

# SPECIAL EDUCATION GUIDANCE

## CONTENTS

- Legal Requirement
- General Guidance
- Meeting IEP Service Recommendations
- Special Education Services Face-to-Face
- Related Services Face-to-Face
- Provision of Functional Academics, Basic, Applied and Inclusion Services
- Documentation of Services in the IEP
- Lack of Progress Guidance
- Times of Closure
- Exposure Prevention Strategies
- Instructional & Related Services
- Guidelines for Community-Based Instruction
- Guidelines for Work-Based Learning in the Community Setting

PLEASE NOTE: The details in this document are subject to change as directives are provided by governing authorities and/or health officials or as environmental conditions change.

## LEGAL REQUIREMENT

Flour Bluff ISD will ensure that students with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). We will ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's individualized education program (IEP).

## GENERAL GUIDANCE

- Students with disabilities will follow the same curriculum as general education students, with special consideration given to meet their individual needs.
- Students who are entitled to instructional and related services through an ARD (Admission, Review and Dismissal)/IEP, Plan, and who choose Flour Bluff's Online Only Instruction Program will be required to convene an appropriate meeting to revise their supports and services to ensure the District meets their individual needs.
- Special education instructional and related services will be provided in accordance with the ARD/IEP either remotely or face-to-face or in combination.
- Transportation is documented through an ARD/IEP if the student is eligible for special education transportation as a related service in order to access their special education services.
- In an effort to minimize potential exposure to our most vulnerable students, Flour Bluff ISD will:
  - Focus on social distancing, handwashing for 20 seconds or use of hand sanitizer every hour.
  - Require masks and/or face shields when social distancing is not possible.
  - Post visual supports throughout building to remind and support understanding of expectations.
  - Keep each student's belongings separated using student designated containers or areas.
  - Minimize sharing of high-touch materials (e.g., assign each student their own device/materials for the day when possible).
  - Sanitize all used materials daily or as contact demands.
  - Utilize protective barriers as appropriate.
  - Utilize grouping and scheduling strategies to reduce exposure.

## MEETING IEP SERVICE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Flour Bluff ISD will review all health plans and IEPs prior to reentry into brick and mortar settings and revise them through an ARD with appropriate safety protocols as needed.
- Flour Bluff ISD is committed to meeting the unique needs of students with disabilities by ensuring that ARD/IEP Committees convene as needed to discuss needs, review progress, and make individualized recommendations for our students.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES FACE-TO-FACE

- Group sizes will comply with state and local regulations.
- Multiple groups may use a shared space only when the area is large enough to allow for all students and their respective desks to be six feet apart. The groups should not combine for activities at any time.
- Special education teachers should provide services by grade level rather than content area as much as possible.
- See Teaching and Learning guidance specific to each campus.
- When feasible and appropriate, it is preferable for students to receive instruction outside rather than inside to reduce potential spread of contagions.
- Students should review good handwashing techniques and provided frequent opportunities to wash their hands with prompting when necessary. As appropriate, students should engage in supervised handwashing when entering/leaving the class, before/after meals, before/after toileting, and other scheduled times during the day.
- Employees should wear face coverings over the nose and mouth when appropriate, as delineated in the [FBISD COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidance](#).
- Students for whom it is developmentally appropriate should wear face coverings over the nose and mouth as explained in the [FBISD COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidance](#), except while engaging in an activity where the mask cannot be worn (e.g., eating). Students' individual needs will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- It has been recommended that floor tape or dividers be used to separate large areas into smaller spaces. This will be implemented as teachers assess the needs of the classroom(s) periodically.

## RELATED SERVICES FACE-TO-FACE

- Group sizes will comply with state and local regulations.
- When feasible and appropriate, it is preferable for students to receive services outside rather than inside to reduce potential spread of contagions.
- Providers will develop schedules that maximize time in a single classroom and minimize the number of rooms visited per day.
- Designated spaces will be used for small group instruction.
  - Face coverings and face shields should be used when appropriate.
  - Speech-language pathologists and teachers of the deaf or hard of hearing will wear clear face masks/shields as needed.
  - Clear barriers are recommended for small group instruction and individual assessments and/or therapy as needed.
- Employees should wear face coverings over the nose and mouth when appropriate.
- Students for whom it is developmentally appropriate should wear face coverings over the nose and mouth, except while engaging in an activity where the mask cannot be worn (e.g., eating). Students' individual needs will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

