

Bergen County Special Services (0285) Virtual or Remote Learning Plan 2023-2024

Statutory and Regulatory Requirements

P.L.2020, c.27 provides for the continuity of instruction in the event of a public-health related district closure so that LEAs 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) to the New Jersey Commissioner of Education.

Equitable Access and Opportunity to Instruction

The Bergen County Special Services School District provides a broad spectrum of special education programs and services for students with disabilities ages three to twenty-one. We currently have 706 students with disabilities enrolled in our district. Students receive special education and related services in accordance with their IEP that was developed in collaboration with the parent/guardian of the child. The IEP outlines the agreed upon supports, accommodations, consultation, and services, including related services and therapies, that are to be provided to each child to allow for continued access to instruction and instructional materials provided both in school and during periods of remote instruction. Our individualized approach to learning allows for **accelerated learning opportunities** as appropriate for particular students. We will continuously measure student growth and learning during periods of remote instruction through daily monitoring progress made toward achievement of each student's individual IEP goals and objectives and formally reporting on said progress a minimum four times per year.

This remote learning plan is adaptable to meet the diverse learning needs of all of our student populations each of whom present with significant disabilities. This plan can be accessed on our bergen.org website: [BCSS Virtual or Remote Learning Plan 2023-2024](#) In order to address the **digital divide** BCSS has distributed various devices to give student access to remote instruction. This has included: Chromebooks, IPADS, MyFis, communication devices, etc. On an ongoing basis when it is reported that a device is not working, we replace it. When a need for a new or different device is identified we have sent a new device to that student. Each day there is tech support available for students and staff who need assistance with any of the devices or online platforms. In addition, all students were provided with teacher-made learning packets that were distributed before remote instruction began. These packets have been updated and redistributed as needed.

BCSS currently does not serve students identified as migrant LSE or as ELL. BCSS does not have state funded preschool students. We serve 4 students considered to be homeless. BCSS has 221 students identified as eligible for free meals & 51 students who are eligible for reduced meals.

Addressing Special Education Needs

In the event of an extended school closure, Bergen County Special Services School District will deliver curriculum and instruction in the core content areas and to include related and support services. This will be done through a learning management system (LMS) and/or instructional methodology that is most appropriate for our diverse and exceptional student populations. One such learning system will be Google Classroom. This delivery system will enable teachers to deliver content, facilitate online discussion, post assessments and provide particular students with timely feedback. Educators may

utilize Google Meet or Zoom to provide the virtual classroom and/or related services. In addition, teachers and students will be able to access appropriate supplementary online curriculum tools to which BCSS subscribes, i.e. IXL, Learning A to Z, BrainPOP, Boom Cards, AES, NJCAN, etc.

In preparation for this response, we conducted a detailed needs assessment of teacher readiness and student internet and hardware access. We provided any teacher in need with additional support to manage a fully online classroom. Alternate, “paper and pencil” options were developed for students for whom accessing the internet is an issue, and any student in need was provided with a Chromebook or an IPAD. These afore mentioned methodologies ensure equitable access for all of our diverse student populations.

Roles & Responsibilities

Central Office Administration (6) will:

- Ensure that the critical functions of the district continue uninterrupted throughout the course of the event
- Ensure the plan for continuity of instruction is fully implemented
- Remain in communication with all principals and supervisors on a continuous basis via phone and email
- Communicate updates to all faculty and staff frequently and as needed

Principals/Supervisors (14) will:

- Ensure all preparations to provide remote instruction are completed and the continuity of instruction plan is ready for implementation
- Distribute the devices needed to both students and staff. Keep an inventory.
- Set up system for educational teams to be able to cover for each other should the teacher become unable to provide instruction
- Remain in contact with all staff via phone & email on a daily basis for the duration of the event.

