

**2020-2021 Remote Learning Plan  
Columbus Collegiate Academy | IRN: 009122**

**Description of how student instructional needs will be determined and documented**

All students will take the nationally norm-referenced i-Ready diagnostic assessment within the first three weeks of the school year. This diagnostic will provide baseline data for reading and math instruction. The diagnostic results will be analyzed by teacher-based teams and the building leadership teams to complete a gap analysis.

Because spring 2020 may have been more disruptive to student learning than usual, the school will also administer an internally-created, skill-based assessment to all students during student orientation.

Each IEP in the district will be examined and updated (as needed) to ensure students are receiving the appropriate specially designed instruction.

Columbus Collegiate Academy will continue to prioritize learning standards for each grade level and course that are aligned to the Ohio Learning Standards.

**The methods to be used for determining competency, granting credit and promoting students to higher grade levels**

**Grading**

For the 2020-2021 school year, Columbus Collegiate Academy will maintain their normal grading procedures as described in the Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment Manual for each school. Students will receive grades for assignments and assessments completed both in-person and remotely, and will receive letter grades at the end of each trimester.

In response to the pandemic in the spring of 2020, we made several adjustments to our grading procedure. Students did not receive a letter grade or a "pass/fail" grade for courses during Trimester 3. Instead, Columbus Collegiate Academy focused on tracking remote learning engagement and providing feedback to students. To be clear, that is *no longer* in effect.

**Progress Reports & Report Cards**

CCA modified its school calendar in response to the pandemic, in order to provide more time for staff, students, and families to prepare for the year. Consequently, CCA adjusted some progress report dates to align with the new calendar. Progress reports and report cards will be distributed to students on the following dates:

- **Progress Report 1:** September 29
- **Progress Report 2:** October 20
- **Progress Report 3:** November 10
- **Report Card 1:** November 24
- **Progress Report 4:** December 15
- **Progress Report 5:** January 19

- **Progress Report 6:** February 16
- **Report Card 2:** March 9
- **Progress Report 7:** March 23
- **Progress Report 8:** April 20
- **Progress Report 9:** May 11

### **Promotion & Retention**

The COVID-19 pandemic, as we know, will have a significant impact on the 2020-2021 school year as we transition between school models, and it's likely that there will be interruptions to student learning throughout the year, whether big (i.e. inconsistent monitoring of student learning at home) or small (i.e. loss of internet or device for a day or two). In addition, because we shifted to remote learning in the spring of 2020 with little warning and had to adjust to our new reality on the fly, students lost a lot of instructional time which likely produced additional academic gaps as we begin the 2020-2021 school year.

USN's 2020-2021 promotion and retention policy will not be modified from what is in our Student & Family Handbooks. The policy applies as written. Grades, attendance, i-Ready achievement and growth, student age, prior retention, and special education status, among other items, will be taken into account when making promotion and retention decisions. However, when making these decisions, USN team members should remain cognizant of the facts mentioned in the prior paragraph, as well as the general understanding that this will be an extremely unique school year. The pandemic will continue to affect students academically, socially, and emotionally in ways both apparent and subtle.

Pursuant to Student & Family Handbook, promotion and retention decisions will be made only after the school has notified and conferred with parents throughout the year (through progress reports, report cards, phone calls, family conferences, etc.) as to the student's progress or lack thereof. When considering student promotion, the CCA team members should base decisions on the applicable criteria mentioned above and in the Handbook, but also take into account the broad impact of the pandemic on student learning and development.

### **The school's attendance requirements, including how the school will document participation in learning opportunities.**

#### **Attendance**

Consistent school attendance is a vital part of every student's educational experience and, for many students, is correlated with increased academic growth and achievement. A core part of USN's mission is to ensure that our students attend school regularly. Throughout the pandemic, we will expect that USN students and families follow USN's Attendance Policy as described in the school-specific Student & Family Handbooks. Students and families are still 1) required to attend school in accordance with state law, 2) arrive at school on time, and 3) report absences to the school.

However, due to the special circumstances brought upon by the COVID-19 pandemic, USN schools will modify their attendance policy in the manner described below. Generally speaking, the goal is to provide additional flexibility in working with our families on attendance-related matters during the pandemic. Our

focus on student attendance must be balanced with the priority of keeping students and employees safe and healthy.

#### *Attendance Policy | In-Person Learning*

1. **Tardy Sign-In.** At the elementary school level, families are instructed to bring their children into the school if they arrive after 8:50 a.m. For the 2020-2021 school year, we will suspend this policy to reduce the number of people in the front office area at the beginning of the day and, more generally, decrease the number of adults in the building throughout the day. Families will be instructed to have their children ring the buzzer and enter the building alone to sign in. Schools should also consider opening entry doors during arrival when many students are entering the building, and sanitize the buzzer frequently to mitigate virus spread.
  
2. **Medical Appointments.** Families are encouraged to 1) schedule appointments around our school calendar and 2) bring their children back to school after a medical appointment, especially those that are scheduled in the morning. We will have to approach this policy in a more nuanced way during the 2020-2021 school year. For regular check-ups, vaccination appointments, and sports physicals, the above policy applies. For appointments related to COVID - showing symptoms, suspected cases, etc. - families should be instructed to 1) schedule appointments as soon as possible (*regardless of conflict with our school calendar*) and 2) keep the child at home until contacting the school by phone to discuss the status of the situation.
  
