Jeffery S. Zito, Ed. D.
Superintendent
609-476-6300

Roxann Bryant
Director of Curriculum & Instruction
609-476-6108

John Deserable
Interim Business Administrator
609-476-6302

1876 Dr. Dennis Foreman Drive, Mays Landing, NJ 08330
Hamiltonschools.org

Hamilton Township School District

Virtual Instruction Plan 2023-24

LEA Name: *Hamilton Township School District (HTSD)*

Introduction

The student body at the schools served by Hamilton Township School District is 37 percent, White, 23 percent Black, 5 percent Asian or Asian/Pacific Islander, 24 percent Hispanic/Latino, and 11 percent of students are two or more races. In addition, 1.47 percent are identified as homeless.

At schools in Hamilton Township School District, 20 percent of the student population are students with disabilities, 47 percent of students are eligible to participate in the federal free and reduced-price meal program and 2.8 percent of students are English language learners.

Google Classroom will be the platform used to deliver the district curriculum in a virtual learning environment. The Google Apps for Education and various extensions will be used to differentiate, supplement and enhance the district-adopted curriculum to best meet the needs of all students. Accelerated learning will provide students with the delivery of grade-level materials, tasks, and assignments where teachers provide just-in-time support for grade-level mastery of standards.

During the 2020-21 school year, the HTSD successfully instituted both fully-remote and hybrid learning environments at various points throughout the year. For the 2021-22 school year, we functioned fully in person, with no need for closure. Should circumstances change in the future, the HTSD is prepared to work with county and/or state Departments of Health and/or Education to respond with a localized and/or district-wide move to Virtual or remote Instruction. We realize the importance of communicating with our staff, our students, our communities, our sending districts, and all appropriate agencies and departments, and believe we have the apparatus and infrastructure to do so successfully. The information included below is submitted to demonstrate our preparedness for such an event.

Create opportunities for real-time interactions with students (office hours, virtual meetings, etc.). Instruct and maintain good practice in digital citizenship for all students and staff. Teacher leaders or instructional coaches should support teachers in making necessary curricular adjustments and continuously improving the quality of instruction in remote environments. Providing materials, manipulatives, and items for at-home activities at no cost to families (particularly in pre-school). Limiting online activities for preschool students.
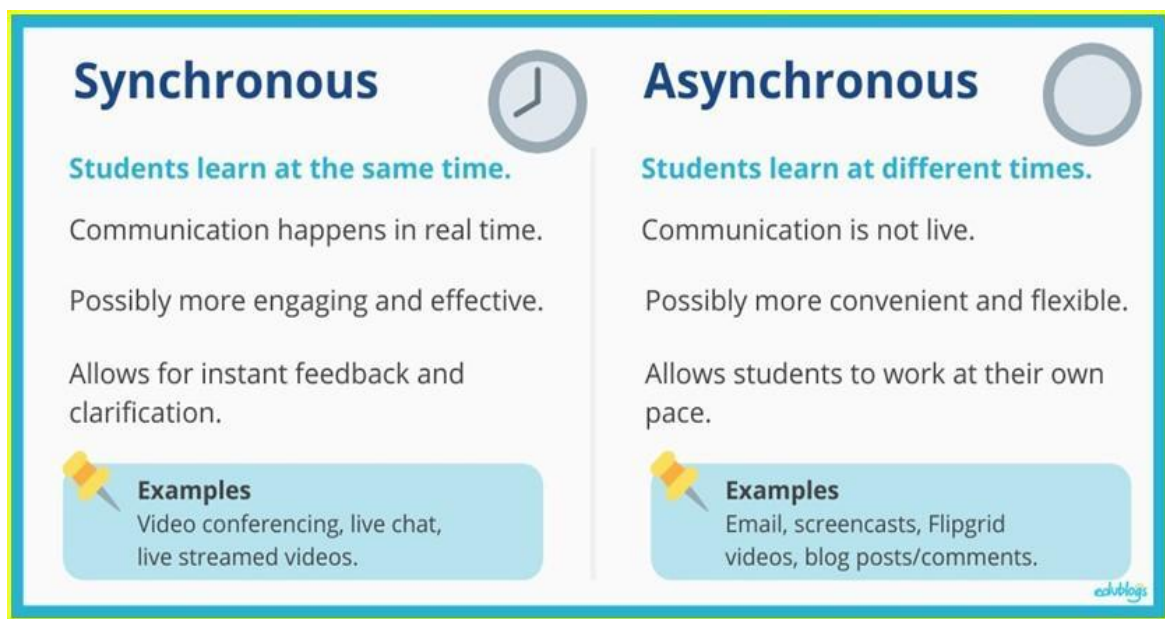
Communication

The HTSD will utilize multiple and various forms of communication to notify families of a move to a virtual/remote environment, including but not limited to, automated phone calls, emails, website messaging, and the REMIND app, various social media platforms. As needed, attempts will be made to include messaging specifically for non-English speaking families. Students (and their families) who do not report/respond to their virtual/remote environment will be personally contacted by school guidance staff, CST, and/or administration to confirm health and assist with the transition. Community communication will be posted on the district website as well as through social media.

