



Ask the Experts Webinar Series

Wading through a Sea of Ambiguity: Charting a Course for Special Education Services During a Pandemic

“Ask the Experts” Webinar Series

- Series of recorded webinars to be posted on the NASP website
- Webinars are designed to offer support to school psychologists, interns, and practicum students as they navigate the delivery of school psychological services during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Each webinar will be followed by the opening of a discussion thread on the NASP member community. Use the strand associated with this webinar.
- Each webinar will:
 - Address critical questions emerging as a result of the need to provide virtual telehealth school psychological services
 - Provide advice and guidance from experts
 - Offer suggested strategies and resources for addressing professional practice issues

Charting a Course Given our Current Reality

- It's a Pandemic!
- Prioritize care for self and others
- Focus on what is reasonable & appropriate vs. compliance
- This is what we know for today....more guidance to come.
- NASP and our partners are here for you!



Quick Overview of US Dept. of Ed Guidance

Question 1: Are IEP Teams required to meet during a school closure*?

- IEP Teams are not required to meet in person while schools are closed*. (OCR Fact Sheet (03/16/2020))

**Individual definitions of school closure are going to vary state to state.*

Guidance from the US Dept of Education is available at www.ed.gov/coronavirus



Quick Overview of US Dept. of Ed Guidance

Question 2: Should we proceed with evaluations during a time of school closures?



- Evaluations and re-evaluations that do not require face-to-face assessments or observations may take place while schools are closed, so long as a student's parent or legal guardian consents. (OCR Fact Sheet - 03/16/2020)
 - *As a general principle, during this unprecedented national emergency, public agencies are encouraged to work with parents to reach mutually agreeable extensions of time, as appropriate. (OCR/OSERS Fact Sheet- 3/21/2020)*

Quick Overview of US Dept. of Ed Guidance

Question 3: Can we conduct IEP meetings via phone, Zoom Meeting, or some other online method?



- Yes. The IDEA specifically provides that the district and the parent may agree to use alternative means of meeting participation, such as video conferences and conference calls. NOTE: Regs do not require formal consent. (34 CFR 300.328).

Expert Panel

- NASP: Kelly Strobach,
Director of Policy and
Advocacy
- NASDSE: John Eisenberg,
Executive Director
- CASE: Phyllis Wolfram,
Executive Director



Critical Question 1:

- What are you sharing with your members about how they should be providing special education and related services during the school closures?



Identify Where Your School Is Located

Completely Closed	Homework Packets	Continuous Learning Opportunities	e-Learning/ Distance	Completely Open
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School is completely closed.• No services provided to any student.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School is closed, but learning activities are being provided for students.• Learning activities are primarily parent/ guardian supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School is closed, but learning is continuing with teachers and service providers actively checking in with students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brick and mortar school is closed.• Learning is continuing through a continued series of structured activities which are teacher directed, student implemented, and assessed for progress.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brick and mortar schools are open.

March 20, 2020



Focus of Your Efforts

Completely Closed	Homework Packets	Continuous Learning Opportunities	e-Learning/ Distance	Completely Open
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning for when schools move to the next level on the continuum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the work being provided accessible to all students?• How are you documenting what is being provided to all of your students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the work being provided accessible to all students?• Is it focused on IEP goals?• What reasonable efforts are you making to engage students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the learning goal focused and uniquely tailored?• Is the learning accessible in the new learning environment?• Are we providing as high quality services to students as possible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brick and mortar schools are open.• What's appropriate?• Andrew F. Standard

FAPE Considerations

Completely Closed

- If no students are receiving services, then there is no obligation to provide FAPE to students with disabilities.

Homework Packets

- What's appropriate and reasonable in light of the current circumstances?
- Compare learning of students with disabilities to other students (i.e. is any student getting appropriate instruction?)

Continuous Learning Opportunities

e-Learning/ Distance

Completely Open

- What's appropriate?
- *Andrew F. Standard*

Critical Question 2:

- What are some of the creative or adaptive ways you have heard that school psychologists are delivering services to children and their families?



