

Student Services - Frequently Asked Questions

What are requirements for providing 504 accommodations during this time?

Federal law requires distance instruction to be accessible to students with disabilities, it does not mandate specific methodologies. Where technology itself imposes a barrier to access or where educational materials simply are not available in an accessible format, educators may still meet their legal obligations by providing children with disabilities equally effective alternate access to the curriculum or services provided to other students. For example, if a teacher who has a blind student in her class is working from home and cannot distribute a document accessible to that student, she can distribute to the rest of the class an inaccessible document and, if appropriate for the student, read the document over the phone to the blind student or provide the blind student with an audio recording of a reading of the document aloud.

[Supplemental Fact Sheet Addressing the Risk of COVID-19 in Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Schools While Serving Children with Disabilities](#)

To be clear: ensuring compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), † Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (Section 504), and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act should not prevent any school from offering educational programs through distance instruction.

The Department understands that, during this national emergency, schools may not be able to provide all services in the same manner they are typically provided. While some schools might choose to safely, and in accordance with state law, provide certain IEP services to some students in-person, it may be unfeasible or unsafe for some institutions, during current emergency school closures, to provide hands-on physical therapy, occupational therapy, or tactile sign language educational services. Many disability-related modifications and services may be effectively provided online. These may include, for instance, extensions of time for assignments, videos with accurate captioning or embedded sign language interpreting, accessible reading materials, and many speech or language services through video conferencing.

It is important to emphasize that federal disability law allows for flexibility in determining how to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities. The determination of how FAPE is to be provided may need to be different in this time of unprecedented national emergency. As mentioned above, FAPE may be provided consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those individuals providing special education and related services to students. Where, due to the global pandemic and resulting closures of schools, there has been an inevitable delay in providing services – or even making decisions about how to provide services - IEP teams (as noted in the March 12, 2020 guidance) must make an individualized determination whether and to what extent compensatory services may be needed when schools resume normal operations.

The Department encourages parents, educators, and administrators to collaborate creatively to continue to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Consider practices such as distance instruction, teletherapy and tele-intervention, meetings held on digital platforms, online options for data tracking, and documentation. In addition, there are low-tech strategies that can provide for an exchange of curriculum-based resources, instructional packets, projects, and written assignments.

Student Services - Frequently Asked Questions

What are the requirements for upcoming 504 meeting dates?

We encourage staff to determine eligibility and hold the 504 meeting within the 60-day timeline, should a student qualify. We are currently working through the counselor connectivity issues, as well as the process for input. It is likely that we will push current referrals out to the edge of the 60 days, simply because our teachers are just starting to develop routines with their students and they'll need the biggest window of time they can get.

Counselors are being encouraged to use the informal notice of review and get input from the student's teaching team if you they plan to review a 504 during this time of working from home.

Knowing we are still Mandatory Reporters: Many have no access to paperwork and scanners? How should they report? Teachers are worried due to limited eyes on kids, parents typically with them, etc. We know abuse cases are on the rise in many counties.

The Mental Health Team has concluded that it is in the best for the Mandatory Reporter to contact Child Protection Services directly and email a brief summary of the report to Student Services.

Since we are still mandated reporters, a verbal report can still be made to DHS, even with limited access to technology. **To report child abuse and neglect in Larimer County call 970-498-6990 or 1-844-CO4KIDS (1-844-264-5437).** The reporting forms are available online: [Child Abuse Instructions and forms.](#) Staff should also complete the written form and keep this in a confidential folder until PSD staff can return to school. At that time, staff can fax the reports as they usually would do, to DHS and Student Services.

What is the expectation for counselors? Continue individual student 1:1, as they can?

Counselors and school staff have been collaborating on what service delivery looks like - per building guidance and best practices. All counseling levels have met this week to discuss service models and best practices around reaching out and working with students and parents.

Lessons? Some are recording lessons and giving links to teachers. What is the general expectation?

Counselors remain committed to providing social emotional, academic and career support to students from a distance. Attached, you will find some suggestions our counselors compiled for supporting and connecting with students.

