



## Preparing students for life beyond the classroom

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# School Health-Related Closure Preparedness Plan\*

(updated 3.24.20, 4.7.20, 5.21.20, 6.18.20, 11.5.2020)

### Overview

This plan is in response to guidance (March 5, 2020) from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) pertaining to the current outbreak of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). The NJDOE has advised that “schools may be asked to close preemptively or reactively, therefore schools should be making plans for what to do if there are recommendations for closing schools or cancelling events.” As per the memo, the provision of “home instruction” services should be guided by N.J.A.C. 6A:16- 10.1 and may include direct services, online instruction, services provided through contract with another district board of education, and/or any other means developed by the district to meet the needs of all students in the district. As per the guidance received March 5th, if The Phoenix Center (TPC) receives notification of a public health-related closure, this plan will outline the virtual/remote instruction services that will be offered in order for the days schools are closed to count towards compliance of the traditional 180-day requirement in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9. It is important to note that at that time, the guidance indicated that unless TPC received notification from either the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) or the Nutley Department of Health to close, the days will not count towards the 180-day requirement. It is noted that on March 12th, TPC received confirmation from its executive county office that a closing was advisable. Also note that Governor Murphy’s Executive Orders 104 and 107 indicates schools are closed until such time as the Orders are removed.

The intent of a School Health-Related Closure plan is to provide students with meaningful learning experiences that are aligned to the curriculum and their IEPs in the event that there is a health crisis. This plan outlines steps necessary for TPC to support students during a health-related school closure, or multiple closures, should the need arise.

## Component 1 Equitable Access to Instruction

### About The Phoenix Center

The Phoenix Center is an accredited, not-for-profit school serving the educational, behavioral and therapeutic needs of students ages 5-21 with autism, multiple disabilities, behavioral and intellectual disabilities.

### Demographic Information

Of the 143 students currently enrolled at the school:

- 64 towns in eight New Jersey counties are represented (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Monmouth, Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Union)
- More than half have a diagnosis on the autism spectrum

\* Approved by the Board of Directors on 5/27/2020

- Over 60% require a one-to-one paraprofessional aide
- 40% are either non-verbal or have limited expressive language
- Over 60% are 14 years old or older
- 40% of students qualify for free or reduced meals

As of November 2nd, of the 135 students currently enrolled at the school:

- 64 towns in eight New Jersey counties are represented (Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Monmouth, Morris, Passaic, Sussex and Union)
- More than half have a diagnosis on the autism spectrum
- Over 60% require a one-to-one paraprofessional aide
- 40% are either non-verbal or have limited expressive language
- Over 60% are 14 years old or older
- 40% of students qualify for free or reduced meals
- 35% of the students participate in 100% virtual learning

### **Equitable Access needs attention**

On Monday, March 9, 2020, students were surveyed on their capabilities of completing work online at home. As of May 21st, 140 of TPC students had the access to technology needed for virtual learning. We have two students who TPC In-House Case Managers (IHCM) are working with District Case Managers to work through technical/IT issues and one student's family is working on WIFI issues. Comprehensive packets of paper lessons/activities for all students were sent home March 16, 2020, as phase one of home instruction/distance learning.

As of November 2, 2020, TPC IHCM's have been working in conjunction with the sending districts to ensure that students have access to technology. To date, the IHCM's are communicating with districts on securing devices for two students.

## **Component 2 Addressing Special Education Needs**

### **Virtual/Distance Learning**

#### **Academic**

In the event of a School Health-Related Closure, it is expected that all students will continue their learning through virtual/distance learning. TPC will supply instruction both virtually via Google Classroom/Meet and with table top activities, which is customized for each student based upon their IEP, from 8:30 am to 2:45 pm, each school day. Teachers will be responsible for developing lessons and materials for both virtual and table top learning through paper packets that were sent home and activities uploaded into Google Classroom. Teachers will update or adjust student assignments, as needed, as well as upload additional activities and assignments, virtually through Google Classroom/Meet and emails. Assessment of student progress will be based on completed assignments demonstrated in Google Classroom, photos or videos of work emailed to teachers, and anecdotal data obtained during live Google Meets, email and/or telephone calls. Teachers will email parents/guardians between 8:00 am and 8:30 am each day to touch base in regards to their child's instruction and to offer any assistance they may need. Teachers will conduct a

minimum of two live lessons daily, aligned to student IEP goals and objectives, through Google Meet.

