Georgia's Pre-K Program

Pre-K Updates

Child Care Programs

July 24, 2020

Georgia Dept of Early Care and Learning

BRIGHT FROM THE START

Today's Agenda

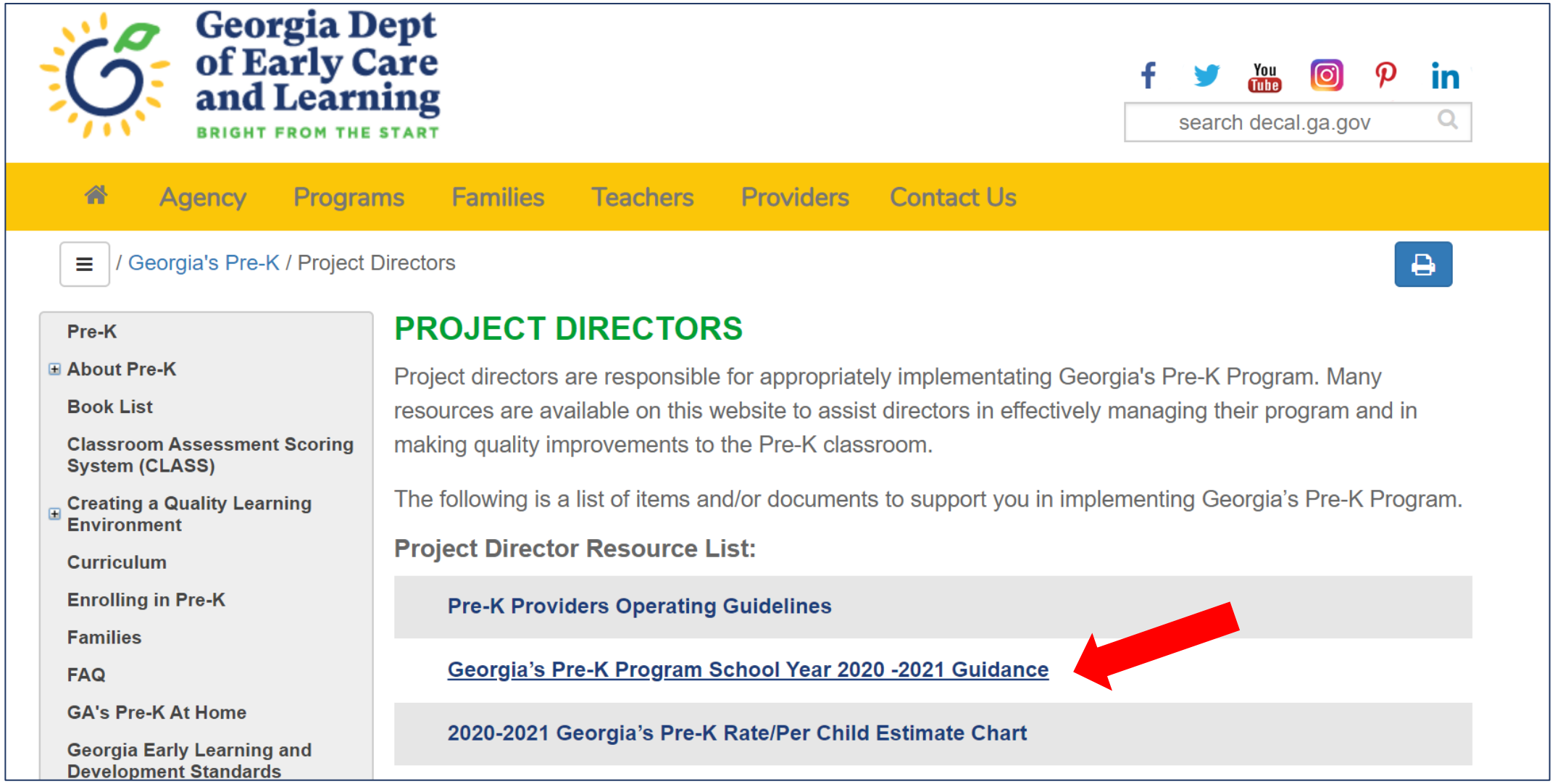
- Determining our Mindset for the School Year
- Pre-K Guidance
- Guidance for Determining the Start of the School Year
- Pre-K Calendars
- Intermittent Closures
- Instructional Model Clarifications
- Recommendations for Pre-K Schedule & Practices
- Serving School Age Students
- Questions

Determining Our Mindset

Guiding Principles

- Acknowledge feelings.
- Be flexible.
- Seek expert advice.
- Assume good intentions.

