



Park Ridge Schools Virtual Learning Plan March 13, 2020

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Park Ridge School District
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Plan and Guidelines for the Park Ridge School District COVID-19 Home Instruction Virtual School Days

Essential Question

How does the Park Ridge School District create meaningful and continuous home instruction for students during a written, declared public health emergency where we are told that schools must close, and have it still "count" under State requirements for the 180 day mandate? [State guideline memo , March 5, 2020]

Proposed Solution

If Park Ridge is closed by order of the NJDOH or local Public Health Officer via a written order, we will implement the virtual school or online instruction option, pending County educational office approval. We are looking to an experience that "will nurture all students to be life-long learners, ethical and responsible citizens, and independent, productive members of a global society," [Park Ridge School District vision statement] and meets state guidelines.

Park Ridge Demographic Profile

Park Ridge is a district in northern Bergen county, serving students in grades pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade (an additional transition program serves students in the 18-21 age range). Total enrollment for the district is currently 1,216 students. Forty three of those students are enrolled in our preschool. Of those students, as of the 2018-2019 school year, 84.4% spoke English at home as the primary language, with 9% Spanish-speaking, 1.2% Chinese-speaking and the remainder speaking another language at home. As of the 2018-2019 NJ State Report, 4.8% of our student population was economically disadvantaged (LSE), 19.7% were classified as Students with Disabilities, and 2.7% were English Language Learners (ELL).

Non-Teaching Essential Staff During Virtual/Distance Learning

In accordance with the solution identified above, and the detailed plan outlined below, the following non-teaching staff will be deemed 'essential' to the operation of the district and required to fulfill the identified duties within the district:



- One Superintendent of Schools (Chief School Administrator) to oversee and coordinate all district-wide operations.
- One district Business Administrator to oversee and maintain all business office operations.
- One Director of Special Services to maintain lines of communication with special education families and oversee compliance with federal special education law.
- One Director of Curriculum and Instruction to oversee compliance with established district curricular guidelines and serve as intermediary with the County curriculum office, and testing coordinator.
- Three building principals to maintain communication with the staff of each building, oversee clear standards for instruction and attendance policies, and collaborate in the district response as events unfold.
- Four members of IT staff to maintain and support network and database (SIS) access, and distributed laptops and other hardware, and one district supervisor of educational technology to coordinate and maintain online instruction.
- Eleven custodial and five maintenance staff to sanitize and clean buildings, and maintain physical integrity of all district buildings, and one district director of maintenance to oversee and coordinate maintenance efforts.
- One member of the custodial/maintenance staff to coordinate the pickup and the distribution of 'grab and go' lunches, as per our plan below.

Preparation

All instructional staff will prepare lessons and learning activities that will be communicated to students either through prepared, sent-home packets or via the district's Schoology Learning Management System that teachers already employ in their class. [And have for over seven years]. Some teachers in grades not using Schoology will use Google Classroom for material/lesson distribution.

Grade level standards will vary according to the following bands:

Pre-K-3:

Students in the lower grades will receive a combination of work through online links and activities, as well as work sent directly home with them ahead of time (packets). All assignments, lessons and activities will be communicated through teacher emails, posted on teacher websites, or distributed through mass emails.



4-6:

Students in the intermediate grades will receive a combination of work via teacher emails and websites or from our Learning Management System, Schoology. The use of online links and activities, as well as work sent directly home with them ahead of time (packets). All assignments, lessons and activities will be communicated through teacher emails, posted on teacher websites, or distributed through mass emails. Also, students will be engaged in lessons and learning through a standardized structure already in place on our LMS, Schoology. Learning activities will be asynchronous, with some supplemental online instruction provided through the conferencing feature of Schoology.

7-12:

Lessons and learning will be delivered through a standardized structure already in place on our LMS, Schoology. Learning activities will be asynchronous, with some supplemental online instruction provided through the conferencing feature of Schoology. Each class should have an engagement section and/or a reflection/collaboration piece optimally lasting approx. 30 minutes per day and the total amount of time spent on course-related work should be equivalent to a regular class period. Students should have the lesson available to them at or prior to 8:00am each morning. Weekly planning and projects are highly encouraged, but ‘chunked’ for students into daily time management suggestions.

Accountability

Park Ridge School district has developed the following plan to develop an ongoing ‘check-in’ style that will help to ensure accountability. Our goal is to establish a system in which students will be responsible to maintain learning on a daily basis, in accordance with our schedule and an asynchronous learning approach.

- To ensure that students get credit for “attendance”, students in grades PK-6 will demonstrate attendance through submission of completed work. After receiving that work, teachers will mark students “present” in PowerSchool. Students in grades 7-12 will log in to Schoology and mark their presence through a discussion board before the end of the instructional day. Teachers will mark those students “present” in PowerSchool. If the student does not log in to Schoology during school hours the student shall be marked “absent”.



