



*Believe • Celebrate • Succeed*

**2024-2025  
Emergency Virtual or  
Remote Instruction  
Program**

## **The Forum School Administration**

Mr. Brian Detlefsen, Director

[brian.detlefsen@theforumschool.com](mailto:brian.detlefsen@theforumschool.com)

Mr. Joseph Neubert, Principal

[joe.neubert@theforumschool.com](mailto:joe.neubert@theforumschool.com)

Dr. Linda Edwards, Supervisor of Curriculum & Instruction

[linda.edwards@theforumschool.com](mailto:linda.edwards@theforumschool.com)

## **Nursing Staff**

Carolyn Walles, BSN

Diane Meyers, RN

[nurse@theforumschool.com](mailto:nurse@theforumschool.com)

## **Contents**

Overview.....	3
Equitable Access and Opportunity for Instruction.....	4
Addressing Special Education Needs.....	5
Addressing English Language Learner Needs.....	5
Attendance.....	6
Meals.....	6
Essential Employees.....	6
Facilities.....	7
Other Considerations:	
Social and Emotional Support.....	7
Extra-Curricular and Community Programming.....	7

## **Overview**

In April 2020, Governor Murphy signed A-3904 into law (P.L.2020, c.27, or “Chapter 27”), which, in part, requires each school district, charter school, renaissance school project, and Approved Private School for Students with Disabilities (APSSD), hereinafter referred to as Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), to annually submit a proposed program for emergency virtual or remote instruction (Plan) to the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). In July 2022, the NJDOE readopted N.J.A.C. 6A:32, School District Operations, with amendments and new rules which includes updates to the components of the LEA’s Plan. This law provides for the continuity of instruction in the event of a public health-related district closure, by permitting LEAs to utilize virtual or remote instruction to satisfy the 180-day requirement pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:32-13.1 & 13.2.

A lot has been learned since March, 2020. I am proud to say that the educators at The Forum School demonstrated their passion for teaching and dedication to our unique learners when they had to “rethink” teaching through a virtual platform. Although every attempt was made to keep school open and in-person to the greatest extent possible, The Forum School was able to provide a robust virtual learning platform that met the needs of all students when school-wide closure or individual classroom closures were necessary.

As we move forward, we recognize that there may be events or emergencies that require the school’s physical plant to close and classes to pivot to remote learning. In the event this happens, the school will use the following plan as a guide for maintaining continuity in student instruction and learning.

## **Equitable Access and Opportunity for Instruction**

During the first week of school, all parents will be asked to complete a survey regarding the access students have to internet within the home. The surveys will be provided in English and Spanish, and translated to other languages, as needed. If there is a case where a student has connectivity issues, The Forum School will work with the sending district to identify solutions to get connectivity. Also during the first week of school, ALL students of The Forum School will be assigned individual Chromebooks. In addition, for students that are more familiar with and comfortable navigating a tablet, iPads will be assigned. All classroom teachers, therapists, and specials are assigned school-issued laptops for providing remote instruction when necessary.

In the event The Forum School has a school-wide closure, all students will participate in a combination of synchronous and asynchronous learning activities within the regularly scheduled school hours (8:45 – 2:45). A combination of live, pre-recorded, and on-line learning opportunities allows for flexibility in schedules where students might need the support of a caregiver to navigate devices. Specials (art, music, physical education) will be held during regularly scheduled times. Related-services will be provided via tele-therapy to the extent allowed by DOE regulation and therapist licensure. A minimum of four hours of instruction, inclusive of related-services, will be offered to all students.

Progress towards goals and objectives will be assessed on an on-going basis through live activities and submissions through Google classroom and other online learning platforms (i.e. iXL, BrainPop).

Instructors will be advised to report any device or connectivity issues to the Technology Department. If a device issue cannot be remedied remotely, a replacement device will be delivered to the student's home by Forum staff. In the event there is a connectivity issue, Forum staff will coordinate with the sending district to resolve the issue.

## **Addressing Special Education Needs**

As an APSSD, with 100% of the population having special needs, all facets of our virtual or remote instruction will involve implementation of the IEP, including all related and extraordinary services, to the greatest extent possible as permitted by Federal law, the NJDOE, and relevant licensures.

