Special Education Family,

The coronavirus has tasked special education teachers in the Oconee County Schools to leverage the power of technology in order to meet the needs of its diverse student population. Teachers and students are accustomed to teaching and learning in the digital world. At home Remote Learning has presented its own set of challenges in regards to meet the needs of our special education population. Our talented teachers, therapists and instructional support staff are using technology in ways once thought unimaginable to adhere to IEPs, to provide therapeutic sessions, communicate with stakeholders, and most importantly continue instruction at a high level.

As the Director of Special Education, our department has established solid and flexible expectations related to supporting special education students in the digital world. Constant communications via Google Hangouts Meet and other web based solutions is a must. Thinking outside the box with various ways to meet the needs of diverse learners has been discussed and the potential use of online speech therapy sessions, online social group sessions, and online IEP meetings via various live platforms are possibilities during this remote learning time period. Even higher expectations for teaching staff as it relates to modifying and providing clarification on assignments through various G Suite Education platforms. There is no doubt that all teaching staff, therapists, and instructional support staff have stepped up to the plate and creatively addressed the needs of diverse learners during these trying times.

Our special education teachers have been outstanding during the remote learning process. Teachers have created a Google Doc checklist that consists of daily assignments, morning meetings, lunch and learn lessons, provided hard copy packets as needed and continued lessons with the familiar online curriculum. Screencastify is also used to provide an auditory platform for struggling readers, for example guided reading lessons. The teachers have also done phenomenal work with providing modifications and accommodations to the instructional lessons in order to meet IEP requirements in the digital world.

Special Education teachers in Oconee County take great pride in communicating with parents on a daily basis to ensure that flexibility is a top priority during this remote learning phase. Annual IEP meetings will continue and be conducted via phone conference or Google Hangouts Meet.

As you can see, the Oconee County Schools has a solid, yet fluid plan in place to meet the needs of diverse learners in the digital world. It’s a total team effort from our awesome superintendent Dr. Branch to the phenomenal teachers, building principals, cafeteria workers, transportation, maintenance and teaching and learning department who are on the frontlines at home creating safe learning environments for all students.

Stay safe and healthy,
Suzanne

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