

MEDIA RELEASE

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Multi-Agency Partnership Issues 'Remote Digital Learning Roadmap' to Help Schools Improve Remote Instruction

Sustainable Jersey for Schools releases guide for schools, teachers and parents

EWING, NJ, August 25, 2020 — Sustainable Jersey for Schools today released a primer and a practical roadmap to help New Jersey schools and teachers implement remote learning programs that provide every student with the best education possible, with as little disruption as possible, when districts need to limit in-person instruction.

The user-friendly "Remote Digital Learning Roadmap," issued through the new Sustainable Jersey Digital Schools program, is accessible at <http://bit.ly/RemoteDigitalLearningRoadmap>.

"It's no surprise, and no criticism, that a number of schools struggled with implementing new remote learning programs in real time," said Randall Solomon, executive director of Sustainable Jersey. "The Remote Digital Learning Roadmap uses research and information gathered from many districts to provide guidance and examples of how schools can effectively implement digital instruction."

The Remote Digital Learning Roadmap covers a wide range of topics including: What is Digital Learning?; Remote Digital Learning and Equity; Remote Digital Learning and Mental Health; Choosing Content for Remote Digital Learning; Choosing Technology for Remote Digital Learning; Remote Digital Learning Family Supports; Remote Digital Learning for Lab, CTE, and Other Hands-On Courses; Remote Digital Learning in a Hybrid Model; Remote Digital Learning Lesson Plans and Strategies and more.

According to Solomon, the COVID-19 Pandemic will not be the last time that schools find it necessary to suspend in-person instruction. Extreme weather events, predicted to increase due to global warming, and future disease outbreaks are just two reasons that schools must build this capacity now, and for the future.

Equity is another concern.

"The public health crisis has exacerbated existing inequities," said Laurence Cocco, senior program consultant for the Sustainable Jersey Digital Schools program. "The most vulnerable students, those with challenging home environments, limited access to computers and broadband, or limited parental involvement, or those who require ESL or have special needs, have been disproportionately impacted."

He added, "The digital divide is growing. These students in particular require schools to build a robust remote digital learning capacity to ensure they do not fall behind when in-person teaching must be suspended." Cocco is former director of educational technology for the New Jersey Department of Education.

The Remote Digital Learning Roadmap is the first product of the new [Sustainable Jersey Digital Schools](#) program, a multi-agency partnership formed to help schools and their students prepare for a future of new challenges, during and beyond the pandemic. Access to and mastery of technology has a tremendous impact on a student's life prospects. The Sustainable Jersey Digital Schools program will provide ongoing guidance and support to help teachers, students, schools, and districts ensure that students are prepared to be economically competitive and engaged citizens in a technology infused future.

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- Sustainable Jersey Digital Schools Bronze Sponsor: ClassLink.

Sustainable Jersey Digital Schools program partners include the New Jersey Department of Education and the New Jersey School Boards Association.

About Sustainable Jersey for Schools

Sustainable Jersey for Schools is a certification program for public schools in New Jersey. It was launched by Sustainable Jersey, an organization that provides tools, training and financial incentives to support and reward municipalities and schools as they pursue sustainability programs. To date, 352 school districts and 969 schools are participating in the program. Sustainable Jersey for Schools has awarded over \$2.2 million in grants to schools and school districts. The [Sustainable Jersey Digital Schools](#) program is a multi-agency partnership formed to help schools and their students prepare for a future of new challenges, during and beyond the pandemic.

Sustainable Jersey for Schools is underwritten by the New Jersey School Boards Association, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities Clean Energy Program, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the PSEG Foundation and the New Jersey Education Association. The 2020 Sustainable Jersey for Schools Grants Program is underwritten by the PSEG Foundation, NJEA and the Gardinier Environmental Fund. Platinum and founding sponsors are South Jersey Gas and New Jersey Natural Gas. The gold and founding sponsor is the NJM Insurance Group. The silver sponsor is Investors Bank. The bronze sponsors are Gabel Associates, the ECG Group and Maschio's Food Service Inc.

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