

Memorandum

Subject: Proposed scope of Regional Enrichment Centers and direct services contingencies

Date: 3/16/20

Summary: The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) will open Regional Enrichment Centers (RECs) and early childhood centers to accommodate the children of essential service providers; will provide meals to all NYC children; and will provide remote learning to all NYCDOE students. We are continuing to work with our school communities over the next three days to make additional modifications to our implementation plans.

Background:

New York City's public schools serve 1.1 million children and their families; non-public schools serve another 260,000 citywide. In order to maintain critical city services such as health care, transit, and first responder capacity, NYCDOE will provide safe, supportive environments for children whose parents need this support.

A. Regional Enrichment Centers:

NYCDOE will open approximately 100 sites across all five boroughs on March 23, 2020, with capacity to serve thousands of children in grades 3K-12. The NYCDOE identified these sites based on a combination of physical and operational factors (location, accessibility, capacity, health clinic, AC, and, where available, community schools/wraparound services).

NYCDOE will be prepared to expand sites if needed.

RECs will accommodate school-aged children of first responders, healthcare workers, and transit workers, as well as students in need of the most intensive support. As space permits, RECs will accommodate children of additional essential personnel.

Model:

- RECs will be open from 7:30am-6pm Monday-Friday
- Each room will have a maximum of 12 children, supported by at least one adult; this size will allow for personalized attention and will meet social distancing needs
- Children will have the opportunity to participate in remote learning with their regular school, as is the case for all NYCDOE students
- Children will have opportunities to engage in art, music, and physical education
- The environment will be safe and supportive and staff will be prepared to respond to children's social and emotional needs
- Children will be offered a site based on their home address and their parent/caregiver's role providing essential services

Staffing model:

- Each REC will be staffed by a combination of NYCDOE staff and Community-Based Organization staff
- Site Supervisors will have appropriate administrative license and operational support
- Each site will have two nurses, a social worker and a guidance counselor

B. Child Care:

- Many RECs will have capacity to support 3- and 4-year-olds; some will be fully dedicated to early childhood care.

- NYCDOE will enter into an emergency procurement with a small number of contracted early education programs to provide support for additional 3- and 4-year-olds and for a limited number of infants and toddlers.
- We will allow all other contracted child care centers and family child care homes to operate for as long as they can safely operate.

C. Food delivery plan - citywide:

- 3 hot meals per day will be offered at REC sites (breakfast, lunch, dinner)
- REC hot meals will be distributed in classrooms to avoid congregation in cafeterias
- Grab and go breakfast/lunch will be provided from 7:30am-1:30pm at 100-150 hub sites (locations to be identified by 3/20/2020). This service will be available to all children under the age of 18.

Alternative Instructional Delivery

NYCDOE has been preparing a remote learning strategy for all district schools, including surveying principals about devices, platform preferences and utilization. Additionally, as the NYCDOE prepared for individual school closures and student absences, the NYCDOE created a webpage where parents can easily access 5-10 days' worth of material by grade level.

Starting on March 23, 2020, NYCDOE will shift to a remote learning strategy for grades K-12. Remote learning provides an opportunity for students and teachers to remain connected and engaged with their course content while working from locations outside the physical school environment. Transitioning to remote learning can keep students progressing academically. While many of our schools already have substantial remote learning capacity, some schools have less experience with online platforms. Despite differences in readiness, every school will focus planning time on transitioning their core learning and instruction to a remote-based model. To support these schools, we have partnered with Google so that all schools that do not currently use an online learning platform can use Google Classroom.

In preparation for our launch on March 23, 2020, NYCDOE school staff will be participating in three days of professional development (March 17th, 18th, and 19th), and will engage in remote planning on March 20th. Over the next three days, we are asking schools to: download the necessary platform; ensure educators have access to the appropriate devices and know how to use technology-assisted learning platforms; and ensure materials are uploaded for use. Where appropriate, schools will also be asked to prepare take-home materials for student learning. The professional development will also show teachers how to engage with students and their colleagues on work plans.

Understanding that not all our students have access to internet and devices, the NYCDOE is working closely working with private partners to deliver devices and data plans for students in need.

With our framework in place, we are developing more detailed plans each day. We are happy to work with our colleagues at the State Education Department to successfully implement remote learning for all New York City's students.