

# With a Restricted School Schedule, How Many Students With Disabilities Can Receive Their Related Services In Person?

Most public school students who chose to return to their classrooms are receiving in-person instruction one to three times a week with remote instruction on the other days. The number of times per week varies depending on whether their school opted for a two-week cycle (two in-person cohorts) or a three-week cycle (three in-person cohorts) under the hybrid system the education department is using for traditional public schools this year. Schools in District 75, which enroll students with disabilities who require extensive support, had the option to have students attend school in person five days a week every other week and—in some cases—every week. Some traditional public schools are also able to offer in-person instruction five days a week for students with disabilities recommended for small classes.

## Department of Education's Hybrid Schedules for the 2020-2021 School Year

Two-Week Cycle (Two Cohorts of Students)			Three-Week Cycle (Three Cohorts of Students)		
Cohort	Week	Days in Person	Cohort	Week	Days in Person
1	1	3	1	1	2
	2	2		2	2
2	1	2		3	1
	2	3	2	1	2
<div>SOURCE: <a href="#">New York City Department of Education's School Reopening Plan Submission to the New York State Department of Education for 2020-2021</a></div> <div>NOTE: Each cohort receives remote instruction on the days that they do not receive in-person instruction.</div> <div>New York City Independent Budget Office</div>			2	2	1
				3	2
			3	1	1
				2	2
				3	2
			<div>SOURCE: <a href="#">New York City Department of Education's School Reopening Plan Submission to the New York State Department of Education for 2020-2021</a></div> <div>NOTE: Each cohort receives remote instruction on the days that they do not receive in-person instruction.</div> <div>New York City Independent Budget Office</div>		

Given the hybrid schedules schools are using, will students who opt into in-person instruction and who are supposed to receive services each week be able to receive specialized services in person as frequently as recommended? In school year 2018-2019, around 150,000 New York City public school students (excluding those in charter schools) in grades pre-K through 12 had a disability that entitled them to receive “related services” such as speech or physical therapy. Roughly 54 percent were recommended to receive only one related service and the rest were recommended multiple services. Since a student can be slated for multiple services, we looked at the maximum number of times per week each student was recommended to receive a related service.

In Schools With Hybrid Schedules Some Students Will Be Unable to Get All of Their Recommended Related Services in Person				
Number of Times Per Week Most-Frequent Service Recommended in 2018-2019	Students		Student Can Receive All Sessions of Most-Frequent Service In Person Under:	
	Number	Percentage	Two-Week Hybrid Schedule	Three-Week Hybrid Schedule
1	58,000	39%	Yes	Yes
2	81,100	55%	Yes	Sometimes
3	7,600	5%	Sometimes	No
4 or More Times	1,700	1%	No	No
SOURCE: IBO analysis of Department of Education Special Education Student Information System data, 2018-2019 NOTE: Data from school year 2018-2019 is the most recent data available on students with disabilities. <i>New York City Independent Budget Office</i>				

- Around 58,000 students (39 percent) were recommended to receive their most-frequent service just once a week. These students could receive their most-frequent service in person regardless of which of the hybrid schedules is used by their school.
- More than half, or about 81,100 students, had at least one service recommended to occur twice a week. If these students attend a school with two in-person cohorts, they could receive both sessions of their most frequently recommended service in person. However, if they attend a school with three in-person cohorts, they can only receive these services in person two out of every three weeks.
- About 7,600 students were recommended to receive at least one of their services three times a week. Students attending schools offering a two-week hybrid schedule would only be able to receive all sessions of their most frequently recommended service in person every other week.
- The roughly 1,700 students recommended to receive their most-frequent service four or more times per week would have the greatest opportunity to receive their services in person at the recommended frequency if they attend schools in District 75. Among these students, 53 percent (900 students) attended a District 75 school. The remaining 800 students were distributed across the city's school districts.

Beyond the question of how frequently students with disabilities are scheduled to receive related services, there are many other factors that families, schools, and service providers consider when determining whether it is feasible for these students to receive in-person services. Many of these considerations revolve around the safety of providing in-person instruction, particularly when it involves service providers, paraprofessionals, or teachers working in close proximity to the student receiving the service. Similarly, transporting students with disabilities without increasing their exposure to the virus is also a major concern. Finally, the Department of Education faces the challenge of finding sufficient staff to provide in-person related services for students with disabilities and the logistical challenge of scheduling these services.

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