



Mountain Lakes School District
Virtual/Remote Instruction Program
2022-2023

Anticipated approval by the Board of Education on September 19, 2022

Introduction

This report outlines the protocols that will be implemented to ensure continuity of instruction in the event of a public-health related school district closure. The utilization of virtual/remote instruction during this closure will satisfy the 180-day requirement pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9. This plan would be implemented during closure lasting more than three (3) consecutive school days due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive by the local or state health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure. The Superintendent or designee will communicate with the Board of Education prior to implementing the plan of virtual/remote instruction.

The Mountain Lakes School District has prepared this plan following guidance from the NJ Department of Education and includes these key areas:

- I. *Equitable Access and Opportunity to Instruction*
- II. *Addressing Special Education Needs*
- III. *Addressing English Language Learner (ELL) Plan Needs*
- IV. *Attendance Plan*
- V. *Safe Delivery of Meals*
- VI. *Facilities Plan*
- VII. *Other Considerations*

I. Equitable Access and Opportunity to Instruction

The sudden pivot to remote teaching that required the full incorporation of technology solutions into curriculum delivery was a heavy lift for staff, students, and teachers. Standardization of which technologies were used and how/when they were used was not fully appreciated at the time of the pivot. Communications to students/families done solely from a digital interface created unanticipated new challenges. Remote participation for assignments, discussions, and other graded activities required new or modified technology tools and techniques

This plan outlines how virtual or remote instruction will be provided to students who may not have access to sufficient broadband, or to any technology required for virtual or remote instruction. The Mountain Lakes School District is constantly self evaluating our technology needs/services and discussing the feedback on how to better serve the families and students of the district. Most recently we did this through the delivery of a district-wide survey sent to all families. Information collected from this survey helped our school district identify and define community access and discover any challenges students and families may experience.

- Students who need a chromebook and do not have a dedicated computer at home will be provided a Chromebook to use.
- Various educational software will be utilized for management, analysis and instructional purposes depending on grade and curriculum needs.
- For classroom management purposes, Genesis, Canvas, or Google Classroom will be utilized. LinkIt! will be utilized for data analysis in order to measure student growth.

All programs and software utilized for instructional purposes will be approved using our district approval procedure and be HIPAA, COPPA, and FERPA compliant.

Since the sudden pivot to remote instruction, we have reviewed the lessons learned and have been working to address the challenges remote learning presents to technology and subsequent training we provide to staff and students. Here's a look at some of the solutions:

- New communication and collaboration tools and techniques:
 - Clever Family Portal and Single Sign On for many online applications
 - Google Classroom and Canvas minimum usage standards
 - Smoothwall Classroom Manager roll out
- Live classroom remote viewing:
 - HD camera in each classroom
 - Additional Document Cameras
 - Additional external monitors for teachers
 - BIG thank you to our H&SA for funding \$30k to enable this rollout!
- Virtual Desktop Infrastructure (VDI) rollout so classes dependent on specific programs or computer technology can access them remotely:
 - BIG thank you to MLEF for working with us on how to fund so we can deploy this new technology!
- Upgrading infrastructure for the increased traffic load:
 - New Firewall enables us to utilize more of our available bandwidth.
 - Lifecycle replacement of many Access Points in the High School.
 - Modified existing network management configurations.

Taking the lessons learned and incorporating them on our path forward, we have worked to provide a continuous improvement of services delivered with technology by gathering input and feedback on the end user experience. This has shifted our culture from a product-focused model to a quality-of-service technology model:

- Established regular internal meetings to gather input from Supervisors, Directors, and Principals to proactively address issues before they become major problems.
- Delivered technology training sessions on key topics for staff and worked with District Administrators to ensure clear communications on requirements of usage of technology.
- Emphasized usage of the new helpdesk system and self-help resources to provide accountability and shorten solution timelines.
- Established and communicated clear expectations for technology services leveraged by the staff and students.
- Continually revise and search for new ways to address requirements where technology can provide improvements, while managing against fiscal responsibility, lifecycle management, and the realistic ability to train, support, and deploy those technology solutions.

II. Addressing Special Education Needs

The regular school program will continue to the greatest extent possible. The elementary, middle, and high school instructional day will proceed as follows in the event of virtual instruction:

Elementary School: 8:30 a.m. to 3:05 p.m. (Teacher lunch/planning is between 11:30 and 1:00); Specials meet from 1 p.m. to 3:05 p.m.