Parents/Guardians will be critical in assisting students to continue their educational programming through support with technology, communicating with their teachers and paraprofessionals (General Paraprofessionals and 1:1 Paraprofessionals) through email, conference call or Google Meet, and assisting in completing necessary assignments each day. It was requested of parents/guardians to initial and date the student academic log each day their child worked on Google Classroom and table top activities. This form will be shared with teachers via email and/or anecdotally through telephone calls.

Paraprofessionals will be supporting the students during their virtual instruction as per the below *Expectation of Staff* section of this document.

Students will be given assignments for Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Economics (when applicable), World Language (when applicable), Life Centered Skills, Health/Physical Education, Art, Music, Structured Leisure, Consumer Family Life Skills and Supported Employment (when applicable). All high school graduation requirements will be maintained and supported throughout this school health-related closure.

### **Related Services**

Effective April 1, 2020, as per the *Notice of Rule Waiver/Modification/Suspension* pursuant to Executive Order #103, all related services will be provided via teletherapy. All related service treatment plans and therapy provided will follow the goals and objectives in the student's IEP, including duration and frequency. Therapy will be delivered via a combination of Google Meet sessions, assignments in Google Classroom and/or phone conference with students and consultation with parents. Materials are provided through assignments made in Google Classroom or materials that are sent home. Related service providers will update or adjust assignments and materials as needed.

Attendance records to track services and therapy log notes (including documentation of progress, accommodations and modifications) will continue to be maintained on a daily basis. Attendance is recorded based upon student participation in Google Meets and assignments. If a student does not attend a live Google Meet session, the therapist will contact the family during that time. Adjustments in related service live sessions schedules will be made, as needed to accommodate the students. Assessment of student progress will be based on completed assignments demonstrated in Google Classroom, photos or videos of work emailed to teachers, and anecdotal data obtained during live Google Meets, email and/or telephone calls. In addition, SEMI Tracking Logs will be completed and provided to sending districts on a quarterly basis.

Additionally, the counseling department, consisting of two school social workers and a school psychologist will facilitate a Parent Support group following the TPC Family Services calendar that will allow parents the opportunity to express concerns during this time of virtual learning and share strategies. Also, the counseling department in conjunction with the administrative team will be prepared to implement the "Loss of Student/Staff Procedure," if needed.

## **Supported Employment**

Supported Employment specialists will supply customized activities to Google Classroom/Google Meet and table top activities for students who are 16 to 21. Supported Employment Specialists will be conducting live Google Meets and/or providing phone calls to students on their caseload. Students will be provided with activities that can be completed in the home environment that focus on job skills and are aligned to the Career Education goals in their IEPs.

## **Dissemination of Information and Communication**

- Administration Communication - Administration, in collaboration with the School Nurse, will keep abreast of all information regarding the COVID-19 virus from the CDC, NJDOH, Nutley Department of Health, NJDOE and Governor Murphy. This team will communicate daily regarding any updates, alerts, and/or changes and will share pertinent information with staff, families, sending districts and community members.
- Staff Communication-
  - Administration will communicate on a consistent basis with supervisors and department managers.
  - Supervisors and department managers will communicate on a consistent basis with staff members within their department or unit.
  - Teachers and paraprofessionals will communicate twice a day via email at the start of the day as well as at the end of the day in order to discuss planning, material preparation, and professional development trainings.
  - TPC In-House Case Managers will facilitate scheduled IEP prep meetings via GoToMeeting.
- Parent Communication - As new information is provided by CDC, NJDOH, Nutley Department of Health, NJDOE and Governor Murphy, TPC will maintain open lines of communication with parents. Below are the ways in which information will be shared:
  - Community Alerts - Administration will send out automated *Apprise Alert* phone and text messages as needed.
  - TPC website, Facebook and Instagram will be updated with new information specific to the school closure.
  - Email - All staff will have access to their email. The classroom teachers will send a daily email to all parents from 8:00 am to 8:30 am as a way to touch base for the start of the day. All certified staff will be available to parents from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm for any questions/concerns.
  - Conference call system (GoToMeeting app) - This will be utilized to conduct Annual Reviews and other planned meetings, unless a different system is provided by the sending district.

- TPC In-House Case Managers will communicate with parents via phone call and/or email on a weekly basis in order to keep the lines of communication open and ensure services are implemented in accordance with IEP's to the greatest extent possible as well as to attain the welfare of the family unit. They will also communicate with the sending district case manager as needed regarding concerns and information with their students.
- All written and verbal communication will be translated into Spanish for families, as needed.

