



## EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DISTRICT 112

March 20, 2020

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TIM MERLINO

Dear Parents of Exceptional Children,

As all of you are no doubt aware, Governor Jay Inslee closed all schools in the state of Washington through April 24, in an effort to aggressively slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19). The ESD 112 partners with the leadership and educational staff in your district to provide special education services for your child and we understand the effect these necessary school closures are having on families. This is an unprecedented time for our educational system and because of that there are many details we are working out on a daily basis. We appreciate your patience as we navigate a situation we have not experienced before. I want to assure you that there are two things we will never lose sight of; the significance of ensuring the safety of your family and our colleagues and the impact of this closure on your child's educational growth and development.

As partners in education, your school district and the ESD 112 recognize the significant consequences an extended school closure will have on our entire community including students, families and staff. Furthermore, we acknowledge the anxiety this may cause our parents and students, especially those who depend on us for special education instruction and related services. You may be wondering what to expect during the school closure related to your student's IEP and special education services. To that end, we have included a list of frequently asked questions to help address many of the common concerns about how special education services will be impacted by the extended school closure.

Staff in your district will provide further communication with you in the upcoming days and weeks, collectively and individually, around the cancellation and rescheduling of IEP and evaluation meetings. At this time, OSPI has not prohibited to the use of school buildings for meetings and individual evaluation activity as long as we maintain social distancing guidelines. This allowance may change in the near future. We are developing plans on how meetings can be held via technology also. We are currently evaluating plans to provide educational services during the closure, also. It has not been determined, at this time, if this can occur or in what format. We are looking into both innovative and past practices for educational opportunities and offerings. If any form of educational services are being provided by your district, then special education services, equal to those district services, will also be provided to students in those grades. We promise to keep you updated as additional information becomes available. After reviewing the attached frequently asked questions

document we understand that many students and families may still have additional questions and we will do what we can to address them all. The ESD will continue posting updates on our website. Please continue to check [our website](#) and [our COVID-19 page](#) for more information. If you have specific questions related to your student's special education services or IEP related to this closure, please email [Jeffrey Niess](#) or your local school district special education director (from whom you received this email and attached letter) and we will work to respond to you individually. Please know that this is an evolving situation and we are committed to our laser focus on health, safety and educational opportunities for your children.

Sincerely,

Tim Merlino  
Superintendent, ESD 112

Jeffrey Niess  
Executive Director,  
Specialized Student Services