3. **Excused Absences.** USN schools currently count an absence as "excused" for the five reasons listed below. The Ohio Department of Education is encouraging schools to consider modifications to its "excused absence" list, and those modifications are captured below in **bold**.
  - a. Personal physical illness such as to prevent attendance at the school.
    - i. **2020-2021 Modification: Absences for illness longer than ten days must be verified in writing by a doctor. Medical excuses will be accepted in the form of a parent call-in on the day of or day after the absence (USN schools will continue to place daily attendance calls for absent students as well) or in the form of a doctor's note within five school days of the absence due to illness or doctor's visit. Medical excused absences will be accepted through this process for students participating both in-person and remotely. This policy will be extended beyond ten days if the student or someone in the student's family is in quarantine due to COVID-19 or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.**
  - b. Death in the family.
  - c. Observance of religious holidays.
  - d. Court subpoena.
  - e. An emergency set of circumstances which in the judgement of school leadership constitute a good and sufficient cause for absence.
    - i. **2020-2021 Modification: COVID-related issues (a student or family member displaying symptoms, suspected case, possible exposure, etc.) will be considered "excused" under this category of excused absence. USN families will be encouraged to submit paperwork documenting any medical appointments or testing related to COVID.**

4. **Excused Absence Limit.** USN schools currently allow a maximum of nine full-day student absences from school to be considered excused with parental notification only. After nine absences, documentation in addition to the parent notification may be required in order for the absence to be excused. Such documentation may include, but is not limited to, written statements from a physician, dentist, or licensed mental health provider, and documentation is reviewed by the School Director. Due to the ongoing pandemic, USN will increase the maximum of nine excused absences without parental notification to **15** for the 2020-2021 school year. This policy may be extended beyond 15 days if the student or someone in the student's family is in quarantine due to COVID-19 or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and, combined with other excused absences, the student would eclipse the threshold of 15 excused absences. USN families will be encouraged to submit paperwork documenting any medical appointments or testing related to COVID.
5. **Absences Not Considered Excused.** During a typical school year, absences are not considered excused if for the following reasons: 1) weather, 2) transportation, 3) parent illness, and 4) family vacation. For the 2020-2021 school year, absences for parent illness or medical appointment related to COVID-19 (displaying symptoms, suspected case, confirmed case, etc.) will be **excused**.
6. **Remote Learning as "Makeup" Days.** Students will not be allowed to complete remote learning activities to make up for in-person absences when the student does not have a legitimate excuse to be physically absent from school and should be physically present during a day of in-person instruction.

#### ***Attendance Policy | Remote Learning***

In July 2020, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) released guidance on attendance for remote learning plans. Remote learning plans are a temporary requirement for the 2020-21 school year only and apply to traditional public schools and community schools that are not computer- or internet-based community schools and not operating blended learning models (i.e. USN). The remote learning plan must contain "the school's attendance requirements, including how the school will document participation in learning opportunities."

1. **Attendance Tracking & Reporting.** Schools have options for how to *track* attendance, but all community schools will be expected to continue *reporting* attendance in **hour** increments at the student level within EMIS and should strive for a consistent policy for determining attendance across schools and classrooms within the district, regardless of the mode of learning. The tracking of attendance does not have to be so precise as to know what every student is doing at every moment with regard to the student's educational experience. Regardless of the way attendance is tracked, schools must *convert to and report* attendance in hour increments. Schools may consider monitoring attendance on a regular schedule (i.e. weekly) that provides flexibility for families as they support their children's completion of remote learning activities.

In light of the above, USN schools will track and monitor attendance in the following manner:

- a. **Synchronous Remote Learning.** USN teachers that lead synchronous remote learning activities will take attendance as they normally would at the beginning of a regular in-person school day. A two-hour synchronous lesson would count as two hours of attendance for a student. If a student is unable to attend a synchronous lesson, but makes up the lesson

independently at a later time, the student's attendance will be tracked in the manner described below ("Asynchronous Remote Learning").

- i. Example:* A 6th grade math teacher holds a synchronous lesson through Google Meet at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday. At the start of the lesson, she takes attendance virtually by looking at who is signed on, and those students are counted as "in attendance." The next day, she notices that three additional students logged onto Google Classroom and completed the learning activities associated with that same lesson. Those three students are also counted as "in attendance."

**b. Asynchronous Remote Learning.** USN teachers that lead asynchronous remote learning activities will take attendance in a different manner than they would during in-person or synchronous instruction. Students will be counted as "in attendance" if they provide evidence of thoughtful completion of subject-specific learning activities designed by the teacher. Teachers will review student work on Google Classroom and make a final determination on attendance for the day, based on the student's thoughtful completion of work. In this mode of learning, schools will assign an hour value to each asynchronous remote learning activity that mirrors the synchronous remote learning activities. For example, if a synchronous 3rd grade math lesson is 1.5 hours, then the asynchronous 3rd grade math lesson will be valued at 1.5 hours, even though it may take students different amounts of time to complete the same lesson.

