



CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT #1
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Office of the Superintendent of Schools
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August 26, 2020

Dear Unified School District #1 School Community,

Over the past few weeks, much information has been shared with our school community regarding our reopening plans. On September 8, 2020, Unified School District #1 will reopen using our Full Time, In-Person model. We are prepared to move between each of the models for learning, 100% in person, hybrid, and completely remote as needed throughout the school year.

As we transition students and staff back to the classroom, we will employ all health and safety mitigation practices (mask-wearing, handwashing, maximizing social distancing, sanitizing classrooms and schools, cohorting, etc.) consistently and thoroughly. New guidance received from the Connecticut State Department of Education that informs our processes will continue to be shared with the school community. Information specific to students with special needs and the implementation of individualized education programs has been released and is detailed below.

Re-Opening Guidance for Students with IEP/504 Plans

Unified School District #1 will provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to each student determined eligible and for whom an individualized education program has been developed. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the delivery of FAPE to all students may vary depending upon the instructional model being followed. (i.e., Full time In-Person Learning, Hybrid/Blended Learning, Full Remote Learning). Students with disabilities will be prioritized during the 2020-2021 school year, regardless of the model that is required due to the health crisis.

Unified School District #1 will determine how to best educate and provide individualized education program (IEP) services to students identified as requiring special education within the context of each instructional delivery model while adhering to current health and safety protocols. While challenges exist, maintaining the health and safety of our students and staff while providing educational access consistent with the law and in the best interest of students continues to be the top priority.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) has developed the Learning Model IEP Implementation Plan for districts to document the delivery of special education and related services that may be impacted by the school district's response to the pandemic. The IEP Implementation Plan must be used to describe any difference in the delivery of IEP services and will serve as the necessary notice to parents. It is allowable, but not required to discuss the IEP Implementation Plan during a planning and placement team meeting (PPT). Unified School District #1 staff will collaborate with parents and students to engage in meaningful consultation to discuss how a student's IEP services will be delivered in a manner that may differ from how it is described in the student's IEP. It may also be helpful to be reminded that change in delivery of IEP services due to a transition to a different instructional delivery model alone does not constitute a change of placement.

If a change in learning plan is necessary, we will ensure we communicate with families and staff in a timely manner.

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we continue to manage this public health crisis and plan for a safe return to school.

In partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Maria", followed by a large, stylized flourish that extends to the right.

Maria Pirro-Simmons
Superintendent of Schools