**PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA**
State Board of Education
Department of Public Instruction

**REMOTE INSTRUCTION PLAN**

**Pursuant to SB704 (SL2020-3) and SBE policy SPLN-006, each Public School Unit (PSU) must submit a Remote Instruction Plan to enable a framework of quality remote instruction by July 20, 2020.**

For ease of completion and submission, each PSU will use the template below for each of the required components for the Remote Instruction Plan (RI Plan).

| | |
|---|---|
| Public School Unit | Thomasville City Schools |
| Superintendent/Director | Dr. Catherine R. Gentry |
| Remote Instruction Plan Coordinator | Name: Dr. Chris Kennedy<br>Title: Assistant Superintendent<br>Email Address: kennedyc@tcs.k12.nc.us<br>Phone Number:336-474-4200 |
| Team Members Responsible for Remote Instruction Plan | Dr. Chris Kennedy<br>Jennifer Buck |
| Date Submitted to NCDPI* | 7/20/2020 |

*This Remote Instruction Plan is submitted by the public school unit on behalf of the governing body of the public school unit in response to SBE policy SPLN 006, based on SB704 (SL 2020-3).

1. How is your PSU consulting with teachers, administrators and instructional support staff, parents, students, community partners, and other stakeholders in developing the Plan and effectively communicating the Plan to all involved parties?

Thomasville City Schools has created multiple methods of communication in order to best reach all stakeholders. Online surveys were publicized on social media and our website for parents to participate in multiple surveys during June to gather parent feedback about perspectives, concerns, comfort levels, connectivity and access. A separate survey was administered to TCS staff for their input regarding concerns, professional development needs, requests, comfort levels, access and reflection from their experiences during the crisis teaching period. Additional data was solicited from staff regarding student participation levels for every students during the remote learning closure. Teachers also completed standards coverage maps to help identify gaps in instruction to address for the next school year. Learner Profiles were created in Schoolnet to establish student strengths and weaknesses as a communication to the next year's teachers. Three teams were created for doing the work of creating the Remote Instruction Plan. An internal senior staff/cabinet level team did the work

**Public School Unit:**

of interpreting the documents and communications of state level guidance for summer and remote learning plans also including re-entry plans. The second comprehensive team included district level directors and their supervisor on senior staff and community members to complete the framework for the indicators as specific to program areas. The third team at the school level was inclusive of teachers, administrators, instructional support staff, parents, students and community partners who worked to detail the indicators more specifically and to create internal school processes for sharing the communication of the plan to the entire staff and school community.

2. How is your PSU training teachers and staff on effective use of the remote instruction resources utilized by the public school unit and the process for student submission of completed work? The Plan shall identify any learning management system, online instructional resource, or offline instructional resource that will be made available to all students in a grade-level across the public school unit.

Thomasville City School is training staff and teachers on the effective use of the remote instruction resources in multiple formats. Opportunities are being leveraged for external professional learning from ed tech providers like ISTE, state level trainings like NCVPS and Friday Institute and also internal opportunities from district leaders and teacher leaders. Most of our internal professional development during this summer is being prepared for online access but there are some planned face-to-face interactions if conditions allow. Our district will use Canvas for all staff users as a learning management system for housing all professional development. A variety of online professional development courses are being developed to deliver adult learning content both synchronously and asynchronously to staff. Courses range from formative assessment, using digital tools, instructional design and pedagogy, remote learning, effective communication and more. Additional content courses are being created to house resources by subject along with curriculum maps, pacing guides, online and offline resources including the use of Schoolnet resources and #GoOpenNC OER resources. A Canvas Course template for new PD has been created. Teachers in grades K-5 will use Google Classroom with students and teachers in grades 6-12 will use Canvas as the LMS for students.

292.ThomasvilleCitySchools.Resources.2020

==Link to spreadsheet to identify learning management system(s), online instructional resources, and/or offline instructional resources.== | To make a Forced Google Copy of the spreadsheet, visit https://bit.ly/NCRemoteResources.

3. How is your PSU defining and clearly communicating staff roles and expectations for remote instruction days, including teacher workdays, teacher accessibility, and noncertified staff workdays and responsibilities? The Plan may include variances for staff expectations when remote instruction days are also used as teacher workdays.

