

USFRI-Eligibility/Evaluation Guidance from BEESS  
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Remote CART Captioning

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>> BETH HARDCASTLE: Thank you for joining us on another one of the special webinars that we've been doing since the onset of the distance learning and COVID-19 restriction. I'm really excited about the session that we have planned for today. It will be a little bit different from some that we've done. This is a little bit more content oriented because a lot of you have requested information with regard to evaluation and making educational and eligibility decisions within that platform. So Dr. David Wheeler with student service support project is with us today to share some information with you and answer those questions that you have. I'm going to just go over a few instructions and then we'll move into David's presentation.

So as in the past, if you are wanting to be able to participate verbally or orally with us, that means we're going to hear your voice if you have thoughts or questions, then you need to be dialed in to the phone line and that information is there on the screen in front of you. If you are okay sharing your thoughts and questions in the chat box that's perfectly fine, too. We just ask you that mute your phone, mute your computer speaker so that we're not picking up on any background noise and just a reminder that if you are not planning on talking then you've elected to just listen then you won't be able to raise your hand and use that speaking feature unless you're dialed in to the phone line with the participant password, et cetera.

Objectives for today's webinar as in the past we were trying to create a forum, an opportunity for you guys to, generally we've been doing this more as a sharing out, you're learning from each other, learning from project staff. Again this is a little bit different based on your requests for some more particular and specific information. So you're going to have a chance to, I hope, gain information that's helpful to you and ask questions of Dr. Wheeler, and at the same time this gives him an opportunity to hear from you, answer your questions and we'll be making notes of things that may be potential topics or things for us to return to at a later date.

So I've kind of gone over your instructions, but again, if you are going to talk to us you need to be dialed in to the phone line but mute yourself if you are not speaking. If you

are listening make sure your computer audio is muted. You may ask questions via the phone line or within the chat box. Dr. Wheeler has requested that you allow him to [inaudible] probably take about 20 minutes. After that he will take questions so that this allows him to get through the information. For some of you the information that he shares may answer a question that you have. If you have questions, it's okay to go ahead and put them in the chat box, Kelly Justice and I will be looking at those and monitoring those so when it is time for questions and answers we've got some potential themes or particular issues that you would like for David to address. But just know that we won't stop in the middle of the presentation to address those.

If you have, I'm not sure if this is applicable but if you have resources that you want to share with others email those to Kelly Justice or [inaudible]. We are, oh it looks like our closed captioning is working. That's at the bottom of the screen on the left and note too that as in the past this session is being recorded.

If you haven't already done so please take a minute to respond to those two poll questions that lets us know what your role is within your school or district, as well as what [inaudible]. The PowerPoint is in the handouts pod.

All right. David, I'm turning it over to you. Thank you again for being with us here today. I really, really appreciate your expertise and your willingness to share with folks and try to answer their questions.

>>: Thank you, Beth. Good afternoon. I think we have much to learn from each other. This pandemic has interrupted our lives and work in ways we could never have imagined. So we're thankful and grateful for your continued efforts to meet the needs of students and families during this COVID-19. There's a silver lining in the sense that the pandemic has forced us to rethink ways of work, policies, practices and look at innovative, creative ways of adapting our work in this present situation.

Now, I will after the presentation part I will try to answer questions. Much of this information is in flux. It's fluid. I certainly don't have all the answers but I'll be glad to consider ways to better meet the needs of students during this pandemic especially when we think about evaluations and eligibility decisions.

Let's go to the next slide. Okay I guess I can do it. Okay. So much of the information I will be sharing this afternoon comes from these documents. So if you have the PowerPoints you will be able to link to them. There are two principle ones from the U.S. Department of education the Office for Civil Rights, the Florida Department of Education had a guidance document around meeting the needs of students with disabilities back around March 19<sup>th</sup> and recently there's been a Department of Education order which I will share with you which has some updated information. Hot off the press, I just found out about it this morning, I think it came out yesterday, is a new guidance document that's called reopening Florida schools and CARES Act and it's sub titled closing achievement gaps and creating safe spaces for learning. And so this is the state's plan for reopening schools. It provides help and instructional recommendations as we

reopen schools in Florida. So you can download that document from the Florida Department of Education's website. If you go to the home page under topics there's a dedicated topic to COVID-19, which has all of the guidance documents that have come out from the department, which are many, but for our purposes I think this document will be very helpful. Part 1 looks at the impacts of distance learning and COVID-19 on achievement gaps and ways we can close those gaps, monitor progress and accelerate growth as students re-entering the physical setting of a school. So these are resources that I will be citing.

