Good Evening Everyone,

Special Services team continues to offer daily Office Hours and consistently hosts upwards of 100 individuals, including teachers, educational technicians and related service providers.  These meetings are designed to support the needs of those in the field who participate and have been modified based on their feedback and request for information.

The weekly format for Special Services Office Hours have included information specific to a particular disability category, related learning challenges and supports and tools that teachers might help parents assimilate into their own home teaching.

Topics have included information specific to Autism, Emotional Disturbance, Other Health Impairment and a weekly focus on Transition Planning.

Also, to better support those in the field, we worked with meeting participants to gather information regarding Successes and Concerns.  They shared the following:

**Some of the Successes voiced by attendees**:

* Learning different communication platforms, like Zoom, Slack, Boom Cards, PDF, Google Docs, Remind, Dojo, See Saw and setting up a channel for students and parents
* We created personalized schedules for our kids, which has helped a ton.
* Our special ed staff has been having ongoing staff meetings on Google Meet, which is new to all of us, to check in on each other and to see how things are going with our students overall.
* Seeing progress in several artic kids goals
* I cleaned my home office area and try to make a schedule plan for the next day
* I have been thinking about different materials and how I can use them to make materials to send home to my PK students.
* Balancing helping my college senior find teaching jobs and my HS senior fill out scholarships while assisting my HS students with special needs get CTE interviews.
* I have individual speech sessions with my students.
* I only have one IEP left to write and I just had that meting!
* I’ve had 4 annual IEP meetings on Zoom so far, with very good parent participation.
* I’ve had many phone conversations with parents and students.
* After getting permission from the publisher, I’ve been posting read aloud videos of a chapter book and doing Google forms to make quizzes for students to take.  They like my different voices of the characters that I do and one of my students thinks that the book is “awesome”.
* I do a quick check in, a read aloud, a quick writing activity, math and fitness and a closing activity which has been a dance party.  It’s an opportunity for the students to see each other and stay connected to me and the BHPs.  I offer the reading, writing and math in the same order that they were used to in class.  I have a theme of the day.  In addition, I offer activities on a class online platform that gives parents and kids engaging activities for each academic period.  Then we offer afternoon OT/yoga groups.

**Some of the Concerns voiced by attendees**:

* Balancing home and work in a shared space when I have my own children at home as well
* Preparing lessons from home office that wasn’t designed for a work space.
* I have 4 children and am having a really hard time keeping up with their distance learning as I teach online.
* I think as a parent accepting that we will not always get it done and there will be some regression, and that is okay.
* I think trying to balance being a teacher, parent, teacher to my own children is tough.
* Some parents are struggling as well and want more from us.  Trying to find balance of both.
* Being a true support person for the whole family more than ever, while balancing my own family.

Please continue to send school psychology related questions to Colene O’Neill at colene.oneill@maine.gov. Guidance on IEP meetings and reevaluations can be found [here](https://nam03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fmainedoenews.net%2F2020%2F04%2F07%2Fcontinuity-of-learning-and-special-education-during-covid-19%2F&data=02%7C01%7CColene.ONeill%40maine.gov%7C29ea325a698248f7cbd608d7e209dade%7C413fa8ab207d4b629bcdea1a8f2f864e%7C0%7C0%7C637226404279440862&sdata=UvZuUqAuAmZ2annfOSYJqrZT0upo8JOJEnxOo4hQGSA%3D&reserved=0).  The Department has not yet solidified timeline extensions and will provide further guidance once this occurs.

Further guidance can be found on the [MDOE Special Services](https://nam03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.maine.gov%2Fdoe%2Flearning%2Fspecialed%2Fcovid19&data=02%7C01%7CColene.ONeill%40maine.gov%7C29ea325a698248f7cbd608d7e209dade%7C413fa8ab207d4b629bcdea1a8f2f864e%7C0%7C0%7C637226404279450817&sdata=JzK8JIxrkqyFWkfz2kXMHNttW9GkEAhUwgTKcqILIxA%3D&reserved=0) webpage

Thank you everyone and see you on tomorrow’s Zoom call!

Erin & The Special Services Team