Preschool: 8:45 to 11:45 for AM Preschool 8:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for Full Day Preschool (Teacher lunch 11:45 – 12:45)

Briarcliff Middle Schools: 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. (Teacher lunch/planning is during their scheduled times.)

High School (Grades 9-12) 8:05 a.m. to 2:41 p.m.

Mountain Lakes High School will continue to follow the posted rotating drop block schedule.

Special education students will have little to no interruption of their instructional program. Accelerated learning opportunities and Gifted and Talented (G&T) will continue to the greatest extent possible. Students eligible to receive special education services in grades K-8 will participate in-person 5 days per week. The same provisions will be afforded to our ELL students. Here are the highlights:

- Students eligible to receive special education services and who require a more intense level of service in grades 9-12, will attend in-person 5 days per week. All other students eligible for special education services in grades 9-12 may receive additional sessions of supplemental instruction.
- The amount of time spent in the resource room settings K-5 will be adjusted, proportionately, to the shortened day to maintain the balance of the student's time in the general education setting. Classes in the resource room settings in grades 6-12 will mirror the length of time of the general education class period.
- Students enrolled in Out Of District placement will follow the plan of the school of which he/she attends. The Department of Special Services will look to provide additional resources to supplement the instruction for students in an Out Of district setting if the need to pivot to full remote learning is required.
- Related Services will be delivered through a combination of in-person, virtual, and home-programming models. Related Service personnel will receive additional PPE, if necessary. Therapy rooms will be equipped with sneeze guards and face shields.
- Evaluation settings will also be equipped with sneeze guards and face shields. Strict protocols have been developed in accordance with CDC guidelines.
- The Director of Special Services will be facilitating standing meetings with Child Study Team members and staff to provide a forum that allows for clear communication, collaborative problem-solving, and robust student programming.
- For special education students, the Board of Education will continue to provide educators with professional development to best utilize the accessibility features and accommodation tools made available through technology-based formats.
- All Child Study Team meetings will be held remotely to limit exposure to our staff and families. This includes initial/reevaluation planning meetings, annual review meetings, review/revise meetings, etc.
- We will encourage parents to communicate with our teachers, case managers, and the Director as soon as a concern arises so it can be addressed effectively and efficiently.

III. Addressing English Language Learner (ELL) Plan Needs

English Language Learners will have uninterrupted and differentiated instruction at the middle and high school during virtual instruction. Elementary ELL students will engage with their ESL teacher, though the schedule may be different than during regular in-person instruction. For ELL students, the Board of Education will continue to provide educators with professional development to best utilize the accessibility features and accommodation tools made available through technology-based formats as well as training related to culturally responsive teaching and learning, social emotional learning, and trauma-informed teaching for students affected by forced migration from their home country.

IV. Attendance Plan

Attendance will be recorded and monitored each day. Students must log in to each class period on time and have their computer cameras on in order for the student to be marked as “present”. Elementary students must log in at the beginning of the school day and will remain logged in to class until the lunch break. Students must have their computer cameras on in order for the student to be marked as “present”. After lunch, students must log in again and adhere to the same protocols described above.

The district attendance policy will be followed. Parents will be notified if a student is marked absence without a parent notification of said absence in *Genesis*. If necessary, our School Resource Officer can be sent to the home for a Wellness Check. School district policies for attendance and instructional contact time will accommodate opportunities for both synchronous and asynchronous instruction, while ensuring the requirements for a 180-day school year are met. Also, the school district will accommodate educators teaching in-person, hybrid, and/or virtual in such a way that allows all students to meet their required instructional hours for the day.

V. Safe Delivery of Meals

In the event of a district closure, the Free and Reduced Meal program will continue across the district. The distribution of school meals for approved students will be daily between 11:00 a.m. and noon. Delivery will be arranged for families who are unable to travel to the district.

VI. Facilities Plan

In the event of district closure, all school facilities will be properly monitored by district custodial/maintenance staff. Should health conditions warrant, a rotating skeleton crew will be deployed. In addition to all existing established cleaning procedures, the school custodial staff will implement a deep cleaning of each school building, including classrooms, restroom facilities, gymnasium locker rooms, and cafeterias.

All indoor facilities will have adequate ventilation, including operational heating and ventilation systems, where appropriate. Recirculated air will have a fresh air component, windows will be opened, if practical, if air

conditioning is not provided, filter(s) for A/C units will be maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations.