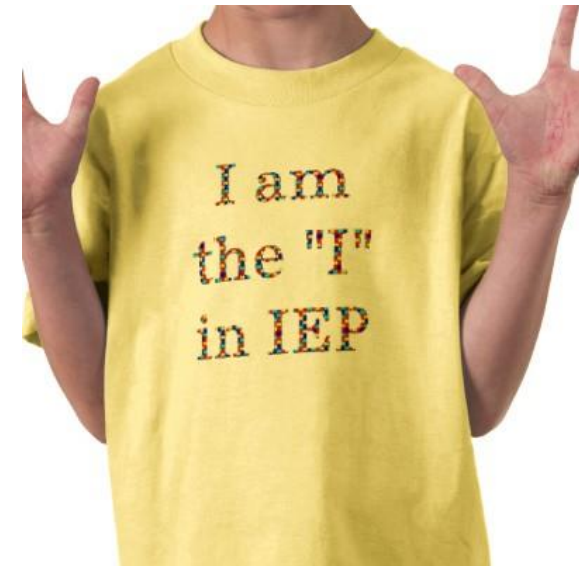
Critical Question 3:

- What are the most important considerations for school psychologists who are delivering virtual mental health or social emotional learning skills, including individual or small group counseling?



Critical Question 4:

- What type of documentation do you think will be helpful for school psychologists to maintain at this time?



Question 5:

- What are the most important things that special education directors (state and local) are working on right now and how can their school psychologists and state SP associations be the most helpful?

Key Messages

- The federal government has issued guidance on how states should respond to this crisis and to the closure of schools. Read and review what it says. If you have questions, ask.
- Much of this guidance permits state education agencies and local educational agencies flexibility.
- Communicating with families is critical. If the families know that you are working to solve the obstacles to support their children, they will be come partners with you in this process.
- Listen, Learn, Ask, Share

Key Messages

- Reach out to your school leaders for guidance and support
- Follow through and stay connected with your students and colleagues
- Consider if your state school psychology association or NASP has resources that can be helpful for students, families, or educators
- Help your school administrators, as appropriate, reach out to state officials for guidance through formal (direct contact by phone or email) or informal (social media) communication channels

NASP Resources

- NASP Health Crisis Resources

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources>

- NASP Virtual Service Delivery in Response to COVID-19 Disruptions

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/virtual-service-delivery-in-response-to-covid-19-disruptions>

- NASP Guidance for the Delivery of School Psychological Telehealth Services

[http://www.nasponline.org/assets/documents/Guidance_Telehealth_Virtual_Service_%20Delivery_Final%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.nasponline.org/assets/documents/Guidance_Telehealth_Virtual_Service_%20Delivery_Final%20(2).pdf)

- NASP Summary of DoE Q&A

<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/school-climate-safety-and-crisis/health-crisis-resources/usdoe-guidance-for-idea-service-delivery-faq-for-school-psychologists>

NASP Resources

- Just a Click Away: Virtual School Psychologist for Hire
<https://www.nasponline.org/publications/periodicals/communique/issues/volume-46-issue-1/just-a-click-away-virtual-school-psychologist-for-hire>
- NASP Special Education resources:
<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/special-education>
- NASP Policy and Practice Recommendations for SLD Eligibility:
<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/special-education/sld-eligibility-policy-and-practice-recommendations>
- NASP Handouts for Special Education
<https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/families-and-educators>

External Resources

- US Department of Education Resources: www.ed.gov/coronavirus
- US DoE OCR Fact Sheet for addressing COVID-19 in schools:
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ocr-coronavirus-fact-sheet.pdf>
- US DoE OCR webinar on online education and website accessibility:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DCMLk4cES6A>
- NCSECS COVID-19 and students with disabilities:
<https://www.ncsecs.org/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19-and-Students-with-Disabilities-.pdf>
- COPAA statement on students' rights under IDEA during COVID-19 outbreak:
<https://www.copaa.org/news/493349/COPAA-Statement-on-Student-Rights-Under-IDEA-During-the-COVID-19-Outbreak.htm>

External Resources

- US Department of Education, FERPA and COVID 19
<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/ferpa-and-coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19>
- US Department of Education, FERPA and Virtual Learning
<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/ferpa-and-virtual-learning>
- Health Exception Disclosures
<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/faq/when-it-permissible-utilize-ferpa%E2%80%99s-health-or-safety-emergency-exception-disclosures>
- CASE Considerations for Special Education Administrators:
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zEH-ggcHSI7sRQy5IpPEC0FaP4Vw5Wm0uUooruNFmrl/edit>



Helping Children Thrive • In School • At Home • In Life