- i. Example:* A 2nd grade ELA teacher releases an asynchronous lesson through Google Classroom on Thursday. On Friday, he notes that 19/25 students have provided sufficient evidence of completion of the asynchronous lesson. He notes that students spent anywhere from 37-136 minutes on the lesson, but he indicates on his tracker that all were in attendance for 1.5 hours of ELA instruction for Thursday.

In order to provide flexibility during this unprecedented period, and in recognition that students will likely complete schoolwork at varying times throughout the week, USN is setting a deadline of **Sunday at 11:59 p.m** for the completion of all synchronous and asynchronous remote learning activities assigned for the week. In order to be counted as "in attendance" for an activity, students must provide evidence of thoughtful completion of that activity by that time. If evidence of thoughtful completion is not provided, students will be considered "absent" for the applicable "hour value" assigned to the class. While students will be encouraged to submit late remote learning activities on Google Classroom after that deadline, they will still be counted as "absent" for the applicable period of time.

Using Google Sheets, all USN schools will utilize an attendance tracker to track daily attendance. The trackers will 1) designate consistent hour values for both synchronous and asynchronous lessons and 2) contain formulas that add up the total number of hours in attendance by day and week. USN teachers will update the tracker on a **weekly** basis, and then USN operations teams will use the trackers to report attendance on USN's student information system, DASL. As a reminder, students are considered "in attendance" unless marked otherwise on DASL. However, in heeding the advice from auditors over the years, USN schools may use the attendance trackers as evidence that students are marked either "present" or "absent" on a daily basis. USN schools will track and report both synchronous and asynchronous remote learning using the procedure described below.

**2. Excused Absences in the Remote Setting.** In addition to the excused absences described in the section above, which apply to both in-person and remote settings, USN schools will excuse absences for the following reasons, upon communication in writing or by phone from families, for remote settings specifically:

- a. Temporary internet outage for individual students or households.
- b. Unexpected technical difficulties for individual students or households, such as password resets or software upgrades at inopportune times, such as during a teacher-led remote learning lesson.
- c. Student absence due to COVID-19 until alternative arrangements can be made to allow the student to participate in the lesson remotely.

**3. 72-Hour Rule.** Guidance for the Ohio Department of Education states that, "although there is flexibility in monitoring attendance, community schools must ensure a remote learning attendance policy and procedures are in place that reflect the '72-hour rule' set forth in Ohio Revised Code for 'automatically withdrawing a student from the school if the student without a legitimate excuse fails to participate in seventy-two consecutive hours of the learning opportunities offered to the student.'" In response to this guidance, USN schools, using the above remote learning attendance tracking methods, will withdraw students accordingly under the 72-hour rule. This equates to roughly 11.5 consecutive days of learning opportunities.

With that said, in light of the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, USN schools should communicate with families with students learning remotely in a proactive manner through phone, email, and other creative methods to alert families to absences and work with them to ensure remote learning attendance.

### ***Attendance Policy | Truancy & Excessive Absences***

According to guidance provided by the Ohio Department of Education, "every district must have an approach to addressing attendance and excessive absenteeism outlined in their district truancy and attendance policies. Districts should update their policies to align with blended and remote learning plans and should continue to follow all attendance and truancy processes and requirements as outlined in Ohio's attendance laws."

Accordingly, USN schools will maintain current protocols for addressing excessive absences and truancy as outlined in Student & Family Handbooks. Remote learning attendance, tracked using internal spreadsheets as described above, will be inputted into our student information system as required for reporting purposes. USN teams will then review data in their student information system to identify students who have met excessive absence and truancy thresholds (automated within our student information system). Excessive absence and truancy interventions (i.e. warning letters, notification of truancy letters, etc.) will be tracked in the student profile as normal. Due to the challenges presented by both the pandemic and remote learning, truancy filings during periods of remote learning should only be submitted after careful consideration.

While truancy thresholds and reporting requirements have not changed, USN will modify the absence intervention team protocol. Specifically, absence intervention teams (established after a student is absent for a period of time that exceeds the threshold for habitual truancy) will not meet in person. Absence

intervention teams will hold teleconferences or virtual meetings (i.e. Google Meet). A copy of the attendance intervention plan will be mailed home to families following the meeting.

In addition, USN team members need to keep in mind that the definition of “excessively absent” was modified with the passage of House Bill (HB) 166. The new language in Ohio Revised Code specifies that only a student’s nonmedical excused absences and unexcused absences may be considered in determining whether a student is “excessively absent.” Any hours that a student is absent with a medical excuse should not be counted by the district in making this determination. Consequently, any student excused absence relating to COVID-19 will *not* be counted toward excessive absence hours, just like any other illness or medical issue.