Teachers (188) will:

- Continue to prepare lessons for each content area on an ongoing basis
- Create & send home individual student folders/large bags of the following items: “paper and pencil” materials, manipulatives, books, visual schedules, miscellaneous supplies, etc.
- Utilize iPads/Chromebooks to deliver instruction
- Set up Student Folders via google drive where additional work/instruction can be placed
- Utilize email and/or phones for contact with the educational team and administration on a daily basis
- Maintain attendance logs, contact notes etc.
- Communicate student attendance to the program secretary each day.
- Art, Music and Physical Education teachers will identify learning resources and develop a bank of activities, lessons and/or exercises that will be distributed to students/families.
- Provide instruction remotely via Google Meet or Zoom and work their regular school hours.

Child Study Team/Teacher Case Managers (27) will:

- Contact families on a weekly basis to check in and provide support, as needed via phone or email.
- Continue to monitor communications with LEA, respond as needed, provide updates etc. Contact will be documented.
- On a regular basis contact individual students to whom they provide counseling during the regular school day.
- The related service of counseling will be provided via tele practice in accordance with NJDOE guidance.
- Maintain attendance logs, contact notes, and log in EasyTrac as appropriate
- Utilize email, phones and/or Zoom or google meets for contact with the educational team and administration on a daily basis
- Utilize Zoom or Google Meets to conduct/facilitate IEP, Reevaluation and any other meetings required to meet the needs of all of our students with disabilities.

Related Service Providers (OT, PT, ST) (107) will:

- Prepare and send home activities that support IEP therapy objectives for each student on caseload
- Provide instruction regarding therapeutic activities, movements, exercises that could be completed at home to support objectives.
- Related services as per a student's IEP will be delivered to the maximum extent possible via tele-practice and/or other virtual and remote methods as approved by the State DOE.
- Maintain attendance logs, contact notes, and log in EasyTrac as appropriate
- Utilize email and/or phones for contact with the educational team and administration on a daily basis

Behavioral Specialists (43) will:

- Ensure that current BIPs are provided to each student 's family
- Contact each family minimally twice a week
- Complete a Home Instruction Log for each contact
- Utilize email and/or phones for contact with the educational team and administration on a daily basis

Teacher Assistants (311) will:

- Assist teachers in the preparation of materials.
- Assist teachers, as needed, during this period of time.
- Utilize email and/or phones for contact with the educational team and administration on a daily basis
- Volunteers will be sought to assist certificated staff members in communications/translations with families.

Nurses (15) will:

- Compile list of students and their medical needs & health issues
- Contact families of students on caseload to check in and provide support as needed via phone or email. Contact will be documented.
- Utilize email and/or phones for contact with the educational team and administration on a daily basis

Secretaries/Clericals (24) will:

- Perform office functions remotely as much as possible
- Enter daily attendance and updates in Realtime on a daily basis

Technology:

- Deliver the devices needed for both students and staff to the schools
- Provide training needed in order for staff to be able to manage remote instruction.
- Turn on email accounts for all students
- Establish a list of technology personnel with phone numbers available to support staff in utilizing the technology/software throughout the event.
- Resources and support available through our assistive technology specialists (4) as needed/requested

Addressing ELL and Bilingual Needs

BCSS solely serves students with disabilities. We currently are not serving students identified as ELL or Bilingual. BCSS has taken a variety of measures to ensure that families for which English is not the primary language can understand any communications coming from the district. Staff members within each school have volunteered to provide translation services as needed. The district has access to Language Line Solutions as needed. All communications from the superintendent's office to the educational community are translated into Spanish and distributed to families as needed. In addition, all administrators and educational staff have and will continue to participate in trainings related to culturally responsive teaching, socio-emotional learning and trauma informed teaching in order to effectively address the needs of our diverse student populations.

Attendance Plan

BCSS continues to follow its attendance policy during this remote learning period. Attendance is taken by the teacher or teacher assistant each day. A student is deemed to be present when direct contact has been made through audio, visual, and/or electronic communication with either student directly or the care giver/family member who is supporting that student as he/she accesses instruction. The attendance is reported to the secretary each day who enters it into RealTime, our student management system. Any absence is reported to the Nurse who will follow up with the family as is our usual practice. If it becomes a prolonged absence the nurse and CST case manager will continue to engage the family and the LEA will be notified. Student attendance is reported to the LEA on a monthly basis. Students on home instruction will continue to receive educational services remotely.

