

April 15, 2020

Dear Families:

We want to thank you for your flexibility, patience, and partnership over the past few weeks as we launched implementation of remote learning. As we move into the next phase of remote learning, preparing to deliver instruction and services through the end of the school year, we want to share some key information concerning remote instruction and services.

We understand that for many students, not attending school in their physical school building is difficult, but this may be especially so for our students with disabilities. We are committed to communicating with you about your child's needs in order to ensure success in their remote learning environment through the rest of this school year. Keeping in mind that parents and staff may be caring for others and/or battling illness themselves, flexibility is important. We are committed to serving all students according to their individual needs, and we will maintain that commitment.

Key Facts about Remote Instruction and Services through End of School Year

- There will be frequent communication between schools and families during this time. Communication will be in your home language. By now, your school should have partnered with you to develop a "Special Education Remote Learning Plan" for your child based on their Individualized Education Program (IEP). If this has not yet happened, please contact your child's teacher or your child's related service provider if the only service your child receives is a related service. If you are not successful, e-mail specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov or call 311.
- Note that for preschool students with disabilities, Remote Learning Plans are only being developed for children in a special class in an integrated setting (SCIS) or in a special class in DOE programs. For preschool students who receive related services or special education itinerant teacher only, services are being provided remotely.
- Remote Learning Plans:
 - Can be adjusted over time, based on what teachers, related-service providers, families, and students learn through this experience, and after consultation with you. The purpose of the consultation is to discuss what your child needs in order to engage in remote instruction (including any modifications) and how services will be provided.
 - Should be made / updated with attention to how much screen time your child can sustain, whether or not you want your child's services and instruction to include a video component for some or all of their sessions, and whether the frequency and duration you initially agreed to is working.
 - Will make sure your child is receiving the services and supports they need, while also affording you and your family any flexibility you may need during this difficult time.
- IEP meetings will continue and will be conducted by phone. Assessments may be conducted remotely where appropriate. Parents can make a referral by emailing the principal or specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov, or by calling 311. Parents of preschool students can make a referral by contacting the CPSE (<https://www.schools.nyc.gov/learning/special-education/help/committees-on-special-education>).
- If you have not yet consented to the delivery of remote related services such as speech, occupational therapy, and physical therapy, or accepted an offer to provide counseling and would like to, please contact the service provider. If you previously declined services, you can change your mind at any time; just contact your child's



service provider to update your status. If you need support contacting your child's service provider, e-mail specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov or call 311.

If your child needs a device to participate in remote instruction and teletherapy and has not yet received one, you can complete a survey here: coronavirus.schools.nyc.gov/RemoteLearningDevices or call 718-935-5100, and dial 5. If you have already completed a survey and have not yet received a device, or if your child has an Assistive Technology device on their IEP and they have not yet received it, please e-mail specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov.

Attached to this letter please find a copy of the Special Education Section of our Frequently Asked Questions for Families during COVID-19 as well as a list of resources we have compiled to support you and your child. These questions and resources can be found here: schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home/information-on-remote-learning and we will continue to update this website as more information becomes available, including information about 12-month IEPs. If you have questions at any time, please e-mail specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov or call 311.

We cannot thank you enough for your partnership throughout this incredibly difficult time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard A. Carranza'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial 'R'.

Richard A. Carranza
Chancellor
New York City Department of Education

Frequently Asked Questions for Families of Students with Disabilities

What is a Special Education Remote Learning Plan?

Your school should have been in touch with you about a remote learning plan for your child. The remote learning plan outlines how services will be delivered during this unprecedented crisis. In developing such plans, your child's IEP is the starting point and your input is crucial. The goal of the remote learning plan is to provide instruction and services that support your child's progress toward meeting IEP goals, understanding that the delivery will not often replicate your child's regular school schedule. If you have not yet received this plan or discussed it with your school, please reach out to your child's teacher and/or related service provider. Also, if at any point, you feel as if your child's remote learning plan is not working for him/her, please contact your child's teacher and/or related service provider. You can also email specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov if you need help contacting your child's school.

Can my child's Special Education Remote Learning Plan be revisited?

Yes, special education remote learning plans will be implemented in full beginning the week of April 20, with services guided by the feedback you share over the coming week. Providers will stay in touch with you in the coming weeks to keep track of your child's progress. Any services missed or other setbacks in the transition to teletherapy will be addressed as soon as possible whenever in-person service resumes.

How will my child receive instruction?

If your child is recommended for integrated co-teaching, special class, or special education teacher support services, your school will make every effort to have them continue to receive instruction from the same special education teacher(s) and/or teacher team(s) and classroom paraprofessional(s) that usually teach them. Someone from your school will contact you to discuss how instruction will be delivered.

Will my child still receive their related services?

Related services will be provided via teletherapy, or video-conferencing where clinically appropriate. Providers and schools will contact families to discuss the service plan for each student. Providers will also give families information about activities that can be done at home to reinforce the related services work.

In what manner can related services be delivered?

We strongly encourage our speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy providers to deliver services, when possible and appropriate, through an audio-video connection. Some students may need less screen time or benefit from services delivered by phone, and some families may prefer these approaches. But if your child's services are not being delivered with a video component and you would like them to be, please discuss this with your child's provider. Counseling can be provided through an audio-video connection or via telephone. The Special Education Remote Learning Plan should reflect the agreed upon mode of service delivery.

Will my child's IEP meeting still take place?

Yes. IEP meetings will be conducted by phone.

Will I be able to make a referral for initial evaluation or reevaluation?

Parents can make a referral by emailing the principal or specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov, or by calling 311. Assessments may be conducted remotely.

Will my child still have access to assistive technology?

Schools will work with families to ensure that devices are provided to families of students recommended for Assistive Technology, and will contact families to make those arrangements.

Where can I find resources for supporting my child during this time?

Learn at Home

schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home

Information on Remote Learning

schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home/information-on-remote-learning

Assistive Technology

schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home/activities-for-students/diverse-learning-for-special-populations/assistive-technology

Occupational Therapy

schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home/activities-for-students/diverse-learning-for-special-populations/occupational-therapy-supporting

Physical Therapy

schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home/activities-for-students/diverse-learning-for-special-populations/physical-therapy-supports

Speech Therapy

schools.nyc.gov/learn-at-home/activities-for-students/diverse-learning-for-special-populations/speech-therapy-supports

Get Ready To Learn Project

thegetreadyproject.com/copy-of-ready-breaks

Resources for shifting to a new online platform for Service Delivery

[How to Get Started in Microsoft Teams](#)

[How to Get Started in Google Classroom](#)