

July 18, 2023

Introduction

Westbridge Academy (WBA) is a unique school in which students with behavioral, emotional and learning disabilities learn how to face their issues to forge productive, fulfilling lives. Westbridge Academy is not a member of NJSIAA.

With warmth and a progressive, nurturing approach, we provide a dependable, structured environment that supports every student's well-being, one day, one child at a time. Our objective is to help each student reach his or her full potential by strengthening academic and social skills through an individualized therapeutic and educational program.

To best serve students from public schools, we focus our sights on returning students to their local school districts with enhanced confidence, coping skills, abilities, and knowledge. We also conduct state testing right at the school, so there is no need to transport the students to another venue.

Westbridge Academy (WBA) Virtual Plan

Equitable Access and Opportunity to Instruction

In some ways, WBA, an approved private school for students with disabilities, is very fortunate to have such a small school with a very similar overall student profile. Under our virtual plan we provide what boils down to 4:1 differentiated and age-banded instructional classrooms.

The low teacher-student ratio is critical in ensuring access to the requisite educational technology, regardless of it being issued by the school or provided by the student's family. Additionally, Westbridge Academy teachers and staff would be issued mobile phones to better support remote learning by offering readily available two-way live communication with students and families to mitigate academic and/or behavioral/emotional lapses.

To identify and document students in need of educational technology throughout the school year, the WBA administrative team issues periodic parent/guardian technology access surveys. Teachers supplement this effort by documenting all student contacts as they specifically inquire about digital access daily. The data is compiled and shared with the clinical and administrative teams frequently.

If a student is identified as in need of support, our Technology Response Team (TRT) is deployed to identify and rectify the issue. Then, the TRT completes a report for immediate submission to the teacher, clinical team and the administration. All TRT reports are continually reviewed daily until the issue has been entirely rectified.

Concerns about the "digital divide" have been central to the WBA remote learning plan as substantial measures are taken to address the "digital divide." WBA ensures that all staff and students are not only issued the necessary software and hardware but are also provided with

training. Additionally, steps are taken to ensure that the internet is available for all WBA students.

Westbridge Academy students will be issued Chromebooks each fall. Internet access will also be made available if it is needed using a hotspot.

WBA is also prepared to offer a traditional paper/pencil based instructional activity option which will continue to be afforded to 100% of the WBA student population if digital access becomes a learning barrier.

Addressing Special Education Needs

These are interesting times for sure. While challenging in many ways, the times we are currently living in provide a unique opportunity to take pause and consider the many innovations in education that are available while considering our obligation to adhere to each student's IEP.

Since early March 2020 we have embarked on the journey of turning our brick-and-mortar therapeutic school (instructional and clinical) into a rich and vibrant Distance Learning Community (DLC) that not only meets but exceeds all student mandated IEP guidelines, state, and district expectations.

In order to do this successfully on the instructional side we have engaged curriculum consultant and digital learning expert, Nancy Sulla (Founder of IDE Corporation), to help us transform the WBA instructional program for this purpose.

Westbridge Academy instructional staff develop student specific IEP facilitation grids, Digital Activity Lists (DAL's) for each of our grade bands (K-3, 3-5, 6-8, 9-10 and 11-12) that maximize student growth and learning via Google Classroom. The instructional staff will modify DAL's so that each WBA student will have their own individualized DAL that differentiates instructional time, measures student learning, addresses ESL/bilingual education and includes all IEP modifications and accommodations. DAL's will be centrally located on corresponding Google Classrooms.

Case Managers & procedures for following up with families to ensure services are implemented in accordance with IEP's.

Role of Case Managers: A primary function of WBA Case Managers is to follow up with instructional and related service providers to ensure implementation of services outlined in student IEPs including the tracking of services. Case Managers (CM's) would participate on instructional phone calls, Zoom meetings and may also be copied on email and Google Classroom correspondence related to DAL's. CMs are invaluable in the academic success of our students. CMs are acutely aware of home life factors, access and connectivity factors that will have a direct impact on implementation of the WBA virtual plan.

CMs will aim to share as much information as possible with Teachers to inform instructional decision making and vice versa. Teachers will aim to share as much as they can to inform case management and related decision making.

- Case managers would serve as liaison between all stakeholders to ensure that services are implemented in accordance with the IEP.
- Case managers would reach out to families daily via phone and/or electronically to assess if students are participating in school assignments as well as counseling and other related services such as Speech and OT (if applicable).
- Daily schedules, which accommodate the needs of students and their respective families, would be created so that all parties are aware of when related services will be provided.
- Case managers monitor any potential factors, including but not limited to family stressors and connectivity issues which may in some way inhibit students from receiving services.
- Case managers will maintain ongoing communication with teachers, the administrative team, as well as inform sending districts of each student's progress and document any interruption of services accordingly.

