The Five Rs of virtual and hybrid instruction

navigating special education in the 2020-21 school year
Agenda

- Introductions
- Learning Targets
- Understanding the Backdrop
- The Five Rs
- Q&A
IDEA NEVER CONTEMPLATED COVID

March/April
INITIAL CRISIS and LOCKDOWN

May/June
2019-20 FINISH

June/July/August
SUMMER

August/September
2020-21 START

initial crisis and lockdown
schools making do for all kids
disability community
experiencing immediate domino-effect impact

May/June
2019-20 FINISH

a longer investment than anticipated

June/July/August
SUMMER

a well-deserved break
efforts at normalcy
hopes for fall

August/September
2020-21 START

public health still a moving target
economics: macro and micro
disparate impact
stability/uncertainty

NO LEGAL BLUEPRINT

school/public health relationship
emergency measures only
loose ties with other public services

COVID-19 vs. a HURRICANE
same quick mobilization

different
ability to pitch in together vs. required separation/isolation
length of time from crisis to recovery
role of mistakes and learning curve
localized vs. nationwide

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RULES — know them.

The IDEA “playbook” remains in place, and requirements unchanged, despite the pandemic.

CHILD FIND, EVALUATION, TRANSITION, EARLY CHILDHOOD
processes and requirements UNCHANGED

IEP DEVELOPMENT IMPLEMENTATION
PROGRESS MONITORING & REPORTING RESPONSE to PROGRESS
processes and requirements UNCHANGED

ARD/IEP MEETINGS
same members/roles required no limits on number/frequency same process required UNCHANGED

ARD/IEP AMENDMENTS
allowed for broader purposes does not replace ARD meeting rights SLIGHT CHANGES

COMPENSATORY SERVICES
put student where they would have been not always exact duplicate two measures: not provided OR lack of progress UNCHANGED

DISPUTE RESOLUTION OPTIONS
ARD/IEP meeting resolution session mediation State complaint Due Process Hearing UNCHANGED

FAPE whole child non-discrimination appropriately ambitious UNCHANGED

NEW IEPs
still written for traditional, in-person instruction UNCHANGED

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REALITY — schools are in an impossible bind.

Current IEPs are written for a full, in-person school day and pre-COVID flexibility for close personal contact.

**WHAT THE PANDEMIC IS TEACHING US ABOUT FAPE**

- consistent with other social safety net issues,
- disparate impact on marginalized and vulnerable populations
- the anti-discrimination gamble

**NEW LAW DEVELOPING**

Congress Litigation

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RHYTHM — same partner, new dance

In the end, schools will have to answer to the requirement of good faith effort. The most powerful parent weigh-in on this will come from having been a good faith partner.

WHAT AM I LOOKING FOR?
- examples of progress
- examples of regression
- patterns
- demeanor
- interest
- motivation
- time on task
- ability with technology or materials

COMP. SERVICES
CONVERSATIONS
DON’T HAVE TO WAIT
proximity to the gap
use of current resources
no penalty

AND… whatever gains are possible currently, are ONLY possible with good faith parent efforts at partnership and engagement.
RIGHT — you still know what you’re doing.

★ YOU are the best authority on how your child is doing and how they are responding to the circumstances. Keep your advocacy efforts specific and focused on your child’s unique needs, progress and well-being.

PARENTS MAY BE THE FIRST TO IDENTIFY new needs regression adaptation growth

THE “I” IN IEP MEANS INDIVIDUALIZED cookie-cutter solutions what the neighbor gets labels
REMEMBER — this is complicated.

Complex problems rarely call for black-and-white answers. Resist the temptation to impose all-or-nothing standards on yourself and others.

CONSIDER THESE THINGS THAT CAN HAPPEN TOGETHER

- feeling anxious/angry…
  AND working in good faith with the school

- helping your child get as much as they can from virtual or hybrid school…
  AND gathering info you need for a compensatory services discussion

- having compassion for your professional counterparts…
  AND being a strong advocate

★ taking care of yourself…
  AND taking care of your child and family
Q&A

Many thanks; stay in touch!