On the next slide from the information that the Office for Civil Rights shared in a couple of their dockets there are some guiding principles and one clearly from the beginning, the health and well being of students, families and staff has been a priority. That's been our primary concern, how do we protect the health safety and welfare of students and our school staff. And so in this OCR Fact Sheet that came out March 16<sup>th</sup> they emphasized that. Then the issue of so what about students with disabilities? How do we meet their needs? And so you can see that in the fact sheet they address the issue of if schools are open then students with disabilities would continue to receive FAPE. But consistent with protecting the health and safety of the student and those providing education, or in the context of our topic today, evaluations for students. So again, safety is a primary issue. The OCR documents, that's the responsibility of the LEA. And the LEA has the authority to take actions to ensure the safety of their students and staff, certainly during this time consistent with the CDC guidelines and the Florida Department of Health guidelines for protecting residents.

And then a third and really a guiding principal in the supplemental fact sheet which was specific to addressing the needs of students with disabilities many of the questions that came up around that because of COVID-19 and school closures, initially, and then later distance learning, so in the document they lay out this general principal that we should be working with parents to reach mutually agreeable extensions of IDEA time lines as appropriate. In that document there's an appendix that identifies the specific types of time lines where there was some flexibility, and there's some where there was not. The one we get most questions about, I know it raises anxiety nationally, the evaluation of time lines for evaluation of students with disabilities. So in that OCR supplemental fact sheet there was no waiver of time line, the [inaudible] has not waived 60 day time lines. There was an opportunity prior to the CARES Act for the Secretary of Education to request a waiver, but she did not. Some 60 day time lines are still in effect. In that supplemental fact sheet it talks about the flexibility around the eligibility determination. So in the federal regulations for IDEA there's sort of a no man's land between completion of evaluation and eligibility determination. A number of days is not defined. So in that supplemental fact sheet they reemphasize that there's flexibility about when you would hold the eligibility determination once the evaluation is complete.

Now, recently, within the last month, the Florida Department of Education has requested approval for some flexibility around initial eligibility evaluation and three year evaluation

time lines. And so this request would be to extend or one the number of days spring break was extended due to emergency. So the number of days that spring break was extended would be added to the 60 day time line. And another flexibility until portion of the evaluation that require face-to-face assessment can be completed. So if those waivers are granted, they will give some additional flexibility. Now, I do want to address a practice that we have heard here in the department from a number of different places, other states of course, it is not appropriate DNQ a student because you need a face-to-face evaluation and it has not been completed. Here's what's happening in some cases when it's an intellectual. We're not able to complete it. In some places they're saying student's not eligible and the plan is when they return to school we'll request consent, a new consent and then initiate the evaluation again. That is not an appropriate practice. We understand that evaluation time lines are going to be an issue when we look at that in the fall. That's going to impact everyone nationally. That will be taken into consideration unless we get the flexibility that the Department of Education has requested.