- School days will be set by building principals in accordance with standards and guidelines issued by local, County, and State officials to comprise an official school day. All schools will operate on an identical structure from 8:30AM to 12:30PM.
- Teachers will be available to communicate with students/parents throughout the day via video conference(grades 7-12) as well as email (grades PK-12) during times when they would normally have class, in accordance with the schedule above. 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 reasonable amount of time via email during the school day. The goal of the day is student-teacher interaction and peer-to-peer collaboration, as the vast majority of our staff so often do already.
- 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 means to check for student understanding of that objective and offer specific student feedback.

Curricular Instruction and Faculty Responsibilities

At all grade levels, the school day and ongoing instruction according to New Jersey Learning Standards will run asynchronously. Lessons will need to have peer and/or teacher interaction. To keep the approach as manageable as possible for students, we will stick to tools that students and teachers are already proficient in.

Examples of tools that could be used for the lesson may include:

- Collaborative writing in a Google Doc with teacher feedback.
- Online access to Pearson curricular materials through teacher, student, and parent accounts already in use.
- An EdPuzzle video where students provide feedback and receive feedback.
- A class or small group FlipGrid video discussion.
- Using Padlet for a classroom brainstorm or posting.
- Using PearDeck for interactive presentations, with peer-peer and peer-teacher interaction.
- Using the discussion features in Schoology.
- Using the "Big Blue Button" video conference feature in Schoology.
- Have students engaged in formative assessment using interactive tools such as Quizlet, Kahoot, or Quizizz.



- Have the teacher demonstrate a task (i.e. experiment, solving a math problem) via video, Schoology conferencing, or YouTube and then have students have a reflective dialogue with the teacher and/or peers about their results in Schoology or a Google Doc .
- Have the class create a class Google Slides explaining a concept or presenting claims and evidence (each student makes a slide) and the teacher provides feedback on the task.
- Create a Google Form with questions for students to assess or poll. (videos & images can be added)
- Shared class notes using Google Docs based on a teacher presentation.

Special Services Accommodations:

- In Class Resource teachers will co-plan the lessons with their general education partners.
- In Class Resource teachers will proactively reach out to students with IEPs in their class as they may have challenges related to this type of learning activity.
- Pull Out Replacement Resource teachers will plan lessons aligned with district-approved curriculum and New Jersey Learning Standards which also address individual student’s IEP goals and objectives.
- Pull Out Replacement Resource teachers will proactively reach out to students with IEPs in their class as they may have challenges related to this type of learning activity.
- Supplemental Resource teachers will plan lessons aligned with district-approved curriculum and New Jersey Learning Standards which also address individual student’s IEP goals and objectives.
- Supplemental Resource teachers will proactively reach out to students with IEPs in their class as they may have challenges related to this type of learning activity.
- Special program teachers (i.e. Preschool Disabilities, LLD, 18-21 Year Old Transition,) will plan appropriate, supported, and scaffolded activities for those students according to New district-approved curriculum and New Jersey Learning Standards which also address individual student’s IEP goals and objectives.

Physical Education:

Classes not currently in health will shift to a health focus while in a virtual day mode. Physical Education/Health teachers will take a grade level focus that is in the curriculum (PK-12) and focus lessons on exercise regimens and physical activities in which they can



engage. Other lessons will complement the work they have already done with mindfulness, stress reduction, yoga, and mental health awareness. Students should also be encouraged to log physical activity/exercise at home if they are otherwise healthy as a supplemental activity

Related Arts & Music, STEAM:

The focus of these classes should be individual performance, creation and engagement. Students will use the power of digital tools and collaboration to demonstrate their work in these areas. Students can create and post performance videos of music, a visual arts work, or programming/Scratch, and share with their teacher for feedback. Additionally, teachers will provide supplemental instruction through online tools already in use in the class. For example, our elementary STEAM teacher will provide students with links to learning websites through our LMS, Schoology.

Guidance and CST Members:

Ms. Lisa Bernardo (Director of Special Services), in conjunction with building principals, will share expectations with their respective departments for ways to be productive and engage with students during this day. Counselors and CST members will document work-flow with their supervisors and establish available office hours for students and/or parents to communicate with them. Counselors and CST members will be responsible for staying in touch with students whom we know might find this type of learning a challenge. Additionally, counselors, where feasible, will virtually conduct course selection meetings, junior conferences, etc.

Supervisors/Building Administrators:

Should remain in communication with their teachers throughout the day and monitor instructional activities. They are available to troubleshoot issues and offer advice and suggestions.

Students Lacking Wifi Access

Students without wifi access have been identified and plans are underway to contract with a service to provide Wifi access for the duration of the extended closing in order to engage with the work. Currently, those students identified have been provided with information to gain wifi access through a local carrier, Optimum online, which maintains coverage across the town of Park Ridge, NJ.



