

# *OSPI Special Education Reopening Workgroup: June 4, 2020 Zoom Meeting Notes*

## **List of Values shared by participants:**

- Open minds, ensure all voices are heard as we all possess expertise
  - Open Minds
  - there are no "wrong" contributions/questions
  - that we all learn from each other! Everyone has expertise
  - Listening to understand and collaborate
- share air time, make sure all voices have an opportunity to be heard.
- Expect non closure
- Respectful conflict
- Assume positive intentions
- working together for systemic change
- Frame conversation in OSPI equity statement and ensure we are addressing access to learning for all students and be redirect if the focus shifts,
  - I am respectfully requesting that OSPI does 1. land acknowledgement and 2. read the OSP Equity statement aloud whenever work groups are convened and 3. I am requesting transparency if we are not having these conversations or doing this work in context of the equity statement
  - Access to learning for all children/youth

## **Notes from Whole-group discussion:**

- Continuum of School Options
  - Models 3,5, 7 being considered. Important to note the difference between distance learning and continuous learning (continuum of distance and in person options)
  - Difference between continuous learning 1.0 and 2.0 is rooted in continuous improvement and evaluation and the need to streamline models within a system
  - Important to be clear, Main workgroup and DOH are clear that Traditional in-person options will not be available with the small exception of some rural communities
- Other Workgroup
  - It is clear we cannot endorse social emotional screening without systems in place to support this, especially in light of budget and staff cuts in this areas
- Concerns raised about equity, participation, and process (see [parking lot](#) for more details)
  - What additional partners should be included in this work?
  - How can this resource acknowledge inequities in access and opportunity?



# Notes from Breakout Groups: Strengths, Barriers, Questions

## Group 1, Alexandra Toney as Facilitator

- Strengths of students and Systems (brainstorm)
  - Students/Families
    - Resilience of our families/students and ability to highlight solutions that meet their needs
    - Huge growth in students in families in accessing resources and seeing relationships/power of inclusion and supporting learning at home (knowledge, empowerment and advocacy)
  - System
    - Schools are centers in the community to support students/families
    - Opportunity/Call to action to redesign the system, re-center on need, imbed continuous improvement
    - Teachers parent communication and looping Parent engagement is an improvement for our P-12 system
    - Opportunities to increase individualized learning and embed technology supports to assist students
    - Remarkable examples of systems that have instituted creative practices (schools and community based organizations)
- Top barriers (brainstorm)
  - Systems gets the results it was designed to get, (with a strength that, we can analyses this for insight into how to redesign to support our students with the greatest need)
  - Lack in-person to supports for students, how to we support students who traditionally received this support and are struggling to benefit/engage/progress in continuous learning opportunities
  - Technology (access, ability to leverage to support students)
  - A disconnected system (schools, community based organization)
  - Local control (lack of consistency between schools, and we have students moving between systems)
  - Equitable access to support students/families
    - Technology, highly mobile populations, students with significant disabilities, languages, bling/visually impaired
    - Behavior (lack of support here, diminished options from leadership {removing laptop})
  - Supporting growth of practices in UDL/leveraging technology/supporting students individualized needs
  - Silos between special education and general ed (sped students are general ed students first, how do we support them across the continue)
  - Prevent stigmatizing for students/families who we perceive as unsafe (exclusion/bullying/harassment etc.)
  - Concerns for exclusionary practices moving forward



- Trauma (increased behaviors as ACES increase), if we do not train increase in exclusion
  - Excluding based on inability to social distance/wear mask
  - Exclusion based on unsafe behavior spitting ect
- Concerns over identifying students after closure
- What is a disability, what is lack of access?
- Providing IEP case managers with the capacity to support families do not over burden
- Staffing barriers
  - Increased training
  - Lower need for classroom sizes
  - Most schools do not have a full time nurse
- Lack of highly trained staff and increased need
- Over reliance on paras over qualified staff.....how to we transition
- Compile lists of questions
  - How to support embedded mental health, UDL, technology support/ behavioral support to meet the needs of our students
  - What is an appropriate caseload for case manager given that we are in a pandemic, and how can districts support student need and relieve the Burdon of high caseloads
  - How can our schools become places of healing and learning, what are the roles in this (it can not be siloed to special education, must be whole system)
  - How can we truly transform our schools into community centers to address needs of family/schools
  - How will we know we are truly addressing need of complex students with medical needs? The smallest number of students get overlooked but need the most support
    - How do we support parents in making decisions for their students and not put burden on our families?
  - Align the system to address and support student need not compliance
  - NEED TO BE EMBEDDED IN GUIDANCE FOR ALL STUDENT, how do we do this
- Highlight one item from each area to share out
  - Strength: schools as community centers if and when we include families to design
  - Barriers: How are our schools going to be places of healing so learning can happen, are not designed this way currently
  - Main Question: How do we build a system where no one gets left behind

## Group 2, Kris Hirschmann as Facilitator

- Brainstorm strengths of students and our P-12 system
  - Students
    - Honest about their feelings – their voice about their strengths and struggles
    - Students can learn in home too – families see a different 'side' of their student's learning