Guidance Posted



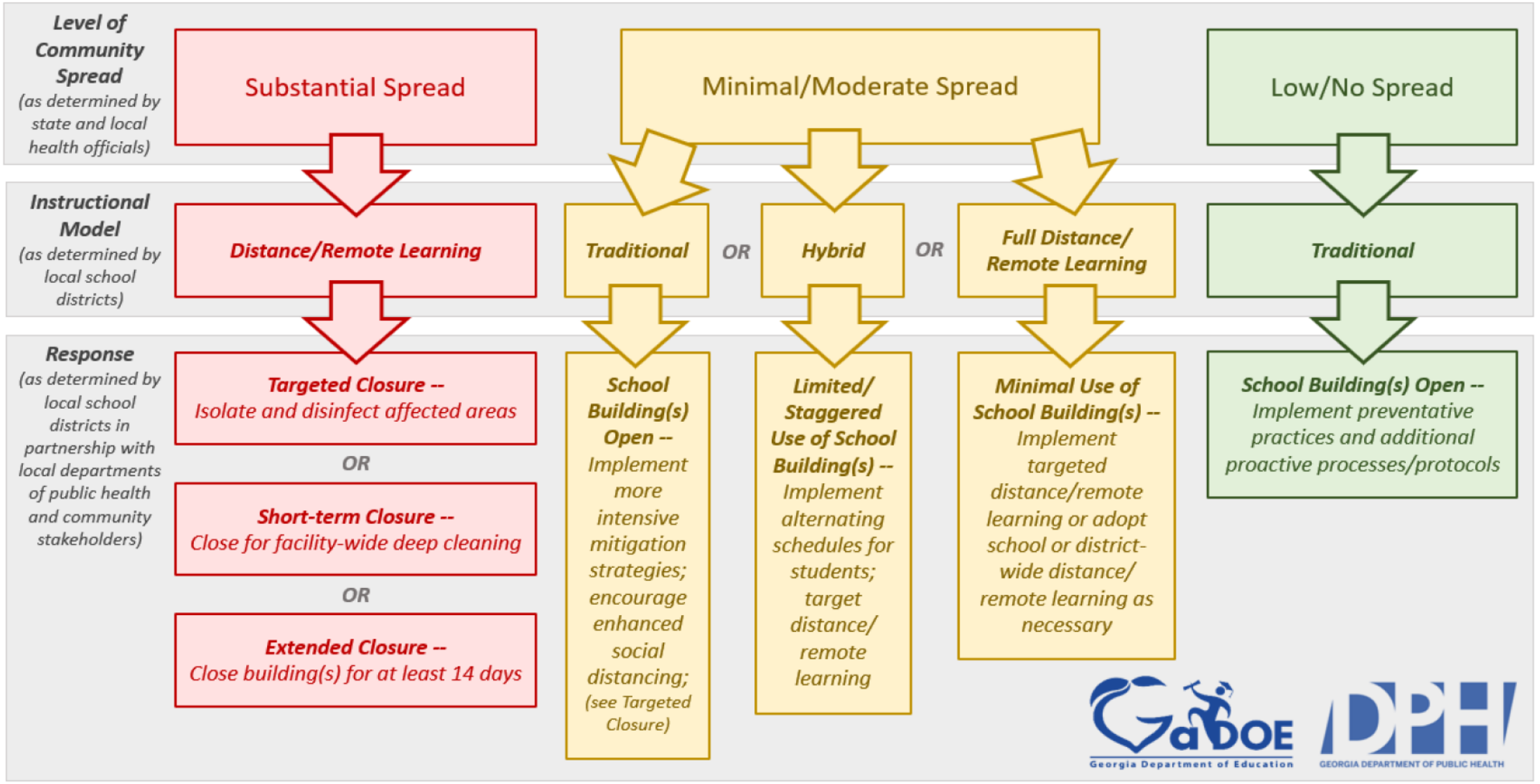
Understanding the Pre-K Guidance

Play Attention to the Language Used in the Guidance.

