



**Newtown Public
School District**

**Alternative
Learning
Plan
Updates**

April 3, 2020

As the District prepares for all Connecticut schools being closed for at least another 30 days, our actions must evolve in a way that is responsive to the needs of our students, families and teachers. To this end, the NFT Executive Board, teacher representatives and administrators, have collaborated to shift some of the practices outlined in the original Alternative Learning Plan. These changes represent what we believe is in the best interest of students, families and teachers and will eventually be included in a revised version of the NPS Alternative Learning Plan in the event that such a plan must be enacted in the future.

This next phase of the Alternative Learning Plan balances the need for moving Newtown Public Schools forward, in unison, while accommodating for a wide variation of individual skills required for distance learning. Incorporating common expectations, while recognizing the range of responsibilities ordinarily fulfilled by the NPS certified staff, adds another layer of complexity in creating a plan that is fair for all. The goal of the committee was to review and adjust the existing Alternative Learning Plan, which was designed for a closure of a few weeks, into one that could be realistically implemented and sustained through the end of the year, if needed. The adjustments that have been made were informed by the collective experiences of teachers, administrators, parents and students since the original launch of the Alternative Learning Plan three weeks ago. It is our hope that these changes will remain stable until the end of the closure. Yet, given the uncertainty of the situation, it would defy common sense not to remain open to the possibility of additional changes.

Please take the time to read through the updates that pertain to your school level, understanding that details surrounding the shifts will be guided by your school leadership teams. It is important that each of you feel that you are receiving the support needed to feel comfortable in your ability to deliver a quality learning experience to your students during this challenging time. If you are struggling to implement any of the changes presented, it is imperative that you reach out to your supervisor.

The details within each level of the plan should be considered “targets” that have been established to keep us all moving in the same direction, along a similar timeframe. As with typical instruction, there will be times when you or your team will be able to speed up, and, more likely in this environment, times when you will need to slow down. And while instruction is important, nothing is more important, especially in this difficult time, than your relationship with students and families. You are all professionals on the front line and your discretion will be critical in maintaining balance. Our collective success will be determined by individual interactions and proactive and supportive communication - not only with students and families, but within your teams and to your administrators. Your input will inform future planning, including what happens beyond this year.

Your hard work and commitment to the children of Newtown Public Schools is commendable and greatly appreciated. We wish you and your own families’ health and peace during this trying time.

Sincerely,

The Alternative Learning Plan Committee

The Alternative Learning Plan Committee

Maryann Bisson
Tina Broccolo
Alysia Caffrey
Nancy Cedor
Sue Connelly
Mary Connolly
Christen Cowden
Amanda D'Amato
Diane Day
Emily DeGrand
Karen Dreger
Tom Einhorn
Kristen Espitee
Tegan Famiglietti
Jess Fonovic
Anne Fries
Chris Giessler
Jill Gonski
Paula Grayson
Tanya Hague-Doehr
Maureen Hall
Jen Hoag
Lisa Kilcourse
Tom Kuroski
Heather Lucian
Deb Mailloux-Petersen
Amy McGoldrick
Bret Nichols
Maureen Pennarola
Tom Pescarmona
Frank Purcaro
Sonia Raquel
Lorrie Rodrigue
Amy Speiser
John Sullivan
Anne Uberti
Jen Welton

Elementary Updates to the Alternative Learning Plan

Devices

- Device distribution for Chromebooks (2+) and iPads (K-1) is expected to be completed by April break
- Additional device distribution will continue after break on an as-needed basis

Teacher Support and Professional Development

- NPS will dedicate a “quiet day” before the April break to allow teachers time to learn and practice new resources
- Specific support and guidance will be provided in the following areas:
 - Learning Google Classroom and/or Seesaw
 - Learning to create and upload instructional videos to Google Classroom and/or Seesaw
 - Learning to use Google Meet
 - Learning other tools that will help facilitate and enrich the virtual learning experience
- A range of tutorials relating to use of Google Classroom, Seesaw, Google Meet and much more can be found on our District website: [Distance Learning Resources Teacher Tab](#)

