

# GMT20200415-210055\_Special-Ed

Wed, 4/22 4:37PM 2:22:27

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

parents, special education, students, distance learning, families, district, teachers, services, home, challenge, questions, child, education, compensatory, receiving, working, school, day, timelines, providing

## SPEAKERS

Ed, Amy Hanreddy, Mayra's Son, Mayra Zamora, Diana Fannon, Judy Mark, Rachel Woodward, Carisa Bowman, Valerie Vanaman, Stephen Hinkle, Vivian Haun, Kelly Kulzer-Reyes

- J** Judy Mark 00:01  
Welcome, everyone, to our webinar on special education. We're going to wait till all of our participants join in. We'll get started in about one minute. All right, we have a large number of participants starting. I just want to tell everyone before we get started that we are having simultaneous translation in Spanish that you will be able to get through a separate phone line. Ed have you put that up on the phone on the chat yet?
- E** Ed 00:58  
Yes I have.
- J** Judy Mark 00:59  
Ok so those of you who are on it look in the chat and you can get the call in number. But Lorna if you wouldn't mind saying this in Spanish for our participants please. Thank you very much, Lorna. Welcome to the Disability Voices United webinar on special education during the Coronavirus pandemic. This is our fifth webinar for those of you who have not been on any of our other webinars. Welcome. My name is Judy Mark. I'm the president of Disability Voices United, an organization directed by and for people with developmental

disabilities and family members. We have created a range of resources during this Coronavirus outbreak that I want to start with sharing and then I'm going to hand over moderating to one of our board members. The first thing I'd like to do is to tell you all about some resources we have available through sharing my story screen but hold on a second. We have created a, a website specifically with resources on Coronavirus. And we have resources in both Spanish and English on it. And now I'm going to make this happen. There it is. So we need your help. We need your help in a couple of different ways for those of you who are part of this webinar. First of all, here is the website for our resources we have. You could also just go to our website Disability Voices united.org backslash CV, as well. We're also doing a survey of people with disabilities and their family members about their experiences currently, their needs. Both with education with services from regional centers or other or counties, as well as any concerns they have with food insecurity or need for funding for rent. And we really we're going to be releasing this survey to the media and to the public. So we need to hear your voices we need to know about your experiences. So please go to this tiny URL.com backslash dv u CV survey. We also have a survey in Spanish at dvu, CV and Cuesta. And we really hope to get a great many more respondents to this survey in the next week so that we can release it to the media. Finally, if you would like to join mailing list will be notified about all of our future webinars. By the way, you can also find on our website you can find our past four webinars, which included the rights of regional center clients, Emergency Preparedness, Mental Health. And last week we did one on general rights rights to communication access rights to healthcare. We've touched on rights on education as well. And all of those are available in its entirety on the DVD Coronavirus, Resources website to be able to get please join our mailing list though because that way you'll get notice of everything. So, I'm going to go ahead and hand over Oh, let me tell you a couple more housekeeping rules. On the way we run our webinars is that you will see two options with us. The first is through the chat. The chat is a way for you to ask questions of our program assistant Ed, who will waive to us and Ed will answer any of the questions that you may have about whether you have concerns about being able to access this website, by the way, it's being recorded. And we will make this available afterwards to all of you who are on our mailing list, or if you registered for this webinar with your email address. So if you have to have any of those kinds of concerns, put them in the chat. If you have any questions for for our panelists, please put that in the q&a. If you go to the bottom of your screen, you'll see QA and in QA, that's where we're really going to be able to track the questions you've asked and put answers to them. It's a lot easier for us to do that through QA than in the chat. So if you've already put it in the chat, go ahead and copy it and paste it over in the QA. We also have the wonderful Kelly Kulzer-Reyes who's monitoring Your q&a and chat it for Spanish speakers and she will be translating them into English and presenting them to panelists in English when necessary, so hoping that there are no other questions, then we are going to get started. I'm going to hand over this webinar to Vivian Haun, who is a board member of Disability Voices United

as well as most importantly, the sister of man who is served by regional center. So we are so thrilled and take it away, Vivian, who's way more of an expert on education than I am.

V

Vivian Haun 07:37

Please, oh, Judy, thank you so much. I really appreciate it. And I'm so excited to be here today with everyone. As Judy mentioned, my brother Brian has autism. He is 33 years old. We live here in Los Angeles and he is served by the East Los Angeles regional center. That's my personal life. Professionally, I have a background as a special education attorney, and a special education and policy analyst, so I am thrilled and really looking forward to hearing from this excellent lineup of speakers that we have for you today. Before we dive into that, though, we did want to sort of give you a little bit of background as to what has been happening on the federal and state levels with regard to special education guidance that has been given. So if you give me just a moment, I will share my screen

S

Stephen Hinkle 08:40

Hello. Hi. Sorry, I kind of find a way to get the link from my phone to my computer. So

J

Judy Mark 08:53

We've started Steven, we've already started the webinars. So we're going to continue on go ahead

V

Vivian Haun 09:04

Okay, are you able to see my slides? Yes, yes. Okay, perfect. So we thought it would be helpful to start with giving a sense of the bigger picture of what's been happening. So I just very briefly wanted to go over some of the written guidance that both the California Department of Education and the US Department of Education have issued in recent weeks. So I'll touch on some of the ways that the state guidance and the federal guidance have interacted with each other. And I'll connect all of that with the call that we're now hearing from some groups for waiving portions of the IPA. We'll definitely talk about that.

J

Judy Mark 09:45

Yeah. We are seeing two screens right now. We're seeing your notes, your speaker notes as well.



Vivian Haun 10:00

Yes. Okay, one moment. I tested that out earlier and it wasn't showing up. No problem. Okay, one moment, let me just share my screen again and I will do it without the notes. Hopefully. Okay, Is that better? Much better? Okay, fantastic



Judy Mark 10:22

We're seeing actually your whole screen. So if you just press Well, it's okay. It's fine. We're just we're seeing everything on your computer desktop as opposed to just the things but it's fine.



Vivian Haun 10:34

My apologies, everyone. Okay. All right. So what I have here is guidance from the US Department of Education. They have issued a number of guides, a number of documents, sharing guidance on special education. And in the interest of time, I'm not going to be able to get to all of it. We're just going to highlight some of the things we thought it was important for you to know. We'll start with this piece of guidance, which the Department of Education came out with on March 21. And this particular piece of guidance that a number of things, but one of the most important things it talks about was clarifying that schools, school districts, charter schools, all school systems are expected to serve all students, including students with disabilities. And this piece of guidance was important because when schools first started shutting down in mid March, there were some school systems, including a large one in Washington state, that were so concerned about the challenges involved with making sure that students with disabilities would be served in a way that was accessible and equitable. They were so overwhelmed by that challenge. So they just decided that would be better not to serve any students at all. And what this particular piece of guidance tells us is that the United States Department of Education said that that was the wrong approach to take. And that in fact, it is imperative that all students be served. And that school system should not let those challenges prevent them from serving students in compliance with the IDEA. There we go. So the very next day, on March 22nd, we received some guidance from California State Director of Education, Kristin Wright. So should we leave a message that is posted still on the CDE website? That went over a number of things, but in particular, it highlighted some specific passages from that federal guidance that came out just the day before. And so if we look at the passages she really focused on in her own statement that I think can tell us a lot about the takeaways that the state took from that federal guidance. And it gives us a little window into what CDE is focusing on and how they're thinking about special education in California at this time. So one of the passages that they focused on was this one right here. And it talks about how federal disability law allows for flexibility in determining how

to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities. So I think what we can gather from this is that they're telling us that there's flexibility in the law, and that therefore there needs to be flexibility in how special education is delivered. And therefore there needs to be flexibility in how schools and families and students approach this unprecedented time. One of the other passages that the State Department highlighted in this guidance was this passage here, which again, talks about flexibility. You may be hearing a a pattern here. So in this particular passage, they acknowledged that there would be a number of questions about how to meet certain requirements of federal civil rights law. And as you can see here, what the US Department of Education has said is where we can offer flexibility. We will and what our State Director of Education Kristin Wright said in her message, quoting this passage was that this was something that we should all pay, pay close attention to, and really have a lot of consideration to. So I think we all know that in these very uncertain times, we know that special education is not going to look the same as it did before. We know that it will look different. It will be different. So the real question is, how will it be different? What is it going to look like on the ground? And what can we expect? So one of the things that our state director said in her guidance is that she gave some examples of some of the ways that might might play out on the ground. She pointed to, again, the federal guidance that I referred to earlier, as including a list of IDEA time frames that might be extended (keyword is might). And she also pointed out that on March 20, the CDE had already put out guidance about various LEA special education monitoring timelines that would be waived or extended, while schools are focused on protecting the health and safety of students. And we'll get into some of that. So what are the some of the state timelines that the CDE has raised or extended with regard to special education. You can see here that I've quoted directly from the guidance that the California Department of Education put out on its website. And in general, for purposes of determining LEA compliance with special education timelines, you can see that the CDE is going to or has taken the position that we're going to be considering the days that schools are closed. As days where timelines are paused, which vary so much of the way they count or consider days on long school breaks, school breaks in excess of five days, which are things like winter break or Thanksgiving days, right. They just don't count those days in terms of timeline. So that's one thing that they've decided to do. You can also see that the state has said that for annual or tri-annual IEP reviews that was opposed have happened during the day that schools are closed due to COVID-19. They will take those exceptional circumstances into consideration for purposes of LEA compliance monitoring. And you can see that here on this slide I bolded. The purposes here for purposes of LEA compliance monitoring, and for purposes of determining LEA compliance, special education timelines. So I will defer to our distinguished panelists, in terms of giving us a little more guidance on what that might mean. But I think...I think one of the things that we might want to think about is, what does that apply to? We know that this is the CDE position, they will likely apply this to compliance complaints, in other words, compliance and monitoring

