

SCSOS

Implementation of Distance Learning

for Classroom Teams





2020-2021 School Year

In response to the current conditions associated to COVID-19, SCSOS will continue to offer Distance Learning as a part of our instructional delivery model at the start of the 2020-21 school year. We recognize that as new information comes in, state/local guidance changes and we will continue to re-evaluate our instructional model recommendations to insure that we are being responsive to our student, staff, family, and community safety-related needs. *Our goal continues to be for students and staff to return to full time in-person learning five days a week when it is safe to do so.*

Senate Bill 98 requires that students receive a minimum number of instructional minutes per day either through in-person learning and/or through Distance Learning. Senate Bill 98 also mandates Synchronous, daily live, in-person and/or online, interaction with certificated employees (teachers) and peers for the purpose of instruction, progress monitoring and maintaining school connectedness.

Distance learning will be provided in the home setting via virtual/on-line electronic platforms (i.e., Google classroom, Google Meet, ZOOM, etc.) and/or by telephone through direct instruction and home learning opportunities. In extenuating circumstances a limited number of work packets may also be made available to families who require low technology or no technology accommodations.

This Distance Learning Guidance Document was developed as a resource to help with the implementation of a robust Distance Learning model that is meaningful and responsive to students' needs, provides instructional continuity for students and supports the transition between in-person instruction and Distance Learning. If you have any questions, please contact your program administrator.

 Synchronous	 Asynchronous
Students learn at the same time.	Students learn at different times.
Communication happens in real time.	Communication is not live.
Possibly more engaging and effective.	Possibly more convenient and flexible.
Allows for instant feedback and clarification.	Allows students to work at their own pace.
 Examples Video conferencing, live chat, live streamed videos.	 Examples Email, screencasts, Flipgrid videos, blog posts/comments.

edvblogs

Technology Support for Staff during Distance Learning:

- Staff will be using technology daily, including the use of Google Classrooms, Zoom and other online platforms.
- Staff will have access to reliable internet. Accessibility options include:
 - Reliable home internet
 - In the classroom (if accessible and able to physical distance)
 - If there are internet issues, work with Administrator and Tech to problem-solve
 - SCSOS Special Ed office; prior permission from administration and Program Specialist

Technology Support for Online Student Engagement:

- Appropriate technology will be checked out to individual students who need them in order to access Distance Learning.
- Each student/family will sign a Technology Use Agreement prior to borrowing a school/program device.
- Additional connectivity support will be made available, as appropriate, to families to help access online engagement.
- Hard copy packets and low technology/no technology accommodations will be made should a family need this option.
- Be sure to familiarize yourself with your site protocols prior to entering your classroom so you know the protocols for PPE, masks and physical distancing amongst colleagues.

Supporting Ongoing Communication and Student Connectedness to School Activities:

- Teachers will conduct a family support plan to identify the best mode of communication for each student/family. Needs may include: Google Classroom, Google Meets, Zoom, telephone calls, and/or emails.
- Students will have daily opportunities to interact with a teacher directly through preferred communication and have opportunities to participate in pre-recorded or live feeds connected to classroom activities, based on student and family needs and conversations and consultation with your program administrator.
- Teachers will monitor student engagement and make themselves available through office hours each day.
- Daily participation includes and is not limited to: direct instruction from a teacher, evidence of participation in online activities and/or contact between the program and the student or parent/guardian.

Student/Family Engagement: We are committed to providing meaningful, responsive and engaging Distance Learning through the implementation of individualized Distance Learning Plans for each student.

- Each student will have an individualized Distance Learning Plan and Family Check In that will be updated weekly to adjust to the changing needs of each student and their family.
- Standardized Online Learning Platform: Google Classroom/Zoom
- Standardized Communication Platform(s): Google Classroom, Zoom, telephone calls, and/or emails
- Alternative hard copy weekly work packets will be made available to families, as needed.
- Students will have opportunities to interact with their teacher daily. Instructional aides can provide additional support and interactions to reinforce learning, support student progress towards their goals and to help facilitate opportunities for peer to peer social interactions.

