

Guidance and Expectations for Remote Learning

[Insert framing and values about context, goals, instructional continuity, importance of staying connected to students, link to [webinar](#) from March 13]

Remote learning provides an opportunity for students and teachers to remain connected and engaged with their course content while working from locations outside of the physical school environment for a designated period of time due to an unforeseen situation. Opportunities for remote learning are typically linked to an emergency situation that poses a threat to student safety.

Transitioning to remote learning can keep students on track so that when they return to physical school environments, they will not have a lot of make-up work to do and they will be ready for any scheduled assessments. Many of the requirements in a traditional classroom environment will be in play for remote learning environments, and the goal is to adhere to as many state and local requirements as possible.

This document provides guidance about the expectations for school administrators, teachers, and students for participating in remote learning in response to COVID-19.

PRINCIPAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The principal is responsible for setting the overall expectations for the school's implementation of remote learning and ensuring that these expectations are clearly communicated to teachers, students, families, and other involved school staff. NYC DOE provided guidance will support principals in setting these expectations. The principal delegates the below responsibilities to assistant principals and other staff as needed. These responsibilities include:

- Designate roles and responsibilities for administrative school staff with respect to remote learning, so that the following decisions and tasks are implemented effectively. This includes designating an administrator or teacher to be the remote learning lead, or primary point person for the implementation of the school's remote learning plans.
- Implement structures and protocols for checking in with the teachers and staff responsible for executing remote learning (see sample protocols [below](#)).
- Decide how and when students will interact with their teachers. This includes deciding which technology platforms and communication mechanisms will be used, and whether they will be used school-wide, by department, by class, etc.
- Establish a mechanism for teachers to take attendance in the form of tracking contacts with students on a daily basis. Assign staff to conduct outreach in cases of absence.
- Ensure that all online discussion forums are moderated by a school administrator or teacher.
- Ensure that updates and expectations about the school's remote learning program are communicated to students and families. This includes tips for student success, directions for accessing any online platforms, escalation pathways for administrative support, and assurances about student privacy.
- Using NYC DOE [academic policy guidance](#), develop expertise and answer questions related to the impact of COVID-19 on key academic policy areas such as promotion, grading, and graduation. Share questions with Borough/Citywide Office as needed for escalation and resolution.
- Ensure that a "Special Education Remote Learning Plan" is developed for all students with IEPs in your school by their special education teacher or other school based staff with knowledge of the student, and that each child's plan is shared and discussed with their family. See [additional guidance](#).
- Set expectations for teacher grade-keeping and data entry and tracking student participation (see [FAQs](#)).

- For high school students, ensure that the school’s remote learning program prioritizes the courses and exam preparation that students need to stay on track toward graduation.
- Ensure that a “Special Education Remote Learning Plan” is developed for all students with IEPs in your school by their special education teacher or other school based staff with knowledge of the student, and that each child’s plan is shared and discussed with their family. **(Note that this document is under legal review)**

TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

During this time, teachers use an online platform and email to provide assignments to their students, consistent with the subject content standards of their respective classes. Teachers are expected to fulfill their responsibilities within the six hours in the contractual workday, exclusive of lunch, according to the schedule provided by the school. These responsibilities could, upon direction from your principal, include:

- Communicate expectations to students and families about the instructional plan for the week, including learning objectives, required activities, assignments, and assessments, along with any associated due dates.
- During designated time, interact with students in real-time to deliver lessons, facilitate discussion, and lead other instructional activities.
- Record lessons and other instructional activities for students to access later.
- Monitor student participation in activities, with at least one teacher responsible for ensuring daily check ins of each student, and following up with student and family, and other school staff as needed. Record student contacts as attendance, in a mechanism specified by the principal.
- Post assignments, content, activities, and links to resources for students to use to master the learning objectives for the week. Ensure delivery of instructional activities are aligned to course syllabi and unit plans.
- Monitor email or other agreed-upon communication channels daily (Monday thru Friday during normal school hours) for messages from students and families and responding to messages in a timely fashion. Also monitor DOE email for guidance from supervisors and Central DOE. Forward messages to guidance counselors, administrators, and other school staff (e.g., parent coordinator) as needed, per the expectations of the principal.
- Grade assignments and assessments and provide feedback on work submitted by students. Communicate with families about student progress.
- For students who need additional support, identify appropriate activities and assignments, such as practice of pre-requisite skills.
- For students who need additional enrichment, provide opportunities and resources for independent inquiry beyond the expectations of posted assignments.
- For co-teaching pairs, develop content, activities and assignments collaboratively.
- Collaborate with grade-level or department colleagues to ensure continuity across the courses or subjects to ensure continuity and establish alignment across teacher in same department so that group teaching and student support can occur across grades or department.
- Participate in check-ins with school administrators as outlined by the principal; respond to inquiries from school administrators in a timely fashion (Monday thru Friday during normal school hours).
- Participate in professional learning opportunities either online or in-person during the six-hour workday.
- Assign responsibilities to paraprofessionals, such as responding to administrative questions from students and families, assisting with posting instructional materials, supporting students understanding of content, and moderating student discussions.
- Assist in supporting all students, as needed, in subject or grade or course level.
- Participate in IEP meetings (initial/reevaluation/three-year evaluations) remotely at the request of the school psychologist.
- Conduct all annual reviews timely for your students with disabilities, to the greatest extent possible.
- Ensure that all students with disabilities have their assistive technology and necessary tools sent home for remote work.

PARAPROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Paraprofessionals are expected to continue to support teachers in the delivery of instruction. Key expectations are as follows:

- Participate in scheduled school-based professional development regarding online learning
- Support classroom teachers with preparing assignments, content, and activities
- Assist with collecting materials that will be sent to students
- Maintain regular communication with teachers, and related service provider(s)
- Communicate and check-in with students as determined by classroom teacher and school leadership
- Participate and facilitate remote classroom experiences with teachers and students

SCHOOL COUNSELOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- Serve as a point of contact for administrative and logistical questions from families, monitoring email and other designated communication channels Monday through Friday during the workday.
- Help students understand and follow the school's daily schedule for remote instruction.
- Using NYC DOE [academic policy guidance](#), develop expertise and answer questions related to the impact of COVID-19 on key academic policy areas such as promotion, grading, and graduation. Share questions with principal as needed for escalation and resolution.
- Support individual students who need additional support to be successful with a new instructional model.
- Support individual students with necessary college and career preparation tasks, in alignment with students' postsecondary plans.
- As designated by the principal, conduct outreach in the event of student absence.
- Moderate student discussion in online forums.
- School guidance counselors, and other staff, who are providing IEP mandated counseling will follow the same steps as outlined below.

RELATED SERVICE PROVIDER RESPONSIBILITIES

Occupational Therapy (OT), Physical Therapy (PT), Speech and Counseling providers will provide appropriate tele-therapy services in conjunction with schools' remote instructional plan. Key expectations are as follows:

- Participate in scheduled school-based professional development regarding the online learning tool utilized by the school
- Immediately review all mandates on their caseload to determine how best to deliver appropriate tele-therapy services to students starting on March 23, for the duration of the school closure period. The Special Education Office has developed general guidance to providers on how to make this determination.
- In some cases, the opportunity for appropriate tele-therapy will be limited; at minimum therapists will provide a weekly tele-therapy consultation with the student and their caregiver (where available) to provide support and advice regarding appropriate therapeutic activities
- While reviewing student's mandates, make initial contact with each students' caregiver, using a script provided by the Special Education Office, and obtain written consent for tele-therapy using a standard form which will be provided by the Special Education Office in consultation with the Office of Medicaid Operations. Therapists will upload the completed consent form to the student's record in SESIS
- Document their therapeutic plan on a secure Microsoft form template provided by the Special Education Office for review by their discipline Supervisor, who will schedule calls to discuss and support the tele-therapy process
- Collaborate with others in the school to develop a schedule for tele-therapy, using the current schedule as a starting point, and ensuring that there is at least one touch point per week per student on their caseload regardless of the appropriateness of tele-therapy

- Share the schedule with the student’s family, school leadership, and their supervisor and initiate service in accordance with the schedule. Discipline supervisors will check in with therapists periodically, and may participate in and observe tele-therapy sessions
- Document all tele-therapy sessions in SESIS; guidance will be provided later this week regarding how to code the location of these sessions as tele-therapy

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGIST RESPONSIBILITIES

School Based Support Team (SBST) Psychologists are expected to conduct IEP meetings remotely with necessary documentation (Notice of IEP Meeting, evaluations) provided to families electronically. Key expectations are as follows:

- Review the status of the Turning 5 caseload; complete all outstanding reports and IEPs that are pending finalization; schedule all cases ready for an IEP meeting for remote/teleconference meetings
- Review open initial referral and reevaluation caseload; complete all outstanding reports/ IEPs that are pending finalization; obtain outstanding reports from any external stakeholders via email communication; identify cases for which parents have provided/ will provide evaluations; complete all IEPs that have been conferenced and are pending finalization
- Provide materials/ assessments to be considered to all participants electronically ahead of the meeting
- Ensure participation of all IEP team members, per [SOPM](#) guidance
- For all referrals, review the reason for referral to determine what level/type of assessment is needed and consider remote assessment and assessments through contract agencies if/when necessary
- Develop a plan to engage in remote intervention/prevention initiatives for students at risk of referral to special education (counseling, consultation and intervention)
- Monitor email or other agreed-upon communication channels daily (Monday thru Friday during normal school hours) for messages from families, supervisors, and school leadership, and respond to messages in a timely fashion

SCHOOL BASED SUPPORT TEAM (SBST) SOCIAL WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

School Based Support Team (SBST) Social Workers are expected to support the successful implementation of remote IEP meetings. Key expectations are as follows:

