**ECE Provider Conference Call #10**

**September 3, 2020**

**1:30 p.m.**

The call began at 1:30 p.m. and Kim Krzanowski welcomed everyone to the tenth early childhood provider. She also thanked them for their patience as we try new technology for our call. Kim introduced Damian Destefano, Director of the Division of Small Business.

We hope that this new platform will provide additional functions to improve the conversation. We selected this format in reference to input we received from providers. If this technology does not work as well, we will make adjustments as we move forward. We will begin the call as we always do with agency updates and a question and answer period.

Today we will be utilizing the chat box feature during our question and answer session. If you have a question, we ask that you type it in the box such as who the question is directed to, such as “OCCL-” and then type your question. Our moderator, Alyssa Moore, will be monitoring the chat box. Likewise, we have some individuals working on the functionality and technology glitches that we're experiencing today. Everyone was asked to mute their phone, but keep their microphones on. We appreciate your patience on today’s call, and for all your support and time.

She indicated that the following individuals would provide updates today:

**Jon Sheehan, Office of the Governor**

**Kim Klein, Director of Finance, DOE**

**Betty Gail Timm, Director, Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL), DOE**

**Thomas Hall, Deputy Director, Division of Social Services, Purchase of Care (POC) Office**

**Jamie Mack, Division of Public Health (DPH)**

**Damian Destefano, Director of Delaware Division of Small Business**

**Jon Sheehan, Education Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor:**  Jon thanked everyone and expressed deep gratitude on behalf of the Governor’s Office for the work providers are doing each day. He excitedly shared that the Governor’s Office is working on visiting Toni Dickerson and her center in the near future.

Additionally, he provided an update on Enhanced Reimbursement (ER). He noted that the Governor’s Office has heard from providers asking what the plan is moving forward. He stated that while we intend to continue ER and Purchase of Care (POC) based on enrollment, instead of attendance, through the end of the calendar year, the state does need to reexamine programs monthly.

Fortunately, it appears that federal guidance and CARES Act funding have not changed, and there is sufficient funding to continue ER through the rest of the year. He particularly noted that this is an “intention” and is not a guarantee. We will need to reevaluate each month to make sure that the same restrictions, federal requirements and guidance are still in place, and that we have sufficient funding. However, given this information is important to providers, we wanted to share this information with you today. He also made clear that CARES Act funding can’t be used for expenses incurred after December.

**Damian Destefano, Director, Division of Small Business:** Damian stated that Governor Carney announced a couple of weeks ago that we would be setting aside a portion of our CARES Act funding to provide relief grants to small businesses to help with recovery from the pandemic and the effect it's had on many of our businesses.

Most small businesses will qualify for a grant between $15,000 and $100,000. The business will need to be able to show eligible expenses as a child care provider. Many of you are going to fall into what we're calling a “disproportionately impacted industry,” which means that the rent payments you're making will be an eligible expense.

So, in many cases, you will be able to get the full amount of credit you're eligible for. The only caveat to be eligible for the grant is that you need to be experiencing a 7.5% decline in revenue in 2020. If you are not receiving any additional state support, there may be times when you are far below that 7.5% drop in revenue. If that is the case, you may want to look at this grant. The website is delbiz.com/relief.

The application will be opening Tuesday, September 8th. The grant amounts range from $15,000 to $100,000. Again, it is all based on your 2020 gross revenue that you report to the IRS. It is a percentage of that and the amount of the grant can scale up. Hopefully, it will be something that you can take advantage of and be helpful to those who qualify.

**Kimberly Krzanowski, Executive Director of the Office of Early Learning, DOE:**  Kim reiterated that we continue to work with providers in a variety of different ways. She noted that Betty Gail Timm is going to talk about information that recently went out from OCCL. She noted there will be an opportunity for folks to ask questions to Betty Gail from OCCL and Jamie Mack from DPH.

**Kimberly Klein, Director, Director of Finance, DOE:**  Kim provided the following update on Enhanced Reimbursement (ER):

* The state’s intention is to fund ER through the end of December 2020.
* That decision will be reviewed each month by the Department of Justice to ensure that Delaware continues to meet eligibility based on any new guidance or changes that may occur in Delaware.
* The September ER application will open on September 15th at 8 a.m.
* ER will continue to be available for providers that were open and serving children as of July 1st.
* ER is only for providers that have vacancies.
* Remember, when you submit your application, it's your licensed capacity and then you submit your enrollment. Enrollment is the number of kids on your roster plus the number of private pays that are paying you as of the 15th of the month.
* ER is not about attendance. It has never been about attendance when applying for ER. It has always been about your roster for that month, plus any private pays for which you are receiving money for that month.
* ER does not take into consideration the part-time or full-time status of your children. If you have a part-time student that is on your roster, or you have a part-time student, you are receiving payments for they are considered one for your enrollment.
* The system automatically calculates your number of vacancies based off of that enrollment. So if you submit an application telling us that your licensed capacity is nine and you have nine on your roster that means that you had zero vacancies and you will not be eligible for ER.
* Confirmation calls by the University of Delaware Stars program are ongoing.
* Please be sure when you submit your application that you include an accurate phone number where you can be reached.
* If you submit by midnight on a Saturday, and you have not received the call that following week, please email us at [enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us).
* If you submit an application on Sunday, please do not call us that following week. Your application will not be pulled down Monday a week later. (Reminder of the process - every Monday we pulled down every application that has been submitted up through midnight on Saturday of the previous week.)

