March 18, 2020

Dear Families of Students with Disabilities,

As Renton School District works to support our families and community during this exceptionally challenging time, we want to assure you that the needs of exceptional learners are being taken into consideration. The Federal Government and the State of Washington are currently developing guidance for the provision of special education services during school closures and changes to education models as a result of COVID-19. We are monitoring the development of guidance carefully and we are committed to partnering with you through frequent communication.

Currently, please note the following information was shared by Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI):

*“Districts should also consider ways to use distance technology (e.g., Zoom, conference calls) to the extent possible to provide child find, hold initial and annual IEP meetings, and/or evaluation/eligibility meetings, if staff and parents are available but not able to attend in person. Continuing to complete IEP and evaluation/eligibility meetings will help decrease the workload when school resumes. If staff and/or parents are not available or believe their participation is impacted by the lack of an in-person meeting, districts should document the reason and complete the activity in a timely manner following the ending of school closures.”*

Accordingly, our IEP and evaluation teams are in the process of setting up virtual meetings with families.  You may be contacted by staff to schedule a special education team meeting via phone or video conference.

Your student’s individual needs are very important to the Renton School District team. We are not providing services to students during this closure. We plan to meet with IEP teams, including families, when school resumes to address student specific needs resulting from the closure. If you have questions or concerns about your student’s services at this time, please do not hesitate to contact our Special Education Department at 425-204-2280.

We will be providing ongoing communication to keep you informed as guidance is updated.  Follow this link for updates: [https://www.rentonschools.us/learning-and-teaching/health-services/coronavirus-covid-19](http://track.spe.schoolmessenger.com/f/a/qyiK1oJXocWZ61opOwofTQ~~/AAAAAQA~/RgRgU7WzP4QfAWh0dHA6Ly90cmFjay5zcGUuc2Nob29sbWVzc2VuZ2VyLmNvbS9mL2EvTXlGRFBzWE1jaVlyS19lc1pIc0dDUX5-L0FBQUFBUUF-L1JnUmdVNEhiUDBSWGFIUjBjSE02THk5M2QzY3VjbVZ1ZEc5dWMyTm9iMjlzY3k1MWN5OXNaV0Z5Ym1sdVp5MWhibVF0ZEdWaFkyaHBibWN2YUdWaGJIUm9MWE5sY25acFkyVnpMMk52Y205dVlYWnBjblZ6TFdOdmRtbGtMVEU1VndkelkyaHZiMnh0UWdvQUFGdE9jbDUzWHR6bVVpSnFaVzV1YVdabGNpNTBjbUYxWm14bGNrQnlaVzUwYjI1elkyaHZiMnh6TG5WeldBUUFBQUFCVwdzY2hvb2xtQgoAADOCcl4fMWokUiJqZW5uaWZlci50cmF1ZmxlckByZW50b25zY2hvb2xzLnVzWAQAAAAB)

As ever, we are appreciative of our Renton School District community and stand with you in support of your children during this very challenging time.

**Question: Will my student still receive special education services during the closure including OT, PT, and SLP services?**

Answer:  As long as schools are closed, we are not providing instruction for students, which means special education services will also be on hold. Please reach out to your child’s case manager or related service provider, by email, if you have questions around how you can provide support for your student at home during the closure.

**Question: Will my student’s IEP or evaluation meeting still be held during the closure?**

Answer: Special education staff may still hold IEP/Evaluation meetings during the closure. These meetings will however be held either over the phone or virtually. If you prefer to wait until after the closure and have a face-to-face meeting that is okay as well. Per OSPI we will be documenting any IEP/Evaluation meetings that are late due to COVID-19.

**Question: If my IEP/Evaluation meeting is missed due to the closure how soon will it be made up?**

Answer: Our staff will work as quickly as possible to schedule missed IEP/Evaluation meetings once school resumes with the goal of completing them within two weeks after school is back in session.