



**The Arc of Essex County's Stepping Stones School**  
**19 Harrison Avenue**  
**Roseland, NJ 07068**

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County: Essex  
Name of APSSD: The Arc of Essex County's Stepping Stones School  
Chief School Administrator: Linda Lucas  
School Phone: 862-210-8781

**School Health-Related Closure Plan: May 22, 2020**

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The Arc of Essex County's Stepping Stones School is an out-of-district placement for students ages 3 – 10 with intellectual and developmental disabilities. There are 12 students who are classified as a Preschooler with a Disability and 16 students in our primary classes who can be served in a classroom for the Multiply Disabled. There are no students in the school who are medically fragile.

Each child is currently receiving an individualized academic and therapeutic program for remote learning at home. These individualized programs are being worked on by families/caregivers, in coordination with our teaching and therapy staff, via various electronic, phone, and video platforms.

**Component 1- Access to technology/equitable access:**

There are 28 students and 24 have access to a computer and internet (3 of these families have borrowed Chrome Books from their home district), and 4 have no computer and internet access. Of these 4 families, 3 can access their email on their phones to receive information and daily activities. There is one family that has no email and is receiving information via text. 13 of the 28 families have access to a printer, 15 have no printer. Packets were sent home in March, 2020 which contain handouts, worksheets, and printed resources.

Families are also provided with links to many free online resources including: free internet; free meeting sites; how to set up emails, etc.

Families have all been given resources for free internet; and 3 of the families who had only been using their cell phones were loaned Chrome Books by their home district. When new families start the program, we begin by providing a technology survey so that we can consider their needs and then these needs are addressed. We ensure that each family can access and work on the

educational and therapeutic programs for their child, coordinating with their home district as needed, and sending resources for free internet, email information, etc.

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

The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is provided to the greatest extent possible via electronic, phone, video, and other virtual learning platforms. The teachers and therapist create individualized daily agendas for each student and email them to the families each morning before 9am. Any online resources, links, or programs are provided in the morning emails so that the families have quick access to their child's remote educational and therapeutic instruction.

Therapists use a tracking form to document therapies scheduled, provided, canceled, etc. For each therapy, the families/therapists complete a therapy session assessment overview which provides details about what happened during the session, goals being worked on, goals mastered, and any issues or modifications that were made. Teachers also use tracking notes to identify what educational goals are being worked on, mastered, and any other progress during the remote learning process.

Stepping Stones administration emails weekly educational and therapeutic assessment overviews to each sending district. The assessments cover the weekly agendas (educational and therapeutic), goals worked on, goal mastery, and documentation of IEP service delivery.

Case managers are responsible for following up with families as per their district requirements.

All sending districts will receive a copy of the updated Remote Learning Plan via email. We will send updates as needed to sending districts regarding student status, remote learning plan updates, re-opening, scheduling IEPs, and rescheduling any meetings.

School administration will maintain contact with case managers regarding any scheduling needs and updates.

### **Individualized Education Plans (IEP):**

For students whose Annual IEP, eligibility review meeting, re-evaluation planning meeting, or any IEP reviews are due during the period of remote at-home learning, school administration will contact sending districts to schedule or re-schedule the meeting, and/or schedule a time for any IEP related meeting via conference call if feasible. The sending district is responsible for notifying the family of the any IEP related meeting. A copy of updated progress reports, annual review information, and any other educational or therapeutic information needed for the meeting is sent via email to the sending district and family in advance of the scheduled meeting. In addition, quarterly progress reports will be emailed to sending districts and families according to prescribed code requirements.

In coordination with sending district, Stepping Stones will confirm method of virtual IEP meeting (i.e. Zoom video call, Google Meets call, conference call, etc.). The case manager is responsible for providing the family with the invitation for the IEP meeting and to ensure that the family is able to join via the virtual platform being used. Re-evaluation planning meetings occur using this same procedure. The sending districts are responsible for any re-evaluations that are required during this period of remote learning.

