with extra time, modified work, shortened assignments, extra notes, scaffolding, text-to-speech, digital manipulatives, breaks between tasks, etc, according to their IEPs. Teachers will leverage software that adapts to student needs. • Teachers will differentiate assignments and objectives through online platforms to targeted groups of students as appropriate. • Teachers will use progress monitoring sheets, data cards, and Frontline (formerly IEP Direct) to track student progress towards goals and objectives. • The Child Study Team director will communicate with out-of-district service providers, parents, and transportation. • Related services providers will contact parents/guardians to provide instruction and track attendance, participation and progress. • Child Study Team meetings will continue as scheduled. Meetings will be conducted as phone conferences, virtually or in-person; paperwork will be sent electronically or mailed, whichever is the preferred method of communication of the parent/family.
Multilingual Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ML and general education teachers coordinate lesson plans and instruction to support the needs of multilingual learners (ML). • Teachers interface regularly with ML to support completion of instructional activities and ensure that students are participating in all remote learning activities. • Teachers of ML assign tasks for students to continue attainment of goals addressed in the bilingual/ESL program. • School documents and communications are available in the languages of the families of the students that attend district schools. • Teachers of ML use the Google classroom translation feature to post in languages other than English. • Teachers use global calling systems such as Class DoJo to send translated messages. • Selected online instructional programs allow students to select the language of choice for participation. • The district instructional programs include online programs with features to support MLs and their families. Continuing the use of these programs is beneficial to the transition to a remote program, since parents, students, and teachers have been trained and acclimated to using the programs regularly and successfully.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The middle school and high school PLCs study, discuss and disseminate information on trauma-informed teaching for students affected by forced migration from their home country to the staff working with immigrant refugee and asylum students in their buildings.• All teachers receive between 15 and 21 hours of initial training in Sheltered English Instruction (SEI) and culturally responsive teaching, and yearly updates. |
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Attendance

[Virtual or Remote Guidance on Attendance](#) - the district will follow additional guidance as provided by the NJDOE

- Guidance on Attendance Codes for staff
- Collaboration and Communication Platforms
- Hybrid & Remote Learning Schedule

Transportation

ACPS will communicate with out-of-district placements to determine transportation needs and ensure that continuity of instruction is maintained for all students.

Facilities Plan

All buildings in the school district will be maintained by the individual school Forepersons and Maintenance staff throughout the period of closure. Frequent walkthroughs and inspections of the school buildings will be complete at a minimum of three times per week. Repairs outside of the capability of the maintenance staff will be completed by the district's approved vendors.

Essential Employees

The LEA will ensure essential employees are identified and a list is provided to the county office at the time of the LEA's transition to remote or virtual instruction.

