

# Special Education Recovery Services

Dr. Sara Woolverton  
Snohomish School District  
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[sara.woolverton@sno.wednet.edu](mailto:sara.woolverton@sno.wednet.edu)

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# Snohomish School District

- About 30 miles NE of Seattle in Snohomish County
- Semi-rural community, covers 128 square miles
- 9400 students
- 1200 students with IEPs
- 15 schools
- In addition to resource programs, the district runs special programs including Extended Resource, Social Skills and Communication (SSC), Positive Behavior Support (PBS), Life Skills (LS) and Preschool.














# 2020-2021 In-Person Services






- In the summer of 2020, special educators reviewed the files of students assigned to special programs, and those of any student whose parents requested in-person services
- Using a rubric, the district identified **about 100 high need students to be served in-person beginning in September, 2020.**
- Many students who did not attend class in-person came into schools to receive OT, PT and/or SLP services.
- **Students had remote learning opportunities on the days or afternoons they did not attend school.** Para support was provided for remote learning for many students.

# 2020-2021 Services

- Starting Sept. 2020, we offered in-person services to special program students:
  - All Life Skills (LS), extended resource and preschool students
  - Some Positive Behavior Support (PBS) and Social Skills and Communication (SSC) students

	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June
<b>Preschool Special Ed</b>	1 half day/week (+ 3 days online) 					4 half days/week 				
<b>Elementary Gen Ed</b>	Remote Learning 					K-2: 4 days  3-6: Hybrid 				
<b>El Special Programs</b>	2 half days/week 					4 full days 				
<b>Secondary Gen Ed</b>	Remote Learning 						Hybrid 			
<b>Secondary Special Programs</b>	2 half days/week 					Four 4-hour days	4 full days 			

 Remote only    
  Partial in-person    
  80% or more in-person

# Planning Recovery Services – Summer 2021

- Though we contemplated getting a jump on Recovery Services over the summer of 2021, we
  - felt a need for official guidance, and
  - recognized that staff fatigue would make it difficult to staff a program.
- Instead, we **embedded special education staff in the general education summer programs**. These staff were there to make the program accessible to students with disabilities by supporting teachers, modifying curriculum, teaching credit recovery classes, assisting with behavior interventions, and otherwise being available as needed to special education students and their teachers.

# Planning Recovery Services – Summer, 2021

- Meanwhile, in Summer of 2021, the special education team rejoiced at the release of ***Washington's Roadmap for Special Education Recovery Services: 2021 and Beyond***, and began planning our district's
  - Process for determining need for Recovery Services
  - Process for delivering Recovery Services
- Because we had provided so much in-person instruction in 2020-2021, **we saw an opportunity to provide the vast majority of Recovery Services before fall of 2022**, thus enabling our staff to return to a more normal teaching experience for the 2022-2023 school year. This has been highly motivating to our team.

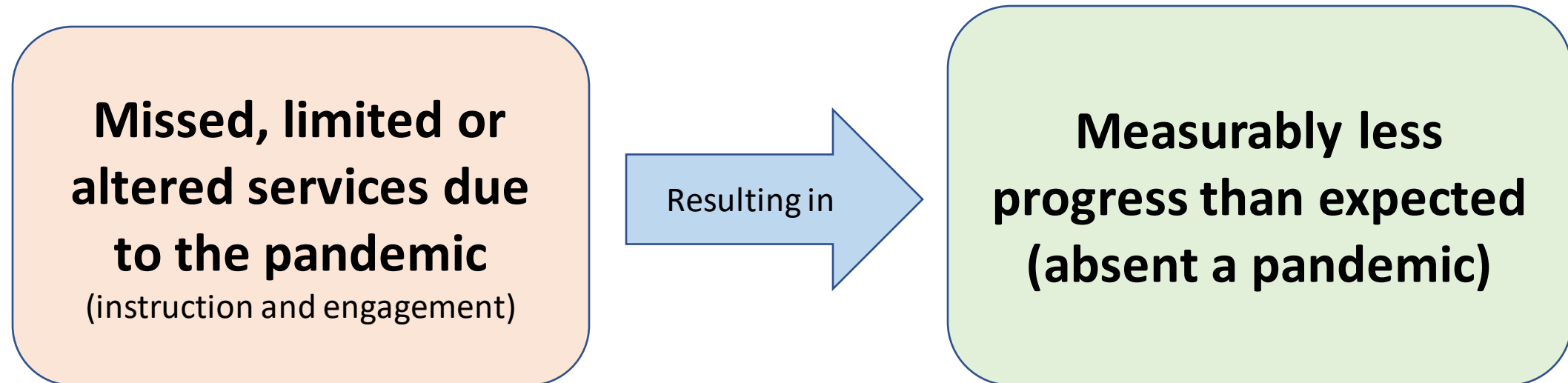
# Determining the Need for Recovery Services

