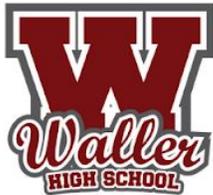


# SPECIAL EDUCATION

ONLINE & ON-CAMPUS  
PROTOCOLS

*Waller*  
Independent School District  
**2020-2021**



**PLEASE NOTE:** The details in this document are subject to change as directives are provided by governing authorities or as environmental conditions change. Individual needs will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Concerns should be submitted to campus administration.

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# GLOSSARY

- **ARD:** Admission, Review, and Dismissal
- **CANS:** Complex Access Needs Services (e.g. Lifeskills)
- **ECSE:** Early Childhood Special Education
- **ESY:** Extended School Year
- **FAPE:** Free and Appropriate Public Education
- **IDEA:** Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- **IEP:** Individualized Education Program
- **SAILS:** Structured Academics and Integrated Learning Services (e.g. Structured Learning)
- **WISD:** Waller ISD

# OVERVIEW

## *Applies to Online & On-Campus Options*

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**7/27 Update:** ALL WISD students will start the school year on Aug. 24 using WISD Online. At this time, our hope is that we will be able to provide the WISD On-Campus option starting Sept. 14, however this date is dependent on state and county officials and requirements from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). [Parents/guardians are encouraged to update contact information in Skyward to directly receive WISD updates.](#)

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- Similar to the overall reentry plan for all WISD students, parents/guardians of students receiving Special Education services will select from either [WISD Online or WISD On-Campus](#) (i.e. traditional in-school schedule) during the 2020-2021 school year. ARD committees will consider any adaptations to these options on an individual basis.
- A parent/guardian who selects WISD On-Campus or Online for any Special Education student, but later changes their mind, may do so at the end of any 6-week grading period. An ARD/IEP committee must promptly address the change in instruction location through an ARD/IEP amendment, unless a contingency plan for moving from On-Campus to Online or vice versa has already been addressed through the ARD/IEP committee.
- Special Education instructional and related services will be provided in accordance with the ARD/IEP through either WISD Online or On-Campus.
- FAPE will be provided to students receiving Special Education services regardless of the learning environment selected by the parent/guardian.
- ARD/IEP committees will convene as needed to discuss needs, review progress, and make individualized recommendations for students.

- ARD/IEP committees will convene remotely, or in-person based on the parent/guardian's preference.
- ARD/IEP meetings will resume at the beginning of the fall 2020 semester based on their due date, or earlier if requested by the parent/guardian or school.
- Special and general education teachers will collaborate to ensure lessons are designed to meet the needs of all students.
- Special Education teachers are required to design lesson plans to implement the IEP whether instruction is on campus or online.

## WISD SPECIAL EDUCATION ONLINE

### GENERAL

- An ARD/IEP committee may not object to a parent/guardian's choice for their child to receive instruction in an online environment as long as the online environment is a choice for all students.
- WISD will ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student is provided the Special Education and related services identified in the student's IEP if instruction is through WISD Online.
- To meet each student's individual needs, an ARD/IEP committee must address the change in instructional location through an ARD/IEP amendment with an online learning plan and the ARD/IEP amendment must occur within a reasonable amount of time following the first day of participation in WISD Online.
- Generally, IEP goals and objectives should not change from an IEP designed for WISD On-Campus instruction if a parent/guardian selects WISD Online instruction. The ARD/IEP committee will make all decisions regarding a student's instructional programming.
- WISD Online instruction for students with disabilities is consistent with the online learning environment for all students. Changes from the 2020 spring semester of online instruction include more rigorous

attendance requirements, blended asynchronous (i.e., pre-recorded or text), synchronous (i.e., live or real-time), and a return to standard grading expectations. The pacing of curriculum within WISD Online will also increase during the 2020-2021 school year. Any adaptations will be decided on an individual basis by the student's ARD/IEP committee.

- Online instruction will begin on August 24, 2020 and continue based on the WISD school calendar, or as directed by the administration and school board.
- To the greatest extent possible, teachers will:
  - adapt lessons to meet the individualized needs of students;
  - provide direct instruction through scheduled synchronous sessions;
    - if a student is unable to participate during synchronous sessions and accesses lessons at another time, the ARD/IEP committee should convene to document how the IEP will be implemented.
  - provide links to online platforms for lesson participation;
  - upload weekly lesson materials to the district-designated virtual platforms (e.g., Google Classroom);
  - document student participation and attendance on the student's log;
  - collect data and monitor progress; and
  - request an ARD/IEP committee meeting to address any concerns with progress on IEP goals/objectives or in the general education curriculum.
- Service providers should:
  - provide indirect services virtually when possible;
  - provide direct service minutes in alignment with the IEP schedules of services;