Leadership at each site is encouraged to reach out to the school counselor(s) to discuss plans and expectations for the school. Counselors are prepared to share their ideas.

Counselor cell phones: we expect contact with families, they are worried about personal cell numbers. Google voice? Other ideas/directions?

See district employee's guidance for additional contact ideas

[Online Platforms for connecting and communicating](#)

Student Services - Frequently Asked Questions

As we shift to remote learning, staying connected is more important than ever and PSD continues to be committed to strong connections for students, families, and staff. Staying well-connected with both colleagues and students is critical for the success of remote learning.

In addition to using district email, if PSD staff wish to connect or collaborate online, PSD will support two primary platforms: G Suite for Education Hangouts Meet and Microsoft Teams. We recognize staff may have familiarity with or curiosity about other online platforms for communication (Zoom, WebEx, Doxy, etc.). At this time, other communication platforms may not be approved or protected under PSD data privacy policies and agreements.

PSD has reviewed that both platforms are currently approved and meet FERPA student privacy requirements. We encourage staff to use either of these platforms for staff-to-staff, staff-to-students, and staff-to-family's connections. Features that both of these platforms include: virtual online meetings with audio and/or video, sharing of screens or documents, recording features.

Staff can use the help guides below for using these platforms.

- G Suite for Education Hangouts Meet - [Training and Help](#); Recorded session G Suite for Education Hangouts Meet Video Conferencing for Staff 101
- Microsoft Teams - [Getting Started Guide for MS Teams](#); [Getting Remote Support and Sharing Your Screen](#) ; [Adding a Teams Meeting in Outlook](#);
 - Recorded session on Microsoft Teams Conferencing for Staff 101

Additionally, we want to be sure to not burden our support teams further with new products, as well as asking staff and families to learn additional products without appropriate support. We want to keep this as consistent as we can for staff, families and students.

If you have questions about the use of other tools or questions on using Microsoft Teams or G Suite for Education Hangouts Meet, please contact enter a ticket through Support Center Online [SCO](http://help.psdschools.org) (help.psdschools.org) using request types IT -> Software -> Microsoft Apps or Google Apps, or contact the Support Center at itsupport@psdschools.org.

Additional applications connected to these two platforms that support communication and are within student data privacy requirements.

- **G Suite for Education Applications:** Google Calendar, Google Drive* (Docs, Sheets, Slides, Forms), Google Hangouts Meet, Google Keep, Google Sites, Google Tasks, Jamboard: *To stay within FERPA compliance and use G Suite for Education, you must be logged into Google under your PSD login only and only share documents in Drive, Docs, etc. to other PSD logins. Anything created in Drive shared outside of PSD logins will no longer meet FERPA requirements.
- **Microsoft Applications:** MS Teams, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, MS Whiteboard and MS forms online

Remote teaching/learning resources

- Expectations and structures for individual school's remote learning opportunities will be communicated by school administrative teams and/or supervisors. PSD educators may also find guidance and resources on the PSD Remote Learning Site: <https://bit.ly/remotepsd>.

Student Services - Frequently Asked Questions

- A Remote Learning Trainings web page is now live, with multiple classes scheduled for this week and beyond. Sessions were focused on Microsoft Teams and G Suite Hangouts Meet. If you were unable to tune into one of the sessions, there are recordings posted on the PSD Remote Learning Trainings site – scroll to the bottom of the page.
- More advanced sessions focused on video conferencing between teachers and students are being offered, as well as sessions on remote learning applications – including Google Classroom, BlackBoard, WeVideo, SeeSaw, Playposit will be offered the remainder of this week and more are being planned. Please continue to reference the [PSD Remote Learning Trainings site](#) for offerings and register to earn credit! EdTech Tools - Office Hours are available to connect with Professional Learning Team Educators for help with various tech tools.

What is the expectation of Mental Health Specialists? Are they going to be connecting kids they have been assigned at our schools?