- Attendance will be taken via daily engagement records that will include evidence of direct interactions between the teacher and student, as well as evidence of participation in online activities.
- Goal Matrix created by Teacher to assist family in supporting IEP goals.

Tiered Re-Engagement Strategies:

Student engagement is essential to student success in a traditional in-person school setting, as well as during Distance Learning. The following tiered re-engagement strategies have been developed to help teachers and related service providers reach out to families, case managers and/or school/program administration to ensure multiple opportunities are provided to reinforce positive and productive engagement, as well as re-engage students in their learning should there be a series of absences and/or disengagement.

TIER	Person(s) Responsible	Actions to Consider
Tier 1: Student attending regularly	Teacher Para Educator	-Positive recognition/rewards for students -Reinforce positive with parents and commend -Send mail to reinforce
Tier 2: Single day absence	Teacher Para Educator	-Teacher or Para Educator contact parent/guardian through their preferred mode of communication and let them know that they were missed during the day's activities; remind them of the next day's schedule of activities; offer to help/set up additional 1:1 time via Zoom -Ask what areas of support family needs
Tier 3: Consecutive absences (student is absent from instruction for 2 consecutive days)	Teacher Para Educator Psychologist Program Administrator	-Teacher or school psychologist contacts parent/guardian to check-in/identify reasons for absences; see if they need to change their schedule time and/or are in need of technical support to access online learning; verify contact information and preferred mode of communication; offer additional 1:1 support via Zoom -Consider updating/adjusting Distance Learning Plan to address student/family needs. -Teacher contacts related service providers to check on level of communication and engagement they are getting from families; -Teacher consults with previous staff best ways to engage family -Teacher notifies Program Administrator of absences
Tier 4: student is absent from instruction for 3 consecutive days or more than 3 days per week)	Teacher Para Educator Psychologist Program Administrator	-Program Administrator contacts works with parents to create solutions to attendance barriers; offer additional 1:1 support via Zoom -Consider adjusting Distance Learning Plan -When student attends provide highly preferred reinforcement(s) -Program administrator notifies district Special Education Representative -Program administrator to mail home attendance letter #1, #2
Chronic Absences: Student is absent for instruction more than 3 days per week for 2 consecutive weeks	Teacher Instructional Assistant Program Psychologist Program Administrator	-Teacher notifies Program Administrator of students absences and reasons provided by family -Program Administrator works with parents to create solutions to attendance barriers -Program Administrator to notify Director of Special Services -Schedule an IEP meeting to more formally address attendance/student engagement; -Program administrator to mail home attendance letter #1, #2

Case Managers should document communication throughout this process and use a variety of communication tools if the family is not responsive, including: phone calls, emails, letters, certified letters, etc...

Teacher Responsibilities for Distance Learning:

Daily:

- Make pre-recorded or live streamed lessons, activities and/or demonstrations available to students and families via Google Classroom, Zoom or another platform in order to provide daily opportunities for students and parents to access school-related activities remotely.
- Post daily assignments, lesson plans and/or activities that can be accessed by students and families remotely on Google Classroom or another technology platform.
- Set-up and publish daily office hours of at least three hours and be available for parents in a communication mode that best supports their family's needs.
- Provide daily communication and support to classroom para educators.
- Monitor and keep track of student and/or parent/guardian daily engagement and participation in online activities.
- Maintain attendance/student engagement records.

