



September 4, 2020

The Division of Special Education School Re-Opening Guidance School Year 2020-2021



For the health and safety of our students and our personnel, schools will be prepared to move between three (3) phases based on the escalation or de-escalation of the COVID-19 virus:

Phase Green: 100% Classroom Face-to-Face Instruction

Phase Yellow: Combination (Hybrid) of virtual and face-to-face classroom instruction

Phase Red: 100% Virtual Instruction

All specialized services will be provided to identified students with disabilities according to their Individualized Education Plans. Services will be provided both in person and virtually according to VIDE's plan for ALL students and school personnel.

Accommodations

Accommodations will be provided for each student as outlined in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP).

Students with Homebound Services

These are students with disabilities who are considered to be medically fragile, so educational services are provided at home. Based on the VIDE's phase of service according to CDC Guidelines and COVID-19 Restrictions, the following may apply:

- **GREEN** - In-person academic and related services at home
- **YELLOW** - Combination of in-person and virtual academic and related services at home
- **RED** - Virtual academic and related services via video-conferencing platform (i.e. MS Teams or Zoom) at home

Students in Self-Contained Classrooms

These are students with disabilities that are in a separate special education classroom environment within the public school environment, such as the Severe & Profound Classroom (**SIE**), Intellectual Disabilities/Developmental Disabilities Classroom (**MOD IV**), Behavioral Classroom (**MOD II**), Autism Classroom (**ASD**), and the Therapeutic Kindergarten Classroom (**TK**). Based on the VIDE's phase of service according to CDC Guidelines and COVID-19 Restrictions, the following may apply:

- **GREEN** - In-person academic and related services at school
- **YELLOW** - Combination of in-person (at school) and virtual (at home) academic and related services - Based on the *number of students* and the *physical size of the classroom* there are two models that will be used to meet social distancing guidelines and CDC requirements:
 - o Students may be able to attend in-person Monday thru Friday (5 days per week)
 - o Students may be split into two groups (Cohort A & Cohort B) following the schedule established by VIDE (2 to 3 days per week at school, other days at home)
 - o *Your child's school will inform you about which model will apply at their school.*
- **RED** - Virtual academic and related services via video-conferencing platform (i.e. MS Teams or Zoom) at home

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Students in General Education Classrooms with Special Education Services

These are students with disabilities that are in the regular classroom environment. Accommodations will be provided for each student as outlined in their IEP. Based on the VIDE's phase of service according to CDC Guidelines and COVID-19 Restrictions, the following may apply:

- **GREEN** - In-person academic and related services at school
- **YELLOW** - Combination of in-person (at school) and virtual (at home) academic and related services
- **RED** - Virtual academic and related services via video-conferencing platform (i.e. MS Teams or Zoom) at home

Home Learning (Applicable in **YELLOW** Phase ONLY)

If the VIDE offers a home learning option for students and families who are not comfortable with in-school attendance, academic and related services will be provided virtually via video-conferencing platform (i.e. MS Teams or Zoom) at home, for this group of students. Please contact The Division of Special Education via telephone in the **STX District at (340) 626-8615** and the **STTJ District at (340) 774-0100** to inform us if you are using the home learning option. You will need to provide your **child's name, the name of their school and if they use transportation service.**

Head Start & Private Preschool Programs

These are students with disabilities who receive special education services within the Pre-Kindergarten environment. Based on the VIDE's/Early Childhood's phase of service according to CDC Guidelines and COVID-19 Restrictions, the following may apply:

- **GREEN** - In-person academic and related services at school
- **YELLOW** - Combination of in-person (at school) and virtual (at home) academic and related services
- **RED** - Virtual academic and related services via video-conferencing platform (i.e. MS Teams or Zoom) at home

The Head Start Program is scheduled to begin on September 8, 2020. The Head Start Program is currently working on finalizing their beginning of the school year plans.

