2020-2021
Reopening of the School Year Packet for Parents of Students with Disabilities

Resources:

- [7 Definitions for Learning During a Pandemic in Hawaii](#)
- [Reopening Requirements for Students with Disabilities](#)
- [A Checklist for a Total Distance Learning Plan](#)
- [School Closure Contingency Plan Checklist](#)
- [Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students with Disabilities](#)
- [Online Synchronous Instruction vs Online Asynchronous Learning Options](#)
- [Parent Tips for Virtual IEPs](#)
- [Using Technology to Deliver Related Services](#)

Parent support and additional information are available through:

Leadership in Disabilities and Achievement of Hawaii - LDAH
Phone: (808) 536-9684
E-mail: info@ldahawaii.org
https://ldahawaii.org/

Special Parent Information Network- SPIN
Phone: (808) 586-8126
E-mail:spin@doh.hawaii.gov
https://seac-hawaii.org/infographics/
https://spinhawaii.org/infographics/school-reopening-infographics/

September 17, 2020

Distance Learning

This is an umbrella term for learning that does not occur in-person. Lessons can be provided by way of paper packets, online programs, or during live virtual sessions on Google Meet or WebEx. Communication may occur through messaging apps, phone calls, video calls, discussion boards, or live virtual sessions.

Synchronous Learning

The teacher delivers live, real-time instruction to students via Google Meet or WebEx. Students can participate in real-time and engage with their teachers and classmates.

Asynchronous Learning

Students work at their own pace with no real-time instruction. Learning occurs through teacher assignments (for example, paper packets, self-guided online programs, turning in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math assignments through Google docs, and other means).

7 Definitions for Learning During a Pandemic in Hawaii

During Distance Learning, schools must implement each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and provide special education, related services, and specially designed instruction (SDI). This also applies to students whose parents opt-in for Total Distance Learning.

Total Distance Learning

Students receive instruction by way of a self-paced and self-guided online curriculum like Acellus, Florida Virtual and ASU Prep Digital. Students work independently and students in general education do not typically receive instruction from a HIDOE teacher. Parents opt-in for this option for a semester or year.

Learning Management System

This is a platform (for example, Blackboard and Google Classroom) that helps teachers manage and organize instructional materials. It provides communication between teachers, students and parents.

Hybrid/Blended Learning

Students rotate between face-to-face instruction and distance learning. A variety of instructional strategies and resources are used. Models differ slightly across elementary, middle and high school.

Face-to-Face Learning

Students receive in-person instruction on the school campus. Priority is given to students with IEPs, English Learners, and students in grades Pre-kindergarten to 2nd Grade.

Reopening Requirements for Students with Disabilities

IEP/Section 504 Review

All students will have an IEP team meeting before the end of the first quarter. Teams must:

- Identify accommodations & modifications needed to access the instructional model,
- Develop an individualized contingency plan,
- Determine additional needs due to the school closure, and,
- Create revisions based on student needs, not on the available instructional models.

COVID-19 Contingency Plan

Schools must prepare for any future disruptions to education. All students with an IEP must have a School Closure Contingency Plan to describe:

- What services will be provided,
- Which accommodations modifications will be needed to support distance learning, and
- If telepractice is appropriate for the student.

COVID-19 Impact Services

Within the first quarter, each IEP team must determine if there is a need for COVID-19 Impact Services for each student including:

- Determining if there was a loss in skill(s), and
- What supports will be provided to address the skill(s) loss.

Request for Distance Learning

With any school model, parents/guardians may opt for distance learning instead of sending their child to school. The IEP team must:

- Develop a Total Distance Learning Plan to implement the IEP to the greatest extent, and
- Include services, supports and parent training.

Educational Environment

Placement in the least restrictive environment (LRE) has not been waived. IEP teams must remember:

- Changes to instructional models will require schools to determine how they maintain LRE.
- If a change of placement is suggested, teams must have evidence of a need and supporting data to make their decisions.

Student Absences

When a student with a disability at high risk of severe medical complications is out of school during an outbreak of COVID-19 and the school remains open:

- A student absent less than 10 days will not be considered for change in placement.
- A student absent longer than 10 days in a row must have an IEP meeting to consider a change in placement.

A Checklist for a
Total Distance Learning Plan

If you choose to have your child receive their education completely through distance learning due to COVID-19, a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) must still be provided to the greatest extent possible, so that students with disabilities can continue to access learning opportunities. This includes all services, accommodations, and/or modifications listed in your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) to the greatest extent possible.

☑ STEP 1

IEP Team Meeting

Ask for an IEP meeting to discuss the plan together. Be sure to include related service staff as well.

☑ STEP 2

Review IEP goals and objectives

If the goals/objectives can be implemented through distance learning, ask how it will be done, who will be responsible for each goal, how often they are worked on, and how progress will be monitored.

☑ STEP 3

Review all services in the IEP

Discuss with your team how related services will be provided, who will provide them and how often they will happen. Discuss and fill out the Telepractice Worksheet to see if your child can use technology to receive these services.