### **Expectation of Staff**

In the event of a School Health-Related Closure, it is expected that all staff members are available to work their contractual hours, Monday through Friday.

All **certified staff** will be developing IEPs, attending virtual meetings (AR, prep, etc), completing projects/tasks as assigned, engaging the students in learning through Google Classroom/Meet and participating in professional development, as needed. Specifically, teachers will be responsible for developing lessons and materials for both virtual and table top learning through paper packets that were sent home and activities uploaded into Google Classroom. Teachers will update or adjust student assignments, as needed, as well as upload additional activities and assignments, virtually through Google Classroom/Meet and emails. Assessment of student progress will be based on completed assignments demonstrated in Google Classroom, photos or videos of work emailed to teachers, and anecdotal data obtained during live Google Meets, email and/or telephone calls. Classroom teachers will email all paraprofessionals in their classroom twice per day to confirm assignments for the day and to address any concerns. Classroom teachers will provide direct supervision to paraprofessionals and guide them to assist in creating materials and how to best support students while on virtual/remote instruction. Classroom teachers will email parents/guardians between 8:00 am and 8:30 am each day to touch base in regards to their child's instruction and to offer any assistance they may need. Classroom teachers will conduct at a minimum, two live lessons, daily, aligned to IEP goals and objectives, through Google Meet.

All **paraprofessionals** work hours are 8:15 am to 3:00 pm, Monday through Friday, as per their contract. They will continue to function under the supervision of the classroom teacher and assist in developing materials to meet each student's unique needs. In addition, all paraprofessionals will engage in professional development opportunities.

More specifically, paraprofessionals, including one-to-ones will be available via Google Classroom and Google Meet to support the students in learning. They will create a live meeting each day and be available to work with the students throughout the duration of their school day (8:30am - 2:45pm). Paraprofessionals will assist in presenting materials, providing accommodations, and demonstrating strategies in order for students to work on assignments. Paraprofessionals will also be able to recommend behavioral supports for parents/guardians in order to help students be successful during virtual learning.

**One-to-one paraprofessionals** will also be available to attend internal IEP/AR "prep" meetings with TPC staff, to prepare for upcoming Annual Reviews on the student they work

with directly. All paraprofessionals will complete a log of work/activities completed during the day.

**Behavior team members** will be working on reviewing behavior plans and crisis management plans, attending IEP meetings, supporting parents of students with behavioral concerns, and completing professional development modules and additional assigned activities. TPC's Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) and Behavior Coordinator will be providing support to parents and staff members with students demonstrating challenging behaviors when requested.

All **related service providers** will be responsible for developing treatment plans and materials for their students that are based upon the goals and objectives in their IEP's. Therapy will be delivered via a combination of Google Meet sessions, assignments in Google Classroom and/or phone conference with students/parents. Related service providers will update or adjust assignments and materials as needed. Attendance records to track services, therapy log notes (including documentation of progress, accommodations and modifications) and SEMI Tracking Logs will continue to be maintained on a daily basis. Related service providers will communicate with parents as needed to ensure the provision of related services.

### **Meetings (Annual Review, Re-Evaluation)**

TPC will virtually host IEP meetings through the use of the GoToMeeting app or the mode of teleconferencing preferred by the sending district. The access code will be shared with families and districts as needed. TPC Child Study Team Secretary (CSTS) will maintain the IEP meeting calendar, listen to voicemails and return calls as needed. The CSTS will email all attendees of upcoming meetings and provide the conference call information. Evaluations, eligibility meetings, IEP reviews, and re-evaluation meetings will be rescheduled by the sending district case manager(s) as needed. In addition, student staffings will be conducted on an as needed basis to discuss any student issues or concerns.

## **Component 3 Addressing ELL AND Bilingual Needs**

### **Bilingual Needs**

TPC addresses the bilingual needs of Spanish speaking students and families to maintain the best form of communication when possible. While TPC currently does not have any students identified as English Language Learners (ELL), any one-to-one student who primarily speaks Spanish is assigned a paraprofessional who also speaks Spanish to best facilitate communication. Spanish speaking staff members will assist parents during Google Meets as well as during parent meetings with translation. In addition, TPC will provide written and verbal communication in Spanish, as needed, for families. Translation for accessing technology (i.e. Google Classroom, Google Meet) will be provided through TPC website, emails, and phone calls. TPC In-House Case Managers will also facilitate connections with the sending districts in order to have Spanish speaking support on district used technology.

