CONTENTS

- Introduction
- Step 1: Identify Resources
  - Review Direct Service Provider Caseloads
  - Identify Technology Resources for Direct Services
  - Assess Student/Family Needs
- Step 2: Develop Approach
  - High-Tech Option
  - Low-Tech Option
  - Communicate with Students and Families
- Step 3: Implement Remote Direct Services
  - Service Delivery Schedule
  - Student Engagement
- Additional Direct Service Resources

INTRODUCTION

When planning for continuous learning, special education teachers and related service providers should provide special education and related services to students with disabilities, to the extent possible. The Direct Services guide builds on the Continuous Education Guidance and Tools document which provides guidance on the development and implementation of continuous learning plans. School systems should consider all actions outlined there while developing a plan for direct services in a continuous learning environment. This Direct Services guide helps school systems develop and implement plans for continuous learning that address direct services (e.g. specialized instruction, speech and language therapy, counseling/social work, occupational therapy) in students’ IEPs.¹

¹ This document reflects current information gathered and will be updated as new information becomes available.
STEP 1: IDENTIFY RESOURCES

REVIEW DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDER CASELOADS
- Review current caseloads for each direct service provider to determine any adjustments, if necessary. Pull SER reports (e.g. Report of Services) and other logs to review.
- Review students, including IEP goals and services, for adaptability to continuous learning. Speech and language therapy, occupation therapy, and counseling/social work and psychology services have established high-tech delivery models for continuous learning.
- Determine if alternate methods of instruction or IEP modifications are necessary to deliver continuous learning, and document any adjustments.

IDENTIFY TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES FOR DIRECT SERVICES
- Consider non-public platforms like Apple FaceTime, Facebook Video Chat, Zoom, Duo, Enable My Child, Skype, and Marco Polo. These platforms can require passwords, meeting IDs, or a planned time to connect. Consider features needed to deliver direct services such as webcams, screenshare, and interactive features (e.g. on screen drawing, keyboard control sharing).

ASSESS STUDENT/FAMILY NEEDS
- Understand student and family responses to the Continuous Learning Survey questions, including device and internet access.
- Understand HIPPA flexibilities for direct service providers and student privacy during the COVID-19 extended school closure.

STEP 2: DEVELOP APPROACH

Once school systems understand caseloads, technology resources, and student and family needs, school systems need to decide on a delivery approach for direct service providers. This approach can be high-tech, low-tech, or a hybrid. It may not be the same for every direct service or every student.

HIGH-TECH OPTION
Determine if a high-tech or hybrid approach is appropriate based on
- Student and staff device and internet access,
- Adaptability of direct services to alternate methods of delivery through high-tech platforms, and
- Student IEP goals, need, age, and developmental level.

Direct service providers should evaluate the direct services based on each student’s IEP, and determine the elements that are adaptable to high-tech continuous learning platforms. Direct service providers should consider the different models or structures of service delivery through videoconferencing:
- Student Interactive: Direct services are conducted with interactive audio and video connection in real time to create an in-person experience similar to that achieved in a traditional in-person special education or therapy session.
- Capture-and-share: Images, videos, therapy activities, and special education activities are captured and shared between the student and therapist.
- Hybrid: A combination of interactive follow up to capture-and-share methods whenever possible.

Document the IEP services that were provided via remote service delivery so that data can be used to determine the need for compensatory services when school resumes.

---

2 Public facing video communication applications that broadcast live or anyone can access should not be used. Ex: Facebook Live, Twitch, TikTok.
LOW-TECH OPTION

Determine if low-tech options are appropriate based on student and staff device and internet capabilities, as well as individual student IEP goals, need, age, and developmental level.

Low-tech direct service options can include:

- **Print Materials**: Printed materials, including readings and books, that act as either the primary way to deliver services or as a way to enhance high-tech service delivery. Materials could be disseminated through meal pick up, email, website, or a combination.

- **Skill Building Activities**: Activities that align with IEP goals to develop targeted skills through weekly phone calls, newsletters, emails, and/or videos.

- **Curriculum-Based Activities**: Reading, math, writing, or other activities that align with core instructional materials.

- **Home-Based Activities**: Activities that build skills at home to the extent possible, such as games, cooking, art, drawing and role-play.