So what about evaluations during closures and distance learning? In the OCR document they talked about closures. Of course once we moved to distance learning we were providing instructional support. Students were not on site but were receiving services. So from OCR and Department of Education, initially in the first OCR Fact Sheet here's the statement, if an evaluation requires a face-to-face assessment or observation the evaluation would need to be delayed until school reopens. So that's in the March 16<sup>th</sup> guidance from the Department of Education. They also stated that those components of evaluations and reevaluations that do not require face-to-face assessments may take place while schools are closed, obviously during distance learning as long as the student's parents or legal guardian are okay with it. So it goes back to the initial guiding principals about protecting the safety and well being of our students and also working closely with parents. We know there are parents concerned about children being exposed and we have staff frankly that we need to be careful because they're at higher risk. I think another key principal is that decisions need to be made on a case-by-case basis. Those have to be made on an individual case basis. On the fact sheet it addressed things currently in the federal regulations but they reinforced. So a couple of those are just to jog our memories, there's -- once every three years. There's a caveat, the federal regulations say unless the parents and federal regulations agree it's not necessary. And also if a reevaluation is conducted, it can in some cases be conducted through a review of existing evaluation data. So, there are two options there with reevaluations that may free up and allow us to be compliant, conduct those during distance learning and free up more time when students return to a physical setting and give us a better opportunity to complete evaluations once we have access to these students.

And here's just a little bit of guidance around teleassessment and telepractice conducting virtual and remote assessments. This became a hot topic early on. There's guidance at the end of the PowerPoint there's a resource page. And so I have provided

some resources from the national association of school psychologists, Pearson has provided some guidance, the American Psychological Association has some guidance on conducting evaluations, assessments virtually as well as a docket from Press' learning who has been engaged in this practice for a number of years. So under certain conditions there's certainly evaluators and they have greater flexibility in conducting evaluations virtually. Those decisions as I already indicated, should be made on an individual case basis and take into account a number of factors. Obviously the availability for the appropriate technology both for the evaluator and for the student are important. A setting in which there's some confidential, it's quiet, a setting in which to conduct the evaluation, the competency and training of evaluators, many of our evaluators have no prior experience with teleassessment so it's bringing professionals up to speed on best practices there. Obviously considering the impact on the examinee's test performance. We have some students that will do well in virtual settings and others will struggle, they really need the closer physical contact in order to function most effectively.

And obviously there are issues often with technology. So if you are doing a timed assessment and then we lose our internet connection there's going to be impacts like that. Then there are ethical and contextual considerations. The impact of COVID on students' emotional, psychological, feeling and behaving are issues that need to be considered.

And then an interpretation when we go to look at the data and what does it mean, we need to interpret that given the fact that the assessment, standardized assessment was administered in a nonstandardized manner.

Again I will refer you to some of the resources that professional organizations have provided. Some general evaluation suggestions, and now we're getting into this isn't guidance, this is kind of my thoughts to help guide discussion and hopefully prompt some of your thinking. I'm sure many of you have much better ideas than I share today but at least this will give us a starting point. So as we move into reopening phases and already in Florida we're in Phase 2 we can begin to conduct face-to-face evaluations consistent with the Department of Health and CDC guidelines, and obviously district policies and practices. The Centers for Disease Control has come out with some guidance on helping school determining when it's safe to reopen and although that guidance is specific to schools in general, I think that would be helpful guidance in determining which students we might begin to complete face-to-face evaluations. So they give some considerations for reopening ensuring that recommendations for health and safety are in place. So for those students who are not high risk and evaluators who are not high risk and if we have a setting that complies with all the standards, I think it may be possible with some of our students to begin to conduct face-to-face evaluations.

But I think an important point is if you are not conducting face-to-face do what you can during distance learning. Completing virtual meetings, so that those won't have to be done later on. Do all that you can so that you're leveraging time for the future as we

now, I know many districts are far behind on initial evaluations. So let's get those things out of the way that we can take care of. We already talked about flexibility around reevaluations. And then of course those components that can be conducted virtually should be completed.

Again, we go back to we need to make decisions about conducting or extending initial evaluations on a case-by-case basis and certainly in consultation and agreement with the parents. If you're extending or not able to complete the evaluation especially if you are getting initial consent but even if we're contacting parents and saying we're not going to be able to complete it within the evaluation time line, be sure to clarify which components will be conducted and which will not and then why. We've already addressed doing what we can virtually, making sure that as much of the evaluation is completed as possible in a virtual setting. And then very important to document the reasons for any delays and have a plan for completing the evaluation when a student returns. We want to make sure that once we're able to complete them it's done in a timely fashion. I think it's also important to collect data on the impact of COVID-19 on a student. This goes to the whole validity issue that we'll talk about in just a minute but we want to know how it impacted the student. That's going to help us with interpretation and understanding what the results of our evaluation measures mean.