Instructional Planning

- Cross-school grade level teams will be established and will meet regularly to offer support and collaboration to colleagues, ensure consistency across schools and facilitate the sharing of resources
- Building-based grade level teams will continue to meet regularly to plan and share workload for lesson planning and development (ex. creation and/or selection of instructional videos)
- Special education teachers and related service staff will continue to meet regularly to plan and share resources and lessons

Instructional Delivery

- Grades K/1 will move primary instructional delivery mode to Seesaw
- Grades K/1 will continue to provide weekly lesson outline email to parents between Sunday, 5 p.m. and Monday, 9 a.m.
- Grades 2-4 will move primary instructional delivery mode to Google Classroom*
- Grades 2-4 will provide parent notification that lessons have been posted in Google Classroom between Sunday, 5 p.m. and Monday, 9 a.m.
- Special education teachers supporting grades K/1 will utilize Seesaw as the instructional delivery mode for Wilson and Orton-Gillingham reading instruction
- Special education teachers supporting grades 2-4 will continue to use and provide instructional delivery through individual Google Classroom accounts to ensure confidentiality of students

Instructional Content

- All staff will begin a shift to delivery of new content (curriculum)
- Elementary teachers will “connect” with their classes 1-3 times/week via Online Recorded Video or Recorded Audio Only (ex. morning meeting, read aloud)
- Special Education teachers will utilize video recorded lessons or virtual interactions via Google Meet (either live video or audio only) or phone conference with students at least 1 time per week per subject area (ex: self-contained math, reading or writing class)

- Related service staff will utilize video recorded lessons or virtual interactions via Google Meet (either live video or audio only) or phone conference with students at least 1 time per week based on students' individualized needs
- School counselors will *generally* post 1 academic, social/emotional, future planning lesson/activity/strategy/resource for students and parents at least 1 time per week (K-1 lessons /activities should continue to be emailed to classroom teachers)
- Classroom teachers should *generally* post the following minimum number of lessons weekly:
 - 2 ELA lessons
 - 2 Math lessons
 - 1 Science lesson
 - 1 Social Studies lesson
- Lesson activities/content will be accessed by students through Seesaw and/or Google Classroom
- When possible, lessons will include the creation/selection of instructional videos appropriate for purpose
- Unified Arts/Spanish should *generally* post the following lessons weekly:
 - 1 lesson per grade level per week (Grades 2-4) posted in Google Classroom (2 lessons for PE)
 - Teachers who are split between multiple schools will create a Google Classroom per grade for their students
 - K-1 lessons/activities should continue to be emailed to classroom teachers
- Interventionists:
 - For grades 2-4, will create Google Classrooms for individual students to post lessons, provide extra support and/or;
 - Be included as co-teachers to support students in their regular classes
 - K-1 lessons/activities should continue to be emailed to classroom teachers

Student/Family Support

- Staff will introduce scheduled time for answering emails (ex. daily from 11-12) to reduce demand on teachers' time and set expectations for response time
- Teachers will introduce scheduled opportunities for interactive student help sessions 1-3 times per week via:
 - Phone (*67) or
 - Online Live Audio or
 - Online Live Video
- School counselors will utilize phone, online live audio or online live videos with students who need additional support at least 1 time per week based on individualized needs
- School counselors will reach out to students or parents via email, phone or Google Meet on a regular basis, as needed

*Grade 2 may find both Seesaw and Google Classroom useful and may use a combination of these two platforms

Reed Intermediate School Updates

Devices

- Device distribution for Chromebooks is expected to be completed by April break
- Additional device distribution will continue after break on an as-needed basis

Teacher Support and Professional Development

- NPS will dedicate a “quiet day” before the April break to allow teachers time to learn and practice new resources
- Specific support and guidance will be provided in the following areas:
 - Learning Google Classroom and/or Seesaw
 - Learning to create and upload instructional videos to Google Classroom and/or Seesaw
 - Learning to use Google Meet
 - Learning other tools that will help facilitate and enrich the virtual learning experience
- A range of tutorials relating to use of Google Classroom, Seesaw, Google Meet and much more can be found on our District website: [Distance Learning Resources Teacher Tab](#)

