



Winthrop Public Schools

Office of Pupil Personnel Service
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Superintendent of Schools

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Director of Pupil Personnel Services

April 10, 2020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope this email finds your family healthy and well. The recent public health mandated school closures have been extremely challenging for all families and particularly complex for families of students with disabilities. We appreciate your understanding, collaboration, and patience as we have navigated the initial stages of this difficult time as a school community.

On March 21, the U.S. Department of Education issued a fact sheet clarifying that schools must continue to provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to students with disabilities while protecting the health and safety of students, educators, and service providers. In these extraordinary circumstances, special education services will be provided differently than when school buildings are open and fully operational.

Over the past few weeks, special education staff have been in touch with students and families to offer targeted enrichment, resources, support, and some instruction and services. Given recent DESE guidance, they have been working diligently to create Remote Learning Plans to be shared with you outlining and providing notice of the services your student(s) will be receiving weekly. If the special educator working with your student has not shared the plan yet, we anticipate these to be shared this week. Based on individual need, the guidance from DESE has directed that plans may include supports and resources for independent learning that can include academic content, homework packets, and project-based learning opportunities, with the accommodations your student needs. The plans may also include instruction and services that can be delivered remotely in whole group, small group settings, or individually. Instruction and services can be provided by using online programs, television, or telephone. Regular, ongoing check-ins with families or established office hours are also offered as part of our Remote Learning Plans for students with disabilities. Please click [here](#) for notice regarding appropriate virtual technology use.

If your student receives speech and language services, consent is required for the services to be delivered using an online platform such as Zoom or Google Meets. Please click [here](#) to fill out the consent form for teletherapy. Your child's Speech-Language Pathologist will work with you to determine if teletherapy is appropriate for your child.

The district will also be moving forward with remote IEP meetings. Please click [here](#) to view the district's statement regarding Remote IEP meetings. If you had an Annual Review meeting scheduled during the closure or one to be scheduled soon, you will be hearing from your Liaison or Chairperson. Evaluations that were in process will have to be reviewed on an individual basis. Any Initial or 3 Year Evaluations that require face to face assessment or observation will need to be delayed until school reopens. If you have any questions or concerns about your student's IEP or evaluation, please reach out to your Liaison or Chairperson.

Additionally, recognizing that access to copiers and scanners is limited or not feasible at this time. The district wishes to get IEP paperwork to families in a timely way and is sending a notice about the sharing of IEP related documents electronically. Please click [here](#) for this notice. If you consent, please reply to the email listed in the notice.

This is an unprecedented time and we are all in this together. Be safe, be well, and take care. As always, please reach out to your student's liaison, Building Chairperson, or to me at joconnell@winthrop.k12.ma.us with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Jennifer L. O'Connell