

MAGNOLIA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Learning and Achieving School
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April 20, 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians,

If your child receives **Special Education Related Services**, please read the following letter. This is to update the definition of **Virtual Special Education Related Services**.

These services *will be taking the place of* your child's **Special Education Related Services** while we provide educational services to our students remotely.

What is our message to you during this difficult time?

We know these are challenging times as parents and that you have a lot of changes thrown your way. We as a Child Study Team recognize the frustration you may have at this time. In an effort to help overcome these challenges, we are suggesting a shift in thinking to find what opportunities are available. We believe this is an opportunity to facilitate functional everyday living and coping skills in the home environment. Developing these skills will help your child continue to progress outside of their school setting. Taking **small but positive steps** week by week can lead to great gains for children over the next weeks or months.

How will Virtual Special Education Related Services be provided?

Magnolia School District is updating the current Policy regarding **Virtual Special Education Related Services**. **Virtual Special Education Related Services** will be provided through primarily the following modalities.

- **Virtual Special Education Related Service** *will be provided* through videos and resources posted on each related service provider's **Google Classroom**.
- **Virtual Special Education Related Service for Speech and Occupational Therapy** *will not be provided* through direct individual Teletherapy (Zoom) sessions. Speech and Occupational Therapy will be available by email or by *scheduled phone calls or Google Meets* to provide **consultative services**.

- **Physical Therapy** is a service contracted through Virtua Health. Our physical therapist through Virtua Health will reach out to families of students who receive this related service regarding teletherapy service options.

The Speech and Occupational Therapy services being provided are considered to be in the form of **Parent Education** and **Consultative Parent** support. Research has shown very positive outcomes with these types of supports. We recommend targeting a specific area of need in your home at this time based on the resources we provide. However, whatever you determine to target should and will be to support your child's specific IEP goals. We also recommend that you focus on a routine/daily habit to help build long term functional skills. Again, we emphasize **starting small** and working towards the mindset that our goal should be to build these skills into an **automatic behavior/habit**. Doing this takes time and patience but the outcomes in the long run are powerful. Remember to **start small** and to work to integrate these practices into some part of your daily routine, we want you to work smarter not harder at this time. We also want you to think about things your child might be able to learn to help you with around the house (i.e. Self Care Skills or Chores).

What will these services take the place of?

These new forms of services will **take the place** of the **Individual, Small Group, and/or Consultative Services** that are stated in your child's **Individual Education Plan** that your student typically receives during a standard school year. This will remain in effect for the duration of the district's **Virtual/Remote Education** as directed by the state. It should be noted that all students' educational services for General Education and Special Education have been reduced or modified in terms of frequency and duration and how it is being provided at this time.

Key legal information provided by the state at this time.

As per the **Temporary Rule: Modification of N.J.A.C. 6A:14, Special Education**, adopted by the State Board of Education, Department of Education per the Authority of N.J.S.A. App.A:9-45 & App. A:9-47 ; Executive Order No. 103 (Murphy) ("EO 103"). This change was made effective **April 1st 2020**. Up until this change , "...Department regulations do not permit school districts or other educational agencies to deliver related services to students with disabilities through the use of electronic communications, virtual, remote or other online platforms. **Without this increased flexibility**, students with disabilities will not receive the special education and related services they are entitled to as determined by each student's individualized education program (IEP)." Further, "The opportunities provided to students with disabilities shall be consistent with the student's IEP to the greatest extent possible. Further, during an extended public health-related school closure, related services to students with disabilities shall be provided through electronic communications, virtual, remote, or other online platforms, as appropriate and as required by the student's IEP to the greatest extent possible." (**Temporary Rule: Modification of N.J.A.C. 6A:14, Special Education, April 1st 2020**).

How can I access these resources?

- **Occupational Therapy** (Kim Armellino)
 - **Google Classroom Code:** 2mrqbtz
- **Speech Therapist** (Emily Green-Hamilton)
 - **Google Classroom Code:** 7cg5hym
- **Social Worker/School Psychologist** (Stacey Augustine/Brandon Gordon)
 - **Google Classroom Code:** nlhcljh

Please know that we are here to continue to support you through this challenging time. We can take advantage of this time and work together to continue to make a positive impact on your child and family.

“Everything can be taken from an individual but one thing: the last of the human freedoms—to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.” **Victor Frankl**

Sincerely,

The Magnolia School District Child Study Team Department