activities, that they have oversight of. I don't know that that necessarily means that that couldn't be brought up in any other circumstance. Such as a due process filing. But again, that is something that we can possibly go into a little later. So, one of the things that I talked about earlier was the idea of proposed IDEA waivers. And that is something that we've just been talking about. What are some of the flexibilities that people are talking about? And are those actually waivers of portions of the ID or rights that families have long been entitled to. So just to give you a short background, as part of the CARES Act, which was the major financial stimulus package that Congress signed on March 27, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, was given until late April to submit to Congress her recommendations as to what changes the IDEA may need as a result of the nationwide school closures. So it's important to note here, though, that Secretary DeVos can't make changes to the ideator. So she can only recommend changes. It's Congress that has the power to make and approve such changes. What the CARES Act has asked her to do was to come up with a list of suggestions or recommendations. So what does that mean? What are some of the things that Secretary DeVos might be thinking about? Well, there are a few things. First, we can look to the guidance from the US Department of Education themselves. The same guidance are referred to at the beginning of my slide from March 21. That particular document lists a number of IDEA timeframes that quote may be extended. Some of those include due process timelines with regard to resolution sessions, hearing decisions, timelines and procedures with regard to annual IEP and IEP amendments, parents with regard to initial eligibility determinations, Triennial Review timelines. It has a lot to do with many of the timelines that those of us in special education has become familiar with. So that's those are certainly one of the things and probably the biggest category of things that that may be on the table for consideration. But they're certainly not the only thing. So, in addition to timelines, there are a number of national and state associations that represent school administrators and special education administrators that have reached out to the US Department of Education and are lobbying them for what some of us might call waivers, and what they have reframed as flexibility during the pandemic, and a lot of those, in addition to timelines center around procedures, or what we might call procedural phase. Some of the things they have asked for include the creation of a distance learning plan, instead of in order to change what a student might be receiving, and sort of doing that through an IEP amendment, they, some have proposed putting together an interim distance learning plan that would be in place and would apply just for this very unusual and temporary period, hopefully, while schools are closed. They have also suggested flexibilities around IEP team meeting requirements around developing such plans. And they've also asked for flexibility with regard to a number of federal monitoring and state fiscal management requirements having to do with state's obligation to report state level data and meet federal targets on certain indicators and also certain fiscal management requirements. With regard to special education spending levels. The big news is that, as you may have heard, there has been

tremendous pushback and a huge outcry against these ideas. And they proposed IDEA waivers, many disability rights organizations, education organizations, and parent family organizations, including ones that don't even typically don't specialize in special education, but simply care about equity and civil rights for marginalized groups. Many of them have come together to reach out to the Department of Education to argue that no waivers are necessary to the IDEA and I've listed some of the main points that they have made. And I'll mention just a few of them. One of their key points was that flexibility is already built into the IDEA and so their argument is that we don't need any additional flexibility in the forms of rights being rolled back. Flexibility is already part of the design of the IDEA. And that to protect health, I think everybody understands that FAPE may not be provided in the same manner. And that's okay. That is okay. And there are a number of other things that these groups have asked for, in a letter that they have written to the Federal Department of Education, that all involve very critical rights remaining in tact, including the right for parental involvement, for parental communication, and due process rights as well. And with that, that is a very quick overview. It's by no means a comprehensive one that would take all day, but I hope it's just enough to give everyone sort of a background for what we are doing what's happening and without further ado, I would love to introduce our first speaker, Valerie vanaman, who is one of California's most foremost special education attorneys. Valerie, welcome, and thank you for joining us.



Judy Mark 24:20

Stop sharing your screen.



Valerie Vanaman 24:23

That was a terrific presentation to the best I've ever seen. Thank you. It was great. Um, we're always very concerned, as you might imagine, particularly people like me who were there before there was special education and remember what it was like when kids were out of school in America and sitting at home and not getting an education. And we are very afraid. People of my generation are very afraid that when we start talking about extending timelines, but more significantly using the word waivers. That it's a slippery slope to doing away with the transparency that we've always had in special education. And I have been particularly vocal. And taking the position that the current law is quite flexible. It provides sufficient flexibility for us to manage around this disaster we have, instead of trying to manage through it by taking away rights for those students who are the least able to care for themselves. It's hard. There is no doubt school districts are faced with enormous tasks that they've never been faced with before. It is no doubt that we cannot deliver services in the same manner that we delivered them before. But that doesn't mean the creative working together folks can't find a way to deliver so services

that remain meaningful, without having to eviscerate to get, as it were the law to make it happen. We've seen some incredible stuff around the state of California, there are some districts that are to be commended for what they've done. We've seen districts that are much slower to get going on doing it and still haven't figured it out. Even though we're now effectively four weeks into this, and everything in between. But it doesn't mean it can't be done. But at the heart of this for parents and the parents, community and consumers and students, is the need to make sure everybody understands this is a population that's not going back into institutional settings that are not going back into the closets, and the backyards and the single segregated classrooms in which they were found in 1973 before this law was passed, this is a law that needs to stay in effect and be in effect and can be used flexibly to make that happen. What's going on now? Depends on where you live, who your director of special education is, how active your district is. There is no uniform answer to that question. Students with special education needs should be getting special education services. How that's being done varies greatly from place to place. What will need to happen with regard to compensatory relief for the failure to get those services now? What needs to happen now for the next six weeks of education they should get in for the four weeks of summer. We're effectively losing 10 weeks of education, assuming even we're able to reopen in the fall. For those 10 weeks, what are you going to do and how's it going to be done? I don't have an answer for it. I have no magic answer for it. To the extent IEP documents can be implemented with teachers providing online services and supports they need to happen. There are districts who have taken the position that individual behavioral therapeutic companions who are written in the IEPs may not go to the home. There is a recent statement from the State Department of Education saying that's not a decision the district should be making, that if in fact they are essential health care workers and they can go into the home. And yet there are many students sitting at home without that service. How is that all going to play out? I don't have an answer. What I know is that we need to keep pushing ahead together as a community to make this work for all students, including those with disabilities. Do you want me to do something?



Vivian Haun 29:03

Yes. Fantastic. Thank you, Valerie. There are a number of questions that have come in to our q&a box. One of the questions is from a parent who says that she does not feel confident having an IEP via zoom. And she's asking if she can wait to have the IEP until they are able to return back to school.



Valerie Vanaman 29:31

Can I say something new that zoom IEP or whatever method they may be using? I think



they're fantastic. Now, I understand I am in a minority with regard to that. But I think there are real I think you should not necessarily be afraid of a televised however, their televised IEP meeting. I think that there are districts with very sophisticated understandings of how to use the technology. They're using it well, and I believe that IEPs ought to continue to happen in a timely way, through whatever means you can have them happen. And I am not sure that I, this is personal. I think everybody comes to this one on their own. But I've now experimented with it enough been involved with it enough that I think there are some real advantages to it. And it may well be when we come out of all of this, that we're going to see more technology used for IEP meetings rather than less. That's my personal point of view.



Vivian Haun 30:47

For whatever reason, this parent does not feel comfortable using zoom. Would it be okay for her to say that she would just rather wait until school starts again to have the IEP?



Valerie Vanaman 31:00

Certainly a parent can say that she's waving her right to have a timely IEP. Districts and it'll depend very much on the district's view of this and the attorneys who are representing that district. Whether they're going to say we're going to go ahead and hold it even if you do not participate if they think they've got some reason to do that. So that's a, that's actually a factually specific question based on whether the district has a need or interest in having one done right away. If there's a discipline problem that they're trying to forestall when school reopens, if there is a necessary change in placement they're trying to get in place before school reopens. There may be reasons that districts are going to insist on going ahead with it.



Vivian Haun 31:46

Great, thank you, Valerie. We do have a few other questions. One of them specifically has to do with children who may be minimally verbal or non verbal, who may have limited of ability to communicate, I think over using virtual means, and who may also have a one to one aide or personal care attendant, and who therefore would not have allowed the support they would usually rely on for communication. This particular parent is concerned that administrative law judges and also folks that regional centers might not know or might not be familiar with technology and some of the the names that are out there like zoom or other technologies that might be used to better support kids with these needs. So she's, I don't know she has a particular question, a specific question, but she is certainly very concerned about this, this situation. Do you have any any thoughts on that?



Valerie Vanaman 33:00

Yeah, I think maybe some of the educators who are on the line who thought about this who are on the panel have thought about this probably have better insight into this than I can provide at this moment.



Vivian Haun 33:13

Okay, we will hang on to that that question, and I'm hopeful that one or some of our other panelists may be able to get that later in this webinar. There are some more questions coming in but in the interest of time, we will perhaps try to get to those in writing in the q&a box. I think it would be helpful at this point if we could move on to our next group of presenters which I am especially excited for our next group of presenters and thank you so much, Valerie for your insight and your statements on where we have been and where we are about to go.



Valerie Vanaman 34:00

Can I just add one thing? I really, I really feel it in my gut as it were. The grandparents and the parents who are the grandparents and the great grandparents who are fighting to stay alive and secure and healthy, do all of this, or the community of people who put this law into effect in the early 70s. They're the folks who went out there and did what they needed to do as a united voice to make it happen. It would be a tragedy that if their legacy became the loss of this law, and I am very worried about that, as we move through this, and I cannot stress enough how important it is that folks support keeping the existing law in place. We've got the flexibility to do it, but we need the support to keep it in place.



Judy Mark 34:57

Um, can I just pop in real quick quick Vivian because I want to get both you and Valerie to answer a few more of these questions, because I feel like when we're moving into the next section, it's really going to be how do you do distance learning right? Or how can you provide supports during this difficult time, even in the home? And so I was just wondering, Valerie, if you could answer a couple of other questions. There seems to be a theme that's coming up about compensatory hours. So the fact that, and I can tell you because we've spoken to them that we know that there are some students and their families who have heard absolutely nothing from their school districts, and they have missed out on private speech therapy, or I'm sorry, in school speech therapy in school behavior for weeks. Can they ask right now for private tutors, private speech, there would be private OTs to come in and provide these services now? So that's the first question. Then secondly, when school

gets back into session, can they ask for compensatory hours to try to close the gap and the regressions that they may have seen?