TCS is creating three documents that explain and define staff roles and expectations for staff duties on remote learning days. The first document is for teachers, the second for instructional support and administration and the third is for non-certified staff. The documents will then be reviewed by the school level core teams to ensure clarity and specificity. Included in each document is the expectation for established work hours, how to report on tasks completed during the teleworking, contact information for parents and students to reach certified staff during "office hours". Expectations

**Public School Unit:**

for returning calls and emails during a remote learning day should be within 24 hours. Communications to staff members who are not hosting videoconferences or conference calling students/parents should be identified with specific job responsibilities for the remote day. If the remote learning day is used as a teacher workday, the core communications team at the school should be able to triage any help requests from students or parents and investigate answers while teachers are otherwise engaged in professional learning on the workday. These plans will be communicated to staff virtually through the superintendent's videoconference and the remote learning working agreement (similar to our telework agreement used this spring) that will be loaded into the online document system for digital sign off from each employee.

4. How is your PSU surveying student and teacher home connectivity and providing for remote instruction that is appropriate for teachers and students with limited connectivity capability, including the opportunity for students to download remote learning materials in advance when practicable?

In Thomasville City Schools, we were already sending Chromebooks and a T-Mobile Hotspot home with every student in grades 6-12 since the beginning of the 2019-20 school year. So connectivity and devices were only an obstacle for our K-5 students during the closure. For grades 3-5 students we were able to send home devices by request, which meant we sent home devices for about 50% of the students in each grade level. Upon our return in August, we will be in a position to provide devices to every 3-5 grade student and hopefully salvage enough older devices to provide to K-2 on a request basis. Hotspot connectivity is still a challenge and we are working through how to expand our T-Mobile EmpowerEd grant to include those K-5 students who need Internet access.

As for downloading materials in advance, teachers will have a built in part of their class period/daily schedule for explicitly teaching students how to ensure they have access to the learning materials they need. Videos and direction sheets will be created for each learning platform to share with teachers to in turn use with students. Packets of paper activities will most likely still be the integral part of the K-2 remote learning landscape in 2020-2021 since there is not enough funding for those K-2 devices.

All parents have been surveyed twice so far since the March closure to gain feedback and input regarding the success of remote instruction, student participation, Internet access, device access, pain points, celebrations and areas for improvement. We also asked our K-12 teachers to provide documentation on the level of every student's participation in every core content area during remote instruction. Additionally, K-5 teachers identified the rate of student participation confirming their experiences with students who had issues with home devices and connectivity as experienced during the closure.

5. How is your PSU engaging with community partners on services that parents and students can utilize on remote instruction days, including community partners willing to provide free broadband access or connectivity for remote instruction and community partners with child care options, and communicating remote instruction schedules with those partners?

Faith partners
Chamber of Commerce Businesses?
Parks & Rec-other local Thomasville Govt agencies?
Businesses-CTE Business Advisory Group?

**Public School Unit:**

Local library-partnering with to apply for a grant for devices and hotspots
After School care providers-determine who has wifi access
"Park & Learn" at local shops & businesses
Create a local wifi free access "map"

6. How is your PSU developing effective design and delivery of remote instruction lessons within professional learning communities?

Initial professional learning will be offered to teachers online through Canvas about using the 7 Instructional Design Principles for Remote Instruction as identified by Friday Institute. We acknowledge that this is not enough training in a one time PD offering and sustaining this on-going learning will be of critical importance as we move throughout the school year. Our instructional support (curriculum and digital coaches, media, counselors) and our administrative teams will have a separate Canvas course with the district Chief Academic Officer and the Chief Technology & Information Officer to delve into throughout the year so that they can facilitate the work in their own buildings consistently during PLCs whether online or in person. Shared PLC activity logs will be the monitoring tool to ensure the conversation and on-going learning about remote instructional design principles are being addressed. Self reflection about remote instructional plans will be solicited from teachers as a pre and post assessment in order to measure teacher efficacy and growth. PLC activity may be supported by district staff in the area of data and accountability in order to align standards unpacking with standards mastery and student achievement.

7. How is your PSU teaching and practicing opportunities for students on accessing and using remote instruction platforms and methods, including how to locate, complete, and submit assignments. The Plan shall include regular opportunities for students to use the platforms and methods during non remote instruction days to ensure student success during remote instruction?

