

eLearning Day Program Guidance for Students with Disabilities

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE), Office of Special Education, and Office of eLearning recognizes the unique circumstances and challenges digital learning brings for teachers, administrators, and students with disabilities. This guidance is provided as a resource to support implementation of the eLearning Day Program. Although this document was originally prepared to assist schools in planning for students with significant disabilities, the suggestions in this document can be applied when planning for all students with disabilities.

General Information

eLearning Day Program

Criteria was established by IDOE that a district / school should be able to deliver on an eLearning Day. These criteria are posted on IDOE's website, <https://www.doe.in.gov/elearning/elearning-day-program>. The general assurances most directly impacting students with disabilities include Learning Targets and Accommodation Support.

Learning Targets: How will you get the word out about virtual work and expectations?

Accommodation Support: How will you accommodate students with disabilities?

Additional information can be found on the [IDOE eLearning Day Program page](#).

Considerations

When determining how to provide the requisite services to students with disabilities on eLearning days, it is ideal to begin the planning process by considering the overall corporation plans for eLearning days. Special education and corporation staff should work collaboratively to address the following questions:

- What is the overall district/school plan for eLearning days?
- What is the plan for parent communication?
- What standards, activities, technology, etc. are teachers using?

As the above questions are answered, special education staff will be able to determine which plans and resources can be modified and can identify areas that will require supplemental or additional planning for students with disabilities.

Planning

Logistics

Planning for eLearning days requires thoughtful, open, and on-going communication among administrators, teachers, support staff, and parents. The complex needs of each student must be considered when planning for students with disabilities, and individualized plans may be needed. The following is a list of topics to consider:

- Transportation
- Related services
- Physical needs
- Assistive technology
- Communication needs
- Access

Lessons

Planning lessons for eLearning days follows the same general structure as planning face-to-face instruction. The following questions are considered prior to developing content for lessons:

- What standards are being addressed?
- What modes of communication need to be considered for accessing curriculum?
- What are the IEP goals, related services, and needs of each student?
- How are lessons/activities differentiated?
- What technology is integrated into instruction? What technology is used in class regularly? How can that be leveraged and reinforced with eLearning?

Additional Information

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Discussion and Documentation

The case conference committee (CCC) will need to discuss how the student accesses technology and how the student will access the curriculum during eLearning days. The services to be provided to the student, including a description of how the student will access the technology and curriculum, should be included in the service narrative of IEPs as appropriate. Related services that fall on eLearning days should also be considered. The following language may be a guide for documenting in the IEP the eLearning program the corporation is adopting and the specific accommodations or modifications that will be applied:

[Corporation Name] is participating in the eLearning Day Program which may be utilized on a day when school is cancelled, as a planned day, or as a makeup day when a day of school was missed. In these instances, work may be modified to meet IEP goals. Instruction will be provided to [Student's Name] _____ through _____.

[Suggested options: online materials, paper and pencil assignments, projects, etc.]

IDOE recognizes there are students with complex needs for whom the eLearning Day Program may not be a feasible option, even with additional accommodations or modifications. The CCC will need to discuss and document within the IEP the agreed upon alternative plan for providing the requisite special education and related services to those students.

Suggestions

The following helpful suggestions have been provided by teachers and administrators:

- Use social stories to help students understand eLearning days
- Hold a mini “dry run” or practice of an eLearning day (outside the normal school day)
- Get the community involved with the concept of eLearning
- Utilize technology students currently use during face to face instruction
- Focus on communication with parents early in planning process
- Utilize the many resources available online, both general education and special education
- Save modules/lessons in multiple formats (i.e. pdf, epub)
- Include assistive technology (AT) in modules/lessons if the student is using AT in the classroom.
- Create modules/lessons with accessibility in mind. Alt Tag Pictures/clip art so that students with vision impairments have access to the information. Caption videos so that students with hearing difficulties can access.
- Reiterate availability of assistance so students and parents can contact teachers. Schedule “check in” times for each student and or general “office hours.”
- Create modules/lessons for a five- hour elementary day and six-hour secondary day
- Although students may need some learning packets or manipulatives to complete activities, these should be individualized and not the same for every student