



## Special Education and Section 504

Grand Prairie ISD is committed to providing a high-quality education and academic experiences for scholars with disabilities. GPISD will ensure that scholars have access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to the maximum extent possible given the scholars' individual educational plan (IEP) or Section 504 plan.

## General Guidance

- Scholars with disabilities will follow the same guidance and protocols with special consideration given to meet their unique circumstances.
- Scholars who are entitled to instructional and related services through an IEP or Section 504 Plan and have chosen to be enrolled in GPISD virtual learning model will be required to convene at the appropriate meeting to revise their supports and services, as needed.
- Special education instructional and related services will be provided in accordance to the IEP, either virtually or in person, to the maximum extent possible.
- There will be a focus on social distancing, hand washing, and wearing a mask, when developmentally appropriate and when social distancing is not possible.
- Visual supports will be posted throughout the campus to remind and support the understanding of the expectations.
- Each scholar's belongings will be separated using scholar designated containers or areas.
- High touch materials will be limited to minimize sharing.
- All daily used materials will be sanitized after each use.
- To reduce exposure, grouping and scheduling strategies will be implemented.

## IEP and Section 504 Services

- GPISD will review the health plans of the IEPs or Section 504 plans prior to re-entry into brick and mortar settings and revise them through the ARD or Section 504 Committee, as needed.
- GPISD is committed to meeting the unique circumstances of scholars with disabilities by ensuring that ARD or 504 Committees convene, as warranted, to discuss services, review progress, and make individualized data driven recommendations for scholars.

## Special Education In Person Instruction

- Group sizes will comply with state and local regulations.
- Multiple groups may use shared space, only when the area is large enough to allow for social distancing with desks or tables six feet apart.
- Groups should not be combined for activities.
- Designated spaces will be used for small group instruction.
  - Face coverings and protective barriers will be used, when appropriate.
  - Speech-language pathologists and teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing will wear clear face masks and/or shields, as appropriate, to facilitate services.
- When feasible and appropriate, it is preferable for scholars to receive instruction outside rather than inside to reduce potential spread of contagions.

- Scholars will be taught good handwashing techniques and provided frequent opportunities to wash their hands with prompting when necessary.
- As appropriate, scholars will engage in supervised handwashing when entering and/or leaving the class, before and after meals, before and after toileting, and other scheduled times during the day.
- Teachers should wear face coverings over the nose and mouth when appropriate, as delineated in the [GPISD Roadmap to Reopening](#).
- Scholars, for whom it is developmentally appropriate, should wear face coverings over the nose and mouth, as explained in the [GPISD Roadmap to Reopening](#), except while engaging in an activity where the mask cannot be worn (i.e., eating). Scholars' individual needs will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- Floor tape or dividers should be used to separate large areas into smaller spaces.

## Related Services In Person Instruction

- Group sizes will comply with state and local regulations.
- 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 protective barriers will be used, when appropriate.
  - Speech-language pathologists and teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing will wear clear face masks/shields, as appropriate to facilitate services.
- Providers should wear face coverings over the nose and mouth, when appropriate.
- Scholars, 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). Scholars' individual needs will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

## Provisions for Instructional Support (IS) and Supplemental Support Services (SS)

- Special education teachers will follow the general education guidance plans for each class, whether virtual or in person.
- Special and general education teachers will collaborate to ensure lessons are designed to meet the needs of all scholars.
- Special education teachers are required to complete differentiated lesson plans to meet the needs of the scholars they support, whether instruction is virtual or in person.
- To the maximum extent possible, each scholar with a disability will be provided the special education and related services as developed in the scholar's IEP.
- If a scholar 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.
- For scholars who have chosen the virtual learning model, teachers will:
  - Develop individualized plans;
  - Provide direct instruction through scheduled synchronous sessions;
  - Provide links to virtual platforms for lesson participation;

- Upload weekly lesson materials to the district-designated virtual platforms (Google Classroom or Canvas.);
- Document scholar participation and attendance;
- 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 the IEP or Section 504 Plan**

- The scholars' schedule of special education and related services or 504 accommodations will be accurately documented in the IEP or Section 504 Plan to reflect what supports and services the scholar requires for FAPE, whether attending school in person or virtually.
- Scholars with disabilities must have an instructional day commensurate with that of scholars without disabilities.
- A contingency plan for services should be documented within the deliberations of the IEP or Section 504 Plan outlining how services will be implemented during virtual learning.
- Data should be collected weekly, at minimum, on IEP goals/objectives.

## **Progress Monitoring**

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

## **Times of Closure**

### **Upon notice that a campus or District is closed:**

- Contact/service logs will be maintained by special education staff;
- Material distribution procedures should be followed by service providers;
- Virtual learning guidelines and IEP and Section 504 plans should be followed;
- ARD and Section 504 committee meetings will proceed 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.
- The following specific strategies will be implemented during the At Home Learning Academy (virtual model).

**Strategies:**

**Asynchronous:**

- Visuals, schedules, and routines
  - To promote independence and maintain structure
- Movement/Sensory breaks
  - To promote physical movement and self-regulation to calm, refocus, and reenergize
- Recorded lessons
  - To reference and reinforce the learning

**Synchronous:**

- Individualized direct instruction
  - To address goals and objectives in the IEP per ARD committee determination
- ZOOM introduction lesson
  - To increase engagement in the learning to be presented
- Related Service and Other Supports
  - Teletherapy
  - Speech and Language Services
  - To address related service goals per ARD committee determination
- Group/class ZOOM lessons
  - To make connections with classmates, encourage peer-assisted learning, and to promote social referencing.
  - To address social-emotional learning and socially related goals in the IEP

**Parent Engagement:**

- Office hours
  - For daily to weekly check ins
  - Goal setting to determine the specific instructional focus on IEP progress
- When in person instruction resumes fully, annual ARD and Section 504 committees should address scholars' specific needs resulting from closure. On a case-by-case basis, this might include discussions of COVID-related compensatory services or extended school year (ESY) services. The ARD or Section 504 committee should:
  - Address 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.

## Instructional and Related Services

Service providers should:

- Provide indirect services virtually, 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 service logs, documenting minutes provided.

## Strategies to Mitigate Exposure

Special education services are oftentimes 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:

- Creating supplementary aid and manipulative kits for each scholar.
  - Update, as needed, per unit of instruction
  - Follow procedures for sanitizing items prior to adding to a scholars' bag
  - Laminate supplemental aids, so they can be easily cleaned and reused
- Strategically scheduling scholars.
  - Limit variation of scholar groupings
  - Minimize number of staff working with a particular group of scholars
  - Adhere to District guidelines regarding number of scholars 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 dividers if scholars 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 scholars in hallways and other common areas
  - Provide visual supports or schedules that highlight social distancing when transitioning between classrooms or activities

## Emergency Closure Materials

Supplementary aids and manipulatives should be prepared in plastic storage bags, ready to send home for scholars in the event the campus needs to close unexpectedly.

## Guidance for Community Based Instruction (CBI)

- Specific permission from parents/guardians allowing their scholar to participate in community-based outings during the pandemic must be provided in writing prior.
- CBI will be limited to groups of 3 scholars and will follow social distancing and hygiene guidelines for transporting scholars in the special education SUV.
- Scholars 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.
- Teachers will use verbal reminders and visual supports with scholars 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.
- Scholars and staff will review all community business return-to-work and social distancing procedures prior to and follow them when on the job.