MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

BETWEEN

THE READING TEACHERS ASSOCIATION AND

THE READING SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Whereas the parties wish to preserve the health of students, faculty and community members. The parties enter into this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

The Reading Teachers Association and the Reading School Committee agree that the following protocols and procedures will apply to all employees during the current State of Emergency, issued by Governor Charlie Baker, concerning the Coronavirus (CoVid-19) or any extension imposed by the district. This agreement shall remain in effect through June 29, 2020, and at which date it shall expire, unless the parties negotiate and agree to an Amendment.

1. If an employee is subject to a substantiated recommended self-quarantine and/or mandatory quarantine, said employee will receive full, regular and current pay and benefits for the duration of the leave. Pay during such leave shall not be reflected in a reduction from the employee's accumulated contractual leaves.

2. Should a worksite be closed for any reason related to the pandemic, employees shall receive their regular current base salary pay and benefits for the duration of such closing. Pay during such closing shall not be from the employee's accumulated contractual leaves.

3. In relation to Appendix B Stipends and any other stipends listed in the contract, we agree that:

   - Stipends for responsibilities that were completed for the year before Monday, March 16, 2020 will be paid in full.
   - Stipends for responsibilities that are ongoing throughout the year and continue through the period of emergency closure will be paid in full.
   - Stipends for responsibilities that are ongoing throughout the year and will not continue through the period of emergency closure will be prorated.
   - Stipends for responsibilities that have not yet begun will not be paid. (i.e. Spring Sports)
   - The Parties agree that should there be any issues with the payment of stipends per this Agreement; that they will work collaboratively to resolve any issues.

4. The RTA and the Reading Public Schools recognize that the existing supervision and evaluation tools were not designed for this period of school closure that requires remote learning. We recognize that remote learning stretches our thinking and challenges all of us to find new ways of engaging in the teaching and learning process. We acknowledge that the demands placed on RPS staff will be challenging; therefore, we agree that:

   - For the duration of the emergency school closure, all RPS teaching staff with professional teaching status will be considered at the rating of their last formative or summative evaluation (whichever is most recent) unless an administrator chooses to document ongoing concerns that arose prior to March 16, 2020. All Directed Growth Plans, Improvement Plans (or other plans designed to remediate staff performance) will resume when the period of school closure ends unless the supervisor has sufficient evidence/information to complete the process prior to the March 16, 2020 closure. Teachers who are considered "proficient" or above will not be required to complete evidence submission.

- Professional Status Teachers who are in good standing (proficient or above) will repeat their Year 1 or Year 2 cycle for the 2020-21 school year.
- For the 2019-2020 school year, non-professional teacher status Reading Public School Teachers will have a summative evaluation based on all evidence and observations that occurred prior to March 16th.
- For non-PTS teachers who are working according to the Guidelines for Remote Learning Opportunities; the period of closure will count as school days for purposes of attaining PTS status.

5. The Parties agree to postpone the April 1st deadline for the posting of stipended positions for the 2020-2021 school year until June 15

6. During the time of this pandemic or when the schools are closed, employees covered by this MOA will be expected to check their school emails twice daily (during normal work hours) to receive information from the district. If there is time-sensitive information the district needs to communicate to employees, the existing system to notify employees about inclement weather closures will be used to alert staff to check their emails.

7. Employees will be expected to follow the attached Reading Public Schools Remote Learning Plan-Phase 3. Attachment A.

8. The Parties agree that the last day of school for students and teachers shall be June 19, 2020.

9. Employees who require leave per the recently enacted Families First Act will not be subject to sections 6 or 7 of the MOA.

10. Change the date in Article XXII-Reduction in Force, Section F3 from May 15th to June 15th.

11. Nurses are expected to participate per the Guidelines for Remote Learning Opportunities; however, given the community needs regarding COVID-19, Nurses may also be available, as needed, to the Town of Reading during this time as an alternative to professional development.

12. Change Article X, Section A1 date from June 1st to June 29th.

13. A working group of representative special education teachers and related service providers (i.e. OT, PT, Speech and Language) will meet with the Director of Student Services and other Special Education Administrators to review current level of workload and look at possible solutions that are in line with state and Federal laws and regulations.
14. A working group of teachers from each level will meet with a group of school and district administrators to discuss and give feedback on activities regarding remote learning or school closure if the 2020-2021 school year does not begin at the scheduled time or is interrupted during the school year.

