

# POLICY GUIDE

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[See POLICY ALERT No. 225]

## 2425 EMERGENCY VIRTUAL OR REMOTE INSTRUCTION PROGRAM

The Board of Education is committed to providing a high quality educational program, virtually or remotely, in the event a school or the schools of the district are required to close for more than three consecutive school days due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure. The district's virtual or remote program of instruction shall be in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.

In the event the school district is required to close a school or the schools of the district for more than three consecutive school days due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure, the Commissioner of Education shall allow the district to apply to the 180-day requirement established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9, one or more days of virtual or remote instruction provided to students on the day or days the schools of the district were closed if the program of virtual or remote instruction meets such criteria as may be established by the Commissioner Education.

The Superintendent of Schools shall submit, with Board approval, the school district's program of virtual or remote instruction to the Commissioner of Education by no later than October 29, 2021 and annually thereafter.

A day of virtual or remote instruction, if instituted under the district's Commissioner of Education's approved program of virtual or remote instruction, shall be considered the equivalent of a full day of school attendance for the purposes of meeting State and local graduation requirements, the awarding of course credit, and other such matters as determined by the Commissioner of Education.

Any district program of virtual or remote instruction implemented for the general education students shall provide the same educational opportunities to students with disabilities. Special education and related services, including speech language services, counseling services, physical therapy, occupational therapy,



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and behavioral services, may be delivered to students with disabilities through the use of electronic communication or a virtual or online platform and as required by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP), to the greatest extent practicable.

In the event the State or local health department determines it is advisable to close or mandates closure of the schools of the district due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure, the Superintendent shall have the authority to implement the school district's program of virtual or remote instruction. The Superintendent shall consult with the Board prior to such decision, if practicable. The Superintendent shall ensure that students, parents, staff, and the Board are informed promptly of the Superintendent's decision.

Nothing in N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9 and this Policy shall be construed to limit, supersede or preempt rights, privileges, compensation, remedies, and procedures afforded to public employees or a collective bargaining unit under Federal or State law or any provision of a collective bargaining agreement entered into by the school district.

In the event of the closure of a school or the schools of the district due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive by the appropriate health agency or officer to institute a public health-related closure for a period longer than three consecutive school days:

1. District employees shall be entitled to compensation, benefits, and emoluments pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.e.(1) and (2).
2. The district shall continue to make payments of benefits, compensation, and emoluments pursuant to the terms of a contract with a contracted service provider in effect on the date of the closure as if the services for such benefits, compensation, and emoluments had been provided, and as if the school facilities had remained open pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.e.(3).



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3. The district shall be obligated to make payments for benefits, compensation, and emoluments and all payments required pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:6-51 et seq., to an educational services commission, county special services school district, and a jointure commission, and under any shared services agreement and cooperative contract entered into with any other public entity pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.e.(4).
4. An educational services commission, county special services school district, and a jointure commission shall continue to make payments of benefits, compensation, and emoluments pursuant to the terms of a contract with a contracted service provider or a shared services agreement in effect on the date of the closure as if the services for such benefits, compensation, and emoluments had been provided, and as if the school facilities had remained open pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.e.(4).

The provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.e.(1) through (4) shall not apply to any employee whose weekly hours of work are reduced, and to whom unemployment benefits are provided, pursuant to a shared work program approved pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 43:21-20.3 et seq. A contracted service provider, educational services commission, county special services school district, or jointure commission shall notify the district with which it has entered into a contract to provide services of its intent to reduce the hours of work of its employees pursuant to a shared work program approved pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 43:21-20.3 et seq.

1. Notwithstanding the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.e.(3), if a contracted service provider reduces the amount that it pays to its employees providing services to a school district, and that reduction is the result of a reduction of workhours of those employees made pursuant to a shared work program approved pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 43:21-20.3 et seq., then the amount paid by the district to the contracted service provider shall be reduced by the same amount.



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2. Notwithstanding the provisions of N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9.e.(4), if an educational services commission, county special services school district, or jointure commission reduces the amount that it pays to its employees providing services to a school district, and that reduction is the result of a reduction of workhours of those employees made pursuant to a shared work program approved pursuant to the provisions of N.J.S.A. 43:21-20.3 et seq., then the amount paid by the district to the educational services commission, county special services school district, or jointure commission shall be reduced by the same amount.

This Policy may be revised as necessary by the Superintendent in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9. The school district's emergency virtual or remote instruction program shall be available on the school district's website.

N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9

Adopted:

