

Frequently Asked Questions – FAQs

CUSD Special Education and Section 504

While we hope the information contained in this document is useful, this document is provided only as a resource and should not be considered to be a response to any specific situation. If you have a specific issue for which you need assistance, you are encouraged to contact your student's campus and/or IEP or 504 team. Additionally, the state and federal guidance on these issues is changing on an almost daily basis. As such, the responses to the questions below may also change based on the updated guidance.

Instructional Models for students enrolled in CUSD. Please click on option links below for specific information. The virtual models of instruction are not the same as the distant learning opportunities that occurred during the 4th quarter of the 19-20 school year.

- [FAQs: Elementary Options \(In-person and Elementary Connect\)](#)
- [Understanding Elementary Connect – Chandler Online Academy for Elementary](#)
- [FAQs: Secondary Options \(In-person and Chandler Online Academy\)](#)
- [Chandler Online Academy for Secondary Students \(7-12\)](#)

There may be a need for amendments to the IEPs to support students in this online setting. Services in a virtual setting will not be the same as in person. For instance, if transportation is on an IEP as a related service, transportation will not need to be provided in an online setting. Similarly, a paraprofessional for navigating a campus will not be necessary. These amendments can be completed without an IEP meeting if the parents and the District agree to make the changes without a meeting.

In selecting the model that you believe will work best for your family, please keep in mind that most IEPs and Section 504 Plans can be implemented in an online or virtual setting. However, you should consider your child's individual skills, abilities and needs before making a decision.

1. When can my student receive in person instruction?

When the governor's executive order expires prohibiting in-person instruction, whole-group, small-group and individual instruction may be provided to meet students' needs. Homebound instructional services may also begin for eligible students.

2. How will my child's IEP service be implemented at Chandler Online Academy?

The IEP will be reviewed by the staff to determine the student's needs, goals and services to develop a plan to implement the IEP. If the IEP cannot be implemented as written in this virtual setting, the IEP team will need to convene to determine how the student's FAPE can be provided based on their unique needs.

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3. Will my child be required to wear a facial covering while at school? If my child has special needs, will they be exempt from this requirement? How will this be enforced?

In compliance with Maricopa County, City and Town Guidelines, and the C.U.S.D. Governing Board, all Kindergarten students and above are required to wear face coverings in public places where persons are unable to maintain continuous physical distancing of 6 feet or more. The Arizona Department of Health has established guidelines for medical exemptions to this policy which will be communicated to parents. While this requirement is in place, parents will be notified, and students will be socially distanced during the remainder of the school day or provided an optional face covering, unless a student is medically exempt from requiring such facial coverings. Face Shields are an appropriate facial covering should a mask or cloth covering not be available. The adults in the classrooms will assist students when needed. See Health and Safety FAQs forthcoming.

4. What are the protocols for hand washing for students who have special needs?

Most elementary classrooms have sinks for handwashing, and all classrooms will be provided hand sanitizer. Students will wash their hands with soap and water at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer at the following times: a. Upon arrival at school b. After being outside for physical activity c. Before and after lunch d. Prior to leaving school for home e. After sneezing, coughing, or blowing nose. These practices will be modeled and prompted with physical, visual, and verbal cues as needed.

5. What are the protocols for restroom use and refilling of water bottles?

Students will have access to restrooms throughout the day with and without adult assistant as needed for students with physical and/or cognitive impairments. Clear social distancing requirements will be posted and reinforced in each classroom, and restrooms will have signage as to social distance markers, number of students allowed, and proper handwashing techniques. Students will be permitted to enter the restrooms in groups no larger than the number of stalls/urinals in the restroom. Restroom breaks will be monitored by the teacher and/or paraprofessionals to ensure social distance requirements are being met. Water bottles must be labeled with student's name, and refilling will be determined by each site. Drinking directly from water fountains will be prohibited.