Procedures for virtual IEP meetings, evaluation and other meetings to identify/evaluate/reevaluate students.

IEP meetings and related meetings would be conducted on schedule using HIPAA compliant Zoom video conferencing technology. A WBA Business Associate Agreement has been established with Zoom and user training has been provided to WBA staff. Precautions have been taken to ensure privacy and confidentiality.

- The Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services will maintain communication with sending districts to ensure that IEPs remain in compliance and are scheduled by the due dates indicated for each student.
- All annual review IEP meetings are scheduled in collaboration with the case managers from the sending districts and the parents/guardians.
- IEP meetings would be conducted via various video and audio-conferencing platforms (depending on the district and the needs of the parents). The district case manager, parent/guardian, WBA teacher and the Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services participate in the IEP meetings.
- All scheduled IEP meetings are documented on the Highlights Calendar (WBA internal calendar).
- WBA teachers and related service providers are notified of IEP meetings scheduled and work collaboratively with direct supervisors to formulate IEP documents and prepare for the IEP meetings.
- WBA case managers follow-up with parents as a courtesy to remind them of upcoming IEP meetings.
- The Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services forwards all IEP documents to the sending district case managers.
- The Supervisor of Pupil Personnel Services completes SEMIs for all IEP meetings held which are then forwarded to the sending districts monthly.
- Reevaluation testing remains the responsibility of the sending district.

Addressing ELL and Bilingual Needs

- Currently, there are no students attending WBA who are in need of ESL/Bilingual education.
- Any parents/guardians who are in need of bilingual services have been assigned a bilingual, bicultural case manager to facilitate communication with all stakeholders and serve as translators for meetings such as IEP conferences.
- In addition, written documents, such as school forms, have been translated to accommodate parents who are in need of bilingual services.
- If students with ELL and bilingual needs are enrolled at WBA all IEP mandated services will be provided through a district translator or bilingual staff members such as Clinicians, Aides and Teachers whenever possible due to language needs.

Student Attendance plan

Attendance

Under the WBA virtual plan, WBA considers the number of student contacts and engagement in determining operational attendance. Minimally, WBA requires two student engagements, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, to be marked present for a given day. For example, two-way contact with a case manager and completing an online “check in” assignment.

- Case managers would take daily attendance through daily check-ins via phone and/or electronically.
- Case managers then would email the “Attendance Group” found in Outlook
- The front office then documents the record of attendance for each student in WBA school management software (Paradigm Pioneers database).
- Case managers would follow up with sending districts regarding excessive absences of any student.
- A letter is generated for any student who has been absent for 5 consecutive days and is forwarded to the sending district accordingly.

Safe Delivery of Meals

Westbridge Academy receives students from all over New Jersey and would continue to offer meals at arranged times to eligible students at the school.

Facilities Plan

Currently, our two custodians maintain a daily work schedule of 8:00-4:00, Monday through Friday. In addition to their usual tasks (as per building upkeep and maintenance schedule) including painting areas of the building interior, they will maintain any recommended and/or required changes as issued by local, state and/or federal entities. Additionally, the building and grounds related maintenance schedule would continue to be in place. Lastly, our custodians are members of the “WBA Re-Opening Planning Team” (Nurse, Custodians, Transportation Supervisor, Principal, Assistant Director and Executive Director) and have been invaluable in the design of a potential plan.

Social Emotional Health of Staff and Students

Any emergency resulting in school closure could result in traumatic stress for students or staff. Westbridge Academy is keenly aware of our students' sensitivity to stress and their overall mental health. Students would continue to have access to their counselors via online and digital communication methods for ongoing support. Counselors would also increase the level of communication to homes of our students to ensure that any family concerns are being addressed expediently. Administrators and supervisors would conduct "pop-ins" on any Zoom being hosted to inventory present students and staff. Administrators and supervisors would also arrange for ongoing "chat" sessions with staff members to make sure they remain mentally fit and emotionally capable of instructing students through an on-going crisis. Additionally, as part of the student check-in process students are provided with a feelings survey. These are monitored and if a student's response indicates a need for support, WBA counselors will provide additional support. Parents/guardians will also be alerted depending on the students comments/conversation/responses to staff.