Instructional Planning

- Grade level/content area teams will continue to meet regularly to plan and share workload for lesson planning and development (ex. creation and/or selection of instructional videos)
- Special education teachers and related service staff will continue to meet regularly to plan and share resources and lessons

Instructional Delivery

- All lessons will continue to be posted on Google Classroom
- Special education teachers will continue to use and provide instructional delivery through both group and individual Google Classroom accounts to ensure confidentiality of students

Instructional Content

- All staff will begin a shift to delivery of new content (curriculum)
- Cluster teachers will “connect” with their classes 2-3 times/week via Online Recorded Video or Recorded Audio Only (ex. community meeting message, lesson introduction/overview, modeling of lessons, etc.)
- Special Education teachers will utilize video recorded lessons or virtual interactions via Google Meet (either live video or audio only) or phone conference with students at least 1 time per week per subject area (ex: self-contained math, reading or writing class)
- Related service staff will utilize video recorded lessons or virtual interactions via Google Meet (either live video or audio only) or phone conference with students at least 1 time per week based on students' individualized needs
- School counselors will *generally* post 1 academic, social/emotional, future planning lesson/activity/strategy/resource for students and parents at least 1 time per week
- Classroom teachers should *generally* post the following minimum number of lessons weekly:
 - 2-3 ELA lessons
 - 2-3 Math lessons
 - 1-3 Science lessons

- 1 Social Studies lesson
- Lesson activities/content will be accessed through Google Classroom
- When possible, lessons will include the creation/selection of instructional videos appropriate for purpose
- Unified Arts should post 1 lesson/ activity per week
- Interventionists:
 - Will create Google Classrooms for individual students to post lessons, provide extra support
 - May also be included as co-teachers to support students in their regular classes

Student/Family Support

- Staff will introduce scheduled time for answering emails (ex. daily from 11-12) to reduce demand on teachers' time and set expectations for response time
- Teachers will introduce scheduled opportunities for interactive student help sessions 1-3 times per week via:
 - Phone (*67) or
 - Online Live Audio or
 - Online Live Video
- School counselors will utilize phone, online live audio or online live videos with students who need additional support at least 1 time per week based on individualized needs
- School counselors will reach out to students or parents via email, phone or Google Meet on a regular basis, as needed

Newtown Middle School Updates

Devices

- Device distribution for Chromebooks is expected to be completed by April break
- Additional device distribution will continue after break on an as-needed basis

Teacher Support and Professional Development

- NPS will dedicate a “quiet day” before the April break to allow teachers time to learn and practice new resources
- Specific support and guidance will be provided in the following areas:
 - Learning Google Classroom and/or Seesaw
 - Learning to create and upload instructional videos to Google Classroom and/or Seesaw
 - Learning to use Google Meet
 - Learning other tools that will help facilitate and enrich the virtual learning experience
- A range of tutorials relating to use of Google Classroom, Seesaw, Google Meet and much more can be found on our District website: [Distance Learning Resources Teacher Tab](#)

Instructional Planning

- Grade level department teams will continue to meet regularly to plan and share workload for lesson planning and development (ex. creation and/or selection of instructional videos)
- Special education teachers and related service staff will continue to meet regularly to plan and share resources and lessons

Instructional Delivery

- All lessons will continue to be posted on Google Classroom
- Special education teachers will continue to use and provide instructional delivery through individual Google Classroom accounts to ensure confidentiality of students

Instructional Content

- All staff will begin a shift to delivery of new content (curriculum)
- Cluster teachers will “connect” with their classes 2-3 times/week via Online Recorded Video, Screen Recording/Presentation with Audio or Recorded Audio Only (ex. lesson introduction/overview, modeling of lessons, etc.)
- Special Education teachers will utilize video recorded lessons or virtual interactions via Google Meet (either live video or audio only) or phone conference with students at least 1 time per week per subject area (ex: self-contained math, reading or writing class)
- Related service staff will utilize video recorded lessons or virtual interactions via Google Meet (either live video or audio only) or phone conference with students at least 1 time per week based on students' individualized needs
- School counselors will *generally* post 1 academic, social/emotional, future planning lesson/activity/strategy/resource for students and parents at least 1 time per week
- Classroom teachers should *generally* post the following minimum number of lessons weekly:
 - 2-3 ELA lessons
 - 2-3 Math lessons