### **Component 3- Addressing ELL and Bilingual Needs:**

There are no ELL students or students who need bilingual education.

Our bilingual staff is available via phone, text, or email for families that may need any or all of the information translated into their native language.

For families that need assistance in their native language in order to work with our staff to provide remote educational and therapy services, our bilingual staff is available. Daily agendas are reviewed in their native language each morning; a bilingual staff joins any video, phone, or other virtual session as needed; and bilingual staff are assigned to each family that needs assistance in their native language for any issue related to IEP work, remote learning needs, contact with staff, and any other school related need. Our social worker also coordinates with our bilingual staff in order to provide outreach, resources, and community assistance.

### **Component 4- Safe Delivery of Meals:**

There is no school food service, meal delivery, or school nutrition benefits at our program.

### **Component 5- Length of Virtual or Remote Instructions Day:**

The remote learning day is the same as our regular in-person school day, 8:50am – 2:40pm.

The teacher and therapists send daily agendas via email each morning. The individualized educational agendas include a series of activities, lessons, and classroom learning events. Families are able to work on all of these with one of our staff via Zoom session or another virtual platform, or on their own using the agendas and staff assistance for guidance. The individualized therapy agendas include activities for the therapy session. Families are able to have virtual therapy sessions via Zoom, or another virtual platform, or are able to work on therapy activities on their own, using the agendas and staff assistance for guidance.

All staff including teachers, teaching assistants, 1:1 teaching assistants, therapists, and all other school personnel will be available to families every school day from 8:50 am – 2:40 pm as per the usual school day.

### Core Subject Instruction:

A student packet of individualized materials for students was assembled and picked up by families in mid-March, 2020.

Packets contain:

- Special Reads for Special Needs Individualized books; packet of child's sight word cards and list of next level sight words
- Unique Curriculum leveled books for individual child
- Math activities including manipulatives that can be used for math games (i.e. small blocks, Legos, crayons, etc.)
- Individual writing activities including handouts, online application suggestions for writing games/activities
- Individual writing materials (i.e. chunky crayons, rock crayons, etc.)
- Homework packet and homework games (i.e. Drops in the Bucket program)
- Materials for families, as needed: appropriate scissors, glue, paste, crayons, etc.

Virtual learning platforms will be used for students whose families have access to computers and Wifi. These include the following:

- Unique Curriculum links
- News 2 You
- Brain Pop
- Scholastic and Scholastic Weekly Reader
- Google Distance Learning
- Youtube links for songs and learning videos
- Starfall
- Teleconference platform for a morning meeting for the older class

### Therapies:

Occupational, Physical, and Speech Therapists have assembled individualized family friendly versions of:

- Feeding Protocols – including handouts, oral motor warm-ups tools and instructions for use, meal and snack suggestions
- ADL checklists (tooth brushing, dressing)
- Communication Games
- Home exercise programs – Brain Gym™ activities, strengthening activities, gross motor skills – these will include handouts with written instructions and pictures.

### Teacher Responsibilities:

- Make contact with families daily to engage them in discussion regarding the day's activities.

- Be available to families from 8:50 am – 2:40 pm via Zoom, phone, email, and text regarding questions, feedback, issues, and assistance with remote learning.
- Send daily agendas to each family via email each morning regarding the day’s activities and lessons, along with an assessment checklist to complete at the end of the day and return via email that night or the next day.
- Weekly: Email modified lesson “plans” to families regarding general ideas for the week and general timeline for families to follow.
- Maintain daily attendance for children who are present for learning.
- Weekly: Assign teaching assistant lesson planning tasks for students (i.e. finding online academic resources, planning academic activities for children)
- Conduct daily teleconferencing meetings with classroom team to discuss plans, issues, and ideas.
- Ensure end of day assessments have been completed by families and send to principal for review and retention.
- Complete end of day work log and send to principal for review and retention.