## PROVISION OF FUNCTIONAL ACADEMICS, BASIC, APPLIED AND INCLUSION SERVICES

- Special education teachers will follow the general education guidance and complete lesson plans for each resource class whether remote or face-to-face.
- Special and general education/Inclusion teachers will collaborate to ensure lessons are designed to meet the needs of all students.
- Special education teachers are required to complete differentiated lesson plans to meet the needs of the IEP-entitled students they support whether instruction is remote or face-to-face.
- Design and Procedures for Basic and Applied at various campuses:
  - Please refer to individual campus guidelines for specific information.
- Design and Procedures for Functional Academics at various campuses:
  - Please refer to individual campus guidelines for specific information.
- FBISD will ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with a disability will be provided the special education and related services identified in the student's IEP.
- For students who choose the Remote Learning, teachers will:

- Develop individualized lessons;
- Provide direct instruction through scheduled synchronous or asynchronous sessions;
  - If a student is unable to participate during synchronous sessions and accesses lessons at another time, the ARD committee should convene to document how IEP will be implemented.
- Provide links to virtual platforms for lesson participation;
- Upload weekly lesson materials to the district-designated virtual platforms (e.g., Seesaw, Google Classroom, etc);
- Document student participation and attendance on the student’s log;
- Collect data and monitor progress; and
- Request an ARD/IEP committee meeting to address any concerns with progress on IEP goals/objectives or in the general education curriculum.

## DOCUMENTATION OF SERVICES IN IEP

- The student’s schedule of special education and related services should be accurately documented in the ARD/IEP to reflect what supports and services the student requires for FAPE whether attending school remote or face-to-face.
- Students with disabilities must have available an instructional day commensurate with that of students without disabilities.
- A contingency plan for services should be documented within the ARD/IEP outlining how services will be implemented during remote learning.
- Data should be collected weekly, at minimum, on IEP goals/objectives.

## LACK OF PROGRESS GUIDANCE

- Whether face-to-face or remote, special education teachers should review the progress of each student on their caseload weekly (i.e., grade books, data collection, etc.) and determine what, if any, additional supports may be needed for each student to continue to progress in the general education curriculum and on their IEP goals/objectives.
- Special education teachers should consider alternate strategies/supports to ensure continued progress (i.e., more synchronous instruction; more small group support, etc.).
- Special education teachers should, after other interventions have been unsuccessful, request to convene an ARD/IEP committee meetings to address lack of progress.

- When face-to-face instruction resumes fully, annual ARD committees should address student-specific needs resulting from closure. On a case-by-case basis, this might include discussions of COVID-related compensatory services or a need for extended school year (ESY) services. ARD/IEP committees should:
  - Answer any questions and address any parent concerns regarding COVID-related compensatory services;
  - Determine what services, if any, are needed;
  - Document the discussion and decision in the deliberations, including:
    - Start and end dates,
    - Frequency,
    - Duration,
    - Area of service, and
    - Goals services will address.
  - Provide prior written notice to parents following any offer of COVID-related compensatory services; and
  - Indicate whether or not the parents agree with the recommendation of COVID-related compensatory or ESY services.

## TIMES OF CLOSURE

Upon notice that a campus is closed:

- Contact/service logs will be maintained by special education staff;
- Material distribution procedures should be followed by service providers;
- Remote learning guidelines and IEP contingency plans should be followed;
- ARDs will continue virtually throughout closure, adhering to legal timelines; and
- If an evaluation timeline cannot be met due to closure, the impact of the delay on services must be addressed when the ARD committee convenes to review evaluation results and develop the IEP.

## EXPOSURE PREVENTION STRATEGIES

Special education services are often times delivered in a small group setting with hands-on support. Special education teachers and service providers will take care to reduce any unintentional exposure by considering the use of:

- Supplementary aids and manipulative kits for each student; and
  - Updates as needed per unit of instruction
  - Follow procedures for sanitizing items prior to adding to a student's bag
  - Laminate supplemental aids so they can be easily cleaned and reused
- Strategically scheduling students
  - Limit variation of student groupings
  - Minimize number of resource staff working with a particular group of students
  - Adhere to district guidelines regarding number of students and staff in a specific location at any given time
- Facilitating safe small group activities
  - Adhere to social distancing requirements
  - Ensure sanitization of space before and after each small group
  - Use of procedures to separate students who may need to work in close proximity to complete activities
  - Wear appropriate face covering at all times during small group instruction
- Supervising transitions
  - Follow district guidelines
  - Enforce social distancing of students in hallways and other common areas
  - Provide visual supports or schedules that highlight social distancing when transitioning between classrooms or activities

