Increasing Inclusive Opportunities for Students with Disabilities During Remote Teaching and Learning

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Reminders during stressful times

- Try your best, that’s all you can do.
- Take care of yourself so you can take care of your family.
- Your child’s special education teacher wants to do what your child needs but might not be able to AND
- Your child has a right to FAPE during this time
- Open, honest, and ongoing communication is key
Agenda

- Inclusion in general education classroom activities
- Inclusion in general education academic activities
- Increasing social interactions with general education peers
Inclusive classroom activities

- Increased opportunities may exist due to distance learning!
- Online class routines
  - Morning/class meeting
  - Read-alouds
  - Small group activities (zoom break-out rooms)
  - Partnering with a peer doing online classwork
- Your child may be able to attend more “specials” than usual to connect with teachers and students
Inclusive classroom activities

- SEL activities
  - Many elementary and middle school teachers are doing increased social-emotional activities due to student stress/anxiety)
  - School counselors may also be having check-in groups with students.
- Ask your child’s special education teacher to advocate for inclusive activities by talking to his/her peers about other ways your child could participate in general education activities.
General education curriculum

- Check with your child’s special education teacher to ensure that all of your child’s accommodations are being utilized during distance learning.
- Ask general education teachers for “the big ideas” for each unit to create individual goals for your child.
- Ask if there is collaboration time built into the distance learning schedule so that teachers can still meet about curriculum planning/adaptations/modifications.
- If your child uses an augmentative or alternative communication system, ask the special education teacher or SLP how to add unit or theme vocabulary.
Peer-mediated interventions

- A group of evidence-based practices in which facilitators support students without disabilities to interact with and support learners with disabilities to acquire new social skills and relationships by increasing social opportunities.
Benefits of peer-mediated interventions

- Effective across a wide age-range
- Increases student engagement
- Positive benefits to peers
- Helps increase acceptance and understanding of students with significant disabilities
How to teach and support social skills during remote learning?

- Your children need communication partners and peers to socialize with.
- Prioritize this with your child’s teachers.
- Leverage your connections with other parents and both general education and special education teachers to identify peers who are interested in meeting new friends.
Keep it simple…and engaging!

- Schedule virtual “playdates” or visits with your child and a peer
  - Use preferred activities – Legos, coloring, art
  - You monitor and support peer and try hard NOT to be an intermediary!
- Use Facetime so your child can see/engage with family members and familiar other people and work on social skills
Thank you for joining me!