- 2-3 Science lessons
- 2-3 Social Studies lessons
- 2-3 Language/Reading/RIL lessons
- Lesson activities/content will be accessed through Google Classroom
- When possible, lessons will include the creation/selection of instructional videos appropriate for purpose
- Unified Arts/Counselors should *generally* post the following lessons weekly:
 - Unified Art 1-2 lessons/activities per week
 - Counselors 1 lesson/activity per week
- Interventionists:
 - Will create Google Classrooms for individual students to post lessons, provide extra support
 - May also be included as co-teachers to support students in their regular classes

Student/Family Support

- Staff will introduce scheduled time for answering emails (ex. daily from 11-12) to reduce demand on teachers' time and set expectations for response time
- Teachers will introduce scheduled opportunities for interactive student help sessions 1-3 times per week via:
 - Phone (*67) or
 - Online Live Audio or
 - Online Live Video
- School counselors will utilize phone, online live audio or online live videos with students who need additional support at least 1 time per week based on individualized needs
- School counselors will reach out to students or parents via email, phone or Google Meet on a regular basis, as needed

Newtown High School Updates

Devices

- Device distribution for Chromebooks (or alternative device for specific courses) will be completed by April break
- Additional device distribution will continue after break on an as-needed basis

Teacher Support and Professional Development

- NPS will dedicate a “quiet day” before the April break to allow teachers time to learn and practice new resources
- Specific support and guidance will be provided in the following areas:
 - Learning Google Classroom and/or Seesaw
 - Learning to create and upload instructional videos to Google Classroom and/or Seesaw
 - Learning to use Google Meet
 - Learning other tools that will help facilitate and enrich the virtual learning experience
- A range of tutorials relating to use of Google Classroom, Seesaw, Google Meet and much more can be found on our District website: [Distance Learning Resources Teacher Tab](#)

Instructional Planning

- Departments will continue to meet regularly to collaborate and recalibrate as needed
- When feasible, PLC Groups will plan and share workload for lesson planning and development (ex. creation and/or selection of instructional videos)

Instructional Delivery

- All lessons will continue to be posted on Google Classroom

Instructional Content

- Continue with the delivery of new content (curriculum)
- Classroom teachers should *generally* post the following minimum number of lessons weekly:
 - 1-3 lessons to support new learning
 - When appropriate, lessons will include the creation/selection of instructional videos to support learning
- Special Education teachers will utilize video recorded lessons or virtual interactions via Google Meet (either live video or audio only) or phone conference with students at least 1 time per week per subject area (ex: self-contained math, reading or writing class)
- Related service staff will utilize video recorded lessons or virtual interactions via Google Meet (either live video or audio only) or phone conference with students at least 1 time per week based on students' individualized needs
- School counselors will *generally* post 1 academic, social/emotional, future planning lesson/activity/strategy/resource for students and parents at least 1 time per week
- Interventionists:
 - Will create Google Classrooms for individual students to post lessons, provide extra support
 - May also be included as co-teachers to support students in their regular classes
 - Reach out to students via email, phone or Google Meet for individual support.

Student/Family Support

- Staff will introduce scheduled time for answering emails (ex. daily from 11-12) to reduce demand on teachers' time and set expectations for response time
- Teachers will introduce scheduled opportunities for interactive student help sessions 1-3 times per week via:
 - Phone (*67) or
 - Online Live Audio or
 - Online Live Video
- School counselors will utilize phone, online live audio or online live videos with students who need additional support at least 1 time per week based on individualized needs
- School counselors will reach out to students or parents via email, phone or Google Meet on a regular basis, as needed