Focus on the Intent of the Guidance..

Ask Questions to Gain Understanding..

When Should Programs Start School?



When Should Programs Start School?

Delaying the Start of the School Year- NEW GUIDANCE

- May **choose** to delay the start of their school year for students up to 10 days.
  - **Programs should use this time to prepare for the school year.**
  - Days can not be utilized during the school year.

- Teachers must report to work during this time (onsite or teleworking) and be paid as part of the 190 days.

- Programs would not be required to make these days up as instructional time with students.

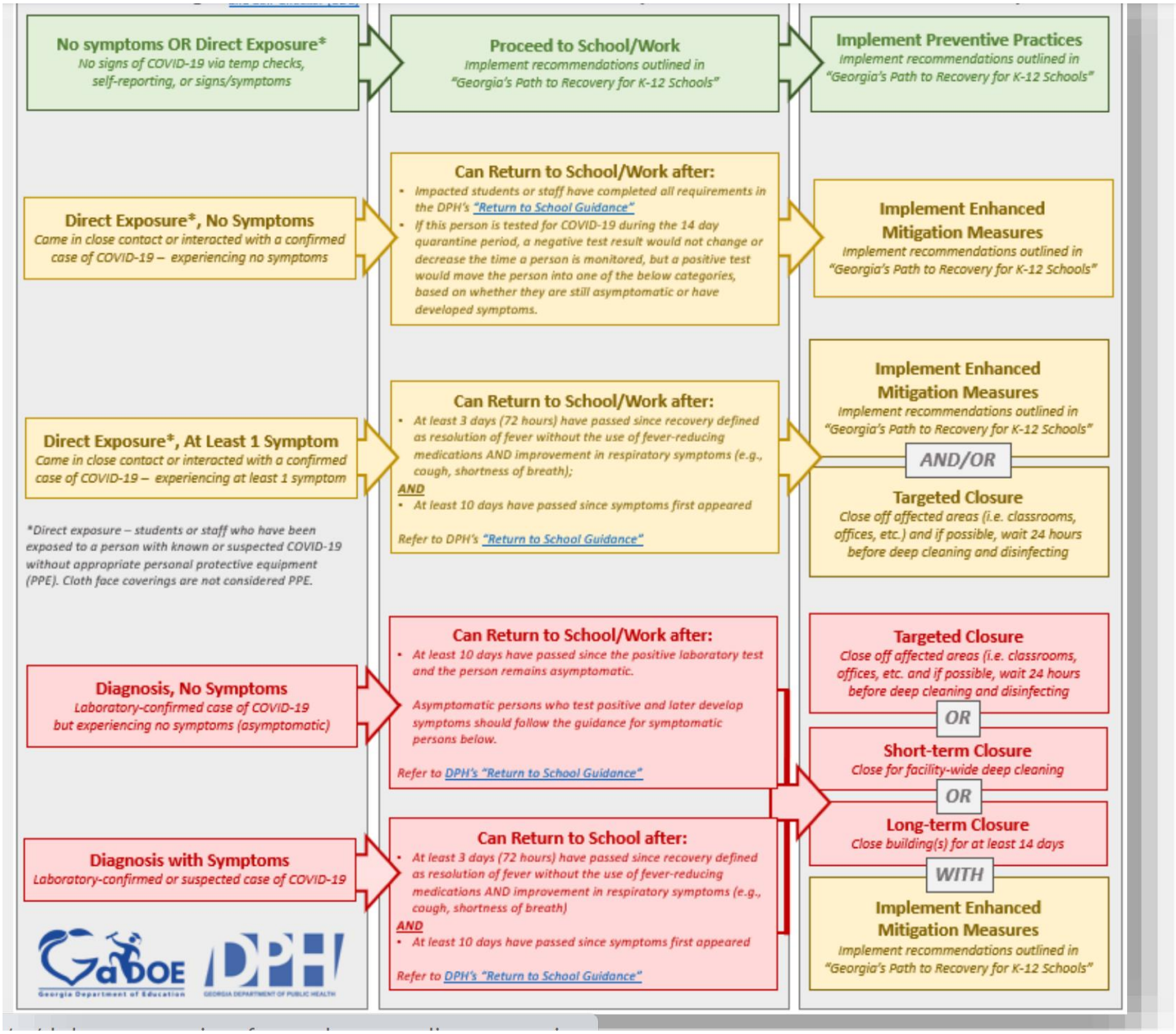
- Prior approval for up to 10 days is not needed.