A repository of videos using combinations of a screencasting tool and live teachers in front of video will be created for age appropriate directions on how to access both Google Classroom and Canvas. Additionally, scripts with written directions and tutorials for those that prefer to read directions will be provided too. These will be made available to parents and to students for 24/7 access. Among the topics to be included are how to login, how to find today's work, how to access the videoconference (live/recorded), how to submit an assignment, how to get help (technical and academic). Students will all be given the opportunity in each class period with each teacher to practice accessing their LMS and following the routines for structure for how to locate, complete and submit their learning. Understanding timelines, flexible "due dates", student choice boards and how choosing personalized pathways will be included as appropriate.This instruction will happen with the first 6 days of school being resumed assuming we are in Plan A or B. If we begin the year in Plan C, these videos and written directions will be posted on the teacher's website initially so there is a transparent way to access the information. Then these will be posted inside the PowerSchool parent portal as links as well. We will ask teachers to confirm on a student roster that each student has had two or more opportunities to practice this in advance of a remote learning day much the same way we affirm that students take the NCTEST Tutorial in advance of the EOG. We will also require each school to host virtual and in-person (if applicable) training sessions for parent engagement opportunities to ensure parents/guardians are comfortable with helping their student access their remote learning work. This will also ensure a concerted effort to sign up parents for the PowerSchool Parent Portal in order to help them know how to track missing/incomplete work so they can monitor their student's progress

**Public School Unit:**

> throughout the remote learning period and throughout the year.

8. How is your PSU communicating learning targets to students on each remote instruction day and ensuring that lesson design provides instructional time, practice, and application components to demonstrate learning? The Plan shall include a process for monitoring the quality of remote instruction materials.

9. How is your PSU ensuring that remote instructional time, practice, and application components support learning growth that continues towards mastery of the standard course of study? The Plan shall include work measurement guidelines appropriate to each grade level, including deadlines for submission of assignments and methods to assess and grade learning during remote instruction.

> During PLCs, teachers and staff will use our standards tracking mastery document that was created this spring and continue to unpack standards and vertically align where gaps in learning exist from the previous year. Teachers will align their work to create mastery paths with standards and evidence of learning example products with Mastery Connect, Case 21 Benchmark Pre-assessments, and Schoolnet Learner Profiles to create learning pathways and progressions. Our district is new to Personalized Learning as it was a planned focus for 2020-2021 so establishing a competency based progression will be new learning for most of our staff. The communication to teachers and then to students and parents about the amount of instructional time and grading is going to need to be crystal clear. Teachers and parents both conveyed in their respective survey feedback the paramount importance of clear communication about accountability with flexibility. This applies to teachers, parents and students expecting work to be done timely but within a range of time; not due daily. For parents, understanding the grading/accountability factor of assessment and feedback to guide progress is critical. Communication will be clear to parents and students to understand the work is not optional, though some individual assignments may involve student choice. Virtual Open House and Back to School nights (live & recorded and translated) with principals leading these will be crucial to set the stage for expectations.Synchronous learning for four periods a day will not be the expectation of our students. Our plan includes metrics for balancing the synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities on a 50/50 basis. This may mean that in schools, we have dedicated scheduled blocks of time that correspond to the regular class day so that teachers can rotate the video conferencing load between them so as not to overwhelm students and maintain routines. This worked well during our crisis teaching at the middle school level this spring. We know how essential clear feedback is to students to move in their learning progressions and it will be expected that teachers report out regularly to parents to maintain open lines of communication. The frequency of that reporting may be determined by the degree of remote learning taking place. Maintaining systems for tracking learning such as Mastery Connect, Canvas Mastery Paths and Rubrics, Schoolnet learner profile updates and PowerSchool gradebook will be utilized to monitor, assess and report on student learning.

10. How will your PSU ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to the remote instruction provided by their public school units and that remote instruction is provided in a manner consistent with each student's individualized education program (IEP) or 504 plan? Remote learning day supports shall be considered and included, as appropriate for the student, when an IEP or 504 plan is initially developed or at any subsequent review or revision of an IEP or 504 plan.

**Public School Unit:**

11. How will your PSU track and report attendance on remote instruction days, including protocols for determining attendance, the reporting system to be used, and how attendance procedures will be communicated to parents before remote instruction begins?

