

Dear families of students with special education services.

In light of these unprecedented times, I want you to know that safety is our highest priority – safety for students, families, and staff. All our decisions for the upcoming weeks are based on safety first. This letter will outline our current plan for student engagement and learning supports for students with special education services during the school closure. Please know we are monitoring state guidance and continue to adjust our plan.

What does school mean during school closure?

Staff are compiling content and materials that will be available for students and families on the teacher webpage or via packets, that include:

- A brief guide intended to support students' engagement in learning during the school closure;
- Suggested activities that do not replace the experience of being in school nor do they replicate special education and related services outlined in the IEP;
- Resources to help students maintain or extend the learning that has taken place this school year.

These resources and guides will be on your students' general and special educators' webpages. For students who have multiple service providers, the teacher/case manager's webpage will be your main point of contact. You can anticipate webpages going live around March 30th. For now, please visit the Everett Public Schools student engagement materials website for an initial set of materials.

Why isn't the district implementing online distance learning?

It is our paramount duty to provide an equitable education to each student. With equitable access in mind, the district is not implementing online distance learning. Currently, 33% (9 out of 28) of schools do not yet have 1:1 devices and training for use of those devices. This means that not all teachers and students are experienced at engaging in learning from an online environment. Additionally, if we replicate the classroom instruction through online distance learning then we will need to replicate special education and related services as well. Given that there are a range of experiences and student needs, some that may not be able to access instruction in an online environment, the district is not replicating classroom instruction and special education and related services.

Will I still need to participate in my student's special education individual education plan (IEP) and evaluation meetings?

The district is still responsible for meeting the special education timelines and will hold meetings by phone or zoom phone/video conference. Staff will:

- Continue to offer annual IEP meetings
- As appropriate, attempt to complete evaluation assessments through the methods listed above

- Continue to offer reevaluation meetings based on the information they have

Remember the IEP and evaluation meetings are to discuss program and service decisions based on regular school day when school is open and will be implemented upon the return to school.

Since some special education timelines are based on days when schools are open, during school closure staff will not complete:

- Active referrals
- Initial evaluations

What to expect when school re-opens?

While this is part of our planning process, we need to wait and learn more from the Governor and OSPI. Please know this is a critical element to our planning and as we get closer to reopening, we will provide more information.

Who can you contact?

- Special services department at specialservices@everettsd.org for school closure and general special education questions
- Special education case manager by email about webpage content and materials as well as IEP and evaluation meetings

Again, we are monitoring for state guidance as it comes. As more information becomes available, we will send an update. We know this is a difficult time for everyone.

Thank you for your grace, patience, and partnership.

Dr. Becky Clifford
Executive Director of Special Services