

BERGEN CENTER for CHILD DEVELOPMENT EMERGENCY VIRTUAL or REMOTE INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN

School Code: 001

District Code: 8212

County Code: 004

Date: Submitted: 7/30/2026



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Approve Private School for Students with Disabilities

www.bergencenter.com

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ADDENDUM

Responsibilities of staff during remote/virtual learning
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ADDENDUM (Separate Document**Preface**

The purpose of Bergen Center's Emergency Health-Related School Closure Plan is to outline the measures taken to ensure students will continue to receive instruction in the event of long-term school closures as a result of any public health EMERGENCY school closure. The plan outlines the protocols developed to ensure ongoing and open lines of communication. Virtual learning is the main platform to maintain a continuum of instruction, equitable access for all and delivery of related services to successfully implement all aspects of the plan. We have also developed a plan that will ensure the continuum of services for students who lack internet or unable to utilize this format.

Staff Directory

NAME:	POSITION:	EMAIL ADDRESS
1. Tom Santagato Cell #(973) 464-6619	Executive Director / Principal Available for assistance as needed	tsantagato@bccdschool.com
2. Ana Mendoza	Administrative Assistant	amendoza@bccdschool.com
3. Elaine Brondi	Business Secretary	eshenkman@bccdschool.com
4. Susan Moe	Business Manager	smoe@bccdschool.com
5. Annalisse Pluas	School Nurse	aplusas@bccdschool.com
6. Tyler Ryan	School Social Worker	tryan@bccdschool.com
7. Joseph Russano	BCBA (Behavioral Analyst)	jrussano@bccdschool.com
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12. Lyrrah Bonifacio	Classroom Teacher	lbbonifacio@bccdschool.com
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14. Robert Hans	CBI / SLE / Life Skills Teacher	rhans@bccdschool.com
15. Stacy Lieberman	Art Therapist	slieberman@bccdschool.com

16. Krysten Cummins	Supervisor/Speech Language Pathologist	kcummins@bccdschool.com
17. Karen Fink	Occupational Therapist	kfink@bccdschool.com
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27. Noelle Evelina
28. Amy Grasso
29. Ines Lopiccolo
30. Ryan Shepper
31. Ramon Zelaya
32. Natalie Mara
33. Mary Nelson
34. Thelma Gonzalez
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Communicable Disease Policy

POLICY # 8006

SECTION: Operations

Bergen Center's Board of Trustees recognizes that control of the spread of communicable disease is essential to the well-being of the school community and to the efficient operation of the schools. The Board shall be bound by the statutes and by rules of the State Board of Education for the exclusion and readmission of pupils who have contracted a communicable disease and of teachers and pupils who have been exposed to

a communicable disease and for the instruction of teachers in health and the prevention of disease. The Board shall comply with regulations of the New Jersey Department of Health and the Bergen County Board of Health governing the prevention, control, and reporting of communicable disease.

When there is evidence of departure from normal health of any pupil, the Executive Director / Principal of Bergen Center and by the recommendation of the school physician or school nurse exclude such pupil may be excluded from the school building. Any pupil retained at home or excluded from school by reason of having or being suspected of having a communicable disease shall not be readmitted to his/her classroom until he/she presents written evidence of being free of communicable disease. That evidence may be supplied by the school medical inspector or another qualified physician who has examined the pupil.

The Executive Director / Principal shall develop procedures for the control of communicable disease that include the instruction of teaching staff members in the detection of disease and measures for its prevention and control; the removal from school premises to the care of a responsible adult for pupils identified and excluded in accordance with this policy; the preparation of standards for the readmission of pupils who have recovered from communicable disease; the provision of appropriate home instruction to excluded pupils in accordance with law; and the filing of reports as required by law.

Legal References:

<i>N.J.S.A.</i>	<i>18A:40-3; 18A:40-7 et seq.</i>
<i>N.J.S.A.</i>	<i>26:4-4; 26:4-6</i>
<i>N.J.A.C.</i>	<i>6A:16-1.4</i>
<i>N.J.A.C.</i>	<i>8:57-1.3; 8:57-1.6; 8:57-2.1 et seq.</i>

COMPONENT 1 (Equitable Access to Instruction)

Equitable Access to Instructional / Learning Platforms / Technology Access:

All Students will be provided:

- A personal device for virtual / remote learning
- An [email address](#) to communicate with their teachers and related service providers
- Access to Google hangout
- Access to video and/or audio conferencing via Zoom

- Access to educational websites used in class and aligned to lessons
- Credentials to log in to apps providing supplemental instruction
- **Additional measures taken to ensure equitable access to instruction include:**
- Video conferencing via Zoom in the event of technical difficulties with Google
- Audio conferencing via Zoom for students with limited access to the Internet
- Video tutorials for parents and students
- Access to IT support for parents and students
- ANY STUDENT THAT DOES NOT HAVE INTERNET ACCESS... HOT SPOTS will be provided to ensure remote access
- Workbooks and other resources prepared for each student
- In the event that students lack access to the Internet. Teachers will have the ability to mail work directly to them.