### **Attendance Policy | General Considerations**

- 1. Communication.** For many reasons, attendance will be a significant barrier to success for many students this school year. Students will be participating in remote and/or in-person learning instruction, and health factors related to the COVID-19 pandemic will likely lead to increased absences. In addition, students from under-served areas have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Thus, it will be extremely important for USN schools to maintain constant contact with students and families through phone, email, social media, school apps, and other creative methods in order to ensure students attend school to the degree possible given their individual context and circumstances.
- 2. Contact Information.** Maintaining up-to-date contact information for students and families will be vital this year, as there will likely be some students learning from home for the duration of the year. We often receive updated contact information (phone numbers, email addresses, etc.) through in-person contact (drop-off, pick-up, other school gatherings). That will be impossible for many students this year. Consequently, USN schools should work proactively to gather updated information frequently. Specifically, more than ever, it will be important for schools to gather email addresses from families to enable that method of communication.
- 3. Digital Access.** USN schools should maintain detailed records of digital access (i.e. internet connection, technology device access, etc.) to ensure that all students in remote learning settings have the materials required to access and complete remote lessons. USN schools should plan to provide one device per student (as opposed to one per family), so that families with multiple USN students do not have to share devices across multiple students, which is not ideal for long-term remote learning. USN schools should plan regular check-ins throughout the year to verify digital access.
- 4. Health & Safety First.** As mentioned above, consistent school attendance is a vital part of every student’s educational experience. However, the COVID-19 pandemic will likely lead to increased student absences due to student or family sickness and general instability brought on by the pandemic. USN schools should remain flexible in working with families on attendance-related issues, and expect to “excuse” more absences this year than in the past for health-related reasons.
- 5. Emphasize Engagement.** Regardless of the modality through which students learn this year, whether in-person or remote, the emphasis should be on *engagement*. Significant effort should be put toward ensuring that students are interacting with lesson material, completing independent work, and providing evidence of thought on lessons, and not necessarily on the number of minutes students are spending on activities.
- 6. Attendance Awards.** Due to the nature of the attendance challenges presented by the pandemic, USN schools should temporarily halt the awarding of attendance awards. Rather, as mentioned in the

prior item, USN schools should emphasize lesson engagement, completion, and evidence of thoughtful work.

### **A statement describing how student progress will be monitored**

Student academic progress will be monitored in several ways:

- Frequent formative assessments such as Exit Tickets and quizzes designed to assess progress towards mastery within our Ohio Learning Standards-based curricula.
- Curriculum-based unit assessments (every 3-5 weeks)
- Curriculum-based and Ohio State Test-aligned comprehensive exams at the end of each grading period
- i-Ready diagnostic assessments are given in the fall, winter, and spring
- Each student is also assigned to small-group intervention and advisory groups where detailed analysis of a student's overall progress will be documented, discussed, and communicated with both students and families.

### **A description of how equitable access to quality instruction will be ensured.**

Technology and Access:

- Every student will be provided with a school-issued Chromebook in order to complete remote instruction activities.
- The school will work with every student to ensure the household has adequate internet access. We are working with several state and federal grant providers to ensure we can assist and provide an internet connection to any student in need of that service.
- All synchronous instruction will be recorded and documented within the Google Classroom to ensure all students have access to the instruction and practice provided regardless of their ability to attend the synchronous session.
- The school has multiple methods of communicating with families including: phone numbers, email addresses, use of One Call auto-calls, SchoolMint, and ParentSquare. Each student will be given a school-specific email address for ease of communication and access to Google Classroom.

Special Populations (Sp Ed, EL):

#### **Special Education**

USN serves many students who receive special education services. Students who receive these services generally need more academic and/or social-emotional support to find success. For many students who receive this support, learning remotely presents even greater challenges. In addition, some support services are more difficult for schools and educators to provide remotely. However, schools must continue to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to all students throughout the pandemic. Thus, the Ohio Department of Education has released additional guidance for schools as they meet the challenges of this unprecedented time.

#### *Flexibility in Meeting Needs*

The Department encourages educational agencies to provide education in the format that will best serve each student and the local community. The Ohio Reset and Restart Education Planning Guide describes that "Ohio's education system must be nimble, flexible and responsive to ensure the health and safety of all



students and adults." Alternative delivery models may be considered to safely meet the needs of students who receive special education services, such as remote learning, in-building learning or a blended approach.

Consistent with U.S. Department of Education guidance, Ohio recognizes that federal and state disability laws allow for flexibility in determining how to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities. We encourage educational agencies to make a good faith effort to provide education to all students through appropriate methods and learning environments.

Communication and collaboration with parents are of paramount importance in identifying the appropriate services, supports and least restrictive learning environments for students who receive special education services. When working with students through alternative delivery models, the school or district **should make a good faith effort** to determine how a FAPE will be provided and the following questions should be considered:

1. Do students who receive special education services have access to the appropriate resources required to engage in the alternative delivery model, such as cell phones, computers, and internet or other forms of connectivity?
2. Can the alternative delivery model effectively support a FAPE for each student who receives special education services, including the ability to provide differentiated and specially designed instruction? Regardless of where the learning is happening, supports and services identified within a student's individualized education program (IEP) must be provided to the extent practicable without putting the health and safety of students or staff at risk. This might consist of phone calls or virtual conferences for direct one-on-one interaction with a student.
3. If using a virtual platform, can your educational agency or building(s) provide training to staff, students, parents and guardians to enable them to use the online system and understand the expectations for use of the system? Can training be accomplished virtually?
4. If using phone or email to connect with students, can your educational agency or building(s) communicate and connect with families to discuss a structure and routine for working with their student via phone or email?
5. Does the district or school have a process in place to track and document communications with parents and services provided as described within the IEP?

