

# Special Education Leader Session

Please see below the initial questions from our CCEA SPED members and answers received from CCSD. Additional questions and answers will be forth coming.



## Concern: IEP Timeline & Process

**Q: What action steps do educators need to take to ensure they are in compliance with federal and state laws?**

A: Teachers should communicate with the parent in advance as well as documenting it on the status log. As the teacher conducts the IEP Revision without a meeting the parent should send an email and/or sign the last page in agreement. That should be documented on the status record. In the event the parent does not agree to the formal IEP must be scheduled to address distance education as the IEP guidance indicates.

**Q: How is the district ensuring protection for educators?**

A: Teachers have the same protection in distance education as they do traditionally regarding the process. Documentation of the contacts and procedures in the status log is very important. The SEIF and SSD team is available to assist with questions and support. Please reach out to the district regional coordinator.

**Q: How do educators protect themselves from parental lawsuits and or other issues when making all these IEP revisions?**

A: The recommendations and guidelines that are in the reopening of schools assist educators in providing information for IEP procedures. All schools have a SEIF and administrators that can assist with answering questions. Teachers are under the same protections afforded to all employees in the school district.

**Q: What are the precautions being made for the SPED teachers that must conduct testing in person? What are the precise guidelines for the testing protocols and what tests must be conducted in person?**

A: At this time Special Education teachers should NOT be conducting face-to-face assessments in person. The guidance allows for related service and GATE teachers only to provide assessments face-to-face if necessary to complete the assessments mandated by law. For IEP present levels development, Special Education teachers should use existing evaluation data, parent and teacher input and potentially student progress monitoring data via virtual assessment. If teachers have a question regarding assessments, they should consult with the school administration and region coordinators. For schools who are in rural areas, their guidance is different based on their school educational delivery model mode allowable by the school board of trustees.

**Q: Have there been any waivers issued for an in-person testing for SPED? If not, when can we expect clear guidance on this?**

A: I am not aware of any waivers of the CCSD's obligations to comply with the requirement of the IDEA. Principals received guidance in the Reopening Guide Version 5 regarding the expectation of face-to-face assessments when virtual assessments could not be completed. Additional questions can be answered by the region team and related services team.

## Concern: Canvas

**Q: It is important for us to meet each of our individual student's needs. Are there any Canvas tools that are specifically designed for the SPED population that will be shared?**

A: Canvas has universal design for learning, so there are many embedded supports. There are amazing resources available at <http://ssd.ccsd.net/special-education-resources-ps/> These resources can also be utilized by educators. Additionally, during the 13 day professional learning, videos were made available for personnel to view that include various technology tools and how to use them during instruction with students with disabilities. One that I have been following is a person in a Facebook group call Special Education Teachers Using Canvas and Taglish Teacher.

### Concern: Substitutes

**Q: What is the district doing to alleviate the issue of unfilled positions in SPED and the limitations long term substitutes have in writing IEPs? This problem is exacerbated when already stretched thin SPED teachers have to assist with writing substitutes IEPs as well.**

A: This is an area that we are always reflecting on for our students and teachers. We will continue to plan and accept suggestions to fill the positions for our classrooms. There are school based Special Education Instructional Facilitators (SEIFs) and SSD support teams that assist with new personnel and/or substitute personnel.

### Concern: School Day

**Q: Does the district have guidelines for co-teaching in the digital environment? Can you give an overview of these?**

A: This is a great question and I will follow up with more information in the future after consulting with our team. Following co-teaching models such as one teach one assist, one teach one observe, parallel teaching, station teaching, alternating teaching and team teaching are beneficial to implement co-teaching in a digital environment. Collaboration between general education and special education teachers prior to delivery of instruction is needed to implement co-teaching models best suited for students.

### Concern: Classroom Supports

**Q: What will the instructional aides do and how will they access students throughout the day?**

A: Support professionals should be providing support to our students under the supervision of the licensed staff member. There are suggestions on how to provide that through Google Meet. Support professionals should be working collaboratively with the teacher or other licensed staff member, as appropriate, in creating and securing learning materials for students as well. Support professionals can also collect data designated by the supervising teachers during synchronous instructions.

**Q: How do related services play into the synchronous and asynchronous instructions?**

A: IEP teams need to determine what services are needed to make meaningful gains towards the goals and determine the amount synchronous and asynchronous needed. Asynchronous instruction is designated and provided to the student/family by the service provider based on the goals and benchmarks.

Related Services continue to provide therapy in multiple ways as dictated by the student's IEP and needs. Related Services will work collaboratively with the teachers to limit the interruption to synchronous learning as much as possible to provide appropriate services and support for the student. Our Related Services personnel are working to ensure that students are being assessed virtually, face-to-face and providing therapy virtually so their time is limited.

**Q: When should pull out times be utilized in this model?**

A: That is a decision that should be made in collaboration with the teachers, administration, and in consultation with the parent if appropriate. Our recommendation is that the team determine when the student's needs (i.e., services, supports, and evaluation if needed) would be best met. There are different needs based on the student's strengths and areas of deficits. In a co-teach and a pull-out model there is typically planning that is factored into the situation and the teacher determines what skills need to be taught and the most appropriate environment for that student to occur in. SSD recommends that asynchronous time is preferred over synchronous time for students to be pulled out so that students receive as much of the general education curriculum as possible.

**Q: Is there a plan to get assistive technology devices to students? At many schools they are asking the SPED teacher to deliver which seems unreasonable given all the additional job responsibilities.**

A: Yes, work with the assistive technology staff and parent in determining if it can be delivered to the home or if this is a circumstance that the parent can pick up the device at the site by appointment. This is not a situation where the parents would be on campus long, they would make an appointment under the principal's discretion and sign for responsibility of the device. It is not the expectation that the special education teacher is required to deliver the item(s) to the home. We also have a referral system that can be used to request transportation to take the device to the home. This is something that would be requested by contacting the Assistive Technology department.