- provide direct services virtually during the school day when appropriate;
- maintain assignments, activities and videos of lessons in the virtual platform used; and
- maintain accurate contact/service logs, documenting minutes provided.
- Start and end times for synchronous (i.e., real-time, video-based) instruction for the online environment will vary based on the class, but will remain within the period of a typical school day, unless indicated by the ARD/IEP and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- Many IEPs cannot fully be implemented in an online environment. FAPE will be provided to students receiving Special Education services regardless of the learning environment selected by the parent/guardian. [COVID-19 Response Services](#) (e.g. compensatory services) will be considered for any student in Special Education, if the impact of prior or future school closure and/or the required adaptations to an IEP for an online learning environment prevents a student in Special Education from making progress on their IEP.

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## ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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- Cyber safety and confidentiality precautions will be in place during the school day for any student with a disability receiving instruction through an online environment. Precautions include:
  - parent/guardian consent for synchronous (i.e., live or real-time) instruction for small Special Education groups and small group therapy services.
  - no markers, labels, or indications will exist on classroom rosters, chat rooms or discussion forums to denote a student's Special Education status.

- no markers, labels, or indications will exist in the online environment that will designate that a student is receiving accommodations or modifications.

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## **BENEFITS & CONSIDERATIONS**

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### **Online Benefits**

- Reduced risk of COVID-19 exposure
- Access to supports such as text to speech and speech to text in an online environment
- Continued access to digital resources
- Continued use of multiple response options within the online environment (i.e, written responses, video responses, auditory-only responses, project-based responses)
- Tele-therapy options for speech, counseling, occupational therapy, auditory, vision, physical therapy and adaptive PE services to the greatest extent possible, and when appropriate.

### **Online Considerations**

- Possible limited access to individual and real-time intervention, clarification, language support and review
- Changes in the way a student's IEP is implemented
- Possible limitations to behavioral or social skills instruction
- Possible changes or limitations in measuring IEP goal progress
- Changes and limitations to social interaction

# WISD SPECIAL EDUCATION ON-CAMPUS

## GENERAL

- Students with disabilities will follow all WISD health and safety protocols with special consideration given as appropriate to meet their individual needs related to their disability. Families are expected to review the following health and safety protocols as they apply to their student's grade level:
  - [WISD On-Campus Health & Safety Protocols: Elementary \(ECSE-5\)](#)
  - [WISD On-Campus Health & Safety Protocols: Junior High \(6-8\)](#)
  - [WISD On-Campus Health & Safety Protocols: High School \(9-12\)](#)
- This section outlines additional protocols for Special Education.
- WISD On-Campus schedule is consistent with traditional operations of a campus and the WISD's school calendar. In-class, direct instruction is [tentatively scheduled to begin on Sept. 14](#) and continue based on the [2020-2021 WISD School Calendar](#), or as directed by the WISD administration and School Board. Students will follow start and end times for their campus of attendance. (See "[Bell Schedules](#)")
- WISD will review all health plans and IEPs prior to reentry into WISD On-Campus and revise them through an ARD or ARD/IEP amendment with appropriate safety protocols as needed.
- New ARD/IEP committee meetings and IEPs are not required to resume in-class, direct instruction in the fall 2020 semester.
- Special Education teachers will follow the general education guidance and design, and/or collaborate on, the design of lesson plans for instruction whether on campus or online.

## **STUDENT & STAFF SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

- Require staff and students, as developmentally and instructionally appropriate, to wear masks when social distancing is not possible.
- Utilize masks, shields, and PPE as appropriate.

## **HANDWASHING & SANITIZING PROTOCOLS**

- Establish hand-washing routines between Special Education and general education setting transitions.

## **WORK & LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

- Focus on the practices of social distancing, handwashing with soap and water or hand sanitizer for 20 seconds every hour and wearing masks when appropriate.
- Embed explicit instruction and/or social stories into teaching to emphasize the importance of safety precautions.
- To the greatest extent possible, develop schedules that maximize time in a single classroom/area and minimize the number of rooms visited per day.
- When necessary and appropriate, use transparent barriers when masks cannot be worn by individuals.
- Where appropriate, post visual supports to remind and encourage understanding of expectations. (e.g. floor tape or dividers used as a visual to separate large areas into smaller spaces to support social distancing.)
- Keep each student's belongings separated using student designated containers or areas.
- Minimize sharing of high-touch materials (e.g., assign each student their own device/materials for the day when possible).
- Sanitize all used materials daily.

