



Special Education Leaders' Meeting

July 23, 2020

CONTENTS

01 Welcome

02 DESE Special Education Updates

03 Language Access for Parents

04 Q&A

01

Welcome

Operate from
confidence, not from fear

We're better together

02

DESE Special Education Updates

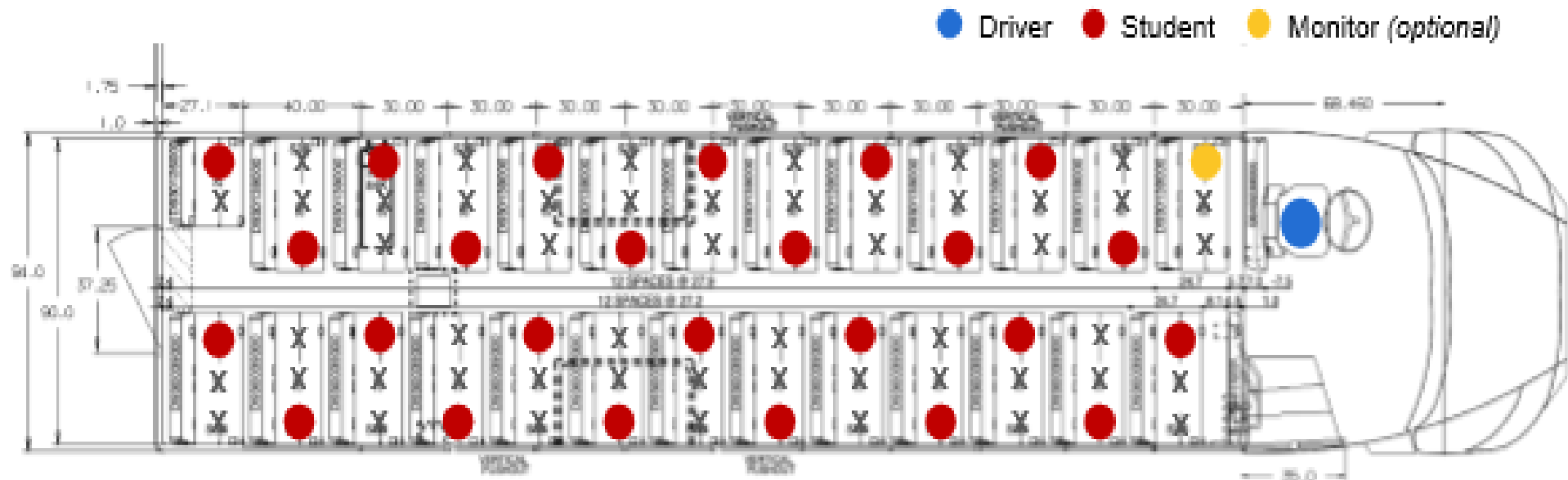
On the Desktop 7/22/20 - Transportation Guidance

Core Principles

- **Masks - All staff and students** on the bus, regardless of age, are required to wear masks at all times.
 - *Exemptions for students due to medical and/or behavioral reasons – and associated protocols – are further described in the guidance.*
- **Distance** - Students should be seated **no more than one student per bench, alternating sides for each row**, which allows students to maintain approximately 3 feet of physical distance. Children from the same household may sit together and in closer proximity (e.g., two students per bench).
 - *Diagrams are provided in the guidance.*
- **Ventilation - Keep windows open** at all times during operation, unless not possible due to extreme weather conditions.
- **Seat assignments** - Students should be assigned to a **single bus and a particular seat**.
- **Bus monitors** Districts should **consider adding a bus monitor** (e.g., volunteer, student leader, or staff member) for every bus to ensure strict adherence to these health and safety guidelines.

