

Community Relations

**SUBJECT: EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

The Board of Education authorizes the Superintendent of Schools to close the schools or dismiss students/staff early when hazardous weather or other emergencies threaten the health or safety of students, personnel or school property. The Superintendent may delegate this authority to another staff member in the event of his/her absence. Building Principals may authorize the early dismissal of a grade or school before the regular time for emergencies or other reasons upon approval of the Superintendent. Such action is never to be taken lightly, for public education is one of the principal functions of the community and should be maintained at a normal level except in extreme circumstances.

Schools will not be closed merely to avoid inconvenience. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening hour, or to dismiss students early, the Superintendent has the responsibility to ensure that administrative, supervisory, and operational activity is continued to the extent possible. School closing and delayed starting times will be announced to the public via Parent Square, email, school district website and news/media outlets. If no report is heard, it can be assumed the schools are in session, and are opening on time.

When the schools are closed for emergency reasons, all school-sponsored activities and programs will automatically be canceled or postponed. School-sponsored activities and programs shall include social events, club meetings, sporting events at home or away and adult education programs.

In making the decision to close schools, the Superintendent may consider many factors, including the following, which relate to the safety and health of children:

- a) Weather conditions, both existing and predicted;
- b) Driving, traffic, and parking conditions affecting public and private transportation facilities;
- c) Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous; and
- d) Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.

Among the other factors the Superintendent may consider are advice from traffic and weather authorities, Building Principals, and school officials.

Students, parents, and staff will be informed early in each school year of the procedures that will be used to notify them in case of emergency closing.

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**SUBJECT: EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS (Con't)**

**Emergency Early School Closings**

In the event of an emergency early school closing due to inclement weather conditions or other emergency:

- a) The Superintendent must approve of the emergency early school closing;
- b) The Superintendent shall notify the Principals;
- c) The Principals will dismiss the students and staff in accordance with the directions of the Superintendent; and
- d) The Superintendent shall notify the media and respond to all media queries.

**Student Transportation**

When an emergency closing has been instituted, bus drivers who appear for work on a scheduled morning route will receive two (2) hours of pay, known as "show time." However, if the emergency closing of the schools has been announced the previous evening, the bus drivers will not be paid "show time."

Education Law Section 3604(7)

**SUBJECT: REMOTE INSTRUCTION**

**Overview**

The District may offer remote or distance instruction to students at certain times including, but not limited to, independent study, enrichment courses, and in the event of an emergency condition, 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.

In the event the District remains in session and provides remote instruction when it would otherwise close due to an emergency condition, the remote instruction provided by the District will be consistent with the District's emergency remote instruction plan, located in the District-wide school safety plan.

When making decisions about remote instruction, the District will consult with students, parents, teachers, administrators, community members, and other stakeholders as appropriate. When implementing remote instruction, the District will ensure that it is complying with applicable teaching and learning requirements.

**Definitions**

- a) "Asynchronous instruction" means instruction where students engage in learning without the direct presence (remote or in-person) of a teacher.
- 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) "Remote instruction" means instruction provided by an appropriately certified teacher who is not in the same in-person physical location as the student(s) receiving the instruction, where there is regular and substantive daily interaction between the student and teacher.
  - 1. Remote instruction will 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 this instruction is more appropriate for a student's educational needs.
- d) "Synchronous instruction" means instruction where students engage in learning in the direct presence (remote or in-person) of a teacher in real time.

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**SUBJECT: REMOTE INSTRUCTION (Con't)**

**Formats and Methods of Remote Instruction**

Remote instruction may be delivered through a variety of formats and methods. Determinations about how to best deliver remote instruction will take into account a variety of factors including, but not limited to, the number of students involved, the subject matter, the students' grade levels, and technological resources of both the District and students. Consideration will also be given to whether accommodations need to be made for students with disabilities or English language learners. All students will have access to 1:1 Chromebooks, Google Classroom and Parent Square for remote instruction.

**Remote Instruction During an Emergency Condition**

Emergency Remote Instruction Plan

The District-wide school safety plan will include plans for the provision of remote instruction during any emergency school closure. The emergency remote instruction plan will include:

- a) Policies and procedures to ensure computing devices will be made available to students or other means by which students will participate in synchronous instruction and policies and procedures to ensure students receiving remote instruction under emergency conditions will access Internet connectivity. The Superintendent will survey students and parents and persons in parental relation to obtain information on student access to computing devices and access to Internet connectivity to inform the emergency remote instruction plan;
- b) Expectations for school staff as to the proportion of time spent in synchronous and asynchronous instruction of students on days of remote instruction under emergency conditions with an expectation that asynchronous instruction is supplementary to synchronous instruction;
- c) A description of how instruction will occur for those students for whom remote instruction by digital technology is not available or appropriate;
- d) A description of how special education and related services will be provided to students with disabilities and preschool students with disabilities in accordance with their individualized education programs to ensure the continued provision of a free appropriate public education; and
- e) If the District receives foundation aid, the estimated number of instructional hours the District intends to claim for state aid purposes for each day spent in remote instruction due to emergency conditions.

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**SUBJECT: REMOTE INSTRUCTION (Con't)**

Reporting of Computer and Connectivity Survey Results

No later than June 30 of each school year, the Superintendent will report to the Commissioner of Education the results of the survey on student access to computing devices and access to Internet connectivity on a form and format prescribed by the Commissioner.

Minimum Instructional Hours

Remote instruction provided on days when the District would have otherwise closed due to an emergency condition may be counted toward the annual hourly requirement for the purpose of state aid. The Superintendent will certify to the New York State Education Department, on a form prescribed by the Commissioner, that an emergency condition existed on a previously scheduled school day and that the District was in session and provided remote instruction on that day and indicate how many instructional hours were provided on that day and certify that remote instruction was provided in accordance with the District's emergency remote instruction plan.

**Remote Instruction Support**

As necessary, the District will provide instruction on using remote instruction technology and IT support for students, teachers, and families. The District will also work to ensure that teachers and administrators are provided with professional development opportunities related to designing an effective remote instruction experience.

**Compliance with District Policies, Procedures, and the Code of Conduct**

Teachers and students are required to comply with any and all applicable District policies, procedures, and other related documents as they normally would for in-person instruction. Examples include, but are not limited to, the District's policies and procedures on non-discrimination and anti-harassment, acceptable use, and copyright. Students will also be required to abide by the rules contained within the *Code of Conduct* at all times while engaged in remote instruction. Violations of the *Code of Conduct* and/or engaging in prohibited conduct may result in disciplinary action as warranted.

Privacy and Security of Student and Teacher Data

The District will take measures to protect the personally identifiable information of students and teachers from unauthorized disclosure or access when using remote instruction technologies in compliance with law, regulation, and District policy. Examples of these measures include, but are not limited to, minimizing the amount of data shared to only that which is necessary, deidentifying data, and using encryption or an equivalent technical control that renders personally identifiable information unusable, unreadable, or indecipherable to unauthorized persons when transmitted electronically.

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**Solvay Union Free School District**

2022

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Students

**SUBJECT: REMOTE INSTRUCTION (Con't)**

8 NYCRR Sections 100.1, 100.5, 155.17, and 175.5

NOTE: Refer also to Policies #5681 -- School Safety Plans  
#7220 -- Graduation Options/Early Graduation/Accelerated Programs

Adopted: January 9, 2023