And then there's always been an extension of the time line by mutual consent. This is only for students suspected of being a student with a learning disability but I think this speaks to the issue of the quality of our response to intervention data during distance learning, for some students this could be an option.

I believe the bigger issue is going to be or a big issue will be when students return to school in a physical sense and then we know, and this new document from the Department of Education acknowledges that up front, that there are going to be achievement gaps. Students access to technology, support, all of those are going to be different depending on individual students. And where the rich can get richer and the poor poorer, certainly instructionally our world has been under upside down we'll have students who have struggled and are going to be far behind. The temptation maybe will be to think all of those students will be struggling because they have a learning disability and I think that's where we can help our teachers, our parents, with understanding what the impact is. So first we need to acknowledge and take into account the impact of COVID-19 and the distance learning environment on student achievement, on their social, emotional and behavioral factors.

The impact in terms of disability is going to be different depending on the disability classification. So for those students that we need good data, good evidence based interventions and response to intervention data, that may be more difficult to come by and we may need to extend time lines. We may need more information. But for other disability categories, and you can think of them but for example COVID-19 is not going to change whether a student is visually or hearing impaired. So I think at the lower incidence categories although they may impact achievement they're not anything to

change whether a student is a student with a disability so prioritize those evaluations now and the others we may want to monitor for a while. Obviously we have to consider the quality of multi-tiered systems and supports both during distance learning and when students return. I believe you've had previous webinars about how do we increase support for students, and clearly, as we return, the supports that previously we may have considered less intensive may have to filter down for all students just because the achievement gaps are going to be greater than what we've experienced in the past so we want to make sure we intensify interventions as well as monitoring progress. Then a key always for me has been one critical consideration is how does this student compare to other students with similar student, peers from similar backgrounds, opportunity, levels of achievement. So we are going to see some students who in part because of COVID-19, but there will be other factors where the progress that peers are making after this period is greater than theirs so we want to look for those students and obviously ones we had concerns previously are ones we want to closely progress monitor.

So one of the questions was about valid educational and eligibility decisions. Validity basically is about whether or not a task measures what it claims to measure. I think we have a couple of factors here. One is the test conditions themselves. And another is how we interpret test results. So IDEA the federal regulations provide some evaluation procedures, which I think those give us kind of a baseline for evaluation in terms of if the evaluation itself, the administration is valid it should be consistent with those procedures.

And so I've noted a few here. There are some others that talk about knowledgeable, competent and knowledgeable personnel conducting evaluation consistent with the publisher's recommendations. But a critical piece here is, and this is interestingly written into any eligibility determination under IDEA is the lack of appropriate instruction in reading or math or limited English proficiency as well cannot be the determinant factor in determining eligibility. I think that will be an interesting discussion among teams when we're looking at eligibility determinations over the next couple years.

So here was my effort though to say so what do we need to be able to make valid educational eligibility decisions and brighter minds out there can improve and make this better. This was just an initial thought. So I had five areas of question, access, normative, performance, assessment itself, interpretation and outcome. So in access I think we ask the question did the student have access to appropriate instruction? Did the student have access to appropriate technology and support? I'm sure you've heard from parents who have said this has been really hard. I don't know how to help my child, they have an assignment, I don't know what to do. Some of us are teachers and we're still not sure how to best support our children. So imagine that parent who just has a high school education, may have never taken the course, so that's a critical factor.

I've already addressed the normative. So we not only look at standards which I think we can safely assume and even though I haven't had a chance to review, I am pretty sure

the DOE reopening document addresses that student performance is likely to be less than what it would have been in a normal school year. So we want to consider how unique that student's response to instruction is compared to their peers.

And then the assessment itself where the assessment measures administered by trained personnel and consistent with standardized procedures and recommendations of the publisher.

