



2020 – 2021 School Year Reopening Plan

Upper East Tennessee Human Development Agency, Inc.
Head Start Program

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Mission, Introduction & Guiding Principles

Mission

It is the mission of Upper East Tennessee Human Development Agency, Inc (UETHDA) Head Start Program to help break the cycle of poverty through supporting families in preparing their children for Kindergarten. We realize that during the timeframe that our Region and Nation is responding to COVID-19 that our program will need to make adjustments to its operations in order to continue to carry out its mission while protecting the health and welfare of families and staff.

The plan listed here has been adapted from the **Sullivan County Plan: Framework for Opening the 2020-21 School Year** documentation issued by the combined school systems of Kingsport City, Bristol TN City, and Sullivan County School Systems that, itself, was based upon the research and plan developed by the Nashville Metropolitan Health Department.

Introduction

This report provides plans of operations during the COVID-19 pandemic for UETHDA's Head Start classrooms across the eight counties of Northeast Tennessee. It outlines necessary steps to understand the public health scenarios associated with the pandemic and provides frameworks, approaches, and measurable milestones to inform the continuum of decisions that must be made to safely operate schools in fall 2020.

Returning to school when the public health situation allows will thus be a uniquely complicated challenge, the likes of which our educators have never encountered. If there exists any chance of returning to brick-and-mortar schooling in the fall of 2020, the work must begin now.

This plan is a framework based on the most up-to-date guidance and information available. This plan will continue to be adjusted to take new guidance and information into consideration. The plan will need to be adapted in real time as the epidemic evolves. This plan will remain in effect until either: 1. The risk of COVID-19 spreading into or through the eight counties of Northeast Tennessee is eliminated, or 2. The 2020 – 2021 school year ends.

Delegates & Partnerships

Delegates

Delegate plans and UETHDA Head Start plans may differ at times. Delegate systems serve a more localized area and are better able to determine risk in those areas.

Refer to attached Delegate Plans in Appendix A.

Partnerships

UETHDA partners with Greeneville City Schools, Greene County Schools, Kingsport City Schools and Unicoi County Schools. Please refer to each school system for their most up-to-date plan.

Partner plans and UETHDA Head Start plans may differ at times. Partner school systems serve a more localized area and are better able to determine risk in those areas. UETHDA Head Start response will be based, in part, on the local school systems responses and will be either the same response or a more conservative response.

Head Start Opening Scenarios

Community Spread and Classroom Operating Scenarios

At any given point in time, the virus may manifest itself in our local communities throughout the school year and will be evaluated by applying the acceptable threshold criteria:

- **None to minimal:** Defined as very few, if any, COVID-19 cases among each individual county's residents, with an average case rate of 0-5 new cases per 100,000 residents over the last 14 days.
- **Minimal to moderate:** Defined as an average case rate of 6-10 new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 among each individual county's residents over the last 14 days.
- **Substantial:** Defined as an average case rate of 11 or more new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 among each individual county's residents over the last 14 days.

UETHDA will not focus only on the number of cases and the case rate alone, but will also consider other characteristics, to include:

- **Disease epidemiology:** Level of community transmission, number and type of outbreaks, impact of the outbreaks on delivery of healthcare or other critical infrastructure or services, and epidemiology in surrounding jurisdictions.
- **Community characteristics:** Size of community and population density, level of community engagement / support, size and characteristics of vulnerable populations, access to healthcare, transportation, planned large events, and relationship of community to other communities.
- **Local School System Response:** The response of the local school system that serves a county or city will be monitored since their response will take into account information that is known locally and will give consideration to all of the competing factors of meeting the community needs of providing education

services to residents in as safe of a manner as possible that mitigates risks to the community as much as realistically possible.

- **Other Authoritative Guidance:** Guidance from Office of Head Start, CDC, State DHS Licensing, Regional Health Departments, state and local governments, etc. that have a stake in Head Start operations and/or community health response.