Valerie Vanaman 36:13

You may have heard me sigh deeply when I heard where this question was going. It is the overriding question that I don't think attorneys on either side of the bar, that is attorneys who represent districts or attorneys who represent parents, and indeed, people who are directors of special education, have fully thought through or understood the answer to. To some extent, I have to duck on the answer because to some extent, it's going to depend on what Congress does. If we are able to maintain the law and the statute and maintain the services and there are not waivers written in for this period of time. People will have, I believe, claims for compensatory services. The best we can suggest to people at the present time and on the the organization that I am with, which is Newman Aaron's and Vanaman LLP. And we have a website. On that website, we have posted a template from, it was developed by a parent to keep track of what services your child is getting through distance learning, what their IEP would have required, and what they didn't get. I think it's a great template. I would suggest all families use it as we work through this question of compensatory services. We know as a matter of law, and I don't think that this is in any way changed in any way, shape or form, that before you can expect ever to get reimbursement from a local educational agency for a service, you must give 10 days written notice that you intend to do that. So if you started giving services tomorrow for your child privately in it not given the prior 10 day notice, there becomes an argument on the part of the district that you haven't given notice. If you give notice to a district, it has to be specific. It needs to say, my child was supposed to get 60 minutes a week of speech and language therapy. The district has not made any provision to provide that service for my child virtually or in any other manner. This is notice that I am going to do so. And then I may be seeking reimbursement from the local educational agency for the cost I encourage you to do so. I believe as a matter of law, and I will of course if down the road if my colleagues on the other side of the bar hook up this thing and say see you say you didn't think you could do it if you didn't give notice. I believe as a matter of law, that a district will be requiring that before anyone is is getting reimbursement that appropriate notices have been given. And I think it's fair to the districts to give notice. Not all districts, some districts are large, some of them won't know that the services are being provided even though they've told people to do it. And so, at a fundamental level, there's two things that should be done. You should be keeping track, find yourself a log to keep track on if you don't like ours use a different one. But ours I think, is about as clean and straightforward as they come. And, and if you are going to intend to try and do it and seek reimbursement, always remember that the law has a notice requirement. Every IEP you've ever been to when they hand you out that bulletin or that book of your procedural

rights, even if you've taken the saying you don't need them anymore, go back and find it. There will be a section in there about the notice requirement. Sometimes it's not the biggest print but it's in there and write what that notice requirement says so you're sure that you're meeting it.



Judy Mark 40:01

Just one other question. And then I agree that we need to move on. But I think that Valerie, stay with us. Because when we have time at the end, we'll go back to some of . You have about 50 questions just for you, Valerie.



Valerie Vanaman 40:16

I don't have 50 answers. So that's the problem.



Judy Mark 40:19


I know, we are in unknown territory right now. But you're going to hear, everybody in the audience, you're going to hear some school districts, some researchers who are doing it right. And so and to show you it really can be done in a non-public school as well. Some people are asking about assessments, though, how does an assessment happen to make a student eligible for specific services when the person can't meet the child directly?




Valerie Vanaman 40:49


Yes, isn't that the problem for us all in this day and age. There are some kinds of things I've come to learn in the last three weeks. That, assessments can be done virtually. There are some remarkable things that can be done for some students. Some students, not necessarily all of them, of course, that can be done virtually and the assessment could go ahead and take place. I think in those situations, one can assert that, in fact, they need to continue to do, to try and do the assessments. In those situations where it's not possible, and I think this is part of the flexibility of idea that we may all be having to just grapple with. There may be delays that are just the result of the necessity of the world in getting some assessments done. The kids who are being hurt most by that in my initial blush are two categories. They're the kids whose third birthday falls during this period of time. They're in terrible, terrible trouble. If the district hadn't completed those assessments, the regional centers are dropping those kids like hotcakes if they don't think they're eligible for ongoing services, and we can't pick up anything from the district. Maybe there's enough assessment data that exists that one could argue they should be pulled together. And there's enough to hold the IEP meeting. And we're urging that that happens in that case.

The other category of kids where we've got the problem is the 18-year-old, there is half of well educated because let's be clear about this. I believe in special education. I think it works. I think it makes a difference in the lives of individuals and I think it's critically important. But we've had a whole batch of kids who were supposed to start being assessed mid-March, to have in fact the transition IEP into an adult or a transition kind of program. Some of those assessments are very difficult to do if they're not done in-person, but many of them I think can be done virtually. But there are those two categories are particularly I feel particularly concerned about. The third category, of course, are people who are waiting for an initial assessment who haven't been assessed. Doing those initial assessments virtually, is probably going to be tough. And it may well be in those cases, what we're looking at is trying again, to pull together what data may exist trying to hold an IEP based on the data that does exist. I'm not asserting that IEP shouldn't go forward even if the assessments haven't been done. But we may be looking to try and use existing data to get those IEPs done. But it is an area that remains of concern of course.

 Vivian Haun 44:02  
Thank you so much Valerie.

 Judy Mark 44:04  
We're gonna move on.

 Valerie Vanaman 44:11  
Could I just, Judy, the question that I just saw come up was how do you send the 10 day notice? I think you send it registered mail to the district. Districts are still receiving mail. Send it to the director of special education if you happen to know that person. If you live in Los Angeles Unified, there is nobody with that title. So I would suggest you send it to the superintendent of public and the superintendent of the district, Mr. Buetner because we don't have a special education department as such in LA Unified at this point in time. So I think a registered letter to Mr. Buetner is in fact adequate notice in this situation, with a CC by the way to your local board member, you know LA Unified elects board members by region, and I would CC your local board member and I would have the letter say, since there is no director of special education for Los Angeles Unified, this is being sent to you.

 Judy Mark 45:08  
And Valerie, while the other speakers are speaking, we would love you to try to track down. I'm looking on your website right now. And I can't find the form that you talked

about. So if maybe you could ask somebody in your office to email me the link, and we'll get it up on our website as well as through this webinar. Go ahead. I will mute myself now.



Valerie Vanaman 45:29

You know what, if I was smart enough, I could tell you where it is. Let me go find out where it is. I know it's there. So let me find out.



Judy Mark 45:35

Thank you so much.



Vivian Haun 45:38

Valerie, thank you so much. That was invaluable. And, Judy, thank you so much for drawing a little more out of that. This is such a rich conversation. And I hope that we can get to more of these questions later this afternoon. So as you can tell, I am super excited for our next group of presenters. I think they really exemplify everything that we've been talking about, about how we can really make it work or try our best to make it work on the ground. We have today Amy Hanreddy, who is a professor of special education at Cal State Northridge. Rachel Woodward, who is the director of special education at WISH Charter. And Diana Fannon, who is the director of special education at Culver City Unified School District. The three of them along with CHIME Charter school, and also TLC, another inclusion focused charter school in Orange County, has been working closely together in the last few weeks, and I'm excited to hear more about your work. Take it away.



Amy Hanreddy 46:46

Hi, everybody, can you hear hear me and see the screen? Okay, I see Vivian nodding. Hello, my name is Amy Hanreddy, and I'm a professor of special education at Cal State Northridge in the Department of Special Ed. As we moved into school closures, it was immediately apparent that as schools and districts began to implement distance learning programs, new formats would impose many challenges for some students with disabilities. We know that some students with significant support needs and very young children with disabilities require a high level of support to access instruction. My co-presenters and myself and I'll let them introduce themselves. We represent a collaborative as Vivian mentioned of educators from several schools, districts and universities, working together to better understand how to best design individualized distance learning programs in collaboration with families. There we go. So family members have expressed concern

regarding how distance learning can work for their child. Some children, teens and young adults with significant support needs cannot easily access apps, worksheets or video meeting platforms. Some students who can access these platforms have minimal interest. Barriers to these platforms might include vision and hearing related disabilities, fine motor skills as well as disabilities impacting language and communication. Families currently have drastically different situations at home and a wide range of capacities to support learning for their children. So at the same time, many families are overwhelmed with a wide range of resources and materials that are available, and they don't know where to start or how to use these materials with their children. So as a group, we set out to kind of answer these two questions. What do we know about family and student support needs during distance learning? And what should distance learning look like for students with more significant needs? So we send out a survey. We sent it out only a few days ago and have over 100 responses so far. This is a really informal survey. We encourage you to complete the survey put out by Disability Voices United, I think that it is going to be far more thorough and will be probably distributed more widely. But this is really to help us inform our practices and to think about how to design these programs more effectively for our students. So I'm going to share some of these results. These are really initial results that we have so far. When we asked families about their hopes for distance learning program for their child, you can see that over 75% really wanted that program to focus on communication and literacy skills. And then next was to remain connected with peers and then to develop academic skills and to remain connected with teachers. Challenges that families said were their greatest challenges during this time, not surprisingly at all, is that on the top there is providing support to my child while managing other responsibilities. I think that this is the most common challenge across the board for both parents and educators connected to distance learning. And then you can see that next is encouraging children to complete school provided activities. But then we also have personal fatigue, anxiety or stress. And some of the materials parents find that they aren't necessarily accessible or motivating to their child. When parents were asked what was most important to them in a distance learning program, they were given we gave them several options. And on the top were that families were looking for live time, so like zoom or phone conference between educators and their child. Next, they would love to have regular videos and updates from teachers to connect with their child. And they want their children to be included in any general education, distance learning opportunities. And I just wanted to kind of point out that in terms of parent priorities or family priorities, those ones that are underlined in orange, I wanted to point those out. Educators provide me with online activities to do for my child, or educators send packets or worksheets, we're not really at the top of the list for families. And then when we asked families what they have gotten so far from their schools, you can see those same orange bars are right up at the top of the list that most often so far, and we're all in the beginning, is that families have received those online activities, so those lists of apps or resources. And they've been

receiving packets or worksheets for their child to complete. Of course, there's going to be an airplane going over right now. And those things that families had put at the top of their list, live times to interact with their child, inclusion in general education distance learning were much less common than than online activities and worksheets. And then when we ask families how much time their child was currently spending on distance learning, about 75% of our respondents said that their children were spending two hours or less in a given day on distance learning. So we're not really sure what that means if that's because that was the family's choice or that was because of what they were receiving from the school or other circumstances. But that was good information. And then we asked, and this was the suggestion of a family member to include this question. We asked if their children appeared to enjoy their distance learning program, and almost 70% said not at all or slightly. So this is kind of where we're at. In terms of collaboration with the child school, most common is that parents have so far their form of collaboration that they've thanked the teachers for work on current program. But the next was that they've had minimal interaction with their child's teachers since distance learning began. And then down there at the bottom, almost 4% said that they have designed the current program collaboratively with their child's teachers. So I think that these survey results, at least the initial survey results are really kind of pointing to the need for school programs to work really closely together with families to design those programs. We see that they have a wide range of needs. And so we developed these distance learning guidelines. These are still kind of in a draft form. I know Vivian mentioned the group that we've been working together with, their list is there on the side. And we've also had some representatives, I should say, from Los Angeles Unified School District. We've had some representatives from Kansas University. And so this has been a really collaborative process. The scan code that is there and the link that's on the screen will take you to a padlet that we've been working on. And I'll also post the link to that padlet in the chat window after we finish to make it a little bit easier to access. But all of the resources that I'm going to talk about are on that padlet and the guidelines and materials that are associated with those guidelines are on the far left column. Everything else is kind of resources that is on there. Okay, so I just kind of quickly summarize those guidelines that we've been working on here and I think that you'll see some connections between those survey results and some of the recommendations that we are making and that WISH and Culver City Unified as Rachel and Diana talk, that we're starting to put into place. Okay. So, really we emphasize the importance of starting with a tailored learning and support plan for each student and family. Because of the diversity of student needs and their ability to access the many platforms we're using, we really have to look at individualized supports. If we go back to the very intention of special education, that emphasis on individualized supports is already there. We know that families based on their different needs really need some direct support and they are asking for direct support. And so we've developed a family support plan that can be just a conversation or we have a sample format that's provided