- Enhance cleaning and sanitizing in classroom areas of self-care (i.e., changing or toileting).
- Multiple groups may use a shared space only when the area is large enough to allow for all students and their respective desks to be 6 feet apart. The groups should not combine for activities to the greatest extent possible.
- To the greatest extent possible, provide services by grade level rather than content area.
- Designated spaces in the resource room and/or therapy areas should be used for small-group instruction.
  - Face coverings and protective barriers will be used to the greatest extent possible, and only removed when the individual needs of the student necessitate temporary removal (e.g. student must be able to read lips, auditory input impacts access to the instructional task).
  - Speech-language pathologists and teachers of the deaf or hard of hearing will wear clear face masks/shields as needed.
  - Clear barriers will be used for small group instruction and individual assessments as needed.
- Group sizes for instruction and related services will comply with state and local recommendations.

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## **COMMUNITY-BASED INSTRUCTION**

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- If federal, state, local, and/or employer guidelines impact the implementation of the student's IEP, the IEP will be revised through an ARD or ARD/IEP amendment.
- Specific permission from parents/guardians allowing their student to participate in community-based outings during the pandemic must be provided in writing prior to the outing.

- Students will be pre-taught COVID-19 safety and hygiene routines prior to going out into the community (i.e., covering your mouth and nose with a mask when in public; avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth; disinfecting shopping carts; using touchless payment options and minimizing cash handling; immediately washing/sanitizing hands; etc.).
- To the extent possible and as appropriate, staff and students will adhere to WISD's health and safety protocols. Social distancing will be maintained as much as possible while also allocating for the need to support student's individualized needs during COVID-19.
- To the greatest extent possible, outings will be designed to allow for a 1:4 adult to student ratio and students will follow district social distancing and health guidelines during transportation.
- Close contact with others will be limited and distance of at least 6 feet maintained when possible.
- Staff will use verbal reminders and visual supports with students to maintain 6-foot distance from workers and customers.

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## **WORK-BASED LEARNING IN THE COMMUNITY SETTING**

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- If federal, state, local, and/or employer guidelines impact the implementation of the student's IEP, the IEP will be revised through an ARD or ARD/IEP amendment.
- Specific permission from parents/guardians allowing their student to participate in work-based learning during the pandemic must be provided in writing prior to participating in work-based learning in the community setting.
- Students and staff will review any community business return to work and social distancing procedures prior to outings and follow them when on the job.

## TRANSPORTATION

- Transportation will be provided, as documented through an ARD/IEP if the student is eligible for Special Education Transportation as a related service in order to access their Special Education services.

## TIMES OF CLOSURE

Upon notice that a campus is closed:

- Contact/service logs will be maintained by Special Education staff;
- Material distribution procedures should be followed by service providers;
- Online learning plans should be followed;
- ARD/IEP meetings will proceed virtually throughout closure, adhering to legal timelines; and
- If an evaluation timeline cannot be met due to closure, the impact of the delay on services must be addressed when the ARD/IEP committee convenes to review evaluation results and develop the IEP.

## BENEFITS & CONSIDERATIONS

### On-Campus Benefits

- Full implementation of IEP
- Full implementation of IEP related services (i.e., Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Counseling, etc.)
- Full implementation of speech and language services
- Full implementation of dyslexia intervention
- Greater access to accommodation and instructional supports
- Access to social interaction
- Frequent ability for clarification and re-teaching

## On-Campus Considerations

- Mitigated, but not without risk to COVID-19 spread
- Possible, minimal, instructional time lost due to possible staggered arrival and dismissal schedules and/or the enhanced safety protocols consistent with instructional time impact of all students

## IEP: DOCUMENTATION OF SERVICES

- The student's schedule of Special Education and related services should be accurately documented in the ARD/IEP to reflect what supports and services the student requires for FAPE whether attending school on campus or online.
- Students with disabilities must have available an instructional day commensurate with that of students without disabilities.
- Unless otherwise determined by the ARD/IEP committee, data should be collected weekly, at minimum, on IEP goals/objectives being addressed, and documented on district data collection logs.
- WISD Online participants: An online learning plan should be documented within the deliberations of every ARD/IEP outlining how services will be implemented during online learning.

## LACK OF PROGRESS

Students receiving Special Education services are experiencing varied responses when required to participate in the online learning environment due to COVID-19.

COVID-19 Response Services (e.g. Compensatory Services) are those that a student needs to make up for skills lost during closures related to COVID-19.

ESY is required by IDEA when an ARD/IEP committee determines a student is in need of services beyond the regular school year to prevent the severe or

substantial regression or loss of skills or learning during the time beyond the regular school year when schools are not in session.

All ARD/IEP committees will determine services on an individual basis and will follow Texas Education Agency guidance.

