



Re-entry Resources/Considerations for 2020-2021



RE-ENTRY RESOURCES/CONSIDERATIONS FOR 2020-2021

During these most challenging times for children, families, educators, and administrators, it is critical that all stakeholders affiliated with West Virginia Universal Pre-K remain committed to providing high-quality early education programming through flexible and engaging approaches. The options outlined below for 2020-2021 WV Universal Pre-K programs are provided as extensions of the *West Virginia Schools Re-entry Toolkit* in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These options include guidance for county collaborative early childhood teams and county boards of education to ensure developmentally appropriate learning experiences and environments for all four-year-old and three-year-old children with identified special needs, as mandated under state and federal laws. Re-entry options may vary across classrooms to meet family needs (ex. A classroom located at a collaborative Child Care Center provides in-person instruction, while other classrooms conduct blended option and/or Distance Family Engagement). **It is essential that collaborative partners engage in planning and joint decision making regarding these options.**

The following options are currently available for WV Universal Pre-K for the 2020-2021 school year:



In-person Instruction

Children attend program 4 or 5 days per week, and the program provides 1,500 minutes per week and 48,000 minutes annually.



Blended Instruction

Children participate in a combination of a set number of in-person days per week and Distance Family Engagement.



Distance Family Engagement

Children and families participate in at-home learning supported by regular one- and two-way communication with the teacher.

In-person Instruction

In-person instruction in WV Universal Pre-K engages children in a four or five day per week model that provides 1,500 minutes per week and 48,000 minutes annually. While requirements for in-person instruction are addressed in West Virginia Board of Education Policy 2525: West Virginia's Universal Access to a Quality Early Education System, flexibility is key in providing healthy and safe environments. The [West Virginia COVID-19 2020: From Outbreak to Recovery Advisory Council: Pre-K through Grade 5 Instruction and Learning Considerations and Supports for Re-Entry](#) provides considerations during the re-entry process. The following guidance will further assist in ensuing additional supports:

- » Plan for alternate transition activities in lieu of face-to-face orientation, home visits, and conferences. This can be conducted by creating a video, establishing telephone calls, or other activities that will allow parents and children to become acquainted with the school staff and environment while social distancing.
- » Stagger arrival and pick-up times and/or have educators come outside the facility for drop-off and pick-up of the children. Plans for curbside drop-off and pick-up should limit direct contact between parents and staff members and adhere to social distancing recommendations.

- » Transportation requirements for pre-k enrolled children remain in place. Pre-k children must sit in a segregated area. Pre-K children from the same bus stop, or those from the same classroom may sit together.
- » Keep children with their core group throughout the school day. Contact with other core groups of children must be minimized throughout the school day (in hallways, restrooms, libraries etc.).
- » Focus on the importance of small group and one-on-one instruction, rather than large group times.
- » Eat meals in the classroom; this time can be counted as instructional time due to the learning that takes place during the meal process.
- » Avoid family-style meals, which will aid in preventing children from using the same utensils.
- » Increase time outdoors for core groups of children as playground/outdoor as space allows to ensure classroom core groups remain separate from other classrooms of children.
- » Consider suspending toothbrushing during in-person instruction until risks related to COVID-19 are lowered. Provide information and resources to families to promote good oral health habits during this time. These guidelines are aligned with federal Head Start recommendations. Information and family resources regarding the promotion of good oral health habits can be accessed at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/oral-health/article/oral-health-resources-families>.
- » If possible, during rest time, ensure that children’s naptime mats are spaced out as much as possible, ideally 6 feet apart. Consider placing children head to toe to further reduce the potential for viral spread. Ensure that bedding and blankets are stored separately.
- » To limit nonessential visitors and activities involving external groups or organizations, classroom observations, including the WV Universal Pre-K Health and Safety Checklists, may be delayed until visitors are able to safely return to classrooms. Programs and schools must follow established daily and weekly health and safety guidelines to monitor and minimize the spread of COVID-19 and ensure safe environments.

