

March 16, 2020

Dear Families and Parents of Students with Disabilities,

During this time there are some important things to remember. Any actions taken by a district or school regarding closures are for the safety of all students and school personnel working with students. As districts and schools are determining the most appropriate steps to ensure student and staff safety, we want to take this time to provide guidance relating to students with disabilities and their services. It is extremely important for families and schools to collaborate and communicate regarding services for students with disabilities.

What will happen to my child's services when school is canceled for all students due to COVID-19?

1. If a school closure causes educational services for all students to stop, then the school/district is generally not required to provide services to the affected students eligible for special education services during that same period of time (See OSEP Letter to Pergament, December 2013). This general standard is especially true in cases where the school district will still provide the required minimum of school days.
2. After an extended closure, districts are responsible for reviewing how the closure impacted the delivery of special education and related services to students eligible for special education services. Students may need additional services or extended school year services to make up missed services.
3. If annual IEP reviews or eligibility reviews are due during a school closure, please work with your school closely to meet as soon as school is back in session or through alternate means, such as video or audio conference calls.

What will happen to my child's services when a school is closed but educational services continue to be provided to all students?

1. If a district has extended school closures but continues to provide educational services to all students, the district will remain responsible for the free appropriate public education (FAPE) of its students eligible for special education services with an individualized education program (IEP).
2. Districts should be communicating with parents and guardians prior to, during, and after a school closure regarding their child's IEP services. Districts and schools will work to ensure that all students receive services to the most appropriate extent possible.
3. Although special education or related services may need to be adjusted, IEP teams should work to ensure that a student on an IEP receives services comparable to all other students. Services might include schoolwork packets, online learning, or some other learning adapted to the student's needs and location.

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4. After an extended closure, districts are responsible for reviewing how the closure impacted the delivery of special education and related services to students eligible for special education services. Students may need additional services or extended school year services to make up missed services.
5. If annual IEP reviews or eligibility reviews are due during this time, please work with your school closely to meet as soon as school is back in session or through alternate means, such as video or audio conference calls.

What will happen to my child's services if school remains open but my child is sick and sent home?

1. Students who are sick and who need to stay at home for more than ten days may need to receive homebound instruction.
2. The IEP team must meet to determine how to provide services for your child. This may include schoolwork packets, online instruction, or some other type of learning adapted to the student's needs and location.

Additional guidance

Office of Special Education Program guidance [here](#).