



April 17,2020

Dear Parents of Students with Disabilities,

The COVID-19 outbreak has caused unprecedented change in the state of Georgia. With a commitment to keep the health, safety and well-being of students and staff the highest priority, Paulding County School District remains closed for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was regulated to ensure rights for students with exceptional needs and their families. IDEA was not built for the COVID-19 pandemic; however, Georgia and Paulding County School District have strived to build capacity for exceptional teachers, leaders and families to meet the needs of our most vulnerable students during this unprecedented time. In light of the global pandemic, PCSD remains committed to ensuring that students with disabilities maintain equitable access to the general curriculum and receive special education services to the greatest extent possible.

PCSD is demonstrating good faith efforts for each student with a disability. Our plan for Digital Learning Days (DLD) prioritizes health and safety guidelines specific to the COVID19 outbreak for students, families, teachers, leaders and related service providers. Our DLD plan is designed to be reasonable within the scope of home access and opportunity for each student and his/her family and continues to consider and include decisions to enable students with disabilities to be involved in and make progress with the general curriculum.

Special Education Services through Digital Learning

The district began Digital Learning Days on Tuesday, March 17. Digital Learning Days will continue. The PCSD ESEP Digital Learning Plan is available on [our website](#).

IEP Meetings and Eligibility Meetings

The district plans to hold all IEP and Eligibility meetings during the district closure.

As school will not be in session for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year, we encourage all parents to hold any required meetings using an alternate format. GADOE-Special Education and Student Supports Department recommends that school districts utilize virtual meetings. We plan to offer two options for virtual meetings.

- 1) We can provide a video conference option for all meetings. We will use the ZOOM video conferencing platform (computer, tablet, or smart phone) to conduct all meetings. There is no cost for using this platform.
- 2) We can provide a conference call option for all meetings. Case managers will send you a phone number with an access code. Call in from any phone and hold your meeting.

Staff from your child's school will contact you to schedule a meeting and email you pertinent information for the virtual meeting. Our goal is to respect your time and to provide meaningful parent participation in a timely manner.

If you choose to wait for a face-to-face meeting, there could be a substantial delay until we are back in school. All educators will continue to follow each student's current IEP until such time a face-to-face meeting may be scheduled. Once we return to school meetings will be scheduled after August 21, 2020, to allow time for teachers and students to settle into the new school year routine.

We hope that you and your family stay safe and remain healthy during this pandemic crisis. As always, our goal is to ensure our students have access to the services and supports required in their Individualized Educations Program (IEP). For specific questions or concerns, please communicate with your child's case manager.

If you have additional questions, please email studentservices@paulding.k12.ga.us

Check our webpage for more updates: <https://www.paulding.k12.ga.us/site/Default.aspx?PageID=364>

Sincerely,
Amy Penn, EdS
Executive Director of Student Services
Paulding County School District