In the daily work schedules for head custodians, the building will be opened, and key sections cleaned first. When classes begin, custodians will disinfect all classroom door knobs, bottle filling stations and bathroom fixtures. Restrooms will be cleaned two times while school is in session and one time after dismissal. High-touch areas will be cleaned as often as possible while school is in session and again after dismissal. High-traffic areas such as entrances and lobbies will be cleaned once while school is in session and again after dismissal. Each area will also be cleaned as needed to address any situations that may arise. Water fountains will be closed, yet bottle filling stations will remain available. Head custodians will monitor all building needs and act on requests. Custodians will make garbage collections throughout the day. All classroom buildings in the district will be disinfected using foggers every night.

The district will prepare and maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based (at least 60%) sanitizers. Station locations will include classrooms, entrances and exits of buildings, lunchrooms, and bathrooms. Each school in the district will provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, to help ensure that staff and students remain at least six feet apart in lines and at other times (e.g. guides for creating "one-way routes" in hallways). If necessary, the schools will utilize additional entrances and exits. Signage will be placed throughout the building to provide hygiene etiquette and reminders. Physical protective barriers, such as plexiglass, will be installed in identified areas in each building and student movement in the hallways will be limited.

Visitors will be limited, but in the event a visitor must enter the building, they will use their own pens or staff will sign on behalf and possibly complete a survey. Student dropoff and pickup procedures will be modified to ensure social distancing. All vehicles involved in the transportation of students will be cleaned and disinfected daily using a combination of sanitizing wipes and Atomizing Disinfectant Sprayers.

In summation, the Mountain Lakes School District will follow all recommendations outlined in numerous Government publications and advisories which are already established and will adjust procedures and policies accordingly as new advisories are released and updated.

VII. Other Considerations

- Social and emotional health of staff and students
- Title I Extended Learning Programs
- 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs
- Credit recovery
- Other extended student learning opportunities
- Extra-curricular programs
- Childcare
- Community programming
- Transportation

All counseling positions will be filled and prepared to continue meaningful, supportive work with our students and families. Students shall schedule appointments with the counselors to ensure our offices are able to maintain the appropriate protocols. This should be done through email. Students should utilize free/lunch periods to schedule these appointments with counselors. Meetings that parents would like to or need to attend will require either phone conferencing or the use of a virtual platform.

Counselors will maintain constant communication with teachers to proactively address issues of students who are not fully engaged in their learning experiences and therefore recommend opportunities for accelerated learning. Zoom and/or Google Meetings will continue to be held to check in on student progress. There will be further development of counseling drop-in opportunities to meet with counselors virtually in group settings. Counselors will supply students and families referral resources beyond the programs within the school to provide further support when necessary.

College visits with representatives will all be held virtually. The high school counselors will continue to connect with our seniors who are navigating the college selection and admissions process. We will explore Naviance, the Common App, essay writing and Teacher recommendations to ensure all senior students are properly prepared to submit applications in time for their colleges' intended deadlines.

We encourage parents to contact their counselors or the Director as soon as needs or concerns arise. Communication is always a key component in driving student successes, but it becomes an essential tool when operating remotely.

In keeping with the district's practice during a closure for inclement weather, there will not be before- or after-care (Time to Soar) programs held during a health-related closure. Extracurricular programs will be postponed and outside community groups will not be permitted in the school facilities. Any Extended Learning Programs will be rescheduled so that no instructional/intervention time is lost.

The district does not provide credit recovery for students, nor does it offer a 21st Century Community Learning Center Program.

With respect to the transportation of students, should a return to remote or hybrid instruction occur, protocols will be adjusted accordingly. Face coverings will likely be required for all passengers and accommodations for students who are unable to wear a face covering will be addressed according to that student's particular need.

Students will sit away from the aisle to increase physical distance and assigned seating may assist in ensuring that such practices are followed consistently. Bus drivers will limit close contact with others by maintaining a distance of at least six feet, when possible, and avoid touching surfaces often touched by passengers.

Tissues and no-touch disposal receptacles for use by the bus drivers and passengers will be made available. Disposable disinfectant wipes will also be made available so that surfaces commonly touched by the bus driver and passengers can be wiped down. Gloves will be used, as needed. Disinfectant will be applied to school buses at least daily, if possible between routes, and transportation vendors will be required to provide the district with their health and safety protocols for review.

