

COVID-19 Special Education Frequently Asked Questions for Families 4/16/20

Child Find

1. Can I refer my child for special education or Section 504 during this time?

Yes. Parents should submit a written request to the school principal. A local screening meeting will be scheduled to consider the request and determine if assessments for special education and/or Section 504 is warranted at this time.

2. How can I participate in the local screening committee meeting?

The local screening committee chair will work with parents to schedule a local screening committee meeting at a mutually agreed upon date and time. The meeting will be held either over teleconference or videoconference.

3. What can I do if I disagree with the LSCs proposal?

If a parent disagrees with the outcome of the local screening committee meeting, he/she may either refer the child again once school resumes or submit a Notice of Appeal to the office of Due Process and Eligibility. This Notice document is located here:

<https://www.fcps.edu/sites/default/files/media/forms/se130.pdf>

Evaluations

4. How do I give consent for evaluations if they are proposed?

After the school team proposes evaluations for a student, the local screening chair or case manager will send an electronic version of the Notice and Consent for Evaluation form. A parent may either print, sign, scan and email the form back, or he/she may provide an electronic consent via reply email.

5. When and how will the evaluations be completed?

In-person evaluations with students will not be completed at this time. Once schools are re-opened, the student will be evaluated in accordance with the local screening committee proposal and the evaluations for which consent was provided.

6. Will evaluations be completed at my home or by virtual process?

Due to the health and safety risks to students and staff and following the guidance of the Fairfax County Health Department, in-person evaluations will not be completed while schools are closed. While distance learning may occur virtually, most evaluations must be completed in-person and therefore are not available while schools are closed. If there are evaluation components that can be completed over the telephone or in writing such as a social history or a rating scale, that may occur.

Reevaluations

7. My child's three-year reevaluation is coming up, how and when will that be completed?

Due to the school closures, some reevaluation meetings may not have been held as scheduled. If that is the case, the student's case manager will contact the parent to schedule the reevaluation meeting as soon as possible.

If a student's three-year reevaluation is coming up, the case manager will contact parents to schedule the reevaluation at a mutually agreeable date and time once schools have reopened.

8. How will the school get current information about my child's educational needs?

The school team will use the information they have access to, along with parent input to complete the reevaluation.

Eligibility

9. What will happen if evaluations are not able to be completed by the end of the eligibility timeline?

The student's case manager will contact the parent to discuss extending the eligibility timelines in order to complete evaluations once school resumes. If consent is provided, the evaluations and eligibility meeting will be completed as soon as practicable, once school resumes for students. If there is disagreement with extending the eligibility timelines, an eligibility meeting will be held using the most recent available data to make an eligibility determination.

10. How can I participate in interpretive and eligibility meetings?

The interpretive conference (to discuss completed evaluation results) and eligibility meeting will be held either via teleconference or videoconference.

Individualized Education Programs/504 Plans

11. What happens to an IEP/504 Plan that was started but not completed?

The student's case manager will contact the parent to schedule a follow-up meeting, if applicable during the school closure. Case managers will be working with parents to conduct annual IEP meetings over teleconference or videoconference to plan for the eventual return to school.

12. My child was just found eligible for special education or Section 504, but an initial IEP/504 Plan was not completed, how is that going to be completed?

The child's case manager will contact the parent to schedule an IEP/504 meeting. The meeting will be held at a mutually agreeable date and time either over teleconference or videoconference to plan for when school resumes.

13. My child's annual IEP/504 Plan was due or is coming due, how is that going to get completed?

The student's case manager will contact the parent to schedule any meeting that was canceled due to the state shut down. Upcoming annual meetings will be held at a mutually agreeable date and time either over teleconference or videoconference.

14. My child is at a transition (PS-K, 6-7, 8-9) year. When will that IEP meeting be held?

The student's case manager will contact the parent to schedule the meeting with IEP team members from the base school as well as any potential placement program staff as appropriate. Due to school closure, on-site school/program visits cannot occur before schools reopen. The meeting will be held at a mutually agreeable date and time either over teleconference or videoconference.

