

May 6, 2020

Dear Special Education Families and Community,

We--the parents, students, staff, and community members of the Community Advisory Committee for Special Education—want to connect with you, our Special Education community. We want to express our support and solidarity during this eighth week of sheltering in place. We know from first-hand experience the additional challenges that you face and how difficult it can be to get the right information and assistance. We will do whatever we can to promote clarity and transparency even as circumstances continue to change.

It is important that families know that:

- IEP meetings and processes continue to happen during Covid-19;
- accommodations must be implemented to make sure that students have access to learning;
- Special Education instruction and services continue to the extent that it is safe and feasible during the pandemic;

In essence, students continue to have access to a Free and Appropriate Public Education consistent with their IEPs.

With that, please consider this statement from the US Department of Education as you seek support for your child:

“It is important to emphasize that federal disability law allows for flexibility in determining how to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities. The determination of how FAPE is to be provided may need to be different in this time of unprecedented national emergency. As mentioned above, FAPE may be provided consistent with the need to protect the health and safety of students with disabilities and those individuals providing special education and related services to students.”

Follow [this link](#) to review the most recent Special Education federal guidance, which can be found as a 3/21/20 entry on the Office of Civil Rights page of the US Department of Education website under Disability Discrimination.

At this moment, we are reaching out to you individually with a survey that can help us better understand the experiences of your child and your family. By completing the survey, you can help us tell the story of OUSD's students with dis/abilities during Covid-19 and to advocate for dis/ability access and equity. Please share the survey with other families, especially those with students that have low-incidence dis/abilities whose experiences can sometimes be overlooked.

**English Language Survey:** <https://tinyurl.com/ya5dmyhs>

**Spanish Language Survey:** <https://tinyurl.com/yaermffp>

You can also join us for our monthly meeting every 2nd Tuesday of the month. The next meeting on May 11 will highlight what we can know at this point about the Special Education budget for 2020-21 and will include time to address any questions and concerns that you might have about OUSD's Covid-19 response. From this point forward, we will also share what we have learned through our survey.

Information to join the meeting is available on the OUSD events calendar at [www.ousd.org/LCAP](http://www.ousd.org/LCAP).

Please reach out to us as we collaborate with OUSD leaders and find ways to support each other as families and community members. You can contact us by:

- Sending an e-mail message to [cacoakland@gmail.com](mailto:cacoakland@gmail.com)

- Leaving a voicemail message at (510) 545-3837
- Visiting our [CAC Facebook page](#).

As parent and community volunteers, we will do our best to respond quickly and keep the work of the committee going. The staff person that supports the CAC and other advisory committees is Cintya Molina. You can also communicate with her at [cintya.molina@ousd.org](mailto:cintya.molina@ousd.org) or 510-491-6069.

In community and solidarity,

DRAFT