

August 3, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians:

As we anticipate the reopening of school in the fall, we are sure that many of you are anxious about the readiness of your children to return to full-time learning. You are most likely eager to know whether the long disruption caused by the pandemic has caused your children to regress educationally. We share your concern. Although we have strived during this unprecedented period of disruption to offer an array of on-line and off-line learning opportunities designed to keep your children engaged and progressing in their learning, some regression is likely for the majority of our learners—not just those with disabilities. We want you to know our plans for addressing the needs of students with disabilities as school reopens.

We expect that some students will have regressed from prior skill levels, due to the mandated school closings, and might struggle to recoup those levels when instruction resumes. Some students will need extra supports and services—sometimes called compensatory services—to continue on the path to meaningful progress toward their annual goals.

Compensatory services are designed to supplement the existing educational program of a child to ensure that any extraordinary loss resulting from the pandemic-related school closings is addressed. Your child's IEP team, which includes parents/guardians, will determine whether he or she needs these services and, if so, what those services should be. Some students will need this support, others might not.

To help the IEP team make this determination, we will need to re-assess your child's present levels of performance in each area targeted by his or her annual goals. Because every student is likely to have regressed to some degree during the period of school closings, we will then need to provide "recoupment instruction" for a reasonable period to determine how well your child returns to previous levels and is ready for new learning.

We anticipate allowing approximately two weeks at the start of the year for assessing instructional baselines, and then up to six weeks for the provision of "recoupment instruction." We expect that some students will respond and be ready for new learning very quickly, while others might take longer. Others students might need additional services immediately upon the return to school.

Our plan is to consider the need for compensatory services for *every* child with a disability. For most, we will make that determination once we have had the opportunity to conduct baseline assessments and provide recoupment instruction.

If, during the six weeks of recoupment instruction, we find that a student is struggling to return to prior levels of performance, we will convene IEP team meetings immediately to discuss compensatory services.

For most students who are not struggling with recoupment instruction and whose IEPs are *not* due for annual revision within the first six-to-eight weeks of school, we plan to address the need for these services at the regular annual IEP team meeting.

For those whose IEPs are due for annual review early in the year before baselines are determined and recoupment instruction has been provided, we will plan a second meeting to address the need for compensatory services once recoupment instruction is completed.

In some extraordinary cases—again, where a child is clearly in need of immediate assistance upon the return to school—we will schedule immediate team meetings.

If you have any questions about our plans or for determining the need for compensatory services for your child, please do not hesitate to contact your child's caseload teacher. Let's work together to make the return to school healthy and successful for our students!

Yours in education,

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