REMOTE LEARNING GUIDANCE

Students with disabilities often have complex needs regarding accessing the curriculum. The individual needs of students are varied and present challenges for families currently working to provide instruction in virtual and remote learning environments. Families need to feel comfortable requesting more frequent communication and increased support from educators who are assisting with instruction in the home.

The purpose of this document is to help families identify ways they can work with educators to provide instruction and support to students with complex needs. Family-school collaboration is critical to remote learning.

PLANNING FOR VIRTUAL AND REMOTE LEARNING

Step 1: Provide input and information regarding available resources.

- Inform educators of your desire to support your child's ongoing learning.
- Request information about expectations of the virtual and/or remote learning environment.
- Provide information about available resources and regular routines in the home.
- Determine how to embed instruction into the natural routine to create authentic teaching opportunities.
- Focus on integrating academic and functional skills taught at school into the home setting.

The following questions may help you provide relevant information to your child's teachers.

- What resources are available in the home that you can repurpose as teaching materials or manipulatives?
- What is the family's current access to various technologies that could support learning?
- What time(s) of day and type(s) of communication is best for the family?
- How much time during the day or week does the family have to devote to instruction?
- Does the family have any immediate needs that the educator can help address?

Step 2: Review student needs and identify priorities.

Revisit the Individual Education Program (IEP) goals and objectives, progress data, and any updated information with your child's teacher. Identify the critical skills that will best assist your child in continuing his or her progress.

The following questions may help you identify priorities.

- What IEP skills does my child most need to work on given the current learning environment?
- Are there IEP skills or instructional strategies that should be revisited and revised to build on performance fluency, promote generalization, and/or minimize regression?

Step 3: Create and communicate the plan.

Now that you have identified priorities from the IEP and collaborated with the teacher, it is time to identify the instructional delivery methods to meet student needs. This is most effectively accomplished in collaboration with your child's IEP Team. Consider a combination of methods to create an instructional program that will position the student to continue making progress.

Examples for instructional delivery options might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Teacher consultation:** including training on how to use resources and materials to support the implementation of daily schedules and visual supports, simple strategies to prevent challenging behavior, assisting the family in understanding assignments, and use of any equipment or assistive technology materials or tools.
- **Hands-on non-digital activities:** work packets, task boxes using common household items, project-based activities, reading books or magazines, learning with repurposed manipulatives, lessons, checklists, visual schedules for functional tasks, leisure skills, and vocational skill assignments.
- **Digital learning activities:** digital learning platform assignments (e.g., watch videos, read online books, play a web-based game, and complete online documents). These assignments should directly reinforce student goals.
- **Video instruction (live or recorded):** general instruction – academic activities or functional skills appropriate for multiple students, individualized instruction – academic activities or functional skills related to student-specific goals or objectives, and provide video modeling of hands-on tasks expected of students.
- **Telephone calls, chat, or text communication with the student:** practicing communication skills.

Step 4: Implement plan and progress monitor.

- Be in contact regularly with the teachers to monitor progress and adjust instruction as needed.
- Choose monitoring methods that align with the assignments given to the student. Allow evidence to show task completion or progress towards IEP goals.
- Document all communication attempts, instructional plans, and student progress with your child's teachers.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Supporting Virtual Learning provides guidance on Preparing Students for Success in Virtual Learning, Structuring Virtual Learning Classrooms, and Effective Instructional and Assessment Practices.

Planning for Virtual Teaching and Learning provides guidance on Virtual Teaching and Learning Approaches and Tips for Teaching and Learning Online.

Professional Learning provides strategies available for students to connect and avoid barriers to distance, learning, Open Educational Resources (OER), and information on Virtual Virginia and the Virtual Virginia (VVA) Outreach Program.

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