15. This agreement shall not be modified except for in writing and by mutual agreement and consent of both parties.

The Reading Teachers' Association   Reading Public Schools School Committee

_____   _____

Dated: May_____, 2020

<h1 style="text-align: center;">Reading Public Schools Remote Learning Plan-Phase 3</h1>

Since March 16, 2020, the way that we have conducted school has completely changed. Over a span of six weeks, we have transformed the concept of school to a remote learning environment. In our first few weeks of remote learning or Phase 1, we focused on student and staff safety, meals, technology access, and other basic needs. Due to the efforts of our food service and technology staff, we are feeding over forty students per week and have distributed 100 laptops to those students that did not have access to technology. In early April, we began Phase 2 which was engaging students in a variety of remote learning activities. Using Google Classroom and Microsoft Teams, our teachers and students are doing some amazing learning activities and reconnecting in a virtual environment. This has been a challenging transition and our thanks goes out to our teachers, administrators, and support staff who have worked tirelessly to make this transition.

With Governor Baker's announcement on April 21st that school will be closed for the rest of the year, our focus is now on Phase 3 of remote learning. In Phase 3 we will continue to follow the initial guidance released on March 26th from Commissioner Riley and the Reading Public Schools Phase 2 remote learning plan with a deeper focus on two areas:

- **Further defining the recommended elements of a quality remote learning program, including a focus on teaching the content standards most critical for student success in the next grade level.**
- **Encouraging schools to move all students towards successful engagement in remote learning, with a focus on addressing fundamental needs.**

On April 24, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released essential standards for elementary and secondary schools. These prerequisite standards are most critical to student success as they complete this unique year of learning and move into the next school year. These are the standards that our teachers will focus on moving forward for the last several weeks of school. In addition, we will continue to create learning opportunities and address fundamental needs to successfully engage all students in remote learning.

<h3 style="text-align: center;">Reading Public Schools Goals and Actions for Phase 3 Remote Learning</h3>

Introduction

For Phase 3 of remote learning our overall goal is the following:

To move all students toward consistent engagement in remote learning, with a focus on connectedness and on the content standards most critical for success in the next grade.

To do this, we will take the following steps:

- **Strengthen the remote learning program for all students** by doing the following:
    1. Prioritize meaningful connections with Reading Public School Teachers and peers
    2. Provide engaging core instruction focused on the prerequisite content standards that are most critical for student success in the next grade.
    3. Offer opportunities for enrichment, exercise, and play
    4. Ensure programming is accessible and secure and communication is streamlined for students and their families.
- **The Reading Public Schools will develop a system for identifying and supporting students not effectively engaged in remote learning** by doing the following:

    1. Collect information to understand each student's level of engagement in remote learning.
    2. Provide supports to further engage all students, with a focus on meeting foundational student needs.

I. **Strengthen the remote learning program for all students**

    a. **Prioritize meaningful connections with Reading Public School Teachers and peers**

        Our remote learning plan will ensure that opportunities for connection are woven throughout core instruction and enrichment opportunities. Separate group or individual check-ins focused on students' social-emotional health and well-being are all critical for all students.

        Our remote learning plan will focus on the following strategies to make these connections. Because two way communication and connections between teachers and students is critical for remote learning, teachers will have regular and consistent connections with students using the strategies below.

- **Synchronous "live" connections-**Reading Public School Classroom Teachers and Specialists will be expected to offer synchronous opportunities with their students on a weekly basis. The content and frequency will look different for each level and for each position. Teachers will use an approved district videoconferencing tool to interact with students. These blocks may focus on social-emotional learning and could take the form of a class meeting, open circle activity, an SEL activity, advisory group, a share, interest-based groups, peer-support groups, or some other engagement strategy. Teachers also may use these times for full classes special interest and/or small group focused classes.
- **Regular teacher "office hours"-**Reading Public School Teachers will offer office hours (minimum of 2 times per week at elementary and 3 times per week at secondary) when students can drop in via computer or phone to get help with assignments and/or check in with their teacher.
- **Individual calls to students from Reading Public School Teachers and staff-**Building principals will continue to implement a system to check in on student's well-being. Teachers will check in on students who may be struggling, may not be engaged or intermittently engaged in remote learning or to review feedback on student work.
- **Opt-in, interest based peer groups-**Reading Public School Teachers, paraprofessionals or other staff could have clubs and activities such as book clubs, drawing workshops, sing alongs, etc.
- **Counselor-facilitated peer support groups-**will be developed by our counseling staff organized around a common student need.