Closing Thoughts

The MLSD reopening plan was developed along with the best interests of students, staff, families, and the Mountain Lakes community in mind. Our process was led by guiding principles that included, but was not limited to, health, safety, wellness, flexibility, and the continuity of learning. Our plan was designed to accommodate the needs of all learners to the best of our ability, facilitate equity and ease of access to communication and resources and was developed with the assistance of staff, students, parents, school board, and other community members' analysis and input.

Please note: this plan represents our best intentions and thoughtful deliberations at this time - it is subject to change. Guidance from our partners in the field (DOE, CDC, local health department) is ongoing and our plan, if needed, shall reflect the most up-to-date recommendations available.

The community will be alerted to any significant changes to our reopening plan in as timely a manner as possible should circumstances dictate.



Appendix A: Essential Employees List

The following list of essential employees will ensure the maintenance of critical infrastructure operations at a time when the LEA transitions to remote or virtual instruction. Identified workers conduct a range of operations and services, including staffing operations centers, maintaining and repairing critical infrastructure, operating public safety call centers, working construction, and performing operational functions, among others.

While adhering to relevant public health guidance, critical infrastructure owners and operators will use their own judgment on issues of the prioritization of business processes and workforce allocation to best ensure worker safety and the continuity of the essential goods and services.

- Michael Fetherman, Superintendent
- Ivonne Ciresi, Assistant Superintendent
- Alex Ferreira, Business Administrator
- David Santos, Director of Technology
- Dan Halsey, IT Technician
- Michael Ruth, IT Technician
- Reno Birchenough, IT Technician
- Ryan Dunn, Supervisor of Buildings & Grounds
- Mark Snowden, Assistant Supervisor of Building & Grounds
- Julie Levine, Administrative Assistant
- Lisa Hogan, Administrative Assistant
- Beth Azar, Principal
- Julie Lazeration, Principal
- Erik Carlson, Principal
- Rick Mangili, Principal
- Lisa Cortese, Assistant Principal
- Ray Searles, Director of Guidance
- Darrell Fusco, Instructional Supervisor
- Trina Moschella, Instructional Supervisor
- Patrick Brunner, Instructional Supervisor/Athletic Director
- Paul Henry, Instructional Supervisor
- Kerry DiGiacinto, Director of Special Services
- Charles Arico, Custodian
- Andrew Arroyo, Custodian
- Robert Baker, Custodian
- Richard Durkin, Maintenance and Grounds
- Luisa Francisco, Custodian
- Wilson Herrera, Custodian
- Devar Jones, Custodian
- Damion Morgan, Custodian
- Shenika Morgan, Custodian
- Denroy Reid, Custodian
- Percy Silva, Custodian
- Alfred Smith, Custodian
- Gilbert Snowden, Maintenance and Grounds
- Yamille Thompson, Custodian
- Carl Watson, Custodian
- Krzysztof Pietraszewski, Maintenance and Grounds
- Joseph Colangelo, Night Custodian
- Chung Lee, Night Custodian
- Luis Plasencia Sánchez, Night Custodian
- Richard Prisco, Night Custodian
- Mark Stritch, Night Custodian
- Imihan Vlashi, Night Custodian



Local Education Agency Guidance for Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan Attestation for the 2022-2023 SY

The New Jersey Department of Education (Department) is providing the following guidance pursuant to *N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9(c)* and *N.J.A.C. 6A:32-13.1* and *13.2*, to assist LEAs in the development of their 2022-2023 virtual or remote instruction plans. The Department encourages LEAs to reflect on the previous school year to enhance elements of the prior year’s plan to provide the most substantive education, and including, but not limited to, related services, for all students in the event of an LEA closure.

For each of the areas below, the chief school administrator or lead person will either mark “yes,” confirming that the information is in the Plan and list the corresponding Plan page number, or mark “no” if the information is not contained in the Plan. The chief school administrator or lead person is expected to provide an explanation to the County Office of Education for all areas marked “no.”

By September 30, 2022, the chief school administrator or lead person must submit a board-approved LEA Guidance for Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan for 2022-2023 SY along with this form to their county office of education. At the time of submission to the county office of education, the plan must be posted on the LEA’s website. Plans will be reviewed in each county office of education on a rolling basis with an electronic response communicated within two business days of receipt.