Credit Loss and Recovery

Per Westbridge Academy's standard procedure all high school transcripts will be forwarded to sending district child study team case managers. Westbridge Academy case managers will collaborate with sending districts in any instance where a student has lost or is short credit necessary for graduation. Plans for credit recovery may include a packet to be completed during the ESY setting or an addition of classes to the subsequent school year, or any other option determined by the IEP team to appropriately meet the needs of the student.

Accelerated learning opportunities

All Westbridge Academy students have an IEP and are provided with differentiated instruction to meet them at their social and academic levels.

Transportation Plan

Sending districts are responsible for overseeing and securing bussing for students. Westbridge Academy would assist with any means necessary to help districts locate or establish transportation for families who may have been impacted by any state, weather or health emergency to ensure students would be able to return to school when indicated.

*****PLEASE NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. IT WILL LIKELY BE UPDATED ON A WEEKLY BASIS. CHANGES WILL BE ANNOUNCED AT OUR WEEKLY STAFF MEETINGS AND A REVISED DOCUMENT WILL BE ISSUED*****

Cordially,

Dr. Anthony Hadzimichalis

Dr. Anthony Hadzimichalis
Executive Director

Addendum

WBA 2023-2024 Staff Roster

1	Teacher's Assistant	Alvarez, Saidy
2	Teacher's Assistant	Anderson, Nailah
3	Teacher of the Handicapped	Araneo, Michael
4	Sr. Secretary	Bardi, Joan
5	Teacher of the Handicapped	Bosire, Beatrice
6	School Nurse	Cascione, Joanna
7	Teacher of Students w/ Disabilities	Celeste, Jennifer
8	Principal/TOH	Cerniglia, John
9	Music Teacher	Charyn, Griffin
10	Teacher's Assistant	Clerk, Matthew
11	Supervisor - Spec Ed	Coston, Tracy
12	School Social Worker	Coya, Brian
13	Teacher's Assistant	DeLuca Anthony
14	Executive Director	Hadzimichalis, Anthony
15	Teacher's Assistant	Harper, Quadeesha
16	Bookkeeper	Jadeid, Alya
17	Speech/Language Specialist	Jones, Cheryl
18	Art Teacher	Juliano, Alice
19	Assistant Director	Mathew, Abraham
20	School Social Worker	Miranda, Nicole

21	School Social Worker	Neto, Nicole
22	Teacher of the Handicapped	Nutting, Jennifer
23	Teacher of the Handicapped	Ortiz-Almeida, Sofia
24	Teacher's Aide	Paul, William
25	School Social Worker / Supervisor	Perrotta, Adriana
26	Teacher's Assistant	Pierre, Olivia
27	PT Attendance Secretary	Raineri, Dinorah
28	Janitor #2	Ramos, Eric
29	Janitor	Rosario, Luis Jr.
30	School Social Worker	Salmeri, Amanda
31	Teacher's Aide	Slavinskiy Victoria
32	Teacher of Students w/Disabilities	Smith Jr., John
33	School Psychologist	Walsh, Carrie-Ann
34	Teacher of the Handicapped	Welkis, Jamie
35	Teacher of Students w/ Disabilities	White, Catherine
36	Secretary	Wiggins, Portia
37	Teacher's Aide	Wilson, Gladys
38	Teacher of Students w/ Disabilities	Wollman, Cherie
39	Teacher's Assistant	Yournet, Kaina



Local Education Agency Guidance for Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan for the 2023-2024 School Year

The New Jersey Department of Education (Department) is providing the following guidance pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9(c) and N.J.A.C. 6A:32-13.1 and 13.2, to assist LEAs in the development of their annual virtual or remote instruction plans. The Department encourages LEAs to reflect on the previous school year to enhance elements of the prior year's plan to provide the most substantive education, and including, but not limited to, related services, for all students in the event of an LEA closure. For each of the areas below, the chief school administrator or lead person will either mark "yes," confirming that the information is in the Plan and list the corresponding Plan page number, or mark "no" if the information is not contained in the Plan. The chief school administrator or lead person is expected to provide an explanation to the County Office of Education for all areas marked "no." By July 31 annually, the chief school administrator or lead person must submit a board-approved LEA Guidance for Virtual or Remote Instruction Plan for the coming school year, along with this form to their County Office of Education. At the time of submission to the county office of education, the plan must be posted on the LEA's website. Plans will be reviewed in each county office of education on a rolling basis with an electronic response communicated within two business days of receipt.

LEA Checklist for Virtual or Remote Instruction Programs

LEAs must enter the page number where each checklist item may be found in the virtual or remote instruction program submitted to the County Office of Education.

