



RIDGEWOOD

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Special Programs Office
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March 12, 2020

Dear Parents & Families of Students with Disabilities:

I am writing as the Director of Special Programs to inform you of our current plans in preparation and response to COVID-19 as it is necessary for us to prepare for the continuation of students' education in the event that schools may be closed and it is important to share our plans regarding the additional steps being taken with regards to meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

For students with disabilities who currently receive instruction in-district, special education teachers will continue collaborating with general educators and will send a daily email to students/parents to provide appropriate academic work or accommodations for academic work as necessary. As you may already be aware, the district has created formats for virtual instruction should the need arise. Google sites and Google classrooms will be maintained for various grade levels, and through email, parents will be notified when these sites are live and when assignments for the day are posted. Special education teachers of self-contained programs will send a daily email to students/parents to provide appropriate accommodations for academic work where necessary. In addition, a Google site has been created that will provide specific resources from the Child Study Team [CST] and Related Service Providers; those staff will reach out directly regarding the posted activities as well.

For students with disabilities who receive programs and services out of district, we will be in continual contact with the various schools for disabilities and programs that serve our students in order to be updated on their school closings or necessary changes to the services provided. Our CST Case Managers will be available should you have any questions or require assistance with regard to any steps in their response to COVID-19.

Our Ridgewood Child Study Team [CST] will be available to communicate remotely with our students, families, and faculty on a daily basis. The CST will be available to review students' IEP needs with teachers and are able to reach out to our families regarding both academic work and if your child is experiencing additional concerns due to the school closing. CST Case managers responsibilities will continue, including holding the required meetings for IEP evaluation planning, eligibility, and annual review. These meetings can be held via Google Meet or phone conferencing if there is agreement with families to do so.

It will be important for our special education staff to be accessible should students need help with an assignment or concept; therefore, special education teachers, related service providers and CST case managers will be available online between 8:00 and 12:30 each day. Teachers may give students feedback on their work when it is submitted and parents should expect a teacher response to an email within 24 hours, as is our normal policy.

Please include this letter along with other district correspondences with regard to COVID 19 as guidance for expectations should we transition to home instruction using virtual means. If you have questions regarding this plan and how it will meet the specific needs of your child, please contact your child's teacher(s) and case manager directly and include myself and the Special Education Supervisors, Ms. Janel Nese and Daniel Wood as needed.

As always, we are dedicated to working collaboratively in meeting the needs of all our students and thank you for your cooperation during this time. May you and your family stay strong and in good health.

Warm Regards,



Michelle Fenwick, SLP.D
Director of Special Programs
Ridgewood Public Schools

www.state.nj.us/education/code/current/title6a/chap14.pdf
www.state.nj.us/education/specialed/form/prise/prise.pdf