Tracking attendance methods will vary based on the grade span of the school. Elementary students who have one teacher for most subjects all day will need to track "daily" attendance. Middle and High School students will be tracked through a "period" attendance. For young students who require significant assistance from an adult, the teacher will track when students are on a videoconference live or when they are having a call with the parent. Additionally, student work submissions with date/timestamp will be the evidence of student attendance. Canvas and Google Classroom for older elementary, middle and high school students will be able to use the analytics features to help determine participation in additional online activities as proof of "attendance". The authoritative source for "attendance", if it is not spelled out by PowerSchool and the School Attendance & Student Accounting manual from DPI, for our PSU will be to have student rosters that identify dates of remote instruction with drop down menus to choose from identifying whether the student either participated in an online videoconference or if he submitted work identified as due during the week. If by Friday all work for the week was submitted, the student was present and in attendance for the week. Individual weekly or bi-weekly check in calls with students and parents from school staff will be expected depending on the level of remote learning being experienced. Parents indicated in their feedback a need for increased communication from a majority of the teachers during the closure.

12. How will your PSU provide online and offline contact options for students to communicate with teachers or staff for remote instruction days that are not used as teacher workdays?

When students are remote learning and teachers are not engaged in a workday, the student communication process will be to contact the teacher through her online office hours information on her website, Google Classroom or Canvas. At the beginning of August before students arrive, administrators will have teachers create and commit to office hours and post the school phone number, teacher email address and link to video/audio conference options and the workday hours when reachable. During non-workday remote learning days, teachers should be available to take these calls and provide assistance during the posted office hours. For after hours help for families that have work or other duties that keep them from helping their student during the day, the options for email or the contact form for help will be available. Offline contact options such as an audio phone call will be coordinated through the school's main phone line. For early elementary grades where remote learning is still including pickup of packets, there will be a physical "message board" where parents can leave notes for teachers or administrators with questions and a return phone number to call back.

13. How will your PSU provide technology support for students experiencing technical difficulties on remote instruction days?

Technology support is provided for students during remote learning through 3 options. For technical device support there is a technology hotline phone number where a live technician can be reached during workday hours or the student or parent can fill out the online form describing the technical issue they are experiencing and await a call back. There is also "Chromebook Central" at our high

**Public School Unit:**

school that is staffed by a technician and this is the delivery point for swapping out a device or getting it serviced. These options are posted on social media and our websites. Additional technical staff are available for helping to troubleshoot login or account issues when teachers submit a ticket through our normal ticket routing system.

14. How is your PSU responding to how the needs of English learners, Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted learners and students who have been identified and are served under the McKinney-Vento Act as homeless will be met during remote instruction?

    a.  English learners

    b.  Academically and/or Intellectually Gifted learners

    c.  Students served under the McKinney-Vento Act as homeless

15. How is your PSU describing the limitations that exist for implementation of quality remote learning based on each public school unit's local context?

*Tackling professional development for teachers in understanding remote learning instructional design "remotely" is challenging.
*The funding allotted is appreciated, but doesn't cover the cost for every student to have a device and uninterrupted access to connectivity.
*Communication to parents virtually about remote instruction is tricky.
*Establishing relationships with students was paramount to the varying degrees of success that teachers and parents experienced. Many are concerned about how to build relationships virtually if those face-to-face interactions are not cemented early in the year.
*Transportation
*Fidelity and maintaining solid health and cleaning practices after the routine sets in.
*Understanding the accountability model and explaining it to parents.

**OPTIONAL REMOTE INSTRUCTION PLAN RESPONSES**
In the RI Plans, public school units are also encouraged to consider adding information regarding:

16. Providing students and parents/families with remote learning strategies and behaviors to support success.

A parent engagement liaison was successful in hosting weekly "Tea & Talks" with parents through video conferencing and discussing important topics with the parents. Curriculum nights held this spring were better attended virtually than ever had been in person. The ability to stay in their own space to make themselves less vulnerable not having to enter the school building was a positive factor that an administrator shared. Transportation has always been another barrier and this was a

**Public School Unit:**

solution to that issue. Ensuring all wrap around services are available and engaging with students on a regular basis for constant communication will be essential to keeping students on track.

17. Impact on other existing programs, such as Transition to Kindergarten and Career and College Promise.

**Public School Unit:**