Hello everyone,

I hope you get to enjoy the sunshine even briefly today.  Here is the graduation guidance I reviewed on Tuesday’s call:

SAUs should clearly articulate grading standards, awarding credits, and graduation criteria for ALL students in high school. A written procedure should be developed and provided to all families in the SAU.

Having done this, the same graduation standards that apply to general education students would apply to students with disabilities. Graduation policies are local, and special education generally isn’t factored in to decision making around graduation criteria.

We can speculate that there may be three graduation paths that are provided to students during the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency:

1. Grades will be calculated from the March end date, and all other instruction will be measured by engagement or participation.
2. Grades will continue to be issued as if school were still operating under regular conditions.
3. Grades after the end of school-based instruction will be considered pass/fail.

Regardless of the path your SAU takes, you will have to work with each of the students identified to develop a plan for school completion. It may not be necessary to conduct an IEP meeting, as you can exercise the option of issuing a written notice without a meeting.

Case managers who work directly with students are in the best position to develop an understanding of whether a child will meet graduation criteria.  They should alert necessary stakeholders (administrators, parents, guidance counselors, student, etc.) if they discover that there may be an impediment to graduation.

It will be very important to document what accommodations are put into place to achieve graduation standards and support students to access their general education curriculum. This will support you in determining whether a child has been offered equal access to their curriculum based on the intent of their IEP and their unique learning needs.

If a student is not engaging in the curriculum, it will benefit you to have a meeting to document attempts to engage a student in their learning. This could be an IEP meeting or a written notice without a meeting. It may be another form of documentation, such as email communication to parents. It should also be documented that the student would be in jeopardy of not completing school, or having to participate in summer school to earn their diploma if they do not participate in alternative learning.

Also, please review the sources referred to on today’s meeting.

[Washington State Guidance on Evaluations](https://nam03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwsasp.org%2Fresources%2FDocuments%2FCOVID-19%2FWSASP%2520Guidance%2520for%2520COVID-19%2520Closure.pdf&data=02%7C01%7CColene.ONeill%40maine.gov%7Cecebfc440316472ab5b308d7e2333f34%7C413fa8ab207d4b629bcdea1a8f2f864e%7C0%7C0%7C637226582054661989&sdata=6J4Y3PhHrSovL%2BRguP%2FwPRdFXnpp%2B6kdHtKo6K9F5T0%3D&reserved=0)

[Maine Parent Federation PowerPoint](file:///C:\Users\Erin.Frazier\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\SR7B08QO\COVID%2019%20SPED.pdf)

[Recommendations for Grading](file:///C:\Users\Erin.Frazier\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\SR7B08QO\Recommendations%20for%20Grading%20During%20COVID-19%20(Apr%202020).pdf)

[Enhance your Zoom security](file:///C:\Users\Erin.Frazier\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\SR7B08QO\Enhance%20your%20Zoom%20Security.pdf)

As a bonus, I am also including the Q&A presented today with the School Psychologists.

This is a lot of information, so unless something earth shattering comes out of OSEP tonight or tomorrow, you can expect a lighter note to start the weekend and for some of you, school vacation!

Enjoy!  
Erin