1. What are Alternative Instructional Delivery Models?
   - Georgia’s K-12 Restart and Recovery provided optional guidance regarding three instructional delivery models: (a) traditional (face-to-face), (b) hybrid, and (c) full distance/remote. School districts determine the most appropriate restart plan for all students. The state constitution provides local school boards with the management and control of public schools; the district has the flexibility to develop a restart plan based on safety guidance. (From: GaDOE Guidance on Restart and Implementation for the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA))

2. Are the Alternative Instructional Delivery Models just for students with disabilities?
   - No, the alternative instructional delivery models are for all students. The BCSS Special Education Department alone does not make decisions regarding the type of instructional delivery model. (From: GaDOE Guidance on Restart and Implementation IDEA)

3. Will students with disabilities receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) during the pandemic?
   - Yes, students with disabilities will continue to receive FAPE. USED’s memo stated that those services may look different during a time of emergency closings and adherence to health and safety guidance. During this national emergency, schools may not be able to provide all services in the same manner they are typically provided, and that FAPE may include services provided through distance instruction. (From: GaDOE Guidance on Restart and Implementation IDEA)

4. What services will be provided to students with disabilities during periods of distance/digital learning?
   - Students will have a Special Education Case Manager assigned to them who will continue to provide guidance and support. Students with disabilities will be provided the services in their IEPs to the extent available, taking into consideration the services that are being provided to students in the general education program.
   - It is possible that not all classes, programs, services, or accommodations may be appropriate through a digital learning platform. Some goals may not be appropriate for the home setting. Some service delivery models may not be appropriate for the home setting. For example, if you child is receiving the equivalent of 60 minutes/day of small
group reading instruction, the IEP team may determine a one-on-one 15 minute/day segment via the online platform is appropriate. Additional details include:

i. Synchronous or asynchronous instruction, as well as group or individual instruction may be designed to address IEP goals and objectives. This may include small group sessions designed to target common goals and objectives, additional work tasks, and/or individualized activities.

ii. Students that receive OT, PT, DHH, VI, and/or OI services will receive these services to the degree possible in a distance learning environment.

iii. Regular communication with students and families will occur so that students remain connected to their teacher and school.

iv. Increased supports, guidance, and training for Special Education teachers will be provided regarding scheduling and implementation of virtual learning.

v. Speech services will be provided through teletherapy in the full distance learning instructional delivery model. Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) and Georgia Board of Speech-Language Pathologists & Audiology (State Licensure) are two different licensing agencies. For that reason, Speech-language pathologists practicing under GaPSC are exempted from certain licensure requirements listed by Georgia Board of Examiners.

- Multiple methods for providing services (digital instruction, small group, learning materials, etc.) may be used for students to the extent possible in the distance learning environment in order to accommodate the needs of students with different skills. Collaboration with parents as to the best method to serve the student, and amount of work to be provided, are strongly encouraged. Accommodations (such as extended time, read aloud, etc.) in the distance learning environment will be provided.

- BCSS special education students will have access to the same BCSS created curriculum activities designed for the general education virtual learner. Special education teachers will ensure implementation of Distance Learning Plans, and will be available to instructionally assist their students. BCSS special education teachers will be available for communicating with parents/guardians of both students on their caseload and with the special education students that they teach. Special education teachers will plan and implement differentiated instruction to include modifications and accommodations as outlined in Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for the students that they teach (to the extent possible) in a digital learning environment. Assistive technologies, to include items such as text read-aloud, will be made available to those students requiring such accommodations as outlined in IEPs.

5. What are distance learning plans (DLPs)?

- Distance learning plans (DLPs) are contingency plans used to document temporary provision of special education services provided during a time of selective or required school closures. The distance learning plan may include special education services and
related services using options such as online or virtual instruction, instructional telephone calls, and other curriculum-based instructional activities. Distance learning plans are included with the IEP and used to describe any necessary changes or amendments to the IEP based on the use of an alternative instructional delivery model.  

(From: GaDOE Guidance on Restart and Implementation IDEA)

- It is important to note that special education services can be provided anywhere. The physical location of the special education service does not automatically change the LRE. For example, student with disabilities who receive the majority of their instruction in the school building with nondisabled peers can still receive the majority of the virtual instruction with nondisabled peers. Additionally, it is important to note that the determined alternative instructional delivery model of a school district is not the same thing as determining special education placement. DLPs are completed to communicate and collaborate on how services are delivered in a distance learning environment as the result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

6. **Will the district create a separate distance learning plan for students with disabilities?**
   - With guidance from the Georgia Department of Education, a separate plan to document services and accommodations that can be provided during distance learning will be developed without amending the student’s IEP. The distance/learning plan will be uploaded to the document tab in GO-IEP and will not require an IEP meeting or formal amendment to the students IEP. Digital Learning Plans were written and established in the spring of FY20 in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. These DLPs remain in effect during a district’s alternate instructional delivery model such as distance learning for the length of the IEP. If your student is new to the Barrow County School System (BCSS), or if there is not a DLP in place for your student, BCSS Special Education Personnel will be setting up a meeting with parents to establish a distance learning plan. Collaboration with parents is vital in the establishment of a DLP. If you have questions or concerns regarding your child’s DLP, please reach out to BCSS Special Education Personnel. Contacts are provided at the end of this document.
   - After the beginning of school, BCSS will require that DLPs for all students with disabilities be revisited as necessary with parents, and modified as needed, to provide the best possible support for students with disabilities during distance learning.

7. **What format will be used for IEP meetings?**
   - Until BCSS determines a traditional (face-to-face), or hybrid delivery instructional model, all IEP meetings will be held virtually either through a virtual conferencing platform or through a phone call. As IEP meetings are scheduled, your student’s caseload manager or other BCSS Special Education personnel will provide instructions for navigating the virtual IEP meeting. Should you have any questions or concerns, please reach out via the contacts provided at the end of this document.
8. **How will the district conduct compliant evaluations when school re-opens?**
   - Evaluations requiring face-to-face assessments or observations should take place based on health and safety guidance. BCSS is scheduling evaluation appointments with families when face-to-face assessment is necessary. Families of students who require face-to-face assessments as a part of a comprehensive evaluation will be provided with safety procedures and more information with how and when these evaluations will take place.

Should you have questions or concerns, the following contact information is provided via the following link: [Contact Information for the BCSS Special Education](#)

**BCSS has a parent mentor as a part of the Georgia Parent Mentor Partnership.**

**Contact information for the BCSS Parent Mentor:**

- **Name:** Ashley Ware
- **Phone:** 678-425-2870
- **Email:** ashley.ware@barrow.k12.ga.us

**Additional Resources to help families learn more information facilitate learning and improve outcomes for students with disabilities during the pandemic.**

- [Georgia Parent to Parent](#)
- [Georgia State Advisory Panel](#)
- [Georgia Home Classroom](#)
- [Be a Learning Hero](#)
- [CEEDAR Family Guide to At-Home Learning](#)
- [Surviving School Closures (Resources for Families)](#)
- [Georgia Special Needs Scholarship Program](#)