## INSTRUCTIONAL & RELATED SERVICES

Service providers should:

- Provide indirect services remotely when possible;
- Provide direct service minutes in alignment with the IEP schedules of services;
- Provide direct services virtually during school day when appropriate;
- Adhere to district expectations for PPE and scheduling to minimize cross-contamination;
- Maintain assignments, activities and videos of lessons in the virtual platform used; and
- Maintain accurate contact/service logs, documenting minutes provided.

## GUIDELINES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED INSTRUCTION

- Specific permission from parents/guardians allowing their student to participate in community-based outings during the pandemic must be provided in writing prior to the outing.
- Outings will be limited to groups of 3-4 students and will follow social distancing and hygiene guidelines for transporting students in the special education Bantam buses.
- Students will be pre-taught COVID-19 safety and hygiene routines prior to going out into the community (i.e., covering your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering when out in public; avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth; disinfecting shopping carts; using touchless payment options and minimizing cash handling; immediately washing/sanitizing hands, etc.).
- Close contact with others will be limited and distance of at least 6 feet maintained when possible.
- Staff will use verbal reminders and visual supports with students to maintain 6 feet distance from workers and customers.
- The CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings in public settings where other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain, especially in areas of significant community-based transmission.

## GUIDELINES FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING IN THE COMMUNITY SETTING

- Students and staff will review all community business return to work and social distancing procedures prior to outings and follow them when on the job.
- Support students' access and understanding of performing preventative measures related to their job or traveling using public transportation with the following resources:
  - CDC guidance for grocery and food retail workers, and
  - CDC guidance for use of public transportation

## FACE-TO-FACE TRANSITION PLAN

This is a plan to transition Flour Bluff students with disabilities and the highest needs, back to face-to-face instruction on all campuses from the ECC through the HS. The intent is to transition students with disabilities with the highest needs, e.g. students in Functional Academics or Life Skills settings first, then add more students with increased need, e.g. students in Applied, Vocational Transition, and or Social Intervention classes. The students in Functional Academics settings tend to have the most difficulty benefitting from online instruction. They usually require more of a hands-on approach which may include 1:1 support for the acquisition of certain skills.

Flour Bluff ISD will ensure that students with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE). We will ensure that FAPE is provided, to the greatest extent possible, and each student with a disability will be provided the special education services identified in the student's individualized education program (IEP).

All students are general education students first, and the provision of special education and related services, or Section 504 accommodations and supplementary aids and services is provided in addition to general education, not in place of it.

In mid-March of 2020, Flour Bluff ISD was tasked with moving all instruction to an on-line platform with the national closures of schools. This continued until the end of the 2020 school year due to COVID-19. Since that time, Districts across the state of Texas have been grappling with rapidly changing circumstances, requirements, and recommendations from local, state and federal officials regarding the reopening schools and resuming face-to-face instruction for the 2020-2021 school year.

This transition plan was created for a limited amount of students at this time, and is a fluid document that will be updated as circumstances surrounding COVID-19 change including directives from governing authorities, health officials and the state of the global pandemic. The number one driving force behind decisions regarding the re-opening of our schools is the health, safety and well-being of the students, staff and the community of Flour Bluff ISD. Our priority has been and will continue to be to provide the highest quality of instruction while keeping our students and staff safe and healthy.

Guiding principles to help in preparation for re-opening schools to limited special education populations include:

1. Establish re-opening health and safety guidelines that align with local, state and national requirements to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 within the classrooms, buildings and community of Flour Bluff ISD.
2. Students with disabilities will follow the same curriculum as general education students, with special consideration given to meet their individual needs.
3. Students who are entitled to instructional and related services through an ARD (Admission, Review and Dismissal)/IEP, Plan, and who choose Flour Bluff's Online Only Instruction Program will be required to convene an appropriate meeting to revise their supports and services to ensure the student's individual needs are addressed through an ARD approved district plan.
4. Special education instructional and related services will be provided in accordance with the ARD/IEP either remotely or face-to-face or in combination.
5. Transportation is documented through an ARD/IEP if the student is eligible for special education transportation as a related service in order to access their special education services.
6. The social and emotional well-being of students and staff will be met by continuing to examine current practices and revise as appropriate to meet all student needs.
7. Finally, we look to our parents as partners in this ever-changing and unique time. Your continued support and feedback are paramount in developing the best educational experience for our students. We welcome your questions and/or feedback.

