

# Q&A: SPECIAL EDUCATION DURING A PANDEMIC

WHAT DO WE KNOW NOW?

WHAT ARE WE STILL WAITING TO LEARN?

WHAT CAN WE DO NOW TO PREPARE FOR THE FALL?

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# WHAT DO WE KNOW NOW?

- NOT AS MUCH AS WE HAD HOPED
  - 1. SCHOOLS – AND KIDS – ARE STRUGGLING
  - 2. SERVICES ARE INCONSISTENT FROM DISTRICT-TO-DISTRICT & SCHOOL-TO-SCHOOL
  - 3. GUIDELINES FOR THE FALL ARE NOT PUBLISHED OR OFFICIAL
  - 4. DRAFT GUIDANCE INCLUDES MANY SUGGESTIONS AND FEW REQUIREMENTS
  - 5. ESY AND “COMPENSATORY” SERVICES ARE TO BE TREATED SEPARATELY
  - 6. NO WAIVERS OF FAPE HAVE BEEN GIVEN BY FEDS OR STATE GOVERNMENT
- THIS IS A FLUID, UNFORESEEN AND UNPRECEDENTED SITUATION
- THERE IS NO “ONE SIZE FITS ALL” IN MANAGING THIS IMPACT ON STUDENTS
- THERE IS NO “ONE SIZE FITS ALL” APPROACH TO PROVIDING SERVICES TO STUDENTS

# SERVICES ARE INCONSISTENT

- EACH DISTRICT CREATED ITS OWN DISTANCE LEARNING PLAN
  - NO “REQUIRED” LEVEL OF SERVICES
  - NO SET RATIO OF IEP SERVICES – TO – DISTANCE LEARNING SERVICES
  - RULE SEEMED TO BE “DO SOMETHING” AND FIGURE OUT HOW TO MAKE UP SERVICES AFTER THIS IS OVER ... (WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?)
- EXTREME DIFFERENCES IN SERVICES TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
  - SOME GETTING 100% OF SERVICES
  - SOME GETTING “CHECK IN” CALLS AND SERVICES
  - SOME GETTING DIRECT INSTRUCTION IN GROUPS OR 1:1
  - SOME GETTING GENERAL EDUCATION INSTRUCTION AND OTHERS GETTING “CHECK IN” OR LIST OF ASSIGNMENTS TO COMPLETE
- AS WE MOVE INTO SUMMER, SOME SCHOOLS PROVIDING IN-PERSON ESY SERVICES, BUT MOST REMAIN VIRTUAL.

## WHAT ARE SOME VIRTUAL “BEST PRACTICES”?

- PROVISION OF DIRECT INSTRUCTION VIA VIRTUAL ONLINE CLASSROOMS
  - LARGE GROUP, SMALL GROUP, AND 1:1 INSTRUCTION
  - USE OF RECORDED LECTURES THAT STUDENTS CAN ACCESS VIA ONLINE PLATFORM
  - CONTINUED SLP, OT, PT (WITH ASSISTANCE FROM PARENT OR CARETAKER IF NEEDED)
- DATA COLLECTION:
  - INSTRUCTIONAL SESSIONS DESIGNED TO ADDRESS/COLLECT DATA ON IEP GOALS
  - HIGHLY SPECIALIZED WORKSHEETS CREATED TO COLLECT IEP OBJECTIVES/BENCHMARKS
  - ASKING PARENTS TO RECORD LEVEL OF ASSISTANCE PROVIDED ON ASSIGNMENTS
- AIDE SERVICES
  - ALLOWING PARAPROFESSIONALS OR AIDES TO GO INTO STUDENT HOMES TO PROVIDE SERVICES

## WHAT ABOUT ESY? WHY NOT USE THE SUMMER TO ALLEVIATE COVID-RELATED ISSUES?

- OHIO DEPT OF EDUCATION AND FEDERAL GUIDANCE SAY TO TREAT ESY AND COMPENSATORY SERVICES SEPARATELY
  - LEGAL GUIDANCE AND PRACTICAL ADVICE DON'T ALWAYS OVERLAP
  - PERSONALLY THINK THIS IS MISGUIDED APPROACH, BUT WILL BE LEGALLY UPHELD
- WHEN ARE ESY SERVICES NECESSARY?
  - REGRESSION-RECOUPMENT STANDARD
  - OTHER ELIGIBILITY FACTORS
- WHAT IF ESY IS VIRTUAL AND STUDENT ISN'T BENEFITTING FROM THAT MODE OF INSTRUCTION?
  - OPTION FOR DISTRICT TO REQUEST PERMISSION TO PROVIDE ESY IN PERSON
  - OPTION FOR PARENT TO REQUEST REIMBURSEMENT FOR SERVICES FROM PRIVATE PROVIDERS