6. Will there be difficulty with students moving from the Online Option (Elementary Connect) to the In-person option?

We ask that once a parent chooses the online option that a commitment be made for one quarter, semester, or year. However, exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis including an IEP team determination.

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7. If school does not start, will a virtual learning opportunity be provided to our students? What will this programming look like until we are able to return in-person?

Yes. Students will be assigned to their in-person teacher at their enrolled site. This teacher will stay with the same cohort of students and transition to in-person/brick and mortar instruction when approved. Students will have access to all content including specials and live instruction through a virtual platform, five days a week. The delivery of specially designed instruction and related services may not mirror in person delivery.

8. How frequently will students have teacher-led lessons and what platforms will be used for these? Will they be live or recorded?

Each Elementary Connect pathway will feature at least three live daily interactions with the teacher. This may include both the general education teacher and/or the special education teacher, therapists or paraprofessionals. Students will confer daily as a class to set the stage for the day, engage in social emotional curriculum, and build relationships. Teachers will provide small group skill-based live instruction based on each student's needs as driven by data collected from the self-paced content and other assessment protocols. Additionally, teachers may choose to provide additional live opportunities for science and social science to support and engage students with the curriculum. Elementary Connect will use Google Meets for live interactions and various screen-recording tools for any prerecorded lessons.

9. How will COA accommodate academic level?

The District will provide equal access to the educational opportunities available via online instruction. The teachers will be responsible to accommodate academic levels if the student is not able to access grade level materials. The provision of FAPE may not be appropriate for some students with disabilities.

10. Will small group instruction occur to assist in addressing learning gaps in the online setting?

Yes, in an online setting. Specially designed instructional practices and/or programs will also be provided online by certificated staff, therapists and/or paraprofessionals.

11. Why is there not a hybrid model specifically for children with IEPs, medically fragile students, etc.?

This is not an option the district chose to provide. If students who are medically fragile are not able to access in person or COA, an IEP team will need to reconvene to discuss options for the provision of the student's FAPE. Homebound is an option if a healthcare provider certifies the student will miss more than 90 days of school due to the student's prognosis.

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12. Many of these medically fragile children, supported by an IEP cannot stay home because their parents work and cannot sit with them the computer to help modify, accommodate, and motivate. Is there an option to work with these families who need in home FAPE with educational professional assistance?

The District has put safety procedures in place for all students and staff. Students who are deemed to be medically fragile are welcome to attend school in a brick and mortar setting. If a student requires homebound or home instruction due to medical need, the District will convene an IEP meeting to determine the appropriate supports and services for the Student to ensure their receipt of FAPE in that setting. Parents will need to make arrangements for care if they are unable to stay home with the student if the student requires homebound or home instruction or parents have made the decision to enroll their child in the online platform.

13. Do the models meet the least restrictive environment as online is not really appropriate for many children supported by IEP/504 and in person is a public health issue?

It is inaccurate to state that online programming is “not really appropriate for many children supported by IEP/504.” Many, if not most, IEPs and Section 504 Plans can be implemented in an online setting. The District continues to have a continuum of services available for all students with disabilities.

As stated in the FAQs for Elementary Connect and Secondary Schools, there will be teachers assigned for online instruction and they will be interacting with students and groups of students virtually. Special educators will also be part of the virtual setting as co-teachers and providers of specially designed instruction. Virtual participation may not be appropriate for some students and IEP teams will need to convene to discuss options.

14. Will CUSD make accommodations for parents that are not comfortable with sending their child back full time? (modified schedule)

As described above, the District has provided two instructional models for students for the 2020-2021 school year. If Parents are not comfortable sending their child(ren) back to school full time, they will need to choose COA instructional model. The service providers will collaborate with online teachers and parents for service delivery. Providers can use Google Classroom and Google Meets to instruct students in this setting.

15. Will you consider a concurrent schedule for students with an IEP?

Yes, if they are in high school where this option is provided.