Preparing for Intermittent Pre-K Closures

All programs should have a plan to continue offering Pre-K services if Pre-K classes must be closed due to COVID-19.

- Closures due to COVID-19 do not have to be rescheduled if distance learning is provided.
  - Programs must notify their Pre-K Specialist of any closures.
- Establish a communication tool for families.
- Lead and Assistant Teachers are expected to work during closures.
  - Programs can determine if teachers should report onsite or work from home.
- Create supply kits and send home prior to any closures.
- For extended closures, provide families with on-going supplies and materials including manipulatives, books, etc. for at-home learning activities.
  - Families can pick up or program can deliver.
- Connect with students through individual, small group and large group video chats, Zoom (or other online platforms), apps and phone calls.

Georgia's Path to Recovery for K-12 Schools



School District Decision Tree

This *District Decision Tree* equips local school and public health leaders to mount a targeted response based on confirmed COVID-19 cases or exposures within a school community.

- CDC's COVID-19 Symptoms and Self-Checker
- DPH's Return to School Guidance After COVID-19 Illness or Exposure *(issued June 13, 2020)*

Districts continue to have the flexibility to implement prevention strategies above and beyond the recommendations laid out in this guidance and adopt instructional models that best serve their students, teachers, and community.

https://www.georgiainsights.com/recovery.html

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Kathleen E. Toomey, M.D., M.P.H., **Commissioner** / Brian Kemp, **Governor**

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Return to School or Childcare Guidance After COVID-19 Illness or Exposure

July 22, 2020

The Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) in conjunction with the Georgia Department of Education have released guidance to help schools plan for a safe return to in-person instruction in fall 2020: https://www.georgiainsights.com/recovery.html. DPH recommends schools use this guidance to make decisions regarding opening for in-person education.

CDC also provides guidance on preventing the spread of COVID-19 in school and childcare settings https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/schools.html

For schools opting to have in-person instruction and childcare facilities the following guidance should be used to make decisions for children, teachers, and staff:

- with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19;
- who have suspected COVID-19 (e.g., developed symptoms of a respiratory infection [e.g., cough, shortness of breath, fever] but did not get tested for COVID-19 and have been

https://www.georgiainsights.com/recovery.html

Pre-K Calendars

Programs will need to submit the school calendar for approval.

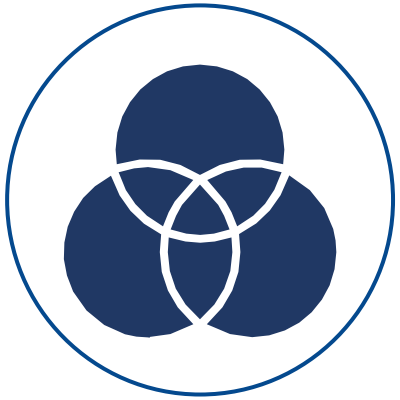
- Enter calendar into PANDA, will open by Wednesday, July 29th .
- Enter start date for teachers, start date for students.
- Do not enter any furlough days.
- **Private programs can choose, but are not required, to follow the local school system calendar**.

