



IRVINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS SPECIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Patricia Dowd, Director

1324 Springfield Avenue
Irvington, New Jersey 07111
Phone: (973) 399-6800 Ext.1920
Fax (973) 399-4726

May, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians of Special Needs Children,

I hope you are doing well and staying healthy. I am reaching out because I know you have worked closely with your child's teacher and service providers for several months prior to COVID-19, and have built an excellent relationship with them. We appreciate your current cooperation and all your efforts to work with our staff, especially in light of the recent school closures due to COVID-19 and hope this partnership continues during this difficult time.

During this time of school closures, due to COVID-19, there are some important things to remember. Any actions taken by a district or school regarding closures are for the safety of all students, families, school personnel and community members. As the District is determining the most appropriate steps to ensure student and staff safety, we want to provide you with guidance relating to students with disabilities and their services. It is extremely important for families and schools to collaborate and communicate regarding services for students with disabilities so we can continue to assist you.

Since our school closure, as of March 17, 2020, The Irvington School District has provided your child with grade level curriculum packets along with supports, services, and accommodations provided by our Special Education staff. Our school district will soon be offering remote learning models for all students. The US Department of Education has stated that schools are required to provide special education students with the accommodations and services they are entitled to in their IEP, "consistent with the need to protect the health and safety" of special education students and their teacher and as the District provides educational opportunities to the general student population, then the district also must ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to the same opportunities, including the provision of a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). Although special education or related services may need to be adjusted, we are providing IEP services through an alternative means, such as curriculum-based schoolwork packets, online learning or some other learning adapted to the student's needs.

Once schools are re-opened, your special education child's IEP team will reconvene and make an 'individualized determination' regarding how the school closure impacted the education of your child, and whether the student requires compensatory services and/or additional services as a result of the closure.



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If annual Individual Education Program (IEP) reviews or eligibility reviews are due during our school closure, please work closely with your Child Study Team to have the IEP meeting remotely through video or audio conference calls since we are continuing to convene meetings remotely.

Additional information and support is available by visiting the Irvington Public Schools website or visiting the U.S. Department of Education's COVID-19 ("Coronavirus") Information and Resources for Schools and School Personnel (<https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus>).

If you are interested in discussing your child's progress or services that are being provided, please let me know and we can schedule a phone appointment. I am available, as well as the Special Education Supervisor, Ms. Crooks, and the case managers, to answer any questions you may have about the services provided during this difficult time, please email us at pdowd@irvington.k12.nj.us or lcrooks@irvington.k12.nj.us.

Thank you for your understanding and we hope that you and your family are healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

Patricia Dowd

Director of Special Services

Lystrea Crooks

Supervisor of Special Services