A Conversation with State Superintendent Chris Reykdal

Special Education During COVID-19

Hosted by The Arc of Washington State & WA State Developmental Disabilities Council

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Students with Disabilities in Washington State

- 143,000 students with disabilities, ages 5-21
- Over 300 school districts, tribal schools and charter schools
- It is estimated that over 13.5% of all students have disabilities
- Only 57% of students with disabilities are included in general education settings for 80-100% of the school day
- Washington is currently one of the least inclusive states, ranking 44 out of 50
- Disciplinary rates of students with disabilities is 2.5 times higher than for students without disabilities
- Rates of Restraint and Isolation disproportionately affect students with disabilities
- 4 out of 10 students with disabilities report being bullied or harassed at school
Impact of COVID-19

Some students require specialized services:

- Speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, vision therapy, behavioral support, and communication support
- Assistive technology devices and instruction
- Specialized curriculum modifications and strategies to enhance attention, learning, and retention
- Environmental supports to engage in learning and progress

Students are at risk for regression and recoupment issues
Families Share

1) Adana Protonentis from Seattle
2) Jennifer Lee from Spokane
3) Maria Mendoza from Lake Stevens
4) Rachel Nemhauser from Seattle
5) Emilee Everett from Everett
Impact of COVID-19

- Schools – There are no risk-free environments during a pandemic
- “Safer” Schools Follow safe procedures
- All Districts must have a plan 2 weeks prior to starting that follow DOH guidelines
- IEP v Continuous Learning Plan – Districts must follow IEPs beginning this Fall
- FAPE is the standard – Measurable progress
- Case by case basis – students may receive in person instruction
- IEP Team is the KEY
COVID-19 Resources

• Parent Guide – *Summary of Reopening Washington Schools 2020: Special Education Guidance*

• *Reopening Washington Schools 2020: Special Education Guidance*

• OSPI website – Special Education Guidance for COVID-19:
What If I Need Help??

• The Office of the Education Ombuds: https://www.oeo.wa.gov/en

• OSPI Special Education Parent Liaison: https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/special-education/guidance-families-special-education-washington-state/need-assistance

• Sound Options Mediation: http://somtg.com/our-services/conflict-engagement/mediation/
Formal Complaints

• Filing an OSPI Citizen’s Complaint:  https://www.k12.wa.us/student-success/special-education/dispute-resolution/file-citizen-complaint

• OSPI Office of Equity and Civil Rights:  https://www.k12.wa.us/policy-funding/equity-and-civil-rights

• Office for Civil Rights, Region 10 (covers Alaska, American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington and the Northern Mariana Islands)

Office for Civil Rights, **Seattle Office**
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