

Special Services – Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 8/18/20

Below is a list of common questions regarding special services, and answers from the district. We will continue to update and clarify these concerns as more information becomes available. We will continue to do our best to communicate the most current and update information as it becomes available.

Special Education

How will the Individualized Education Plan process work for distance learning?

If needed, an IEP amendment or IEP meeting will be held to determine goals, accommodations/modifications, accessibility, and services needed through distance learning. Each student will have a special education case manager, and service providers will be assigned based upon the IEP needs of the student. A copy of the IEP will be provided to teachers who are teaching through distance learning.

How will my child's services be accessed during distance learning?

Special education staff have been trained to use Schoology as a learning platform. Services will include direct instruction with a provider (Schoology, teletherapy, or instructional phone calls), in-direct instruction recorded by a provider, and IEP goal activities (in Schoology or in an instructional packet as determined by the IEP team).

If a student has been participating in a modified curriculum based upon the students IEP, will his/her curriculum continue to be modified for distance learning?

Yes, students who qualify for a modified curriculum will continue to receive a modified curriculum while participating in distance learning.

Will Adapted Physical Education (APE) services be offered for in-person and distance learning?

Yes. For students who participate in in-person learning, APE will engage in physical activities that allow for social distancing. For students who participate in distance learning, APE activities will be provided as needed.

Will any changes need to be made to my child's IEP if in-person is chosen?

Yes. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has created a new Form G to be completed on all in-person learners. Form G outlines a plan for your child if an unplanned school closure occurs, such as snow days or pandemic closures. Your student's case manager will contact you to either conduct an IEP amendment or conduct an IEP meeting.

Will IEP programs focusing upon community-based instruction and working in the community continue to be offered?

The Special Services department is considering alternatives for meeting student transition needs that would not include going into the community in order to limit exposure and as safety precautions of the general public cannot be guaranteed.

Section 504

How will 504 plans be implemented through distance learning?

Your student's 504 coordinator will contact you to discuss if any changes are needed to the 504 Plan for distance learning. If needed, a 504 meeting will be held to determine accommodations/modifications, accessibility, and services needed through distance learning. A copy of the 504 Plan will be provided teachers who are teaching through distance learning for implementation.

Will any changes need to be made to my child's 504 Plan if in-person is chosen?

Maybe. If your child's 504 Plan includes accommodations that may no longer be appropriate in light of the situation, such as student resting in the clinic, then a 504 amendment or a 504 meeting will be held.

Special Education and 504

Can students with IEPs or 504 plans participate in BSSD Distance Learning?

Yes, students with IEPs or 504 plans can participate in either BSSD Distance Learning or in-person school.

How will related services (i.e., speech, language, occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, et.) be provided to qualifying students who choose distance learning?

A student's IEP team or 504 team (which includes parents) will determine if the student will participate in teletherapy, computer activities, or pen/paper activities depending upon a student's unique needs.

Will there be exemptions for children with disabilities in regards to wearing a mask?

During this public health crisis, there will be no blanket mask exemptions for all students with disabilities when the district mandates mask (cloth face covering or surgical mask) use.

Students who *cannot wear* cloth face covering have the following characteristics according to the CDC: trouble breathing, unconsciousness, incapacitation, or inability to remove cloth face covering without assistance. These students will not wear a mask at school but will have identified accommodations.

Students who *have difficulty wearing a cloth face covering appropriately and consistently* according to the CDC include: young students in early childhood or primary elementary school, students with severe asthma or other breathing difficulty, and/or students with special educational or healthcare needs such as intellectual disabilities, mental health conditions, and sensory concerns or tactile sensitivity. Students in this category will wear a mask with accommodations and may have instruction on mask tolerance as appropriate.

Decisions on whether accommodations are needed for a cloth face covering requirement will be made on an individual basis and decided by school-based teams in consultation with any health professionals involved with the student. School-based teams may include 504 team and IEP team.

Who can I contact to discuss my child's IEP and 504 needs further?

Contact your child's school for specific discussions regarding your student.