15. I would like to schedule an IEP addendum/504 Plan, how do I make that request?

Parents may discuss concerns or possible IEP or 504 meeting needs with the case manager or Procedural Support Liaison. A list of PSLs by school can be found here:

<https://www.fcps.edu/academics/academic-overview/special-education-instruction/special-education-procedural-support-1>

16. Why did I receive a Temporary Learning Plan (TLP) from my child's case manager?

Case managers will be working with related service providers, if applicable, and families to develop a TLP for all students with IEPs. The TLP will include the goals, accommodations and services the student will receive during the emergency school closure.

17. Do I have to sign and return the TLP?

If parents are in agreement with the TLP, the signed document should be returned via email to the student's case manager or reply with consent via email.

18. What if I am not in agreement with the TLP?

If parents are in disagreement or have concerns with the TLP, they may contact the student's case manager or Procedural Support Liaison to discuss next steps or request an IEP meeting.

19. My child is parentally placed in a private school and has been receiving services from FCPS through an Individual Services Plan (ISP). What happens now that schools are closed?

FCPS ISP provision is discontinued at this time due to all schools being closed. When school is reopened, parents may contact their child's base school or related service provider to inquire about arrangements for a new school year ISP.

Frequently Asked Questions – Special Education Instruction

20. How does the Distance Learning Plan address the needs of students with disabilities?

The FCPS Distance Learning Plan is intended to include all students. To supplement the Distance Learning Plan and help to answer this question, the Department of Special Services has posted information on the Distance Learning Plan Supports for Students with Disabilities. This is available online at: <https://www.fcps.edu/node/40602/>

21. Will special education teachers and related service providers be instructing my child in a small group or will it be individualized?

During distance learning, special education may include small group instruction as well as some one-on-one instructional time. Related services will provide the support necessary for students to access and participate in a distance learning environment. Special education services will range from teacher and team supports to real-time, multimedia interaction with families and students. Specific questions can be addressed with the student's case manager or related service provider(s).

22. Is parent consent required for related service providers to interact with students and families in a real-time, multimedia format?

When a physical therapist, occupational therapist, speech-language pathologist, or school social worker works in a real-time, multimedia format, parental consent must be obtained for services to occur in this manner in accordance with applicable law. School psychologists must also obtain parental consent to provide telehealth services to students. Individual service providers will work directly with families regarding consent. Further questions can be addressed with the student's case manager or related service provider(s).

23. How do we know which packets my child with a disability will be receiving and can my child receive more than one?

Early childhood special education packets are sent to all students with preschool class-based, preschool resource, or preschool autism classroom services on their IEP. The adapted curriculum packet is sent home to students in grades K-2 who are in an enhanced autism, intellectual disabilities, or intellectual disabilities severe program. The adapted curriculum packet is also sent home to students in grades K-12 with the VAAP selected as the assessment option on the IEP.

Students with disabilities or 504 plans in grades K-8 who do not fit the description listed above for the early childhood special education packet or the adapted curriculum packet were sent the special education general curriculum supplemental packets during the week of March 30 and April 20. These students are also receiving the general education instructional weekly learning packet.

Descriptions of the above mentioned packets are available in the Digital Learning Plan and can be accessed at <https://www.fcps.edu/academics/distance-learning/instruction/packets>. If you feel your child needs to receive a different packet, or a packet in addition to the one they are currently receiving, please contact your child's teacher. Additionally, all packets are available for parents to access on [FCPS 24/7](#) in the Continuity of Learning Resources-Distance Learning Plan folder.

24. How will special education students who are accessing an adapted curriculum and are assessed with the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP) be instructed during distance learning?

Teachers working with students who are accessing an adapted curriculum and are assessed with the VAAP are providing instruction in a variety of manners. Some students accessing an adapted curriculum will need the support of a parent/caregiver to participate in the instructional activities. Instruction may be provided 'live' with students (synchronously) and not occurring at the same time (asynchronously). Synchronous options include using Blackboard Collaborate Ultra for instructional sessions where the teacher and students can see and or hear each other as well as phone calls where the teacher talks to the student and/or parent regarding instruction. Asynchronous options include the teacher or paraprofessional posting a video that the student watches, activities posted online, and the packets sent home weekly. The adapted curriculum packets that are sent home weekly and incorporate instructional activities for students in kindergarten through grade twelve will include math, reading, movement, and science/social studies activities, along with other important work and home skills. All activities have communication skills embedded within the activity to assist students with learning how to communicate in a variety of settings. A behavioral tip sheet is also incorporated to assist students in developing independent self-regulation skills. Specific questions can be addressed with the student's case manager.