# Component 4 Safe Delivery of Meals

## School Nutrition Program

For all students\* who qualify for free or reduced meals, the TPC Food Service Coordinator will contact the student’s District Case Manager so local arrangements can be made for them to receive these meals, if available. A letter will be sent to each qualifying parent/guardian advising them to contact their home school district for meal options. In addition, Seamless Summer as well as other food provision options will be made available to parents through the TPC website: <https://www.thephoenixcenternj.org/parents/lunch-program/>. TPC In-House Case Managers will be notified of students who qualify for free or reduced options and they will follow-up with families weekly.

\*Currently 58 students qualify for free or reduced meals.

As of October 9, 2020, when there is a School-Health Related Closure, it is recommended by the Department of Agriculture that TPC not provide meals to students due to safety concerns. Families will be notified to reach out to their local food banks, local school districts, or local community centers, such as a YMCA, as a possible option to obtain meals safely.

# Component 5 Length of Virtual or Remote Instructions Day

TPC will supply instruction both virtually via Google Classroom/Meet and with table top activities, which are customized for each student based upon their IEP, from 8:30 am to 2:45 pm, each school day. All staff members will work their contractual hours and will engage in the virtual learning process during the extended closure. Assessment of student progress will be based on completed assignments demonstrated in Google Classroom (permanent product via Google Docs/Slides), photos or videos of work emailed to teachers by student/parent, and anecdotal data obtained during live Google Meets, email and/or telephone calls.

TPC student schedule during virtual/remote learning is as follows:

(Please note, should TPC need to switch to 100% virtual instruction, all hybrid students, Cohorts A & B, will follow their virtual week’s schedule for all live Google Meets and 100% virtual students will continue with their schedules as is.)

|                                 | Monday  | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------------------|---|---------|-----------|----------|--------|
| <b>Parent Communication</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Email parents/guardians, daily, by 8:30 am to provide a Welcome to the day and expectations</li> <li>Ongoing email and phone calls to parents/guardians to answer questions and provide support</li> </ul>   |         |           |          |        |
| <b>Daily Lessons/Activities</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly assignments will be posted in Google Classroom daily by 8:30 am               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and Life Skills daily</li> <li>World Language and Economics (2x a week as per student IEP and schedule)</li> <li>Health/PE daily</li> <li>Music, Art and CFL (1-2x a week as per student IEP and schedule)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Any updates or modifications to lessons will be posted in Google Classroom, daily, as needed</li> </ul> |         |           |          |        |

|                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>Live Lessons</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live lessons aligned to students' IEP goals will be facilitated by the teacher in Google Meets twice a day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Times will be determined by the teacher and parents will be notified.</li> <li>• Teachers will check into individual/small group links to work with students and paraprofessionals throughout the day.</li> <li>• Special Area teachers (Music, Art, PE, and CFL) will facilitate lessons based on the hybrid virtual schedules for each classroom.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Related Services</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teleconference therapy sessions aligned to students' IEPs goals will be facilitated by the therapist based on the student's individual schedule</li> <li>• A combination of live Google Meets, Google assignments, phone calls and consultation are provided to each student</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Supported Employment</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supported employment sessions aligned to students' IEPs will be facilitated by the job coach</li> <li>• A combination of live Google Meets, Google assignments, phone calls and consultation are provided for each student</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Paraprofessional Support</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paraprofessionals and 1:1 aides are available to work directly with students from 8:30 am – 3:00 pm through Google Classroom and Google Meets</li> <li>• Paraprofessionals create daily Google Meets to be available for students</li> <li>• Paraprofessionals assist in presenting materials, providing accommodations, and demonstrating strategies in order for students to work on assignments</li> <li>• Paraprofessionals are able to recommend behavioral supports for parents/guardians in order to help students be successful during virtual learning</li> <li>• Under the supervision of the classroom teacher, paraprofessionals assist in developing materials to meet each student's unique needs</li> </ul> |
| <b>Student Work</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student work is submitted via Google Classroom and emails directly to teachers/therapists</li> <li>• Academic and therapeutic data is collected through permanent product, data sheets, anecdotal data, pictures and videos</li> </ul>   |

## Component 6 Student Attendance

TPC has a dedicated student attendance line as a way for parents to report student absence. Parents will be advised to call the TPC student sick line if their child is unable to access and participate in the virtual/distance learning on a particular date for sick or personal reasons. The school nurse will enter students as absent into Paradigm, TPC's student database, as these calls are made. The student attendance list will then be emailed to all staff each morning by the school nurse. Should a student be called out sick for more than two consecutive days, the health office will contact families to assess wellness. Sending districts will be notified if students are out sick for a consistent/extended basis by TPC IHCM.

