



COMMITTEE ON OUTREACH



Citywide Council for District 75

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### **CCD75 Outreach Committee Report** **January-March 2020**

Chair: Grisel Cardona

Co-Chair: Amy Ming Tsai

Other members:

- Craig Spencer
- Andrea Daniels

The committee received from a Parent Association/ Parent Teacher Association (PA/PTA), the difficulties they are faced with connecting with the sites they work with. The concern came from a Parent Association/Parent Teacher Association (PA/PTA) located in the Bronx that currently has 13 sites. We also received concerned information from a Parent Associations located in Staten Island. There was a suggestion that an AD-HOC committee should be formed to specifically work on the reorganization of the parent associations within D75.

The council agreed and approved on the Ad-Hoc committee to focus on the re-organization of the Parent Association or Parent Teacher Associations (PA/PTA)

#### **Covid-19**

With the circumstances of the Corona Virus, there was a state order to no longer have meetings with more than 20 people occupancy. We awaited information from the dept of education of our next steps.

It was then ordered by the governor, mayor and chancellor that ALL schools be CLOSED until April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020. It was also said that it would be very difficult to open schools. Due to the fact we aren't sure of the COVID-19 and the spreading. The numbers have increased as the days were passing.

The Department Of Education had to plan accordingly, create video conference/phone conferences with the many parent leaders, parent advocacy groups and personnel. Down below are the notes taken from the phone conference that took place with the department of education and special education representatives, CCSE, CCD75 and other advocacy groups.

## Update Call from DOE Office of Special Education – March 16, 2020-5:00pm

### Major Takeaways

- Special education students will be primarily served through remote learning and tele practice
- Regional enrichment centers will likely be restricted to children of first responders and essential healthcare employees, but DOE is considering expanding service to include students with disabilities
- Technology will be distributed with priority given to specific demographics of students, and assistive technology will be shipped home
- Unclear how this applies to students who receive services through the CSE

### Remote Learning for Special Education Students – Expected to Go Live 3/23

- Working to meet the needs of students with IEPs through remote learning
- Schools are responsible for contacting families to coordinate individualized delivery of services, and schools have been provided templates to help them develop remote supports for students.
- ICT, SETSS, and paraprofessionals
  - DOE is working to develop ways to receive live instruction in a co-class or small group setting through the remote learning platform
  - Will receive remote instruction from their classroom teacher, or co-teachers teaching together where students were previously in a setting with two instructors. Where there are absences, schools will deploy teachers from the child's home school.
  - Students will be able to participate virtually with classmates.
  - Modules, lessons, and assignments will be posted to each school's online classroom, and students will be able to access and return to content as many times as needed to complete work.
  - Assignments will be monitored and checked by familiar staff.
  - Content currently being developed in coordination with District 75, special education, and Division of Multilingual Learner teams to be accessible to wide range of students.
  - Students will have access to alternate assessment content and differentiated content as needed.
- What if the child cannot access remote learning or live remote instruction because of the nature of their disabilities?
  - The DOE is considering implementing 1:1 remote instruction through an alternate platform
  - Lessons will be individualized to emphasize IEP skills maintenance related to listening, speaking, reading, writing, and math
  - Will also emphasize opportunities for students to generalize and practice at home
  - Where necessary, students will have the opportunity to call to listen in to content being delivered (though technology will be rolled out)
- Resources will be made available in several languages and staff will be trained this week on resource accessibility, including language accessibility tools (e.g., translation)
- Remote learning will include parent/caregiver engagement components, particularly for students who cannot learn effectively by engaging with material on their own for hours

### Delivery of Related Services – Expected to Go Live 3/23

- Related services providers for speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and counseling will be expected to provide services via tele practice
  - For physical therapy, the possibility of tele practice will be assessed on a case-by-case basis by team of parents/caregivers, providers, and school
- Both DOE and independent contract therapists will be working this way and will be expected to log sessions in SESIS as usual.
- In addition, related service providers will be asked to conduct conferencing and check-ins to parents/caregivers to provide updates on student progress and service as supportive resource as families adjust to tele practice
- Students should receive services from their existing providers
- In person delivery of related services is likely to be minimized given health concerns

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- For students who require in-person support on technical aspects of learning (e.g., turning a page, holding a pencil), remote learning plans will have to be individualized to account for these needs before Monday

### Evaluations, Reevaluations, and IEP Meetings

- The overall goal is to keep the IEP process moving to the greatest extent possible
  - However, warned that compromises may be necessary
- Parents will still be able to make referrals for initial evaluations or reevaluations by emailing or writing to their school, or by calling 311 for assistance
- Schools will be advised to engage all stakeholders to hold remote IEP meetings once enough evaluative materials are available
- DOE is still working to determine if/how evaluations can be conducted remotely

