

From: Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), Poudre School District

Date: November 9, 2020

On Thursday November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020, the PSD Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC) was asked to discuss the impact of phase plans on students with disabilities after listening to a presentation from Madeline Noblett, Executive Director of Communications for PSD and an update regarding Integrated Services from Sarah Belleau, Director of Integrated Services.

The following reflects the thoughts and considerations for students with disabilities as we move in and out of phase plans in response to community health and safety from SEAC parents, staff, and community members:

1. Clear and consistent communication opportunities from the District, especially around phase shifts and what happens with positive COVID tests in schools and classrooms is very helpful. Whether it through town halls, emails, or phone calls, opportunities for parents, teachers, and students to get reliable information from District sources in advance of major changes would help a great deal with anxiety and preparation. This should also include the positive things happening around the District with COVID. Integrated Services should continue to directly address concerns parents have regarding the access students with disabilities (SWDs) have to education within the various phases.
- 2) Develop a clear and detailed educational access plan for quarantined students with disabilities to mitigate achievement gaps, truancy and maintain the health and safety of SWDs in the remote environment.
- 3) Some SWDs may require additional access to OT/PT/SLP services and medical appointments without having to compromise their right to educational access. Poudre School District could work to promote flexibility in attendance requirements by providing class recordings or other methods to “make up” what was missed in synchronous class.
- 4) Prioritize the most vulnerable students (e.g., students of color, students on free/reduce lunch, Medicaid, TANF, McKinney-Vento, students with disabilities, etc.) when transitioning from phase to phase, allowing parents time to determine their schedules, childcare, transportation, etc. Students who can transition easily can move from phase to phase rapidly, while other families and their school-based teams require more time to manage the difficulties that arise from phase shifting.
- 5) Create clearly written protocols for parents, students, and teachers to know what to expect when transitioning between phases. The plans should include clearly communicated expectations regarding technology access, assistive technology and the availability of services provided at home. An ideal timeframe would give teachers one week to transition students between phases.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the very important aspect of school for students with disabilities.

Sincerely,

PSD SEAC Members

CC: Dr. Sandra Smyser, Superintendent

Dr. Todd Lambert, Assistant Superintendent of Elementary Schools

Dr. Scott Nielsen, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools

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