Students Who Attend Private and Parochial Schools

These are students with disabilities who receive **Speech-Language Therapy ONLY**. Based on the VIDE's phase of service according to CDC Guidelines and COVID-19 Restrictions, the following may apply:

- **GREEN** - In-person therapy at the service provider's location
- **YELLOW** - Combination of in-person (service provider's location) and virtual video-conferencing therapy service
- **RED** - Virtual therapy services via video-conferencing platform (i.e. MS Teams or Zoom)

Family Support Is ESSENTIAL

Serving our students with disabilities will require that we work together. When virtual (at home) services apply, an adult needs to support instruction/therapy within the home environment. Our service providers will support you and our student by providing the necessary tools/resources prior to your sessions. Our teachers and specialists will contact you to set up schedules. Please inform them whether it is easier for you if professionals provide services at the same time (co-treat and/or co-teach), or provide each service separately.

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Masking Protocol

Wearing masks in all areas of our community is our new normal. This practice also extends to the school environment.

- Masks are required for all students and employees while on the school campus
- Parents are expected to provide masks for their children
- It is recommended that parents start training children to use masks as early as possible before the beginning of the school year. This will assist in increasing their mask tolerance over time. See attachments on the do's and don'ts of mask safety, parent tips for assisting children, and social stories on mask etiquette.

Transportation

Our school buses are also required to follow strict CDC and social distancing guidelines. As such, they can only transport small numbers of students at a time. Our Transportation Team is asking for parents' support in transporting students to and from school daily.

- The Division has contacted parents of transported students to determine which parents are able to transport and which parents cannot.
- Transportation services will continue for students whose parents cannot transport to and from school.

The Division of Special Education is here to serve you. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at via telephone in the **STX District at (340) 626-8615, the STTJ District at (340) 774-0100, and the State Office of Special Education at (340)774-0100, ext. 8800**, between **8:00am – 5:00pm Monday thru Friday**. Thank you for your continued support. Stay Safe. Be well.

Attachments: Mask Safety in English, Spanish, & French, Mask Strategies, Mask Social Story, Hand-washing Poster in English, Spanish, & French (<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/posters.html>)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/print-resources.html?Sort=-Date%3A%3Adesc>

<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public/when-and-how-to-use-masks>

HOW TO WEAR A NON-MEDICAL FABRIC MASK SAFELY

[who.int/epi-win](https://www.who.int/epi-win)

Do's →



Adjust the mask to your face without leaving gaps on the sides



Cover your mouth, nose, and chin



Avoid touching the mask



Clean your hands before removing the mask



Inspect the mask for damage or if dirty



Remove the mask by the straps behind the ears or head



Pull the mask away from your face



Store the mask in a clean plastic, resealable bag if it is not dirty or wet and you plan to re-use it



Remove the mask by the straps when taking it out of the bag



Wash the mask in soap or detergent, preferably with hot water, at least once a day



Clean your hands after removing the mask

Don'ts →



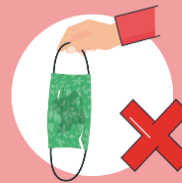
Do not wear the mask under the nose



Do not remove the mask where there are people within 1 metre



Do not use a mask that is difficult to breathe through



Do not use a mask that looks damaged



Do not wear a loose mask



Do not wear a dirty or wet mask



Do not share your mask with others

A fabric mask can protect others around you. To protect yourself and prevent the spread of COVID-19, remember to keep at least 1 metre distance from others, clean your hands frequently and thoroughly, and avoid touching your face and mask.