## SO ... WILL KIDS GO BACK IN THE FALL?

- PROBABLY – SUBJECT TO MANY SUGGESTIONS
- EACH DISTRICT TO CREATE OWN PLAN BASED ON GUIDANCE FROM COUNTY HEALTH DEPT AND OHIO DEPT OF EDUC.
- GUIDANCE IN DRAFT FORM AND CONTINUALLY CHANGING
- CURRENT IDEAS:
  - YES – BUT DISTRICTS HAVE TO MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING IN CLASSROOMS, BUSES, PLAYGROUNDS, GYMS, LUNCH ROOMS, HALLWAYS, OFFICES, NURSING STATION
  - YES – BUT KIDS UNABLE TO ATTEND IF SYMPTOMATIC OR EXPOSED
  - YES – BUT PROBABLY PART-TIME DUE TO NEED TO LIMIT NUMBERS OF STUDENTS IN CLASSROOMS
  - YES – BUT WEARING MASKS
  - YES – BUT WITH SUPPLEMENTAL VIRTUAL ONGOING INSTRUCTION

## WHEN DO WE EXPECT PLANS TO BE READY?

- PROBABLY MID-JULY FOR GENERAL EDUCATION PLAN
- HOPING DISTRICTS REMEMBER “ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL” FOR SWD
- IEP TEAMS SHOULD MEET INDIVIDUALLY TO CONSIDER IMPACT OF GENERAL EDUCATION, POSSIBLE ATTENDANCE LIMITATIONS ON SWD
  - WHAT IEP CHANGES TO GOALS & SERVICES NEED TO TAKE PLACE?
  - WHAT GOALS CAN BE DONE VIRTUALLY VERSUS IN SCHOOL?
    - CONSIDER: READING VERSUS SOCIAL SKILLS; MATH VERSUS CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR
  - HOW DOES SCHEDULE NEED TO CHANGE? TECH SUPPORTS NEED TO BE ADDED?
  - DOES STUDENT NEED ACCOMMODATIONS TO GENERAL POLICIES TO BENEFIT FROM EDUCATION?
- IEP TEAMS NEED TO MEET TO CONSIDER HOW CLOSURES HAVE IMPACTED STUDENT
  - WHAT BEHAVIORS IS STUDENT EXHIBITING THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED?
  - DOES TEAM ANTICIPATE NEED FOR TRANSITION SERVICES (BACK TO SCHOOL) TO ADDRESS ANXIETY?

# WHAT WILL COMPENSATORY SERVICES LOOK LIKE?

- 1. WHAT IS NEEDED? ESTABLISH NEED FOR COMPENSATORY SERVICES
  - HAS THE STUDENT EXPERIENCED REGRESSION IN SKILLS? IF SO, WHAT AND HOW MUCH?
  - HAS THE STUDENT EXPERIENCED LACK OF ANTICIPATED PROGRESS? IF SO, WHAT AND HOW MUCH?
  - WHAT ASSESSMENTS OR EVALUATION NEEDS TO BE DONE TO ESTABLISH THE EXISTENCE OF REGRESSION OR LACK OF EXPECTED PROGRESS?
    - WHAT IS THE PLAN TO GET THAT INFORMATION?
    - WHEN SHOULD THAT INFORMATION BE COLLECTED?
- 2. WHAT ADDITIONAL SERVICES (OR ALTERATIONS IN SERVICES) ARE NEEDED TO MAKE UP FOR LACK OF PROGRESS OR REGRESSION?
  - LOOK AT INTENSIFYING EXISTING INSTRUCTION (ADD TIME, REDUCE NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN GROUP)
  - CONSIDER ADDING INSTRUCTION OUTSIDE OF THE SCHOOL DAY TO ADDRESS NEEDS



## SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR IEP TEAM?

- EVALUATIONS
  - TIMELINES HAVE WAIVERS – BUT SOME TESTING IS APPROVED TO BE DONE ONLINE. CIRCLE BACK TO TEAMS AND SCHOOLS PSYCHS TO DISCUSS
  - FOR NEW EVALUATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY – MOVE FORWARD NOW OR REQUEST THAT THEY CONTRACT WITH PRIVATE PSYCH TO DO TESTING
  - CONSIDER RECORDS REVIEW FOR RE-EVALUATIONS AND FURTHER EVALUATION AT A LATER DATE
- TRANSPORTATION
- STUDENT HEALTH AND FAMILY WELLNESS
  - WHAT IF SCHOOLS OPEN BUT I'M CONCERNED ABOUT HEALTH OF CHILD?
  - WHAT IF OTHER FAMILY MEMBERS ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO INFECTION?

# ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

- WHAT ARE SOME CREATIVE WAYS TO SERVICE CHALLENGING GOALS VIRTUALLY?
  - EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING, SOCIAL SKILLS, COPING SKILLS, CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR, ETC.
- HOW CAN WE TELL IF VIRTUAL LEARNING IS “WORKING”?
  - DATA, DATA, DATA!!!!
- WHAT ARE SOME RESOURCES FOR PARENTS TO SUPPORT LEARNING OVER THE SUMMER?
  - COMMERCIAL WORKBOOKS, ONLINE TUTORING WEBSITES AND GAMES, PRACTICE OF SKILLS AT HOME, PLAYING GAMES (MAKE THEM UP!), ZOOM SOCIAL EVENTS
- WHAT ABOUT PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND STUDENTS ON SCHOLARSHIPS?
  - ALL SCHOOLS SUBJECT TO CLOSURE RULES
- HOW CAN WE EXPRESS CONCERNS TO GOV. DEWINE OR THE OHIO DEPT. OF EDUCATION?

WHEN CAN WE MEET AGAIN?

**THURSDAY, JULY 9<sup>TH</sup>**

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 6<sup>TH</sup>**