On the Desktop 7/22/20 - Transportation Guidance

- Bus configuration represents the maximum* school bus occupancy achievable while maintaining approximately 3 feet of physical distance
 - (i.e., one student per bench, alternating sides for each row)



On the Desktop 7/22/20 - Transportation Guidance

Develop Transportation Plan:

- **Survey** expected ridership for the coming school year.
- Develop strategies for **encouraging alternative modes of transportation**.
- Address bus capacity challenges through **modifications to bus routes and schedules**, including potentially **staggering school start and end times** for greater bus capacity to enable more students to attend full-time, in-person school.
- **Modify boarding, pick-up, and drop-off protocols**, including a plan for defining **bus and seat assignments**.
- Develop health and safety protocols, including but not limited to **screening, masks, physical distancing, hand hygiene, ventilation, and precautions for bus drivers and monitors**.
- Make schedules and protocols for **routine cleaning/disinfecting of vehicles**.
- **Develop strategies, protocols, and training specific to transportation of students with disabilities**, including those who require close contact with adults.
- **Communicate** plans and provide **training for parents/caregivers, students, and staff**.



On the Desktop 7/22/20 - Facilities Guidance

Critical Health and Safety Requirements

- Developed in consultation with pediatricians, infectious disease physicians, other medical advisers, and the COVID-19 Command Center's Medical Advisory Board, and including a review of CDC and WHO guidance
 - **Masks** - covering the nose and mouth are to be worn by students (required for grade 2 students and up and strongly encouraged for kindergarten and grade 1), staff, visitors, and vendors. Exceptions for meals, mask breaks, and medical exemptions are permitted
 - **Handwashing and hand sanitizing** - provide handwashing or sanitizing stations
 - **Physical distancing** - aim for a physical distance of 6 feet when feasible; 3 feet is the minimum distance allowed. From a facilities and operations perspective, it is important to understand how these minimum requirements will affect space layouts and movement protocols
 - **Create cohorts wherever possible**
 - **School cleaning and disinfecting** - occur at least daily for shared spaces; high-touch surfaces (e.g., door handles, light switches, handrails), cleaning and disinfecting should occur multiple times per day between uses
 - **Ventilation** - increase outdoor air ventilation as much as possible
 - **Movement protocols within facilities** - avoid crowding, maintain cohorts, and minimize unnecessary person-to-person interactions

On the Desktop 7/22/20 - Facilities Guidance - Checklist

- **Prepare spaces in the facilities:** Develop plans to prepare the following spaces prior to the start of the school year.
 - Student learning spaces • Staff office set-up • Mask break spaces • Student eating areas • Medical waiting room • Entry and exit points • Storage and disposal of unnecessary furniture or other items
- **Make modifications to facilities and building systems as feasible:** Develop plans to ensure set-up of additional fixtures and appropriate modifications to the existing physical infrastructure.
 - Handwashing and hand sanitizing stations • Ventilation and HVAC systems • Hallways • Bathrooms • Water fountains • Lockers • Signage throughout the building
- **Develop operational protocols:** Develop operations plans to align all staff, families, students, and visitors on expected healthy behaviors and precautions.
 - Cleaning and disinfecting • Food preparation and distribution • Movement in the facility • Arrival and dismissal of students • Sharing items • Visitor and volunteer engagement • Using the medical waiting room •
- **Develop communication protocols**
- **Inform students, families, staff, and visitors to ensure alignment and adherence to guidance**



Student or staff tests positive for COVID-19

- The student or staff member must remain at home (except to get medical care)
- Individual (parent/caregiver or staff member) informs school and personal close contacts to assist with contact tracing
- Determine if individual was on the premises two days prior to symptom onset (or testing positive if not symptomatic) until the time of isolation
 - Close off areas visited until they can be cleaned and disinfected



Protocols for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios in School, on the Bus, or in Community Settings

Student is symptomatic on the bus

- If student is on bus, make sure student is masked, keeps mask on and keeps physical distance
- Ensure all students remain masked
- Driver/monitor call ahead to bus dispatch to make them aware of possibly symptomatic student
- School nurse meets bus (wearing a mask)
- Student with possible symptoms should exit bus first
- Nurse should evaluate student and if any symptoms, they should be placed in medical waiting room and be physically distanced from others



Protocols for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios in School, on the Bus, or in Community Settings