### Support for Parents/Caregivers of Special Education Students

- DOE developing parent-facing resources, including social stories to describe COVID-19, visual aids for parents to use at home, and at-home tips for maintaining Related Services
- DOE is partnering with NYU to develop specific content to support students with Autism Spectrum Disorder and their families
- DOE also partnering with other groups in the coming weeks to develop content for students with disabilities

### Distribution of Remote Learning Technology & Access to Assistive Technology

- Two categories of technology will be distributed to families to facilitate remote learning
  - 300,000 iPads, centrally purchased, will be arriving at DOE in waves over the coming weeks so will not all be available immediately
  - Existing technology owned by individual schools, DOE is instructing schools to loan this out
- Methods of distribution
  - School-based distribution
  - Centralized distribution at regional centers
- The following students will be prioritized for distribution of remote learning technology
  - Students in temporary housing
  - Economically disadvantaged students
  - Multi-lingual learners
  - Students with disabilities
- Students who receive assistive technology through their IEPs will have home access to that tech
  - Schools have been instructed to ship assistive technology and AAC devices to all students who have those devices on their IEPs
    - Families who wish to pick up those devices from their child's school should be able to do so
  - DOE is developing teletherapy readiness checklists for related services providers, including the instruction that they identify students on their caseloads who receive assistive technology or AAC and ensure that the school has shipped that device home
  - DOE will create a living document including supports, information, and resources for parents who are learning to use assistive tech
    - Will also include recommendations for commonly used devices, applications, and free web-based resources
    - Will be available to families on the DOE website
  - If parents have questions about assistive tech, they can reach out to the District 75 Tech Solutions email address or the D1-32 Assistive Tech teams

### Regional Enrichment Centers

- Little information given about these today, as they are still a work in progress
- Under current DOE plans, these centers will only serve the children of first responders and essential healthcare workers
  - However, DOE is considering opening these centers more broadly to students with disabilities
- There will likely be two per district
- Centers will have extended hours, will serve meals, and will be accessible
- For children of first responders who have disabilities, DOE is working to ensure centers are equipped to meet their needs
  - Most of day will be spent participating in remote learning
  - Those students' remote learning plans will be written to allow support from center staff and delivery of services within centers

### Miscellaneous Information

- This week, staff will be trained on
  - Teacher Readiness for remote learning platform
  - Training on content available on platform
  - How to support parents and families
- Return to school environment at conclusion of crisis
  - DOE expects that students will need to be assessed for the impact of time spent away, and students will need a plan to address those gaps
  - DOE will provide building support structures to help staff support students who are returning
- Parents can refer to the "Learn at Home" page for preliminary resources and technical guidance for use of technology
- All questions should be directed to [specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov)

### Outstanding Questions

- What will happen to students currently serving suspensions or scheduled to serve suspensions? Students should be permitted to return to school when schools reopen, if their suspensions would have been completed by the reopening date if schools had not been closed.
- How will transportation to regional enrichment centers be handled? What health precautions will be taken?
- Many parents are now becoming primary educational caretakers for their children with disabilities and are providing academic care and instruction that they are not accustomed to providing. Will the DOE provide resources, training (including by video), and information to parents of students with disabilities to help with this transition? Can the DOE collaborate with community organizations to develop video trainings around this, i.e. how to manage behavioral challenges that arise during learning? (Somewhat answered, but would like more clarity)
- What support will DOE provide for students who receive instruction at charter schools and non-public schools?
- Will parents who wish to adjourn/postpone evaluations and IEP meetings be granted adjournments?
- Will deadlines be extended on independent evaluation authorizations? Will Nickerson letters issued during the school closure be honored next academic year?
- What is the DOE doing to ensure that notifications are being made in languages other than English? How are parents being notified of updates, including where/how-to pick-up technology to facilitate remote learning? Is the DOE collaborating with media to push out notifications?
- How will students that currently receive home instruction be served? Will home instruction be expanded in any way to serve students during closures?

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- How will the Turning 5 IEP process function during these closures?
- How will students in Residential Treatment Facilities be served?
- Where should we direct records requests during closures, if schools are unable to receive them? Please provide contacts for each district/borough who can respond to records requests in a timely manner.

They advised the committee on outreach to have parents contact their schools, D75 office or email [specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:specialeducation@schools.nyc.gov) .

Upcoming cancelations:

End of the year celebration

March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020 council meeting.

Any other meetings for March until further notice.