

BERNARDS TOWNSHIP  
SCHOOL DISTRICT  
VIRTUAL/REMOTE  
INSTRUCTION PLAN FOR THE  
2023-2024 SCHOOL YEAR

August 2023

# INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to New Jersey Public Law 2020 Chapter 27 public school districts must annually submit their virtual/remote learning plans, with Board of Education approval, to the Commissioner of Education. The Superintendent of Schools will submit the Board of Education approved virtual/remote learning plan and a virtual/remote learning instruction plan checklist/attestation form to the county office of education.

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## **1. Equitable Access and Opportunity for all Students**

The Information Technology Department will be responsible for ensuring that all Bernards Township School district students have adequate access to computing devices and network/broadband access. Students/families will be surveyed to determine needs and will also be provided contact information for assistance. In the event that a student does not have a device they will be issued a device owned by the Bernards Township School District. In the event that a student's home does not have access to broadband the IT department will work with the family to determine the most appropriate way to obtain broadband access. The district has purchased enough Chromebooks to accommodate the needs of students.

Schedules by grade level band are shown below and teachers will use a combination of both synchronous and asynchronous activities during the scheduled instructional periods. Schedules have been developed specifically for each age band in order to address age appropriate needs. Using a variety of educational software including, Zoom and Google for educators, staff members will be able to conduct remote assessments to measure student growth and progress on instructional objectives.

Each school day will be a minimum of four hours excluding any time designated for lunch and/or recess. The virtual/remote schedules for each grade band, elementary, middle and high school are shown on the next three pages.

# ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

- Elementary students will follow the basic school schedule for academic and special-area classes.
- Each grade level is on a slightly different time schedule for academic subjects and lunch and recess.
- Students will use Zoom to participate remotely for class meetings, mini lessons, and whatever small groups the teacher requires such as guided reading, guided math, writing conference, book talk, etc. This procedure will be the same for academic and special-area classes.
- Teachers will “dismiss” students to their “desks” signed off Zoom either completely **or** with screens off while students work on applying the learning objective.
- The teacher has the option to bring the class together at the end of each subject lesson for a short closure.
- Individual teachers will provide students with breaks from all work throughout the day.

Period	Times	Number of Minutes
Homeroom and Class Meeting	8:45 a.m. to 9:20 a.m.	35 minutes
Period 1	9:20 a.m. to 10:10 a.m.	50 minutes
*Period 2	10:10 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	50 minutes
*Period 3	11:00 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.	50 minutes
*Period 4	11:50 a.m. to 12:40 a.m.	50 minutes
*Period 5	12:40 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.	50 minutes
Period 6	1:30 p.m. to 2:20 p.m.	50 minutes
Period 7	2:20 p.m. to 3:10 p.m.	50 minutes

\*A 50-minute recess and lunch will be built into the day for each student.

# MIDDLE SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Period	Times	Number of Minutes
Period 1	7:45 AM to 8:22 AM	37 minutes
Period 2	8:27 AM to 9:04 AM	37 minutes
Period 3	9:09 AM to 9:46 AM	37 minutes
AM break	9:47 AM to 10:02 AM	15 minutes
Period 4	10:02 AM to 10:39 AM	37 minutes
Period 5	10:44 AM to 11:21 AM	37 minutes
Period 6	11:26 AM to 12: 03 AM	37 minutes
PM Break	12:04 AM to 12:19 PM	15 minutes
Period 7	12:19 PM to 12:56 PM	37 minutes
Period 8	1:01 PM to 1:38 PM	37 minutes
Period 9	1:43 PM to 2:20 PM	37 minutes

- Mid morning and afternoon break is scheduled to help with Zoom Fatigue
- Students would be expected to have their cameras on during instructional times

# HIGH SCHOOL SCHEDULE

<b>All -Virtual Schedule</b>			
<b>A/B/C/D Days</b>			
<b>Block</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>	<b>Length</b>
1	7:35	8:25	50
2	8:35	9:25	50
3	9:35	10:25	50
Lunch 1	10:33	10:59	26
Lunch 2	11:01	11:27	26
4	11:35	12:25	50
5	12:35	1:25	50
6	1:35	2:25	50
ABCD Rotation would continue as scheduled.			
Morning and Afternoon rotation start and end times fall within current timelines to avoid issues with shared staff and shared time students			
Breaks between classes to help with Zoom Fatigue			
Longer Unit Lunch to allow for Virtual Tutorials as last year where students can zoom in for extra help.			

## **2. Addressing Special Education Needs**

Special education students in self-contained programs would be the last students to go to a virtual educational environment. However, in the event that conditions required remote instruction, IEPs would dictate the plan for each student. Teachers, special education instructional aides, and case managers would support students and families with remote services through platforms such as Zoom to the greatest extent possible. However the bell schedules noted above would be customized to meet the needs of each student so that extraordinary services could be scheduled into the child's day.