for educators to use together with families to individualize those programs. We can work with families to identify what a daily routine could look like for them. We can work to develop interactive activities that families can do with their child as opposed to simply online apps or activities that are kind of two dimensional on the screen that might not be the most meaningful for some of our students with more significant needs. We have some formats provided to help educators to connect IEP goals to different activities they might be doing in their home settings so that we're not forgetting about those individualized goals that we established. And then strategies for working with general ed teachers to keep students connected to their teachers and their classmates. And then finally, we are encouraging educators to continue to make regular and personal connections with the students that they're supporting. So our overriding goal here, we want to work towards programs that are collaboratively developed, implemented, sorry, programs that are individualized and collaboratively developed that result in students who are motivated, engaged and continuing to learn, despite disruptions to their traditional school structures. And when Diana and Rachel and I met this morning, Rachel showed us a puzzle that's on her coffee table, and we were kind of talking about how this whole thing is kind of like that puzzle. It's kind of this, you know, we know what we're working towards. We know what that over overall goal is. And we have some of those structures in place. So you can see that outline, we're working on that outline of that puzzle. We're starting to put it together, but we still have a lot of pieces that are left to assemble. And I think that we're all working on getting those pieces in place as quickly as possible. You can see the picture on the left is a young girl whose parent gave me permission to post. But this is what we're working towards is his kids who are learning who are enjoying their program. And that's a result of collaboratively implemented individualized programs for their kids. So, I'm going to turn it over to Rachel.

R

Rachel Woodward 58:25

Thanks, Amy. My name is Rachel Woodward, and I'm the director of special services for WISH community and academy schools. We're a pre-K through 12 charter school in Los Angeles and the west part of Los Angeles near LAX. We serve just under 1,000 students and about 150-160 of them receive special education services. So that survey data that Amy collected, you know, we are sharing that with our teachers. We need our teachers to hear from parents and to understand the complex issues that you are facing at home and trying to juggle the myriad of tasks you're trying to juggle while also supporting your children and learning. I also undertook a survey. It was very much informal, it was based on Twitter and Instagram. I just did a search of distance teaching versus distance learning, distance teaching and virtual school. And I, you know, I believe in teachers. I believe that they are experts, they are professionals. And I also just want to share with this audience of parents that they're also struggling and I want us to have that context as we talked about

problem solving together. If you look at kind of the pink hued little post in the left corner, you'll see from administrators, "Please go easy on our students and try not to overwhelm them with information." And then also also, "Here are 75 emails linking to brand new resources you've never used before and get familiar with them and we'll see you in the morning at eight o'clock for a staff meeting. We're not dropping any of these other meetings that we usually have either, right?" So as administrators, we're having to evaluate what we're asking our teachers to do. And I know we're asking them to do a lot. There was a meeting this week with a large group of special educators from a variety of different districts and charters. And the kind of general sense is that they're stressed and sad and feel, as you can see kind of evidenced in the lower right hand tweet that I copied there, that they're feeling self-conscious, they're feeling vulnerable, demonstrating their practice in front of you, parents, all day long. They all entered in very different places in terms of their skills and facility with technology. And some are feeling very differently about their professional practice and their skills and abilities in this setting than they did when they were in the classroom physically with your children every single day. You notice the one right in the middle with the with the hearts that kind of scale of how are you doing? Pink being great, purple being okay, blue being meh, and red being struggling. This is a first-grade teacher's Instagram post. And she says on a daily basis, I am okay, meh, and struggling. So up in the right hand corner we also, and I'm sure you parents, you know this and some of you are probably teachers yourselves. And you also know that the teachers of your children are parents whose children are at home with them. Some of them also with disabilities, some of them getting a lot of synchronous instruction from their teachers, and some not getting any and so they're doing that whole juggling thing that we're all doing together. And I wanted to, this last one in the bottom left with the rainbow border. I think that's really powerful. You're not working from home. You are at home during a crisis trying to work, right? And we're trying to work and serve children and families. in a way that makes sense, and that is aligned with what's in their IEPs, and that keeps them safe and healthy and learning. And it's not easy. And I appreciate hearing our panelists, so far all kind of echoing that same sentiment. Amy, could you go to the next slide? Okay, so hopefully, you know, your team has contacted you by now. I assume that a lot of families have heard from their teachers, but I am seeing in some of the Q&A, that some have absolutely heard nothing. And that makes me so sad, and I am hoping that if you haven't heard from them yet, or if you have in the plan that you're trying to work isn't working, this might be a good framework for a conversation to have with them. It'll help to focus that talk and help the school team to align the support that they're giving to you based on what is working for your family and your children. So my recommendation is to start with what is working. And even if you haven't heard from your teacher yet, what could be working is something that you've already put together, something in the schedule that you're running every day that your son or daughter is now participating in, preparing the meal in a way that they haven't before. Finding some little tidbit about what

is working can help inspire the other professionals to build a program out around that. What is not working absolutely needs to be shared, along with your biggest concerns, or concern, trying to narrow it to one or two and your greatest hope for your child and their learning during this period of distance learning. I want to share regarding a concern that I have heard from a number of families and a range of families. From families with typically developing children without disabilities, to families of children who have very significant support needs and have very individualized tailored curriculum. And then a couple in between that range have all said to me, my biggest concern is that my son or daughter is going to be retained in their current grade level and not matriculate on with their peers. And that was not a concern I anticipated, probably because I am an educator, I'm a parent too, but I haven't thought about that for my own children, because I know we're not going to be punishing children right now. Given that this is really out of their control. We're not going to be, you know, retaining kids because they haven't met grade level standards this year. Because of the difference in the quality of education that they've been receiving. But in each of those conversations in one was between a teacher and a parent, not myself. As soon as we heard that concern, and we're able to say no, that's not going to happen, your child will go on to the next grade level next year. And just the stress and the tension immediately retreated and we were able to have a very productive conversation. Now that might not be your biggest concern for the parents in the audience, but for us on a few different occasions, hearing that concern from families we were able to address it. And then finally, your greatest hope. And that has been a range from what I've heard from families. From, I hope that my son and I will be able to use AAC to communicate more effectively, to I hope that the gains we've made in their behavioral program won't regress during this time. Or I hope that my son or my daughter stays connected with some of the peers that they built relationships with. Hearing that as educators, hearing your your greatest hope can help us ensure that we are including activities and actions that will address it. And then, you know, just asking, can we make some time to problem solve this together? Instead of what are you gonna do about this, but can we make some time to problem solve this together? Like I said at the start, I believe most teachers are experts and they're professionals and they care about their kids and their families. We want to do right by you, and for the most part, we're not going to say no, I'm not going to problem solve this with you. They're going to respond positively to a request to problem solve. Amy, can you go to the next slide? So in terms of what to problem solve about, these are three things that have come up for us at WISH a number of times that seemed to kind of help to structure our problem solving. So the first one is schedules. Right now our school is providing synchronous instruction for a chunk of time in the morning, appropriate based on kids ages, so anywhere from like 8:30 to 12 to 8:30 to 1 where they are getting some live instruction with teachers. I know that that is not the same everywhere else. And even for our students, I have heard from families who say this is great my son loves it he just will stare at all of the peers on the screen, and I'm not even sure he's getting the instruction,

but he is so engaged in watching everybody and pointing them out to me and talking to me about his peers. To others saying, my son or my daughter has never engaged, even with FaceTime with a grandparent from the time they were two years old. So thanks for this, but this isn't working for me. So even with that kind of base schedule that we have, what our direction to our special education teachers is it needs to be highly individualized by the student, for the students needs. It should work with your families needs, the supports you may be receiving from other providers. And it should include opportunities for social interaction and not just be about academic progress. Some kind of ways to be flexible, things that came to mind for me as I was brainstorming and thinking about some of our families, and what we're doing for them, are some students are getting a 15 minute morning schedule setup meeting every single morning with their special educator to review the schedule of the day. Some are getting some live lessons in some classes as appropriate for the kid that might be their favorite teacher, favorite peer, favorite subject. The most accessible content, most opportunities for participation, most opportunities for integration of AAC, if it's not reasonable, that they're engaging in that full two hours, three hours, one hour, 30 minutes of, you know, zoom or whatever the platform is. Looking for the best times of day, the best class period, the best activity to be included with. Time with peers, time for a home based or functional activity, time for a one-on-one with providers. And, you know, some other things might be time for modeling from the special education teacher for the parent. That's something we've had to include for some of our students schedules. So moving on to social connections, I think that's something that needs to be included in the schedule. And something that's come up for one of our teachers, that, "Oh, the mom wants me to give her phone numbers and emails for all of these other families. I'm not really sure if I'm comfortable with that." And so that's just a conversation that I encourage you to say to your teachers. Hey, you can give my phone number, share my email. Here's my TikTok username. And I'm giving that example because that came from some of our middle schoolers who got together in a social group with a young man who has pretty significant support needs. And organically, they decided to teach him how to use TikTok and make TikTok videos while they're away from school together. So tell your teacher, hey, you can give my phone number out to anybody. Well, I mean, maybe not anybody, maybe you want to put some boundaries around that, but make sure that they know that that's okay. And then finally, oh,



Vivian Haun 1:09:51

Hi, Rachel. Hi. This is fantastic content. I just want to make sure we also have enough time for our remaining speakers. And I know that Diana has some great things to say too. I just want to let the two of you know if we can move on shortly.

R

Rachel Woodward 1:10:08

Yeah, great. Thank you. Absolutely, I'm sorry about that, I should have set a timer for myself. And then finally, just in terms of IEP goals, it might not be reasonable to work on every IEP goal every week or every single day. And to say to your team, hey, give them that kind of permission and say, hey, let's prioritize let's pick two this week to focus on. That will feel like a relief to your teachers and probably to you as well, to know that we're just going to focus our efforts and our activities and our scheduling this week around these one or two or three or four goals, whatever's you know, appropriate for for your son or daughter. That's it for me. Thank you.

