



Coeur d'Alene Public Schools

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE CENTER
1400 N. Northwood Center Court, Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814

OFFICE 208.664.8241

FAX 208.664.1748

www.cdaschools.org

April 20, 2020

Dear families and parents of students eligible for special education services,,

As has been shared with you through district communications and the Coeur d'Alene Public Schools website, our district schools are currently closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This action was taken for the safety of all students and school personnel working with students. Please know that our district special education staff are missing your students greatly, and we sincerely hope that your family is remaining healthy and safe during the Governor's current statewide stay-at-home order and the "soft closure" ordered by the Idaho State Board of Education on March 23, 2020.

On Monday, April 6th, the Idaho State Board of Education voted unanimously to extend the "soft closure" of all public schools to the end of this school year *or* until local and state social distancing orders have been lifted and re-entry criteria established by the state board have been met. The "soft closure" prohibits instruction in school buildings, due to the coronavirus pandemic, but still allows school districts to continue remote learning. During this time it is extremely important for families and schools to collaborate and communicate as we continue to offer and provide special education services in accordance with FAPE.

As the district continues to transition to a remote learning model of instruction for all students, you may still be wondering what this means for your child who has been receiving special education services through an IEP (Individual Education Plan). This letter is intended to provide you with some explanation of actions that have been taken by the school district so far, and how the district plans to continue to support all students in the days ahead.

We know that for students with disabilities, educational services may need to be adjusted for a remote environment; they will likely be different than they were when your child attended school on-site. Service adjustments will be considered individually, just as they are in an IEP. Although special education or related services may need to be adjusted, IEP teams (including you as parents and guardians) should continue to communicate throughout this school closure to ensure that your child receives special education and related services to the most appropriate extent possible. Teams will work together with you creatively and flexibly to explore ways we can face this challenge together. Services considered by teams may include school work packets, instructional telephone calls, virtual instruction, teletherapy, online learning, or some other learning adapted to the student's needs and location. In considering options, student, staff, and community safety continues to be our number one priority.

For the last two weeks, special education case managers and related service providers have been calling families to discuss each child's unique circumstances. If you have not yet heard from your child's case manager to discuss your individual circumstances, please let our special education department know so that we can establish communication as soon as possible. You can email us at info@cdaschools.org, or call our main office number at 208-664-8241. When we receive your message, someone from the special education department will be in contact with you as soon as possible.

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The Coeur d'Alene Public Schools Special Education Department continues to follow the most current guidance we receive from the U.S. Department of Education and the Idaho State Department of Education. As the educational situation for all students evolves, we want to **WORK TOGETHER WITH YOU** to face this challenge. Here are some things you can continue to expect as we move forward:

- You can expect to receive ongoing communication from school staff as educational services continue. As important IEP team members, you can always reach out to your child's case manager or school to discuss concerns or to request an IEP meeting to have full team consideration of an issue.
- Case managers will continue to communicate with families on rescheduling meetings that were not able to occur during the period of school closure. They will also begin scheduling any upcoming meetings for your child related to the ongoing provision of special education services.
- During the state's current social distancing order, IEP meetings will be held by telephone or video conference to ensure we are following all recommended safety protocols.
- You can expect to receive special education paperwork and other documentation in response to this changing school situation. We want to provide these communications in the format which best works for you, so please let your student's case manager know if you prefer to receive special education documents via email or U.S. mail.

Thank you for your ongoing partnership as we work together to address your child's individual needs during this unprecedented time. As a reminder, the most recent information about district communications and resources are always posted on the Coeur d'Alene Public Schools website: <https://www.cdaschools.org>. Contact information for district-level special education staff can be found at <https://www.cdaschools.org/domain/43>. Moving forward, the special education staff in all of our buildings are dedicated to working with you, our family partners, to face this unprecedented challenge together. Don't hesitate to reach out at any time.

Sincerely,

Frank Maier
Director of Special Education
Coeur d'Alene Public Schools

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