

Question and Answers from 8/14/2020

1. During remote education, can families have therapists or paraeducators come to their home (OT, PT, SLP)?

From Aug. 24 through at least Oct. 16, Poudre School District is working in a remote learning format. During this opening phase, students will learn from home and staff will not go into student's homes.

2. How is the district planning to meet the needs of and provide services to children with disabilities who cannot access their education in the remote format?

This past summer, Integrated Services staff worked to identify alternative technology and software for students who had difficulty accessing remote learning. If a student is challenged to engage in remote learning using alternative technology or a laptop, other instructional methods can be used. The student's school team is the best resource when it comes to identifying and developing specific instructional strategies for a student.

3. Is the district considering small in-person group options for students with disabilities who cannot engage in remote learning?

If PSD moves to Phase 2, which is mostly remote education with some limited small in-person group options, some students identified by PSD will be able to come to school for limited in-person instruction and support.

4. What state or federal guidance and laws is PSD's Integrated Services Department following?

PSD staff are continuously monitoring and working diligently to ensure compliance with the Exceptional Children's Educational Act of Colorado (ECEA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The district is committed to meeting the individual needs of each student.

5. How can families request compensatory services?

The Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) has provided guidance on this topic that can be found on CDE's website <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped>.

6. How does an Individualized Education Plan address working parents? It focuses on the child and the child's needs only.

The IEP is intended to address a student's special education needs related to the student's disability.

7. Can families use Medicaid for respite care for schooling?

The best place to find information on Medicaid is through the State of Colorado; the agency's Medicaid Division is a great resource <https://connectforhealthco.com/get-started/health-first-colorado/>. [Respite Care](#) may also be able to answer questions you may have.

8. Will schools provide adaptive equipment (i.e. fidgets, manipulatives) that IS students would have access to in school and that are outlined in student accommodations?

Parents/guardians should discuss with their student's team if it is appropriate for a student to have these items to help them access their education while learning remotely.

9. Why are there differences between counties within the same state? Aren't they accountable to the same laws?

School districts are allowed local control under the state law.

10. During remote education, how will one-to-one and specialized instruction occur?

Staff worked diligently this past summer learning best practices and planning for each [PSD phase of education](#). Specifically, they have and will continue to train in remote learning methods and strategies.

11. If assessments are done and show that virtual learning is "not working" for my student, what do we do?

If a student is not making progress on their goals and objectives, this is an opportunity for the student's Individualized Education Program team to meet and discuss changes that could occur to assist the student in making progress on goals and objectives.

12. Where is the PSD parent liaison? We have had near "radio silence" all summer and since we moved to virtual learning in March – why has Integrated Services NOT communicated to parents? Why when we are now only 1 week away from school starting are we still waiting to hear from IS?

Integrated Services sent letters to IS parents in April of 2020 and July of 2020. In June, department staff met with our Special Education Advisory Committee, comprised of parent and community representatives, and have also worked with the PSD Communications Department to develop information for the district's weekly update to parents, as well as the district's comprehensive COVID-19 response plan for the 2020-21 school year. It has also been a top priority to respond to the hundreds of parent/guardian

calls and emails throughout spring and summer 2020. It is important to us to support our families and give them that level of care.

At the end of May, Integrated Services central office staff were reduced significantly due to budget shortfalls anticipated for Poudre School District. Many Integrated Services central office positions were eliminated, moved to other departments, or consolidated. Our Parent Liaison was one of the reductions from our department. Heidi Graber, our former Parent Liaison, is now the Child Find Specialist with some time reserved to work with parents in the liaison position. Although we will continue supporting families as quickly and effectively as we can, please know that it may take a little while longer for us to respond now as compared with the 2019-20 school year, as a result.

13. How will IEP progress monitoring happen during virtual or remote school?

Monitoring of student progress can take many forms and will depend upon the student's goals. Staff are being given tools to assist with monitoring progress and will also have the opportunity to engage in a training related to progress monitoring.

14. What steps are being taken to support social skills related Individualized Education Plan goals?

Depending upon the needs of a student, social skills may be addressed by the teacher, speech/language clinician, or other service professional.

15. How will students with disabilities who struggle with transitions be supported by teachers they meet only in a remote environment?

The social emotional health and wellness of our students is a priority always and even more so now. Connecting with students first will be critical, and Integrated Services staff will take the time to connect with students in a variety of ways in a remote environment.

16. How will it work for students with physical disabilities who normally receive physical and occupational therapy?

During remote learning times, services may look different for students for them to make progress on their goals and objectives. Depending upon the student's needs, services could look a variety of ways and are best determined by the student's team.

17. Is IS/PSD looking at other districts like JeffCo and Colorado Springs District. 11 that have already begun in-person schooling for some special education students as a model?

Yes, although, PSD is different in that the district is making decisions based on guidance and orders from the local public health department.

18. Has PSD considered a voucher system for parents of special needs children to be able to hire educators and/or childcare?

I am not aware of discussions regarding this.

19. In a remote learning environment, what will paraprofessional support look?

For each individual student, this would be a discussion with the student's school team. Remote learning is different than in-school learning; therefore, a team discussion regarding supports and schedules for the student is most appropriate.