**Betty Gail Timm, Director, Office of Child Care Licensing, DOE:**  Betty Gail thanked providers for continuing to make it possible for families to work and know that their young children are safely cared for. You are amazing in all that you are doing each day. I hope that the information contained in the documents received earlier this week is helping you to be better informed. I know there was a lot of information contained in that one email; but in that way, all the documents can be found in one place rather that you having to search other multiple emails to read all the information.

Because there were multiple changes to the Phase 2 guidance document, changes made were underlined in the Phase 2 document. Continue to reach out to your licensing specialist with questions. She will assist you and elevate any questions for which she does not have the answer readily available. We get our answers to questions regarding health information from DPH. They are the experts on the safety measures needed in our child care facilities, and they have been a terrific partner in giving us needed answers to the questions you ask.

* Additional symptoms have been added to possible COVID-19 indicators. The additions include vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, headache/congestion/runny nose with no known underlying cause (such as seasonal or chronic allergies), and fatigue.
* New also is if a staff member or student has possible symptoms for COVID-19, the person should not return until a health care provider has provided a return to work/childcare document.
* To return, being free from symptoms is now 24 hours, not 3 days.
* Note that a negative test is relevant for the point in time at which the test was taken.  It does not mean the staff or student will not develop COVID-19 in the future.
* Close contact is now defined as within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes (not 10 minutes).
* The maximum allowable group size is 15 preschool-age children or younger (or smaller, as contained in DELACARE Regulations based on the ages of children or room size restrictions).
* The maximum allowable group size is 25 school-age children (kindergarten or higher), space permitting.
  + Staff to child ratio may be 1:20 for school-age children if supervision is provided by an early childhood teacher (or higher) or a school-age site coordinator (or higher). Otherwise two staff are required to provide supervision when the group size exceeds 15 school-age children.
  + Variances will not be granted to exceed the maximum group size of 25.
* In a family child care home, a provider’s own school-age children will not count in the licensed capacity.
* In a large family child care home (private residence or commercial setting) the school-age children of the provider and staff person will not count in the licensed capacity.
* A variance will not be issued by OCCL to exceed the licensed capacity of a family child care home or large family child care home.
* The listing for contractors and others approved to enter a child care facility has been expanded. While not listed, CACFP monitors are permitted to enter.
* Medical documentation is needed if a staff member cannot wear a face covering. A face shield must be worn instead.
* All children in kindergarten and above must wear face coverings at all times while **inside** child care centers and child care homes except for meals, naps, or when doing so would inhibit the child’s heath. If **outside** the child care home or center, face coverings must be worn by children kindergarten and above if social distancing cannot be maintained.
* All children 2 years of age through pre-kindergarten are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings.
* Social distancing of 6 feet for school-age children shall be maintained with appropriate use of face coverings, as appropriate to the age and developmental levels of the school-age children in care and the activities being performed. Note: if the children are seated and facing the same direction, then 3 feet between students with use of face coverings is appropriate. Social distancing of younger than school-age children is not required but is encouraged where feasible.
* Child care homes and centers must discontinue off-site field trips.
* Reporting of COVID-19 cases among staff or students to DPH is required.
* Center experience for an intern to be alone with children has been reduced to 3 months at that facility. School-age interns are also eligible to be alone with school-age children.
* Screen time restrictions for school-age children have been removed if doing remote learning activities.
* A variance can be requested to expand screen time for younger children if needed to complete school requirements.

**Tom Hall, Deputy Director, Division of Social Services (DSS):**  Tom thanked everyone for this time to provide an update. He noted that also with him today is Linda Freeman, a Social Services Administrator with the POC program. He noted:

* DSS continues to provide updates to providers though our Provider Portal, Listserv, and the MyChildDE.org website and provide direct assistance to providers through the Resource mailbox, and POC helpline.
* August Provider billing instructions for POC providers were distributed to providers on 8/21/20.

For the month of September:

* All open providers will be paid 100% of September enrollment. September enrollment is defined as September POC authorized children at 100% attendance.
* Closed providers will not be eligible for POC payments.
* DSS will be paying the parent co-pay.
* Please do not collect copays and please reimburse any families that may have paid in advance for the month of September.
* Approved camps and remote learning sites must be in compliance with POC contract standards to be eligible for POC payments.   Please contact Tiyana Prince at 302-255-9858 or email her at Tiyana.Prince@delaware.gov or Linda Freeman at 302-255-9572 or [Linda.Freeman@delaware.gov](mailto:Linda.Freeman@delaware.gov) to discuss standards and contract requirements.
* For facilities who will have school-age children who are attending full time:
  + If those children are currently authorized as part-time or part time with extended care, facilities should submit the names of those children to the POC team by emailing the POC Resource Mailbox ([POCResource@delaware.gov](mailto:POCResource@delaware.gov)). Only submit children who will be attending full-time.
  + You will be getting a confirmation email of your request from the POC team. Children converted to full-time in September will show up on the portal as approved for full-time effective October first.
  + The POC team will do manual corrections in the system to ensure providers are paid for full-time for the month of September.
  + To date, we have converted over 400 children to full time status.