☑ STEP 4

Review accommodations and modifications

Determine if the supports in your child's IEP can be provided over distance learning. If they can, discuss how and when those supports will be provided.

☑ STEP 5

Identify Barriers

Discuss barriers that may prevent your child from accessing their education through distance learning. Identify accommodations that will be provided to address the barriers. Also identify supports your family may need to help your child learn.

School Closure
Contingency Plan Checklist

In the event that a school closes due to unforeseen safety concerns (like a natural disaster or disease outbreak), a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) must be provided to the greatest extent possible, so that students with disabilities can participate in distance learning during a school closure.

Have an IEP Meeting

STEP 1

Your child's IEP team includes parent(s)/guardian(s), a special education and general education teacher, school administrator and related service staff (OT, PT, ABA, etc.). If someone from your team needs to be absent, consider rescheduling the meeting; otherwise you will need to excuse them in writing.

Review Each IEP Goal

Discuss each goal and objective and determine how they will be implemented via distance learning. Who will implement each goal/objective? How often will they be implemented? How will progress be monitored? If goals and objectives cannot be implemented, how will your child be supported?

STEP 2

Review All Services in the IEP

STEP 3

Discuss how specially designed instruction and/or related services will be provided to your child. Who will provide the needed service and how often will it happen? Use a separate Telepractice Worksheet to see if your child can or should receive their related services virtually.
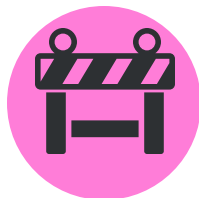
Review Accommodations and Modifications in the IEP

Can the accommodations and modifications listed in the IEP be provided to your child? How will that happen? When or in what situations will they be provided? Are there any additional accommodations/modifications needed to support access to distance learning?

STEP 4

Identify Any Barriers

STEP 5

Are there things that will keep your child from accessing their education through distance learning? Barriers could include academic, behavioral or environmental factors. What accommodations and modifications be used to address these barriers? Include any supports you will need as the parent or guardian to support your child.

Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students with Disabilities

During the 1st Quarter of SY 2020-21 IEP and 504 Plan Teams will determine if there was a loss in skill(s) due to school closures.

INFORMATION GATHERING

In order to determine whether a student lost skills during the school closure from mid-March to August, information from a variety of sources should be gathered prior to an IEP or 504 Plan team meeting:

SCHOOL DATA

Right before and during school closure:

- 3rd & 4th Qtr. Progress Reports
- 3rd Qtr. grades
- Correspondence
- Recordings
- Observations

Since the return to school:
- Universal screening
- Informal assessments
- Observations
- Student work samples

FAMILY INFORMATION
- Notes
- Recordings/videos
- Correspondence with school
- Reports from other service providers
- New information

STEP 1

IEP OR 504 DISCUSSION

Meetings will be held to review the IEP or 504 Plan during the 1st Quarter of the school year to see if the plan is addressing the student's current needs. Parents may request to have an immediate meeting, if they are concerned about big changes in their child's academic, functional, emotional or behavioral needs.

DETERMINING SKILL(S) LOSS OR NEEDS

The main purpose of the meeting is to determine:
- any skill(s) loss during school closure;
- how significant was the loss; and
- how skill(s) loss will be addressed.

The method for determining loss is to compare pre-school closure data with current performance. If skill loss is considered minor, the team may recommend *explicit instruction* or *high impact strategies* available to all students (HMTSS). If the skill loss is considered significant, the IEP/504 Plan may need revision.

## STEP 2

REVISING THE IEP/504 PLAN

An IEP or 504 Plan revision may be required if the student has significant skill(s) loss or needs that require individualized supports and services beyond HMTSS.

Plan revisions may include:
- Updating the Present Levels of Academic and Functional Performance (known as the PLEP)
- Designing new or revised goals or objectives, and
- Increasing the frequency or duration of related services or specially designed instruction.

When considering the need for a new related service, an assessment in that area must be done.

If the student's skill loss or needs are significant and cannot be completely addressed through the IEP or 504 Plan, then the team must discuss the need for COVID-19 Impact Services.
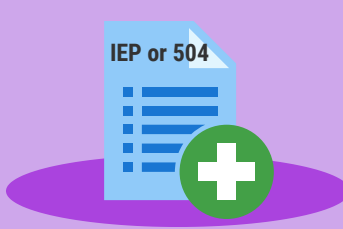
STEP 3

COVID-19 IMPACT SERVICES

COVID-19 Impact Services are services to make up for the student's skill(s) loss which are in addition to the current IEP or 504 Plan services. They are temporary and high impact specially designed instruction or related services delivered **beyond the school day**.

The purpose of these services is to quickly improve skill(s) and get the student to a level s/he would have been but for the school closures.

HOW SERVICES ARE PROVIDED

In person:
- small groups of students with similar needs,
- before or after school sessions, or
- tutoring.