World Health Organization

CÓMO UTILIZAR UNA MASCARILLA HIGIÉNICA DE TELA DE FORMA SEGURA

who.int/epi-win

LO QUE DEBE HACERSE →



Lávese las manos antes de tocar la mascarilla



Compruebe que la mascarilla no está dañada, sucia o mojada



Ajústese la mascarilla a la cara de modo que no queden aberturas por los lados



Cúbrase la boca, la nariz y la barbilla



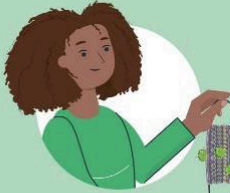
Evite tocar la mascarilla



Lávese las manos antes de quitarse la mascarilla



Quítese la mascarilla por las tiras que se colocan tras las orejas o la cabeza



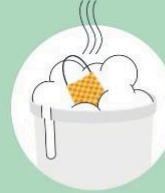
Al quitarse la mascarilla, manténgala alejada de la cara



Guarde la mascarilla en una bolsa de plástico limpia y de cierre fácil si no está sucia o mojada y tiene previsto reutilizarla



Extraiga la mascarilla de la bolsa por las tiras



Lave la mascarilla con jabón o detergente, preferiblemente con agua caliente, al menos una vez al día



Lávese las manos después de quitarse la mascarilla

LO QUE NO DEBE HACERSE →



No utilice una mascarilla que parezca dañada



No lleve una mascarilla que le quede suelta



No se ponga la mascarilla por debajo de la nariz



No se quite la mascarilla cuando haya alguien a menos de un metro de distancia



No utilice mascarillas que dificulten la respiración



No utilice mascarillas sucias o mojadas



No comparta su mascarilla con otras personas

Las mascarillas de tela pueden proteger a quienes estén a su alrededor. Para protegerse e impedir la propagación de la COVID-19, recuerde mantenerse al menos a un metro de distancia de otras personas, lávese las manos a fondo y con frecuencia y evite tocar la cara y la mascarilla.

EPI·WIN

Organización Mundial de la Salud

COMMENT PORTER UN MASQUE NON MÉDICAL EN TISSU EN TOUTE SÉCURITÉ

who.int/epi-win

À FAIRE →



Ajustez le masque sur votre visage de façon à ne pas laisser d'espace sur les côtés.



Couvrez la bouche, le nez et le menton.



Évitez de toucher le masque.



Lavez-vous les mains avant de toucher le masque.



Retirez le masque par les élastiques derrière les oreilles ou la tête.



Retirez le masque de votre visage en le soulevant par devant.



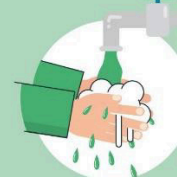
Rangez le masque dans un sac en plastique propre et refermable s'il n'est pas sale ou humide et si vous prévoyez de le réutiliser.



Pour sortir le masque du sac, prenez-le par les élastiques.



Lavez le masque avec du savon ou de la lessive, de préférence à l'eau chaude, au moins une fois par jour.



Lavez-vous les mains après avoir retiré le masque.

À NE PAS FAIRE →



Ne portez pas le masque au-dessous du nez.



Ne retirez pas votre masque dans un lieu où d'autres personnes se trouvent à moins d'un mètre.



Ne portez pas un masque qui vous empêche de respirer correctement.



Ne portez pas un masque sale ou humide.



Ne prêtez pas votre masque à d'autres personnes.

Un masque en tissu permet de protéger les personnes autour de vous. Pour votre propre protection et afin d'éviter de propager la COVID-19, gardez au moins un mètre de distance avec les autres personnes, lavez-vous les mains fréquemment et soigneusement et évitez de vous toucher le visage ou de toucher le masque.

EPI·win

Organisation mondiale de la Santé

Strategies for Helping Children with Developmental Disabilities Wear a Mask

1. Look at the mask first

Just have the child touch it, hold it and explore it so that it is not a strange thing. Let them see someone else wearing one and use that child or adult as a model. Use a mask as a piece of “clothing” to put on a doll or a stuffed animal.

2. Make it fun

Make it a game. Pair putting on a mask with some giggles or tickles or whatever will make it fun or funny. Be creative and pretend they are a superhero or favorite character from a movie. Compliment them on how awesome they look in their mask!

