



CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF NEW ROCHELLE
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March 31, 2020

Dear Parents & Guardians:

As you are aware the City School District of New Rochelle has been continuously engaged in contingency planning in preparation for the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) health crisis occurring in New York State and beyond. This rapidly evolving situation is already having significant implications for all New York school communities. As of Friday, March 27, 2020, the Governor directed that all schools be closed until Wednesday, April 15, 2020.

Please know that as a department we are aware of the possibility that closure beyond April 1 may become a reality, we have prepared an update regarding our department's response and the evolving federal and state guidance we have received thus far.

Provision of Special Education During the COVID-19 Closure

Our District intends to provide educational opportunities to our entire student population during a prolonged school closure. We are committed to ensuring students with disabilities have access to those educational opportunities to the same extent as their nondisabled peers, and will seek to provide services and supports that appropriately meet their needs. The District will endeavor to provide, to the extent practicable, remote special education services that approximate those on students' IEPs. Our District recognizes, and the NYS Education Department has acknowledged and understands, that there may be exceptional circumstances that will affect how a particular service is provided during a school closure. Our staff will work to provide opportunities for the provision of remote special and related services, as practicable, through the use of online or virtual instruction, instructional telephone calls, and other curriculum-based instructional activities.

The District will continue to review how the closure impacts the delivery of special education and related services to each student eligible for special education services. This may include review by the Committee on Special Education of the need for make-up services to address any regression of skills during the closure.

Special Education Teachers

Our special education teachers will provide instructional, practice, and skill building activities that are consistent with our distance learning protocols for all students. These activities will offer age-and grade-appropriate content, and be aligned to each student's IEP annual goals to the greatest extent practicable. Special Education teachers will monitor student progress, provide feedback, and assist parents/guardians as they work with their children in the home environment.

Related Services

For many of our providers, services may be able to be conducted remotely. Therefore, related service providers will be scheduling sessions with families ahead of time to assure availability. Remote methods of service delivery can include but are not limited to:

- Google Meet sessions (Video Conference)
- Telephone conference
- Utilization of a chat feature in the Google Platform
- Collaboration on a Google Document with the use of chat and/or comment feature

CSE Meetings

During this disruption in school attendance, it is important for us to meet our CSE obligations in order to reduce the amount of time teachers will need to be pulled from the classroom when school reopens. In order to mitigate the risk of transmission of the virus, all CSE meeting shall be conducted virtually. Our clerical staff will be sending out Google Meet invitations whereby all CSE meeting participants, including parents and students (age 15 or older), will be invited to participate either through video conference or by calling into the meeting via telephone. In preparation for these virtual CSE meetings, our clerical staff will strive to provide all participants with access to an electronic copy of the CSE material, as available, prior to the meeting.

Per Superintendent Feijoo's guidance to the CSDNR community on March 17, 2020, in an effort to transition to virtual CSE meetings, **all CSE and CPSE meetings scheduled from Monday, March 17, 2020 through Friday, March 25, 2020 will be rescheduled to a later date.** On March 26, 2020, the CSE began virtual meetings as set forth above. Correspondence from our Department will be forthcoming as it relates to your scheduled CSE meeting date and how you can join electronically.

Initial Evaluations and Reevaluations

According to the guidance from New York State, if an evaluation requires a face-to-face assessment or observation, the evaluation would need to be delayed until school reopens. Evaluations and reevaluations that do not require face-to-face assessments or observations may take place while schools are closed, so long as a student's parent or legal guardian consents.

All reevaluation meetings will be conducted as annual review meetings if the necessary assessments were not able to be completed prior to this closure. These meetings will be rescheduled at a later date as reevaluations once all the assessments have been completed. We will make all reasonable efforts to comply with the applicable timelines.

Students Attending Out-of-District Programs

The Director has been in communication with each of our students' out-of-district placements to ascertain how they will provide support and/or services during this closure and to ensure that this information is communicated with you. If you have any questions regarding your child's out-of-district program, please email Dr. Anthony Bongo at ABongo@nredlearn.org.

Given the unprecedented nature of the COVID-19 health crisis, the NYS Department of Education has indicated that they will be as flexible as state and federal laws allow, and will continue to investigate and inquire at the federal level about the provision of services for students with disabilities during this outbreak. Please note, given the constraints of distance learning and service provision, the services that are provided in a school setting may not be practicable in a remote environment.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate this challenging situation.

If you have any additional questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact our Assistant Superintendent Student Services Dr. Anthony Bongo at ABongo@nredlearn.org

Sincerely,
Dara E. Joseph
Director of Special and Alternative Education
City School District of New Rochelle