Blended Instruction

Blended instruction must engage all children in learning four or five days per week based on the county’s verified universal pre-k program data. Through this option, children participate in a combination of a set number of in-person days and Distance Family Engagement opportunities each week. Blended instruction can also be incorporated when programs must shorten the length of the school day for cleaning and disinfecting. In this case, at-home learning experiences are an extension of daily classroom learning. Blended instruction should be conducted by the child’s classroom educator. The following guidelines address necessary elements to extend in-person learning during blended instruction:

- » Be flexible regarding family cultures, resources, and schedules.
- » Plan for alternate transition activities in lieu of face-to-face orientation, home visits, and conferences. This can be conducted by creating a video, establishing telephone calls, and other activities that will allow parents and children to become acquainted with the school staff and environment while social distancing.
 - › Conduct initial contact with each family to determine the primary mode of communication and a schedule of a minimum of **once-weekly** two-way (educator and family) communication to allow families to provide input regarding children’s progress.

- › Provide expectations for regular contact between educators and children/families. Allowances should be provided when unexpected challenges arise.
- » Develop a weekly at-home learning template to guide regular contacts for follow-up, input regarding children’s progress, and parent observations that includes standards across all domains of learning. An electronic platform may be utilized when families have technology and broadband to access guides.
- » Consider developmentally appropriateness of schedules and use of technology, as well as equity and access to broadband.
- » Provide in-home resources to support family engagement activities.
- » Maintain communication logs to document ongoing family engagement and track follow-up.
- » Determine how evidence of learning from school and in-home activities will be utilized for progress checkpoints (for all components of the West Virginia Early Learning Reporting System: Pre-K, or ELRS).

Distance Family Engagement

While virtual learning (as defined by the West Virginia Department of Education) is not an option for WV Universal Pre-K programs, the option of Distance Family Engagement is available to those families who are not comfortable enrolling their child for in-person and/or blended instruction during the pre-k year. Virtual learning, even for kindergarten, has a set curriculum that is based on content standards. Distance Family Engagement is the process of providing at-home learning ideas and activities, along with regular one- and two-way communication with and between families, that supports development of children across content standards in family-friendly language. The Distance Family Engagement model is more dependent on family partnerships. The family will work regularly with the child and receive support and communication with and from the educator regularly. Distance Family Engagement is not required; however, when a program elects to include this option, the following priorities must be addressed:

- » Be flexible regarding family cultures, resources, and schedules.
- » Conduct initial contact with each family to transition into the program to:
 - › Determine the primary mode of communication and a schedule of daily contact with each family, and
 - › Provide expectations for regular contact between educators and children/families. Allowances should be provided when unexpected challenges arise.
- » Maintain regular contact with each child’s primary caregiver. Regular contact must include:
 - › Provide daily one-way (educator generated) communication to children’s families (via email, phone, online, etc.), and
 - › a minimum of twice-weekly two-way (educator and family) communication to allow families to provide input regarding children’s progress.
- » Consider developmental appropriateness of schedules and use of technology, as well as equity and access to broadband.
- » Develop a weekly at-home learning template to guide regular contacts for follow-up, input regarding children’s progress, and parent observations that includes standards across all domains of learning. Discuss how to use the at-home planning guide with families. An electronic platform may be utilized when families have technology and broadband to access guides.

- » Provide in-home resources to support family engagement activities.
- » Maintain communication logs to document ongoing family engagement and track follow-up.
- » Utilize the formative assessment process to gauge children’s emerging development across learning domains.
- » Determine how evidence of learning will be utilized for progress checkpoint (for all components of the West Virginia Early Learning Reporting System: Pre-K, or ELRS).

