Guam Department of Education * Division of Special Education

Hita Para Mo'na:
Continuity of Learning Provisions for Students with Disabilities

Continuity of Learning in a Virtual and/or Distance Learning Environment

KEY

- **█ General Education**
- **█ Special Education**
- **█ Considerations**
- **█ Tips**
- **- - - As Appropriate**

Special Education delivered in a virtual and/or distance learning environment

Determine whether and how equal access can be given to the instruction offered to nondisabled students to the maximum extent possible (Section 504/FAPE).

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Determine whether and how the IEP goals can be addressed to the greatest extent possible (IDEA/FAPE)

School districts must provide a FAPE consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those individuals providing education, specialized instruction, and related services to these students. Exceptional circumstances may affect how all educational and related services are provided. Schools may not be able to provide all services in the same manner they are typically provided (OCR, March 21, 2020).

School staff review student s IEP, contact parent, and discuss **individualized** proposals for IEP implementation to prevent regression and promote learning

Can the IEP be implemented remotely (i.e. Grab-n-Learn, Online, or Hybrid)?
Consider:
- Specially Designed Instruction: learning/behavior/social emotional/communication IEP Goals/objectives
- Related services by alternative means
- Accommodations and modifications
- Home instructional materials individualized to the student's needs
- Providing individual and/or small group instruction for students with and/or without disabilities, as appropriate

Are there any new needs resulting from distance learning?
Consider:
- SDI to access remote learning technology
- Model instruction for parents to practice with their children
- Social skills instruction or opportunities for structured virtual interaction
- Gathering parent's input on needs (e.g., training on remote technology, etc.) and child's progress, as appropriate

Individualized Continuity of Learning

IMPLEMENT IEP
as written through virtual instruction

AMEND IEP
with parent agreement (outside of the IEP Team meeting) to supplement student s current IEP

REVISE IEP
if parent not in agreement to amend IEP (through the IEP Team meeting)

Conduct annual IEP Team meetings IF parent agrees to participate by alternative means AND school staff have necessary data (including assessment materials)

Tips to Support Virtual/Distance Learning for Students with Disabilities
- Consider how the student will have access to the general education curriculum
- Establish teaching presence (e.g. face to face interactions) and external structure early and revisit often
- Be open and honest about what is working and what needs to be adjusted
- Provide explicit instructions with clear expectations and practice (student/parent) support learning, online participation, communication, and netiquette
- Use a calendar as a visual representation of assignment due dates, in addition to listing due dates
- Break teaching/learning into smaller chunks to avoid cognitive overload and provide multiple means of communication and collaboration
- Be sure that learning content aligns with IEP goals, objectives, and progress monitoring
- Provide frequent/timely feedback to improve student outcomes
- Offer alternative means of completing assignments if it does not interfere with assignment outcomes. Example: voice recorded journal entries
- Provide students with opportunities to interact with peers, such as through discussion and group work.

Document any changes, as appropriate to current IEP and service delivery remotely:
- School staff/parent discussion
- Accommodations, modifications, supplemental aids, and services to be provided (nature, frequency, provider, begin date, etc.)
- Technology needs
- Qualified personnel to deliver SDI
- Data points that require ongoing progress monitoring
- Ongoing communication

Document that amendments are only in place during school closures due to COVID-19
Document parent agreement
Actions:
- Provide a copy of the IEP amendment to the parent and service providers
- Upload a copy of the IEP amendments to sped.iepdocs@gdoe.net

Conduct an IEP team meeting by alternative means if a parent can participate

Implement only after PWN is provided

Conduct initial evaluation and re evaluation by alternative means IF the school staff have necessary data (including assessment materials) AND the parent consents

Tips to Amend IEP

Conduct IEP meeting as soon as possible or within reasonable time, but no more than 30 days after first instructional day of the student.

If parent cannot participate in an IEP meeting, then no IEP meeting is held and the team delivers those services on the IEP which can be **reasonably implemented in a virtual environment** without changing the program or placement

Implement IEP
- Follow a consistent schedule/routine
- Document activities and services provided (contact log)
- Monitor and track student progress based on student's response to services provided during school closure

RECOVERY EFFORTS
Once there is data to determine whether there was a loss of skills and/or progress during school closure, IEP team determines whether additional/new/different services and accommodations are needed to address the impact of school closure

The IEP Team analysis for determining whether a student requires additional/different services is fact specific
Consider a non exhaustive list of factors:
- data on the student s progress during the school closures (progress monitoring);
- data on the student s ability to recoup skills and make progress on IEP goals;
- length of school closure, including time without any instruction and time with virtual and/or long distance learning;
- documentation of accommodations and/or services provided (e.g., amount of instruction and services including dates, times, and duration);
- accommodations and/or services the IEP team was unable to provide
- additional special education needs that result from the extended school closure

Missed services do not automatically result in a one for one compensatory award.

Decisions regarding Extended School Year (ESY) services and compensatory services are made by the IEP team, on a case by case basis, to address the individual needs of the student.

Adapted From: Maryland Together: Maryland's Recovery Plan for Education (May 2020)

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