

Good morning,

I have had many staff contact me with their concern over the beginning of in person services that will be provided by our staff. I received this information and wanted to make sure that staff saw the latest from MDH and MDE that the district is using for guidance. If at any time you feel you don't have proper PPE, please contact your supervisor. I would also like to know that IEP teams are helping to make the final determination for which students are going to be brought into our buildings.

In-Person Services

We have been hearing from a number of school staff and educators with concerns about in-person services when the rest of the district or charter school is in a distance learning model. Executive Order 20-94 states that school districts and charter schools operating in a distance learning or hybrid learning model that are providing in-person services in accordance with public health guidelines must prioritize providing in-person instruction and services to students with disabilities whose individualized education program calls for intensive services that cannot be provided in a distance learning model.

MDE's Safe Learning Plan states, "If your school district or charter school is moving some or all grades to distance learning, the school district or charter school may continue to prioritize in-person instruction for students with disabilities, English learners, students experiencing homelessness, students in foster care, and students who are struggling academically as long as there is not evidence of widespread COVID-19 transmission in the school building."

In-person services and instruction of any kind can and should only be provided when public health guidelines can be followed, including wearing face coverings, social distancing, and/or any additional PPE instructions in the [direct services guidance](#) from MDH. If in-person services are offered, the executive order states that the first priority should be students with IEPs that call for intensive services that cannot be provided in a distance learning model. The IEP team should be the entity that makes the determination. After these students, schools should prioritize English learners, students experiencing homelessness, students in foster care, and students who are struggling academically. Again, all of these services should only be offered if public health guidelines can be met.

(Excerpt taken from)

***MDE guidance - Superintendent and Charter Leader Update: 12-11-2020**

This is a difficult situation for our staff. There are so many conflicting emotions when it comes to meeting the needs of our students. I have passed the word along to Education Commissioner Mary Cathryn Ricker about the feeling that the needs of the students seem to be a higher priority than educator's health. At this time, the district is following all the guidance given them by the state. We will continue to monitor the information as it is given out by the state.

Thanks,

Dan Kuhlman, President
Rochester Education Association