LEA Checklist for Virtual or Remote Instruction Programs for the 2022-2023 SY

LEAs must enter the page number where each checklist item may be found in the virtual or remote instruction program submitted to the [County Office of Education](#).

Contact Information

County: Morris

Name of District, Charter School, APSSD or Renaissance School Project:

Mountain Lakes School District

Chief School Administrator/Charter or Renaissance Leader Name/APSSD Leader:

Michael J. Fetherman

Phone Number of Contact: (973) 334-8280

Equitable Access and Opportunity to Instruction

Question	LEA Yes or No
1. Is the LEA ensuring equitable access and opportunity to instruction for all students?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>



Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
2. Does the program ensure that all students varied and age-appropriate needs are addressed?	2	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Is the program designed to maximize student growth and learning to the greatest extent possible? Synchronous and/or asynchronous virtual or remote learning plans which will maximize student growth and learning.	2	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Does the program describe how the LEA will continuously measure student growth and learning in a virtual or remote instruction environment?	4	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Does the program describe how the LEA will measure and address any ongoing digital divide issues, including a lack of internet access, network access and/or sufficient access to devices?	3	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	

Notes on Equitable Access to Instruction



Addressing Special Education Needs

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
1. Does the program address the provision of virtual or remote instruction to implement Individual Education Programs (IEPs) for students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible, including accessible materials and platforms?	4	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Does the program address methods to document IEP implementation including the tracking of services, student progress, as well as provision of accommodations and modifications?	4	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Does the program describe how case managers will follow up with families to ensure services are implemented in accordance with IEPs to the greatest extent possible?	4	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Does the program address procedures to conduct IEP meetings, evaluations and other meetings to identify, evaluate and/or reevaluate students with disabilities?	4	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	

Notes on Special Education Needs



Addressing English language learners (ELL) Plan Needs

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
1. Does the program include an English as a Second Language and/or bilingual education program aligned with State and Federal requirements to meet the needs of ELLs?	5	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Does the program describe how the LEA communicates with families of ELLs including providing translation materials, interpretative services, and literacy level appropriate information?	5	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
3. Does the program include the use of alternate methods of instruction (that is, differentiation, sheltered instruction, Universal Design for Learning), access to technology and strategies to ensure ELLs access the same standard of education as non-ELL peers?	5	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Does the program include training for teachers, administrators, and counselors to learn strategies related to culturally responsive teaching and learning, socio-emotional learning, and trauma-informed teaching for students affected by forced migration from their home country (e.g. refugee, asylee)?	5	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	

Notes on Supporting ELL Educational Needs



Attendance Plan

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
1. Does the program address the LEA's attendance policies, including how the LEA will determine whether a student is present or absent, how a student's attendance will factor into promotion, retention, graduation, discipline, and any other decisions that will reflect the student's performance?	5	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Does the program describe how the LEA communicates with the family when a student is not participating in online instruction and/or submitting assignments?	5	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	

Notes on Attendance Plan

Safe Delivery of Meals Plan

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
1. Does the program contain how the LEA will provide continued safe delivery of meals to eligible students?	5	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	

Notes on Safe Delivery of Meals



Facilities Plan

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
1. Does the program contain an outline of how buildings will be maintained throughout an extended period of closure?	5	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes on the Facilities Plan Other

Other Considerations

Does the program contain the following considerations?	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
a. Accelerated learning opportunities	4	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Social and emotional health of staff and students	7	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Title I Extended Learning Programs	-	No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. 21 st Century Community Learning Center Programs	-	No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Credit recovery	-	No <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Other extended student learning opportunities	7	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Transportation	7	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Extra-curricular programs	7	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Childcare	7	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Community programming	8	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Notes on Other Considerations

c. The district does not receive Title I funds.
 d. The district does not provide 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs
 e. The district does not provide credit recovery programs.



APSSD Applicable Only: Sharing Plans

Was the program shared with all sending districts? Yes No

Notes on APSSD Sharing Plans

[Empty text box for notes on APSSD Sharing Plans]

Essential Employees

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
1. 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.	App. A	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	

Notes on Essential Employees

[Empty text box for notes on Essential Employees]

Board Approval

Date of board approval (mm/dd/yyyy): 09/19/2022

Notes on Board Approval

[Empty text box for notes on Board Approval]

Posted on Website

1. Is the program posted on the school district/APSSD/Charter/Renaissance School Project Website? Yes No

2. Link to website: https://www.mlschools.org/