Remote Learning

Remote learning will occur for pre-k children participating in the in-person or blended options if the Governor determines it is necessary to close a school or county temporarily due to increases in COVID-19 cases impacting the school community. Schools cannot activate remote learning. This instructional model requires that all children remain engaged in learning and instruction at home. **In instances where the Governor activates remote learning, the activities and focus of engagement inherent in the Distance Family Engagement option should be utilized during school or county closures to support pre-k children and families, including those in collaborative classrooms.**

Sample Distance Family Engagement Template: Weekly Family Child Communication & Engagement

Teacher's Name		Week: September 21-25, 2020	
Telephone Number/E-mail address:			
Child's Name:		Family Members:	
Contact 1: Date/Time:	Mode of Contact: (TEAMS Link, Telephone Number)	Contact 2: Date/Time:	Mode of Contact:

Learning Experience/ Activity	What it looks like in action at home	Standards (at least two)	Domain	Parent Notes
			Approaches to Learning	
			Social & Emotional	
			English Language Arts	
			Mathematics	
			Science	
			Health & Physical Development	
			The Arts	

Daily Activities:

- » Read a book
- » Take pictures/video for progress/work samples, if possible
- » Get heartrate up for at least 30 minutes a day

Materials/Resources Provided:

WV Universal Pre-k children with IEPs

For preschool children with disabilities, counties are required to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). In the blended option, counties should consider time with non-disabled peers when making decisions about preschool and enrollment for the classroom.

For a preschool child with an Individual Education Program (IEP), counties may consider the same options: in-person; a blended option to provide another learning option for families for pre-k children with disabilities; home-based services; and/or the child could receive Distance Family Engagement activities and related services. For LRE considerations, home-base services could capture the Distance Family Engagement option. Preschoolers learn through relationships and active, hands-on exploration. To the **extent possible**, services should prioritize in-person opportunities for preschooler.

» WV Birth to Three to County School System Special Education Transition (Part C to Part B)

1. Counties remain obligated to complete a timely Part C to Part B transition, with an IEP in place by the child's third birthday if found eligible for special education. As part of meeting the timelines for transition requirements, it is important to continue communication and collaboration with WV Birth to Three partners and families as counties reopen schools this fall.
2. Counties should review existing data from WV Birth to Three to assist in decisions regarding eligibility. If the IEP team believes there is enough current information to complete a comprehensive evaluation and determine eligibility for special education. The counties can complete the evaluation using existing data. It is important to document all decisions made and provide prior written notice as required.
3. If face-to-face transition conference planning meetings and assessments/evaluations are needed, staff should arrange those to be conducted while following health and safety guidelines, including physical distancing. If a county and/or school should be ordered to close, then the transition conference will be conducted virtually.
4. Counties should prioritize the completion of any delayed Part C to B transitions that were unable to be completed in spring 2020 because of school closures, to avoid any further delay in the provision of special education services. If the child is found eligible for special education, the IEP team should consider what recovery services might be needed as a result of the delayed transition.

» Child Find and Referrals for Preschool Special Education

Counties continue to have a child find obligation. Systems for the referral, screening, evaluation and provision of special education services must be available to ensure child find is being fulfilled as required in West Virginia Board Policy 2419: *Regulations for the Education of Students with Exceptionalities*. Counties continue to be responsible for developing and implementing methods and activities for identifying children with disabilities that require special education and related services. All parent referrals and requests for referrals by school staff or other individuals should follow the process outlined in Policy 2419.

Enrollment and Pre-K Classroom Data

Families who wish to participate in WV Universal Pre-K may enroll in in-person, blended, or Distance Family Engagement, as offered by the county program. Full funding will be provided across all re-entry options for each enrolled child, unless otherwise noted on a child's IEP. Each enrolling child must be entered into the West Virginia Education Information System (WVEIS) and assigned to a classroom in the ELRS. Progress checkpoints must be completed for each enrolled child. The Child Outcome Summary (COS) must be completed for children enrolled with IEPs. As addressed in WVBE Policy 2525, all changes of substance to a county pre-k program must be approved through the addendum process; however, this school year brings unique options that include temporary supports for the current situation. The following should be considered when adjusting program structure and determining needs for addenda.