### [TEA ESY and Compensatory Service Guidance](#)

- Whether On-Campus or Online, Special Education teachers should review the progress of each student on their caseload weekly (i.e., grade books, data collection, etc.) and determine what, if any, additional supports may be needed for each student to continue to progress in the general education curriculum and on their IEP goals/objectives.
- Special Education teachers should consider alternate strategies/supports to ensure continued progress (i.e., more synchronous instruction; more small group support, etc.).
- Special Education teachers should, after other interventions have been unsuccessful, request to convene an ARD/IEP committee meeting, or agree to amend the IEP, to address lack of progress.

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## **COVID-19 RESPONSE SERVICES (e.g. Compensatory Services)**

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- Annual ARD/IEP committees should address student-specific needs resulting from closure. On a case-by-case basis, this might include discussions of COVID-19 Response Services.
- ARD/IEP committees should:
  - Answer any questions and address any parent/guardian concerns regarding COVID-19 Response Services;
  - Special Education staff should collect multiple sources of data on student progress to determine a baseline of performance on goals/objectives at the start of the 2020-2021 school year;
    - Sources of data may include, but are not limited to:

- parent interviews
- student interviews
- informal screeners/assessments
- review of logs maintained during Spring 2020
- grades
- student work samples
- curriculum-based assessments
- Determine what services, if any, are needed;
- Document the discussion and decision in the deliberations, including:
  - start and end dates,
  - frequency,
  - duration,
  - location,
  - area of service, and
  - goals services will address.
- Provide prior written notice to parents/guardians following any offer of COVID-19 Response Services; and
- Indicate whether or not the parents/guardians agree with the recommendation of COVID-19 Response Services.
- COVID-19 Response Services may vary based on the recommendations of the ARD/IEP committee and may include, but are not limited to, an increase in Special Education services during the school day, extended day, extended week, and/or extended year learning opportunities for students that are determined on an individual basis.
- COVID-19 Response Services should align with the student’s current IEP goals, objectives, and schedule of services.
- WISD is committed to providing all appropriate COVID-19 Response Services during the 2020-2021 school and beyond, if needed.

## ESY

ESY services are required only if the ARD/IEP committee determines and documents in the IEP that, in one or more critical areas addressed in the current IEP goals and objectives, the student has exhibited, or reasonably may be expected to exhibit, severe or substantial regression that cannot be recouped within a reasonable period of time. In Texas, severe and substantial regression means that the student has been, or will be, unable to maintain one or more acquired critical skills in the absence of ESY services.

- Special Education staff should collect multiple sources of data on student progress to determine a baseline of performance on goals/objectives promptly at the start of the 2020-2021 school year.
  - Sources of data may include, but are not limited to:
    - parent interviews
    - student interviews
    - informal screeners/assessments
    - review of logs maintained during Spring 2020
    - grades
    - student work samples
    - curriculum-based assessments
- Special Education staff should follow WISD processes and procedures for data collection throughout the school year to assist in the determination of whether a student is eligible for ESY services.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **1) Will a FAPE apply for students in Special Education, if a parent/guardian chooses to enroll their child in an online learning environment?**

Yes, FAPE will apply for any student with an IEP in an online environment. Many IEP supports and services, however, may not be implemented due to the constraints of an online environment (i.e.,

physical prompting, behavior related goals, IEP minutes designed for on campus direct instruction, etc.). The method of instruction in an online environment will also differ from an on campus direct instruction classroom.

**2) Is a new IEP needed for the 2020-2021 school year to participate in online learning?**

Yes, students receiving Special Education services accessing online learning will require an online learning plan. An online learning plan can be created as an ARD/IEP amendment. Online learning plans will be designed within a reasonable period of time once school resumes.

**3) Will my child receive their full IEP during online learning?**

Most IEPs are designed for in-class direct instruction. Despite the district's best efforts, many accommodations, modifications, and/or services are limited in an online environment. Immediate informal feedback is limited in an online learning environment. Special and general education teachers will not have the same ability to provide immediate correction, clarification, and explanations that many students need in order to access the curriculum. Students who require physical prompting or assistance to complete learning tasks will not experience the same level of support from a teacher in an online learning environment. [COVID-19 Response Services](#) will be considered if an IEP cannot be fully implemented in an online learning environment.

**4) Will my child receive their related IEP services in an online learning environment?**

Services such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, and counseling can be delivered through a tele-practice, but an online learning environment may prevent the full delivery of some related services in a remote learning environment.

**5) Will my child receive speech and language services in a remote learning environment?**

Yes. Speech and language services can be delivered through a tele-practice model in a remote environment, but an online learning environment may prevent the full delivery of some speech and language services in a remote learning environment.