

Special Education Reopening Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

July 14, 2020 at 1:00

Team Members Present: Stephen Cullinan, Susan Imschweiler, Tim Hotchkiss, Tanya Gilchist, Kate Slingo, Michael Galligan, Jen York, Jennifer Salvas, Erica Caouette

Purpose of Today's Meeting:

The committee met today to discuss what specialized instruction would look like under the three potential phases of opening. Phase one being in the building meeting state guidelines, hybrid instruction at 50% capacity with partial distance learning or a full distance learning model. The committee reviewed options under each potential option and made decisions about what next steps the committee will need to take.

Discussion:

Erica, Stephen and Susan shared various updates from the state in regards to continual need to meet the federal and state guidelines for the provision of special education. It was shared that there have been no exceptions to IDEA or FAPE due to the pandemic. The governor will make final decisions in August but at this point, we begin to plan for all kids in The team discussed the specific need to designate cohort groups to maximize access to support services. There were discussions about using a co-taught universally designed method of instruction, to protect the rights of students who may be receiving support in the general education classroom and still provide services without having students exposed to other cohort groups. The committee discussed utilizing paras as part of the team to assist in providing specialized instruction under the guidance of certified staff. The team also gave specific considerations to ensuring that classroom cohorts still meet the requirements of a true inclusion model. The team gave a general overview to the reports that teachers have made regarding special support to re-enter successfully but that data will be shared as part of a bigger report. The committee discussed the need to draft a form letter explaining what the PPT/504 process will look like in the fall, as state guidelines indicate the need to keep additional community members out of the building in order to reduce exposure. The committee also discussed that parents will be given various options to participate in meetings and will be able to select how they choose to participate: Zoom, Google or Phone. The committee also gave consideration to evaluation procedures and the need to continue to conduct evaluations face to face but with a mask and perhaps plexi-glass due to the fact that close proximity will be required to administer evaluations and get a standardized result.

Next Steps: The committee felt strongly that in order to look at other modes of service delivery we needed to identify which students plan on coming back, what grade level and what their goals and objectives are in order to devise appropriate cohort groups. Erica is in the process of gathering all of that information and putting it into a spreadsheet. Once this happens it will be shared with the committee for review and cohorts will need to be decided upon. There is consideration being given to bringing the special educators into the next meeting to review the groups needing support. Cohort groups will be proposed.

Next Meeting: July 21, 2020 at 1PM via Zoom