

PREPNET VIRTUAL ACADEMY
SAFE RETURN TO SCHOOL & CONTINUITY OF LEARNING PLAN
Updated: September 2023

Overview: PrepNet Virtual Academy is a K-12 tuition-free online school that enriches every aspect of your child's life. Based in Michigan, PrepNet Virtual provides the best combination of virtual and in-person learning, a moral focus program, a college-prep curriculum, a variety of electives, and an opportunity to belong to a connected community of friends and teachers.

Personal protective equipment: PrepNet Virtual Academy is an online school, so personal protective equipment is not applicable.

Social/physical distancing: PrepNet Virtual Academy is an online school, so social distancing mitigation strategies are not applicable.

Hygiene and cleaning: PrepNet Virtual Academy is an online school, so hygiene and cleaning mitigation strategies are not applicable.

Monitoring student and staff health: NHA monitors and follow any federal, state, and local requirements as it relates to COVID-19 safety procedures and follows them as necessary to ensure the safety of our students and staff and to ensure the continuity of in-person learning. Currently, there are no quarantine requirements, only recommendations, but the school will continue to monitor federal or state requirements and recommendations for changes. PrepNet Virtual Academy is an online school, so quarantine mitigation strategies are not applicable.

Vaccinations: NHA has provided us up-to-date information and resources on vaccination in our state and county.

Continuity of Learning for Special Populations: Students with IEPs or 504s access the same learning opportunities offered to general education students. These learning activities and supports address student needs identified in their IEP/504 to the extent appropriate. To accomplish this, special education providers collaborate with general education teachers to ensure provision of accommodations and modifications (when appropriate) that allow students to access learning opportunities. Individualized accommodations are documented and shared with classroom teachers for each student. English Learning (EL) teachers work with classroom teachers to provide necessary scaffolds to schoolwork to ensure that EL students have access to the core content.

The school complies with the regulations imposed by the state and by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures that all children with disabilities receive an Individual Educational Program (IEP) designed to address their unique needs. All required components of the IEP are addressed, including a description of the student's present level of academic achievement and functional performance, including disability-related needs, goals and objectives, supplemental aides and services, program services, ancillary services, and extended school year.

All students with disabilities are considered general education students first. Each IEP is designed to assure that eligible students receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and specialized instruction delivered by highly qualified special education staff within the least restrictive environment (LRE). Before school opens, we review registration forms to identify students with current IEPs from previous schools attended. We inform parents of their rights, procedures, and responsibilities under special education law. Decisions about an IEP are made by the school's IEP Team. This team has required participants, including general and special education providers and administrators. Parents are also encouraged to join the IEP Team.

As much as appropriate, children who are disabled are educated with children who are nondisabled. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of children with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that satisfactory education in regular classes with supplemental aids and services cannot be achieved.

To meet LRE requirements, the school ensures that a continuum of placement options is available to students with disabilities, including:

- services provided within the general education classroom;
- pull-out services;
- special classes;
- home instruction;
- instruction in hospitals and institutions; and
- in special circumstances, access to programs and services in settings outside the school.

The Individualized Education Program Team (IEPT) makes decisions about student placement.

Continuity of food services: PrepNet Virtual Academy is an online school, so food service is not applicable.

Mental health, behavioral, and emotional support services and support: Traumatic experiences like COVID-19 can impact learning, behavior, and relationships at school. Research clearly indicates that a traumatic experience in childhood can diminish concentration, memory, and the development of language that children need to be successful at school. The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting not just our children's physical health and academic experience, but it is taking a deep emotional toll as well. We believe children's well-being comes first, and that young people like adults, learn best when they are happy, safe, calm, and cared for properly.

As educators, we need to do everything in our arsenal to reduce the effects of trauma so that students can learn at an optimal level. Trauma does not discriminate between urban and suburban students as people will perceive threats like COVID-19 in their own way.

NHA has provided professional development on Emotional Intelligence, Leading in Complex Times, and Behave with Care, as well as Empathic Leadership. Each of these sessions

focused on developing our leaders' social and emotional competence to ensure healthy and effective ways of thinking, relating, and problem-solving.

Building leaders are provided with a menu of effective curricular tools and resource options that will help address the social and emotional well-being of students and staff in our schools. These options are evidence-based programs that are in alignment with the CASEL Framework and can be used to meet the needs of their school community.

The organization also prioritizes the mental and social-emotional health of staff. Leaders hold one-on-one meetings with employees that help leaders assess employees' physical and mental health. We also have an ethics hotline employees can use to report concerns. Additionally, we give employees free access to an employee assistance program, through which they can access a library of resources for self-care as well as free counseling sessions.

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