    b. **Provide engaging core instruction focused on the content standards most critical for student success in the next grade**

- **Focus on prerequisite content standards-**Remote learning lessons should focus on the prerequisite [elementary](#) and [secondary](#) content standards that were released by DESE on April 24th. These standards have been identified by DESE as critical for success in the next grade for math, English language arts, science, and history/social studies. The Reading Public Schools will give further guidance on these standards in the near future.
- **Emphasize student engagement in core instruction-**In a virtual world, making core instruction engaging for students is critical to encourage and increase participation. Some examples of maximizing student engagement could include, but are not limited to the following:
  - Curriculum that provides real world applications for learning
  - Gamified, self-paced learning platforms that provide frequent feedback
  - Frequent feedback on student work, with celebration of progress
  - Project-based learning on an engaging, socially relevant topic
- **Ensure supports and scaffolds for students with disabilities and English learners-**General education teachers, special education teachers, and ESL teachers should be working together to ensure supports are in place for students with disabilities and English learners. DESE guidance on English learners is located [here](#). DESE guidance on special education is located [here](#). In addition, our special education department has created information for families located [here.](#)

- **Provide a manageable number of lessons and assignments-**As stated in the March 26th guidance from DESE, the overall student remote learning day is expected to last approximately half as long as a normal school day. However, academic time on task will vary by grade level with enrichment opportunities filling in the remaining remote learning time.

c. **Offer opportunities for enrichment, exercise, and play**
    - The Reading Public Schools remote learning plan will provide students with access to enrichment, exercise, and play based activities that support their mental and physical health.

d. **Ensure programming is accessible and secure and communication is streamlined-**To support students and families, we will focus on the following:
    - Plan and communicate remote learning in weekly doses by planning and organizing assignments, lessons, and meetings one week at a time, instead of day by day. Because teachers and families are juggling multiple responsibilities, this will allow everyone time to plan accordingly within their own daily routines and needs.
    - Send out one communication with assignments and meeting times before the week begins.
    - Schools will provide sample daily schedules to suggest ways for students to organize their time.
    - Differentiate between required and optional assignments and meetings.
    - Coordinate efforts on school and district communication to ensure families are receiving a manageable number of emails and/or calls.
    - We will continue to streamline our platforms so that we are using district approved platforms (i.e. google classroom, Microsoft Teams and the portal).
    - Teachers may deliver their instructional lessons (not office hours or morning meetings) in an asynchronous format (i.e. record a video of the lesson as opposed to asking students to tune in at a specific time to watch it live). This will free up educator time during the day to provide synchronous (live) support to students who may need extra support and engage students in small group or other class settings. It will also provide accessibility for all students and families who have conflicting commitments or responsibilities.

II. **Developing a system for identifying and supporting students not effectively engaged in remote learning**

There are a population of students in each school who are not being reached in remote learning or are only intermittently engaged. These are students who may have other foundational needs (food, technology, mental health support). The purpose of this section is to continue to identify and address the specific barriers students are facing. We have a moral obligation to do all we can to reach out and engage all students in the Reading Public Schools.

a. **Collect information to understand each student's level of engagement in remote learning**
    - Each school will continue to implement an outreach team that will consist of a variety of staff as designated by the principal. This outreach team will focus on students who are not engaged or who are intermittently engaged in the remote learning. The outreach is for support, not compliance. The purpose of the outreach is to understand the needs that are preventing the student from engaging in schoolwork, with the goal of ultimately providing support to meet those needs.
    - The process should look as follows:
        o Gather existing information from teachers to understand current student engagement and potential student needs.
        o Identify students who are not engaging regularly and flag the need for additional information to find out why.
        o Assign staff members to each student/family. This could include the principal, assistant principal, secretary, paraeducators, teachers, counselors, and/or other staff.
        o Connect with families to identify barriers to engagement.
        o Determine next steps to support each student.
        o Follow up with each student/family over the next few days/week.

