



Home of the New Braunfels Unicorns!

NEW BRAUNFELS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dear Parents,

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented the unprecedented need to provide our students with distant/virtual educational opportunities. TEA has said, “There is no defined or correct method to adequately and equitably meet the needs of all students in an unprecedented event such as the current COVID-19 pandemic response. LEAs need to be flexible and consider employing a variety of delivery options as they make reasonable efforts to provide services to students with disabilities.” As described in the March 12, 2020 guidance from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), LEAs must make reasonable efforts to provide FAPE to students served by special education or served under section 504 even in extreme circumstances such as the current COVID-19 pandemic response.

If the district provides limited educational services to the general student population while direct in-person instruction is suspended, such as through online or virtual learning, the school must ensure that students with disabilities have equal access to the same opportunities. The OSEP states, “The district should, to the greatest extent possible, ensure every student with a disability is provided with special education and related services as outlined in the student’s IEP or Section 504 plan.”

The Office for Civil Rights details, “If an evaluation of a student with a disability requires a face-to-face assessment or observation, the evaluation would need to be delayed until school reopens. Evaluations and re-evaluations that do not require face-to-face assessments or observations may take place while schools are closed, so long as a student’s parent or legal guardian consents...The personnel responsible for ensuring FAPE to a student for the purposes of Section 504, can be utilized to assist with the effort to determine if some, or all, of the identified services can be provided through alternate or additional methods.”

Please know that the NBISD educators are working diligently to offer “alternate or additional methods” of education to your child “to the greatest extent possible.”

Sincerely,
Clay Gillentine
Director of Student Services