Student is symptomatic at school

- Teacher ensures student is wearing a mask properly
- Teacher calls nurse or school's medical point of contact
- Nurse evaluates the student's symptoms
 - Student remains in designated medical waiting room until caregiver can pick up student
 - Student should not go home on a bus with other students
- Student should be tested or isolate for 14 days
- If tested, isolate until test results are received
- If negative test, student may return to school based on guidance from their clinician or until asymptomatic for 24 hours



Protocols for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios in School, on the Bus, or in Community Settings

Staff is symptomatic at school

- Staff should not come to school if experiencing any symptoms
- If a staff member experiences symptoms during the day:
 - follow the school's protocols for getting another adult to cover their class
 - get tested or self-isolate for 14 days and until
 - isolate at home until test results return
- If test is negative, stay at home until asymptomatic for 24 hours

Protocols for Responding to COVID-19 Scenarios in School, on the Bus, or in Community Settings

Presence of multiple cases in the school or district

- School leadership should work with local board of health to determine if it is likely that there is transmission happening in the school
- When there is suspected in-school transmission beyond one cohort or a small number of cohorts, school and district leaders must consult with the local board of health as to proposed next steps
- **Before a final decision is made on a school or district closure, the superintendent must consult with DESE for further guidance**
 - **Russell Johnston**, Senior Associate Commissioner, Russell.Johnston@mass.gov, 781-605-4958.
 - **Erin McMahon**, Senior Advisor to the Commissioner - Fall Reopening Implementation Lead, Erin.K.Mcmahon@mass.gov, 781-873-9023
- If a school or district closes, send clear information and instructions to families and staff
- Before returning to school:
 - Check inventory of needed supplies and reorder replacement supplies
 - Consider refresher training
 - Reiterate importance of masks, social distancing and hand hygiene

Reporting Requirements for Fall Reopening Plans

- **By July 31**, districts, collaboratives and approved special education schools must complete and submit a **preliminary** reopening plan summary to DESE.
- **By August 10**, districts, collaboratives and approved special education schools must **finalize** comprehensive plan documents, **submit** them to DESE, and **release them publicly**.
- **Commissioner's Instructions for Submitting Plans:** <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/2020-0715two-step-process.docx>
- **To Submit Preliminary Plans:**
- <https://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/5725769/Preliminary-School-Reopening-Plan-Summary>
 - Questions about the plan submission process or the online form? Contact reopeningk12@mass.gov.
 - Need technical assistance with the online form for technical or formatting issues? Contact research@doe.mass.edu



Preliminary Plans Must Include:

- Findings from the district/collaborative/approved special education school's feasibility study on in-person learning.
- The district/collaboratives/approved special education school's **preliminary thinking** about which of the three reopening models it will use this fall (i.e., in-person, hybrid, or remote).
- Each model must include support for students with disabilities, current or former English learners, and/or economically disadvantaged students (i.e., High Needs students).



Final Plans Must Include:

- **Description of in-person learning model**
 - A subset of families may decide their children will continue in a remote learning model.
- **Description of hybrid learning model**
 - Some High Needs students may still participate in full-time in-person instruction.
 - Some families may decide that their children will learn remotely.
- **Description of remote learning model**
 - The default for all students, though some High Needs students may still be served in-person full time or through a hybrid model.
 - **Must** include:
 - Adherence to **Structured Learning Time** requirements
 - Procedures for all students to participate in remote learning, including **a system for tracking attendance and participation**;
 - Alignment of remote academic work to **state standards**;
 - A **grading policy**
 - A method for teachers and administrators to **regularly communicate with students' parents and guardians**, including providing interpretation and translation services to limited English proficient parents and guardians.
- **Other requirements**, including information about technology platforms, staffing model, curriculum, and instructional materials; an out-of-school time plan; plans for student supports and professional learning; and certification that the district, collaborative or approved special education schools meets DESE health and safety requirements.

