

Ensuring FAPE for Students with Disabilities During COVID-19

Adapting Individualized Education
to the Virtual Context

WEBINAR: January 2021



Our Mission

To ensure that students with disabilities are able to fully access and thrive in charter schools.



Document and Communicate Facts

The Center is committed to proactively disseminating information about the status of students with disabilities in the charter sector.



Inform Policy

As a part of our efforts to engage in the national discussion, the Center works to track and inform federal, state, and local policy.



Develop Coalitions

The Center is committed to bringing together stakeholders to change the status quo for children with disabilities.



Build Capacity

The Center works to actively engage key stakeholders to fully leverage the innovative opportunities created by charter school laws.



The Diverse Learners Cooperative connects teachers and leaders with professional **learning, resources, and networks** to improve outcomes for diverse learners and increase teacher and leader retention

Today's Mission



Review the mandate



**Identify key principles in “translating”
in-person IEPs to remote settings**



**Examine a tool to support your team
in student-centered IEP decisions**



**Walk away with a next step toward
ensuring FAPE in the virtual setting**

AGENDA:

1. FAPE within current guidance
2. Principles of decision making
3. Tool organization
4. Application ideas

What is FAPE?

- Provision of a **free appropriate public education (FAPE)** is required under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the federal law that also gives children with disabilities the right to special education and related services
- FAPE ensures that the education is “*appropriate*” and meets the individual needs of each child with a disability

Despite the ongoing challenges related to COVID-19, the right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for students with disabilities remains in place.

What the Law Says: FAPE during COVID

“However, school districts must remember that the provision of FAPE may include, as appropriate, special education and related services provided through distance instruction provided virtually, online, or telephonically.”

“Schools may not be able to provide all services in the same manner they are typically provided.”

“Educators may still meet their legal obligations by providing children with disabilities equally effective alternate access to the curriculum or services provided to other students.”

U.S. Department of Education

Schools are called on to balance flexibility with individualization, providing services that ensure each child is making progress toward appropriately ambitious goals.

Considerations for Translating Services to Remote Settings



Connect with families now.



Anticipate needs that may overflow the current IEP.



Consider purpose.



Get creative within parameters.



Think beyond an in-person schedule.



Document.

Personas

23
personas

Autism Spectrum Disorder

Ayotunde | Grade K-6

Marcus | Grade 7-12

Visual Impairment

Sage | Grade K-6

Suzanna | Grade 7-12

Each persona offers a unique student profile, including an illustrative (not exhaustive) description of a young learner with a particular disability.

IEP Goal Areas describe what each student's services are meant to address. If you're working on translating services for a student with a particular set of IEP goals, trying looking for students with similar goals to reference how their services have been updated.



Jonas

Jonas is an 11th grade student with moderate-to-severe hearing loss which affects his vocabulary and language skills. He is successful when provided a peer support model to participate in class and complete assigned academic tasks. He chooses not to utilize an FM system in any of his classes and instead relies on his hearing aids. He enjoys working with younger students, and has expressed interest in being a teacher.

IEP GOAL AREAS

Language Executive Functioning
Vocational

How to Use This Document

Key Questions articulate high-level prompts to consider for students like those represented in each persona.

Additional Supports offer important reminders about aspects of services that might be overlooked, or might be especially important to keep in mind given new learning contexts.



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KEY QUESTIONS

- How can we leverage technology to provide a more conducive environment in which the student can learn?
- How can we collaborate as a teaching team to ensure that the student has access to all accommodations needed across all virtual courses (synchronous and asynchronous)?
- Through what modes can we create opportunities for the student to engage their peers for both academic and social purposes?

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

- Ensure captions are enabled for synchronous class and asynchronous videos and/or provide a teacher copy of notes or transcripts.
- Provide a recording of synchronous classes to Jonas for re-watching.
- Consider new hearing technologies for the virtual setting including coupling Jonas' hearing aids with Bluetooth to eliminate the need for headphones.
- Ensure that Jonas has dedicated time to meet with his case manager and family members to review and plan for post-secondary opportunities.