Given the Coronavirus pandemic scenarios and the manifestation of community spread, there are multiple possibilities for the 2020 – 2021 school year, and decisions should be based on the public health framework for reopening:

Public Health Framework for Reopening

From an epidemiological standpoint, classrooms will be able to open and remain open if transmission remains low. If the UETHDA region experiences community disease transmission higher than the acceptable threshold level, then classrooms will likely be required to close to help break transmission chains. It is important to note that identification and investigation of potential COVID-19 case clusters are an imperative component in this decision-making process.

	No to Minimal Spread	Minimal to Moderate Spread	Substantial Spread
Threshold Level	Average case rate of ≤5 new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 County residents over the last 14 days	Average case rate of 6-10 new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 County residents over the last 14 days	Average case rate of ≥11 new COVID-19 cases per 100,000 County residents over the last 14 days
Classroom Operations	Classes open all students attend all days	Consideration of operating a Hybrid Model where students are in the classroom 2 days per week and Remote Learning Environment other days of week. (Other factors beyond spread must be considered before transitioning to Hybrid Model.)	Consideration for transitioning to fully Remote Learning Environment Model. (Other factors beyond spread must be considered before transitioning to Remote Learning Environment Model.)

The most recent data can be found by county on the Tennessee Department of Health website at www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov/data/epi-curves.html.

Protocol Guidance

The following guidance outlines general considerations for use by all classrooms for

opening and operating during the 2020- 2021 school year. These protocols are not intended to be all-inclusive. Each individual county and classroom will have unique situations, environments, and capabilities that will require specific consideration as transitions from one type of teaching environment to another takes place.

Class Size/Spacing Requirements

Classes will operate at a reduced capacity. UETHDA Head Start and its delegates will operate a total of 928 slots (UETHDA 695, Johnson Co. 80, & Carter Co. 153) in classrooms located in the eight counties service area. For the UETHDA classrooms, Children First FD/FY classroom will operate with 12 classroom slots. All other non-partnership classrooms will operate with 14 classroom slots. The virtual classroom will operate with 30 classroom slots. Duration classes and FD/FY will operate with reduced hours. Duration classes will operate 5.5 hours per day. FD/FY will operate 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Partnership and delegate classrooms will operate with no reduction of slots.

No to Minimal Community Spread

- Classes will operate daily with the reduced capacity listed above.
 - Partnership classrooms will have no reduction in slots compared to the 2019 – 2020 school year.
- Class size will be maintained, and all students will attend all days.
- Staff are strongly encouraged to appropriately wear face masks and utilize social distancing measures (minimum 6 feet) whenever possible.
 - The Head Start Director may require staff to wear face masks.

Minimal to Moderate Community Spread

- Partnership classrooms will receive direction from the partnership school system.
- UETHDA may choose to operate a hybrid environment
 - Children First FD/FY will operate with all students attending all days.
 - All non-partnership classroom children will be broken into 2 groups, with the first group attending in the classroom on Monday & Tuesday and the second group attending Thursday & Friday.
- Staff are required to wear face masks and utilize social distancing measures (minimum 6 feet) whenever realistically possible.
 - Staff will be allowed to remove their masks when on the playground if social distancing measures (minimum 6 feet) are taken and maintained.
- Consideration for transition to a hybrid model.

Substantial Community Spread

- Continue all Minimal to Moderate Community Spread Requirements
- Consideration for transition to remote learning.

Protocols for Screening Students and Parents

Protocols surrounding screening students and parents is the same regardless of the community spread of COVID-19.

All In-Class Operations

All screenings should comply with privacy and HIPAA requirements.