b. **Provide supports to further engage all students, with a focus on meeting foundational student needs**
- Identify trends as to why students are not engaging by looking at foundational needs (food, technology access, mental health supports), academic skill gaps, communication challenges, social emotional connection needs, etc.)
- Identify additional supports that should be built into the core program.
- Look to see if specific student groups (gender, age, race/ethnicity, etc.) are disproportionately engaged.
- Focus on foundational wellness and readiness for all students by doing the following:
  - Direct 1:1 support provided by a school counselor (mental health challenges), paraprofessional, technician or teacher (hands-on technology support)
  - Referral to Director of School Nutrition for food insecurity
  - Referral to Network Manager to access help to obtain technology

III.   Office Hours and the Work Day

5. School as we knew it several weeks ago has completely changed. The length of our teachers' workdays will be flexible and customizable, as many of them are juggling the same responsibilities as our Reading Public School families. They are not expected to hold traditional school hours, however, will be expected to be engaged in a typical work day. As described above, staff will be involved in the following:

> Our remote learning plan will ensure that opportunities for connection are woven throughout core instruction and enrichment opportunities. Separate group or individual check-ins focused on students' social-emotional health and well-being are all critical for all students.

> Our remote learning plan will focus on the following strategies to make these connections. Because two way communication and connections between teachers and students is critical for remote learning, teachers will have regular and consistent connections with students using the strategies below.

- **Synchronous "live" connections-**Reading Public School Classroom Teachers and Specialists will be expected to offer synchronous opportunities with their students on a weekly basis. The content and frequency will look different for each level and for each position. Teachers will use an approved district videoconferencing tool to interact with students. These blocks may focus on social-emotional learning and could take the form of a class meeting, open circle activity, an SEL activity, advisory group, a share, interest-based groups, peer-support groups, or some other engagement strategy. Teachers also may use these times for full classes special interest and/or small group focused classes.
- **Regular teacher "office hours"-**Reading Public School Teachers will offer office hours (minimum of 2 times per week at elementary and 3 times per week at secondary) when students can drop in via computer or phone to get help with assignments and/or check in with their teacher.
- **Individual calls to students from Reading Public School Teachers and staff-**Building principals will continue to implement a system to check in on student's well-being. Teachers will check in on students who may be struggling, may not be engaged or intermittently engaged in remote learning or to review feedback on student work.
- **Opt-in, interest based peer groups-**Reading Public School Teachers, paraprofessionals or other staff could have clubs and activities such as book clubs, drawing workshops, sing alongs, etc.
- **Counselor-facilitated peer support groups-**will be developed by our counseling staff organized around a common student need.

2. Reading Public School Teachers will also use their time for the following:

- Remote collaboration within their teams/grades/departments/mentors and protégés
- Preparation and professional development time
- Virtual Staff Meetings with Principals at scheduled times

- Professional development time for preparation regarding enrichment and remote learning opportunities.
- Curriculum development and other committee work that was in place prior to March 13th.
- Remote participation in Special Education IEP/504 meetings at scheduled times.
- Completing special education evaluation reports and other documents related to special education
- Communication with students and families.
- Read and respond to emails.
- As an opportunity to include paraprofessionals as part of the team.

4.   At the middle and high school level, the third and fourth quarters will be combined and teachers will be asked to record pass or pass/incomplete for grades during the remote learning period. If a student receives a pass/incomplete, they will be given opportunities to make up the learning. At the elementary level, teachers should continue with formative assessments and give feedback, where appropriate, during this time period, but report cards will not be issued.

6.   Employees may be expected to participate in online professional development during this period. Some of the professional development may include but is not limited to training of the various district technology learning tools. The district shall provide a menu of professional development options for employees to self-select and participate. In selecting PD options, the District will be mindful of length of programming and will work to provide options that Reading Public School Teachers can participate in while still completing work per the attached guidelines. Reading Public School Teachers may also substitute applicable professional development not on the list after approval from their Principal or supervisor.

7.   When speaking with families, Reading Public School Teachers should use available options to maintain the privacy of personal contact information. Should an educator have concerns about speaking with a family regarding a particular matter or issue or if the educator needs assistance with volume of inquires; the educator shall call or email your principal or director for further assistance.

The District understands that this is largely unchartered waters and that Reading Public School Teachers will have other responsibilities throughout the day. The expectations are for everyone to do their best to maintain communication and connection with our students until normal operations can resume.