

Remote Learning and Special Education

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Autism Connections and Family Empowerment



Keep in Mind....

“The best preparation for tomorrow is doing your best today.”

-H. Jackson Born, Jr.

But, there are only 24 hours in a day....

So, remember.....

“Doing your best is more important than being the best.”

- Shannon Miller

Presentation Outline and Goals

1. Introductions
2. Guidelines from DESE
3. Remote learning
4. Struggles facing special education students and parents
5. Tips
6. Question and Answers

Autism Connections



Autism Connections was founded in 1989 by parents of children with autism. Their goal was to help families, schools, professionals, agencies and communities understand autism, promote the well-being of individuals with autism, and foster their inclusion in the community.

Our goal today remains to help families build on their strengths, work together to create a positive vision for the future, and help their children learn, grow, and be welcomed, fully included members of their communities.

DESE Guidance for Remote Learning

Commissioner Jeffrey Riley released Remote Learning Guidance on March 26, 2020.

Guidance was updated on April 24, 2020:

https://www.masc.org/images/news/2020/DESE_Remote-Learning_Guidance.pdf

Federal Guidance:

<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/frontpage/faq/rr/policyguidance/Supple%20Fact%20Sheet%203.21.20%20FINAL.pdf>

Purpose and Focus of DESE Guidance

- Guidance is developed for all students, including those eligible for special education, to engage and benefit from virtual learning during school closures.
- Focus
 - Guiding Principles: Supporting Student Learning and Holistic Needs Specific
 - Guidance on Developing and Implementing Remote Learning
 - Teaching content standards most critical for student success in the next grade level.
 - Encouraging students to move all students towards successful engagements in remote learning, with a focus on addressing fundamental needs.

Guideline Goals and Expectations

- ½ day of direct instruction/related services to maintain/reinforce already acquired skills (3 hours for full day students)
- Communication with the district should include:
 - Create Remote Learning Plan
 - Support and Resources
 - Instruction and Services
 - On-going Communication with Team Leader and Teachers.

Parent's Expectations from School

- Communication from the district which should be on going.
- Access to necessary technology.
- Direct Special Education Services (from related service providers, special education teachers, paraprofessionals)
- Links to Instruction on-line and/or materials sent home.
- Progress Report (most recent)
- Virtual Team meetings (or by phone)
- Assessments (partial/survey & checklists/remote testing)
- Needed translation/interpreter services
- Patience, support, understanding

Home-Based Education

- This will look different for every student!
- Does not need to be focused mostly on traditional academics.
- Hard-copy packet from teachers
- Virtual classrooms
- Daily Life:
 - Routines – visual and/or calendars are recommended
 - Life Skills (chores, cooking, hygiene, etc.)

Home-Based Education

- Daily Life:
 - Mental Health/Emotional Regulation/Self-Help
 - Exercise/Physical Health
 - Communication with family/friends/mentors/providers through technology (Zoom, Facetime, Text, Call, etc.)
 - Executive Functioning
- Online assignments (Google Classroom, Classroom Dojo)
- Virtual tours, concerts, recreational programs, etc.

Potential Struggles, Pitfalls and Concerns

(include, but are not limited to)

- General Education Students vs. Special Education Student.
- Capacity limitations for districts.
- Licensing restraints in regards to related services.
- Absence of technology and/or difficulties with technology
- Difficulty in getting student to participate remotely.
- Lack of 1:1 or shared paraprofessional support.
- Modifications may be more difficult for school to keep up with.

Potential Struggles, Pitfalls and Concerns

(include, but are not limited to)

- Accommodations may be more difficult for school to keep up with.
- Sensory issues
- Time limitations
 - Parents working from home
 - Multiple school age children within the home
 - Natural interruptions
- Keeping up with many emails and assignments from various teachers.
- Schools not following guidelines to fullest extent.

Potential Struggles, Pitfalls and Concerns

(include, but are not limited to)

- Timelines may be “adjusted”
- 3 year re-evals/Mid-year assessment
- Regression and potential compensatory services
- Transition services/Graduation
- Virtual meetings and remote learning cannot be recorded.

Tips for Parents

- Keep expectations realistic.
- Be patient with your child and yourself.
- Review child's IEP goals and benchmarks and prioritize.
- Prioritize focus
- Work collaboratively
- Communicate regularly with school and providers.

Tips for Parents

- Share your challenges and concerns with the Team.
- Create Remote Learning Plan.
- Documentation is key:
 - Save all emails between home (parent/student) and school
 - Utilize Remote Learning Record
- Document any regression which may be helpful in potential compensatory services.

Tips for Parents

- The more students can get now, the less they will need later.
- Recognize that the schools are dealing with difficult challenges.
- Remember that IDEA and FAPE are still applicable. However, Guidelines state IEP services should be delivered to the **extent which is feasible.**
- Document any regression which may be helpful in potential compensatory services.
- Address any supports being denied that are included within guidelines.

Resources

The Student Remote Learning Plan:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/2cce95d1401/920816a3-3746-4a0e-9243-18968e516280.pdf>

The Student Daily Remote Learning Record:

<https://files.constantcontact.com/2cce95d1401/be8a6bee-8eaf-4914-a700-68082250b68a.pdf>

Federation for Children with Special Needs: <https://fcsn.org/>

MAC Advocates for Children: <https://www.massadvocates.org/covid19/#special-education>

SPaN: <https://spanmass.org/covid-19.html>

Remember the importance of sticking with it!

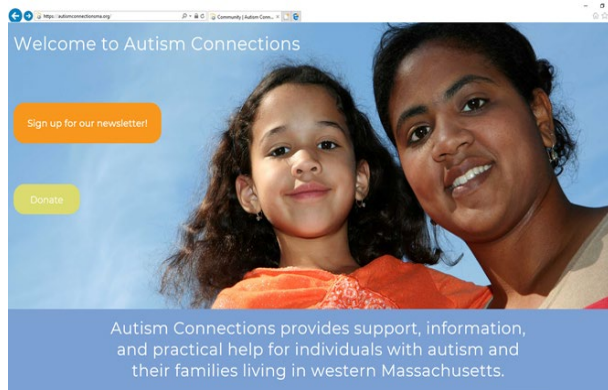
Thank you for all that you do!




Questions and Contact Info

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- We have two Facebook pages:  *Autism Connections and Autism Connections Berkshire*

Autism Connections is a  Pathlight program