24. My child was using a research-based specialized instructional program in school, will that continue during distance learning instruction?

In accordance with the Distance Learning Plan, the students' Temporary Learning Plan, and our ability to use aspects of certain programs, it is expected that instruction using the research-based programs will look different than it does during face-to-face instruction. Questions regarding how this will look for individual students can be addressed by their case manager.

25. How will preschool special education students receive instruction during distance learning?

All preschool families are receiving a central office created learning packet of materials weekly. Teachers are preparing individualized lesson plans sent home to families each week using the central office created learning packet activities.

Class based and Preschool Autism teachers are conducting at least two 20-minute coaching sessions each week with each family. Resource students will receive one 20-minute coaching session each week. Specific questions can be addressed by the student's teacher.

26. How will parents of early childhood resource students participate in IEP meetings?

Each school has one assigned Phone Conference line. To hold an IEP meeting between school staff and families, each early childhood center now has one phone conference line also specifically for this use. Additionally, Google Meet may be used for IEP meetings as well.

27. How will distance learning be accessible for staff who are deaf/hard of hearing? What about access for students with hearing impairments?

FCPS is currently reviewing platforms that support accessible learning for our deaf/hard of hearing teachers and students. Google suite tools have the capacity to provide closed captioning and an interpreter to training and instruction. Questions can be directed to the student's case manager.

28. How are vision and hearing services going to be provided?

Hearing and vision teachers will support access to communication and participation in a distance learning environment for students with hearing and visual impairments. Services will range from collaboration and consultation with teachers and school teams to real-time, multimedia interaction with families and students. Additionally, hearing and vision teachers will work with classroom teachers and case managers regarding the expectations for presentation of instructional materials. They will also assist families to understand how to implement appropriate accommodations such as closed captioning, educational interpreting services, visual supports, among others. Questions can be directed to the student's vision and/or hearing teacher.

29. Will my students have access to their communication devices?

Assistive technology resource teachers are assisting students and families with the implementation of appropriate assistive technology accommodations in online learning environments. Items can be made available if determined essential to distance learning. Questions can be directed to the student's case manager or assistive technology resource teacher.

30. How will my students access adapted physical education?

Adapted physical education teachers will consult and collaborate with health and physical education teachers to modify activities/lessons to meet student needs and problem solve around challenges that may occur within a distance learning environment. Additionally, they will develop instructional activities and strategies that support student success in a virtual environment. Questions can be directed to the student's adapted physical education teacher.

31. What happens to students in WAT and EFE and other similar classes/programs? How are those done?

High school students in these courses will be receiving instruction during their designated class time similar to the other classes on their schedule. Instructional activities will incorporate skills and tasks that can be worked on at home.

32. Can I access behavior support for my child at home?

Staff are available to provide behavioral intervention support as needed, assist teachers with incorporating behavioral best practices in a distance learning environment, consult and collaborate with parents/guardians as needed on behavioral strategies to support online learning in the home environment, and provide district training and resources for supporting the learning environment incorporating behavioral best practices. Additional information about behavioral support at home can be addressed by the student's teacher. Resources are available on the distance learning plan webpage in the special education folder.

33. 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.

34. Will paraprofessionals continue to support students during distance learning? Will they have access to laptops?

Paraprofessionals are working during this time and the support they provide to teachers and students will vary. Paraprofessionals may support the teacher in building a classroom community, help with the newly established routines and procedures, co-plan weekly instruction with the teacher, implement teaching plans, promote student engagement, or support an online behavior management system put in place by the teacher. FCPS is exploring ways to provide technology to those paraprofessionals who do not currently have access at home.

Where can I find additional activities for my child to facilitate learning at home?

Continuity of Learning resources have been developed for special education students pre-kindergarten through grade twelve and are posted on the FCPS public web located at:

<https://www.fcps.edu/academics/distance-learning/instruction/continuity-learning-resources>.

Access to learning resources will continue to be available through live streaming of instructional programming for elementary, middle and high school students on local cable channels.

https://www.fcps.edu/tv/live?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term=