For me, one of the biggest issues is going to be the interpretation. Data is data. Our understanding of the data requires interpretation which requires understanding context, as well as outcome. So how accurately do the assessment results measure student performance? What's the impact of COVID-19? And actually thinking of those exclusionary factors as challenges to validity, in other words, the validity is does the test measure what it claims to measure? If there are other reasons for the student's performance outside of the disability one then that is a validity challenge when we're looking at eligibility determination.

And then important as always, the evaluation needs to identify what is needed in terms of instruction intervention for the student to progress in general education. That goes back to the old question, what's special about special education? If we don't know what we're going to do to improve performance in the general education setting, in the general education curriculum we're not going to be making valid educational and eligibility decisions.

So there are the resources. It was a little longer than 20 minutes, I'm sorry, but that the information I wanted to share. And so Beth, Kelly, if you can help me with questions, and I'm sure there are probably some good comments that we may want to share with the group as well.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: So I have captured a few questions that came in. They're still I think visible to you. So one question I'm going to scroll back up, had to do with standardized assessments and just wanting some more information about that.

>>: Okay I'm not sure, what about standardized assessments.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: I believe that question came from Miami-Dade. If Miami-Dade is on the phone use your raised hand feature and we can --

>> DAVID WHEELER: I saw one question was can one [inaudible] be applied to all evaluations? And the answer is no. It can be only applied to students with a suspected learning disability. And a warning, it could be very problematic if all students suspected of being a student with a specific learning disability receive extensions. So again, we go back to we need to be making decisions on a case-by-case basis and the caution that I shared earlier and it shouldn't be based on how we get out of Indicator 11 purgatory. We need to be doing what's best for students and not, our primary concern, and I know it's a huge concern. I have been, I have worked with Indicator 11 for the past, almost 15 years, but the primary concern is about students. So in some cases that would be

appropriate. In others, not. I think primarily where we do not have good data on a student's response to intervention, which those are the eligibility categories that require response to intervention as a criteria for eligibility. In some cases that's where we're going to find a challenge if during this interim we receive consent March 5<sup>th</sup> and there was no opportunity to implement interventions. If you do that, again, only for students suspected of being a student with a specific learning disability, the parent must agree to it, yes.

Now, that is with reference and respect to the Indicator 11. If it's a face-to-face evaluations that cannot be completed that needs to be discussed with a parent. Those students would still, the evaluation time line though would still be in place. Maybe that's the clarification there. So there could be an extension but you are not out of evaluation time line. I hope that helps.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: Assessments to determine the potential visual disabilities is hindered in distance learning because many of the components of those assessments are face to face. I don't know whether that's a question.

>> DAVID WHEELER: I'm not as familiar with those so again if there are elements that have to be face to face, I'm not sure what the distance in those, so, I think as we move forward there's going to be opportunity to begin to conduct face to face, as long as we're in compliance with guidelines, and continue to consider the safety of students and staff. And obviously the parents have to be in agreement. So we're going to have some parents who say no, I don't think it's safe for my child to come into a setting. We'll need to respect that.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: That segues nicely to a comment from mason who says our district is providing Plexiglas screen guards, masks, gloves so we can conduct face-to-face evaluations. What are your thoughts on that.

>> DAVID WHEELER: I deferred early on as long as we're consistent with CDC and Department of Health guidelines and whatever the district policies are around this, I, again, I think it's going to be case by case. So, if you have evaluators who are at high risk, and I'm assuming districts are taking that into account. If you have students that are at risk and again if we have parents who have concerns then it wouldn't be everyone. This all or nothing or arbitrary, during this time we're going to continue to have flexibility.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: All right. Mary has a question, what is everybody doing about evaluating developmentally delayed students who have turned six?

>> DAVID WHEELER: That's a great question. And we've had a lot of discussion around extending that. Hopefully the age, so that that would not be a problem. I don't know the answer to that. I'm not going to try to make one up.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: Okay. And it could be that --

>> DAVID WHEELER: I don't want to get anyone in trouble, especially me.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: And it could be that some of the other participants have thoughts about that. Our friend Patty Bickers wants to know how to we use our TI data once it's six months old [inaudible] staffing and the evaluation can take place?

