

Special Education Frequently Asked Questions Regarding a Return to School 2020-21

The purpose of this document is to provide you with the most up to date and current information the School District of Janesville has regarding a return to school as it pertains to students with disabilities. As information is added and/or updated during this ever changing and fluid time, it will be shared out.

Original Release Date: July 15, 2020

Update: July 22, 2020

1. Will my student who receives special education be able to return to a school building when school starts in September?

- a. The Board of Education approved a face-to-face return to school for all students for the 2020-21 school year at the July 14, 2020, Board of Education Meeting. All students receiving special education services ages 3 through 21 are able to return to school. The current IEP for each student will be implemented when a student returns to school face-to-face.
- b. An IEP team meeting will be held to complete a change in placement and to review/revise the IEP of those students with disabilities who will participate in ARISE Virtual Academy full time or through the hybrid model. This meeting will be held no later than October 1, 2020.

2. Can students with disabilities attend ARISE Virtual Academy? (Updated July 22, 2020)

- a. Decisions concerning a student's participation in virtual learning are made on an individual basis. The decision about the appropriateness of virtual education and the services, supports, or accommodations needed to allow participation by students with disabilities is made on a case by case basis in accordance to state and federal requirements. If it is determined that virtual learning is appropriate for the student, students eligible for special education services are provided with reasonable accommodations to allow them access to virtual learning.
- b. Students with disabilities in grades K-12 are eligible to be considered to be full time students through ARISE Virtual Academy. Please call ARISE at (608) 743-6016 for more information or visit <https://www.ariseva.com/apply-now> to complete an application.
- c. Students with disabilities in grades 6-12 are eligible to be considered for a hybrid learning model in which some courses are taken from home through ARISE and some courses are taken in the student's current school building. Please contact

your student's current school building or ARISE at (608) 743-6016 to further discuss whether a hybrid model is appropriate for your student with a disability.

- d. An IEP team meeting will be held to complete a change in placement and to review/revise the IEP of those students with disabilities who will participate in ARISE Virtual Academy full time or through the hybrid model. This meeting will be held no later than October 1, 2020.
3. **As a parent of a student with a disability, I am not comfortable with my student returning to school face-to-face and the virtual options through ARISE Virtual Academy are not appropriate? What can I do? (Updated July 22, 2020)**
- a. Parents are able to enroll students reaching age six on or before September 1st in homeschooling if they are not comfortable with any model the District has provided. The Department of Public Instruction does not allow for students who are ages four or five to be homeschooled.
 - b. Parents should go to the [Department of Public Instructions Homeschooling Site](#) and complete the required PI-1206 form and read about what enrolling in homeschooling entails for the parent and student. Parents are able to re-enroll with the District at any point and time throughout the school year, as well as, enroll or re-enroll their student in homeschooling.
 - c. Students enrolled in homeschool are eligible to take up to two courses in their assigned school building based upon the school building schedule. An IEP team meeting will be held for students with disabilities who elect to take up to two courses in their assigned school building based upon the building schedule. The IEP team will determine what services may need to be provided for the courses the student elects to take. Parents of students with disabilities interested in taking up to two courses as a homeschooled student should call (608) 743-5061 for more information and details.
 - d. Students enrolled only in homeschool and not electing to take up to two courses in their assigned school building will not be provided with special education services.
4. **Will my P4J student with a disability be able to participate in the home based learning model offered by the District? (Added July 22, 2020)**
- a. Districts are required to implement IEPs as they are written. Parents should review their P4J student's current IEP to determine if they would like to further discuss whether or not the services written in the IEP can be provided based upon the home based learning model.

- c. Due to COVID-19, homebound instruction may consist of online or virtual instruction, teleservices, instructional telephone calls, and other curriculum based instructional activities appropriate for the student.
 - d. Once homebound applications are reviewed by the District, families will be notified of next steps in the process, as well as, the IEP team.
- 8. My student with a disability lives in a household with family members who have underlying medical conditions that may make them susceptible to COVID-19. I am concerned about a face-to-face return to school. Are there any options? (Added July 22, 2020)**
- a. The IEP team should convene to discuss the situation and determine the student's placement. Written information regarding the family health needs should be provided to the team and will be given significant consideration. The IEP team may consider homebound instruction to be implemented as outlined in question five of this document.
- 9. What happens if a student with a disability needs to be quarantined due to the student or a family member testing positive for COVID-19?**
- a. If a student with a disability contracts or is exposed to COVID-19, and needs to be in quarantine away from school for up to 14 calendar days, and the student is available for instruction, then the District, in consultation with the parent, must consider what services such as online or virtual instruction, teleservices, instructional telephone calls, and other curriculum based instructional activities, should be provided. The IEP team will work with the parent and complete a School Closure Special Education Student Plan.
- 10. What if my student with a disability will not keep a mask, face covering or shield on? Can my student with a disability still return to school face-to-face?**
- a. The District recognizes that there are certain circumstances in which a student or staff member may not be able to wear a mask, face covering, or shield. These students and staff are still allowed to be in school face-to-face with others.
- 11. I am worried that my student with a disability will have behaviors or reactions to staff he or she is familiar with if a mask is worn by the staff member. How will this be dealt with?**
- a. The District recognizes that many students, with and without disabilities, may require facial recognition of a trusted adult. The District has purchased face shields for staff to wear when working with students in these situations.

12. I have been told that school districts are being allowed to put all special education students in their own classroom for the duration of the school day in order to help reduce class sizes for physical/social distancing to occur in the general education classrooms. Will the School District of Janesville be following through with this?

- a. The IEP team makes the least restrictive environment decisions, including the specific determinations of appropriate educational services, location, and building or facility. This determination must meet the individual student's educational needs. To the maximum extent appropriate, the student must participate with nondisabled peers. The least restrictive environment must also enable a student to make progress in light of a student's disability. If a student is not making progress, the IEP team should discuss if the least restrictive environment needs to be more restrictive, or if there are other strategies, tools, accommodations, and/or modifications that could be implemented to increase the rate of progress.
- b. The School District of Janesville will use a student's current IEP to make placement and scheduling decisions for a student with a disability. The District will not go against the law and place all students with disabilities in segregated classrooms in order to decrease class sizes in the general education setting.

13. If my student with a disability qualifies for transportation as a related service, will my student still receive transportation? Can I choose to transport my student myself even if my student has transportation in his or her IEP? (Added July 22, 2020)

- a. Students with disabilities who return to school face to face and who also qualify for transportation to and from school will still receive transportation as written in the IEP.
- b. If the IEP team determines a parent will provide the transportation required as a related service to and from school and it is documented in the IEP, the parent is entitled to reimbursement for the transportation costs. The general practice is a District provided gas card each week based upon student daily attendance at school.

14. I have been told that my student with a disability will be getting compensatory services when school resumes due to school closure in the spring of 2019 due to COVID-19. Is this accurate and what does this mean?

- a. Due to school buildings being closed by state order as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Department of Public Instruction will not mandate Districts to provide compensatory services to students with disabilities. Compensatory services are provided when a school district fails to provide a student with a disability a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The

Department recognizes the significant efforts Districts have made to allow for continuity of learning during school closure and that Districts have used a variety of approaches. Compensatory services will not be mandated.

- b. As circumstances could change to the unpredictability of COVID-19, the Department of Public Instruction could release further guidance on Districts providing additional services. More information regarding additional services will be provided to parents in September once school resumes.