Students will continue to receive instruction to support IEP goals and objectives, using platforms they are familiar with and able to navigate. To the greatest extent possible, live instruction will incorporate manipulatives and demonstrative materials that the students are familiar with. In the event of a pre-announced closure, students will be sent home with the necessary materials and/or manipulatives to support learning. In the event of an unexpected closure, necessary materials will be delivered to students' homes, or made available for pick up, so that students have the opportunity to continue learning. In addition, any accommodations and/or modifications listed in the IEP will be incorporated into remote instruction to the greatest extent practical.

Classroom teachers will track student participation in virtual or remote learning on a daily basis. Likewise, all specials and related-service providers will record attendance and the amount of time students attend on spreadsheets to be submit weekly to the administration.

Administrators and/or support staff (i.e. nurses, counselors, and social worker) will check in weekly with parents/caregivers to assure adequate instruction is being provided and to check-in on student well-being.

The Forum School staff will work with sending districts to ensure availability of staff for all required IEP meetings, and will work with sending districts to help facilitate completion of any remote evaluations that must be conducted. In the event the sending district is closed and The Forum School is open, or vice versa, The Forum School will assist in supporting the student so that a virtual or remote evaluation can be conducted.

## **Addressing English Language Learner Needs**

While we do not currently have any ELL students, all communications are sent home in English and Spanish. In households where the primary caregivers speak another language, Google translate is used to translate all communication or a "live" interpreter is used.

## **Attendance**

A student will be marked present when they appear for “live” instruction. In cases where a student requires caregiver support to navigate technology, but none is available, a student will be considered present when they submit completed assignments as posted on Google classroom on a daily basis. School administration will communicate to the sending district when this issue arises.

When a student does not present themselves for virtual or remote learning, or refuses to turn their camera on, the instructor will reach out to the parent via phone or email to make them aware of the issue. When students do not present themselves for a scheduled “live” session, and the instructor has not been notified of the absence, the parent/caregiver will be called to check on student well-being and to account for the student.

Per administrative code, when students do not present themselves or submit daily work for a period of five consecutive days, letters will be sent to the sending district(s). Habitual absences and/or failure of caregivers to ensure completion of assignments will be reported to the sending district case manager and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss how to address.

## **Meals**

In the event of an Emergency Closure, parents/guardians will be informed they can pick up pre-packaged lunches at the school, if interested. Due to the large geographic area our student body comes from, meals cannot be delivered. If there is a regional and/or statewide Emergency Closure, The Forum School staff will coordinate with sending districts to see if local meals are available for families unable to get to The Forum School.

Meals to conform to National School Lunch Program meal-patterns will be provided in prepackaged “to-go” containers. Meals will be provided for two days at a time to ensure freshness.

## **Essential Employees**

In the event The Forum School needs to pivot to remote only instruction, a list of essential employees will be provided to the County Office.

## **Facilities**

During an extended period of closure, administrative and custodial staff will continue to report to the building on a daily basis to the greatest extent possible.

The school custodian will continue to ensure daily cleaning procedures are followed. The school will use EPA approved disinfectants. All regularly scheduled maintenance duties will continue to be performed during an Emergency Closure to ensure the physical plant is ready to receive students as soon as on-site services are allowed.

## **Other Considerations:**

### **Social and Emotional Health of Staff and Students**

The Forum School will continue its focus on addressing the social and emotional well-being of its staff and students. Classroom staff will continue to incorporate social-emotional learning (SEL) activities into their remote and virtual instruction, just as they do for in-person instruction. SEL activities will focus on strengthening the learning community, promoting interpersonal relationships, and providing individualized social-emotional support and coping strategies where warranted.

Support staff (social worker, counselor, BCBA, nurses, consulting psychiatrist) will be available to assist students that may be struggling with anxiety, loss, school avoidance, etc. that may, or may not be, directly related to the closure.

### **Extra-Curricular and Community Programming**

The Forum School will continue to hold any extra-curricular activities to the greatest extent possible during emergency remote or virtual instruction. In the past, we have successfully hosted family game nights, dances, ice cream socials, and even our annual semi-formal, during an extended closure. Additionally, we will continue activities through our partnership with Ramapo College, which include socialization opportunities for our students, both during and after-school hours.

**Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to reach out to teachers, nurses, and/or administrators if they have any questions or require additional assistance.**