Online Special Education Effective Practices

OW and CCS

03/20/2020

MDE GUIDANCE

- MDE Special Education: https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/sped/
  - Site will be updated on a daily basis.
  - Information regarding due process, instruction, timelines, and finance.

- MDE School-wide: https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/health/covid19/
  - Any items highlighted in gray indicate additional information.

THE MINDSET SHIFT: PIVOTING TO VIRTUAL-LEARNING

Teachers: Let's remember...
- Our roles for how we support our students have changed. We're used to being "masters of the space" and classrooms. We are more of a "guide on the side" to help support facilitating learning for students. More and/or different supports will be required.
- There will be an increase in student responsibility. Ideally, allowing them to be more independent which will only be possible with establishing new routines.
- Each educator must know the school-wide distance learning plan. What are the priorities across your organization? This will guide how you develop resources and instruction for your students. Going slow, to go fast. Week 1, focus on morning meetings and potentially 1 academic subject. Stressing not expecting kids to sit for 6 hours.

Also don't forget...
- Learning becomes much more flexible. Instruction can be broken down into the path, pace, time, and place.
- Be sure to prepare your own workspace ahead of time. Students will draw on your energy and preparedness.
- This is likely a new learning process for everyone: teachers, students, and families. Still, in order to keep the process fluid, follow your own guide.

Special Education:
- Instruction will still be focused on the goals and objectives of our students. Are there new things that we need to teach our students based on the online/distance teaching structure?
  - Universal Design
- Strong relationships will continue to be the bedrock of this work. This doesn't mean just with your students. Don't forget to collaborate even more with general education teachers (might mean picking up the phone instead of a virtual call). Don't be afraid to ask questions when you aren't sure. Face to face time (Google hangout, Zoom, WebEx, etc.) offer opportunities to use each other's resources and expertise.
- Structure
  - Build in a schedule and begin teaching students to organize their work for themselves. This new format will require teaching students to create their own space. Might include to-do-lists. Remain aware that our work(while these have always been embedded, may shift to more of a focus) might include helping students to cope, problem solve, support with having difficult conversations with teachers/parents.
  - Given the new daily structure, a consistent question: how might we modify the assignment?
- Planning ahead
  - Are other teachers able to view your proposed content beforehand? Use peers to help you create guided notes for students or support in re-teaching the content after the lesson.

- Communication
  - Develop a plan so that families and students know when/how they will hear from you. Be consistent with how you communicate and how they can reach you. Establish how students are to turn in work and how they will be receiving feedback. Set your own office hours and be comfortable with sticking to those.
  - Take attendance based on the school's policy, which should be determined from the distance learning plan.

BEST PRACTICES

- Document, Document, Document. Determine the best way for you to be able to document the meaningful communication you've had with students and families. What has worked well and what didn't as a way to prioritize continual improvements through this process.
- Send follow up communication to students and families. This should stress what was worked on(content specific) and if there are any remaining items the student should be focusing on.
- Find samples of daily schedules online. Fit to your own liking, but don't spend time creating those documents when they already exist.
- Take the current IEP and break out goals based on objectives and different activities.
  - [Personalized learning card example](#)
- 5 C's of Student Engagement
  - Learner control (choice menus supports flexibility and allowing students to do assignments longer)
  - Course (Curriculum)
    - Can't be so difficult they cannot engage with it
  - Climate of the school
  - Caring community (social); how do they interact online
  - Connection between goals and outcomes

FAQS

Q: As a contracted employee (OT) how do you bill/fill daily hours (to get to 32 hours/week) if you send home a personalized learning card?
A: In the fiscal update which should be coming soon, MDE will be providing guidance. When you are billing for the creation of content, it's similar to an indirect service. Teams must consider with upcoming IEP amendments, that there will be a shift in direct and indirect services. If you are billing, it's still considered a billable service.

Q: Any specific IEP meeting guidance?
A: IEP meetings are ordered to be held through conference calls or other similar means. Examples: Google Hangout, Webex, Zoom. This must be included in the school's distance learning plan. Please do not schedule the meetings back-to back. To maintain confidentiality, make sure each meeting is set up separately, as we don't want families to potentially hear different items related to other students' privacy. Ask families for permission to email out the IEP ahead of the meeting. Send out an agenda ahead of time and indicate who will be talking during each section.

Q: Students who have been applying for/receiving vocational rehab services; how will students receive?
A: Now is the time to connect with families to find out what access your families currently have. This will help you begin to manage the workload of your own team.

Q: What are good resources for helping teach social skills for EBD students?
A: Modify items you have already been using. Specific websites include: Emotional ABCs /Thrively (older students). Have students reflect in response type journals or interact with small group social skills scenarios. Extending the learning, by allowing students to practice at home with their families.

RESOURCES

Documentation links
- Supporting individuals with autism through uncertain times (full packet)
  https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/sites/afirm.fpg.unc.edu/files/covid-resources/Supporting%20Individuals%20with%20Autism%20through%20Uncertian%20Times%20Full%20Packet.pdf

- Collection of symbols and images designed to help students learn, communicate, and navigate the world around them
  https://smartysymbols.com/

- E-learning support if you aren't using primarily online resources; way to build your own binder
  https://theautismhelper.com/e-learning-in-the-self-contained-classroom/

- COVID-19 Top 5 Helpful Responses for Families
  https://consciousdiscipline.com/covid-19-five-helpful-responses-for-families/

- COVID-19 Planning at home
  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UQpM8-pjwqI5m6rjhtsV6m1sjHnsUWUc5JcS5I2-dEg/edit

- Long Break Work Ideas
  https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Zt7xDLxOTDQTUj6KxU2cAAQfy2FxwLB8GbvTmEwGshM/edit?ts=5e72ba3b

- Educators resources to support remote learning
  https://padlet.com/wested/educate

- Website to support and assist schools in creating effective long-term distance learning plans
  https://nwsc-learning.teachable.com/p/distance-learning

Free web-based and/or app-based learning

- **List of free educational apps currently available**
- **I Know It**
  Online math for elementary students
  Can assign individual lessons to each student and/or class
- **Fluency and Fitness**
  3 weeks free
  Combines math and reading fluency with exercises through video clips
- **Epic**
  Free for families through June 30, 2020 which offers remote student access by teacher invitation
- **Lalilo**
  Adapted phonics and comprehension K-12
  Free for all students
  Need to do a quick assessment for placement
- **Scholastic Learn at Home**
  Free virtual learning resources for Pre-K through 9+
  Every day includes four separate learning experiences; built around a story or a video; kids can do on their own or with families, or with teachers
- **Brainpop**
  Educational website with over 1000 short animated movies for students in grades k-12; has quizzed and related material in a variety of content areas
- **SplashLearning**
  K-5 math program
  Web-based and app based versions are free
  Can create a class and then send out home invitations to keep track of learning