

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions 1 for Staff - April 9, 2020

IEP RELATED QUESTIONS

- 1. What is the purpose of the Temporary Learning Plan (TLP)?**

During these unprecedented times, we are looking at ways to support students receiving special education services. The school division is implementing a Temporary Learning Plan (TLP) to outline special education and related services which will look different than what are currently included in the IEP. While it does not replace the IEP, the TLP is a letter which identifies the continuity of learning services and consultation that will be provided to students between now and the end of the school year.
- 2. How and when will the TLP be rolled out to teachers?**

A Blackboard Collaborate training session will be recorded that covers the TLP and a link will be sent out to administrators and Leads/Chairs for pushing out to teachers by Monday, April 13, 2020. Information will also go out through the PSLs.
- 3. What timeline are case managers expected to adhere to for TLP completion?**

The request is that the TLP process begins on April 14, 2020 and be completed by April 28, 2020. There is recognition that the process will be dependent upon parental internet access and response time, so flexibility is understood. Teachers are asked to document all attempts to engage the parent in the TLP process.
- 4. How is the TLP developed and are the parents deciding our goals and services?**

The TLP process includes the case manager collaborating with related service providers, if applicable, and contacting the parent to gain input. Next, the case manager completes the proposed TLP letter and sends a copy electronically to the parent. Case managers will upload the proposed TLP into SEA-STARs.
- 5. What services should IEP teams propose?**

Services for the 2020-21 school year should be proposed assuming school will resume by the start of the new school year calendar. For initial IEPs, only list services for next school year and document the TLP on the PLOP page of the IEP. Case managers, and related service providers, if applicable, should consider how a student's programming is impacted by distance learning and propose services appropriate to address this learning model at this time. Guidance and some sample language will be provided to case managers during the week of April 13, 2020.
- 6. What placement should IEP teams propose?** Placement should reflect what the IEP team would otherwise propose for the 2020-21 year. Due to the school closure, there will not be changes of placement for the remainder of this school year.

7. Will transportation representatives be available for IEP meetings, to include placements that will start in August?

Yes, they are available to be a part of IEP meetings.

8. Do we hold placement meetings for higher levels of service that were in process before the school closure?

Yes, for students whose IEP team members had proposed consideration of a more restrictive setting prior to 3/13/20. The IEP team may continue to hold meetings to discuss whether a placement might be proposed to begin next school year. Please contact your PSL for any meetings involving a representative from multi-agency services to consider a private placement.

9. What do we do if we have a student who requires an IEP meeting following a decision from the hearing's office?

Your PSL will contact you with the placement options that can be considered by the IEP team.

10. Are Behavior Intervention Plans and BIP reviews conducted during COVID-19 and the closing of schools?

Implementation of BIPs is suspended. Case managers should consult with OSEI (BIT, curriculum specialists, ABA coach) regarding concerns around social skills, executive functioning, or behaviors. Work with your BIT or ABA coach to share strategies with parents, if appropriate.

11. What is the status of SOL and VAAP state assessments?

The Virginia Department of Education provided a waiver for all state testing for this school year. At this time, during an IEP meeting, propose the state assessments the student may participate in the 2020-21 school year. Document the waiver information on the PLOP. For annual IEPs, document the waiver on the PLOP.

12. Should Case Managers provide parents with the existing Diploma Options brochure?

Yes

13. Do we need to review SPLAVC-A for graduating seniors?

Specific guidance from DSS will be issued the week of 4/14/20. The link below will provide guidance from VDOE for SPLAVC-A:
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/health_medical/office/covid-19-grad-credits.shtml

14. Should Case Managers do Progress Reports?

Yes, complete IEP progress reports for the 3rd quarter, using data prior to March 13, 2020. A progress report is not required for the 4th quarter because we are not providing grades for students without disabilities.

15. Should IEP teams consider ESY?

At this time, there is no way to predict if buildings are going to be open for summer or ESY services. IEP teams should indicate that ESY should be addressed at a later date.