3. Give them choices

All masks do not look alike or feel the same. Explore different fabrics or types of masks with children. Some children may be more likely to wear certain types of masks over others (e.g., over the ear, tied, bandanas or buffs, etc.).

4. Create something the child will like

Consider decorating their mask, using a fabric with a special character or making it their favorite color. Think about what makes a mask undesirable and change it. If elastic hurts, consider tying it or using a soft material for an earpiece or change the size to make it more comfortable. Parents know what their children will be attracted to and comforted by and will be a valuable resource. Teachers can communicate with parents if they think a different sort of fabric/style will be better for a child based on your experience with them.

5. Build Tolerance and Rewards

Provide lots of reinforcement when children wear a mask and use the Premack Principle (e.g., first wear mask then you can color, etc.). Children’s tolerance will be different from each other. For a child who is very hesitant you may need to start with very basic steps:

- Touch it
- Hand it to teacher
- Hold it up to your face
- Put it on & take it off
- Put it on for 10 seconds (start small and build up). Reinforce for longer and longer time increments.

Some children need more steps and some need less. Be sure to be positive and enthusiastic for all approximations and time wearing a mask. It is important to pair mask wearing with “good things” so that it does not become aversive to them. Develop individual reward systems specific to each child and what they like (e.g., stickers). Provide lots of praise when during each step of learning to wear a mask!


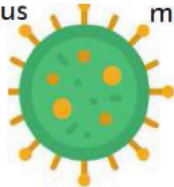








6. Use a Social Story or Make a Book

We know that Written Conversations, Social Stories™ and picture books all help children understand. Depending on the age and skill level of the child, you can create something for them or have the child create their own book (see attached social story that can be used).

Be patient and supportive with students with developmental disabilities as this is a new routine in our society and may take some time for them to get used to!







I Can Wear a Mask Social Story

Courtesy of the Autism Research Institute
www.autism.org

<p>Right now, some people around the world are sick with a virus called COVID19.</p>	<p>sick</p> 
<p>I cannot see the virus because it is very small, but people with microscopes have seen the virus.</p>	<p>virus</p>  <p>microscope</p> 
<p>The virus can pass from person to person through tiny droplets that come from a person's mouth or nose when they cough or sneeze.</p>	<p>sneeze or cough</p>  <p>particles</p>
<p>I can help prevent catching and spreading the virus by staying home. When I need to go out, I can help prevent spreading germs by wearing a mask.</p>	<p>stay home</p>  <p>wear a mask outside</p> 
<p>I can practice wearing a mask at home.</p>	 <p>practice with masks at home</p>
<p>Masks are made of paper or cloth. The mask will cover my nose and mouth and may have fasteners that go around my head or ears.</p>	<p>around ears</p>  <p>around head</p> 
<p>It may feel different to have a mask on my face. It may feel different to have fasteners around my head or over my ears. This will help the mask stay in place.</p>	<p>mask around ears</p> 

I Can Wear a Mask Social Story

Courtesy of the Autism Research Institute
www.autism.org

<p>I can ask for help putting my mask on if I need to. The mask may become warm from my breath, and that is ok. I can still breathe with a mask on my face.</p>	 <p>help putting on mask</p>
<p>If I see other people wearing masks, I do not need to feel afraid. Underneath the masks, they are just like me.</p>	 <p>masks are good!</p>
<p>When I wear a mask outside, people can see I am helping to prevent spreading the virus. If my family prefers to wear masks that is ok too.</p>	<p>family wearing masks</p> 
<p>Some people may not be wearing masks. This may be because they do not have masks, or they have forgotten or for another reason.</p>	 <p>mask no mask</p>
<p>We should stay six feet away from other people whether or not they are wearing a mask. That's about the length of my bathtub or couch!</p>	 <p>6 feet away</p>
<p>When I get home, I can take the mask off carefully and then wash my hands.</p>	 <p>wash hands</p>
<p>I can ask for help removing my mask if I need to.</p>	<p>help taking off mask</p> 