#### *Restarting the 2020-2021 School Year*

Educational agencies should continue to make a good-faith effort to provide specialized services to students with disabilities. The IEP team will need to consider the exact nature of the services provided on a case-by-case basis depending on the needs of each individual student.

When conducting an Evaluation Team Report (ETR) or IEP meeting, the health, safety and wellness of students, parents and staff must be considered and drive decisions regarding whether meetings occur remotely or face to face. All attempts to obtain parental consent and participation should be documented according to district and school policies and procedures, and a prior written notice (PR-01) should be completed and provided to parents.

#### *Evaluation Team Report (ETR)*

Initial *evaluation team reports* must be completed within the 60-day mandated timeline as prescribed in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)<sup>1</sup> and Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-06.

Meetings Held Remotely: Reviews of the evaluation team report can be completed using a virtual format or by telephone. Participation and required signatures can be documented by email attachment, standard mail, scanned signature, photograph of the signature or any other electronic means.

Evaluations and reevaluations that do not require face-to-face assessments or observations may take place, so long as a student's parent or legal guardian consents.

As is the case with a typical re-evaluation, a district/schools may choose to conduct a *records review*. This allows the district/schools to update the evaluation without conducting face-to-face assessments and observations (if new assessments and observations are not needed). The method of conducting an evaluation team report review and signature collection should be documented in a *prior written notice* (PR01) consistent with the requirements listed in Ohio Administrative Code 3301-51-05(H).

In-Person Meetings: Face-to-face meetings must be held in a healthy and safe manner according to Ohio Department of Health and State of Ohio guidelines. Federal and state regulations as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Ohio Administrative Code regarding Evaluation Team Reports (ETR) apply and should be followed accordingly.

#### *Individualized Education Program (IEP)*

Meetings Held Remotely: IEP annual reviews can be completed using a virtual format or via telephone. Participation and required signatures can be documented via email attachment, standard mail, scanned document, photograph of the signature or any other electronic means, and the method of IEP team review and signature collection should be documented in a prior written notice form (PR01).

If the IEP team, which includes the parent(s), determines that remote learning will be used with a child who receives special education services, then the IEP must be updated to reflect this change of placement, and a prior written notice must be provided to parents.

In-Person Meetings: Face-to-face meetings must be done in a healthy and safe manner according to Ohio Department of Health and State of Ohio guidelines. Federal and state regulations as defined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Ohio Administrative Code regarding the Individualized Education Program (IEP) apply and should be followed accordingly.

While balancing the need to protect the health and safety of students who receive special education services, parents, staff and educational agencies must provide a FAPE. It is important for staff and parents to work collaboratively during the 2020-2021 school year to continue to support students who receive special education services.

#### *Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)*

The IEP team must reconvene (remotely or face-to-face, as appropriate) to determine the change of placement, and a prior written notice (PR-01) must be provided to parents.

The least restrictive environment is determined by the student's IEP team on an individual basis as reflected in the IEP. If a student's least restrictive environment has changed due to remote learning, or a blend of remote and in-person learning, IEP teams must ensure this change is accurately reflected in the student's IEP. It is recommended that an IEP team make provisions to address what the student's learning would look like in each of the multiple types of scenarios; a traditional (face-to-face) environment, blended learning

environment or remote learning environment. All these provisions can be written into one IEP; however, the statements about a student's least restrictive environment **MUST** be individualized to meet that student's unique needs. Generalized statements for students' least restrictive environments are not appropriate when making these amendments.

When making determinations of least restrictive environment based on the structure of the 2020-2021 school year, IEP teams must consider the following:

1. What is the district's plan for instruction during the 2020-2021 school year?
2. Depending on the type of instruction, what implications are there for the least restrictive environment?
3. How will the student's needs be met to support the student's least restrictive environment through the district's plan?
4. Does the least restrictive environment specify what the individual student's learning would look like in the event of a blended learning environment or fully remote learning environment?
5. If a parent or guardian has opted to receive all instruction remotely, how will the IEP reflect the student's unique educational needs?
6. If the family declines the IEP team's proposed least restrictive environment, did the IEP team discuss alternative options? Does the district have documentation reflecting the refusal, including prior written notice and any other documentation?

#### *Specially Designed Instruction (SDI)*

Specially designed instruction is determined based on each student's individual goals, objectives and needs as written in the student's IEP. A student's special education services must be determined by the student's IEP team on an individual basis. If the school is engaged in remote learning or blended learning, specially designed instruction must continue to be provided as written in the student's IEP. Specially designed instruction should address what the specialized needs are for the student's learning in a traditional (face-to-face) environment, blended learning environment or remote learning environment. All these provisions can be written into one IEP; however, the statements about a student's specially designed instruction **MUST** be individualized to meet that student's unique needs. Generalized statements for students' specially designed instruction are not appropriate. Data about the provision of any specially designed instruction must be kept by teachers or school staff providing the specially designed instruction.