Instructional Plan

Academic Services will be delivered in a synchronous fashion by our teaching staff, utilizing our existing Google Suite platform, including but not limited to, Google Classroom and Google Meet. At a minimum, our school day will meet or exceed the state requirement for four hours of instruction per day. HTSD will follow the normal bell schedule in each building to maintain continuity of instruction. The William Davies Middle School's instructional hours are 7:35-2:15, the Joseph Shaner instructional times are 9:10-3:10, and Hess Educational Complex are from 9:15-3:15. As they have done in the past, teachers will primarily utilize synchronous learning, with asynchronous learning used to allow students to demonstrate independent growth and understanding (as part of the assessment plan). HTSD teachers have access to over two dozen "Google extensions" that can be utilized from the introduction of material through direct instruction and assessment (this last part is of note since we can control "our" Chromebooks and establish secure testing environments. HTSD houses ELL programs in each of our three schools that utilize a high-intensity, double-period program for our ELL students, with specific attention to reading spent outside of other curricular classes. In addition to the reading and direct instruction. Professional development for teachers, administrators, and counselors to learn strategies related to culturally responsive teaching and learning, socio-emotional learning, and trauma-informed teaching for students affected by forced migration from their home country. The NJSLS will be addressed through virtual instruction.

The district IT staff will continue to support Google Meet for staff-student/parent digital contact (video conferencing). Staff will use

Google Meet for students participating in virtual learning as well as for small group instruction and/or parent contact along with the Remind App. Google Classroom will continue to be utilized for assignment posting and any other announcements related to specific class sessions along with the Remind App. Staff is encouraged to continue to utilize all district and school-based software platforms for instruction i.e.: BrainPop, Bridges, Learning Ally, NearPod, Read180, Screencastify, etc. Assessments may be adapted to a digital format as needed. Both summative and formative assessments will be used to assess the progress of students in a virtual learning environment. Remind, a school communication platform will be utilized for school and district communication. Through this platform, we are able to share information with teachers, students, and parents and create accountability for student learning. Instructional staff will utilize differentiated instructional strategies to accelerate student learning.

Synchronous

Students learn at the same time.

Communication happens in real time.

Possibly more engaging and effective.

Allows for instant feedback and clarification.

Examples
Video conferencing, live chat, live streamed videos.

Asynchronous

Students learn at different times.

Communication is not live.

Possibly more convenient and flexible.

Allows students to work at their own pace.

Examples
Email, screencasts, Flipgrid videos, blog posts/comments.

edublogs

Instructional Staff

Plan standards-based lessons to meet the needs of students at various levels, ensuring the versatility of lessons to apply to virtual learning environments. Develop predictable routines and structures for students while maintaining student engagement through varied instructional strategies/modalities. Provide regular feedback to students and families on expectations and progress. Set clear expectations for remote instruction. Assess student progress early and often and adjust instruction and/or methodology accordingly.

Administration

Provide time for staff collaboration and planning. Prioritize vulnerable student groups for face-to-face virtual instruction. Identify teachers and teacher leaders that may provide support to staff to continuously improve instruction in a virtual environment. Work with staff and faculty to ensure

that teaching and learning, and all student services are effectively and efficiently developed, planned, and delivered virtually. Hone collaboration, cooperation, and relationship-building skills using alternative methods to remain connected to virtual instruction. Define and provide examples of high-quality instruction given the context and resources available. Assess teacher, student, and parent needs regularly. Ensure students and parents receive the necessary supports to ensure access to virtual instruction. Communicate expectations for delivering high-quality instruction, assessing, and monitoring student progress in the virtual environment, in accordance with NJDOE's Professional Standards for Teachers and NJ Professional Standards for Leaders (N.J.A.C. 6A:9). Create feedback loops with parents and families about students' academic and social-emotional health and well-being, through use of remote learning conferences and/or surveys to parents about their child's experience and learning while out of school. Share a comprehensive account of academic interventions and social-emotional and mental health support services available through the district. Create and communicate realistic student schedules to increase student engagement and accountability for remote learning models. Collaborate in determining expectations for differentiated instruction and rigor in remote learning models. Support families in connecting with teachers and other services they need to be successful in navigating the virtual environment. Ensure the Pre-school Director/Contact Person is involved in the planning in order that development activities and supports are in place for preschool and support transition to Kindergarten. Provide SEL opportunities for all staff.

Support Staff/Paraprofessionals

Pre-record read-aloud and videos around SEL activities and routines (Grades Pre-K through two). Caption pre-recorded instructional videos from general education teachers. Provide real-time support during virtual sessions. Research websites, videos, and links for accessible activities that teachers can incorporate into lessons. Support families and students in accessing and participating in remote learning. Paraprofessionals can be added to online classes as co-teacher. Lead small group instruction in a virtual environment under the direction of a teacher. Facilitate the virtual component of synchronous online interactions. Family Workers will need to provide support to parents via virtual platforms (preschool).

Substitutes

Develop contingency staffing plans in case of sudden long-term absences and/or vacancies. Develop roles and responsibilities for substitute teachers in virtual settings. Designate substitutes to a single school building or grade level to avoid too much movement between schools. Identify areas where additional staff may be necessary: school nurses, counselors, and school psychologists.