- » Collaborative contracts should address re-entry options.
- » Program options must be determined by the county collaborative early childhood team and include partners for collaborative classrooms.
- » An addendum must be submitted if there is a change of substance that the county collaborative team determines will potentially be long-term and not based solely on re-entry options.
- » Classroom data for blended and Distance Family Engagement should reflect the days per week, start and end times, and days of operation that would be reflected within the normal pre-k program calendar. This time should reflect a minimum of 1,500 minutes per week and 48,000 minutes annually in the ELRS.
- » A pre-k lead teacher must be assigned to each classroom in the ELRS.
- » Early Childhood Classroom Assistant Teachers (ECCATs) should be assigned to classrooms and assist with educational services regardless of re-entry services.
- » All enrolled children must be assigned to the teacher providing the educational services in the ELRS regardless of the re-entry option.
- » Children enrolling through the Distance Family Engagement option may be assigned to one classroom or across classrooms with consideration to classroom enrollment numbers and program needs. There should not be more than twenty children enrolled in any classroom.
- » Consider procedures for families who may wish to change re-entry option, when possible.
- » For children who receive special education services only and are not enrolled in a universal pre-k classroom, the child will be assigned to the special education teacher or Speech Therapist (if speech language impairment services only).
- » The county placement process should be utilized for enrollment across all re-entry options.
- » Staff should work with families to obtain enrollment health requirements, including screenings, for enrollment regardless of which re-entry option with which children are enrolled.
- » As much as possible, utilize the HealthCheck to assist in meeting school entry health requirements and to identify concerns or need for follow-up.

Attendance

Although WV Universal Pre-K is a voluntary program, attendance procedures should be in place and reflective of expectations within each re-entry option. Attendance during in-person instruction is more easily measured as it traditionally has been in the past; however, blended instruction and Distance Family Engagement options include required two-way communication with families that should be included in attendance measures. It is important to recognize that families are facing varieties of challenges at this time. Attendance procedures should include the following:

- » Attendance procedures should be clearly articulated with families.
- » Include process for notifying staff when a child will be absent from in-person instruction and when regular two-way communication must be canceled or rescheduled.
- » Include allowances or flexibility within set expectations for regular participation and communication.
- » Determine a grace period (the amount of time, as determined by the county program) that can occur before a staff member intervenes when the family misses a regularly scheduled check in with the classroom educator.
- » Document contact attempts in communication logs.

Formative Assessment During Blended Instruction and Distance Family Engagement

Regardless of the re-entry option being utilized, the formative assessment process must be utilized to link evidence of learning to the West Virginia Pre-K Standards (Ages 3-5). Grade-level standards are what children should know, understand, and be able to do at the end of the school year. Formative assessment provides evidence of learning necessary to adjust daily instruction and ensure experiences are available to close the gap between current learning and learning goals. The purpose of formative assessment is to inform instruction. Educators will use the evidence of learning collected to provide feedback and guide instruction, as well as to inform data reporting on the ELRS.

Following the above guidance for in-person instruction, teachers will continue to utilize the formative assessment process to document evidence of learning for children's progress. Designing instruction with the individual strengths and needs in mind creates personalized learning and supports all children. Evidence of learning is gathered during instruction. Examples of evidence may include (but are not limited to) observations, checklists, interviews, work samples, photographs, etc. This evidence is not only utilized to support learning, but also to articulate progress to families.

Following the above guidance for Distance Family Engagement and blended instruction, teachers will utilize the formative assessment process through communication and partnerships with families. Just as learning targets are utilized in the classroom to clearly describe what children will know and be able to do, learning targets should also be utilized with families. Instructional goals may be too broad to guide daily instruction, so learning targets break down the meaning of the goal in child and family-friendly terms. These can often be written as "I can" statements.

