



# Chapter 27 Emergency Virtual Instruction Program Plan 2023-2024

Hillsdale  
Public Schools

County: Bergen -03

District: Hillsdale Public Schools -2180

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## **Hillsdale School District: Emergency Virtual Plan**

This plan provides for the continuity of instruction in the event of a public health-related district closure or other need to shift to virtual learning during the 2023-2024 school year. While a virtual format can never truly replace in-person interactions with a classroom teacher, it is our intent to maximize the multitude of resources available to our learning community to maintain educational continuity and to meet State guidelines until schools are able to reopen.

**Essential Question** - How does the Hillsdale Public Schools (HPS) create a 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 HPS is closed by order of the NJDOH, local Public Health Officer via a written order, Governor of New Jersey or other qualifying official with jurisdiction as related to a school closure we will implement virtual online home instruction, pending County educational office approval. HPS is looking for an experience where students can "work collaboratively in a safe and supportive learning environment that addresses individual students' needs" [[Hillsdale Public Schools Mission Statement](#)] and meets State guidelines.

## **Equitable Access to Instruction**

The plan that follows includes equitable and differentiated access to instruction for all students.

### District Demographic Profile (as of 6/15/2023):

Total Student Population: 1,106

State-Funded Pre-School: N/A

Homeless: 1

Migrant LSE:\*

Students with Disabilities: 230

English Language Learners: 28

100% of Hillsdale students have access to a Chromebook. The Hillsdale Public Schools provides all learners in grades 4-8 with a Chromebook that is transported to and from school on a daily basis. Kindergarten through grade three students have devices for use in school and will be permitted to take this device home in the event of a school closure. Students with limited or no Internet connectivity will be provided guidance on accessing a shared network (i.e. Optimum) or given a mobile hotspot to support learning.

### **Special Education**

Special education instructors will support classroom teachers with creating and sharing differentiated and scaffolded learning opportunities for students. The special education teacher will be available to support students with their work through online methods and provide feedback to students. Special education teachers will proactively reach out to students with IEPs in their class as they may have challenges related to remote/virtual learning.

Students in resource replacement programs and self-contained classes will receive live instruction via Google Meet in addition to access to other educational platforms. Teachers will schedule individual work sessions with students who are struggling with remote instruction and parents who are having difficulty assisting them. Teacher aides will attend and assist these sessions. Supportive technology will be provided to students in all grades in the form of Chromebooks, laptops and/or mobile hotspots. Accommodations include, but are not limited to graphic organizers, speech to text, text to speech, calculators, scientific calculators, spell check, rubrics and word prediction. These are accessed through technology. Related services will be delivered via teletherapy both individually and in small groups. Services will be delivered in as close an alignment to student IEPs as is possible.

Teachers and related service providers will complete progress reports in accordance with regularly scheduled timelines.

Child Study Team members will continue to accept and process new and already received referrals for special education services. Meetings will be held virtually to plan for testing, find students eligible and develop or revise IEPs. Where testing has not yet been started, meetings will be held to identify the testing to be conducted and consent received. All efforts will be made so that progress can remain on track when school reopens. Child Study Team members will be available to connect daily with teachers and reach out to parents to assist with implementation of the IEP.

### **ELL & Bilingual Learners**

The ESL teachers will meet with students via Google Meet for small group instruction sessions lasting 30-40 minutes. Google Classroom and Reading A-Z ELL materials and other educational platforms will remain in use. In addition to the ELL support the ELL learners will access learning in the same capacity as their general education counterparts. Our ELL teacher provides strategies for staff to respond to the cultural needs of our ELL population. Internet services and Chromebooks will be provided by the district for students who do not have access in their homes. The ELL families in Hillsdale will continue to be contacted via email and phone calls. Staff members with Spanish speaking abilities will continue to serve and speak with EL families to translate digital communication for viewing in their home language.

## **Facilities**

The district will provide custodial and maintenance services to its four buildings and grounds utilizing the district's School Facility Supervisors and Maintenance Supervisor. Building cleanliness and sterilization is of the utmost importance in the anticipation of students and staff returning to the facilities. Facility plans will continue to be adhered to along with each of the facilities daily/weekly/monthly reporting requirements to ensure the health of each building.