Students Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch

Park Ridge School district has been in communication with our food service vendor, Pomptonian, and developed a plan to serve families eligible for free and reduced lunch. In the event of a school closing under the state criteria, Pomptonian will provide a 'Grab-and-Go' meal available for pick-up at a centralized location on campus. The location chosen for this distribution is the lower parking lot, near the gym entrance, of Park Ridge High School. If necessary, a delivery system could be implemented. The Chief School Administrator, in conjunction with the district Business Administrator, have coordinated communication with families eligible under this program.

Full details of this program are below:

- **SFA Name:** Park Ridge School District
- **Agreement #:** 00303940
- **Date Meal Distribution will begin:** Meal distribution will commence on the first day of school closure in accordance with this plan. (Monday, March 16, 2020)
- **Date Meal Distribution will end:** Meal distribution as per this plan will be coterminous with the emergency school closure, or will terminate with the planned end of school year according to our Board-approved calendar.
- **Schools/Site where distribution of meals will take place:** Meals will be distributed in the lower parking lot, near the gym entrance of Park Ridge High School.
- **Meals to be claimed for reimbursement per day:** 29 total
(up to two meals, or one meal and one snack, per child per day)

Technical Issues/Repair during School Closure

Technical support for students and staff will be available at all times through our service email address, techsupport@parkridge.k12.nj.us. This e-mail address will be continuously monitored by technical staff working remotely/virtually from home. Furthermore, staff members and students will be notified to bring home any items they have in their lockers that they will need during a short or long-term closure. If the school building is closed, no students and staff will be permitted back in until clearance from the Board of Health.



Bias and Stigma associated with COVID-19

Understanding that COVID-19 could bring unwanted bias or stigma upon certain ethnic and religious groups, our district will be hyper-aware of student behavior and utilize prevention, response, and educational strategies to prevent or combat bias and stigma associated with the virus.

Special Services Additional Considerations

Understanding that school closure due to COVID-19 could bring present equity issues especially for students with IEPs and 504s the district has made sure that the students are receiving work along with their peers in general education. The work contains the necessary accommodations and modifications as dictated by the students IEP or 504 plan.

During the school closure due to COVID-19 the Child Study Team will continue to hold annual review meetings, eligibility meetings, reevaluation meetings and initial planning meetings.. These meetings will be held through video conference using Schoology or Zoom or through teleconference with the permission of the parent/guardian. If the parent declines to have a meeting via videoconference or teleconference the CST will work to reschedule the meeting as soon as possible when school reopens. A statement will be included in the annual review/reevaluation/eligibility/initial planning document indicating the medium which was used to hold the meeting and that this was due to the school closure for COVID-19. At the beginning of the meeting the CST will email any necessary paperwork to all participants so they can follow along. In addition, the case manager will record participation on the attendance sheet for the meeting. Any document requiring signature will be emailed to the parent at the conclusion of the meeting. An email from the parent indicating that they consent to the document in question will be printed for the student's file.

Immediately prior to the school closure due to COVID-19 contact was made with the parent/guardian of every student with an IEP whether they attend Park Ridge Public Schools or an out of district school. The communication outlined the plan for classwork, related services, any outside therapies, transportation, communication with CST and Related Service providers and CST meetings. In addition to that initial communication from the Office of Special Services the parents/guardians have received all communication from the Superintendent, Building Principals, individual teachers, case manager and



related service providers. The communication was provided in the families native language if necessary.

At this time the district does not have any students who are considered medically fragile. If a student were to become medically fragile during the time of the school closure for COVID-19 the district would consider the needs of the student and make the appropriate accommodations.

Related services (OT, PT, speech) are being provided for students in PK-21 through packets of work that have been sent home. There are letters that went home with the packets in order to explain the work related service providers have been instructed to communicate with parents/guardians at a minimum of one time per week in order to answer any questions they may have about the work provided and offer any remote assistance possible. Counseling is being offered as a video conference/teleconference to all parents/guardians of students who receive counseling as part of their IEP or 504 plan. Many of these students receive counseling due to mental health issues such as anxiety, depression and as a result have experienced school refusal/avoidance. It is the concern of the district that without providing the student with the interaction with the therapist either through video conference/teleconference the student will suffer significant regression. Upon the re-opening of school the CST will assess the students for skill acquisition and recoupment in order to determine the need for compensatory services.

The Office of Special Services communicated with all out of district schools that if the Park Ridge Public School District is closed and the out of district school is not closed the Park Ridge students will be unable to attend their out of district placement. Communication has been made with all out of district schools and will continue in the days/weeks ahead. Transportation for Park Ridge students attending out of district schools is arranged in conjunction with Region II for Special Education. Region II notifies the transportation companies of school closures.



Conclusion

In summary, virtual school days and online instruction in the Park Ridge School District will work because although shutting a school down for a public health emergency may be new to us, virtual days and the tools and strategies that we will be employing are not. We have been a 1:1 district for seven years and have implemented a virtual day, in grades 7-12, in the recent past (2016). Our staff has acquired and employs skills that makes us a progressive district in terms of our innovation and readiness to employ this meaningful instruction.