Weekly:

- Provide students and families with weekly Distance Learning Plans (see attached template) that are individualized, aligned to their IEP and address a variety of student needs and interests, including and not limited to: academics, social-emotional, self-help/independent living, vocational/pre-vocational, fine/gross motor, health and/or enrichment activities.
- Schedule at least one daily parent/guardian check-in appointment using the mode of communication that best meets each family's needs and preferences, such as: email, Zoom, and/or phone.
- Provide support to families that are low tech or no tech and who need hard copy packets and support that does not require access to technology/internet:
 - Email Individual Weekly Learning Plans and learning activities by Wednesday for the following week's activities that will be either mailed out to families or dropped off at homes by Para Educators.
 - Coordinate with your Secretary and Admin in getting items to student's homes.
 - Email Individual Weekly Learning Plans to families on Friday afternoons for the following week's online activities.
 - Schedule daily or weekly phone calls to provide instructional support to parents who are assisting their student.
- Create a virtual schedule for instructional assistants that provides additional opportunities for students to engage with school staff that supports and reinforces learning and assists students in making progress towards their IEP goals. Include facilitated opportunities to interact with classroom peers in person or online.

Ongoing:

- Review student engagement logs and reach out to families who are "absent" (do not participate in recorded, live and/or online activities) the following day. See Tiered Re-Engagement Strategies for additional guidance. Contact the program administrator and/or school psychologist to assist in engaging the family if you are not able to get a hold of the parent/guardian.
- Create a schedule of classroom activities available to students and/or parents/guardians and work with support staff to create pre-recorded and/or live opportunities to engage in school related activities remotely.
- Continue to monitor student engagement/progress towards goals and work with the program administrator and/or school psychologist to schedule an IEP meeting to review any concerns or lack of engagement/progress.

- Communicate and collaborate with related service providers and ensure that students are able to access services made available. Contact program administrator with any questions or concerns regarding missed services or patterns of disengagement.
- Share on-line resources with families.
- Work with Program Administrator to build a staff schedule for weekly professional development time for Instructional Assistants.
- Participate in Program/Team meetings via Zoom.
- Maintain service logs and communication logs.

Para Educator Responsibilities for Distance Learning:

Under the direction and guidance of the teacher:

- Present/prepare instructional material under the supervision of the teacher to individual students or small groups in conjunction with planned program in delivery of pre-recorded or live streamed lessons, activities and/or demonstrations available to students and families via on-line platform in order to provide daily opportunities for students and parents to access school-related activities remotely. Support teacher with 1:1 student Zoom sessions.
- Assist teacher in collecting and logging data for organizing and tracking daily assignments and/or activities that can be accessed by students and families remotely or via hard copy.
- Assist teacher in data collection practices that help monitor student engagement.
- Present/prepare instructional material through supplemental reinforcement activities via Zoom and/or telephone that supports student learning, engagement to school activities and peer to peer social interactions.
- Attend meetings (e.g. staff, parent/teacher) for the purpose of conveying and/or gathering information required to perform functions by attending all classroom zoom meetings with teacher and students/parents.
- Check-in daily with the teacher via virtual meetings (classrooms may be available as an optional meeting choice for staff, this will be given as an optional choice if classroom is available and staff are able to physical distance).
- Participate in Program/Team meetings via Zoom.
- Participate in virtual professional development weekly during regularly scheduled work day TBD between support staff and approved by program administrator.
- Additional duties TBD

Classroom Zoom Protocols:

- Make sure your settings require that the host lets in each participant.
- Make sure your settings limit screen sharing to just the host. You can allow others to share by adding them as a co-host during the meeting.
- Make sure your background is not distracting.
- Orient your parents/guardians to Zoom Platform prior to their first lesson. (Do not assume everyone is familiar with it)
- Remind participants to change their name to just a first name (no last names).
 - Click “Participants” at bottom of screen, hover over your name and click “more”; choose “rename and change your name
- Remind participants to use mute to reduce background noise. The host of the meeting can mute participants, as well.
- Remember to pause and allow for processing time when giving verbal directions.
- Remember to continue to use visuals (via screen and/or demonstration from your location)
- Check for understanding frequently

- What can I do if a participant is being disruptive or inappropriate? (Be sure to follow up with the parent/guardian afterwards, if this is needed):
 - Mute their microphone
 - Turn Off their video
 - Remove them from the meeting

Assessments:

