



April 27, 2020

BCSB Question: What services does psi provide to Ohio's charter schools?

psi: We serve over 150 charter schools in Ohio providing many services in a variety of areas including:

- health (screenings, nurse and clinical),
- educational support (speech, occupational, physical therapy, counseling/social work, Title 1, gifted & talented, remedial, intervention specialist) as well as
- training & education for students, parents, teachers and staff (suicide prevention, social media, human growth and development) on site and through webinars and podcasts.

BCSB Question: Let's focus on special ed for now.... Are charter schools required to provide special education services during this time of COVID 19 school closure?

psi: If a Local Education Agency (in most cases, each charter school is considered its own LEA) continues to provide educational opportunities to the general student population during a school closure, the school must ensure that students with disabilities also have equal access to the same opportunities. Schools must ensure that each student with a disability be provided the special education services and support as outlined in their current IEP (Individualized Education Plan that details the type and amount of specialized instruction tailored to the student's unique needs). As schools provide continued remote learning for all students, special education staff should pull together materials, resources, access to electronic learning programs, visuals, and schedules, that they feel will be the most meaningful for students relative to their IEP. How this looks for each student will vary greatly based on each student's individual needs.

BCSB Question: How does psi currently service students with disabilities?

psi: For related services and intervention for the schools we hold in contract, we work with parents to determine the best delivery model that keeps the health and safety of the student and staff in mind while addressing the needs outlined in a student's IEP. Online (computer or smart phone) applications are optimal, allowing the student and PSI professional to see each other and communicate in real time. If access to a shared device prevents real-time communication, we can assign participation in online programs that are open to the public or through the school's program portal. Additionally, phone consults with PSI intervention specialists are taking place. We also provide paper/pencil tasks, as well as practice kits (flashcards, reusable materials on loan, hands-on manipulatives, etc.).



BCSB Question: What if services are refused by the parent (for whatever reason)?

psi: The parent and the school-based team should discuss make-up services, whereas the team agree to provide services to the student once in-person school services are in session. The team should review the amount of 'missed services' time and discuss how to provide services over an agreed upon amount of time. This should be documented on a Prior Written i: team.

Make-up services for the special ed student need to be made on a case-by-case basis after the mandated school building closure is lifted. IEP teams will need to review student data to determine if critical skills will be or have been lost during the period in which the school has been closed.

BCSB Question: Why do charter school board members need to be aware of all the above information?

psi: Schools are to **provide education to all students** through alternative means. It is also expected that schools and parents “**work together collaboratively**” to find ways to educate students with disabilities. If a school does not make an effort to provide continued specialized instruction and support for students with disabilities, *parents may seek legal repercussions*. If a child does not receive services during a closure, a child’s IEP team must determine whether and to what extent compensatory services may be needed. This means that the school team along with the parent must develop a plan to make up any services and skills the student may have lost due to lack of instruction during the closure.

This information is being sent to you by Buckeye Charter School Boards, Inc. April 2020.