**Population Data: (Base on projected enrollment)**

These numbers are contingent on parental commitments to face-to-face or remote instruction.

- ECC- 4 ECSE Classes meeting ½ days: 16 students  
1 Functional Academics Class: 8 students
- Primary-2 Functional Academics classes: 19 students

- Elementary- 2 Functional Academics classes: 16 students
- Intermediate- 1 Functional Academics class: 6 students
- JH- 1 Functional Academics class: 6 students
- HS- 1 Functional Academics class 2 teachers: 12 students

**Current Staffing:**

- ECC:
  - ECSE 1: 1 teacher; 1 para
  - ECSE 2: 1 teacher; 1 para
  - FA: 1 teacher; 1 para
- Primary:
  - FA 1: 1 teacher; 3 paras
  - FA 2: 1 teacher; 2 paras
- Elementary:
  - FA 1: 1 teacher; 2 paras
  - FA 2: 1 teacher; 1 para
- Intermediate:
  - FA 1: 1 teacher; 2 paras
- JH:
  - FA 1: 1 teacher; 2 paras
- HS:
  - FA 1: 2 teachers; 4 paras
  -

**Classroom Make Up:**

Classes will be divided into 2 cohorts made up of approximately ½ the total population of each class. Each cohort will meet two days face-to-face and two days asynchronous instruction, with a day mid-week to allow for deep cleaning, planning for the next face to face cohort, and tutoring. This consideration allows for the current staff to student ratios to adequately address the needs of each student in this environment, while also allowing for a more cautious incremental transition to 5 full days of face-to-face instruction. This will guarantee the ability to properly maintain social distancing guidelines with students in the classroom and on the buses who may or may not be capable of wearing a mask.

**Schedule:**

Monday- Tuesday: Face-to-face Cohort 1 & Online Only instruction (w/ Asynchronous Check-Ins)

Wednesday: Deep cleaning, Remote Instruction for Online Only and Cohorts 1 & 2, Scheduled Face-to-Face delivery of Related Services for students in Online Only platform

Thursday-Friday: Face-to-Face Cohort 2 & Online Only instruction (w/ Asynchronous Check-Ins)

**Physical Classroom Design:**

Under the current plan, classroom set-up will allow students to properly socially distance. Tables in the classroom should have freestanding tri-fold plexiglass carrels allowing for no more than three students at a table. 1:1 or 1:2 student work stations are encouraged.

**Procedures:**

Self-screening of staff should occur each day before entering the campus. Teachers and Paras are always required to wear masks and/or face shields within the classrooms. Instructional areas should be disinfected after each activity. Students are encouraged to wear face masks when possible. Hand washing or the use of hand sanitizer should occur frequently throughout the instructional day.

**Instruction:**

Students in 1:1 or 1:2 grouplets are positioned in the classroom setting to allow teachers to move freely and provide direct instruction within each grouplet, while classroom paraprofessionals supervise remaining grouplets and engage those students in reinforcement activities before and after direct instruction.

**Lunch:**

Lunch should occur within the classrooms. Designated staff will retrieve student lunches from the cafeteria and bring them back to the classroom. Students on a special diet or opting to bring lunches from home are strongly encouraged to bring daily lunches in disposable lunch ware with disposable utensils to avoid cross contamination of containers being sent back and forth between school and home.

**Clothing:**

Parents will also be asked to provide a single change of clothing and undergarments in the oversized sealed zip lock bags. This will also prevent cross contamination of student clothing or undergarments in these settings.

**Transportation:**

We will work closely with transportation Director, Mr. Carlos Vargas, to communicate expectations to parents of students receiving special transportation and provide ongoing updates to address any and all safety concerns for the active transportation of our students.

### **Adaptive Physical Education**

The adaptive PE teacher will work with teachers to create a schedule for FA classrooms & cohorts to provide movement and music breaks and activities that will allow students to engage in physical activities during this time.