## **Delivery of Virtual and Remote Instruction**

### **Preparation**

Instructional staff will prepare lessons and learning activities that will be communicated to students via the district's learning management platform, which is Google Workspace, Seesaw, Classkick, and/or via a homeroom teacher's individual web page. These current platforms are currently utilized by students and familiar to parents and staff. The instruction will be synchronous, but may include asynchronous activities/tasks that support the lesson objective or unit goal. Each class will have a learning objective, an active engagement section and/or a reflection/collaboration component. Weekly goals and daily lesson objectives are highly encouraged, but must be scaffolded for students into daily time management suggestions.

### **Attendance/Accountability**

To ensure that students get credit for "attendance," in grades Pre-K-8, as students log in and/or communicate with their teacher via a Google Meet the teacher will mark that student "present" in Realtime. If the student does not make a digital connection with the teacher during class time the student shall be marked "absent". Families of students that are not connecting digitally will be contacted by the teacher, building administrator, school counselor or case manager for follow-up, troubleshooting or strategizing on the experience both present and future with parents/guardians.

- The District recognizes that our youngest learners in grade Pre-K -1 will need the assistance of a parent/guardian to help provide their set-up and access for the day.
- Students in grades 5-8 will be moving through a rotating schedule and each class period the teacher will take attendance. Students in Pre-K-4 will have attendance taken at the start of the school day and continued to be monitored by the classroom teacher as the day unfolds. The attendance tracker feature associated with Google Meet will be utilized by staff members to support this process.

- Middle school students (grades 5-8) will follow their assigned schedule and utilize a 6-day schedule. Elementary students (K-4) will continue to utilize and follow the 6-day schedule. Students will interact with the academic content and special areas in the same fashion as the typical in-person school day. Teachers will facilitate daily live Google Meet sessions with their classes in addition to utilizing our online software management platform for the delivery of academic content.
- Student attendance will be monitored by the building principal, assistant principal, school nurse, and school counselor. Problematic trends in a child's attendance will be identified and supported via I&RS. Plans and interventions appropriate to remedy inconsistencies in attendance will be in place on an individual and as needed basis.

### **Length of Remote Instruction Day**

The District will meet the requirement for at least 180 days of school in the 2023-2024 school year, in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9. The minimum hours of instruction for a virtual day is four hours excluding lunch and recess. In the event of an emergency closure, the District will provide virtual instructional hours that align with the typical in-person school day. Based upon the length and nature of the closure, the District will continually evaluate the student schedule with screen time, learning progress, and social/emotional wellness as contributing factors to create a modified schedule, if needed, that meets or exceeds the minimum four hour requirement set forth in N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.

- Teachers will be available to communicate with students/parents throughout the day via video conference, email or online discussion. 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, learning 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 and a means to check for student understanding of that objective and offer specific student feedback.
- Learning will be available in synchronous format. The District is aware of the challenges at-home learning may bring to a child, family and home setting. During a public health emergency we recognize that parents may be working from home or may be delivering essential services outside of the home. Compassion, flexibility and progress will remain at the foundation of our plan as we encounter a myriad of scenarios

that will require our adjustment as we move forward.

### **English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Math, World Language, Technology Instruction**

Instructional time will include peer and/or teacher interaction. To keep the approach as manageable as possible for students, we will continue to use tools that students and teachers are already proficient in. Teachers will not be permitted to simply assign a reading or a worksheet without interaction as the lesson for the day. Examples of tools that could be used for a lesson may include:

- Collaborative writing in a **Google Doc** with teacher feedback.
- Utilize **Flipgrid** small groups to differentiate specific skills.
- A threaded discussion **via Google Classroom**.
- Use **DocHub** to share and edit PDF's.
- Having a **Gmail** exchange between teacher and student.
- View and reflect on a **TED-ed** video.
- Using **Screencastify** to provide students with a voice over as slides/lessons presented.
- Have students engaged in a learning conversation with the teacher and/or each other using **Google Meet**.
- Having the teacher demonstrate a NJSL learning objective (i.e. experiment, solving a math problem) via video or YouTube and then have students have a reflective dialogue with the teacher and/or peers about their results in **Google Classroom**.
- Having the class access the teacher's website where a procedure or concept is explained and tasks are listed for completion.
- Creating a **Google Form** with questions for students to assess or poll. (Videos and images can be added.)
- Sharing class notes using **Google Docs** based on a teacher presentation.