Age Appropriate Instruction/Instructional Time / Class Assignments / Independent Work / Measures of Student Learning:

- The specific age and need determine the amount of time a student spends on direct instruction. The window of time offered by teacher and related service therapist is between the hours 8:00 am and 3:00 PM. However, the average daily time spent on virtual direct instruction is approximately 300 - 360 minutes. (5 hours - 6 hours) Times are mutually agreed on with the parent, teacher and therapist. Special circumstance may require a teacher or therapist to meet with the parent and student other than the designated time.
- Class assignments are based on the abilities, skills, grade level and NJ learning standards of each student. Students with significant disabilities complete their assignment during the online time slot with close monitoring, assistance, support and prompting. Whereas, students that have advanced cognitive and independent skills complete their assignments when the on-line session is over. Assignments are reviewed and feedback is provided.
- Bergen Centers employs the use of IXL; one of numerous learning tools offered to the entire student population. IXL is personalized is a learning program that is tailored for each child. With a comprehensive K-12 curriculum, individualized guidance, and real-time analytics, IXL meets the unique needs of each learner.

Assessing Student "Learning Loss" / Regression

- Bergen Center's Students have significant learning disabilities. Each student requires daily assessments to ensure that learning is retained, thereby mitigating any regression or learning loss. Many forms of assessments are used by teachers and para-professionals on a day-to-day basis. The NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) provide a variety of assessments that can be tailored to meet student needs in various disciplines. Upon the re-open of schools, each student will be assessed on the retention of their IEP goals as well as (ADL's) Activities of Daily Living. If a student demonstrates regression, then re-learning the identified deficiencies will be taught and monitored until the student is proficient.

School Organization:

- Class size: 6-12 students
- 1:1 Support 100% of the student population receive 1:1 support
- Classroom makeup: Ungraded
- # of Classrooms 5
- Age Ranges 5-10 years / 10-14 years / 13-16 years / 15-18 years / 18-21 years
- Administrators 2
- Office Staff 4
- Custodial Staff 2
- Food Service Staff 1
- Teacher Staff 9
- Related Services Staff 10
- Para-Professional Staff 42
- Main Building 13,864 sq. ft. - 8 Classrooms / 1 All Purpose Room- Cafeteria / 5 Offices / 1 Café - School Store
6 restrooms / 1 reset room
- Module Building 750 sq. ft. / 3 classrooms
- Property Size 4.06 acres

Student Demographics:

- Student Residence: 23 sending school districts / Bergen, Passaic and Essex
- Student population: 37 students
- Disabilities: Down Syndrome, ASD (verbal & non-verbal), Cerebral Palsy, ADHD, TBI, Mental Health Challenges
Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired, Behavioral Disorders , etc.
- Ages: 5 to 21 present (service ages 5-21)
- Ethnicity White = * Black = * Latino/Hispanic = * Asian/ Pacific Islander = *
Native American = * Other = *
- Economic Status 100% of our students are receiving free lunch and weekend meals lunch
- Pre-School N/A
- Homeless None
- Migrant None
- ELL's *

COMPONENT 2 Addressing Special Education Needs

Accommodations and Modifications as per Student IEP's / Monitoring Student Progress

Bergen Center teachers, para-professionals and related service personnel have received tutorial instruction on how to use ZOOM, Google Hangout, Skype and Facetime to provide virtual instruction. Each of the aforementioned individuals are extremely familiar with every student's specific needs and learning goals, therefore effective instruction is apparent and highly plausible. Parents, students and group home guardians are also trained in how to access the various virtual platforms employed.

While meeting IEP goals is certainly important during this time, the health of each child is paramount. Teachers and the school nurse will do WELLNESS CHECKS. Monitoring will occur on a daily basis performed by the classroom teacher and/or the school nurse or related service therapist. Many children received food through their local schools, so the Covid-19 closures, coupled with rising unemployment, have increased the needs of students and their families. Recognizing that students cannot learn as well if they are hungry or feel unsafe, doing weekly runs to drop off hygiene items and nonperishable foods for the children will occur if the need arises. It is important the school and parents be on the same page.