D

Diana Fannon 1:10:47

Okay, hi, everybody. I'm Diana fan, and I'm the director of special education with Culver City Unified School District. And sort of going off what both Rachel and Amy have talked about in terms of prioritizing really, do your best to communicate that. We actually like to hear that at school districts. The more you can really partner with us to tell us what you really want to work on and what you want to see from us. So, identify those areas with learning. How can we work together so that learning continues? This is new for all of us. We are the experts in education, but you were at home with your child. So we want to know what's happening. We want to know what you're seeing. So what's preventing learning from occurring, if anything? What are you seeing in the home environment? Let us know that. So if you're seeing something, let us know and let us help you facilitate that. And then help us in terms of prioritizing as Rachel was talking about. What IEP goals should really be the focus? It doesn't mean we're not going to work on other ones, but there may be some that we need to prioritize. And then in terms of support, what types of other supports can we provide? How can we really help you and your child flourish? Or do better in this, in this setting? It's a tough time. We want to do everything we can. So let us know. And we really want to find a way to partner with you in this. So for the services, how is this service delivery meeting the needs of your child? Things are different, but it doesn't have to be worse. It's just different. It might not be as good right away. But I said today, I had a meeting with parents an hour or two ago. And I said, I know it's hard to believe, but it's only been, we had two weeks of spring break. And I said, it's only our third week. Like, it hasn't even been 15 days of this yet. So we're really still figuring things out. So what changes can we make? Like I keep asking my parents, especially my advisory committees, what can we do better? What can we do differently? Tell us, give me feedback, you know, give us feedback, let me help the teachers. If kids are not doing well, if they're upset, then we're doing something wrong. If teachers are upset, and if parents are upset, like that is not what we want. So we really do want to individualize. Amy, can you go to the next slide. And so again, part of the partnering is making sure that everyone knows how to access support. So for the families, for you guys, for parents, for students, the district offers

a lot of support. And this is every, I know, it looks a little bit different in every district, but I know that every district is offering some support. So I think it's about finding out where that support lives. So technology need. Where is the device pickup and device exchange? Make sure that you're aware of that and you figure out how you can get access to that. So meals, and I saw a comment about the time of meal pickup that it's happening during distance learning. I would, so I'm making a note right now, I want to go make sure when our meal pickup is happening and make sure that there are times. So that's the kind of feedback. Provide that. Because every time I hear something like that, and I had a meeting with my parents again today and they said, we might need to have a different pickup time of technology for our students with IEPs because it gets a little crowded. It gets really like congested, and we need to do a different one. So those kinds of things, every time I get a piece of feedback like that, we file that away and we try to make a change to the greatest extent possible. And then families, like I said, advisory groups, board meetings if you have time, if you are capable of doing that, we love hearing from you. Reach out to your director or coordinator and schedule a meeting. We love to hear from you. So please, continue providing us with information. If you can connect with other families, I would really, really recommend it because you're not alone. And I think the more you guys can share with each other, the better. And then in terms of providing support to your child, teacher office hours are a really great time. Our district teachers, our elementary teachers are holding them regularly. And then our secondary teachers are a little more, they're alternating days, because they're doing a block schedule. But if you can find out that time, I would schedule an appointment so you can talk to them and really partner with them. I think that's it, but we know it's hard. And we're with you. Thank you.



Vivian Haun 1:15:44

Diana, Rachel, Amy, that was such incredible information and content. Thank you so much for that. I hope you guys can stay on and maybe provide some feedback or be available for questions. At this point again just to keep things moving, let's go to our next speaker who comes to us from a non public school, the Creative Learning Center in Redwood City. Her name is Tamila Sayar. Tamila, are you there?



Judy Mark 1:16:27

She was there. And now she is gone. So let's move to the next person.



Vivian Haun 1:16:33

Okay. We will welcome her back when she reappears. It happens. Mayra Zamora, Mayra,

are you there? I see you. Fantastic. Thank you so much, Mayra. We are so pleased to have Mayra with us today. Mayra is a parent in the Los Angeles Unified School District. She's also been a member of Disability Voices United for some time. and



Carisa Bowman 1:16:58

Hi Vivian, sorry, I was on and I got kicked off. It's Carisa Bowman from Creative Learning Center. I can wait if you've already started, whatever's best for you. Okay, great. Sorry, sorry. Again, I'm Dr. Carisa Bowman. I'm the director of Creative Arts Center, which is outside of San Francisco, California. And bear with me for just a second. I'm going to show you what we are doing for parents and just kind of doing a quick overview. And we are new at this also. And so we are figuring it out just as you all are, and I'll switch to the screen. So one of the things that we really wanted to do is to make sure we're doing more than just sending packets home. The kids that we serve have severe, profound autism. They're on the moderate, or more severe level. And we knew the packets weren't going to work. We also knew the distant learning was going to be difficult for some of our kids. So we really looked at it from a three prong approach. All of our kids are getting online direct instruction every day through a teacher from 9 to 11. So that is like our group interaction and we set up our zoom link so that the kids can interact with each other. In addition to that, every child has two direct IEP times. We call them reading, two for reading two for math, but they could also be for individual life skills, vocational. They're specifically for individual IEP times. So our kids at this point have gotten group instruction. They're getting individualized instruction on their IEPs and then we're doing teletherapy. First speech, OT, behavior and counseling. And it's funny, I was listening to the last speaker and my parents are probably at the other end of the spectrum at this point, like, please stop calling me. I don't want to hear from you guys anymore. Because what we did is we even went to the point of creating an online resource center, where our parents could put in a request for token schedule or token charts, visual schedules, on anything that they may need to operate at home, tap analysis. And then we've either mailed them, email them or had them pick it up. And then we have a marriage and family counselor and this is definitely that's something new for us. But we offered every family and every student three family sessions during this time because all of us are adjusting and working towards this new norm. And some of our kids aren't doing well with it and some of our family members aren't doing well with it. And that's above and beyond any kid or family member who gets counseling through the IEP process. So we've looked at it through multiple approaches. We also know as a mom of a parent with special needs that I was going to be working and I may not be able to get on at nine o'clock or 11 o'clock. And so we also launched a Creative Learning Center YouTube channel, where we put folding clothes, matching, colors, ABCs, 123, with a lesson plan, our task analysis, and an answer key for our families to be able to access when they are available. So we did it like I said, through a three

prong approach to online learning through telecare, tele therapy, and then using access through YouTube. Of course we are doing packets. We sent links for free resources, like reading a tizzy. But we really wanted to focus in on the face to face. And the one last thing that we're doing is having our BCBA call every family member, and just say, What do you need? How can we help out? And I will tell you, it started to be just for the parents for the BCBA to check in. And what we found is that our kids know the BCBAs and want to talk to them. And so they're working one on one with our BCBAs. So we're doing a lot, but I will tell you that connection and that rapport of just being seen on the screen. Yes, we have lesson plans, but I think sometimes those kids and parents, just knowing that there's somebody else out there going through it has been really helpful. So that's just a general overview. I did create manuals, and I've been trying to share my screen and it's not showing but I'd be happy to send them to Judy or to somebody and then if you guys want them, then I can give you access. We did a manual for the parents, one for the staff, and then one for our districts just so they would know what we are offering. Some of the information in them are the same. But others like the staff, that's been an ongoing process. We're adding and changing it as we're building this program and learning as we go, but I'd be happy to share all those with everybody.

V

Vivian Haun 1:22:32

Carisa, that was amazing. You guys are doing so much. Thank you for sharing with us. One quick question I have for you. Because this is a common theme of a number of the questions that have been coming in has to do with students who really struggle a lot with being able to attend and being able to participate in virtual learning methods, whether that's online or even watching a YouTube video for some students, even that much be extraordinarily difficult. What are the things that you've tried or what sorts of advice might you have for families in that situation?

C

Carisa Bowman 1:23:11

Right. And it's a great question. And as I mentioned, a lot of our kids have severe, profound autism. So sitting at a tablet isn't necessarily one of their best skills. And the person on the other side of the tablet is saying, do this, do that, do this. So they definitely may not be interested. But what we did is we built the whole program so that everybody got the same thing as far as an hour instruction, IEP time, and teletherapy time. So that was our general framework, just to get launched, so everybody had that schedule for about one week. And then based on that, and it goes to what other speakers are saying, we individualized after that. So we got the program launched, and I'm gonna make up a name Johnny. Johnny doesn't have the capacity to be able to sit for an hour for reading and math. We have then went back and recreated his schedule, and we've done five or 10



minute intervals. So he gets five minutes, like at 9, and then another five minutes at 11. So that we can build that capacity for him to increase his screen time. So this is really about being individualized. Like I said, we've launched it as an overall school program. But then we were getting the emails, I'm working from home, are you available this time, my child can't sit here from this point to this point. And we have been able to just individualize that and going one at a time now based on the students needs. So again, it goes to what every speaker has said that it's individualized. Again, we are a non-public school, and so we have different resources. But the individualizing is really the key, and as a former Baltimore City principal and working in the general ed setting in urban areas, I know that we're all kind of struggling with different resources. And if anything is out there, please reach out and let us know. I had, for example, I had a parent who was like, is this lady insane? She just scheduled my child for seven different times that he's going to get up and down to get on and out of the computer for OT, then speech, then classroom. And again, we did that so we have a framework, but then we individualize it for that kid. And so my biggest, I guess, advice is getting something launched like we did and then moving along and individualizing it within the capacity that you have.

V

Vivian Haun 1:25:48

Taking a step by step approach. Thank you so much, Clarissa. I wish we had more time than that. I hope that you'll be able to stay on for a little bit. Thank you so much for joining us on the fly. We really appreciate it. Just to make sure we have enough time. I do want to go back to our other speaker, our parent, Mayra Zamora, who I started to introduce. Mayra, are you still there? I can see you, Mayra. Hi. I wanted to introduce Mayra Zamora again. She is a parent of a child in the Los Angeles Unified School District and is here to share some of her experiences with us. Thank you Mayra.