When making determinations for specially designed instruction if a school is utilizing remote learning or blended learning, the IEP team must consider the following:

1. How the specially designed instruction will be provided, be it in-person, in a blended learning curriculum or completely remote?
2. How the IEP team will document the provision of specially designed instruction?
3. What types of support (such as computer access or internet) the student will need to access the specially designed instruction?

#### *Transportation*

Students with disabilities who have transportation needs written in their IEPs must continue to receive specialized transportation, as appropriate. If students with disabilities do not have transportation as a need written in their IEPs, they will receive transportation the same as general education students.

When determining transportation needs for student with disabilities, the IEP team must consider the following:

1. Does the student require transportation in order to access a FAPE? If so, the IEP team must document this information in the student's IEP.
2. Does the student require specialized transportation (such as door-to-door) in order to access a FAPE? If so, this must be documented in the student's IEP?
3. Does the student attend a community school and does the student need specialized transportation? If so, is this written in the student's IEP?

### *Considerations for Recovery vs. Compensatory Services*

Because school buildings were closed at the end of the 2019-2020 school year due to the public health emergency, the usual framework for determining whether compensatory services should be provided does not fit the current circumstances.

School districts did not fail to provide a FAPE because the district stopped implementing a student's IEP; instead, the entire state moved to remote education without choice.

*NOTE: If a student with a disability was refused services by a school, or otherwise did not receive services or instruction while other students were receiving services during the building closures, then actual compensatory services may be warranted.*

When schools reopen, it's possible some students receiving special education services may demonstrate they did not make as much progress as expected or otherwise display gaps in their learning. To close these gaps, these students will need additional services and support to resume learning based on their current levels of performance. The term "recovery services," rather than compensatory services, describes the provision of services for students showing less than expected skills acquisition upon re-entry to school. Recovery services are not about a school or district's intentional failure to provide services as much as they are a systemic approach to help students recover from unavoidable coronavirus- (COVID-19) related service delivery interruptions. The next two sections describe recovery services and compensatory services.

### Recovery Services

The IDEA does not define the term "recovery services." This term is increasingly being used by educators across the country, in addition to compensatory services, in response to the unprecedented impact COVID-19 has had on schools and student learning. The term recovery services reflects the need of learners to recover from any educational gaps in learning caused by the unexpected school-building closures. Recovery services should be provided to students who had an interruption of services during the ordered school-building closure period in the 2019-2020 school year. The determination to provide recovery services to students with disabilities must be done on a case-by-case basis.

These additional services should be based on individual student assessments, needs and IEP progress documentation.

The following are questions to consider when determining if recovery services should be provided to a student who receives special education services.

1. Did the student make progress on his or her IEP goals and objectives prior to the ordered school-building closure period?
2. What were the student's baseline measures on his or her IEP goals and objectives prior to the ordered school-building closure period?
3. Does the IEP team have documentation of the progress the student made during the ordered school-building closure period in the form of progress reports and other documentation?
4. Did the district provide a FAPE to the student during the ordered school-building closure period?
5. Was the student "accessible" during the ordered school-building closure period for the district to provide services?
6. Did the parent or guardian refuse services during the ordered school-building closure period? If so, did the district document the refusal in a prior written notice?
7. If the district provided a FAPE, did the student make progress?
8. Did the student regress even with a FAPE provided during the ordered school-building closure period?

Once the determination is made to provide the student with recovery services, the IEP team needs to determine what educational recovery services will be provided to the student. This determination should be made by each student's IEP team. Questions to consider when determining the type of recovery services the student will need are listed below:

- Does the student require a new evaluation to be conducted?
  - If so, what types of evaluations should be conducted?
  - Does parental consent need to be obtained for the evaluation?
  - Will the evaluation need to be conducted face-to-face or virtually?
- How will the student's IEP reflect the additional recovery services?
  - Do new present levels of performance need to be developed which include the recovery services?
  - Will the recovery services be included as part of the goals and objectives?
  - Will recovery services be reflected within the student's specially designed instruction? Will the frequency, duration and intensity need to be adjusted?
  - How will progress be reported? Will it be included in goal reporting or an alternative format?
  - Will recovery services occur after the typical school day, or does the school day include time when the service could be provided without missing other instruction?
  - Will the related services need to be increased or adjusted?
- If the parent refuses recovery services, has the district documented this refusal? If recovery services have been attempted by the district but the student was not made available to be provided those services, has the district documented attempts to provide services?

- If it was not possible to provide services, did the district attempt to communicate with the parent or guardian to discuss alternative options?
- If it was not possible to provide services and attempts to contact the parent or guardian were unsuccessful was a prior written notice issued?

Recovery services can be provided over an extended period of time — not just in the first weeks of returning to school. Also, recovery services for services that were not provided during the ordered school-building closure period do not need to be replaced minute for minute. It is important that school staff document with specificity the recovery services being provided to students with disabilities while monitoring and tracking individual student progress. This information will be necessary to inform the IEP team in making a future determination as to what additional services may be necessary to ensure the provision of a FAPE. The amount, frequency and type of services, beyond the recovery services provided to all students during this time, need to be based on the present levels of performance data collected during both the ordered school-building closure and during the first days and weeks of school reentry.