Case manager's primary responsibility is to ensure that IEPs are being met, as such they would play an important role in monitoring the services of each of their student's to ensure compliance with the IEP. In addition, case managers would schedule all requisite IEP meetings and conduct them remotely as necessary. Case managers would also use remote communication tools to stay in contact with families to ensure that services are being implemented to the greatest extent possible.



### **3. Addressing English Language Learners (ELL) Plan Needs**

The ESL program in Bernards Township is aligned with state and federal requirements for ELLs as well as with WIDA standards. ESL teachers, General Education teachers and administrators are trained annually on the current population of ELLs and how to meet their needs. This includes but is not limited to culturally responsive teaching practices, socio-emotional learning and trauma informed teaching for students affected by forced migration from their home country.

Depending on the school and student level of proficiency, our ELLs participate in Push-in, Pull-out, High Intensity, ESL and/or Sheltered English Instruction. The ESL specialists and administrators communicate with general education and special education staff to ensure the lessons, content and assessments are differentiated to meet the needs of the individual learner.

All staff make it a priority to communicate with families in English and if possible in their native language to ensure understanding of procedures related to virtual instruction. This is done through use of in-district interpreters and translation tools. Parents are asked the mode of communication they prefer and the district works to align with their requests.

In the event of a school closure or need for full or partial virtual instruction, English Language Learners will be given priority to remain in school as long as possible to advance their English language proficiency and provide them critical access to academic content. Should students need to be virtual, regular ESL instruction as well as monitored support by aides, general education and ESL teachers will continue. Furthermore, additional efforts will be made to communicate with families regarding instruction and procedural changes.

#### **4. Attendance Plan**

Students will be marked absent or present by their teachers in the student information system (Genesis) as a function of their appearance and participation in Zoom meetings.

Board of Education Policy 5200 will still apply to students even in a remote environment.

Teachers, administrators, and counselors will communicate with families whose students are not in attendance, not participating or not turning in school work. Attendance improvement plans will be instituted per Board Policy 5200.

## **5. Safe Delivery of Meals Plan**

The school district does not participate in the National School Lunch Program. However, the school district does administer a free and reduced lunch program applying the same criteria for access as the National School Lunch Program. Consequently, any student who qualifies will be provided a daily lunch on a free or reduced basis even if the district is closed to in-person instruction and is conducting only virtual/remote instruction. Lunches will be made or purchased by the district and be either delivered to families or made available for pick-up (parent's choice) at regular intervals. Eligible families will be contacted so that it can be determined if they would like lunches to be delivered or if they would prefer to pick them up from the district.

## **6. Facilities**

In the event that a remote learning environment is instituted for the foreseeable future the business office will take a variety of actions including looking to put contracts on hold for services not being used. Facilities would be included in such planning. Reductions of staff would occur however enough staff would remain to monitor the safety, security, climate control and building envelopes. Enough facilities staff would also be retained to maintain grounds. The goal would be to prevent buildings from deteriorating in any way while their use is greatly reduced and/or entirely suspended for an extended closure.

## **7. Other Considerations**

Accelerated learning opportunities are scheduled into the student's day and would continue to occur along with regularly scheduled classes - in a remote fashion.

The district maintains online resource hubs of wellness resources for both staff and families.

Title I programs - a.k.a "What I Need" or WIN time is scheduled into the day for identified title one students and services would continue via Zoom.

The district runs a variety of programs designed to expose students to community businesses or to career pathways, to the extent possible, the district would look to maintain these opportunities with students or to create similar remote opportunities.

Credit recovery would be scheduled as needed through remote opportunities and classes designed to help students earn the necessary credits to graduate - Educere has been used in the past.

Transportation contracts would be suspended if they are not being used.

Extra curricular programs would be suspended unless it were possible to continue them on a remote basis or with program specific accommodations to make them accessible in-person.

Before and after care services normally run by the district would be suspended if in-person settings were not possible.

Community programs such as parent academies and Board of Education meetings would be conducted remotely via Zoom and live streamed via YouTube if in-person settings were not possible.

The district 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.

The virtual/remote instruction plan will be posted to the district website at [www.bernardsboe.com](http://www.bernardsboe.com). In addition, the plan will be sent directly to all Bernards Township School District staff and families via email. The plan will also be reviewed in a public board of education meeting at the time it is provided to the Board of Education for approval.

The virtual/remote instruction plan was approved by the Bernards Township Board of Education at its public meeting on: August 28, 2023 and the Chief School Administrator, Nick Markarian, submitted the plan to the County Office thereafter.