In person assessments may or may not be accessible during Distance Learning. Considerations will be made on a case by case basis and will be in accordance with state and local health requirements, district of residence’s policies and practices, county office policies and practices and site-based procedures. Some assessments may be able to be completed virtually. Decisions regarding the feasibility of conducting assessments virtually will also be made on a case by case basis. If we are able to move forward with in person assessments, the following will be required:

- Appropriate PPE, social distancing and safety will be maintained
- An identified room will be identified for assessment and this will need to be cleaned regularly

IEP Meetings During Distance Learning:

- IEP meetings will be held remotely through the use of Zoom, which allows participants to “attend” meetings via a phone call and/or teleconference.
- Please work with your program administrator if a parent or district requests a meeting in person. Depending on the status of our county, updated state and local requirements/guidelines and our ability to implement safety guidelines, we may be able to accommodate in whole or in part.
- Paperwork will be made available via hard copy or electronically, depending on the needs/preferences of the family.
- Electronic Signatures will be made available to families upon completion of the IEP meeting.
- Prior to the meeting, either send home an electronic or hard copy of the draft IEP, Invitation/notice of IEP and copy of procedural safeguards.

IEP Meeting Checklist for Meetings Held Remotely

Please make sure that you are communicating and coordinating with your program administrator to ensure you are following the procedures outlined. We will update this document as new information comes in.

This Checklist is in addition to what case managers “typically” do when scheduling, holding and following through with IEP meetings.

Prior to Meeting:

- Administrator: Contact District Special Education Representative to make sure they are available to attend remotely during extended school closures/during Distance Learning.
- Case Manager: Contact parent and make sure that they are available to attend an IEP meeting remotely and explain that the Zoom platform allows for phone in and/or videoconferencing participation. Internet is not required to access the phone option.
 - If yes, proceed with setting up IEP Meeting via Zoom.
 - If no, work with your program administrator to problem-solve.
- Set-Up Zoom Meeting. Include the following on the email to parent:
 - Meeting Notice
 - Notice of Procedural Safeguards and Parents Rights
 - Link to [“How to Join a Zoom Meeting”](#) (Live Link)
 - IEP Agenda Draft (optional)
 - Include drafts of assessment reports, as appropriate
 - Send Zoom link with Notification to all participants
- Send a reminder email with Zoom Link the day before/week of meeting.
- Email draft of IEP to parent prior to day of meeting. Make sure it is watermarked “DRAFT.”
- Set-Up/Check Zoom Settings:
 - Require the meeting host to “let in” each participant.
 - Share co-host responsibilities with your program administrator
 - Log-in early to check settings, wifi, sound and video.
 - Position your camera properly (at eye level if possible)
 - Make sure your background is professional and that you are participating in a room that allows for confidential conversations to take place.
 - Prepare materials in advance. If you are sharing documents during a meeting, make sure you have them prepped and ready/easy to access.
 - Limit distractions. Close out any other documents/email/tabs/applications that are not related to the meeting and/or could present confidentiality concerns.

During the Meeting:

- Use the video option as much as possible and encourage participants to use it. Having the parents “see” the participants will help establish online rapport through a better sense of human contact/connection.
- At the start of the meeting, orient participants with the following Zoom features/suggestions (do not assume everyone is familiar with this platform):
 - Have participants mute themselves during the meeting when not speaking to reduce background noise. The meeting host has the ability to mute and unmute—this can be helpful when participants accidentally forget or do not know how to change it.
 - Point out Chat Box function (located on menu bar at bottom of the screen) feature. It can be used to ask questions, etc... Remember to save the Chat Box before ending your meeting.
 - Have each participant type their name and role in the Chat Box as a way to document attendance.
 - If a participant is having technical difficulties, have them call in as opposed to video.
- Consider building in a break if a meeting lasts over 60-90 minutes. Pre-set a break time at the beginning of the meeting. Participants can log off and then re-log back in.
- Use “Screen Share” to show drafted IEP documents, especially when reviewing/updating Present Levels, Accommodations/Modifications and Services Page, etc...

