



May 26, 2020

COVID-19 Update for *ESY Instruction*

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope this letter finds your family healthy and safe. During this unprecedented time of this global pandemic, our thoughts are with each of our students and their families. We miss our students and we look forward to getting back to teaching, while at the same time, recognizing that our goal must be to prioritize student and staff health and safety. Last week, TEA provided guidance regarding instruction this summer, and the ESY leadership team has thoroughly reviewed the available information, which you can also review [HERE](#). (On the TEA website).

The district is dedicated to ensuring student and staff safety, and school teachers and staff will be trained specifically on the protocols outlined in the TEA guidance, as well as any additional practices adopted by DISD. Additionally, all Special Programs staff are expected to take the free online course on [Special Considerations for Infection Control](#). During COVID-19, this 2 hour course is being offered free by Texas Agri-Life Extension. While this course is intended for frontline childcare workers, the principles of the course apply to those working in school settings. You can access this course [HERE](#).

Keeping in mind our goal of safety for our students and staff, our ESY leadership team thoroughly reviewed the TEA document and concluded that there are several operational concerns to conducting ESY in person. I have listed these concerns below:

1. The majority of students who attend ESY have significant educational needs requiring “pairs work” – pairs work is defined as a student and staff working as a pair in a distance of less than 6 feet, for example, students who require hand-over-hand physical prompting.
2. Many students are unable to observe proper social distancing and/or are unable to wear a mask and some students may exhibit behavior that may lead to an unintentional sharing of body fluids.
3. Several students are also not likely to attend to natural barriers (e.g. staying in a specified space).
4. We have placed several orders for personal protective equipment, however, due to the national shortages, we are not sure if all items will be received in time for the planned start of ESY.
5. Our transportation department is also currently working on solutions to address these same concerns while students are on a bus.

Thus, DISD will be conducting ESY in a virtual environment during June 15-26 and July 20-30, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic (no Fridays). Each student’s IEP plan during ESY will be individualized. We have outlined the following expectations for our ESY teaching staff below:

Teacher expectations:

1. **Communication:** Communicate with parents/guardians of the student
 - Many of our students and parents may be unfamiliar with our ESY teachers. Teachers are expected to introduce themselves and share a brief bio. Teachers will ask you if your student responded well to virtual instruction during COVID and what format the student works best with (i.e. zoom sessions, phone calls, Face time).
 - Teachers will also share their weekly office hours (minimum of 2 hours per week) and contact information. The district respects teachers' personal contact information and they will share their district contact information with you.
 - Teachers will ask for your preference for communication (i.e. phone call, email, etc.) and they are expected to contact you at least one time per week during ESY instruction.
2. **Instruction:** Provide individualized instruction per the student's IEP
 - Teachers will thoroughly review your student's IEP, evaluation and ARD documents.
 - Teachers will contact your student's previous teacher(s) to gain a deeper understanding of how instruction worked best for your child during the COVID-19 instruction phase.
 - Teachers will create virtual or paper packet instruction (lesson plans) to address each student's IEP.
 - Paper packets and any manipulatives needed for instruction will be delivered to the student's home on Monday and picked up the following Monday.
 - Weekly, Teachers will provide a minimum of two sessions (approximately 30 minutes for each session, dependent upon student/parent availability) during morning (9 AM- 11 AM) or afternoon (1 PM – 3 PM) sessions.
3. **Data Collection:** Gather data from ESY instruction (All data will be uploaded to Frontline twice: once at the end of June and once at the end of July). Required data include:
 - Data collected from zoom lessons or paper packet
 - Logs of communication with parents
 - Lesson Plans
 - Attendance during Zoom lessons (paraprofessionals will also assist with this)

We know that virtual instruction is not the preferred way of providing special education instruction and we ask for your patience and understanding as we navigate this unusual situation. We look forward to seeing your student soon! Please contact one of us if you have questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

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