



March 16, 2020

From all of us at the Education Law Center, we express our concern and compassion as our community copes with this unprecedented and challenging time.

Because the coronavirus pandemic and its fallout impact every student and family in Pennsylvania (and beyond), we also want to offer you additional information.

We encourage you to visit the COVID-19 information page from the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) [here](#) for current information about Pennsylvania schools.

In response to school closures due to COVID-19, [Philadelphia](#), [Pittsburgh](#), and many other school districts throughout the state are mobilizing to provide meals for students, available at pick-up points throughout districts. Some districts and schools are also providing packets of assignments for students to complete. ELC recommends you check your school district's website and communicate with your child's teacher directly for the most up-to-date information for your family. If you need assistance locating information for your district, please call ELC's helpline.

To ensure equal access for all families, it is imperative that school districts provide translated information about COVID-19 so that it is accessible to all limited-English-proficient families, as required by federal law. We urge school districts to move quickly to address this need.

PDE has issued [guidance](#) to school districts across the state that are working to ensure that all students receive equal access to educational services and opportunities, while protecting our communities from the spread of the COVID-19 virus. As that guidance has made clear, school districts must ensure that they are addressing the interests of students with disabilities and English learners as they develop their plans for educational services.

This includes involving parents in the planning process for individual students with disabilities, just as they would for any other decision about educational services, holding virtual special education team meetings, issuing written notices to parents about the temporary educational services, and ensuring that students with disabilities have equal access to the same educational services and opportunities as other children. Students who are English learners must also receive English as a second language (ESL) services.

Meanwhile, in response to COVID-19, ELC's physical offices are currently closed and staff are working remotely. We remain fully accessible, operational, and focused on our work.

If you need to reach us regarding educational issues, please call ELC's Helpline at 215-238-6970 or 412-258-2120 (Western PA).

Please continue to monitor our social media pages and website in the coming days for updates. You can like our page on [Facebook](#), follow us on [Twitter](#), and search our [webpage](#).



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