### **Physical Education**

Physical Education classes will shift to a focus on overall well-being while in a virtual day mode. Physical Education/Health teachers will take a grade level focus that is in the curriculum (K-8) and focus lessons on exercise, healthy diet, hygiene and self-care as well as lessons that complement the work they have already done with mindfulness, stress reduction, 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.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

Visual and performing arts classes will focus on individual performance and creation. Students will have the opportunity to try something different and use the power of digital tools and collaboration to create art. Students can create and post performance videos of music, a visual work of art, or a meal cooked with a parent/guardian and share with their teacher for feedback. For example, performing arts teachers can have students use their available technology to collaborate and play/sing from their own homes.

### **Guidance and CST Members**

Expectations will be shared with their respective departments for ways to be productive and engage with students during the day. Counselors and CST members will document work-flow with their direct supervisor (principal or supervisor of special services) and establish available office hours for communication with students and/or parents. Counselors and CST members will be responsible for remaining in touch with students whom we know might find this type of learning a challenge. Additionally, counselors, where feasible, can support the academic experience and interaction with staff.

### **Supervisors/Building Administrators**

Supervisors/Building Administrators will remain in communication with their teachers throughout the day and monitor instructional activities by periodically logging into Google Meets. They will be available to remotely meet, troubleshoot issues and offer advice and suggestions. Supervisors/building administrators will also be available for parent/guardian meetings.

### **Differentiated Instruction**

During the delivery of virtual instruction, the district will continue to provide differentiated instruction as well as individualized instruction to meet the needs of all our students. According to Carol Ann Tomlinson, “the process of differentiated instruction is to ensure that what a student learns, how he or she learns it, and how the student demonstrates what he or she has learned is a match for the student’s individualized needs.” Teachers differentiated instructional time, class assignments, independent work is based on the students’ learning in each grade level band and will be aligned in accordance with a student’s IEP. Teachers have engaged in professional learning to understand best practices for differentiated instruction during remote learning. For instance, teachers differentiate based upon student abilities, homelife, support, interests, or other preferred modes of learning. Our teachers will also continue to meet in grade level professional learning communities (PLCs) for horizontal and vertical articulation to best teach the New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS).

## **School Nutrition & Safe Delivery of Meals**

The Hillsdale Public School participates in the National School Lunch Program. Maschio's, the district food service provider, will accommodate cold packaged grab-and-go lunches for ease of delivery and pick-up by parents and guardians in the event of a school closure.

*SFA name: Hillsdale Public Schools*

*Agreement # 00302180*

*Date:* Meal distribution will commence upon school closure and continue until school resumes its normal operations or direction is given to suspend this service by a local, County, State or Federal authority.

*Site:* George G White Middle School

*Times:* 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

*Days:* Monday and Thursday

### **Feeding Plan for Free/Reduced Lunch Students**

- Maschio's, the district food service provider, will supply up to three employees to prepare and distribute "grab-and-go" lunch for these families from George G. White Middle School between the hours of 10AM-12PM on Monday and Thursday of each week we are faced with a school closure. A table/distribution area will be set-up upon entrance to the building nearest the main entrance. The HPS SLEO III officer will be present to offer security and safety to students/families as they approach the school and will assist with street crossing as needed.
- The frequency of meal distribution will be consistent with the guidance received from the United States Department of Agriculture .
- Ideally, on Monday of each week a parent/guardian will pick- up 3 meals (lunch) to be claimed for reimbursement and on Thursday pick-up to 2 meals (lunch) to be claimed.
- All existing food safety protocols will remain in place by our provider, Maschio's.
- A roster of all eligible student names for all lunch meals picked up will be maintained.
- Follow-up communication regarding menu and/or service changes will continue throughout the closure period in English and Spanish.

## **Summer Programming**

All special education support, replacement and self-contained teachers will be notified of the criteria for determining a student's need for extended school year services as is done every year through the IEP process. Virtual delivery of extended school year services will be provided, with a back-up plan for school-based service delivery if guidance is changed. The program will run for 4 weeks and will include academic instruction as well as related services



## **Essential Personnel/Services:**

**Teachers/CST Members/Counselors/Nurses:** Our staff is responsible for the daily well-being and instruction of children assigned to their class/course roster. Their instructional delivery, academic/social support services, lesson facilitation, assessment, teacher-student connection and planning are an essential function to the education services provided by the Hillsdale Public Schools.