When describing recovery services in the IEP, staff should clearly note in the “Written Notes” section of the IEP that these services are being provided due to the coronavirus-related ordered school-building closure period. Also, note in the IEP that these recovery services are not extended school year (ESY) services.

### Compensatory Education

Compensatory Education Services are educational services provided to a student because the district failed to provide the special education services listed in the student’s IEP during the ordered school-building closure.

Compensatory services are an equitable remedy under the IDEA. Compensatory services may be ordered in a complaint investigation report or due process hearing when a school failed to provide a student with a FAPE. Sometimes a school voluntarily will offer a student compensatory services when it becomes aware of an inadvertent failure to provide services required by a specific student’s IEP or other potential FAPE violation. In each of these situations, the purpose of compensatory services is to put the child in the same position he or she would have been if the school had not violated the IDEA.

School districts and parents can mutually agree to the compensatory education services after the ordered school-building closure period ends or contact the Office for Exceptional Children’s Dispute Resolution section and utilize the dispute resolution options available. Compensatory education can be issued through a corrective action plan triggered by one of the various dispute resolution processes. Information and the timelines for these dispute resolution options are established by the IDEA.

Districts and parents can utilize the same consideration questions as those used for recovery services. The following are questions to consider when determining if compensatory educational services should be provided to a student who receives special education services.

1. Did the student make progress on his or her IEP goals and objectives prior to the ordered school-building closure period?
2. What were the student’s baseline measures on his or her IEP goals and objectives prior to the ordered school-building closure period?
3. Does the IEP team have documentation of the progress the student made during the ordered school-building closure period in the form of progress reports and other documentation?

4. Did the district provide a FAPE to the student during the ordered school-building closure period?
5. Was the student "accessible" during the ordered school-building closure period for the district to provide services?
6. Did the parent or guardian refuse services during the ordered school-building closure period? If so, did the district document the refusal in a prior written notice?
7. If the district provided a FAPE, did the student make progress?
8. Did the student regress even with a FAPE provided during the ordered school-building closure period?

Once the determination is made to provide the student with compensatory services, the student's IEP team needs to determine what educational services will be provided to the student. Questions to consider when determining the type of compensatory services the student will need are listed below:

- Does the student require a new evaluation to be conducted?
  - If so, what types of evaluations should be conducted?
  - Does parental consent need to be obtained for the evaluation?
  - Will the evaluation need to be conducted face-to-face or virtually?
- How will the student's IEP reflect the additional compensatory services?
  - Do new present levels of performance need to be developed which include the compensatory services?
  - Will the compensatory services be included as part of the goals and objectives?
  - Will compensatory services be reflected within the student's specially designed instruction? Will the frequency, duration and intensity need to be adjusted?
  - How will progress be reported? Will it be included in goal reporting or an alternative format?
  - Will compensatory services occur after the typical school day or does the school day include time when the service could be provided without missing other instruction?
  - Will the related services need to be increased or adjusted?
- If the parent refuses compensatory services, has the district documented this refusal? If compensatory services have been attempted by the district but the student was not made available to be provided those services, has the district documented attempts to provide services?
  - If it was not possible to provide services, did the district attempt to communicate with the parent or guardian to discuss alternative options?
  - If it was not possible to provide services and attempts to contact the parent or guardian were unsuccessful was a prior written notice issued?

#### Extended School Year

Another consideration in understanding "Recovery Services" is that of extended school year (ESY). The purpose of an extended school year is to prevent, or slow, severe skill regression caused by an interruption of special education services during extended periods when school is not in session. It is not to enhance the

present levels of educational performance exhibited by children with disabilities at the end of the regular school year.

The need for extended school year services is based on a construct of skill regression and a child's limited capacity for recoupment. An extended school year may be provided only when it is determined a child might regress in a critical skill area to such an extent that recoupment of the skill loss would require an unusually long period of time or make it unlikely or impossible to recoup the present level of educational performance.

Within the categories marked by a severe disability, it is not appropriate to assume a significant regression or recoupment factor exists. Some children with severe disabilities may consistently demonstrate a limited array of skills but not demonstrate a significant regression/recoupment factor in any of the skills. Therefore, these children would not be appropriate candidates for extended school year services.

The following are questions to consider when determining if extended school year services should be provided to a student who receives special education services.

1. Will the student lose critical skills without continued support and teaching?
2. Will it take a long time for the student with disabilities to regain those skills—longer than it would take a child without a learning difference?
3. Does the student have difficulty retaining skills over shorter breaks?
4. Does the student have known issues with working memory?
5. Does the student need continual reinforcement to keep his or her skills during the regular school year?
6. Does the student have behavior issues that get in the way of learning during the school year? Will that be a problem next year without continued support over the summer?
7. Is the student making steady progress toward meeting his or her IEP goals? Will a break in services threaten that progress?
8. Are there goal areas of concern that need to be acquired or maintained without interruption for the student to meaningfully benefit from a FAPE?
9. Has there been (or is there a potential for) significant regression during periods of interruptions that would require significant recoupment?
10. Are there rare and unusual circumstances that necessitate continuous instruction for service?
11. Are there other factors to be considered in determining the need for extended school year services?
12. Consider whether the learning that occurred during the regular school year will be significantly jeopardized if extended school year service is not provided.
13. The primary criteria in determining a student's need for extended school year services are the likelihood of significant regression of previously learned skills during a break in service and limited or delayed recoupment of these skills after services resume.

