

POLICY

**PATERSON
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

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Distance Learning

2360.01 DISTANCE LEARNING

The Board of Education recognizes that distance learning can be a viable instructional option that supports student achievement of academic goals. Distance learning opportunities may be offered to students participating in independent study, credit recovery courses, enrichment courses, or other courses identified by the Superintendent or designee, or in the event that a school site is physically closed for reasons related to public health, natural disasters, or other emergencies.

The district may offer distance learning through a variety of delivery methods as appropriate for the grade level and subject matter. Distance learning opportunities may include video, audio, and/or written instruction, where online interaction is the primary mode of communication between the student and teacher. Online interaction shall include email, live or prerecorded video lessons, teleconferences, and the use of print or electronic materials with written or oral feedback.

The Superintendent or designee will ensure all courses are of high academic quality and are aligned with district standards and curricula. In assessing courses, the Superintendent or designee will consider the course sequence, prioritize content and standards to be completed, and recommend the grading criteria. Students' social and emotional wellness will be considered, and schedules and learning experiences will be designed to build continuity, routine, and regular connections with students and parents.

1. Program Standards.

Teaching staff will use computers, videoconferencing software, online platforms, and other District-approved instructional technology to achieve the goals and objectives of the program. Teachers may use multiple methods of providing instruction to meet student needs, and will communicate with students and parents/guardians regularly about expectations, assignments, and available academic support resources.



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A. Instructional Strategies.

Teachers are required to utilize both synchronous and asynchronous instructional strategies to ensure that students and parents receive adequate feedback and academic support. Synchronous instruction involves teachers and students gathering online at the same time to interact in "real time", online by audio and/or video, and by phone. Asynchronous instruction is coursework delivered by web, email, and other online platforms. When using web-based video conferencing tools including Google Meets and Zoom to provide synchronous instruction, teachers must enable their webcams and appear live on screen to help engage students who are learning remotely. Teachers are required to be on camera for the first five minutes of each class and at all other times during class except when presenting slides or other learning materials.

B. Student Attendance.

Students are expected to review and complete assignments and to participate in live online lessons and learning activities when required. When using web-based video conferencing tools including Google Meets and Zoom to participate in synchronous instruction, students must enable their webcams and appear live on screen for no fewer than the first five minutes of each class.

Teachers will utilize Infinite Campus to record daily student attendance. To be recorded as present for the day, students must log into their online homeroom class using their District-issued credentials and complete the daily Social-Emotional Learning question. To be recorded as present for each class, student must log into the online class and complete the daily assignments posted there. If a student fails to log into any particular class, the school will call the student's parents within 48 hours to inform them of the absence.



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Grading of distance learning assignments and assessments of end-of-course knowledge and understanding of the subject matter shall be consistent with grading of equivalent courses in classroom settings.

C. Equity.

The district shall take steps to ensure that distance learning is available to all students, including economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English learners. All online programming and Internet content will meet accessibility standards for students with disabilities, including compatibility with commonly used assistive technologies.

D. Professional Development.

As needed, the Superintendent or designee will provide teachers with training and ongoing support, including technological support and guidance, to effectively implement distance learning. The district will also provide opportunities for teachers to communicate and collaborate with each other to exchange information on effective practices.

2. Access to Technology.

The Superintendent or designee will assess access to computers and the Internet among students and teaching staff and, consistent with the District's budget and technology plan, may loan devices to use at home and/or assist families in identifying free Internet service providers. To the extent possible, the District will make technical and academic support available.

3. Acceptable Use.

Students and staff shall be expected to use technology responsibly, consistent with all Board policies and regulations regarding the acceptable use of technology, electronic



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communications between students and staff, and copyrighted materials.

4. Student Records.

Distance learning involves the use of web-based platforms and services that are operated not by the District, but by third parties, including Google, ClassDojo, Zoom, and others. To comply with federal law, these online tools have terms of service that require users under the age of 13 to obtain parental permission before registering and sharing any personally identifiable information. The District has no control over these providers or their policies and service terms.

For students to use these resources, the District will need to share certain personal identifying information about each student with the website operator. This information will typically include student names, student ID numbers, e-mail addresses, and other student directory information. Although federal law allows schools to share such information with educational service providers, the District may require written parental consent before sharing any student's name, ID number, e-mail address, or username with online educational service providers.

Electronic information about individual students and staff members will be created, stored, and transferred in the course of implementing the District's distance learning program. The District may access and use this information for any purpose allowed by education privacy laws.

Staff members may create audio/video recordings of their virtual classrooms, but must notify students at the beginning of each class if the session will be recorded. If the recorded session depicts students asking questions or making presentations, the recording may be shared only with students in that particular class. However, the recording cannot be shared with other students or classes, without additional parental consent.



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5. Learning Continuity Plan for Extended School Closures.

The Superintendent or designee will develop a virtual or remote instruction plan to meet the minimum 180-day school year requirement in the event of extended school closures. This plan will be subject to approval by the Board of Education and by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Cross References:

Board Policies:

2200 Curriculum Content
2360 Use of Technology
2361 Acceptable Use of Technology and Social Media
3283 Electronic Communications Between Teaching Staff
Members and Students
2423 Bilingual and ESL Education
2428.1 Standards-Based Instructional Priorities
2460 Special Education
2531 Use of Copyrighted Materials
2624 Grading System
3240 Professional Development for Teachers
3270 Professional Responsibilities for Teachers
3322 Telephone Use for Teaching Staff Members
5200 Student Attendance
5750 Equal Educational Opportunity
5755 Equity in Educational Programs and Services
8335 Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
8420 Emergency and Crisis Situations
9560 Administration of School Surveys

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