16. How will transition plans be completed?

Case managers should reach out to students age 14 and above prior to meeting and should collaborate with the ETR.

17. How should we handle students new to FCPS with transfer IEPs?

It is not necessary to complete the Transfer IEP documents. Develop a new FCPS IEP and document Temporary Learning Plan on the PLOP and in the PWN. Contact Due Process and Eligibility so that eligibility information can be entered in SEA-STARs.

18. How will requests for compensatory services be managed?

School staff must reach out to their PSL or DPE for guidance. The IEP team may meet to consider compensatory services when school resumes.

SPECIAL EDUCATION MEETING LOGISTICS

19. How do we handle signing in at IEP meetings?

The case manager completes the cover page in SEA-STARs, double checks attendance, and makes adjustments as necessary. On the PLOP page, indicate all participants on the cover page participated in the meeting via teleconference or Blackboard Collaborate Ultra.

20. Are all IEP team members required? Can parents sign non-attendance forms for particular members?

During the spring 2020 shut down, case managers may conduct annual IEP meetings with the required committee members only if appropriate. If there are concerns from any IEP team member, follow our current protocol. If parents are not available to attend an IEP meeting after being given several opportunities and methods, FCPS will move forward with a proposal to present to the parents.

21. How much time should you allot for a special education meeting?

Meetings should be scheduled for no more than 2 hours and Blackboard Collaborate can be set to end at a specific time.

22. What is the protocol for securing language services support for meetings?

FCPS Language Services provides telephonic/virtual interpretations through FCPS interpreters. Teachers or staff members must contact interpreters to request the service. This is not a language hotline. List of available languages by Language Services: Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Farsi, French, Hindi, Japanese, Korean, Mongolian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Somali, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Tamil/Telegu, Turkish, Twi, Urdu and Vietnamese.

The Office of Language Services has a list of interpreters who can be a part of a 3-way conference call or virtual meeting (via Google Meet or Blackboard Collaborate).

For a list of interpreters, contact LS_Oral_Interpretation@fcps.edu and for questions, contact the Language Services Specialist, Katie Han at kjhan@fcps.edu.

For a 3-way telephonic interpretation, the following protocol must be followed:

- From any smartphone, the teacher/staff member would call an interpreter from the LS list who speaks the appropriate language. After contact has been made

with an interpreter, the teacher would then use the “add a call” and “merge call” features of the smartphone to establish a 3-way phone call with the family.

- When the 3-way conference call has been established, the teacher would take the lead in the conversation and the interpreter would only interpret what is being said by both parties. (Interpreters are not allowed to add to, or edit, any part of the conversation nor provide their own opinions.)
- For a virtual meeting, the appropriate meeting link should be sent to the interpreters for them to access. At the conclusion of the call/meeting, the teacher/staff member must email LS_Oral_Interpretation@fcps.edu to obtain a job number and provide the following information in order for the interpreter to receive compensation*:
 - Requester’s Name & School
 - Name of interpreter used
 - Language
 - Date of phone conference/meeting
 - Start. End time
 - Did the interpreter prearrange this meeting with the parent prior to the meeting? Yes or No

*There is no need to send this information if a 3-way call has not been established. Leaving a voicemail does not qualify as a 3-way conversation.

Note: School staff should never ask interpreters to call a list of families to deliver a one-way message. The telephonic interpretation service is only available for 3-way conference calls.

23. How will we address the participation of attorneys, advocates, and other non-biological parent participants in annual IEPs?

Case managers should ask parents if anyone else will participate in the meeting and send a copy of SS/SE-79A along with the meeting notice. If necessary, the IEP team can accept oral consent and document that on the PLOP.

24. Are there any suggestions for Internet access connectivity issues/glitches mid-meeting?

Just log back in as soon as possible. Be sure to turn off VPN for the most stable connection. The following suggestions may also support your connection: turn the Internet off on other devices such as phones, iPads, etc. and/or restart your router.