- Related Service Providers can also share their screens when going over reports, etc.
You will need to make them a co-host in order to be able to share their screens.
- Remember to give participants, especially parents, processing time to take in information shared verbally.
- Make extra efforts to engage parents, ask clarifying questions and allow them more time to ask questions and contribute their feedback throughout the meeting.
- Check to make sure contact information has been updated, including: phone, address and email(s)
- IEP recommendations, including goals, services etc. should be based on when school is in session (not during school closures). Distance Learning Plans will address changes associated with emergency school closures of more than ten days.
- An Emergency Learning plan will become a part of the IEP and will be presented to families.
- Notes Page & Participation Documentation: Type in the names and titles of each participant on the participation page and use the notes page to memorialize participation via teleconference and type participant names on the signature page.
 - Sample Verbiage: *“Due to school closures associated to COVID-19, the following IEP team members via tele-conference: list names and titles...”* (Remember to include your own name). Zoom meetings also have a reporting mechanism that your administrators can help you print out that shows who was virtually present including log-in/off times. Each virtual participant will NOT need to sign the signature page.
- Ask the parent if they would like a hardcopy of the IEP mailed home or if they would like to receive it via email. Document their preference in the notes.
 - Hard Copy via US Mail: Let the parent know to expect a copy in the mail and it will include a self-addressed stamped envelope that they can return to SCSOS Special Education via US Mail. (See attached Internal Process)
 - Electronic copies: Let the parent know that you will be emailing an updated draft via email and to expect an electronic signature page to be emailed.

After the IEP Meeting is Completed:

- Save the Chat Box before ending the meeting. Send a copy of the updated IEP paperwork and a copy of Procedural Safeguards and Parental Rights to parent based on their preference:
 - Hard Copy: US Mail
 - Electronic Copy: Email
- Case Manager: Email the parent an electronic copy with a cover letter/email (see template below).
- After a couple days, call the parent to make sure they received the copy and ask if they have any questions.
- Affirm and Attest IEP per original IEP Checklist (with or without parent consent). Do not wait for a completed Signature Page to be received.
- Save completed IEP as a PDF and email your school Secretary so they can print the IEP and place in the student’s Special Education file and/or mail home a hard copy, if needed:
- Include in the email if the parent requested a hard copy to be mailed home, so that the office staff can follow through with printing and mailing.
- Hard Copy: School Secretary will notify you upon receipt and will scan and attach in SEIS for you.
- Electronic Copy: Your administrator will notify you and attach in SEIS.
- School Secretary will print and file in student permanent Special Education file.
- Schedule a follow up IEP meeting if needed.

Please contact your administrator with any questions regarding hosting an IEP meeting via teleconference.

Sample Hard Copy Cover Letter for Parent:

Dear (parent/guardian name),

Thank you for attending (student Name's) IEP meeting held on (date) via teleconference. Per your request I have attached the updated draft of your son/daughter's IEP for your review. I have also included a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards for your reference. As always, we appreciate your participation in the IEP process and look forward to working with you to support your son/daughter's progress in school.

I have included an additional Signature/Consent Page for you to complete and return to SCSOS Special Education in the self-addressed and stamped envelope also provided for your convenience. Please contact me directly with any questions.

Sincerely,
(Teacher Name)

Sample Email to Parent for Electronic Copies:

**Send to parent and CC program administrator*

Dear (parent/guardian name),

Thank you for attending (student Name's) IEP meeting held on (date) via teleconference. Per your request, I have attached the updated draft of your son/daughter's IEP for your review. I have also included a copy of the Notice of Procedural Safeguards for your reference. As always, we appreciate your participation in the IEP process and look forward to working with you to support your (son/daughter's) progress in school.

I have CC'd (Name), our program's Administrator, she will be following up with an Electronic Signature Page to be completed via email. Please contact me directly with any questions. Please respond to this email so that I know you have received it and can open the attachments.

Sincerely,
(Teacher Name)

Other Templates: Insert here (Distance Learning Plan, Emergency plan, Parent Contact Log, Parent FAQ)