M

Mayra Zamora 1:26:32

All right. Good afternoon. So my name is Maya Zamora. I'm actually a parent of two students the exceptional needs that attend a school within the LA Unified School District. I'm also a member of the Parent Advisory Committee and officer of the Community Advisory Committee and a member of the Speak UP Special Education Task Force. So special education advocacy is near and dear to my heart. And just here to really tell of our experience during the Coronavirus and it hasn't been a very positive one. So, for my children, services haven't been really provided, not even during virtual access or as everybody's been doing through zoom. My oldest son is the only one who has received a service and he only received at one time. My other younger son, before the school closures, we had had an IEP meeting and had agreed to specific services to begin, but a provider had not been selected at the time. And so right now he's doing without. There's

been no communication for any services, other than emails for particular service providers who want to start, you know, having sessions of some sort, but no actual plan has been given to us or hasn't been a very positive one. And I've been hearing from other parents as well that we're in a similar boat, that you know, some providers are reaching out to us and while these, the provision is not ideal, at least are receiving some type of service, to we're not receiving any services at all. And so, you know, one of those barriers definitely is technology. We have a lot of parents who don't have access to internet connections. Our particular school, we're fortunate that we have one to one iPad availability. So you know, a lot of students were able to check them out, for particular reasons, the devices on my own homework weren't functioning, so we were able to get the devices from the school and that's how they've been able to log in and have their classes. Again, that's not ideal. Like one of the panelists said previously, they've done a survey and the initial results, as you know, the students are receiving less than two hours and I can agree to that. My children are receiving less than an hour of actual instructional time right now. So it's definitely not ideal. Another part of the barriers is lack of communication, because, again, those two weeks of the initial school closures, you know, that's the timeline we were given and we received no communication from the schools or any of our related service providers at that time. It wasn't until after that we started receiving emails and phone calls. And so I've been hearing from other parents, that was a similar case, they received little to no communication. And so that's definitely some barriers. Again, the thing that was done right, for that one particular service that my child did receive, it was a completely different mood that my child was in because he was able to have services where he could see the other students. And he depends on that. So I was, I was really glad that he was able to receive that particular service, but it's only been the one time and so again, it's from the other parents that I've spoken to. This seems to be what's happening right now, during this crisis. And what suggestions for other parents are particularly listening right now, the only thing that I can recommend that I've also heard from other parents and pannelists that have spoken already is to contact your individual schools, particularly because of LA Unified and how it's set up where we have local districts. Other than the state guidance, we haven't really received any additional guidance from our central district. We're still waiting to hear from our superintendent. We do have a director of special education, that's Anthony Aguilar. They said that we didn't we didn't. We do, but they've shifted the office to now, he's the chief of special education, equity and, access. So they've changed the name, but we do have a director of special education. That's Anthony Aguilar, so just you know, for people from LA Unified who are listening. And we have been informed that there's going to be some kind of town hall meeting with the special education director at a future date. We haven't received that information. Again, as part of Speak UP of that Special Education Task Force, I know that they're going to be informing that on their site, as well through other means and LA Unified as well. There'll be announcing that shortly and hopefully in the future. I know it's coming but so far again,

there's been no centralized guidance as to the provision of services for all of our students with exceptional needs. And I actually have my son here next to me wants to speak for a couple minutes, just to let you guys know his particular experience during this time. So hold on a minute, give me a second so we can use this microphone.

**M** Mayra's Son 1:31:34

Hello. My name is John Fracks. I am an eighth grade student and student body president at my middle school. I have autism and may fidget. Please have patience. I would like to tell you about my experience in the Coronavirus pandemic. It is going terribly right now because I rely on my services at school, specifically my one on one. This is affecting me negatively, impacting my ability to focus, and my mood. I am okay, but I am struggling to do my work and keep up with my classes. I am starting high school next year and I am scared that I may have to concentrate on reviewing what I have missed and may not catch up. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

**M** Mayra Zamora 1:32:16

So, again, his particular experiences are common from the other parents who I've spoken with, particularly from our school, local school district with regards to what's happening during this time.

**V** Vivian Haun 1:32:30

Thank you so much to both of you for sharing your experiences. I'm sorry that it's taken so long to get services to you and your family. One quick question I have for you, Mayra, one of the things that you mentioned often was how you had gotten no communication or little, very little communication about the services that your children would receive or what would be happening. What kind of communication do you find to be most helpful? I heard you mention centralized communication or maybe some display communication. What would be helpful to you and then the other families you know at this point in terms of letting families know what to expect?

**M** Mayra Zamora 1:33:15

In particular, we would have liked some central communication from that particular individual to all the families who have students with IEPs, so at least we would have known what was coming in, we didn't receive that. And so I have still yet to hear from that person, even though I've communicated with them directly. So I'm still waiting for a follow up. But it was kind of odd to me a little bit that the providers themselves individually

reached out to me and there was no cohesive timeline as to how they did that it was just at random, and that was either via telephone or email. And so it depends on the parents and those who more feel comfortable with email. Some feel comfortable with a telephone call. I know that some parents are having difficulty right now still learning zoom. Again, I know that Speak UP was doing it for the parents, but learning the technology so that we can still do distance learning. So I know that that itself is a barrier, not just for the students but for the parents as well. And that's also varied for communication in these times. But there's no real clear answer because it just depends on the parents and me personally, I would at least like to have had some guidance from my individual school and we didn't receive that. And not to put the blame or the pressure on the school itself, I think that because there is no centralized guidance from our district, the schools don't know what to tell us.



Vivian Haun 1:34:43

Mayra, thank you so much for sharing your story. And again, a special special thank you to your son, you did an awesome job. Thank you for sharing your story as well. And just as a quick note, I am seeing in the chat box that for those of you who are also within the Los Angeles Unified district, that board members Jackie Goldberg and Nick Melvoin are planning on holding those town halls later on in the coming weeks. Yes, okay. I thought I heard something. But I think at this point we have reached our next speaker. I am so pleased to introduce Steven Hinkle, who is a PhD student and a teacher and a self advocate and so many other things. He'll be here to talk about his experiences and experiences that other students with disabilities may be having during this difficult time. Hi, Stephen.



Judy Mark 1:35:49

You have to unmute Stephen. There we go.



Stephen Hinkle 1:35:52

Yeah, I'm just gonna find my PowerPoint two here. Everybody see that? Well, there's a lot of implications. I'm going to talk about some of the implications that are challenging and it's been I want to say it started out it's been very challenging for me since my school, Chapman, went to distance learning. In fact, there've been some days where I spent crying being cut off from my friends and everything else to the level that this stay at home orders have impacted. So I will go ahead here and showed here. Basically, distance learning and the K-12 is basically for everybody who doesn't know it's where a teacher is not present and we do mostly deliver core academics through the internet to people. And

there's also other ways people do it from packets to other methods. And sometimes it's done in Blackboard or Canvas or streaming platforms like YouTube and Vimeo and others like FaceTime and a Zoom and others things like that. And I just want to give you an idea of who this works well for and who might be having some trouble with it. Basically, distance learning works best when students are self-motivated. When they can figure things out best without a teacher being there present where they work best from reading books or paying attention to what's on a TV screen or a computer screen. And also, they're better when they're comfortable without interactions from their classmates and their peers. And one of the things with challenges with distance learning is it requires a certain level of vocabulary knowledge of the thing, what you're working on, knowledge of computers, knowledge of the subject matter. And of course, it can be sometimes a sensory challenge if somebody doesn't work well from home with all the other things going on with their families. But it works much better when you can focus even with your family around you, which is challenging for some or in a lonely setting. But the real issues come when it comes to special ed. And the challenges people make, like are their IEP goals going to be met or not? And oftentimes, they're not going to be the same quality as being in a class where we have more resources. Another challenge I've heard a lot about is people that depend on getting modified curriculum. A lot of times, what will happen is, people will log on and they play on the same packets of the same curriculum and the same shell on Blackboard and stuff. So you should be making sure that if somebody goal is modified instruction, are you getting that remotely? And then supports and services, it might be more challenging if somebody has occupational therapy or physical therapy or speech. How is that going to be provided remotely? And if so at all. Another big challenge is those being unable to use electronic devices. For example, I've heard of some reports on some Facebook groups where someone was breaking the device the school gave, or sometimes they don't do well with a computer or they're blind/deaf and a screen thing might not be appropriate. So that's gonna be another challenge that you might need to bring up to your schools. And then students who rely on teaching versus figuring out things from books. That's another thing because oftentimes you have less time with your teachers when you're online or things may have to be made by appointment and there isn't after school tutoring. So you really have to realize that a lot more of it's going to be figuring out things from books or from reading articles. And then another thing is internet safety for younger children. A lot of times this whole COVID-19 forces us to do distance learning. But what about those, which opened their kids to the internet, which there are challenges, from pornography to predators to other things, to making sure they're supervised on the web browser, to making sure that they have privacy. So you want to be careful with that, to make sure younger kids get the right supervision or filtering or other options they should look at. Usually most schools don't typically use the internet in traditional classroom until they're in middle school for that reason, or if they do, it's a very small amount. So this goes against the screen time issue and things like that. And then you have

accessibility. Like what if somebody uses a screen reader, or uses a type to speech device or is blind? Our schools need to make sure that their websites that are used for this distance learning are accessible to section 508. And then what about parents who are unable to tutor their child, or single parents who work during the day? That can also be a challenge. Again, we make the assumption everybody has a stay at home parent. But what about if both parents are essential workers and their work schedule has them out in the same times? So again, parents need to coordinate supervision and maybe make an exception to stay at home to go with a friend's house for that portion of the day, if that's a last resort, or things like that, if that's an issue. And then another challenge that kids are gonna experience is not having access to the library when you're trying to do your reports and your research because a lot of times they're closed. So again, there's ways of getting through the internet some of the stuff, but you really are going to have less resources, so you should be prepared for that. The other thing that's important to understand is how the curriculum of distance learning might be different than the traditional experience. Oftentimes your work will be the same in your core subjects like English and math and social studies, and so forth, and will be a lot more reading-based and may have some discussion through zoom if they have video conferencing capabilities. But there will be some challenges like if someone took science lab class, how is that supposed to be implemented with equipment that you might not have in the home for example. Or what about if they're taking dance or theater or something? That's going to be an even bigger challenge. And you might not get that with web-based classes. The same with career technical classes, like if somebody is wanting to learn shop class or home or a business career or some kind of a thing that requires a very specialized lab. So again, that some of the high schools traditionally offered in terms of electives. Again, you're going to have a much shorter selection and then be prepared for that. And the other thing about this is, we should be making sure our kids are getting exercise in some form. At least take an hour, maybe you can go in your backyards and run around for a little bit as a recess break or even if you kick the ball between the parents and stuff. Or if a park is open, maybe take a little walk and I know you're not supposed to play team sports during this time, but it can be hard for a child to feel like they're grounded in terms of not having their sports, not having their theater or not having their social dances, not having the prom, not having ASB, not having student government, not having the clubs that they used to have. This can feel very traumatic to a child. So again, you have to find some creative ways, like some activities or other things at home to do so in this time. I hope pretty soon they will end these stay at home orders. I think it'll impact their kids a lot when we start getting back to this. But who knows when that will be? I have a feeling it will probably be probably in the next couple of months, but it'll depend on how many cases there are in emergency rooms whether they'll lift them or not. And the last thing that can be a challenge in our distance learning is transition, where you go out in the community. One of my friends has ways of simulating that who does this for Wesley University. One of my friends said it's