Bergen Center will ensure that every parent has a copy of their child's IEP. If they cannot find a copy one will be sent. In addition, a phone call with the parents will take place to re-acclimate to the parent with the child's IEP. The students **PLAFF** (*present level of academic achievement and functional performance*) will also be discussed to ensure continued progress.

Accommodations will be made to ensure a family has a reliable computer connection and a device with the appropriate capability. Bergen Center will also provide free hot spots, iPad, Chromebooks or augmentative device/s if a student is in need during the Covid-19 crisis. Students that receive ABA support will also be remotely when possible and appropriate

If a technology platform is not the preferred, an alternate method of instruction may be used, i.e. (hard copy materials sent via mail followed up with telephone instruction, pictures, drawings, refreshable braille, switch, alternative communication (AAC) supports and or / simple speech generating devices (SGDs).

While providing special education services, progress reports will continue to be provided to parents/ guardians on the schedule indicated in the IEP, to the extent possible. If progress reporting is unable to be provided as indicated in the IEP, this decision will be documented; a plan will be developed to resolve any concern when school returns to normal operations. As educational services are provided, Bergen Center will collect progress data in order to inform parents and the IEP teams on compensatory service decisions once normal school operations resume.

Related Service Provisions - (Speech Language Therapist SLP - Occupational Therapist OT - Physical Therapist, PT Audiologists and Teacher of the Visually Impaired TVI)

The NJDOE and Federal Government determined that related services can be delivered via video conferencing. Bergen Center's staff will be available to deliver services accordingly. Bergen Center has updated this aspect of the emergency preparedness plan and communicated with each ending district.

Additional details regarding delivery of related services are as follows:

- Student-specific work packets to provide mandated sessions targeting IEP goals
- Scheduled time via Google Hangout, facetime or Zoom for additional face-to-face support
- Scheduled time for weekly check-ins with parent via phone and email for increased support

Virtual IEP Meetings / Methods to Document IEP Implementation and Tracking of Services

Scheduled IEP meetings follow the subsequent steps.

- Sending district case managers schedule and notify the parent and school case manager to schedule a mutual time to meet virtually. If computer access is not available a conference call is scheduled.
- The appropriate stake holders are notified of the meeting.
- Virtual invitations are emailed and confirmed
- Meeting is conducted with the IEP Team

To the **best extent possible** the monitoring and delivery of services will include:

- The classroom teacher will daily record daily the services delivered and the process will be monitored by the principal, school social worker and BCBA.
- Each service provider will record the frequency and duration of services. Weekly records will be submitted to the principal via Google Docs at the end of each week.
- Each service provider will also maintain and record data on efficacy of accommodations. The records will be submitted to the principal via a Google Doc at the end of each week.
- All documents are stored electronically in a secure file.

Communication to Sending District Case Managers

Bergen Center's school psychologist is responsible to communicate weekly with every case manager via email, telephone or virtually. The communication addresses the progress of each student, any challenges that may occur and to offer support to the parent and student. Case managers will also be provided with an instant alert, recorded video, or letter that is sent to parents and students.

COMPONENT 3 (Addressing ELL / Bilingual Needs)

Students that need ELL services or language interpretation services are provided by a family member that speaks English and the native language. If not feasible, then the school will hire an interpreter to join each virtual learning session. If a deaf or a visually impaired student requires services, Bergen Center will provide (ASL) American Sign Language and / or augmentative devices to service that student/s.

Bergen Center is presently is meeting the needs of 2 students that require sign language instruction or visual impairment instruction.

The method that is presently used to communicate with ELL, immigrants or bilingual student is having a family or staff member assist in translating materials and verbal instruction employing the native language of the students. Moving forward Bergen Center multiple companies have recently designed portable Translation Smart Phone Devices that are reasonable priced. Bergen Center will be purchasing a language translator device that can translate 102 languages with 98% accuracy.

Additionally, in order to meet the needs of families, students and staff that may be impacted socially, emotionally or forced to be removed from their current living environment, the Bergen Center will have our Social Worker reach out to impacted families to ensure that they have the necessary resources and contact information to seek assistance. The Bergen Center has created a list of Family Resources and has posted it on our website, please see link below.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HBH9CVt5xqBlhPkBqGERpt_WLZ5gA4bMQtowonsjyF0/edit?usp=sharing

COMPONENT 4 (Safe Delivery of Meals)

The sending school districts of all students who receive free or reduced meals, have been asked to make provisions for their out of district students attending Bergen Center in accordance with whatever plans have been made for their in-district students. Each district was contacted via email or letter requesting the same.

