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VCLC's Emergency Remote Instruction Plan

Background

Beginning in the 2020-2021 school year, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) authorized a "snow day pilot" program that allowed schools to deliver instruction remotely on days in which it would otherwise have closed due to an emergency. Following permanent adoption of remote instruction days by the Board of Regents in January of 2023, all schools are required by NYSED to have in place plans that cover the provision of remote instruction in the event of emergency school closings. In accordance with state regulations, the plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

If our schools need to close due to an emergency condition as per 8 CRR-NY 200.7(10)(i), remote instruction will be implemented. Remote instruction follows a typical school day schedule that resembles students being physically present in their school building and abide by the time on instruction consistent with the definition of a full-day session in 8 CRR-NY 200.1.

Scope

Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK), Center-based Preschool and School-Age Programs, and Special Education Itinerant Services (SEIS)


This plan applies to chief executive officer, chief financial officer, compliance director, information technology director, program directors, principals, teachers (special education, general education, and Special Education Itinerant), teaching assistants, related service providers, administrative assistants.

Stand-Alone Related Services

This plan applies to related service director, related service providers, administrative assistants.

Definitions

- a. *Remote instruction* means instruction provided by an appropriately certified teacher who is not in the same in-person physical location as the student(s)


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receiving the instruction, where there is regular and substantive daily interaction between the student and teacher.

1. Remote instruction shall encompass synchronous instruction provided through digital video-based technology and may also include asynchronous instruction intended to complement synchronous instruction. Digital video-based technology includes online technology and videoconferencing technology.
2. Remote instruction may encompass non-digital and audio-based asynchronous and/or synchronous instruction where such instruction is more appropriate for a student's educational needs.
 - b. *Non-digital and/or audio-based instruction* means instruction accessed synchronously and/or asynchronously through paper-based materials where the student to teacher interaction occurs via telephone or other audio platforms.
 - c. *Asynchronous instruction* means instruction where students engage in learning without the direct presence (remote or in-person) of a teacher.
 - d. *Synchronous instruction* means instruction where students engage in learning in the direct presence (remote or in-person) of a teacher in real time.
 - e. *Emergency Condition* means including but not limited to, extraordinary adverse weather conditions, impairment of heating facilities, insufficiency of water supply, shortage of fuel, destruction of a school building, or a communicable disease outbreak.
 - f. *Full-day session* means a school day with not less than five hours of instruction for preschool students with disabilities and for students whose chronological ages are equivalent to those of students in grades K through 6.

Protocols For Technology and Connectivity for Students

- o Assess access to devices and internet capabilities (see Access to Technology and Connectivity Survey) for all students at their primary residence. Assessment will be conducted in at least one of the following formats, online survey, phone calls, emails, and paper documents.
- o Provide VCLC-owned devices that operate with platforms of instruction to students who do not have access to a device (see Computing Devices for Students Policy).

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- Inform and collaborate with the student's district of residence to ensure internet access for the device to students who do not have sufficient access (see Internet Connectivity Policy).
- Identify students' technology needs to include adaptive technologies.
- In the event of an emergency closing, provide a location and pick-up time and/or arrange for delivery of devices for those who cannot pick them up (See Computing Device for Students Policy).

Remote Instruction:

If the need arises to transition to a fully remote model, the expectation for VCLC of the time spent on instruction will be proportionate to the time spent on instruction in a typical in-person school day. Within our full remote model, teachers combine synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities to maintain community and teacher access. Teachers continue to provide feedback and track student progress.

A. When to Provide Remote Instruction

For UPK, Center-based School-Age and Preschool Programs

If NYS declares a state of emergency where schools are closed and/or there is an emergency condition that prohibits instruction in the school buildings, then the entire Remote Instruction part of the Emergency Instruction Plan will take effect on the first full closed school day.


For SEIS and Stand-alone Related Services

If the emergency condition lasts where a student misses one to five consecutive sessions only, then the provider will use VCLC's make-up policy to recuperate missed sessions.

If the emergency condition lasts where a student misses more than five consecutive sessions, then the entire Remote Instruction part of the Emergency Instruction Plan will take effect immediately.