25. What if a parent requests a tour of a school/program?

Buildings are closed and tours cannot be scheduled at this time.

OTHER SPECIAL EDUCATION PROCESSES

26. Is there one day of the week schools do local screening?

No, schools collaborate with relevant LSC members to determine the schedule. Many elementary schools will be doing CLT meetings on Fridays and that day is not recommended, if possible.

27. How do we get signatures for special education documents in which you have not received a consent decision for a meeting that already occurred?

Given the current situation, we are accepting verbal consent, an email providing consent, a text message providing consent, or an electronic signature with notation in the contacts log in SEA-STARS.

28. Will special education testing be completed within local screening, reevaluation or for IEP purposes?

In-person testing will not be completed until school resumes.

29. What is the process for Local Screening referrals?

LSC referrals can occur and meetings should be held. In-person testing will not be completed until school resumes.

30. Do we proceed with an MDR if it was to be scheduled prior to the COVID-19 closing of schools?

No, MDR is only applicable when we are in school.

INSTRUCTION

31. Are evidence-based programs allowed to be administered via video?

The permission to provide instruction using aspects of the FCPS approved evidence-based and research-based programs vary by company. Please visit the Distance Learning Resources folder in FCPS 24/7, special education folder, for information regarding the use of different programs. Please note, no matter the program, it is not expected that any of our research-based programs will be provided with the same frequency and duration using all aspects of the program during this time period. For specific questions, please reach out to your OSEI team member.

32. What if parents ask for 30-60 minutes of individual video conferencing/teaching for their children?

The case manager will discuss this with his or her PSL regarding the Temporary Learning Plan. If necessary, the IEP team may need to consider all parent requests with consideration to the distance learning plan and the school schedule. Consult with OSEI to discuss programming models to meet the needs of the student.

33. If parents purchase an Evidence Based Program for home use, will FCPS guide them on implementation?

Information can be shared regarding the aspects of the program which have been approved for use during this distance learning period. This information is available in FCPS 24/7: Distance Learning Resources folder, select a grade level, and then select Special Education. Please contact your OSEI team member regarding specific questions.

34. Are related service providers going to be implementing distance learning as well?

Yes, related service providers will be implementing distance learning services and supports. Please consult with the individual related service providers for each case.

MISCELLANEOUS:

35. Are teachers familiar with the use of *67 so they can block their personal phone number when calling parents?

Principals should be giving protocol guidance as all teachers have to communicate with families. IT provided all FCPS staff with a one-page communication document.

36. Will students currently on homebound or home-based instruction continue to receive services from their homebound/based teachers?

Homebound and homebased teachers, when schools are operating normally, act as surrogate instructors supporting lessons and instruction which comes from classroom teachers. The last school attended classroom teachers remain the teacher of record and are also responsible for grading. As part of the distance learning plan, students receiving homebound/homebased instruction will receive the same instruction provided to all FCPS students. As the distance learning plan will not require the need of a homebound/homebased teacher to provide direct face to face instruction in lieu of the classroom teacher, the roles of these teachers will shift. Students who previously received face to face instruction will be provided weekly check-ins and/or other additional instructional support based on individual need.

37. What is our responsibility to students with an ISP?

ISP services are concluded for the remainder of the year.

38. Are Public Health Nurses (PHNs) available to participate in virtual IEP and/or 504 meetings and to support the MSRT process?

The Fairfax County Health Department (FCHD) has shared that nearly 100% of the school health PHNs are currently assigned to support the COVID-19 response in our community and are not available to support student specific school health services at this time. As a result:

- PHNs will also not be available to participate in IEP and/or 504 team meetings
- Medical Services Review Team (MSRT) cases will be placed on hold until school resumes
- At Annual IEP meetings, for those cases reviewed during FCPS school closure, teams may continue skilled nursing services without a review by MSRT