



Texas Association of Community Schools

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TACS Zoom Meeting Summary Zoom
Meeting with TACS and Sara Leon & Associates
Monday, March 23, 2020
11:00 AM

1. TEA Waivers/Transportation Issues -

This agenda item came about as a follow up to Friday's call.

One question dealt with teachers working on ESL certification. Would they be able to receive extensions on those waivers granted for this school year. In discussing this further with the superintendent asking the question, April is when the board reviews teacher contracts and the teachers will have not completed the requirements because they were receiving instruction within the district and are focusing on delivering student instruction through technology and other delivery methods now rather than completing their own coursework. Waivers are addressed in many ways on the TEA website fact sheets - they show extended deadlines in each case so far. Crystal gave the superintendent with the question additional contact information to make contact for a written response prior to her board meeting.

There is a lot of info posted about funding on the TEA website.

A common question coming up is, "When we do reopen what if my kids don't show up? Will my funding be cut?" No. There will be low attendance waivers and other options developed for these situations.. TEA is working to get that guidance together as they receive clarification from US Department of Education.

With regards to transportation funding, they are still reviewing everything but the thoughts right now are that they will more than likely be holding transportation funding at a similar amount your district received last year.

In regards to FAPE: see the [new fact sheet from USDE](#) , which is also posted to site.

TACS cliff notes version of the TEA update from March 20th regarding Special Education Students and FAPE:

LEAs should identify and acknowledge any service limitations in your district. If you can't provide things like Speech therapy, PT, or OT, you should document your efforts show you are making reasonable efforts to provide IEP now and as well as when school resumes.

Notify families of things their child can work on until then, and/or have PT/OT staff send homework they can work on. Make sure you are including private facilities, preschools, and transitional homes and are contacting those folks as you work with identifying and addressing instruction for all students.

TEA also says make sure you are providing real-time opportunities for parents for their questions, like video or teleconferences.

If you're changing locations/schedules, the LEA is responsible for providing "clean, safe, and disinfected" locations. When face-to-face contact starts, we'll have to figure out how to address that more thoroughly.

Document any deviations, especially timeline discrepancies.

Go to your school board and have them adopt local policy during this period. These timelines may be exceeded but utilize whatever technology you can to hold ARD meetings and make changes/provisions to anything being worked on.

Hans Graff from Sara Leon and Associates cites that members of ARD committee are specified by federal law and doesn't believe you can change or reduce members of ARD committee during this time. You'll still need to have an administrator, teacher, special ed teacher etc.; you may not need someone from assessment. However, you have hold your ARD committee meetings (via telephone, video call etc..), figure out how to meet core instructional needs of students and prevent regression. For signatures, set up e-signatures or have people acknowledge on the call that they agree to any changes/the ARD as specified and agree to have their names signed. Have department chair, Sp Ed director, or whoever is holding agreement to sign for each participant.

You can still have IEP meetings – you can make changes to IEP and circulate it to required members. Of course, you still have to comply with state/federal laws. Even if you don't convene as a group, that group has to agree to any changes.

Instruction Information

For districts experiencing difficulty with internet access, [see this link](#) to the Texas Cable Association's website, which tells you how different cable companies are assisting districts to getting free/low cost access to kids without internet.

On March 20, TEA posted an [Instructional Continuity Checklist](#); what they are recommending for instructional delivery methods. Great resource to walk you through. Please share any other resources with us.

[Lead4ward](#) has developed a format that allows you to plug your staff into their software and utilize the templates they've developed. We aren't sure what it costs, but it's worth looking into! Info posted on our FB from Jill Siler at Gunter. She said it made their life a lot easier and they were able to get teachers set up within 90 minutes.

In terms of availability for internet options, TACS asked what superintendents have been trying. James Cowley from Groesbeck ISD reports that they did an initial online survey with their students' homes, just a Google doc that teachers manage about what internet access families have, if they need food delivered, if they need paper materials. You can see what his district put together [here](#). Jason Marshall also sent the survey his district did - see [here](#).

Jason Marshall of Palestine ISD also inquired about board meetings procedures during this time. His district had an emergency board meeting last week, but their regular meeting is scheduled for this Thursday. Do they still have to have monthly meeting? If they have it, can they do that over video/phone call?

Sara Leon reported that yes, you are not required to have the regular meeting and it can be done over video or teleconference. As long as you adhere to normal posting requirements and make materials available to the public. If you can post 72 hours in advance as usual, you can and should. If calling an emergency meeting, you don't have to.

Rose Mary Neshyba of Lake Worth ISD reports that they hosted our first online meeting yesterday to take care of a resolution and purchased modular buildings.