working okay, but it's a challenge, again, to be cut off from your peers or not having the things like the shopping malls and the work experiences and stuff opened up. And then the other thing about this is the social emotional challenges. Like for example, not being able to see your peers and your classmates or not being able to invite them over to your birthday parties. Again, we have to manage the kids' trauma levels in this. Or especially if a kid is very social and they're used to not being lonely and they're used to being around other kids and are having to unlearn social skills because you have to stay six feet away from others or some of these kinds of trauma, from having all your activities canceled. I know some people like sports or getting out to the play the games or whatever or getting out to be active kids. So again, it's going to be a challenge for emotional regulation or ADHD and things like this. Hopefully we're going to get through this and get back to some things but who knows when that will be? But still you should be modeling some virtual socialization or try to plan exercise videos or something for PE or maybe if it is allowed, maybe see about putting on a mask and having one friend over just occasionally as a last resort during this. But again, it's going to be harder for children than it is for adults to get through this. But even as an adult, it's almost destroyed my life. I used to go out to conferences, I used to go places, I used to play kickball, I used to have opportunities with friends to go out to dinner, but all that's gone. It's just been very difficult in my own life to manage my stress. There were some days I was literally crying and it could be very traumatic. So I just want to let you know, and hopefully we will get through this and hopefully we'll be able to get our campuses reopened at some point in the future. I know they're trying to approach it in some modified ways for fall, so I'm gonna let you go on, but if anybody has a question or anything let me know.



Judy Mark 1:50:55

Thanks, Stephen. That was great. It was really helpful.



Vivian Haun 1:51:10

I want to echo what Judy said, Stephen, thank you so much. I know how intensely this has been affecting you. So I certainly appreciate the voice that you are giving to everyone in the same boat, to all the students who have been really suffering and has been having a very hard time dealing with all these changes, and their inability to access a lot of the things, like you said, have really grounded them in their community and with their friends and loved ones. At this point, there are so many questions that we have and I apologize in advance. We are not going to be able to get to every single question that has come in through the q&a box but we will do our best. We have just a few minutes left. And there have been a number of questions that have come through the question and answer box. Judy, do you have any?



Judy Mark 1:52:14

Can I just say something, Vivian? A lot of people are asking similar questions, like, are speech therapists, are one to one aides, are behavioral therapists considered essential workers? And they are. Yes, they are considered essential workers, which means they're allowed to be working directly with other people at this time. People are saying should I be asking them to come to my house? And those are decisions that you as parents need to make on your own. You need to decide what is the risk of having this person in your home, who could potentially bring Coronavirus into your home. For those of you who were on last week's webinar, you might have heard me talk about the fact that one of, my son is an adult now, but my son who has autism, one of his aides tested positive for COVID and develop symptoms 10 hours after being in our home and sitting at our dinner table. And so luckily, we're all okay, we've all tested negative, but it is important for you to understand the risks of bringing people into your home, who you cannot track where they've been and what they've done. So there's no way that we, as an organization, or any of the speakers on this webinar are going to make a recommendation for you to bring a behaviorist into your home, for you to bring a one to one aid in your home. That is the only decision that you can make. So again, I want to get all those questions kind of off the table and then go back to you Vivian for some of the other ones.



Vivian Haun 1:53:57

Absolutely. Thank you Judy. That is a huge question that a lot of people have had. So thank you.



Stephen Hinkle 1:54:05

And one thing to that, and that is, is to see if one option would be to have your worker be tested occasionally for COVID or monitor for symptoms or check their temperature or something before they come in your house or something. There isn't any guarantee because there's asymptomatic cases, but in some ways you can manage the risk a little better. And certainly don't let them in if they're sick. It's a chance because you don't know where they've been and there might not be a 14 day quarantine prior.



Judy Mark 1:54:52

So I also just want to mention, Vivian, we can go a little bit longer. I know some of the speakers may need to jump off, but we can go a little bit longer because I see there's so many really passionate questions. But I also wanted to, if you're okay Vivian with this, throw it to Kelly. We've had a number of questions in Spanish in the chat that if you could



translate them for us.

K

Kelly Kulzer-Reyes 1:55:16

I'm actually going to just kind of put them into one super question if that helps. A lot of people are concerned about not unnecessarily dominating English the way they would need to to help their kids through their schoolwork. Questions about we don't have access to technology. How are we supposed to do a tele therapy session when we don't have solid internet in a rural area? Like my family had to buy a second internet service, but we're able to do that, so that we could have zoom running in two rooms of our house at the same time, but we're in a rural isolated area. So I guess for those who are specifically helping create these plans on school sites. What do parents need to be telling you so that they can get the supports that they need? They're not going to be able to do teletherapy for speech. Like that's just not going to be a reasonable thing. So it can go to anyone who has experience at a school site. Thank you so much. I'm going to mute and get rid of my video.

S

Stephen Hinkle 1:55:16

I'd like to respond to that one. I know that Comcast and Spectrum and the others are offering a couple months of free internet through this time.

K

Kelly Kulzer-Reyes 1:56:43

We don't have those options in rural areas. So that's a wonderful option in an urban area. But that is not an option for my family who does not have Comcast.

S

Stephen Hinkle 1:56:53

The problem with the rural areas for internet is that their infrastructure might not be there. So you're gonna have to see what's available. And a lot of times the satellite providers end up getting very slow if you go over so much data, and so video conferencing might not be an appropriate way to go, which is gonna be a little bit more challenging because of the limited bandwidth and rural areas. That's what I was going to say.

J

Judy Mark 1:57:32

Thank you, Stephen. So Amy or Diana, do you have some ideas for those folks?

**D** Diana Fannon 1:57:39  
Yeah, I can. So what's the first thing you do? I mean, tell your school. If you're having trouble, tell your schools, and a lot of the schools are able to get access to hotspots. So we're going to be providing some of our families with hotspots. Some schools have additional funds, some schools are getting donations, some providers are giving those hotspots because the providers who are giving that free access, it's a little bit like it's possible, but it's still a little bit tricky. Like it works, but even when it's there, it can be a little bit tricky. So even in the rural areas, or in the more rural areas, the hotspots help more.

**K** Kelly Kulzer-Reyes 1:58:16  
Hey, could you tell us what a hotspot is?

**D** Diana Fannon 1:58:19  
So it's actually a thing that lives in your house,

**K** Kelly Kulzer-Reyes 1:58:23  
A thing that lives in your house!

**D** Diana Fannon 1:58:24  
It's a thing that lives in your house, but children shouldn't be worried about the thing living in your house.

**J** Judy Mark 1:58:33  
It's a little box.

**D** Diana Fannon 1:58:35  
A little device brings the internet with it.

**K** Kelly Kulzer-Reyes 1:58:42  
That may not be something that's also clear because a lot of the stuff like for us, technology jargon is no problem.

D

Diana Fannon 1:58:51

The things that brings the internet into your house, and a lot of school districts are working and partnering with different companies or getting donations of them, or using additional funds in order to buy them. And the other thing I want to say is that in the first week, I know some of the speech and language providers and even some of our occupational therapists who work with my district or work in my district in Culver City, we're doing sessions over the phone. So teletherapy really became telephone therapy. So even though the virtual therapy is much better because we can see each other face to face, but if people don't have that, we will walk you through it on the phone. We will email worksheets or we will mail worksheets if we need to, and then we will walk you through it over the phone. So there is always a way to deliver the sessions if we need to. And I think Amy can talk a little more about this but or maybe we don't have time for it, but she shared that you can do professional development via text so we can find the way to deliver whatever we need to, via whatever method we need to.

A

Amy Hanreddy 2:00:08

Yeah, I was just going to share that, you know, in. In other countries with less internet access, they've actually been doing providing support for quite a long time over over text and video messages. And so I and I know that some of the teachers that I've been supporting, who are interns in LA Unified have a large number of their students who are homeless. And so all of these internet solutions are not working for them, but they have some of them have been able to be successful in providing text based support to those families. A lot of it is around problem solving and really addressing immediate needs. But the hope is that as these students get established somewhere, whether it's in a shelter somewhere, that they can provide some more academic or educational types of stuff. or via text or video messages.

J

Judy Mark 2:01:05

I just want to pop in and just say that a lot of you, we got 10 people asking for Valerie's website that she talked about, and we have put that in the q&a several times as well as in the chat. We are also going to put a link to a service law example. Valerie's law firm which is called Newman Aaronson Vanaman, or [navlaw.net](http://navlaw.net), also has other resources under News and Coronavirus resources, as well as a list of what your rights are. But we've put the direct link for that log in the chat and in the q&a.

V

Vivian Haun 2:01:47

All right, thank you, Judy. I am seeing a couple of similar questions in the chat that has to do with compensatory education for services that they may have been offered by their school or school districts that may not be working for them. For instance, if telespeech therapy has been offered, but isn't working, or for instruction. If on their child's IEP, if they had been bidding certain amounts of hours of instruction and certain subjects per week. And then what they're being offered now by their school district during the pandemic is something that is so much less, and also that is not focused on or specific to the subject matter that their child was supposed to be focusing on. A lot of parents want to know, will they be able to get compensatory education for that? And of course, with the caveat that everything is fact specific to a particular student and their needs. And so what they have been getting before to what they are being offered now. I can say this. There's some of my answer that's speculation and there's some that's based on on actual previous law. What I would imagine going forward because we don't really know is that compensatory education even before we had a little better handle on the law. Compensatory education does not necessarily have to be provided on a 100% basis, meaning that if for some reason you missed 50 hours of compensatory education, while we all hope that is what you would get, because that is what your child would be owed under the law. That is not always the case. That is not always what gets awarded, whether that's at hearing. Or if you were to settle, say with a school district, that's not always what you end up getting. So I will say that for any question about compensatory education, that was true before, but you might not receive or be in title to 100% of the services that you missed. I would imagine then that going forward post pandemic, or whatever new phase we are in, that that will probably be even more true. Again, that's just speculation on my part, but enlarge the fact that our teachers and our service providers are already, I think, at or beyond maximum. There will be a lot of hours that will be owed. And there will be a lot of students who will both be owed those services and will desperately need them because they will have fallen behind. So at some point when things come back online, I'm very concerned about the capacity of our schools and our teachers and our providers to be able to both simultaneously serve their students in real time and also to be providing the tremendous backlog of compensatory services to make up for what they should have received for that reason. My best guess is that they might not get 100% of what they are owed.