Online (with the student and provider in real time):
- small groups of students with similar needs,
- before or after school sessions,
- tutoring or
- skill-based, before or after school Learning Labs.

STEP 4

Online Synchronous Instruction

VS

Online Asynchronous Instruction

Online Synchronous Instruction	Online Asynchronous Instruction
Online instruction that happens in real time, with a teacher and students interacting in a virtual space.	Online instruction that does not happen in real time, with no direct teacher instruction.
Uses online platforms like Google Meet & Cisco Webex for live classes.	Uses self-guided lessons, websites, videos, teacher assignments, and posted class notes.
Provides classroom engagement, dynamic learning and depth of instruction.	Provides flexibility, self-directed learning and pacing on own time.
Requires a shared schedule where everyone has to be online at the same time.	Learners have more options for when they can use their devices and connectivity in a busy household.
Technical difficulties, on both sides, can lead to frustration and discouragement.	Risk of isolation, loss of interest in classwork and not turning in work due to lack of engagement and support.

Parent Tips for Virtual IEPs

During this time of closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools must make every effort possible to meet required timelines by scheduling and holding your child's Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting online or by phone.

BE READY FOR THE CALL

- If your child's annual IEP or initial IEP is due, you will be contacted by someone from your child's school to set up the IEP meeting.
- If you have recently changed your phone number or email address, be sure to let the school know as soon as possible.

YOUR IEP MEETING WILL NOT BE IN PERSON

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) requirements for IEP review, development, evaluations and eligibility are still in place.
- IDEA has provisions to use different ways to participate in meetings, including video conferences like Skype, Zoom or WebEx or by phone.
- Work with your child's school to decide the best way to hold your meeting.
- Ask your school when and how you will receive documents before the meeting.

WHAT YOUR IEP MEETING WILL BE LIKE

- Your IEP meeting will not be in person. You and the IEP Team may agree to conduct IEP meetings through alternate means, including videoconferencing or telephone conference calls.
- All required IEP members must attend unless you and the school, in writing, consent to excuse a team member.
- Team members should review relevant materials ahead of time to prepare for this IEP meeting. Ask the school if you can receive copies in advance of the meeting of important information that will be used to make decisions at the meeting (like draft goals and objectives, recent evaluations, etc.).

ATTENDING YOUR IEP MEETING

- Make sure your phone or device is fully charged and you have access to a good cell or WiFi signal. You may want to dress like you would for a regular meeting.
- Have all your documents ready: your current IEP, any evaluations, classwork or other evidence, and any concerns and suggestions you have.
- Find a quiet, comfortable place with a place to write and good lighting.
- Be engaged and ask questions.
- Request a re-cap of IEP agreements before the meeting ends.

AFTER YOUR IEP MEETING

- Contact your child's special education teacher right away, if you forgot to mention something important during the meeting discussion.
- Look for the final copy of the IEP within ten days of the meeting.
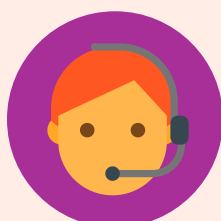
WHAT IF I NEED HELP

- Call your child's special education teacher or the school's Student Services Coordinator for assistance, copies of documents and current assessments.
- Call or email Leadership in Disabilities and Achievement of Hawaii @ 808-536-9684 for IEP preparation and support, and questions about IDEA and your rights.
- Call or email SPIN @ 808-586-8126 for support, information and questions about special education and community resources.

Created by SPIN and adapted from "Parent Tips for Virtual IEP Meetings" by the Oklahoma Parents Center

Using Technology to Deliver Related Services

Telepractice allows a student to benefit from related services when it is unfeasible or unsafe to deliver those services in person. It involves using technology to provide an IEP service, (like speech therapy, ABA services, counseling, etc.) remotely.

Determining the Appropriateness of the Telepractice:

The IEP team members first consider the following questions:
- Does the student need to access services at home?
- Is telepractice appropriate for this particular student and can the service can be delivered via telepractice? One consideration would be does the student have access to a device and internet connection?
- Are the parents and therapist in agreement about using technology?

1

Determining the Need for an E-helper:

While some students are able to interact with the therapist without assistance, others may need help logging in at the scheduled time, having needed materials available, prompting through verbal or physical assists or aiding in communication. If help is needed, is a parent or other family member available and willing to assist?

2

Training and Support for the E-helper:

Once an E-helper is identified, the related service provider will provide any necessary training and support *virtually*. That means that the therapist will use videoconferencing and/or teleconferencing to provide instruction to the E-helper to enable him or her to assist the student, including helping the student complete assignments.

3

Setting up a Service Delivery Plan:

When the necessary technology and in-home E-helper (if required) are in place, the parent and therapist can agree on a plan and a schedule to provide services. Generally, services fall within the hours of a typical school day.

4

Obtaining Parent/Legal Guardian Approval:

The last step in setting up telepractice sessions is to get the approval of the student's parent or legal guardian to receive these services.

5

Information in this infographic was provided by the Hawaii Department of Education, March 2020