



April 20, 2020

Dear Families:

On Monday, April 6, 2020, Governor Inslee, along with Superintendent Reykdal, announced that all schools will be closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. This global pandemic and national emergency have forced educational systems to rethink how services may need to be provided; moving away from traditional in-person instruction to a remote distance learning model.

Marysville has been providing students, including students with disabilities, learning resources that have been intended to enhance, deepen, and extend prior learning. These learning resources will continue to be available to families through the district website: [MSD Learning Resources](#). If you haven't yet explored the site, I encourage you to do so, as there are several resources that may be helpful to your child. If you need help in navigating the resources provided, your child's teacher or related service provider will support you in choosing ones that align with your child's individual plan.

With the announcement that schools will remain closed for the remainder of this school year, the Marysville School District's learning focus has shifted moving forward. Teachers and specialists are beginning to provide new learning for students that builds on prior knowledge and is assessed with feedback provided so that students can make progress toward their IEP goals. As I mentioned in the email dated March 27, 2020, the district has been following guidance provided by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI). In their guidance dated March 24, 2020 ("Questions and Answers: Provision of Services to Students with Disabilities During School Closures for COVID-19"), OSPI stated the following:

*"Guidance dated March 21, 2020 from the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) and Office for Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) indicated that 'there may be exceptional circumstances that could affect how a particular service is provided.' There is not an expectation that IEP services would be delivered exactly as the IEP states. This is a national emergency, and districts should be communicating with families and making decisions based on student need and how those services can be provided."*

Given the exceptional circumstances, the individualized nature of the IEP, and the fact that distance learning requires a different approach to teaching and learning, OSPI provided the following additional guidance:

*“Districts should make decisions individually based on student needs, and the focus should be on supporting students and their parents/caregivers in engaging in systems that promote safe behaviors in the home and community.”*

As we learn to work in this new reality, teachers and specialists are working hard to determine how to address the individualized learning needs of your child while partnering with you. As instruction begins, if something is working or isn't working for your child, please communicate with your child's teacher(s) or specialists. It is only through open communication that we are able to address your concerns or build on what works well for your child.

Since the closure of schools, I know that many IEP and evaluation meetings have continued as scheduled; albeit, remotely. The feedback we have received has been overwhelmingly positive. For IEP/Evaluations slated to be held between April 20 and June 19, your case manager will reach out to you to schedule the meeting. If you would rather postpone and meet in person, your case manager can discuss scheduling options with you.

We really appreciate your partnership, patience, and understanding as we navigate these uncharted waters. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or specialist.

Sincerely,

Ginger Merkel  
Executive Director of Special Services