- Students are allowed to enter the building at limited sites and are strongly encouraged to appropriately wear face masks and utilize social distancing measures (minimum 6 feet) whenever possible.
- Parents should check child's temperature at home every morning using oral, tympanic, or temporal scanners; children with a temperature 100.0°F or above should stay home and consider coronavirus testing if no other explanation is available.
- Parents should ask their child or monitor for any cough, congestion, shortness of breath, or gastrointestinal symptoms every morning. Any positives should prompt the parent to keep the child home from school.
- All screenings should take place outside of the facility or bus if at all possible.
- Staff will perform temperature checks on bus riding students prior to the student boarding the school bus. A child will not be allowed to board the bus if a fever of 100.0°F or above is detected.
- Staff will perform temperature checks on students and parents when the students are parent transported prior to the student entering the classroom. A student will not be allowed to enter the classroom if a fever of 100.0°F or above is detected with either the student or the parent.
- Students who fall ill at school will be placed in a designated area of isolation with a mask in place. Staff will wear masks when caring for these students.
- Students failing a screening or sent home from school should be kept home until they have tested negative or have completely recovered according to [CDC guidelines](#).

Protocols for School Visitors

To reduce the risk of COVID-19 as much as possible, visiting Head Start sites / classrooms is discouraged. Protocols surrounding school visitors is the same regardless of the community spread of COVID-19.

All In-Class Operations

- Parents / visitors are not allowed in the facilities except under extenuating

circumstances (such as child sickness); adults entering the building should wash or sanitize hands prior to entering, should practice social distancing, and are to appropriately wear face masks.

- Parents / visitors should not enter the classroom.
- If there are extenuating circumstances that necessitate a parent entering the facility, only one parent per child should be allowed to enter to minimize the number of entering persons.
- Strict records, including day and time, should be kept of non-UETHDA employees entering and exiting the building.

Protocols for Testing Students

Protocols surrounding testing is the same regardless of the community spread of COVID-19.

All In-Class Operations

- Students who develop fever greater than 100.0°F or above or become ill at school should be kept in a designated area of isolation with a mask in place until they can be transported out of the facility. They should be transported by their parents, or ambulance if clinically unstable, for off-site testing and medical evaluation. In the event that any student tests positive, immediate efforts should be made to inform any close contacts (those who spent more than 15 minutes within 6 feet of the student) so they can be quarantined at home. Classmates should be closely monitored for any symptoms. At this time, empiric testing of all students in the class is not recommended; only those who develop symptoms require testing.
- In the event that a student or adult tests positive, the local public health department of the individual's residence will initiate the case interview and investigation and proceed with contact tracing. The health department will follow-up with close contacts (those who spent more than 15 minutes within 6 feet of the individual) so that they may be quarantined at home. Classmates should be closely monitored for any symptoms. At this time, empiric testing of all students in the class is not recommended; only those who develop symptoms require testing.
- In the event that a student or adult tests positive, UETHDA will coordinate with the regional health departments to identify potentially impacted students and families for notification to encourage closer observation for any symptoms at home.
- Parents should check their child's temperature at home every morning using oral, tympanic, or temporal scanners; students with a temperature of 100.0°F or above should stay home and consider coronavirus testing if no other explanation is available.
- Parents should ask their child or monitor for any cough, congestion, shortness of breath, or gastrointestinal symptoms every morning. Any positives should prompt the parent to keep the child home from

school and seek out testing and medical evaluation.

- Students sent home from school should be kept home until they have tested negative or have completely recovered according to TDH *Guidelines for Releasing Cases and Contacts from Isolation and Quarantine*.

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/Isolation-QuarantineRelease.pdf>.

Protocols for Responding to Positive Tests Among Staff and Students

Protocols surrounding responding to positive tests among staff and students is the same regardless of the community spread of COVID-19.

All In-Class Operations

In the event of a positive test among staff or a student, the classroom or areas exposed should be immediately closed until cleaning and disinfection can be performed.

- If the person was in the school building without a face mask, or large areas of the school were exposed to the person, short-term dismissals (2-5 days) may be required to clean and disinfect the larger areas. This decision should be made in concert with the local public health department.
- If possible, smaller areas should be closed for 24 hours before cleaning to minimize the risk of any airborne particles.
- Cleaning staff should wear appropriate PPE as referenced in the CDC guidance for disinfection and cleaning.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/clean-disinfect/index.html>

Protocols for Meals

Protocols for meals will be the same regardless of the community spread of COVID-19 due to the higher risk created by the consumption of meals.