>> DAVID WHEELER: It was interesting the OCR Fact Sheet talked about flexibility around eligibility determinations. So potentially all of the data's collected. The need for special education services, it could be problematic or difficult because we've had this instructional period that's been lost and we don't know what the impact is. That might be one way to address it, is to delay for a short period of time to see how the student is functioning when they return to school. That goes back to the validity of the decision making. How well the data is representing what the student knows and can do and those are all decisions I think that have to be made again, on a case-by-case basis. Age becomes a factor. Those really, for me, become team-based decisions given some broad parameters and guidelines. They know the student, they know the data, they know the quality of intervention and support the student has received.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: Okay. Back to the question from Miami-Dade around standardized assessments, she's provided a little bit of extra information and says you reference standardized procedures for validity. And she wants more details.

>> DAVID WHEELER: Okay. So, in the way tests are constructed and normed there's a standard procedure for administering. The farther we go from the standardized assessment procedure, that brings into question the validity and understanding of the results. So it's just a consideration.

If, so standardized tests have very prescriptive guidance, instructions, guidance around how it's done. So again when we vary from that, we don't have the normative data of how that impacts performance. So that's just, not that it can't be done but that becomes an interpretation challenge.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: Okay.

>> DAVID WHEELER: I'll give an example, a good one for Dade. If you translate the test, on the spot, you give it another language that's a nonstandardized administration and it's going to give you information. The challenge becomes when you look at the student's performance and you try to make sense out of it compared to the normative base which was given in English.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: Okay. Good example. Ava I hope that is helpful to you. Jamie from Duval, I think this is related to your comment or suggestion about when schools or districts are trying determine the impact of COVID-19 and the span of distance learning and any anxieties and family issues that have occurred because of that. The question is do you suggest we gather information directly from students and families about specific impacts of COVID? If so what kind of information could we ask for?

>> DAVID WHEELER: That's a great question. The first part certainly I think we always should be gathering information from students and families about student performance and other impacts. The other piece that's not going to go direct to this though is as students return over time we're going to know what the generalized impact has been. So unless an evaluation was already in process, I believe in most cases particularly if we're talking about achievement and much of behavior, we need to give the students more time. So it's that providing more intensive supports, monitoring how they're doing and then as we have data on the collective impact you know, how are students doing overall, how far are they behind from what we would expect in a normal year. There are you know, some of the social history type questions, parent interview, [inaudible] with students, I think you can come up with some questions just direct, how were you impacted. And it's going to be different. Some people lost family members and they couldn't go to the funeral. In some cases a parent or both parents lost their jobs and there's economic hardship. So again it's going to look different for different students. For some the impact other than not being able to hang out with their friends and being stuck at home, going back to that individual case. I hate to keep saying that but it's true. There isn't, this isn't a one size fits all.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: Okay. My friend [inaudible] Baker has put in two questions and I'm going to combine them in the interest of time. I think they're related. I think this is in response to your comments and explanation around extensions. Her question is I thought he said the SLD rule would allow for time line extensions. And then asking for clarification, is the guidance to establish a new deadline and are we bound by the new deadline versus an open-ended extension?

>> DAVID WHEELER: So now we're going to the SLD rule, to be clear this is outside of distance learning. In the LD rule that's where it allows for extension by mutual agreement. That's in the federal regs. And it's only for SLD. If that's done yes the mutual agreement with the parent establishes when it will be completed. Those students are not reported in the evaluation time line. And that's why I cautioned, that's not something we want to be doing with the majority of students suspected of being a student with a learning disability. But it is in the rule that is an option but you are correct. It's not just, we're outside of the evaluation time line and now you know it could take a year. The mutual consent should specify when the will evaluation will be completed. So there should be a date specific.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: And another --

>> DAVID WHEELER: Going back to distance learning and evaluations, particularly those that had to be extended or couldn't be completed due to they had face-to-face components or for other reasons, that plan to complete expeditiously should establish a projected date in which that's going to be done. I would use similar procedure for student with a learning disability which that preceded COVID-19. That's always been in the rule.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: Okay. And David just --

>> DAVID WHEELER: I'm sorry, go ahead.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: Go ahead.