Attendance

Attendance is a vital part of student success and will be monitored throughout any remote or virtual instructional period. Students will be required to log in to their class's Google Meet and/or Google Classroom, and attendance will be logged by teaching staff as is currently completed while "in-person". The District has a process to track student attendance (both consecutive and in-total) and will continue to utilize the said process. Students (and their families) will be contacted via email and phone call for individual absences, and will then be tracked by guidance, administration, and our Student Resource Attendance Officers. In absence of phone and/or digital communication leading to proper student attendance, the SRAOs will visit homes to investigate student well-being, ensure proficient technology is present, and provide information on other services (county, state, financial, health, etc.).

Support Services Plan

Special Education and Related Services shall be delivered to the best of our ability in compliance with Board Policy 2460: Any virtual or remote instruction program implemented for general education students shall provide the same educational opportunities for students with disabilities. Special education and related services, including speech-language services, counseling services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, 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 Educational Program, to the greatest extent practicable. CST will utilize Google Meet to hold conferences and meetings related to student services, with staff, students, and families. Google Meet provides an attendance feature that will serve as a backup to the CST member's notes and IEP programs, documentation for compliance, and memorialization. CST members will continue to utilize IEP Direct and their current methods for tracking/logging meetings, check-ins, and services. All teaching staff review IEPs for the students on their class rosters prior to the start of the school year, and we will continue with that requirement to proceed as "business as usual" for HTSD. CST will conduct reviews with teaching staff twice per trimester (or upon student and/or parent questions) to ensure modifications and services are being implemented properly. During remote learning, the Hamilton Township School District will ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's IEP.

Unless significant changes are being recommended to a student's IEP or unless a parent requests a meeting, new IEP meetings will not occur and the IEPs that were developed at each student's annual review meeting for the 21-22 school year will remain in effect. If an IEP meeting is needed, that meeting will occur virtually. Amendments to IEPs can occur with written parental consent should there be a need to make changes such as adding additional accommodations and/or modifications for the presentation of

instruction and/or services virtually. Related services will be provided virtually to the best ability possible. Case managers will communicate frequently with parents and staff to ensure that IEPs are being followed to the fullest extent possible.

Technology

The HTSD is a "1:1" district, providing Acer laptops & Chromebooks to all students. Our teaching staff all have access to at least two of the following: Dell laptop, Microsoft Surface, or Dell desktop. The district is equipped to deploy devices home to students in case of virtual instruction or long-term remote learning. HTSD can also offer our at-risk students mobile hotspots if internet access is challenging in a remote learning environment. The teaching staff has the ability to bring home their laptops and provisions will be provided to non-teaching staff who would need a device to complete their tasks in a remote environment.

Meal Service Plan

The USDA continually changes fully remote guidelines regularly and presently the HTSD will follow the same schedule we utilized during our fully-remote schedules throughout the 2020-21 school year. Meals will be available at the Davies Middle School on Wednesdays for 5-7 days' worth of meals thru distribution(pick-up). Those meals include breakfasts and lunches (7 days would include Thursday thru Tuesday meals). We will also solicit from our families the need for delivery, and provide delivery on the same day, at no cost to our families. Guidance, CST, and administration will be in contact with every family to determine what if any food service is required.

Facilities

The HTSD successfully maintained our three facilities during the fully-remote closure of 2020 and our fully-remote and hybrid learning environments for the 2020-21 school year. HTSD adjusted our staffing and scheduling to fully comply with all county and state guidelines. We will again follow all directives, should we be placed in a virtual or remote environment.

As indicated on NJDOE LEA Checklist for Virtual or Remote Instruction Programs for the 2022-23 school year, the following considerations are explained below:

a. Accelerated learning opportunities
   We will continue our rigorous Gifted & Talented program. New this year, we have MAP Accelerator and Accelerated Reader for grades 6-8.

b. Social and emotional health of staff and students

We utilize our student SEL program as well as provide opportunities for staff to take care of their social-emotional needs, such as spirit days, book club, and common planning time during the school day, If there are specifics that are not listed here, staff can submit their needs to the Administration.

c. Title I Extended Learning Programs

Currently, we have a small number of qualifying Title I students. We can offer extended learning programs if needed which is in accordance with the extra help time which is contractually required by all teaching staff members.

d. 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs We embed 21st-century skills into our curriculum.

e. Credit recovery - Our program is not credit bound, therefore this is not applicable.

f. Other extended student learning opportunities/extracurricular activities

Our teaching staff members are required to have 60 minutes per week of extra help for students which provides extended student learning opportunities. We have a variety of extracurricular activities (before and after school) that we would work to continue in a virtual/remote learning environment.

g. Transportation

We provide transportation services through Shepard, a third-party vendor for any running Extracurricular programs.

h. Childcare

We collaborate with our Community Education program to provide before and after childcare via Kid's Corner.

i. Community programming

We work very closely with our community organizations such as the Community Ed program.

Date: *9.21.2022*
Revised: *7.18.2023*