#### Teacher Assistant Responsibilities:

- Provide assistance to lead teacher with developing on online lesson ideas.
- Provide daily (and throughout the day) contact with families via phone, text, or video platform to assist with any activities and/or questions.
- Conduct video calls with children, as applicable, to maintain contact and ensure consistency.
- Conduct online research for core subjects (math, reading, writing, language).
- Work on Professional Development activities as directed by teacher and administrators.
- Maintain email and phone contact with lead teacher to update on families, share ideas, and provide feedback about activities.
- Attend daily remote team and staff meetings.
- Assist families with end of day assessments.
- Complete end of day work log and send to principal for review and retention.

#### 1:1 Teacher Assistant Responsibilities:

- Conduct 9am check in with family regarding daily activities.
- Conduct frequent check-ins with assigned family to help with any activities, answer questions, and work with the children.
- Provide and be available for email, text, phone and video availability with family/child from 8:50 am – 2:40 pm each day to work on activities with the child/family, answer questions, and be present for child throughout the school day.
- Maintain email and phone contact with lead teacher to update on assigned family, share ideas, and provide feedback about activities.

- Research and provide individualized activities for use by teacher to correspond to teacher lesson plans.
- Attend daily remote team and staff meetings.
- Assist family with end of day assessments.
- Complete end of day work log and send to principal for review and retention.

Therapist responsibilities:

- Therapists will send a daily agenda to families on their child’s scheduled therapy day with individualized activities and games, along with an assessment checklist for families to complete at the end of the day and return.
- Therapist will be available to provide therapy sessions via Zoom video call or another virtual platform if the family requests this.
- Therapists will be in close contact with families from 8:50 am – 2:40 pm via any necessary platform to offer guidance and suggestions regarding instruction and therapy and help with any issues that families are encountering.
- Ensure end of day assessments have been completed by families and send to principal for review and retention.
- Complete end of day work log and send to principal for review and retention.

School Administration will be in close contact with families regarding: status of remote learning program; updates regarding school, Department of Health or Department of Education information; and to manage/discuss any needs families may have regarding their child’s program.

**Component 6- Attendance Plan:**

Families will be responsible for texting in at 9am to their teacher, in response to an email sent by their teacher which includes the daily learning agenda, that their child is available for learning and therapies that day. Teachers will track attendance through this morning check-in.

For students who are present, families are responsible for completing daily assessment overviews and sending back to the teachers and therapists at the end of each school day.

When the teacher has not heard from a family regarding a child’s attendance, a teaching assistant, teacher, or school nurse is responsible for reaching out to the family to confirm whether the student is absent for the day.

For any absence of five or more consecutive days, a letter will be sent to the district of residence as mandated under N.J.A.C. 6A:14-7.9 (a) 3 and in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:32 regarding habitual tardiness or prolonged absences.

Monthly attendance will be sent to each sending district along with the monthly billing. In addition, attendance records for each child are kept in the New Jersey Department of Education registers maintained by the classroom teachers.

### **Component 7- Facilities Plan:**

The building is being cleaned by the cleaning company throughout the period of school closure.

### **Component 8- Summer Programming Plan:**

As per the State of NJ, there currently is no directive whether we can return to in-person school for the Extended School Year (ESY). In the event that in person school programming is not permitted for the ESY option, the following will occur:

- Stepping Stones remains closed and continues implementing Remote Learning Plan
- ESY for Stepping Stones operates for students from 8:30 – 1:30; staff works from 8 – 3

In preparation for in-person summer programming, Stepping Stones has created a re-entry planning team which consists of the following: Chief School Administrator; Principal; Assistant Principal; Administrative Assistant; School Nurse; Director of Facilities; and the Custodian.

The following in-person options have been drafted:

#### Options:

- a) A regular 30 day summer session (July 1, 2020 – August 12, 2020). Expanded classroom/space use within the building to accommodate the reduced capacity requirements per classroom in order to follow social distancing and other health and safety guidelines.
- b) One morning in-person session 8:30 – 11:30.  
One afternoon in-person session 12:00 – 3:00.  
Break children into two groups, creating classes that are half the size. One group would be in school for the morning session. One group would be in school for the afternoon session.