- Introducing parents to our method for moving forward with cases during the DOE school closure and supporting parents with the use of technological/ online services
- Schedule and conduct Social Histories and participate in outreach for scheduling IEP meetings
- Conduct adaptive scales/ rating scales, parent and teacher interviews over the phone and using Microsoft teams
- Review the Home Language Identification Survey (HLIS) to verify the language spoken at home; confirm the parent’s preferred language and mode of communication; inform the parent in the parent’s preferred language of the parent’s right to have a trained interpreter at meetings, if necessary, and of the right to request evaluation reports and the student’s IEP translated into the parent’s preferred language
- Confirm that the parent has received a copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice and inform the parent of his/her due process rights
- Ensure that the parent has access in the parent’s preferred language to the [Family Guide to Special Education Services for School-Age Children](#)
- Develop a plan to engage in remote intervention/prevention initiatives for students at risk of referral to special education (counseling, consultation and intervention)
- Serve as a point of contact for administrative and logistical questions from families, monitoring email and other designated communication channels Monday through Friday during the workday; support families with outreach to community-based organizations that can support them



STUDENT AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

In communicating expectations to students and families, principals and teachers may consider including the following points:

- Students should complete instructional activities assigned by teachers within the expected timelines;
- Students should participate in check-ins, discussions, and other communication mechanisms as expected by the teacher;
- Students should review teacher feedback and complete any follow-up activities as assigned by the teacher;
- Students and families should proactively notify their teacher or a school administrator school with any concerns about progress or additional support needed;
- Families should support students in being successful by establishing routines and habits that support their success in the above activities.
- Families should ensure that students are adhering to their school’s contract that outlines appropriate behavior on web enabled devices.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE FOR REMOTE LEARNING

Schools should create a daily and weekly schedule that provides time for check-ins and collaboration among staff, independent time for school staff and students, aiming towards live instructional time for students and teachers. This schedule may evolve as schools develop their remote learning plans. For example, the initial schedule may contain more time for staff collaboration and meetings and less time for direct instruction, so that staff can establish procedures and expectations. Over time, the schedule may shift to more closely resemble the sample schedules below.

The remote learning schedule must include all courses that students receive as part of regular instruction. Principals may choose to design the schedule in the following ways:

- Mirror the regular schedule, but with shorter periods. Teachers and students follow their regular schedules for continuity. During lunch and other administrative periods, teachers perform the responsibilities described above. Students work on activities and assignments. See the sample schedules below for an example of how an eight-period day may be abbreviated in a remote learning setup.
- Alternatively, develop a new, simplified schedule. Schools choosing to do this must ensure continuity with the regular schedule and have a mechanism to communicate about the modified schedule to teachers and students.

Schools may refer to the following sample schedules and modify them accordingly. The schedule for teachers must include 6 hours of working time and 50 hours of lunch time.

Sample Daily Schedule for School Staff

Time	Teacher activities (meeting participation is in-person or virtual)	Principal/administrator activities
8:00 – 8:10 (10 minutes)	All-staff meeting led by principal	All-staff meeting led by principal
8:10 – 8:50 (40 minutes)	Grade level and/or department level team meetings, as specified by the principal	Principal supervises/participates as needed and performs other duties as described above
8:50 – 9:00 (10 minutes)	Transition time; log into and setup the online platform	Principal supervises/participates as needed and performs other duties as described above
9:00 – 12:20	Live instruction with teachers and students	Principal supervises/participates as needed and

(3 hours and 20 minutes)	<p>through the school's instructional platform.</p> <p>For elementary school, the official class teacher structures the day similar to a regular school day.</p> <p>For middle and high school, instruction follows an abbreviated schedule as shown below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Period 1: 9:00 – 9:25 • Period 2: 9:25 – 9:50 • Period 3: 9:50 – 10:15 • Period 4: 10:15 – 10:40 • Period 5: 10:40 – 11:05 • Period 6: 11:05 – 11:30 • Period 7: 11:30 – 11:55 • Period 8: 11:55 - 12:20 	performs other duties as described above
12:20 – 2:50 (2 hours and 30 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 minutes preparation period (teacher-directed) • 50 minutes lunch period • 50 minutes Professional Work as determined by administration (office hours, grade/staff conference/PD) 	Principal supervises/participates as needed and performs other duties as described above

Sample Daily Student Schedule

Time	Activities
8:50 – 9:00 (10 minutes)	Students log into the platform
9:00 – 12:0 (3 hours 20 minutes)	<p>Live instruction with teachers and students through the school's instructional platform.</p> <p>For elementary school, students participate in whatever lessons and activities the teacher has planned.</p> <p>For middle and high school, instruction follows five shortened blocks as shown below. Last five minutes serve as buffer/transition time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Period 1: 9:00 – 9:25 • Period 2: 9:25 – 9:50 • Period 3: 9:50 – 10:15 • Period 4: 10:15 – 10:40 • Period 5: 10:40 – 11:05 • Period 6: 11:05 – 11:30 • Period 7: 11:30 – 11:55 • Period 8: 11:55 - 12:20
12:20 and beyond	Students work independently on assignments and activities on their own time. Designated school staff are available through 2:50 to provide support.

