



**Date:** March 14, 2020

**To:** Board of Directors

**Submitted By:** Sharon Waller

**Subject:** COVID-19 and the student services department response

### **Background**

Navigator students who qualify for special education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), have specialized services and plans based on their needs. These individualized education plans (IEPs) were created to ensure these students have access to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Students with IEPs have specific rights and protections that must be specifically addressed by the school during this time of school closures.

To help ensure full compliance with the law, our team is relying on the guidance from the following sources: our charter special education local planning area (SELPA), the local county offices of education (COE) and the federal government. A few of these documents are attached for reference.

This memo will provide information to the Board and staff about how the student services department will be meeting the needs of our students with IEPs in the upcoming days.

### **Actions**

Parents of students with IEPs (and some students with 504 Plans which are academic in focus) will be contacted between 3/17/20 and 3/19/20 to let them know that the student services department will be providing services to their children during the school closure. The team plans to use zoom or facetime to provide direct speech, academic, occupational therapy or other specialized services, and to use google classrooms to deliver appropriate academic content to the students. In some cases paper packets will be provided to parents as needed.

Parents of students with IEPs will be provided a copy of their procedural safeguards (parent rights), and a prior written notice (PWN) which identifies a change in the location or type of educational services.

Parents will be invited to an amendment IEP meeting (via phone call or zoom) with the IEP team to determine and document any changes to services which may be necessary for this time period.

Other special education service providers that Navigator contracts with (counseling, occupational therapy, hearing impaired services, vision and mobility services, etc..) will describe to parents how they will provide services to students.

Families will be provided iPads with zoom and Facetime capabilities, as well as a means to access WiFi, if that is necessary.

Student services staff members will review all general education academic content and be prepared to modify or accommodate the materials for individual student needs as per IEPs and 504 Plans.

Student services staff members will have schedules designed to allow them to be in frequent contact with students, parents and caretakers to address any concerns and provide any help that is needed.

All scheduled IEPs will be conducted via zoom or phone.

Any pending full special education assessments will be postponed.

In extreme cases, student services staff members may do home visits to assist with IEP implementation.

When schools reopen, amendment IEP team meetings will be convened to document any new changes to a student's plan, provide a PWN, and to discuss whether compensatory or additional services are required. Compensatory services are additional special education services which may be due to the student if they had not made the expected progress during the school closure time frame.

### **Final words**

The student services department is deeply committed to ensuring that all of our students continue to receive a high quality education during this challenging time, no matter what their educational needs are. We will remain in contact with our SELPA and other agencies to stay abreast of any new recommendations.

### **Resources**

1. [Resources for educators related to students with IEPs](#)
2. [Young, Minney & Corr Legal Guidance](#)
3. [COVID-19 and Special Education](#)