

Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education Reopening and Operating Framework: FAQ Guide for First Class Pre-K Teachers

The Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education (ADECE) understands that each teacher is in the process of developing instructional plans best suited to the children and families who will join the classroom in Fall 2020. Our goal is to provide each of you with the support needed to make this unpredictable year, predictably rewarding for children and families. While this FAQ Guide focuses on commonly asked questions, please keep in mind information provided today may not be applicable at a later date. We thank you in advance for your flexibility and patience as we make adjustments. Additionally, teachers should not hesitate to contact their Region Coach with any specific questions.

- **Center Time: What would be the best way to implement center time? Can children be assigned a center? Rotations? Moving freely? Can I limit the amount of materials on shelves during center time?** Teachers should discuss Center Time modifications with the Region Coach. Guidance will be given focused on best practices combined with health and safety procedures. Decisions to limit the amount of materials on shelves is supported.
- **Whole Group: How can I social distance for carpet/whole group time? Can students sit on the rug? Can carpet squares be used to space children throughout the room for whole group? Can students bring their individual chairs to the circle instead sitting on the rug?** Region Coaches will provide individual support and guidance to teachers to adjust classroom procedures to minimize the number of children in whole-group at any one time. Decisions to remove soft materials from the classroom environment are supported but not required.
- **What assistance is available for teachers whose systems are implementing virtual learning for the first nine weeks?** ADECE will provide direct access to information, resources, and Region Coaches to support classrooms during virtual learning.

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- **Can shelves be removed from the room to allow more room to distance the students?** Programs must consult with the Region Director and Region Coach prior to the removal of any furnishings and equipment from an OSR-funded classroom. ADECE will help each site devise a plan that works for individual locations.
- **How should GOLD assessments be conducted during remote learning?** ADECE will provide additional information regarding GOLD assessment during remote learning. Support from Region Coaches will be provided for this process.
- **Can students bring items to school from home (backpacks, blankets, lunch boxes, etc.?)** Teachers should consult with their local administrators regarding adjustments to the storage and cleaning of cots.
- **Small Group: How can I do small groups with social distancing?** Region Coaches will provide individual support and guidance to teachers to adjust classroom procedures to minimize the number of children in small-group at any one time.
- **How will parents get the required 12 hours of parent involvement if they are not allowed to come on campus? Will parents still be required to have 12 hours?** ADECE requires 12 hours of parent/family involvement. Programs should develop activities parents can facilitate at-home or away from the school or program site.
- **Nap time: Will cots still be used for nap time? How do we set up nap time to distance children? Can children bring their own blankets from home? What is the best way to ensure the cleaning of rest time things?** Cots may still be used for nap time. Teachers should consult with their local administrators regarding items that may be brought from home and also reference locally adopted health and sanitation requirements.

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- **Can we go outside to the playground for gross motor play? What are the health and safety procedures for cleaning? Can we play on outside playground and use tricycles, wagons, balls and the apparatus?** Based on current data, outdoor time is encouraged for First Class Pre-K students. Teachers should follow health and safety procedures outlined by the local program.
- **How will teachers manage teaching full time in-person combined with the online option?** ADECE expects all OSR funded programs to provide 180 days of developmentally appropriate, in-person instruction (6.5 hours per day) for 18 students. Teachers should consult with their local administrators regarding duties and responsibilities when delivery models combine in-person instruction with remote learning. ADECE also requires each program to inform teachers of their duties and responsibilities prior to the first day of school.
- **Do I have to set-up my classroom with all 18 children facing the front?** Programs must establish revised policies and procedures based on developmentally appropriate practice. Discussions with the Region Coach or Region Director should occur *before* implementing any revised daily procedures.
- **Are childcare centers required to close if the local school closes? Can childcare continue to provide in-person instruction even if the local school decides to implement virtual learning only for 9-weeks?** Childcare centers and Head Start programs may continue to operate and provide in-person instruction even when the local school system closes to remote learning only. Programs should contact the Region Director for specific guidance.
- **Can the class divide in half and some centers take place outside to help with social distancing?** Region Coaches are available to assist teachers with daily schedule modifications that incorporate social distancing and increased health and safety procedures.
- **Classroom Sanitation: Does the department have a safety/sanitation plan for Pre-K to follow? What are some suggestions for keeping materials sanitized during whole group, small group, and centers? How should we handle storage and daily use of cots and cleaning?** Teachers should consult with their program administration regarding adopted cleaning and sanitation requirements.