Student participation will be tracked on a weekly basis by the teachers, related service providers, job coaches and TPC IHCMs using Google Sheets (spreadsheet). The level of participation for each student will be noted, based on student engagement in Google Classroom, live Meets as well as information gathered from the family. This spreadsheet will be updated weekly, as needed, by each staff member noted above and reviewed by the IHCM. TPC IHCM's will be in continuous contact with the sending district in regards to the level of their student's participation and engagement in virtual/distance learning. As an APSSD, student attendance does not typically factor into promotion, retention, graduation, or discipline. The TPC IHCM's and the sending districts will collaborate with parents to address any student participation/attendance issues.

## Component 7 Facilities Plan

Upon closure of TPC, the custodial staff will thoroughly clean each area of the school building and lock the doors of each room to limit the potential further spread of COVID-19. EPA approved cleaning products will be used to properly sanitize and CDC guidelines will be followed. In order to maintain the integrity of the school building, three custodians will continue their responsibilities as well as any additional responsibilities that are deemed necessary during this time of closure. The Executive Director will enter the building on a weekly basis in order to keep the everyday business aspects up and running. The Technology Coordinator will enter the building, as needed, to address technology issues that cannot be addressed remotely. Through the support of the Executive Director, Technology Coordinator and custodial staff, TPC will assist in providing needed technology to families. Through coordination with TPC IHCM and Principal, technology will be retrieved from within the building and a specific day/time will be given to the family in order to obtain the device strictly from the Main Entrance area, which has limited access to the school building.

## Component 8 Summer Programming

### Summer (ESY) Programming Plan

***TPC's 2020 ESY program will be virtual in delivery:***

Given the health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic and the social distancing guidelines provided by the CDC, The Phoenix Center has decided to continue virtual/distance learning through our Extended School Year (ESY) program. TPC will offer an ESY program via virtual/distance learning that includes an educational and related service component for each student, which will be governed by the student's IEP to the greatest extent possible. Appropriate modification for distance learning will be utilized using the same protocols as noted above.

### Graduation Plan (Class of 2020)

- Graduation ceremony will occur on June 18th in a virtual format, specifically Zoom.
- The ceremony will be a combination of pre-recorded and live segments.
- Graduation supplies will be mailed home prior to graduation (i.e. graduation gown/cap/tassel, graduation program, graduation gift).
- All families and students will be notified of the graduation ceremony plan and will receive a Zoom link to attend.

Future ESY programs and graduation ceremony plans will be based on current health data.

### Assessment of credit loss or shortages for high school seniors and an initial plan to address credit recovery

TPC ensures all of its students meet high school requirements and the necessary credits for graduation.

## **Assessments of learning loss and an initial plan for potentially addressing learning loss**

- If compensatory services are warranted, the need will be determined by the IEP team and will be made on an individual student basis.
- When the health-related school closure ends, TPC will collaborate with sending districts regarding regression and/or learning loss.

## **Component 9 Preparedness Plan Board Approval**

The School Health-Related Closure Preparedness Plan was approved by The Phoenix Center Board of Directors on May 27, 2020.

## **Component 10 Preparedness Plan Location**

The School Health-Related Closure Preparedness Plan is located on The Phoenix Center's website - [www.thephoenixcenternj.org](http://www.thephoenixcenternj.org) since the onset of closure, including updates. A second update was uploaded June 19, 2020 to the TPC website. This most recent updated plan will be uploaded on November 5, 2020.

## **Component 11 Essential Workers**

| <b>Essential Worker Title</b> | <b>Essential Worker Employee Name</b>     |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Executive Director            | Julie Mower                               |
| Principal                     | Katie Passarotti                          |
| Vice Principal                | Andrew Schuck                             |
| Director of Related Services  | Kim Wynbeek                               |
| Business Manager              | Claire Holdsworth                         |
| Technology Coordinator        | Beth Psota-Miele                          |
| School Nurse                  | Connie Andolino                           |
| Custodians                    | Jeff Psota<br>Benel Bayard<br>Frank Ortiz |

## **Component 12 Dissemination of Preparedness Plan**

The School Health-Related Closure Preparedness Plan will be emailed to all 64 of TPC's sending districts upon completion. Parents and staff members will be informed via email that the plan is located on the main page of the school website. Various closure communications, resources and directions for accessing Google Classroom and Meet are also maintained in the same designated area of the website for ease of access.