- Language use increasing and social engagement with families is increasing
  - Blossoming at home (reduced anxiety) Independence in using technology to reach out to others
  - Increase in life skills at home
  - Some students do better with different work (technology / packet)
  - Adaptability and rising to the occasion
- System
  - Reaching out to the families and providing zoom therapies
  - Parents willingness to interact with educators to assure appropriate environment
  - Creativity/innovation of staff
  - Paying attention to the institutionalized barriers that have been in existence – continue to act on addressing and resolving them
  - Communication with parents about what is working and not – collaboration with parents – trying to make it work – how to best serve students
  - Greater flexibility to adjust expectations in collaboration with parents
  - Coordinating with Local advocacy group support with schools with common language and solutions
  - Co-teaching systemically being embraced
  - Increase in UDL
  - Technology response
  - Systemic support from PAVE
  - Relationships that are strong, but isolated to one school or one teacher
  - Continue activities that are grade level with all students – more inclusive activities
  - Different ways to provide curriculum without technology
- Brainstorm barriers for students with disabilities returning to school
  - Rapport building and connecting with parents
  - Equity in providing accessing technology (internet, etc.)
  - Students not getting the services that they need to be successful
  - Training for staff, students and families – individualized and home language – accessing technology
  - Non-participation/non-engagement (30%)
  - Conflicting messaging from parents – some people are good, some not so – lack of uniformity
  - PD in family engagement and building relationships
  - Consistent language
  - Family trauma – unemployment, housing food, emotional support – basic needs
  - Educational background and/or language barriers to understand the tasks, etc.
  - Families may not know how students are engaged in the classroom, and therefore cannot replicate it at home
  - Non-individualized packets
  - Underestimating student ability



- Some students don't have access to language in the home (deaf and hard of hearing) – students are more isolated in the home than at school
- Compile a list of questions you hope the guidance document can address
  - How will schools engage with families who need interpreters?
  - Logistics – IEPs, articulation, etc., transportation
  - Social emotional needs of students before returning to school
  - Social narratives to prepare students for the fall

## Group 3, Lee Collyer as Facilitator

- Strengths of students and Systems (brainstorm)
  - A lot of committed professionals who are coming to the table to collaborate.
  - Student tech skills
  - Individual teachers who have risen to the occasion
  - Resiliency of students
  - Inclusionary practices prof dev project (how are we setting up expectations for collab between sped and general)
  - Kids who are itching to connect with school community
  - Individual educators who want to connect
  - SPED teacher skill in differentiation, grounding in UDL, draw on their expertise
  - Students want to connect, and refine their
  - Teachers wanting to grow skills
  - Students teaching us about their strengths in how they communicate with us
  - Parents doing their job
  - Some parents are thrilled to be home with their kids. Home learning has worked for some kids. What is working in home learning is working.
  - Parent and teacher connections during closure
  - Access to technology
  - Resilience of students, stressors are gone.
  - Access to administrators
  - Connection back to families.
- Top barriers (brainstorm)
  - Needs that are not documented
  - Quality of technology
  - Ways to engage families
  - Tech access
  - Communication between agencies and families
  - Transition C to B
  - Staff retention
  - Creating opportunities for early learners to have face to face interaction



- PPE interferes with relationships and access, Triggers medical trauma
  - Compliance is inconsistent and can be a barrier to program implementation
  - How to have effective communication around learning and roles of educators with families especially ESL
  - Lack of clear directive from OSPI
  - Lack of a firm deadline from OSPI to have services in place and individualized
  - Parents are not educators
  - How come services are able to access outside of school and not in schools?
  - Limited communication students
  - Communication systems between sped and transportation
- Compile lists of questions
- How do we remain developmentally appropriate
  - How do we address social distancing with students that struggle with that day to day
  - How to not make PPE a barrier.
  - How to we make sure our SPED staff have consistency with expectations. Compliance is an even larger
  - With regard to local control: How do we get closer together rather than further apart, consistency distract to district
  - How come services are able to access outside of school and not in schools?
  - How to access students when there are barriers in place from
  - How to support medically fragile
  - Virtual options limit access to some students
  - What does it look like to change systems and practices, how do we maintain continuity
  - How can we provide training to the IEP team to provide shared development of programming?
  - Much of our current approach involves identifying students who are behind and saying we want to help them catch up yet still trying to work within the same number of hours per day and without significant additional resources. Is there some tipping point/percentage of students who need to start from point A. that would lead the system to decide to start back at point A rather than moving forward from point B and expecting that we'll somehow get those students left behind caught back up - again without additional hours to do it in, or significant additional resources.
  - A few quotes that have helped me have these difficult conversations lately are: "Scripts are long-held ways of doing things, and we use them in all walks of life for whatever we're doing in everyday circumstances. In teaching, we have scripts that we learned in pre-service teaching and through our own experiences as students. It's important to re-examine those scripts about how



circle time should happen, for example, and ask ourselves why we're doing things in certain ways and if there are adjustments we can make to improve our practice. By listening to and watching children, we can break old scripts and move toward more engaging and meaningful practice." from Stacey, S. (2018). Inquiry-Based Early Learning Environments: Creating, Supporting, and Collaborating. United States: Redleaf Press and "Clear is kind. Unclear is unkind." from Brene Brown

- While we are a "local control state," we do also have the framework and obligations from IDEA. IDEA gives each State Education Agency the responsibility to establish a full educational opportunity goal for all students - is there room within the role of SEA under IDEA for OSPI to establish some greater consistency in baseline expectations for all students eligible for special education?

