NAVIGATING SPECIAL EDUCATION DURING COVID-19

ADVOCACY DENVER
providing active voice and supporting civil rights for people with disabilities
VIRTUAL NORMS

QUESTIONS
SEND DIRECTLY IN CHAT

CHATTING
KEEP TO A MINIMUM

MAKE SPACE
TAKE SPACE

SILENCE
MUTE YOUR COMPUTER
Stephen practiced law for 12 years and decided to enter the field of education in 2013. He received a Masters in Education with a focus on Behavioral/Learning Disabilities and is currently working on his PhD in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Denver. Stephen also worked at a residential treatment facility for children with severe behavioral and learning disabilities and later ran a special education department at a large elementary school with approximately 980 students (95% English language learners and Title I) as a member of the administrative team. Stephen moved to Colorado to serve as Deputy General Counsel at an urban school district.
AGENDA

Put On Your Own Mask First

CURRENT LANDSCAPE
- Federal
- State
- Local

VIRTUAL LEARNING – NAVIGATING THE NEW NORMAL

PRACTICAL ADVICE

RESOURCES
PAUSE...BREATHE...CONNECT
Putting On Your Own Mask First

1. **Self-Care**
   Take “Me” Time

2. **Ask for Help**
   Wealth of Resources To Help (see part 4)

3. **Recognize Feelings**
   Don’t “Stuff” Your Feelings

4. **Prioritize**
   We Won't Meet All Of The Needs Overnight

5. **Disconnect**
   Plan Downtime

6. **Let Go of Control**
   Focus on the things you can change and let go of the things you can't change.
FEDERAL/STATE

VIRTUAL LEARNING
IDEA, Section 504, and Title II of the ADA do not prevent any school from offering educational programming through distance learning, which can be virtual, online, or by telephone.

SPECIAL EDUCATION TO THE “GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE”
Schools must ensure that, to the greatest extent possible, each student with a disability can be provided the special education and related services identified in the student’s educational plan.

SERVICES
Under the IDEA and Section 504, if a child with a disability does not receive services after an extended period of time, a school must make an individualized determination whether and to what extent compensatory services may be needed.

STATE-WIDE TESTING
The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) waived Colorado state-wide testing requirements for the 2019-2020 school year.

STUDENT PRIVACY
Educational agencies and institutions may disclose, without prior written consent, personally identifiable information from a student’s education records to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency, if knowledge of that information is necessary to protect the health or safety of a student or other individuals.

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While AdvocacyDenver is working in collaboration with DPS regarding the educational needs of students with disabilities, families should reach out to building-level administrators for the most up-to-date information regarding DPS’ policies and procedures. Additionally, for individuals outside of the Denver Public School System, please consult with your local district for the most up to date information.
Pause – Breathe – Wonderings?
LEARNING IN THE NEW ENVIRONMENT

01 TECHNOLOGY
Gather necessary technology, test before going “live,” reach out if you have tech needs.

02 SETTING
Set up an environment “free” of distractions.

03 ROUTINE
Set a consistent and predictable schedule for learning. Develop visual schedules.

04 PRIORITIZE
Pick your “battles.”

05 MULTI-FACETED
“Learning” is not just sitting and getting information.

06 ASK FOR HELP
Reach out to your social network, school administrators, administrative agencies, higher education institutions.
**Teacher Tips**

- No two students (or teachers) are alike – differentiate instruction.
- Focus on low and no tech teaching options
- Offer choice on how students demonstrate knowledge AND how they complete assignments
- Share content in multiple formats
- Allow students to curate and share
- Build in brain breaks/down time

https://youtu.be/EgO6k8-I4vQ
Pause – Breathe – Wonderings?
The only non-human to have ever testified before Congress regarding school funding for music is:

A. Kermit the Frog
B. Alf
C. Elmo
D. Buzz Lightyear
Elmo appeared before the Education Appropriations Subcommittee in 2002 to urge more spending on musical instruments for school programs.
01 YOU KNOW MORE THAN YOU THINK YOU KNOW
Follow your gut and leverage what you know.

02 LEVERAGE YOUR ASSETS AND YOUR CHILD’S
Schedule your day to maximize return on investments.

03 DON’T SHOW FEAR
Set a consistent and predictable schedule for learning.

04 REWARDS & INCENTIVES
Creativity is key. Ask kids what is an appropriate incentive.

05 Self-Care
It’s worth repeating again!

06 CHOICE
Empowering children to self-direct their lives in any meaningful way is vital and can help decrease power struggles.
**Special Education in a Virtual World**

**Drop In Virtual Hours for Parents of Children with Disabilities and Students**

For those without virtual access, please call (303) 974-2530 to schedule a conference.

**Educación Especial en un Mundo Virtual**

**Horas de servicio virtual para las familias de alumnos con discapacidades**

Para los que faltan la tecnología, favor de llamar al (303) 974-2530 para citar una conferencia.
Pause – Breathe – Wonderings?
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THANKS FOR WATCHING

VIRTUAL DROP-IN

https://calendly.com/sfusco/20min
https://calendly.com/bmcgill-1/bob-mcgill-drop-in
https://calendly.com/pbisceglia/15min

REFERRAL LINE
(303) 974-2530
ONLINE FORM

DIRECT CONTACT
sfusco@advocacydenver.org
(303) 974-2524

Because of AdvocacyDenver's mission and our own limited resources, members of the DPS community receive priority scheduling. AdvocacyDenver may triage non-DPS cases and cancel meetings for non-DPS families in the interest of serving our most directly impacted community. We will happily refer you to other agencies who may be able to offer assistance.