Safe Delivery of Meals Plan

We will provide the required for free and reduced eligible students at designated meal pick up sites within the county. The district is working collaboratively with the Departments of Education, Agriculture and our food service vendor (Chartwells). Meals are provided for pick up at two central locations (Paramus at our 296 Building & the BCTS Teterboro Campus) on Mondays starting from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm utilizing 2 food service workers. Families will be provided one weeks’ worth of meals each Monday. BCSS is collaborating with sending LEAs in ensuring that eligible students are provided meals through either BCSS or the resident district due to accessibility issues.

Delivery of Remote Instruction (Minimum fours hours of instruction excluding lunch & recess)

Elementary School (Grades K-4)

Approximate Time	Instructional Areas	Curriculum/Materials/ Supplementary Tools/Platforms
45 minutes/day	Language Arts/Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Apps for Education(Drive) • Zoom • Boom Cards • Go Math • Learning A to Z • Brain Pop • IXL • Reading Horizons • Teacher-made learning/activity packets • Therapist-made activity packets • BCSS Curriculum • Kinder Corner – Kindergarten Curriculum • Adaptations & accommodations as required via the IEP, i.e. assistive technology, communication devices, Visual aids, 1:1 assistants, etc.
45 minutes/day	Mathematics	
90 minutes/day	Other Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes Science, Social Studies, Art/Music, Physical Education, Social-Emotional Learning 	
30 minutes/day	Flex Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent reading (students reading or being read to) • Self-directed play • Board games and challenges with math/strategy/critical thinking • Puzzles • Art projects with available materials • Exercise and outdoor time • Positive behavioral supports 	
Related Services (as required per the IEP) 30 minute sessions	Speech/Occupational/Physical Therapy, Counseling	

Middle School (Grades 5-8)

Approximate Time	Instructional Areas	Curriculum/Materials/ Supplementary Tools/Platforms
45-60 minutes/day	Language Arts/Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Apps for Education(Drive) • Zoom • Boom Cards • Go Math • Learning A to Z • Adaptive Curriculum • Brain Pop • IXL • Reading Horizons • Teacher-made learning/activity packets • Therapist-made activity packets • BCSS Curriculum • Positive Behavioral Supports • Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) • Adaptations & accommodations as required via the IEP, i.e. assistive technology, communication devices, Visual aids, 1:1 assistants, etc.
45-60 minutes/day	Mathematics	
90 minutes/day	Other Areas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes Science, Social Studies, Art/Music, Physical Education, Social-Emotional Learning 	
30 minutes per day Flex Learning	Flex Learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent reading (students reading or being read to) • Self-directed play • Board games and challenges with math/strategy/critical thinking • Puzzles • Art projects with available materials • Exercise and outdoor time • Positive Behavioral Supports • Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) 	
Related Services (as required per the IEP) 30 minute sessions	Speech/Occupational/Physical Therapy, Counseling	

High School (Grades 9-12+)

Approximate Time	Instructional Areas	Curriculum/Materials/ Supplementary Tools/Platforms
30 minutes/day	English Language Arts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Google Apps for Education(Drive) • Zoom
30 minutes/day	Mathematics	
30 minutes/day	Science	
30 minutes/day		

30 minutes/day	Social Studies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boom Cards • Adaptive Curriculum • Brain Pop • Applied Educational Systems (AES) • Life Centered Education • NJCAN • Rosetta Stone • Teacher-made learning/activity packets • Therapist-made activity packets • BCSS Curriculum • Positive Behavioral Supports • Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) • Adaptations & accommodations as required via the IEP, i.e. assistive technology, communication devices, Visual aids, 1:1 assistants, etc.
60 minutes/week	Spanish	
30 minutes/week	Art	
30 minutes/week	Music	
60 minutes/week	Health & Physical Education	
60 minutes/week	21 st Century Life & Careers (Transition/Vocational Instruction)	
Related Services (as required per the IEP) 30 minute sessions	Speech/Occupational/Physical Therapy, Counseling	