Pre-K Instructional Models

2020 - 2021

Traditional

Pre-K is provided in the regular classroom setting. All students attend each day on site.



Hybrid

Pre-K is provided via a combination of traditional classroom and distance learning.

Full Distance Learning

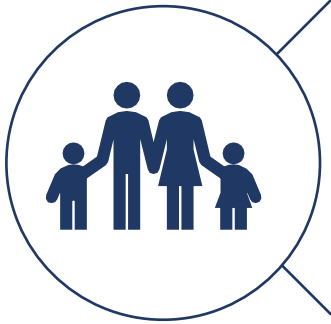
Pre-K is provided through full distance learning. Instruction is a combination of virtual learning and remote hands-on learning.

Choosing an Instructional Model

2020 - 2021

Each Pre-K Program is required to select an Instructional Model for each Pre-K classroom.

- Must implement the model for at least the **first nine weeks of school.**
- Programs are not required to select the same model for every classroom.
  - A site with only one classroom must select only one model.
  - A site with multiple classrooms can select more than one model (one model per classroom).
- Programs should consider the needs of children and their families as well as their Pre-K staff when selecting a model.
- Programs should select a model that best fits the needs of their families, community and program.



What are the needs of the families you serve?

Consider surveying your families to determine their concerns and needs.

What is the current spread of COVID-19 in your community?

Consult with your local health department.

Can your program meet the model requirements?

Each model has specific requirements for implementation.

Traditional

- **Purpose:** The Traditional model allows for daily in-person instruction for all enrolled students five days a week following normal operating hours. It follows a traditional school day and calendar.

Requirements for Utilizing this Model:

- Programs should monitor community COVID-19 data and recommendations from the local health department to determine if there should be a temporary Pre-K closure.
- Must have written distance learning plans available for any temporary closures due to increased COVID spread. Send learning materials home with families in preparation.

Hybrid

Purpose: The Hybrid or Blended model allows for programs to decrease the number of students and staff exposed to each other.

Requirements for Utilizing this Model:

- Model and distance learning schedule must be communicated clearly to families.
- Must plan for instruction in classroom and for distance learning.
- Distance learning can be provided through virtual learning and/or at-home, hands-on learning activities.
- Both the Lead and Assistant Teacher are actively engaged with students each day.

Hybrid Model Recommendations

- Types of hybrid learning may include but are not be limited to the following examples:
  - **Split schedule**: Children are divided into two groups. One group attends Pre-K in the morning; the other half of the class attends in the afternoon. Children have planned instructional activities including materials provided by the teacher for the time they are not in class. Lunch should be provided for both groups. Meal could be provided concurrently but groups can not be served in the same room.
  - **Entire class:** All children in a class attend in-class learning two to three days per week. Instruction is provided through distance learning the other days. This model is appropriate for reducing classes to each other and is appropriate for sites with multiple Pre-K classes or other grades on site.
  - **Two-day rotation:** Children are divided into two smaller consistent cohort groups. Cohorts would receive in-person classroom instruction two days a week. On days not in the classroom, children participate in distance learning that could include a combination of online instruction and learning activities prepared by the teacher and sent home to be completed with family support. Using this schedule would allow programs to thoroughly clean classrooms and other areas of the building on the day with no in-person instruction.
- Consider the impact of the model on the quality and quantity of instructional time for students.

“Student Cohorts” in Traditional & Hybrid Models

Consider creating cohort classes to minimize crossover among children and adults.

- It would be appropriate to set up cohorts of students that participate in activities together as a consistent small group to reduce interaction among all students. Cohorts don’t mix, but physical distancing isn’t always observed within the cohort group.

- Children should be included within the same cohort each day, and the same teacher could remain with the same group each day or the teachers could switch between activities.

Full Distance Learning

Purpose: No in-person instruction is provided which minimizes COVID-19 exposure; especially for more vulnerable populations, and for COVID-19 “hot spots”

Requirements for Utilizing this Model:

- All instruction is conducted through virtual learning and at-home learning activities.
- **Must ensure Lead and Assistant Teachers AND students have distance learning tools**.
- Must have digital infrastructure to offer distance learning, sufficient number of families requesting model (or a school/program ONLY offering full distance), and teachers with sufficient training in distance learning. Must be consistent with program operating model.