### *Dispute Resolution Processes*

If an educational agency or parent(s) has questions concerning dispute resolution processes, they should contact the Department's Dispute Resolution staff for information at 1-877-644-6338 or by email at [exceptionalchildren@education.ohio.gov](mailto:exceptionalchildren@education.ohio.gov).



The Department will continue to monitor guidance released by the U.S. Department of Education and update information as necessary.

### *Resources for Schools*

[Meeting the Needs of Students with Disabilities](#) (Ohio Department of Education)

[Students with Disabilities Compendium of Resources](#) (Ohio Department of Education)

### **English Learners**

#### *Providing English Language Development and Academic Supports*

All teachers of English learners impact the rate and quality of their students' English language development and achievement in the academic content areas. Just as the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher brings expertise in language acquisition, the general education teacher provides English learners with opportunities to practice and refine their developing language skills. When educators co-plan quality instruction that includes linguistically and culturally responsive practices, students can be full participants in all classes. Finding pathways to success in academic content areas empowers English learners to develop the language skills needed for school and life.

The following are strategies teachers can use to impact the language learning trajectories of English learners within remote environments. These strategies are based upon principles of best practice for English learners and can be applied to all content areas.

1. Collaboration is essential.
  - a. Content and English learner specialists should continue to co-plan lessons by phone, text and virtual teacher-based team sessions.
  - b. Setting up regular times for collaboration and using technology to share documents can help teachers support each other in reaching English learners.
  - c. A virtual meeting or three-way call that includes an interpreter or the bilingual paraprofessional can provide invaluable knowledge and ideas for ways to support English learners in the content classroom.
  - d. General education teachers also can create separate spaces for English learners to learn in small groups in the remote learning management system. There, English learners may be provided comprehensible instruction, language and literacy supports, and learning activities related to the content area.
2. Share resources.
  - a. Frequently used reference materials, such as bilingual vocabulary glossaries for math, English language arts, science, social studies and other content areas.
  - b. Ready-to-use lesson plans available for free at Share my Lesson, Career Connections, INFOhio Educator Tools and The Newcomer Toolkit, chapter 3, pages 15-16.
  - c. Curriculum-based measurement resources that may be individualized for English learner language levels to monitor and assess basic academic skills.
  - d. Tools such as professional learning for parents and online teachers from the Center for Applied Linguistics and Ohio Partnership for Excellence.

- e. Short videos with suggestions and tips for working online with English learners, how to add subtitles to YouTube videos, using text to speech tools in PowerPoint, explaining and determining reading levels of text in Microsoft Word.
  - f. Texts aligned with English language proficiency standards.
  - g. Teaching tips and practices related to online learning, digital content and e-learning days at edWeb.
3. Use visual representations on the screen.
    - a. Teachers can use visuals, such as graphic organizers, strategically to express higher-order thinking skills and support the use of new vocabulary in conversations with students. They can allow students to use shared tools to write and draw on the screen and encourage communication around academic content.
  4. Use sentence frames.
    - a. The nonprofit group Student Achievement Partners explains that sentence frames and starters help English learners understand what they should be analyzing within a text to complete a writing or discussion activity. Remote learning teachers should continue to use sentence frames and starters to scaffold instruction with the aim of having students build toward the ability to analyze and write about content without the use of the frames
  5. Promote conversation.
    - a. Talking and interacting with children in the home language should never be discouraged. Supporting parents to communicate in the languages they prefer builds family relationships, benefits students' overall cognitive development and augments their academic achievement. Remote learning plans can include home language conversation activities that provide opportunities for English learners to maintain and value bilingualism as an asset. For example, educators can provide conversation prompts for families to use in their languages of choice or encourage older students to prepare, conduct and document interviews with family members.
  6. Reach out to the community.
    - a. Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages specialists can work with community groups to provide online meetings with interpreters to facilitate forums for listening to the concerns and questions of parents within a safe space. The meetings can provide information useful for developing the remote learning plan and meeting individual needs.
  7. Encourage student interaction.
    - a. Remote learning should include online content for students and teachers to engage in speaking and writing regularly.

### **A description of the professional development activities that will be offered to teacher**

#### **Summer Institute:**

- 1st and 2nd year teachers will attend Summer Institute daily from August 3rd - September 4th, 2020.
- 3rd+ year teachers will attend Summer Institute daily from August 13th - September 4th, 2020.
- The content of Summer Institute includes multiple in-depth trainings around the following pillars:
  - Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, including: specific training on remote instruction,

remote learning, and remote assessment.

- School Operations, including: health and safety procedures during the pandemic
- Student Culture, including: facilitating advisory, student wellness, and social-emotional learning activities.
- Antiracist education

During the School Year:

- The school has PD during morning hour once/week and more frequently as needed
- Teachers will be observed once/week and attend a feedback meeting with their coach once/week.
- PD days at the end of each grading period are reserved for data analysis and data driven instructional decisions