>> DAVID WHEELER: So with some of the DD, and this, early on one of the responses, there were a lot of questions when we introduced response to intervention which marked into a multi-tiered system of supports but the whole idea of eligibility determinations. When response became a critical element, we have guidance early on, the question came out what about students with developmental delays? I think it was more if they had academic or minor behavior problems, and so the response back then was in a multi-tiered system of support we should be able to translate if they lose that eligibility classification under DD into a level of support commensurate with need. That's how a multi-tiered system of supports would work. So that they, the label was it didn't drive the services and supports. So that may be one way to think of it.

So for just kind of that broad, general, they're delayed in multiple areas, and for many of the students, opportunity, they haven't had the same exposure to language and print, that multi-tiered system of support should be able to pick them up and provide supports commensurate with need. Until we get into --

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: We are about nine minutes away from our stop time David so I'm going to just throw out two or three more questions for you. This is from Shoshana concern for secondary students have been in the process, I'm assuming she means intervention support process for some time, but lost intervention time. Will those three months negate all of the previous months and years of interventions? And can we just pick up where we left off and I think embedded in the question is or must we go back and redesign what the appropriate intervention is going to look like?

>> DAVID WHEELER: Yeah so I know prior to COVID-19 this has been a concern about the amount of progress monitoring data needed for high school students for example. So, at that level I think we have tons, we should have lots and lots and lots of data on student response to instruction, interventions that have been provided. This is my personal opinion now, but I believe there's more flexibility at that level. The amount of response to intervention data with specific interventions needed added earlier grades may be different because of the accumulation of information. Now, I believe there should be more flexibility at the secondary level. Given that though, we'll need to look at what the impact was, what the quality of data is. There are students that have had instruction interventions, and if we have data that those are effective with other students, you know, how many years of that do we need before we say a response is not adequate? Again, we're going to have more exclusionary variables post COVID-19 and distance learning and it looks like there may be options to continue the hybrid model of part time, so as we move forward we're going to have to do differently as stated early on. This is challenging the whole way we view assessments, instruction.

And we're going to have to be flexible and adaptable, which that is a quality that humans have. So we can do it, but it requires some change.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: I appreciate that.

>> DAVID WHEELER: And I'll have fun watching from the sidelines.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: I know! A question from Audrey, just so you know and I want to recognize some of these questions. There are a number of questions that have come through related to the 60 day time line. I feel as though you've spent a fair amount of time talking about that so I'm skipping over those folks just so you know.

>> DAVID WHEELER: I'm sorry Beth, since there's so many, but can I go back to the Department of Education order? So if the request, if the feds approve the request for flexibility that request was to, for those evaluations that required face to face to permanent an extension. That currently is not an option. That's a potential one.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: Okay there have also been a number of comments related to extending the age for developmentally delayed. And I am skipping over those on purpose because we're so short on time and because I think those questions are broader than just distance learning type of scenario. So again folks I'm acknowledging them but in the interest of time, trying to zero in on some for David. So, question from Audrey, what about instances where parents do not respond to attempt to contact. Would this be parents did not present child for evaluation when considering time lines?

>> DAVID WHEELER: Document, document. That condition existed previously. Again, on some cases, if there's been multiple attempts I'm wondering were those students not engaged in distance learning at all? And usually that particular exception has been for parents of pre-K or parents of children who are in private schools where we're, we have no access unless the parent brings them. If the parent, I do want to clarify, if we say we want you to bring your child in for an evaluation face to face and the parent says I don't think so, that wouldn't, I don't believe in this context that would be refusal to produce because the federal guidance on safety of students, working closely with parents, let's be honest, unless the feds give an extension on those face to face and even if they do, I expect that our Indicator 11 data is going to look a little differently next year. Good news because I do want to leave with a positive and I will be glad to try to address some other questions. But the good news about Indicator 11 I shared with our strategic team last week, 2012 was the year we had the highest percentage ever students evaluated within the 60 day time line. And it was just over 99 percent. The evaluation time line in 2012 was 60 school days which is basically close to 90 calendar days. So in 2015 we went to 60 calendar days. This past year we were at 98.4 percent almost for 20182019, that's our most recent data. We won't have 19-20 until fall. There was a small decrease for this year. But there were 9,000 more consents for evaluations for the previous year and there were almost 6,000 more evaluations completed within the 60 day time line. Compared to 2012 which was a different time line. It was school not calendar. In this state we completed almost 20,000 more evaluations within the