COVID-19 Compensatory Services and Recovery Support- Preview

- Guidance is expected to be issued next week
- Extensive stakeholder feedback on an early draft that was created for discussion purposes
- Refers to three types of services and supports (new terms)
 1. **Recovery Support** – to mitigate regression and gaps in learning for all students (e.g., MTSS, DCAP)
 2. **COVID-19 Compensatory Services** –determined by the Team as what’s needed to remedy skill or knowledge loss or lack of progress resulting from delayed, interrupted, or suspended IEP services because of the emergency extended suspension of in-person education related to the COVID-19 pandemic
 3. **Additional IEP Services** – to address new areas of disability-related need

Give us your feedback

- [Guidance on Fall 2020 Special Education Services](#) emphasized authentic family engagement with teachers and IEP liaisons contacting parents as soon as possible to discuss how a student's IEP services will be delivered if different than described in the student's IEP

QUESTION: How can that discussion facilitate collection of information, and discussion of planning for necessary COVID-19 Compensatory Services, Recovery Support, or Additional IEP Services?

- What does that conversation look like?
- What will families need to know to be prepared for that conversation?



Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) SLP Working Group Recommendations

- Chromebooks do have functionalities necessary for students, including built-in camera and mic

BUT

- Microphone is lower quality, thus problematic for kids who are DHH
 - Do not have functionalities necessary for service providers, including software installation and the ability to easily stream multiple videos
 - Are not adequate for kids with VI or who need Closed Captioning
- Consider two sets of AAC equipment
 - One for home and one for school

AAC - Staff and Students will need

- Adequate bandwidth (could be provided by portable hotspot)
- Ethernet cable (to support a more stable internet connection, especially recommended during tele-assessment)
- Secondary web camera and camera mount (to display face and actions at the same time, especially important for some students with severe disabilities, including students who use AAC)
- Headsets (necessary for all SLPs; may be necessary for some students, especially during tele-assessment)
- iPad with AAC applications (necessary for all SLPs working with students who use AAC) Service providers will require training and support

Preparing to Transition Children Back to School Webinar (PreK – 2)

July 30 at 1 p.m.

The Pyramid Model Consortium has developed a webinar specifically for Massachusetts' school and district leaders.

As we prepare to welcome children and families to our schools, there are many questions about how to best support this transition. This webinar will focus on:

- concrete strategies to support a seamless re-opening in our early childhood and early elementary settings
- social emotional needs of young children amid COVID-19
- how to embed the current guidance from MA DESE into our daily interactions, schedules, and routines
- taking care of ourselves and each other so that schools provide both a safe and a welcoming atmosphere for children


Registration link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/administrators-and-leaders-only-transitioning-back-to-school-tickets-114188326358>

Special Education Leaders Meetings for August 2020

Date/Time of Meeting	Link	Meeting ID / Password
Thursday, August 6, 2020 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	https://zoom.us/j/93635387983?pwd=Z1hLR2dmMXcrSVhycVJHenpOY3J3Zz09	Meeting ID: 977 7437 1789 Password: 928335
Thursday, August 20, 2020 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	https://zoom.us/j/93116828281?pwd=bUFiL0pNOGQvb3BKsZJxTWZ0SmZHdz09	Meeting ID: 931 1682 8281 Passcode: 394211

03

Language Access for Parents



Engaging and Empowering
CLD Families of Students with
Disabilities during the
Pandemic

Dr. Lusa Lo

University of Massachusetts Boston



What's **NOT** Working – Examples

- Assumptions, such as
 - Parent capabilities
 - Resources available at home
- Use untrained interpreters and translators
- Online class schedule conflicts
- Overly rely on online instruction/independent work time
- Rely on one mode of communication only



What's Working – Examples

- Rethink what parent engagement is
- Take time to know the families – importance of parent choice
- Two-way communications
 - “human touch” + debrief
- Be creative
- Utilize parent network + community support + resources



Q&A

- Online translators?
- Statewide list of interpreters?
- Ensure family engagement – non or limited English speaking families?
- PD opportunities?
- Remote assessment?
- Regression – language differences vs language disability?

04

Q&A

THANK YOU