For in-person options above:

- IEPs - Upon re-entry to in-person school, staff will review IEP goals and will conduct IEP assessments in order to determine at what level each student is working. Individual learning and therapy plans will be reviewed and modified, if necessary, in order to address any learning loss and work with students at their current level of functioning.
- All teaching staff will remain with the same classroom for the entire ESY.

- Classroom staff assignments will be related to class size and in accordance with social distancing guidelines.
- Related services will be delivered in accordance with social distancing guidelines; most sessions provided within the students own classroom.
- Transportation provided either by the sending district and/or caregiver/parent.
- Health and safety: Refer to re-entry planning in document for details

Re-entry planning guidelines:

- 1) Institute enhanced hygiene and cleaning procedures to include cleaning touchpoints throughout the day in the classrooms, hallways, bathrooms, and offices. In addition, increased professional deep cleaning of the building will be implemented in accordance with CDC guidelines.
- 2) Post signs (according to CDC guidelines) regarding how to stop the spread; properly washing hands; promote every day protective measures; properly wear a face mask.
- 3) Staff will wear protective personal equipment including face masks and gloves.
- 4) SS will create an isolated area for child with a fever or symptoms.
- 5) SS will create a procedure for safe transport to local health facility if necessary.
- 6) SS will create a procedure for reporting a sick child or staff member to The Arc of Essex County.
- 7) Students will have their own supplies for all individualized educational and therapeutic services.
- 8) Morning health checks for staff and students, including family health surveys (see below for details)
- 9) Enhanced staff training
- 10) Revised drop off and pick up procedures (see below for details)
- 11) Only essential visitors will be allowed to enter the building by appointment

Morning screenings and health checks:

Staff and Essential Visitors: Every morning, school nurse, and any other designated administrator, will take staff temperatures and conduct a symptom screening prior to the staff being allowed to enter the building. Temperature readings above 100.4 and/or staff responding positively to any item on the symptom screening will result in that staff being sent home with guidance to contact a medical professional. Clearance from The Arc of Essex County to return to work will be required using The Arc of Essex County's COVID-19's Response Plan guidelines.

Students: Every morning, school nurse, and any other designated administrator, will take student temperatures and conduct a symptom screening prior to the student being allowed to enter the building. Temperature readings above 100.4 and/or student responding positively to any item on the symptom screening will result in that child being sent home. Sick student return home procedures will be developed and implemented.



Family Health Surveys:

Family will be emailed a questionnaire prior to the start of in-person school, and every week thereafter while the student is in session. The survey will include questions regarding their history with and exposure to COVID-19 for themselves or other people living in their home.

Drop off and pick up procedures:

\*These procedures will be implemented for bus, van, and parent transportation.

Drop off – Upon arrival, a health check for the child will be conducted on or near the vehicle by a designated staff. If the health check is cleared, the child will be escorted off of the vehicle and into the building by Stepping Stones staff.

Pick up – Students will wait with their class in designated areas, following CDC guidelines. As buses/vans/parents arrive, a staff member from the child’s class will bring the child to the vehicle.

As per DOE checklist:

- The Arc of Essex County’s Stepping Stones School does not have 21<sup>st</sup> Century Programs.
- There are no credits for school, high school students, or situations where there may be credit loss.
- There are no STEM programs.
- There are no Title 1 learning programs.
- There are no formal Class of 2020 graduates

**Component 9- Board Approval:**

The plan was board approved on May 20, 2020.

**Component 10- Posted on Website:**

The plan was posted on the school website on May 21, 2020.

**Component 11- Essential Employees:**

- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Social Worker
- School Nurse
- Administrative Assistant
- Special Education Teacher
- Occupational Therapist
- Physical Therapist
- Speech Therapist
- Teaching Assistant
- 1:1 Teaching Assistant
- Custodian

- **Component 12 - Sharing Plans:**

The Arc of Essex County's Stepping Stones School Health Related Closure Plan was shared with all sending districts.