The Mental Health Team is here to help and support staff and students. The team has worked together to create a plan to support students with whom we have previously worked, as well as those with new concerns. Mental Health Specialists are still available to assist schools and students. We will be reaching out to those on our caseloads to set up with individual families what continuing care will look like.

This may include:

- texts, email, phone calls with families and students
- set appointments to “meet” with students via phone or video services, as appropriate
- compile and share crisis resources w/schools and families

In the case of suicidal students, the Mental Health Team has concluded that it is in the best interest of those students for their parents / guardians to directly contact the Community Crisis Center. Mental Health Specialists cannot conduct the face-to-face assessment, per our usual practice. We know families are already stressed and worried. If a parent contacts you directly with concerns for their student’s safety, please have them call the Community Crisis Center, at 970-494-4200. This is different from our usual procedure; however, we are trying to reduce the effort the family needs to make in order to ensure their child’s safety. We recommend they call ahead before going, as the Crisis Center has made changes to their hours. Please see specifics regarding the Community Crisis Center below.

The Mental Health Team is available for consultation calls and are happy to assist school staff and families if they are unsure what to do in a situation or have concerns about a student or family. Additionally, Safe2Tell is still an option if a student, staff, or family member has concerns about someone.

[PSD mental health and community services](#)

<https://www.psdschools.org/COVID19-MentalHealthResources>

Student Services - Frequently Asked Questions

While schools are closed during the COVID-19 health crisis, PSD's mental health team continues to support students and families in collaboration with building counselors and other building staff. Mental health specialists for your student can be accessed through your school counselor or administration team. Community mental health services and facilities, along with tips from the PSD mental health team are available below.

Community mental health services

Facilities may be closed but services are available. People are encouraged to call or use online resources. If there is an immediate threat to your child or others, please call 911.

- [SummitStone Community Crisis Center](#), 1217 Riverside Ave., Fort Collins. Staff are available 24/7 at 970-494-4200 for crisis concerns, including suicide assessments or text TALK to 38255 to receive mental health crisis support. The facility remains open for Behavioral Health Urgent Care, Mobile Response and Crisis Stabilization Unit services. SummitStone is still open for walk-ins but prefer people call first.
- [CAYAC \(Child, Adolescent and Young Adult Connections\)](#), 425 Mulberry St. Suite 112, 970-221-3308
- [Colorado Crisis Services](#): 1-844-493-TALK (8255) - Colorado's statewide resource for mental health and emotional crisis help, available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Wellness and recovery apps are available.
- [Safe2Tell](#): 1-877-542-7233 - Submit an anonymous report to help someone who is hurting or in need.
- National Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255

Suicide threat assessments...recommendations if needed?

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The Mental Health Team is working with counselors, social workers and EAS to compile resources of all kinds for families and staff. New resources as well as coping and resiliency strategies will be a part of the PSD Thursday update for staff and families. This is information that principals can use in their school newsletters as well to get the word out to their families. If principals need specific information, they can reach out to their MH Specialist and or counselor for additional resource assistance.

Student Services - Frequently Asked Questions

The PSD Mental Health Team recommends families and staff reference:

- [Child Mind Institute's "Talking to Kids About Coronavirus"](#)
- [Parent Caregiver Guide to Help Families Cope with the Coronavirus](#)
- [Cómo hablar con los niños sobre el coronavirus](#)

The Mental Health Team had a full week this past week with connecting with students and families at all levels. MH Specialists used cell phones to call and text students and parents, in addition to using Microsoft Teams and Google Hangout to have video meetings / check in with students and parents. A theme for all MH Specialists is that the team is supporting parents even more now than usual. The needs of families have increased dramatically, and the MH Specialists are assisting families not only with mental health concerns, but access to resources in the community. Melanie will have an update every Wednesday morning for the 9:00 COVID meeting on what we are providing for our families as well as themes and needs that have been identified. We will continue to support, on an ongoing basis, students and families using the device / communication platform that works best for the student and family. Also, the Student Safety Team is connecting with principals and building admin teams re: students on safety plans. The team is communicating with parents and community agencies