- After reviewing the processes in use by some other districts, **we developed our own rubric** that relies upon the data available to us.
- Following OSPI's guidance we asked each IEP team to engage parents in a discussion about Recovery Services
  - At the annual IEP meeting, or
  - Earlier, at parent request
- We emphasized to IEP teams that they were reviewing evidence of:
  - **Instruction** – what we offered to the student and in what format
  - **Engagement** – what the student's participation and attendance looked like, and
  - **Progress** – whether student learning was roughly where we could have predicted it would be (absent a pandemic).



# Determining the Need for Recovery Services

Specifically, we asked our IEP teams to look for evidence of two phenomena that could be causally related:



# The Form and Supporting Documents

- We developed a **Recovery Service Considerations** form to collect data to be reviewed by the IEP team
- We developed a **detailed guidance document** explaining how to answer the questions and where the relevant data could be found
- We provided **exemplars** of filled documents at both the elementary and secondary levels
- We provided **PWN template language** covering a variety of eventualities

# The Form - Questions About Instruction Offered

1. Describe any **services provided during the Spring of 2020** after schools closed for the pandemic
2. Describe **services offered during the 2020-2021 school year**
  - a. *Before* general education students at this grade level returned
  - b. *After* general education students at this grade level returned
  - c. List any domains in which continuous service were provided
3. For goals that could not be served as written, what **alternate similar skills** were addressed?
4. List any **services refused by parents** (per PWN)

# The Form – Questions about Engagement and Attendance

1. Describe **engagement and attendance** in person or online during the pandemic (include attendance data)
2. Describe any **changes in 2020-2021 grade patterns** compared to historical grade pattern
3. Describe the student's **involvement in any 2021 summer programs** other than ESY
4. Describe **parental concerns** about learning loss due to the pandemic (if any)

# The Form – Estimating Progress

- Indicate your **professional opinion about the student’s progress in each goal area**, and the **information upon which it is based**.

GOAL DOMAIN:	PROGRESS DATA AND OTHER INFORMATION	Expected Progress	Some Progress	Little Progress
<b>Reading</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.			
<b>Writing</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.			
<b>Math</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.			
<b>Org./Exec. Funct.</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.			
<b>Social Skills</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.			
<b>Adaptive</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.			
<b>Communication</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.			
<b>Motor</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.			
<b>Other:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.			
<b>Other:</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.			

# The Form - Determining Need

- Write each IEP goal domain in a box below at the **intersection of services and progress**. Include all services offered (online and in-person)

	<b>Student made expected Progress</b>	<b>Student made some progress but not as much as expected</b>	<b>Student made little progress</b>
<b>Student received less than half of IEP services</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Student received 50-75% of IEP services</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
<b>Student received more than 75% of IEP services</b>	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

# The Form – The Offer

- We directed teams to offer recovery service for any domain in the pink zone,
- We asked teams to discuss whether the student needed recovery service for areas in the yellow zone, considering such things as
  - The effectiveness of the mode of learning offered last year
  - The reasons a student may not have attended or engaged
  - The amount of learning delay and how quickly the student is learning this year
- When discussing areas in the yellow zone, we asked teams to defer to parents if parents strongly wanted these services
- We were clear that recovery services were not needed for areas in the green zone

# The Offer

- The outcome of the Recovery Services conversation is recorded in a PWN
  - In the regular PWN if the conversation occurs during the annual IEP meeting
  - In a fresh PWN if the meeting was only about Recovery Services
- We avoided asking teams to quantify the amount of time needed, as that required subjective speculation
- The PWNs describe the services we planned to offer and include a statement that IEP teams can reconvene to determine if more are needed
- The PWNs contain language that leaves the door open for IEP teams to reconvene to determine whether adequate Recovery Services have been provided
- Teams were instructed to upload the form (and PWN) in IEPO and send it in for the student's file