All In-Class Operations

- Students and staff will wash their hands before and after every meal.
- If possible, classrooms should be used for eating in place.
- Food carts will be picked up and returned to outside the kitchen door by a teacher, teaching assistant, or floater. Only staff members directly involved with food preparation will be allowed to enter the kitchen.
- Nutrition staff should not eat in classrooms and should limit time with children and other staff.
- Teachers will do clean-up. Children should not be allowed to take up their plate, dispose of milk, or place plates, utensils, etc., in the dishpan going back to the kitchen.
- Nutrition workers must clean and disinfect returned food carts

- between each use.
- Serving and cafeteria staff should use barrier protection, including gloves and face masks, when in close proximity to other staff or students.

Protocols for Personal Protective Equipment and Hand Washing

Use of physical distancing measures is designed to create layers of redundancy, recognizing that students are unlikely to be able to maintain full compliance at all times. They are designed to minimize the risk of transmission as much as possible while still allowing for feasibility, flexibility, and ease of use.

No to Minimal Community Spread

- Staff are encouraged to appropriately wear face masks.
 - The Head Start Director may require staff to wear face masks.
- Students are encouraged to appropriately wear face masks.
- Regular use of hand washing and hand sanitizer per normal operating status.
- Students should wash their hands before and after meals and snack.
- Students should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after using playground equipment.
- Gloves are not required except for cleaning classrooms.

Minimal to Moderate Community Spread

- All staff are required to appropriately wear face masks.
- Students are encouraged to appropriately wear face masks.
- Regular use of hand washing and hand sanitizer per normal operating status.
- Students should wash their hands before and after meals and snack.
- Students should wash their hands or use hand sanitizer before and after using playground equipment.
- Gloves are not required except for cleaning classrooms.
- Consideration for transition to a hybrid model.

Substantial Community Spread

- Continue all Minimal to Moderate Community Spread Requirements.
- Consideration for transition to remote learning.

Protocols for Cleaning

Coronaviruses on hard surfaces can survive for hours to days. Exposure to sunlight and higher temperatures is expected to diminish their survival, but the exact amount of time required remains unclear. At this point, more aggressive cleaning practices are recommended to err on the side of caution.

No to Minimal Community Spread

- Classrooms should undergo cleaning on an increased tempo.
- Frequently touched surfaces, including lights, doors, benches, bathrooms, etc., should undergo cleaning with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or diluted bleach solution (1/3 cup bleach per one gallon of water) frequently, no less than daily.
- Hands-on classroom items should undergo cleaning with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or diluted bleach solution frequently, no less than daily.
- Efforts should be made to minimize sharing of materials between students.
- Sand and water tables should not be used.
- Student tables should be wiped down with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or diluted bleach solution frequently, no less than daily.
- Staff should wear gloves and face masks when performing all cleaning activities.

Minimal to Moderate Community Spread

- Routine cleaning with standard soap and water removes germs and dirt and lowers the risk of spreading SARS-CoV-2.
- Classrooms should undergo normal cleaning on a daily basis.
- Frequently touched surfaces, including lights, doors, benches, bathrooms, etc., should undergo cleaning with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or diluted bleach solution (1/3 cup bleach in 1 gallon of water) at least twice daily.
- Hands-on classroom items should undergo standard cleaning procedures with increased frequency or between groups.
- Sand and water tables should not be used.
- Student tables should be wiped down with either an EPA-approved disinfectant or dilute bleach solution at the beginning and end of every day and continuously throughout the day as needed.
- Staff should wear gloves and face masks when performing all cleaning activities.
- Consideration for transition to a hybrid model.

Substantial Community Spread

- Continue all Minimal to Moderate Community Spread Requirements.
- Consideration for transition to remote learning.

Protocols for Busing and Student Transportation

Due to the confined space on a bus, bus capacity has been reduced. Parents are encouraged to transport their child(ren) if at all possible. If a family is unable to provide transportation and a space on the bus is not available for their child, the family is encouraged to enroll in the virtual classroom. Protocols for buses will be the same regardless of the community spread of COVID-19.