Preschool 3 & 4

Instructional Area	Curriculum/Materials/ Supplementary Tools/Platforms
Class Instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to follow Curiosity Corner Themes and content standards through activities sent home and virtual instruction. • Activities sent to parents via DoJo. Class sessions conducted in the form of whole class instruction (7-12 students), small group instruction (group 2-3), and individual meeting times with teachers (one-to-one with teacher). • ABA programming provided as required per the IEP
Materials & Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • iPad sent to students, tech support available as needed, MyFi offered to

	students without internet access, manipulatives/learning activities sent home via district transport and/or US mail
Platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgraded Zoom platform for added security, Google Meets and phone/facetime. Class DoJo, messenger and email used disseminate information.
Related Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Speech, OT, PT scheduled with therapist provided through Zoom, Google Meets or FaceTime platforms.

Facilities Plan

During extended closures BCSS will maintaining two daytime custodial shifts (1 person from 9 AM to 1 PM and another person 1 PM to 5 PM) for a total of eight hours Monday through Friday. We will continue to move forward with any facility upgrading projects that might be needed with social distancing and other precautionary measures in place. We will continue to check security, HVAC, water intrusion, refrigeration etc. We will keep up on the grounds and also cleaning up after essential workers. Our custodians employ social distancing and wear masks and gloves at all times. On weekends we will continue to do building checks.

Other Considerations

a. **Accelerated Learning Opportunities** – See page 1 of this plan

b. **Social and Emotional Health of Staff & Students**

All BCSS educational staff and administrators have and will continue to participate in our Emotional Learning (SEL) Initiative that continues to enable students to build the skills needed to successfully navigate and meaningfully contribute to their schools, relationships, and their diverse communities. These SEL activities are incorporated into our classrooms each day. In the event of a period of remote instruction these activities will continue to be provided virtually. BCSS staff have access to our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and other mental health supports via the health care system. In addition, training has been and will continue to be provided regarding recovery from trauma and grief.

c. **Title 1 Extended Learning Program**

BCSS has one Secondary Program that receives Title 1 funds. The funds are used to provide remedial instruction to students during after school hours. During a time of remote instruction these remedial services will be conducted via zoom or google meets.

d. **21st Century Community Learning Center Programs** – See Checklist page 7 Notes on other considerations

e. Credit Recovery

As a receiving school district, BCSS programs would work with the LEA to enable credit recovery for students on an individual basis via the IEP. This would be done remotely when necessary.

f. Other Extended Student Learning Opportunities – Extended School Year (ESY)

If BCSS needed to conduct our wide-ranging ESY programming via remote instruction, we will generally follow the instructional plan laid out previously in the document. Our ESY programs usually include theme related and recreational activities. Our remote version will provide these experiences for students to the greatest extent possible.

g. Transportation

During times of remote instruction BCSS would utilize our buses to bring supplies, such as technology and other instructional materials to students at home as needed.

h. Extra-curricular Programs – See checklist page 7 Notes on other considerations

i. Childcare

On an individual basis BCSS CST staff serve as a resource to help families and/or students obtain childcare as needed. During periods of remote instruction, they would continue to provide families with information regarding childcare resources.

j. Community Programming

BCSS schools are heavily involved in community-based instruction/programming via internships and participating in basic community activities, such as: shopping, banking, and accessing other local agencies and businesses. During times of remote instruction, we have and will continue to replicate these experiences virtually to the greatest extent possible.

Addendum

Essential Workers

During times of remote instruction, BCSS employees who are required to come to work for certain amounts of time:

- Administrators
- Custodians
- Drivers

BCSS will send a specific list of those staff members deemed to be essential workers at the time we transition to remote instruction. The list will include: district name, school name (if applicable), position title, and contact information.