COMMUNICATE WITH STUDENTS AND FAMILIES

Whether the school system chooses a high-tech, low-tech or hybrid approach, the school systems should develop a strong communication plan with families. School systems should work with students and parents or guardians to:

- Verify whether providing remote special education and therapy services and activities through high-tech or low-tech platforms is appropriate,
- Establish a plan to answer student questions, submit assignments, and exchange feedback,
- Provide technology support.

Family collaboration and feedback are important to determine when the student will be ready for a new skill. If introducing a new skill, it may be beneficial to send students and families written directions and/or a short video including demonstrations of the new skill. Families may send descriptions, photos, or videos back to show their child practicing skills. Ensure parents know students can pause or stop activities when necessary.

STEP 3: IMPLEMENT REMOTE DIRECT SERVICES

SERVICE DELIVERY SCHEDULE

Determine a weekly schedule for direct services to ensure a consistent learning environment for students, families, and direct service providers during the extended school closure. Before creating a remote service delivery schedule, providers should contact the family of each student in their caseload to

- review IEP goals, determine the best way(s) to provide student support,
- schedule remote service delivery times, and
- answer any questions.
After contacting families, direct service providers can create and follow a schedule like the example below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Day 4</th>
<th>Day 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Office Hours for families and students to reach out for assistance</td>
<td>• Office Hours for families and students to reach out for assistance</td>
<td>• Complete therapy documentation, participate in IEP meetings as needed, etc.</td>
<td>• Complete therapy documentation, participate in IEP meetings as needed, etc.</td>
<td>• Office Hours for families and students to reach out for assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Call parents to review schedule and revise therapy time if needed</td>
<td>• List of therapy time/student(s)/approach</td>
<td>• Example</td>
<td>• List of therapy time/student(s)/approach</td>
<td>• Review progress to determine student needs and course of therapy for next week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create and send newsletter</td>
<td>• Example</td>
<td>• Example</td>
<td>• Example</td>
<td>• Consult with colleagues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Example</td>
<td>• Example</td>
<td>• Example</td>
<td>• Answer emails/respond to parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prepare for therapy sessions for the week</td>
<td>• List of therapy time/student(s)/approach</td>
<td>• List of therapy time/student(s)/approach</td>
<td>• Design low-tech activities to share with families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prepare for therapy sessions for the week</td>
<td>• Office Hours for families and students to reach out for assistance</td>
<td>• Office Hours for families and students to reach out for assistance</td>
<td>• Prepare for therapy sessions for the week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Prepare for therapy sessions for the week</td>
<td>• Complete therapy documentation, participate in IEP meetings as needed, etc.</td>
<td>• Complete therapy documentation, participate in IEP meetings as needed, etc.</td>
<td>• Complete therapy documentation, participate in IEP meetings as needed, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STUDENT ENGAGEMENT**

Remote delivery of direct services and therapy is a new method of learning for many students. Some students might need help to focus, attend, and stay motivated when they are not in the same room with their instructor or peers. To keep students engaged, direct service providers should:

- Start with a fun game or activity just like during in-person direct service sessions.
- Work toward goals using some of the student’s favorite websites, apps, games, books, digital books, music, or stories.
- Incorporate students’ favorite in-person direct service activities.

Some students might benefit from assistance during direct service delivery, such as logging into technology and staying at the computer or phone. Direct service providers should clearly understand and communicate when assistance is needed so the provider can deliver the service. Document modifications, delays, or adjustments to service delivery during continuous learning.

Direct service providers can provide additional support to students and families during service delivery through:

- Instruction or tips on how the student can be supported to practice activities between sessions
- Supplemental activities that target direct service skills and IEP goals, starting with skills that the student has already mastered
- A list of apps to support goals in the IEP
- Weekly consultations
ADDITIONAL DIRECT SERVICE RESOURCES

For additional guidance in implementing remote delivery of direct services or a list of vetted organizations that provide direct services remotely, review Louisiana’s Partnerships for Success Guide.

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA) has created a hub of EC tele-therapy and distance learning resources for service providers and families.

Professional organizations have developed remote direct service guidance for certain areas:

- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Speech–Language Pathology
- Social Work
- Counseling
- School Psychology
- Clinical Psychology

The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) released:

- Resources for Teaching Remotely for special education teachers and direct service providers
- Teaching Exceptional Children articles on telepractice
- Webinars on remote direct service delivery topics