B. Instructional Platforms

Instruction is mainly provided via the Learning Management System, Seesaw, and a video-conferencing application. Other synchronous and asynchronous instruction are utilized such as telephone conferencing, hands-on and paper-based materials, and interactive websites based on the student's instructional and/or digital

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technology needs. The digital system and application can be accessed on any computer, tablet, or smart phone device. For students that do not have access to technology or internet service, see above Protocols for Technology and Connectivity for Students. Teachers will consider in advance what supplies and materials would be required for students to have at home.

Seesaw usernames and passwords will be provided by the classroom teacher and access to the virtual classroom will be established at the beginning of each extended and regular school year program. There, parents and students will find assignments, some posted for the entire class (such as videos, songs, games, activities, etc.) and specifically designed instruction based on student's IEP goals. As much as possible, posted activities are made interactive using Boom cards, online curriculum subscriptions, and other interactive websites and tools.

For students for whom remote instruction by digital technology is not yet available or appropriate, instruction for those students will be proportionate to their typical school day via hands-on and/or paper-based materials, telephone conferencing from qualified personnel, instructional guidance and facilitation for student caregiver, and asynchronous instruction.

C. Attendance

UPK and Special Education Programs

Children will be marked present for attendance if and only if they attend a minimum of two synchronous instruction sessions and complete a minimum of two asynchronous activities. Children will be marked absent if they do not fill these requirements.

Related Services and Stand-Alone Related Services


Children will be marked present for attendance to synchronous sessions only.

D. Schedules and Service Frequencies

UPK

UPK students will follow the established and agreed upon calendar by VCLC and the school district. The duration of the remote instructional hours is the same as they would receive if physically present in school.

For teachers who teach UPK classes should follow the same guidance, expectations, and best practices regarding pedagogy, content, class meetings, and flexibility.

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Teacher aides are available for instructional support by way of participating in class meetings and keeping up on classroom assignments, preparation, and expectations.

Special Education Programs


For all students, school-age and preschool, who receive specialized instruction services and/or supports through special education will continue to receive such services at the same frequency and duration as they would as if they were physically present in school, including SEIS, and within IEP start and end dates.

For teachers, who teach self-contained special and SCIS, should follow the same guidance and expectations as per Individualized Education Program (IEP) and best practice regarding pedagogy, content, class meetings, and flexibility. Teacher aides are available for instructional support by way of participating in class meetings and keeping up on classroom assignments, preparation, and expectations.

Stand-Alone Related Services

Related service providers are to provide “tele-therapy” services, to the best of their ability. Remote instruction sessions will be set up between students and their therapists once consent is given. School-age and preschool students approved for and receiving stand-alone related services, remote instruction must be provided with the same frequency and duration and within the start and end dates of the student’s IEP.

The provision of related services on any given day will be based upon the student’s school therapy schedule. Related service providers are expected to adhere to similar guidelines as other professionals regarding student and teacher work at home, communication, and flexibility and they will use the students’ IEPs to determine an appropriate/reasonable level of communication and support.

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Sample School Schedule for Remote Instruction

8:30	Remote Instruction within thematic unit <i>Asynchronous</i>
9:00-9:30	Group Instruction: Morning Meeting <i>Synchronous</i>
9:30-10:30	Quiet playtime at home (puzzles, books, building, pretend play) and morning snack. The teacher schedules 15-minute individual or small group instruction for students. <i>Asynchronous and Synchronous</i>
10:30	Music & Movement Break <i>Asynchronous</i>
10:45	Storytime <i>Synchronous</i>
11:00	Home Learning (Seesaw activities) and specially designed instruction <i>Asynchronous and/or Synchronous</i>
11:30	Group and small group instruction: Literacy and Math <i>Synchronous</i>
12:00	Lunch
12:30-1:30	Playtime for (indoor or outdoor). The teacher schedules 15-minute individual or small group instruction for students. <i>Asynchronous and Synchronous</i>
1:30	Group and small group instruction: Check-in Meeting and Literacy and Math <i>Synchronous</i>
2:00-2:30	Art/Sensory Time (coloring, painting, crafts, playdoh, shaving cream, sand, water play, pasta or rice bin) followed by Review and Goodbye meeting <i>Synchronous</i>