DEAF / HEARING IMPAIRED | GRADE 7-12

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

| Before COVID-19 (In-Person) | Activity / Purpose | During COVID-19 (Virtual) |
|---|--|---|
| Paraprofessional Support 55 minutes 1x per day | Assist student with taking notes, repeating or review content, and navigating the environment | Paraprofessional Support 55 minutes 1x per day Synchronous |
| Language Therapy 45 minutes 1x per week Provided by speech language pathologist | Develop vocabulary skills related to current coursework Model and practice language skills necessary for grade level writing assignments Practice self-advocacy skills in preparation for post-secondary transition | Language Therapy 45 minutes 1x per week Synchronous (teletherapy provided by speech language pathologist) |
| 1:1 Check-in 15 minutes 1x per week | Check in with student on progress with current class assignments and provide an opportunity to build self-advocacy skills | 1:1 Check-in 5 minutes 3x per week Asynchronous (text or email) |
| Hearing Consultation 30 minutes 1x per month Provided by teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing for general education teachers | Consult with general education teachers to assess student progress in courses, as well as to provide strategies for increasing the accessibility of the content (add visuals, chunked assignments, captions) and environment (sound design, peer models) | Hearing Consultation 15 minutes 2x per month Synchronous (general education teachers) |
| Hearing Technology Check 30 minutes 2x per year Provided by audiologist | Check in with student about functionality of hearing aids and other hearing technology employed; suggest adjustments as needed Consult with teachers about use of hearing technology to increase student success | Hearing Technology Check 30 minutes 2x per year Synchronous (audiologist) |

General Education Special Education Consultations (Adult-to-Adult) Related Services

For each **Sample Schedule**, the activities and purposes are listed at the center, with the original in-person services shown at left. Services are translated for the virtual environment on the right—with a **creative focus on the purpose of the activities**, rather than a prescriptive adherence to the original service schedule or duration.

Services are color-coded according to their setting and category in both the in-person and virtual environments.

Key Questions

Purpose: To support an IEP team in developing an appropriately individualized virtual learning plan

🔑 Access to core content

🔑 Learning environment

🔑 Team planning and collaboration

🔑 Foundational skills

🔑 Related service support

🔑 Access to peer interaction

🔑 Authentic practice & feedback

🔑 Social-emotional needs

🔑 Family partnerships

🔑 Monitoring progress

🔑 Engagement and persistence

🔑 Transition to postsecondary



Each set of key questions is mapped by shared characteristics of disabilities and ages. Focus on the 3-4 listed by profile and move on to others as needed to create a high-quality plan. Provide to team ahead of time, including the family.

A Blank Template

TRAYLAD

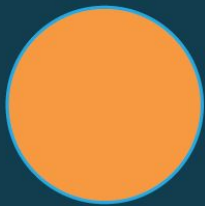
KEY QUESTIONS

| HOW COULD I/WE DO IT? | ACTIVITY/PURPOSE | HOW COULD I/WE DO IT DURING VIRTUAL |
|--------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1:1 EE SUPPORT COTAUGHT ELA | IN CLASS - | |

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

IEP GOAL AREAS

☒ GEN ED ☒ SPECIAL ED ☒ RELATED SERVICES



Name

Student Profile:

IEP GOAL AREAS

KEY QUESTIONS



ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

| Before COVID-19 (In-Person) | Activity / Purpose | During COVID-19 (Virtual) |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| | | |

General Education Special Education Related Services

Additional Resources



Ensuring FAPE for Students with Disabilities During COVID-19: Adapting Individualized Education to the Virtual Context

Key Questions

These sample questions articulate high-level prompts to consider for students like those represented in each persona.

SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY



For a high school student with a specific learning disability, consider:

- What foundational literacy and/or math skill gaps exist and will require explicit skill instruction? Can this instruction be provided synchronously in small groups or asynchronously utilizing a digital platform?
- In what ways will these gaps present as a barrier to core content access? What accommodations are appropriate to mitigate these barriers?
- Will disability-related needs (i.e. anxiety or executive functioning needs) present differently in the virtual setting than the typical in-person setting? What additional support will be needed as a result?

For an elementary school student with a specific learning disability, consider:

- What impact does the specific learning disability have on the student's ability to access grade-level content in all subject areas?

Key Questions Reference



Ensuring FAPE for Students with Disabilities During COVID-19: Adapting Individualized Education to the Virtual Context

Student Planning Template

<short description>

| STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION |
|---------------------------------|
| NAME: |
| GRADE: |
| DISABILITY: |

| PROFILE |
|------------------|
| STUDENT PROFILE: |
| IEP GOAL AREAS: |

| KEY QUESTIONS AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS |
|---------------------------------------|
| KEY QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES: |

Student Planning Template

How you could use the tool

- Share with your teachers, specialists, school leaders, and families
- Use personas as a model for yourself or your team
- Use key questions to guide IEP team discussion
- Use the blank template as a starting brainstorm
- Advocate that ensuring FAPE is possible!



Questions & Answers

We'd also love to hear:

1. What do you find most helpful about the tool?
2. What about the tool challenges your current practices?
3. How will you use the tool in your setting?

Thank You.

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