It is vital that communication with families is enhanced during these times of varied instructional models. Teachers may use descriptors that families understand to indicate what kind of behaviors are being looked for and ask probing questions, like "What did it look like? When did it happen? Tell me about..., etc.". to glean additional information. Keep in mind materials and supplies that families may need to implement these activities in the home environment. Teachers may also want to break

standards down and send activities with a few standards/items per week (see Sample Distance Family Engagement Weekly Template above). The formative assessment process will help teachers know what and how much to send at a time. [The Formative Assessment Toolkit](#) may be utilized as a resource for teachers and contains an explanation of the process for families. Keep in mind, you first must build relationships and connections to children and families if you are going to inspire them.

Possible Forms of Evidence of Learning (ways for children to show learning/participation):

- » Drawings
- » Pictures
- » Conversations
- » Journals
- » Videos of children demonstrating a particular skill or set of skills
- » Virtual observations during contacts
- » Guiding parents in activities that can be reviewed together.

Child Outcome Summary (COS) Process

As part of the formative assessment process, counties must still complete the Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process for all students with an IEP. There is no flexibility regarding the requirement for special education data reporting. It is important for counties to plan how progress data be completed for the re-entry options being offered by your county. The options listed above regarding ways to show learning/participation should also be included as part the information considered for the COS ratings for students. County boards of education are federally required to complete the early childhood outcome progress ratings for each preschooler aged 3 – 5 with an IEP, including speech-only IEPs for all children who have been in a program for at least six months.

The Child Outcomes Summary (COS) process must be completed for entry and exit of each preschool student with an IEP regardless of the service delivery option. Counties should consider gathering additional information through parent report and or informal assessment used to support the completion of the rating, such as virtual meetings, teleconferences, or other remote learning resources if necessary.

Entry Rating:

For completion of the Entry rating the consider using this information:

1. Assessments;
2. Observations;
3. Referral information;
4. Review of existing evaluation documentation (e.g., WV Birth to Three information);
5. Parent/caretaker interviews; and
6. Review of any medical information.
7. Document which materials/information were used to determine the Entry rating.

Exit Rating:

The teacher/team should use available data to complete the Exit rating to reflect the student's current level of performance. For completion of the Exit rating consider using this information:

1. Progress data collected prior to building closures;
2. Student work samples;
3. Observations;
4. Assessments and/or evaluations;
5. Parent/Caretaker information; and
6. Anecdotal information.

Document which materials/information were used to determine the Exit rating.

There are multiple assessment tools that may be administered remotely in a standardized manner using adult raters for young children. The Center for IDEA Early Childhood Data Systems (DaSy) developed the [Norm-Referenced Assessment Tools for Children Birth to Age Five Years with Potential for Remote Administration for Eligibility Determination](#). It provides a list of standardized and norm referenced measures that may be used remotely.

Meals

Meals are provided in accordance with the child nutrition and national school meal programs. County collaborative early childhood teams must work with county Child Nutrition Directors regarding meal service during blended instruction and Distance Family Engagement. Staff can provide families with meal information through during transition activities and ongoing communication.

Resources

Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center, Update May 2020. Norm-Referenced Assessment Tools for Children Birth to Age Five Years with Potential for Remote Administration for Eligibility Determination. Accessed at https://ectacenter.org/-pdfs/events/Assessment_Tool_Table.pdf.

Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC). Oral Health Resources for Families. Accessed at <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/oral-health/article/oral-health-resources-families>.

West Virginia COVID-19 2020: From Outbreak to Recovery Advisory Council Pre-K through Grade 5: Instruction and Learning Considerations and Supports for Re-Entry, August 11, 2020. Accessed at https://wvde.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/20882_P-5-ReEntryConsiderations-081120-v2-1.pdf.

[West Virginia Schools Re-entry Toolkit Guidance, July 28, 2020. Accessed at https://wvde.us/school-system-re-entry/](#)

West Virginia Universal Pre-K Re-entry Options for 2020-2021, August 2020. Accessed at <https://wvde.us/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/WV-UniversalPreK-School-Re-entry-v5.pdf>



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