COMPONENT 5 (Length of Virtual / Remote Instruction)

The length of remote instruction, teacher availability, class assignments, independent work, tiered and measured learning were indicated in Component 2. However, comparable expression suggests that the length of instruction time is determined on the daily status of each student. Succinctly stated, students suffering from severe disabilities may be unable to meet academic and behavioral expectations on any given day. Nevertheless, daily efforts are demonstrated to ensure that services are implemented in accordance with IEPs to the GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE. The ultimate goal is to maximize student growth and development.

COMPONENT 6 (Attendance)

Bergen Center utilizes **REALTIME TIME** as the Student Tracking Information System. This system allows teachers to remotely record the attendance of each student. At the end of each week the report is sent to the business office and forwarded monthly to every sending district

A student is recorded **PRESENT** when he / she reports to their daily virtual learning session, i.e. (Zoom, Google meets, Skype, etc.).The complexity or severity may look different for each student and is based on individual needs and circumstances. Therefore, the general” rule of thumb” or broad application for being marked present is not intended to be absolute for every situation.

When a teacher makes three attempts to contact the parent/student in the course of one day, and that student fails to respond, it is at that time the student is recorded **ABSENT**. An **ABSENCE** may also be ” defined when a family notifies the school that their child is ill or unable to participate for the day due to varied circumstance related to the child’s disability.

When a student demonstrates a pattern (3 or more times) of not attending a virtual or teleconference session, the sending district case manager is contacted with the request to follow-up with the parent / family. In addition, a letter is sent to the parent from the principal indicating the lack of student participation.

As previous indicated; Bergen Center monitors the virtual attendance of each student. Although attendance is essential to the continued growth and progress of a student, however, it is NOT the attendance record that determines whether a student is retained, promoted or graduates during the pandemic. The critical component is the IEP which ultimately determines the aforementioned.

It is understood that school closures are a temporary situation, and APSSD are required to offer special education services to the most appropriate extent possible while students are away from their schools/programs. The IEP teams may need to consider compensatory services and IEPs may need to be adjusted accordingly when school resumes. The IEP team will determine the amount of compensatory related services and the specifics for retention, promotion and graduation. IEP’s will be adjusted accordingly and adjustments will be made on a case-by-case basis, when school resumes.

Assessments of Learning (previously stated)

Bergen Center’s Students have significant learning disabilities. Each student requires daily assessments to ensure that learning is retained, thereby mitigating any regression or learning loss. Many forms of assessments are used by teachers and para-professionals on a day-to-day basis. The NWEA (Northwest Evaluation Association) provide a variety of assessments that can be tailored to meet student needs in various disciplines. Upon the re-open of schools, each student will be assessed on the retention of their IEP goals as well as (ADL’s) Activities of Daily Living. If a student demonstrates regression, then re-learning the identified deficient skills will be taught and monitored until the student is proficient.

COMPONENT 9 (Board of Trustees Approval)

Bergen Center's Board of Trustees has received the Virtual Instructional Plan via email and has been asked to approve it in writing. Our next meeting is scheduled on July 30, 2024.

COMPONENT 10 (Website Posting)

In accordance with NJ DOE requirement's Bergen Center's **Emergency School Closure Plan** will be posted and updated on the school website on Wednesday, July 31, 2024 **WEBSITE:** www.bergencenter.com

COMPONENT 11 (Essential Employees)

The following staff members of Bergen Center are considered essential for the continuation of operations during the COVID-19 crisis while we have transitioned to online instruction. They may be required to pick up files, mail, or deliveries and may be requested to work on site for short durations of time depending on extenuating circumstances. Our custodial staff will ensure the building is clean, heated and ready for our students and staff to return on short notice. Additionally, the County Office will be provided with this list of essential employees, see below, as soon as we determine that we will be moving to virtual instruction. School districts will also be notified and provided with this list.

<i>Tom Santagato</i>	<i>Executive Director / Principal</i>
<i>Elaine Brondi</i>	<i>Business Secretary</i>
<i>Susan Moe</i>	<i>Business Manager / Accounts Payable</i>
<i>Ana Mendoza</i>	<i>Administrative Assistant</i>
<i>Jack Calligaro</i>	<i>Maintenance / Custodian</i>
<i>Mike Boyce</i>	<i>Maintenance / Custodian</i>

COMPONENT 12 (Plan Sharing)

The updated plan will be shared with sending districts upon approval of the Board of Trustees.