



March 19, 2020

TO: School District Superintendents
School Principals
BOCES District Superintendents
School District Business Officers
Special Education Directors
Charter School Leaders

FROM: Kathleen DeCataldo

RE: Child Care Plans

Schools are an important part of the community and are charged with the care and instruction of a community's youngest members. Therefore, during a public health emergency, schools and districts are integral parts of a state's emergency response plan. Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 202.4, school districts in NYS are required to establish and submit plans for the care of children of essential personnel across a wide array of critical professions and occupations that are necessary to protect and support the public. The list below is intended as an illustration and guide, but **not an exhaustive list of professions or occupations eligible for prioritized childcare.**

- Essential health care workers may include licensed health professionals such as physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, registered nurses, LPNs, nurse assistants, laboratory personnel, or pharmacists.
- Direct support professionals may include clinicians and support staff serving the behavioral health, intellectual/developmental disabilities and child welfare communities in residential and community-based care settings.
- First responders may include paramedics, emergency medical technicians, police officers, and firefighters, correctional officers or related support personnel necessary to execute these duties.
- Food manufacturing, production, distribution and supply including supermarket workers and food preparation.
- Transportation including commercial truck driver of necessary supplies and equipment, transit workers, air and rail and carriers of critical and essential materials.
- Construction and Manufacturing including specialized equipment related to health or safety of the public.
- Nonprofit and social service agencies providing support to families and employees in related fields.

This list may change as the facts and circumstances change. As stated, this list is not exhaustive, nor does not being listed prohibit other groups.

The NYS Education Department, working in partnership with the Department of Health, the Office of Children and Family Services and other agencies will work with local school districts as they implement these mission-necessary centers to ensure that our appropriate essential personnel have their childcare covered. We are also actively working with leaders in the nonprofit and social service sector to identify additional supports and resources that may be provided.

Districts are strongly encouraged to build upon the myriad of projects and partnerships with existing community-based organizations (CBOs) that are already licensed through the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) when developing their childcare plans.

Where possible, school districts should consider working collaboratively with other districts and with their county partners to provide childcare access.

Districts may also wish to contact their Child Care Resource and Referral agencies for information regarding available childcare placements in existing programs.

Additionally, Districts should consider any of the Extended School Day/School Violence Prevention or other afterschool or childcare providers in their districts. Districts who have relationships with school aged child care centers, should have the SACC program contact OCFS regional offices for possible expansion of, or changes to, an existing license for the duration of the emergency. Such creative and innovative uses of licensed CBO partners will also provide opportunities for continued employment by personnel trained and experienced in working with infant, toddlers, and school-aged children. Another benefit of partnering with licensed CBOs is that personnel involved in district programs already in place are cognizant of OCFS health and safety requirements as well as the districts' requirements. Trained personnel will be beneficial in explaining some of the differences between school and childcare provider health and/or medication requirements.

OCFS has provided a list of daycares and afterschool centers by district. OCFS has also provided a list of home-based daycare centers (small providers – up to 8 children). Districts may also have relationship with providers of 21st Century Community Learning Centers in New York City Programs and for 21st Century Community Learning Centers Rest of State programs. Extended School Day School Violence Prevention Programs may also be of help.