Valerie Vanaman 2:05:08

It's very important for people to know that compensatory services have never been a one for one calculation. It has always relied on what was the regression of the student, and what is the appropriate thing to do to address that regression. It's also the case that of course, there's only so many hours in a week even for a student. There's only so many hours of speech and language, let's be honest about this, that a student can benefit from in any given week. And at some point, there's a break not even quite in regard to that. It is

vital, whatever form you use, however, that you do keep track of what did the IEP say you should be getting? What did you get? And how did your student respond to that? So that you have what we call contemporaneously collected data as to what went on. It's going to be very hard to remember 12 or 14 weeks from this when maybe we begin to come out of it, what was really happening the week of April the 13th. And what was really going on and keeping contemporaneous records, so that if there is a question of regression and if compensatory relief remains available, that you have a record of it is vitally important. And it is good practice to be keeping those records, but it's unlikely that it's ever going to be one to one. Just unlikely.



Judy Mark 2:06:42

And I want to just throw in something and I would like Valerie to comment on it as well. The regional centers exist for people with developmental disabilities. Now, many of you who are in the audience listening to this are not qualified for regional center services. They're only for people with developmental disabilities, such as autism, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, intellectual disabilities. For that population, they can actually turn to their regional centers at this time. Regional centers have been given incredible amount of flexibility to provide supports that they would normally not be providing. And does that mean that they're winging it? Not necessarily, but they have the authority to do that. So they are considered the payer of last resort. And you must use what's called generic resources first. A school district is a generic resource. However, we are seeing that school districts are not providing the full range of needs. So what does that mean? That means that if you are a parent who has no access to technology, but that's the only way for your child to be able to access education and the school district is not providing that technology, you should be asking your regional center to purchase technology for you. Secondly, you should also be going to them for therapies, for private therapies. The regional center should be paying for it if your school district is not and if your insurance is not. So there are many opportunities. I just was speaking to the Department of Developmental Services today who were reiterating the flexibility, such as if somebody needs a COVID test, and you can only get it at a place that costs money, your regional center should be paying for your COVID test. So there is a lot of flexibility there. I urge you if you have our client of a regional center to use it. But I wanted to ask Valerie to weigh in on whether you're seeing families try this and whether they've been getting good response.



Valerie Vanaman 2:08:55

It depends on the regional center as with all things. There are many regional centers that were acting virtually anyway, that is nobody went to the offices. They were all working

from home and working virtually. So this hasn't been any change and shouldn't be any change in their quick ability to in fact go into action. It does probably require that they agree to do a quick amendment to an IPP document, to add a service in to be provided for X number of weeks until school reopens. That can be done virtually. That can be done by over the phone that can be done through fax, email, and a variety of ways. And they are the payer of last resort for families who qualify for regional center services. Efforts ought to be made to pick up services and pick up to obtain necessary services at a time when they're not available either through your insurance or the school district. If regional centers take the position, well, the district should be providing it. The answer it seems to me is do you want to sue the school district to make them do it? Because they're not doing it. And so tell me they should be means that if you think they should be doing it, then you bring an action against Los Angeles Unified School District, for example, to start providing good home instruction, or good long distance learning while this time is going on. In the meantime, provide me the service.

J

Judy Mark 2:10:39

Thank you. Vivian, maybe one or two more questions for our panelists?

V

Vivian Haun 2:10:48

Yes, so just one moment here.

J

Judy Mark 2:10:53

I saw one for Stephen but also for all the other educators on it. People were asking about those non-academic courses that are such a crucial part of an education such as theater, such as PE, such as the fun activities people get into, depending on the grade level. I'm wondering maybe we'll start with Rachel or Diana or Amy, if any of you have any creative ways for those kinds of electives to be provided.

R

Rachel Woodward 2:11:41

I can only speak to what we're doing. This isn't something I've really looked at at other schools, so maybe Diana can share from their district. In terms of our elementary students who receive already weekly PE, art, music from PE, art, music teachers, this is still being provided for them. They're coach, their PE teacher, their art teacher, their music teacher is coming on the screen and leading a little lesson, usually about 30 minutes, once or twice a week. We've had to modify our original schedule for that. And then our middle and high school students who elect into classes, we're doing the same thing. So they're moving,

they're on a much shortened class period than they were originally. And their art, music, PE teachers are still coming on and finding creative ways to engage the kids and learning around those content areas. And then for students who are not able to, or access, or participate virtually, then that's something that's built into that individualized scheduling plan that I that I shared about earlier.

D

Diana Fannon 2:12:47

And I can speak to that as well. Similarly with our secondary students or middle and high school students, because they're built into the schedule, they're operating on a block schedule right now. So they're still receiving all those same elective classes. And we have a student with a visual impairment. And we have the PE teacher who wanted to make sure he was accessing everything. And so we put them in touch with a couple of our resource service providers, our orientation and mobility specialist, and our visual impairment teacher, and so they're all coordinating with our PE teacher who wanted to make sure that everything was accessible. So that's happening. And then in our elementary level, they have all this sort of what they call this special teachers, which are makerspace music, a couple other things I'm probably forgetting, but those are all being provided as well. So that's all happening a couple of times a week for our elementary teachers. And that's being posted to I want to say the school's website. So all of the stuff didn't have access to that. So that's being provided for all of our students at the elementary level.

A

Amy Hanreddy 2:14:06

I just wanted to add that I think that everywhere schools and districts are all of those teachers, those specials teachers, are remain employed. And so that means that they are looking to find ways to continue to provide those services, whether they're through a weekly recorded lesson that they're sending out to kids or through live interaction, but I do think that that depth certainly remains. Those are classes and services that districts want to push out to students and get to students in whatever way they can.

S

Stephen Hinkle 2:14:39

I'll weigh in on this. The hard part is when you have a lesson that you really can't do virtually, and that's the hardest part because, for example, let's say how do you learn to do your construction project in shop class in high school? Or how do you learn how to do like stage lighting, for example, where you need the actual lights and you need the board? There are ways of looking at things like this that is a little more than theoretical. What schools could potentially do is make an appointment, maybe it won't be in a group, but maybe could do one on one similar to how our a grocery store worker or something

doesn't put a mask on. And then they arrange for a couple of times throughout the year where they could go over to the campus in that particular room and then disinfect it afterwards. Another idea would be to see what things people have at home in terms of equipment. Like for example, do they have any tools the kids could work with under supervision? Do they have any equipment? Can they maybe give them an instrument and have them play it? Maybe even, sorry to cry, but maybe even a way of virtually audio mixing and do a cut virtually or something. Or maybe each person reads their lines in an order for theater. Something, I don't know, think about ways that this could potentially be done. But I think it's important that we don't admit those hands-on classes, because I know the main model of distance learning is what you read in front of a book or read in front of the screen. But in some ways we have to do look for alternatives, and maybe when the parks reopen, maybe there are some ways that some low impact sports could even be done. Like, for example, if you have a pool at home, you could do a lesson in swimming. Or if you have a one on one in a tennis court would probably be a six foot distance. Even baseball, if everybody wore masks and everybody used gloves. If you look at the distance even on a baseball field between bases you're looking at 60 feet, which is much more than the Coronavirus can spread. And if one runner was interactive, that would be no more risk than a grocery store. If everybody stayed at a distance and the dugout, I think you could even, when schools reopen, you could probably put 50 fans in a huge football stadium and still be able to do your sports when things reopen. So there is really, even with an audience, you could probably put 10 people in a theater and have a small audience and just have five seats in between each other.



Judy Mark 2:18:54

Thank you, Stephen.



Vivian Haun 2:18:55

Yes, thank you so much Stephen for these really creative solutions. You're absolutely right. There are so many ways that we can and need to get creative about how to get students and all individuals back to where they need to be which is in the community, you know, in places where they were included, and social and participating in the activities that make them both part of the community and that build towards their personal best. I can't wait till those things happen. Stephen, you can hang on.



Stephen Hinkle 2:19:37

One last word. I just want to challenge all the school districts to instead of canceling graduation for our seniors, wait till things reopen and give students an option to walk with



their peers and a prom even if it's in August. Or even if everybody wears a mask while they're dancing or does a little bit less contact with a fast dance and spreads them out in an even bigger room, six feet in between. And you dance with one other person. There are ways of even to make some of that a reality. You just have to be clear.



Judy Mark 2:20:27

We do. I agree. I want to go ahead and close off our webinar and thank our amazing panelists for your compassion and your passion for the work that you do. You are role models for schools that may be struggling with this. And Stephen, you're a role model for so many self advocates and for family members. You are just a voice for my son who can't speak for himself. And I want to just urge everybody that we need to demand the best, not only of ourselves, but others at this time. That we need to lead with kindness and lead with compassion. But that doesn't mean that we shouldn't have high expectations. So if you're out there and you're not getting the education that you're entitled to, or your child is not getting the education they're entitled to, you're not getting the services that you're entitled to, you should be asking for it. Ask for it with kindness. We're all struggling. Teachers are struggling. They have their own kids at home, many of them, or they may be impacted by COVID directly. And so we all have to lead with kindness right now. But at the same time, we all need to be our best selves at this time. So I want to thank you, Vivian, for taking on the very difficult role it is to moderate one of these. For everybody who's still on, we will be posting by tomorrow all of the materials. If I could have all of the speakers send us their PowerPoints so that we can get them up for everybody and please join our mailing list because that way you will always get all of these things by email. Thank you, everyone. And we'll see you next week. We are doing another webinar. We're still planning the date and the time but we will let you know as soon as we've made the decision. Thanks, everybody.



Vivian Haun 2:22:24

Thank you, everyone.