

Special Education and COVID-19: Where We Were, Where We Are, and Where We're Going

Lauren Rangel, Easterseals Central Texas

Jolene Sanders-Foster, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities

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Welcome!

- Expectations
- Who are we?
- Why are we here?
- Objectives for this presentation
- What we hope to gain from you
- How we can continue this conversation after today

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Existing Special Education Issues Pre-COVID

- Denying and delaying services (the 8.5% cap)
- Transition from Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) to Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)
- Funding weights
- Disparity in school discipline
- Mental health supports

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Strides Made during the 86th Legislative Session

- Funding weights
- Maintenance of Effort (MOE)
- School-based mental health services
- Aversives bill
- School discipline
- Full day pre-K
- College, Career, and Military Readiness

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Where were we going and how did we get HERE?

- Continuing to monitor corrective action plan
- Interim charges
- Building on strides made last session
- Revisiting legislation that did not pass

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Enter COVID-19



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Challenges

- Evaluations and transitions stopped
- Distance learning was not accessible
- Distance learning was not effective
- Access to technology
- Some critical supports were unavailable (1:1 aids, accommodations in home, modified curriculum, etc.)
- Different district/ different approach
- Continuity plans
- COMMUNICATION!

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We want to hear from you!

What challenges or opportunities has COVID-19 highlighted for you?

*Enter thoughts in the chat box

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Hmmm let's take a look...



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Things to remember moving forward...

- There is no waiver of IDEA
- What is TEA saying?
- Compensatory Services: document, document, document!
- What you can do...

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Take Action!

- Communicate with teachers and other direct staff in writing
- Share concerns in writing with ARD committee
- Request an ARD to address concerns or revise the IEP
- Request prior written notice for any determinations
- Contact your district special education department
- Reach out to the school board trustees
- Contact your legislators

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What if I'm being denied an evaluation, ARD meeting, or services outlined in my child's IEP?

- Submit your concern in writing to the district
- Contact Disability Rights Texas
- File a TEA special education complaint
- Connect with us!

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And finally...

Always, always, always give yourself some grace. We are figuring this out as we go and everyone is experiencing a new normal. Take small bites and ask for support.



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Q & A?

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Coalition of Texans with Disabilities

Lauren Rangel: ler2138@gmail.com, 512-375-6897

Jolene Sanders-Foster: jsanders@txdisabilities.org, 512-665-2782

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