

CHECP/PreK Family Information

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The following is a very brief summary of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidance regarding special education that we continue to consider as we move into this next phase of planning.

- Acton-Boxborough is committed to the provision of FAPE (free appropriate public education) consistent with the need to protect the health and safety for all students and staff.
- Students must receive all services documented in their IEPs.
- We will prioritize in-person learning for preschool students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible.
- Services will focus on “direct services and instruction”, with limited use of asynchronous “resources and supports”.
- As always, parent engagement and collaboration is essential in making decisions.
- School will look different in the fall. As a result special education services, regardless of the mode of in-person or remote, will look different.

Information about in-person learning and remote preschool for IEP services is included in this document to assist in your decision making.

- For children with IEPs: Families will be able to choose in-person or fully remote learning to access mandated special education services. Families need to notify us of their option by Monday, August 3rd. [Parent Response Form](#)

- At this time we are not planning for any remote instruction for general education preschool students. For planning purposes families of children without IEPs need to commit to in-person instruction by sending the tuition agreement to cdpietro@abschools.org by Friday, July 31.
- In general, public preschools should follow DESE guidance, but can consult guidance provided by the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) for additional information. Information from both (DESE and EEC) was used to develop this document.

In-Person Preschool

Preschool students with IEPs have been prioritized by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for in-person instruction. Therefore, the district is proceeding with our planning for the safe return to school for as many preschoolers as possible. Because of the importance of ensuring the least restrictive environment (LRE), we are also hoping to have students without IEPs enrolled to integrate our classes.

Schedule:

The integrated program will operate on the following schedule: *Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

Morning Class: 8:30 to 11:15am Afternoon Class: 12:15 to 3:00pm All Day Class: 8:30 to 3:00pm

^Students with disabilities will have individualized schedules based on their IEP.

*Some slight staggering to promote distancing during transitions may alter each class's schedule by a few minutes.

*The first day of school will be decided based on ABRSD's first day of school. Typically, CHECP starts school the day after the district's elementary schools begin.

General Guidelines for Distancing & PPE

Similar to the district, we need to target 6 ft. separation in most cases, particularly between students.

- It will be more challenging for preschoolers due to their developmental level but with staffing support, repetition, encouragement and practice, it can be reinforced.
- Visual supports, clearly defined spacing, furniture/barriers, and other strategies for children to maintain physical distance will be implemented.
- During most staff/child close proximity contacts (therapy sessions, activities that require hand over hand assistance, helping with toileting, lunch/snack and other activities of daily living) PK staff will wear more PPE than a typical elementary or secondary teacher.
- Mask use for staff (and additional PPE during close proximity interactions) is required.
- Mask use is also for all preschool children unless there is a medical or developmental hurdle to wear them. While it may be challenging for preschoolers at first, with instruction, assistance and practice, many children will get more independent and tolerant fairly quickly.
- Like the entire district, we are asking families to provide 2 face masks per day for their child

(washed each day or disposable). The district will also have extra disposable masks for student use if needed.

General Operation Guidelines to Minimize Close Contacts

- Avoid activities that involve multiple classroom cohorts.
- Reduce overall foot traffic in the buildings.
- Hold parent meetings/consultations remotely.
- Develop clear movement protocols (including arrival, dismissal, transition between spaces, toileting) to avoid crowding.
- Ensure there are adequate provisions for the storage of child and staff belongings so that they do not touch.
- Cancel all field trips, PTO events and extracurricular activities.
- Staff training on health and safety requirements prior to school beginning.

General Guidelines for Cleaning, Sanitizing and Disinfecting

CHECP will follow DESE's general guidelines for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting.

- Intensify the program's routine cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting practices, paying extra attention to frequently touched objects and surfaces, including door knobs, bathrooms/sinks and bannisters.
- Children will use individual materials as often as possible. Individual bins with activities/materials will be utilized to minimize sharing of materials. Shared materials will be cleaned and sanitized before another child is allowed to use it.
- Toys/materials that children have placed in their mouths or are otherwise contaminated by body secretions or excretions will be removed from circulation by staff wearing gloves. The objects will be cleaned with approved sanitizer/cleaner.
- According to the EEC and CDC, children's books, like other paper-based materials, are not considered a high risk for transmission and do not need additional cleaning procedures. Preschool Staff will conduct regular inspection and disposal of books that are soiled or damaged. If books have been put in children's mouths, they will be removed from rotation.
- Remove all soft and cloth-based toys, stuffed animals and dress-up clothing.
- For electronics (e.g., ipads), staff will follow manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and sanitizing.
- While cleaning and sanitizing, staff will wear gloves as much as possible. Staff will wash and/or sanitize hands after these procedures.

Guidelines for Outdoor Play Areas

- We are encouraged to increase outdoor time where children can engage in play spaced apart.
- Children and Preschool staff will wash/sanitize hands prior to and following use of the playground.
- If students maintain a distance of at least six feet while on the playground, staff will provide a mask break. Staff members will monitor students to ensure they are following protocols for physical distancing and masking.

Scheduled Mask Breaks

DESE has recommended that students attending in-person school have at least two mask breaks per day, such as at mealtimes and recess, with additional mask breaks scheduled for students in preschool as allowed.

- If additional mask breaks are scheduled, they will most likely occur outdoors or at the children's desks/individual tables, to ensure a minimum of six feet between students.
- Hand washing facilities or hand sanitizer will be available upon entering and leaving areas where mask breaks will occur.
- When indoors, students will set masks on a napkin or paper towel (inside face-up) when they take a mask break, such as at lunch or snack. Masks should be put on before leaving the seat.
- Staff and students will be instructed on how to properly put on and take off masks.

Snack/Lunch

Students will eat in their classroom. In each classroom, students will eat at their assigned seats to maintain six feet of distance when not wearing a mask. Staff and children will wash hands or sanitize prior to and following snack/lunch. After lunch and snack, students (if possible) can assist staff to sanitize tables, seats, and benches using approved EPA products and methods.

Rest Time

Students in school longer than four hours are required to have a rest time. Masks must not be worn while children are resting but strict and consistent physical distancing must be practiced at all times during rest time. Students' rest mats will be set up to maintain six feet of distance and adequate provisions are required to ensure child rest belongings do not touch.

Bathrooms

Bathroom doors and windows (where available) will remain open, provided they do not pose a safety or privacy risk. Because student bathrooms have multiple stalls, building leaders will determine the maximum number of students who can be in each bathroom at once (depending on the number of stalls, urinals, and sinks). Maximum occupancy signs will be posted outside each restroom and six-foot marks will be placed on the floors outside of all bathrooms. Trash cans and paper towel dispensers are located by the bathroom door where feasible.

Remote Preschool for IEP Services

Preschool students have been prioritized by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for in-person instruction. If families of children with IEPs will not be sending their children to school in-person, a remote learning option is available to access mandated special education services. Families need to notify us of their option by Monday, August 3rd. [Parent Response](#)

****We are not planning for any remote instruction for general education preschool students.**

Remote Learning Considerations for Preschool Children on IEPs

For families opting for remote instruction, it will be important to balance screen time and non-screen time by using shorter virtual sessions and flexible offerings of live, recorded and small group instruction.

- Pre-recorded enrichment activities aimed at providing practice and/or carryover of skills can be provided outside of live learning time.
- New skills can be paired with familiar activities (e.g., circle songs, etc.) to maintain routine.
- Educators will be mindful of wait times to maximize opportunities for as many children as possible to be engaged.