All In-Class Operations

- All staff on buses are required to appropriately wear face masks.
- Students are encouraged to appropriately wear face masks.
- Staff will perform temperature checks on bus riding students prior to the student boarding the school bus. A child will not be allowed to board the bus if a fever of 100.0°F or above is detected.
- Windows should be open when possible and conditions allow.
- Unloading of buses at Head Start sites should be staggered to minimize mixing of students as they enter the facility and to allow six feet of distance while entering through designated entry points.
- Bus will be disinfected between bus runs.
- One child per bench
 - Children from the same household will be seated together on the same bench.

Protocols for Serving Medically Vulnerable Students

Protocols for serving medically vulnerable students will be the same regardless of the community spread of COVID-19.

All In-Class Operations

- Students identified as having a high-risk medical condition will be enrolled in the virtual classroom and participate in Head Start remotely to minimize health risks to possible exposure to COVID-19.
- Any parents may elect for their child to be enrolled in the virtual classroom if they are not comfortable with their child attending in person teaching.

Summary

This report establishes a plan for implementing a safe, efficient, and equitable return to classroom operations. It is likely that, despite implementation of the recommendations in this plan, staff and students may still be at risk of being infected and developing COVID-19. This risk cannot be completely mitigated.

UETHDA will continue to monitor risks in the communities that are served and these risks will be communicated to staff and families served so an informed decision can be made on whether the benefits of returning to school outweigh the risks.

The recommendations provided within are in line with best practices being used throughout the State of Tennessee. This plan will be updated to reflect any changes to best practices which is to be expected as more is learned regarding how to appropriately respond to COVID-19.

Appendices

Johnson County Head Start Delegate Reopening Plan



JOHNSON COUNTY HEAD START/PRE K
211 North Church Street
Mountain City, TN 37683
(423) 727-2640



First, we would like to thank you for your support and understanding as we as a nation, community and agency continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Johnson County Head Start/Pre-K has made the safety of our families, students and staff our priority. We have been working diligently on plans to safely reopen our program.

Our Head Start/Pre-K program will be opening different this year due to restrictions and following the CDC guidelines.

Our plan is having two groups of 10 students each from 7:45 to 2:45. Group A will attend Monday and Tuesday and Group B will attend on Thursday and Friday. Students will also have take-home packets to work on the other three days. Parents that still are concerned about sending their child to school at this time will also be offered weekly work to pick up once a week from the schools. If you choose this option, you will need to bring your child to the Central Office to have required health screenings.

We will reevaluate our program options and follow the lead of our school system.

Should the current circumstances improve we will resume our normal operation of 5 days a week with the option of students still doing work from home if families choose.

Lorie Plank

Johnson County Head Start/Pre-K Director

Carter County Head Start Delegate Reopening Plan

Head Start

Plans for Returning to School

Current Scenario: #3—AB Schedule

1. Return to school as normal:
 - a. Amazon Fire 7 children’s tablets will be purchased with CARES money for each child to use at home; these tablets come preloaded with 20,000 apps, games, songs, and books. Tablets are also internet capable and can be used for classroom lessons from the teacher should the parent have internet access. Each child will have a school device and a home device to check out for this use during this school year.
 - b. Carter County Head Start will create a children’s YOUTUBE channel.
 - c. Teachers will assign lessons to be uploaded to the YOUTUBE channel for home use. Suggestions are two teachers will provide reading lessons; two teachers will provide the math lessons; two teachers will provide daily calendar activities; two teachers will be responsible for music and character education lessons. All this will be uploaded for the entire program’s use. Teachers will be responsible for gathering and preparing materials for parental pick-up to use at home. This could be utilized when students or teachers become ill or when weather is not permissive for school to occur.
 - d. Activity/education boxes will be created to have a unit of materials for the student to use both at home and school. These units will be created (four identical of each topic to a classroom) for use at school to keep the students in small groups; should the need arise for the students to return home because the pandemic has worsened children will be assigned a unit to take home for a week. Every Friday the family would return the unit for it to be restocked with anything consumable and sanitized for the next person to use; following the return the family will be given another unit of study to use for a week.
 - e. Activities and materials will be purchased to have as many classroom academic experiences as possible outdoors. Lessons would need to be kept short and possibly include a lot of science-based teaching. Additionally, activities may also be purchased that will allow many of the center-based instruction that takes place (blocks, housekeeping, art, etc.) to begin taking place outside in order to ensure the students have the opportunities presented in the classroom. Of course, these type scenarios can only take place when weather permits.
 - f. Communication tools will be used to ensure children have the absolute best school experience possible. Examples are utilizing Facebook and the Remind app.
2. Return to school to return to home for instruction:
 - a. Amazon Fire 7 children’s tablets will be purchased with CARES money for each child to use at home; these tablets come preloaded with 20,000 apps, games, songs, and books. Tablets are also internet capable and can be used for classroom lessons from the

