

School Options

Benefits

Considerations

In-Person Instruction – Public & Private Schools

- Face-to-face learning, ample opportunities for interactive discussion, questions answered in “real time,” teacher-guided practice, etc.
- Traditional school schedule likely maintained (5 days per week or hybrid/hyflex instruction, standard ~8 hour days, bus routes, etc.)
- Peer interaction and opportunities for same-age socialization
- Access to in-person IEP/504 Plan services and therapies (if applicable)
- Possible access to school-based athletics, camps, clubs, and other extracurricular activities
- Potential improved mental health of children (return to familiar routines, schedules, friend groups, etc.)
- Allows working parents to return to their workplaces (full or part-time depending on class schedule)
- Expected smaller class sizes than typical

- Heightened COVID-19 exposure risk
- Safety protocols may create an environment that looks/feels different than traditional school (social distancing, face masks, no classroom rotations, etc.)
- If/when a classmate or teacher experiences symptoms of COVID-19, the class (or whole school) will most likely transition to virtual learning for 10-14 days (possibly several times throughout the school year, requiring reliable technology/internet at home)
- Potential extended school closures/transition to long-term virtual learning
- Potential last minute, unpredictable childcare needs
- Potential long-term substitutes, if teachers and staff are ill or exposed to COVID-19
- Potential heightened anxiety related to disruptions in routine (transitions between in-person and virtual learning) and concerns about health and safety

Virtual Instruction – Public, Private & Online Schools

- Minimal COVID-19 exposure risk
- Participation in live-streamed or pre-recorded lessons led by public/private school teacher(s)
- If technology is available, schools may live-stream class instruction for a more inclusive home learning experience
- Ample opportunities for movement, brain breaks, choice activities, etc.
- Schools may be able to provide varying degrees of IEP/504 Plan services and therapies virtually (instructional delivery and service hours may be adapted to support virtual needs)
- **Public/private school** virtual learning will likely be better structured than it was in Spring 2020, as schools have had time to plan, prepare, and provide various forms of professional development to staff
- **Online schools** specialize in virtual learning and will likely have more robust online programs than public/private schools are able to establish for COVID-19 crisis home learning

- Requires adult in-home supervision
- Requires reliable home access to technology/internet
- Children must remain disciplined to keep up with the classwork schedule with minimal teacher support
- Individual progress may not reflect grade-level expectations if child is unable to dedicate necessary time, effort, and attention towards learning at home
- Virtual IEP/504 services may not be as individualized or effective for the child’s learning as in-person
- Possible academic and/or skill regression
- Potential feelings of social isolation
- Therapies (OT, PT, speech, mental/behavioral, etc.) may need to be provided in full or part by private/clinic therapists to support development
- Limited exposure to diversity and opportunities to learn with peers of different backgrounds
- Increased screen time
- Families with multiple children must provide each child with independent work time, space, and materials, and may require multiple technology devices, higher internet speeds, etc.

School Options

Benefits

Considerations

Homeschool

- Minimal COVID-19 exposure risk
- Schedule, routine, and curriculum flexibility
- Fully individualized learning, plentiful 1:1 and small group learning opportunities
- Ample opportunities for movement, brain breaks, choice activities, and child-led learning
- Child can be taught exclusively at their developmental level, moving at their own pace which may lead to faster progress and fewer frustrations
- Group learning opportunities are available through a variety of cooperative programs (for certain subjects) to promote social development and interactive learning with peers

- Requires adult in-home supervision
- Parent (or other adult) is the child's primary teacher
- Parent (or other adult) must identify a teaching philosophy (classical, de-schooling, unschooling, etc.), and select curriculum that meets state requirements
- Parents must understand homeschool regulations and maintain legal compliance (laws vary by state)
- Curriculum and learning materials may be costly
- Homes with multiple children must provide each with appropriate age/skill level curriculum and instruction
- No access to public/private school IEP/504 services
- Academic progress may not reflect grade-level expectations if parent is unable to dedicate the necessary time and energy towards instruction
- Instructional limitations include parent's comfort teaching less familiar subjects (foreign languages)
- Therapies (OT, PT, speech, mental/behavioral, etc.) are typically provided through private/clinic therapists to support development
- Possible academic and/or skill regression
- Potential feelings of social isolation
- Limited exposure to diversity and opportunities to learn with peers of different backgrounds
- It is difficult (not impossible) for both parents to maintain full-time jobs; may increase financial strain

Homebound Instruction – Public & Private Schools

- Traditionally, the teacher(s) travels to the child's home to provide 1:1 in-person instruction, assist with work completion, and help the child progress towards educational goals (services may be virtual during the COVID-19 pandemic)
- Reduced COVID-19 exposure risk, though more risk than virtual or homeschool, since the teacher comes into the home
- Ample opportunities for movement, brain/rest breaks, choice activities, etc.

- Requires adult in-home supervision
- Extensive qualification as part of an IEP/504 Plan; requires physician recommendation and signature
- Service may be limited to 1-2 hours a few times each week for a finite time period; many children will have independent or parent-assisted schoolwork time
- Often utilized as a temporary plan during periods of medical instability (not long-term placement)
- Academic progress may not reflect grade-level expectations with less instructional time
- Possible academic and/or skill regression
- Potential feelings of social isolation