Full Distance Model Requirements

Learning Format	Time Allotment	Learning Activity Examples
Virtual Whole Group	No more than 60 minutes per day, can be divided into smaller segments • Teacher-directed instruction • Should be recorded and posted or emailed to families	Circle Time Music and Movement Phonological Awareness Large Group Literacy Story Time Large Group Math Large Group Social Emotional, Science and Social Studies
Small Group	15 – 30 minutes per day • Teacher-directed instruction • 3 – 6 children per group • Can be provided by Lead or Assistant Teacher	• Open ended activity utilizing materials provided to families • Activities should be based on GELDS • Small group reading and supporting activity (1X week) • Small group math and supporting activity (1X week)
Individual Instruction	15 – 20 minutes, 2x weekly per child • Teacher-directed instruction with an individual child • Can be provided by Lead or Assistant Teacher	• Activities should be based on GELDS • Differentiate based on the needs of each child • Consider the child's learning style • Use assessment to inform instruction
Independent Play & Outdoor Play	Independent Play: 60 minutes per day Outdoor Play: 60 minutes per day	• Provide weekly activities for extending learning during independent learning that can be facilitated by family • Provide materials on a rotating basis to support learning

Recommendations from AAP

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that Pre-K Programs focus on effective mitigation strategies. These include hand hygiene, infection prevention education for staff and families, adult physical distancing from one another, adults wearing face coverings, “cohorting”, and spending time outdoors.

Higher-priority strategies:

- Cohort classes to minimize crossover among children and adults within the program and within each classroom. (Divide children into two smaller groups to participate in activities together throughout the day.)
- Limit the mixing of children, such as staggering playground times and keeping groups separate for activities. Utilize outdoor spaces when possible.
- Limit visitors into the classroom and halt field trips.

Lower-priority strategies:

- Face coverings for children in Pre-K may be difficult to implement.
- Reducing classmate interactions and play in Pre-K classrooms may not provide substantial COVID-19 risk reduction.

American Academy of Pediatrics

DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®

Recommendations for Pre-K Schedule and Practices

2020 - 2021

Health Checks

- **Encourage families and staff to self screen daily.**
  - If there is fever, loss of smell or taste, or other symptoms for child, staff member or HOUSEHOLD member, then do not come to school.

- **Temperature check and screening checks at arrival.**

Recommendations for Pre-K Schedule and Practices

2020 - 2021

Rest Time- New Guidance

- Cleaning and spacing of mats/cots
- Eliminating rest time
- Allowing children to leave prior to rest time

Recommendations for Pre-K Schedule and Practices

2020 - 2021

Face Coverings

- **Consider having teachers and children wear face masks or coverings.**
  - DECAL is not requiring masks for staff or children. This is a program decision. Wearing masks all day may be difficult for some children.
  - Face Shields should not be worn as a REPLACEMENT for a face mask. Can be used as ADDITIONAL protection if desired.
  - Face masks should be washed daily.
- **Pre-K funds could be utilized to purchase masks for Pre-K staff and students.**

Recommendations for Pre-K Schedule and Practices

2020 - 2021

Social Distancing

- **Social distancing is not required within the Pre-K classroom.**

- **Consider limiting the number of children allowed in individual learning centers.**

- **Consider dividing children into 2 smaller groups and conducting large group activities separately.**

Serving School Age Students

2020 - 2021

- **If families need care for their school age children, then it will also be needed for their Pre-K children.**
  - It is not appropriate to have a Pre-K classroom conducted through a full distance model and then have Pre-K students attend the program for child care.

- **Pre-K teachers can not supervise school age students during the Pre-K day or during planning time.**

Next Steps

- The due date for Model Approval forms has been extended to Wednesday, July 29th.
  - Forms will be reviewed, and feedback provided within 48 hours.
- Submit Pre-K Calendar for approval.
- Teacher resources posted next week.

Questions