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16. If we chose online, can we send our children to their home school for specials to provide some social interaction with less exposure?

No, we are keeping the students in a cohort with the same students to limit possible exposure. We have asked that Parents/Guardians commit to an instructional model for at least one quarter with an understanding that circumstances may require changes before the completion of the quarter.

17. Will CUSD have remote Para Pros to assist in homes?

We will not provide in home paraprofessionals. Paraprofessionals will be available to support students under the direction of the certified teachers via virtual model.

18. How will therapies take place, especially vision, for those with visual impairments?

Special Education teachers will provide the services in person or via Google Meets. If a student has a visual impairment, we will work with the family to determine if FAPE can be provided in a virtual setting. If they are in person, therapies will proceed with the appropriate precautions.

19. If we choose an online model, how will PT be handled?

The PT will work with the family to provide modeling of skills in a virtual setting. This related service may not be appropriate in a virtual setting for some students. An IEP team will need to determine if FAPE can be met.

20. If we choose online how will kids who get speech therapy, reading intervention, math intervention get their services?

Virtual small groups with certified teachers, speech therapists, and paraprofessionals via online platform as explained in the general FAQ's.

21. How do accommodations work with online - will online have a read back mode for kids with dyslexia, etc. or kids who have accommodations like getting less questions on math tests because of a math disability will they be able to honor those accommodations online?

Yes, the teachers will make the accommodations outlined in the IEP or 504 plan. An IEP team or 504 team may need to convene to determine if his mode of delivery provides a FAPE for the student.

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22. How does the online model for 7-12 work for kids who are on IEP's when there are no teacher lead classes and it's self-regulated?

For some students, it may not be an appropriate option. There will be live teacher interaction for specially designed instruction via Google Meets. All teachers can provide support to the students who need assistance. See Secondary FAQs.

23. How is my ADHD child supposed to self-teach and stay on task?

If parents choose COA, COA staff will collaborate with the parent to develop partnerships to support the student's learning in the home. Teachers can provide examples of structured schedules to assist with motivation and self-advocacy skills for students.

24. What kind of online program will be available, and will there be any live instruction?

Live instruction will occur via Google Classroom/ Meets if needed. Students with services will have live interaction with their related service providers in small groups.

25. How can my child get an interactive class option online?

There will be opportunities for live interaction when teachers meet with small groups of students or whole class live interaction as outlined in the Elementary Connect FAQ. Secondary is more limited, but live instruction may be provided under a student's IEP for specially designed instruction.

26. Is it possible for CUSD to do a live feed from brick and mortar classroom? This will allow a flawless transition if a quarantine need arises, if school shut down occurs, if a child is medically fragile and cannot attend, and it allows continued social interaction with friends already established which fills a significant need for security.

We are preparing to live stream.

27. How will you make online learning accessible for students normally self-contained and may not be able to read/write or use technology like talk to text?

Self-contained is a level of service and there is a variety of student abilities and needs associated with this level of service. The IEP team will need to convene to determine how FAPE can be provided utilizing this instructional model. Online will not mirror in person services. In this case, an IEP team may need to convene to discuss access virtually and if that method provides a student their FAPE.

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28. If we chose to do online, will there be additional live one on one sessions?

Interactive live sessions can be provided by the teaching staff as well as paraprofessionals.

29. Will the person be from their home school who is teaching them online?

If a parent selects the in-person model, the teacher online will be the assigned teacher at the brick and mortar campus until the District is able to reopen schools. If a parent selects COA, it will not be the same person from their brick/mortar school site.

30. Will CUSD provide the manipulatives necessary for my child to succeed?

The teacher will make the determination of what supplies will be needed for student use.

31. How do they plan to service the needs of the students who need to see the teacher's face and mouth to assist them?

We have face shields available for staff use.

32. In the online sessions, is there a cap for the number of students?

Class sizes may be higher than in person.