- teacher should the parent have internet access. Each child will have a school device and a home device to check out for this use during this school year.
- b. Carter County Head Start will create a children's YOUTUBE channel.
 - c. Teachers will be assigned lessons to be uploaded to the YOUTUBE channel for home use. Suggestions are two teachers will provide reading lessons; two teachers will provide the math lessons; two teachers will provide daily calendar activities; two teachers will be responsible for music and character education lessons. All this will be uploaded for the entire program's use. Teachers will be responsible for gathering materials and preparing for parental pick-up to use at home.
 - d. Activity/education boxes will be created to have a unit of materials for the student to use both at home and school. These units will be created (four identical of each topic to a classroom) for use at school to keep the students in small groups; should the need arise for the students to return home because the pandemic has worsened children will be assigned a unit to take home for a week. Every Friday the family would return the unit for it to be restocked with anything consumable and sanitized for the next person to use; following the return the family will be given another unit of study to use for a week.
 - e. Communication tools will be used to ensure children have the absolute best school experience possible. Examples are utilizing Facebook and the Remind app.
 - f. Children (parents) unwilling to attend class because of safety reasons will be allowed to follow and participate virtually. Packets will be provided.
3. Return to school using an AB schedule:
 - a. Children will be divided into two groups; children will come on a rotating schedule. Schedules will be Monday and Tuesday for group A and Thursday and Friday for group B.
 - b. ALL ideas from # 2 are included in this section.
 - c. Children (parents) unwilling to attend class because of safety reasons will be allowed to follow and participate virtually. Packets will be provided.
 4. School continues to operate as distance learning:
 - a. Amazon Fire 7 children's tablets will be purchased with CARES money for each child to use at home; these tablets come preloaded with 20,000 apps, games, songs, and books. Tablets are also internet capable and can be used for classroom lessons from the teacher should the parent have internet access.
 - b. Carter County Head Start will create a children's YOUTUBE channel.
 - c. Teachers will be assigned lessons to be uploaded to the YOUTUBE channel for home use. Suggestions are two teachers will provide reading lessons; two teachers will provide the math lessons; two teachers will provide daily calendar activities; two teachers will be responsible for music and character education lessons. All this will be uploaded for the entire program's use. Teachers will be responsible for gathering materials and preparing for parental pick-up to use at home.
 - d. Activity/education boxes will be created to have a unit of materials for the student to use both at home and school. These units will be created (four identical of each topic to a classroom) for use at school to keep the students in small groups; should the need arise for the students to return home because the pandemic has worsened children will be assigned a unit to take home for a week. Every Friday the family would return the

unit for it to be restocked with anything consumable and sanitized for the next person to use; following the return the family will be given another unit of study to use for a week.

- e. Teachers will contact parents at least 2 times per week to ensure that the student is making progress and is not in need of further assistance. Communication tools will be used to ensure children have the absolute best school experience possible. Examples are utilizing Facebook and the Remind app. Teachers will schedule a meeting time at school for parents or students needing extra assistance (possibly for a tutoring time each week).