



Q & A for Parents of Students Who Take the PSSA/Keystone

How will we support students with IEPs who struggle with live-streaming into the general education instruction?

All of the options we would provide in brick and mortar school are available to these students; for example, paraprofessional support, teacher collaboration, additional specially designed instruction, and separate check-ins with the regular education teacher, to name a few.

My child does not have the ability to structure his/her own independent work time. How will this be addressed?

Special education support staff will be available to work with students with these identified needs in their IEPs when there is not live streaming occurring. The support may look like a visual model, a checklist of tasks, teacher directed check-ins and feedback, and/or scheduled time with an educational assistant.

Will my child receive an individual schedule from his/her special education teacher?

Your child's IEP team can discuss the need for a weekly schedule broken down by time, instructional area, and teacher who is providing the instruction, and add this to the IEP revision.

How are teachers addressing possible regression - even in general education?

All teachers will be starting the year with review and reinforcement of essential skills. Special education teachers will be assessing students in the first few weeks of school and will then provide targeted group instruction to remediate any regression.

Will IEP goal instruction be live or pre-recorded?

IEP-goal based instruction that is delivered in a special education classroom will continue to be delivered live by special education teachers.

Will my child's progress on IEP goals be monitored?

Yes, special education teachers will conduct assessments on an ongoing basis to ensure that students are making progress on IEP goals. Parents will receive IEP goal progress reports as outlined in students' IEPs.

What happens if my child is not making progress on IEP goals?

If a child is not making progress on IEP goals, the IEP team will convene and the team will consider changes to the IEP. The changes may include size of group, change in instructional intervention, and/or more frequent progress monitoring.

Will my child still have access to general education grade level instruction?

Yes, your child will continue to access the general education curriculum and peers for any academic areas that are not in need of replacement instruction delivered by a special education teacher.

Will my child receive accommodations for assessments?

Yes. Testing accommodations are documented in the Specially Designed Section of the IEP. All IEP testing accommodations will be provided.

How will my child's paraprofessional be utilized?

Paraprofessionals assigned to specific students will be available in virtual classes to address students' needs in real time. They will also work with students during independent work time.

What if my child's paraprofessional support is for behaviors?

The paraprofessional will join your child's class live and provide coaching to your child via the chat feature/or in a break-out room (separate from whole group instruction).

I am concerned my child will display behaviors at home and I won't know what to do.

All of the district's special education teachers are trained in how to respond to students exhibiting problematic behavior. You and your child's case manager would work together to problem-solve home behaviors related to engagement in virtual school. If those interventions are unsuccessful, the district employs four board certified behavior analysts who can consult with the IEP team and provide additional behavior support.

How will my child's speech services be delivered?

Speech services will be delivered virtually and have successfully been delivered virtually over the last several years in many contexts.

My child has OT/PT needs. How will that be delivered in the virtual environment?

We have been able to hone our virtual OT/PT practices via ESY this summer and are confident we have options for virtual OT/PT.

How will related services be scheduled?

Just as in brick and mortar school, our related service providers will review your child's IEP and daily schedule and determine a time that will work within both your child's and the therapist's workday to provide their services. The amount of time of the services will stay the same as what is in the IEP.

My child receives related services that are integrated into the general education environment (e.g. hearing and vision support). How will this look in a virtual model?

Generally, the related service providers can still "push in" to the regular education virtual environment and provide these services by observation in that environment and the opportunity to go into a virtual breakout room with your child. However, if that is not feasible for certain students, the IEP team will convene and consider the need to change to pull-out services.

My child has community-based instruction in his/her IEP. How will this be addressed in the virtual environment?

In the current environment the district is not sending students into the community for instruction due to health and safety concerns. Instead, teachers will organize activities to simulate activities in the community.

My child has Work Based Learning in his/her IEP. How will this be addressed?

The job coaches will still work individually or in small groups with students, just in a simulated experience.

What is the PASA? How can I get my child to take the PASA instead of the PSSA/Keystone?

The PASA is the alternative to the PSSA/Keystone testing. It addresses practical and functional academic skills. The IEP team determines whether a child meets the eligibility criteria for the PASA. Roughly 1% of students with IEPs meet this eligibility.

What is the plan for determining the need for compensatory services? What if my child has regressed in an area that was not previously addressed in their IEP?

New baselines for IEP goal progress will be determined during the month of September, and teachers will work to remediate any identified gaps and regression over September and October. Additionally, students may show needs in new areas. In this case, just as if we were in brick and mortar school, your child's case manager will start with informally collecting data to assist with next steps. In the event that significant gaps or regression is still prominent in November, the IEP team will convene to consider the need and amount of compensatory services.

What do I need to do next as a parent?

The special education department and supervisors have comprehensive lists of all students with IEPs in each building and are actively developing procedures for IEP revisions. Your child's case manager will contact you sometime between August 17th and the start of school to discuss any necessary revisions to your child's IEP. We are aware of the need for revisions for all students and will reach out to you shortly.