time line. Kudos to all of you out there that have responsibility for this. we've made incredible progress. Nationally, the data is not going to look as good. And I believe the U.S. Department of education understands that this is an unprecedented event and that there will be some comprehension understanding around the impact of COVID-19 on evaluation time lines. That's why they keep emphasizing the importance of working closely with parents, communicating, having mutual agreements and having a good plan.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: Thank you David and I'm glad you went back to Indicator 11 because a lot of people were continuing to have questions about that. As we're wrapping up I want you to know David that a lot of comments that are coming into the chat box now and you can probably see them are related to our impending retirement and well wishes. I join folks in all of those sentiments. We're going to miss you so much. You have been such a source of information, expertise, you are so patient with all of us. You are so willing to share and give up your time and knowledge. So we appreciate it. We will miss you. Folks I am going to move us on but thanks again, David. I'm so glad you were able to be with us today.

>> DAVID WHEELER: And thank you all for the very kind comments. I'm humbled and certainly blessed. I thank God for the opportunity for being able to serve for so long. I will miss the work, but I take comfort in knowing that we've laid a foundation and that you all will continue to build on it and improve outcomes for students of all types, of all races, ages across the state. And again I'll enjoy watching you continue the good work. Thank you.

>> BETH HARDCASTLE: I hope we are able to live up to your expectations. You've certainly paved the way and provided us the foundation that we need to do that. We will miss you but I know your lovely wife Anna is so excited for the end of July and your grandkids and kids. So certainly well deserved. Folks and David I will send you this chat transcript so that you can see what some of these comments are that are coming in pretty continuously right now. All right guys, I'm going to move us on to our closing. We've adjusted our evaluation questions a little bit. I ask you to take a look at those, the bureau requires us to obtain evaluation information based on the services we're providing. So this is important to us. It helps our funding sources know that what we're doing is helpful to you so I appreciate your input. Some of those are just easy poll questions. There is a question that's open-ended that relates to providing us with some feedback, in particular, as we continue to work to provide you the assistance, technical support, resources that you are requesting as we move into the school year. And I just wanted to give a shout out to our discretionary project peeps on the call today. I know there are a bunch of you and I know you appreciate that, shout out especially to my Region 2 folks. We're all working. Our project is in the midst of developing some products aligned with that expectation that David shared as far as we've got to be flexible. Districts don't know yet what the new school year is going to be look like. So we've been given a charge from Monica Veritarato that we know some kids have

regressed, not all. She's made it very clear that that she wants us to be approaching the new school year, whatever that looks like with a strong MPSS in place so that regardless of the delivery method we've got practices and ideas and some things that we've lined up to meet the needs of our kids and teachers and administrators. So thank you for that. I would also like to thank our captioner. I'm always impressed with what a nice job you guys do to capture the spoken portion of these webinars. So thank you so much. And I, yeah, we have some more chats in the works. The next one will be June 25<sup>th</sup>. That topic by design was left open so we have yet to determine what the focus for that webinar will be. So the comments that you are putting into the your feedback matters box there is going to be really useful to us in determining what direction we want to go with that particular webinar. We also have webinars scheduled, two of them in July. Like I said we're working on some products for you. Let us know how we can help you. Please stay healthy. I hope that all of you get a brief respite this summer and are able to get a little bit of rest, relaxation. Whew! So, I think that's it. I will leave this page for a while so that those of you who haven't had a chance yet can add any comments you have for David, and also provide us with some information on that last open-ended poll question. Thank you. Stay safe. Stay healthy and we will see you back here on June 25<sup>th</sup>.