**Business Administrator(1)/Payroll(1):** Hillsdale's School Business administrator/BOE Secretary, in conjunction with the district payroll consultant will be responsible for keeping the payroll system operational. In cooperation with our Payroll Consultant, the Business Administrator will be able to maintain payroll procedures remotely as long as Internet service remains available to the District. The opportunity for elements of this role to be completed on-site may be required, therefore, limited access to the administrative offices will be permitted based upon the wellness of each individual.

**School Facility Supervisor(3)/Building and Grounds(1):** The HPS School Facility Supervisors and the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds will be available and assigned to buildings within the Hillsdale Public School district during a school closure. Daily work hours and days may be modified at the discretion of the Superintendent while considering the health and safety of each employee and the children that will enter the building at the conclusion of a school closure.

**Technology Coordinator (1):** Our technology coordinator will remain engaged and active for the duration of a school closure. This role remains essential to support our students, their hardware as well as the IT infrastructure of the District allowing instructional staff to offer online home instruction. The opportunity for elements of this role to be completed on-site may be required, therefore, limited access to the school buildings will be permitted based upon the individual's health and wellness.

**Supervisor of Special Services(1):** The Supervisor of Special Services will remain active and available to support the role of special education instructors, maintain workflow of Child Study Team members and monitor the services provided to our special needs population. The opportunity for elements of this role to be completed on-site may be required, therefore, limited access to the administrative offices will be permitted based upon the wellness of each individual.

**Supervisor of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment(1):** The Supervisor of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment will remain active and available to support the role of all instructors and administrators. This individual may provide feedback and guidance to staff about the delivery of curriculum via remote/online methods and offer solutions to instructional challenges that may arise.

**School Building Administrators/Principals(4):** The school building principals and assistant principals will remain active and available to support the instruction of their teachers and needs of their students along with the readiness of their building for a return to school. The opportunity for elements of this role to be completed on-site may be required, therefore, limited access to the administrative offices will be permitted based upon the wellness of each individual.

**Secretarial Staff:** The secretarial staff serve essential functions that directly connect to the student experience inclusive of lunch programming, attendance, processing requisitions, and completing IEP documents. The opportunity for elements of this role to be completed on-site may be required, therefore, limited access to the administrative offices will be permitted based upon the wellness of each individual.

**Chief School Administrator(1):** The CSA will remain active and available to all personnel, local OEM and health professionals during a school closure. Regular communication with staff, community and local officials will remain on-going and consistent to preserve the health and wellness of all associated with the Hillsdale Public Schools. The opportunity for elements of this role to be completed on-site may be required, therefore, limited access to the administrative offices will be permitted based upon the wellness of each individual.

## **Other Considerations**

**Accelerated Learning Opportunities-** Accelerated learning will continue before or after school hours. These instructional sessions will happen virtually and remain as long as Federal funding is provided.

**Social Emotional Learning(SEL)-** Student SEL lessons are present in the school day. These lessons will remain present during a health related school closure. Access to school counselors, school psychologists and mental health professionals will remain.

**Title I Extended Learning-** This is not applicable to the Hillsdale Public Schools.

**21st Century Community Learning Center Programs-** During a health related school closure the 21st century learning tenets embedded in our curriculum will continue to be delivered through remote instruction. The energy of our staff will be focused on students and supporting their progress to meet or exceed grade level expectations while offering the opportunity for achievement of his/her personal best.

**Credit Recovery-**This is not applicable to the Hillsdale Public Schools.

**Other Extended Learning Opportunities-** Extra help, basic skills, I&RS services and school-based interventions will be maintained during a health related school closure.

**Transportation:** During a school closure transportation services will not be utilized.

**Extra-curricular Programming:** Extra- curricular programming will continue to the extent practicable while considering if the activity can be conducted remotely and in accordance with NJ Department of Health guidance.

**Childcare:** During a health related school closure childcare services will not be provided by the Hillsdale Public Schools. Parents/guardians will need to arrange for appropriate supervision at home.

**Community Programming-** When applicable, virtual community forums will be provided on topics of interest for the Hillsdale Public School community.

## **Conclusion**

The Hillsdale Public Schools District online home instruction will be successful. Although a closing for a public health emergency as directed by the NJDOH or local health agency may occur, our students and staff have experienced digital learning for several years and utilize these tools on a regular basis.

A copy of this plan can be found at: <https://www.hillsdaleschools.com/domain/632>