# Planning Recovery Services Delivery

- Factors we considered:
  - The requirement that services must be offered outside of the school day
  - Having multiple options so that student and family needs would not preclude participation
  - The availability of staff (and the impact of staff fatigue)
  - The availability of transportation
  - The availability of administrative supervision
  - Costs
  - Collaboration with our unions

# Planning Recovery Services

- Ultimately we decided to offer the following models:
  1. After school services during winter and spring, 2022
  2. Summer program to be offered in 2022
  3. Licenses to access digital learning at the elementary level (Reading Eggs, Math Seeds/Dreambox, Centervention).
- Parents have the option to enroll in the online program OR either or both of the in-person models.

# Planning Recovery Services

- **After school** – Using the 2 hours created by early release Fridays
  - Utilizing program paras and 1:1s who are already paid to work during this time
  - Paras will extend learning through targeted support, practice, and reinforcement of skills
  - Because most of the paras work with the students during the week (and receive ongoing teacher planning and oversight), the Friday sessions would demand minimal additional teacher work
  - Transportation is available
  - Even though teachers are generally involved in PGF activities, there will be enough staff on campus to provide adequate supervision
  - The winter start gave us time to meet with families and make RS eligibility decisions in the fall

# Planning Recovery Services

- **Preschool** students whose parents opt for winter-spring recovery services will be able to access a Friday morning group
- **Secondary transition** students are already accessing recovery services by staying in the program beyond their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. Additional transition services for individual students will be handled on a case by case basis.
- Parents are given an option to ask for **related services** (SLP, OT, PT) to be provided during the school day if the therapists schedules allow

# Planning Recovery Services

- **Summer Program**

- The proposed summer program will run 4 hours/day, 4 days/week for four weeks
- This program will require the hiring of staff in much the same way that staff are hired for ESY or summer programs
- There is no need for bargaining this program as hiring and staffing models are already in place
- Services can be centralized in a few locations to streamline both instruction and transportation
- The program will not conflict with nor replace ESY . . . . Students will have an opportunity to attend both the RS and ESY programs if indicated

# Communication with parents

- Last spring we notified parents that we would be having the Recovery Service conversation this year
- September, 2021, we sent parents an email defining Recovery Services and
  - Telling them we will be having this conversation with every IEP team
  - Describing potential service models – after school and summer
  - Informing parents of students with Winter or Spring IEPs that they could request an autumn meeting to determine whether Recovery Services were needed in the event they wanted to take advantage of winter/spring after-school services
- In November we sent another email saying much the same thing, and
- In December we provided parents (whose students had been found eligible for RS) a link to sign up for after school RS, summer school RS, or elementary online learning programs

# Challenges/Opportunities

- My unfamiliarity with what “normal” looks like in the district (since I joined Snohomish during the pandemic) led to a stumble or two
- Likely due to the novelty of the situation, I’ve found it difficult to inspire a sense of urgency outside of our special education department
- We’re making it up as we go – it’s extremely exhausting!
- Staff experiencing emotional, physical and professional fatigue are not interested in providing Recovery Services
- IEP progress data before and during the pandemic is sparse and inconsistent

# Challenges/Opportunities

- Constraints on how and when we rolled out the process and trained staff in its use led to inconsistencies in how (and how well) IEP teams understand and implement the Recovery Services determination process, which in turn has led to
  - Significant variation in determination patterns
  - Extremely high levels of eligibility in some schools and programs
- An unexpected para shortage was intensified when the vaccine mandate went into effect and again with Omicron
- A Demand to Bargain the impact of an after-school program on teaching staff, combined with paraprofessional staffing shortages, has delayed the implementation of the program



# Thought Partners – The Importance of Collaboration

- We consulted with SEA and PSE regarding any impact on staff
- We asked an attorney to review our form, and tweaked it accordingly
- **The Snohomish County Special Education Directors, with our ESD 189 and OSPI** partners, has met weekly or biweekly throughout the pandemic and shared ideas, resources, encouragement, humor, and mental health support throughout this most stressful time
- The amazing **Snohomish central office special education team** (shout out to Jenn Stewart, Wendy Stegall and Marta Bloomquist) worked long and hard to develop the review process, plan Recovery Services models and support staff to implement the process.