Contact Information

School Year: **2023-2024**

County: **Essex**

Name of District, Charter School, APSSD or Renaissance School Project: **Westbridge Academy**

Chief School Administrator/Charter or Renaissance Leader Name/APSSD Lead: **Dr. Anthony Hadzimichalis**

Phone Number of Contact: **973-429-8110 Ext.147**

Email Address of Contact: **anthonyh@westbridgeacademy.org**

Equitable Access and Opportunity to Instruction

Question	LEA Yes or No		
1. Is the LEA ensuring equitable access and opportunity to instruction for all students?	Yes		
Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
2. Does the program ensure that all varied and age-appropriate student needs are addressed?	1	Yes	
3. Is the program designed to maximize student growth and learning to the greatest extent possible? Synchronous and/or asynchronous virtual or remote learning plans which will maximize student growth and learning.	2	Yes	
4. Does the program describe how the LEA will continuously measure student growth and learning in a virtual or remote instruction environment?	2	Yes	
5. Does the program describe how the LEA will measure and address any ongoing digital divide issues, including a lack of internet access, network access and/or sufficient access to devices?	1	Yes	

Notes on Equitable Access to Instruction

Addressing Special Education Needs

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
1. Does the program address the provision of virtual or remote instruction to implement Individual Education Programs (IEPs) for students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible, including accessible materials and platforms?	2	Yes	
2. Does the program address methods to document IEP implementation including the tracking of services, student progress, as well as provision of accommodations and modifications?	2	Yes	
3. Does the program describe how case managers will follow up with families to ensure services are implemented in accordance with IEPs to the greatest extent possible?	2,3	Yes	
4. Does the program address procedures to conduct IEP meetings, evaluations and other meetings to identify, evaluate and/or reevaluate students with disabilities?	3	Yes	

Notes on Component 2

Addressing English language learners (ELL) Plan Needs

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
1. Does the program address the provision of virtual or remote instruction to implement Individual Education Programs (IEPs) for students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible, including accessible materials and platforms?	4	Yes	
2. Does the program address methods to document IEP implementation including the tracking of services, student progress, as well as provision of accommodations and modifications?	4	Yes	
3. Does the program describe how case managers will follow up with families to ensure services are implemented in accordance with IEPs to the greatest extent possible?	4	Yes	
4. Does the program address procedures to conduct IEP meetings, evaluations and other meetings to identify, evaluate and/or reevaluate students with disabilities?	4	Yes	

Notes on Supporting ELL Educational Needs

Attendance Plan

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
1.Does the program address the LEA’s attendance policies, including how the LEA will determine whether a student is present or absent, how a student’s attendance will factor into promotion, retention, graduation, discipline, and any other decisions that will reflect the student’s performance?	4	Yes	
2. Does the program describe how the LEA communicates with the family when a student is not participating in online instruction and/or submitting assignments?	4	Yes	

Notes on Attendance Plan**Safe Delivery of Meals Plan**

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
1. Does the program contain how the LEA will provide continued safe delivery of meals to eligible students?	4	Yes	

Notes on Safe Delivery of Meals

Facilities Plan

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
1. Does the program contain an outline of how buildings will be maintained throughout an extended period of closure?	4	Yes	

Notes on the Facilities Plan Other**Other Considerations**

Does the program contain the following considerations?	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
a. Accelerated learning opportunities	5	Yes	
b. Social and emotional health of staff and students	5	Yes	
c. Title I Extended Learning Programs		No	
d. 21st Century Community Learning Center Programs		No	
e. Credit recovery	5	Yes	
f. Other extended student learning opportunities		No	
g. Transportation	5	Yes	
h. Extra-curricular programs		No	
i. Childcare		No	
j. Community programming		No	

Notes on Other Considerations

APSSD Applicable Only: Sharing Plans

Was the program shared with all sending districts? Yes ☒ No ☐

Notes on APSSD Sharing Plans**Essential Employees**

Question	Page Number	LEA Yes or No	County Yes or No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The LEA will ensure essential employees are identified and a list is provided to the county office at the time of the LEA's transition to remote or virtual instruction. 	6	Yes	

Notes on Essential Employees**Board Approval**

Date of board approval (08/30/2023)

Notes on Board Approval**Posted on Website**

1. Is the program posted on the school district/APSSD/Charter/Renaissance School Project Website?

Yes ☒ No ☐

2. Link to the website: https://westbridgeacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/2022-2023_Westbridge_Academy_Virtual_Plan_rev.pdf