33. If we elect COA, is AZ Merit still required?

At this time, the legislature/ADE has not cancelled state testing for spring of 2021.

34. For high school students: will concurrent enrollment, will the IEP be with COA or home school?

Typically, the student is assigned to the home school when they are concurrently enrolled for online classes.

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35. What if my child simply cannot do online once he is enrolled?

The District has asked that parents/students make a good faith effort for a quarter with the understanding that there may need to be some flexibility with this request. As discussed above, it is important that parents make a comprehensive assessment of their child before selecting an instructional model. An IEP meeting may need to take place to discuss the provision of FAPE and the district's offer should online not be appropriate.

36. How can a student receive 1:1 help from online teachers, is that available? If a student needs access to live sessions, they will need to contact the teacher for assistance.

Special education teachers and paraprofessionals will be able to provide support via Google Meets.

37. If a child is enrolled in concurrent at the high school level, who will be grading his work and overseeing his IEP minutes?

The home school general education and special education teacher/service coordinator.

38. Will concurrent students receive transportation when classes are dismissed?

They will have access to Transportation per related services on their IEP.

39. Will parents need to sign liability waivers for in person or concurrent classes?

No.

40. Will career coaching that was taking place at home school be given in the concurrent model?

If the student has access to home school site, the transition specialist and/or career center personnel will continue to provide the support related to career coaching.

41. Will the online instruction be led by a different team vs classroom?

Yes.

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42. Will it be a team from their home school?

We will do our best to ensure the consistency of staff and teams for our students. However, the staff that is teaching in a brick and mortar setting will not be teaching in the online model. We have to use our staff members as efficiently as possible and cannot necessarily guarantee that the staff working with a student online will also be from that student's home school.

43. How will the transition from online to brick and mortar look and more specifically, will all the team members change when returning to the classroom?

If you choose online to start and then change to in person at the quarter, you will return to your school site and staff will most likely change. We cannot guarantee staff as shifts in staff may occur once enrollment is verified. This is also answered in the FAQ's for Elementary In-person and Secondary Schools.

44. Will online curriculum align with brick and mortar curriculum for children with an IEP/504 and children receiving district modified work?

As stated in the FAQ's previously provided by the district, ELA and Math are aligned with Arizona state standards. Social studies and science will be supplemented by teachers with integrative units to embed skills for generalization across disciplines.

45. How will they keep my child safe when she needs the nurse at school due to medical reasons?

If the student has nursing services on their IEP's, the nurse will provide those services as indicated. Our Preschool-8th grade schools do not have a nurse on campus each day. We have Health Assistants who are supervised by an RN (Health Services Coordinators). Protocols have been established to keep students safe if they need to enter the health office for medical needs such as diabetic care, catheterization, or dispensing of daily medications.

46. Will district provide medically fragile children a plexi glass desk screen to aide in precautions.

Not at this time.

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47. What if my child cannot wear a mask, or plays with it...making everyone more at risk?

The staff will model wearing face coverings or face shields, provide education via discussions and social stories. If the student is unable to wear a mask as outlined in the CDC guidelines due to cognitive impairment, mental health issues or physically unable to remove face covering on their own, staff will provide the support needs and physical distancing needed to keep all safe.

48. How will you provide inclusion opportunities both online and in person depending on option chosen?

The teachers and co-teachers will provide inclusive practices and opportunities in the online setting with live instructional activities. In person will proceed as safely as possible. The teachers may be moving instead of the students.

49. How will a transfer IEP meeting for a new student take place?

Virtually at this time.

50. How are they going to honor medical 504's where the kids may be at higher risk when the classes they need are not offered at COA and hybrid model is not available?

Students on 504 plans will be implemented in the courses selected. The courses are being reviewed and will be updated should more courses become available.

51. PRIORITY PRESCHOOL: How is the online option to be laid out for priority preschool? Will it be interactive versus emails?

Interactive via Google Meets for those students eligible under the IDEA for preschool.