It is our intention to keep the September payment structure just as described in place for the months of October, November, and December.

It is important to note though that we will need to review monthly to determine if we are able to keep this payment structure in place. A few things we will be looking at each month is POC utilization, POC spending, federal and state funding availability, and any new or changed federal guidance. A significant change in any of these factors may require us to modify the POC payment structure.

As always, thanks for your hard work and dedication to Delaware’s families. At DSS the POC staff are on duty and ready to accept calls and POC questions via the POC Helpline which is 302-255–9670 or via email at [POCResource@delaware.gov](mailto:POCResource@delaware.gov). As always please feel to reach out to me directly at 302-255-9605.

**Jamie Mack, Environmental Health Director, Division of Public Health, DHSS:** Jamie agreed with what Betty Gail said and confirmed they are working on providing some clarity around the joint email that was sent yesterday. Jamie noted that some kids are going back to school for in person learning, at least in the hybrid model and for that reason, DPH is looking at that as a change in the risk for those kids. Due to that risk, DPH is looking at incorporating some additional requirements for face covering - specifically the change from mask requirements from ages twelve and over now being required for kindergarten age children.

Next, there was a question and answer period:

Q. Regarding school-age children being seated at a table at least three feet apart, we received information from the Governor that is different than what was received from DPH. So, can kids sit at the lunch table three feet apart?

A. The three feet distance is not specific as to whether it is a lunch table or not. This guidance is something that was used in schools and this could apply to child cares as well. Regarding being seated at the table generally facing the same direction is important because we want to control how close the children are to one another. We still want to provide some distance between them.

Q. What is the significance of fifteen minutes in terms of distance?

A. It used to be a close contact was defined as someone being within six feet of another individual for ten minutes. That guidance has been changed to be 15 minutes. This gives a little more flexibility in terms of who is identified as a close contact. This should help reduce the number of people that have to quarantine based on the positive test.

Q. Are our doctors aware that all of these parents are going to be calling to get clearance for their children to return to child care setting? Do they know the guidelines providers are being asked to follow – like congestion is a reason to send students home?

A. So, as far as we know, we haven't heard that as a large scale problem. Yes, certainly it is up to the parents and the doctors to communicate as to what's going on. If any of the child care programs start to see a significant number of doctors either unable or unwilling to provide return-to-school notes, please have them contact OCCL. Additionally, you can reach out to DPH, and we can figure out how to work through that situation.

Q. Are waivers still be accepted for increasing a group’s size?

A. Yes, you can still request a variance for preschool children group size. However, OCCL will not assume that you have the space, and you cannot exceed normal ratios with that age group. Also, there will not be variances granted to exceed the school-age class size of 25. Note the ratio for school-age children is 1:15. However, if you are using an early childhood teacher or higher qualified individual, you can go to 1:20.

Q. Is it possible to consider the early child care industry separately from the school districts, in terms of school mask requirements, considering they've been serving through the pandemic, not having had to wear face coverings before, and because they were in cohorts and everyone was well?

A. Let’s keep in mind the change in the face covering requirements is not just specific to schools and childcares. This requirements applies to all environments at this point. In the past the requirement was anyone twelve and up was required to wear a face covering, but now we are going to be looking at kindergarten and up being required to wear a face covering. It gets a little difficult, because now some of those kids may not be in the child cares as consistently as they were, because they may be doing some in person learning, or they may shift shortly to, in person learning.

I know a lot of school districts have that first six weeks already figured out as remote only, but then maybe go into hybrid. I know a couple are already in hybrid. So we want to keep those kids kind of transitioning into wearing a face covering.

Q. Why are the rules increasing when the COVID-19 numbers are much lower than before? Has there been an outbreak in child care centers that I am not aware of? What is DPH basing these increased restrictions on?

A. See above answer.

Q. Some pediatricians are telling parents that if a child doesn't have a fever, or if they're fever wasn't high enough and didn't last long enough, that there is no way they would test positive for COVID-19. Is there a way they could be positive for COVID-19?

A. We can inform doctors about what we are hearing, and I will check with our medical directors at DPH to see if that's accurate. Ultimately, we can make sure we share that information with the pediatricians and with the provider community to ensure that we're all on the same page.

Q. Could we have another separate session going to go over the new guidance and changes made by OCCL and DPH?

A. Yes, we are going to schedule something with Jamie and Betty Gail to go over things more specifically connected with the most recent guidance document.

Q. When are we going to find out if child care programs are going have to close because of COVID-19? Is it affecting our industry in the state?

A. Currently OCCL is doing a survey all the licensing specialists, gathering data, etc. We haven't heard that very many programs are closed. Also, we are doing an official call to find out who is open and who was closed and the reason for that. We hope to have that data very soon.

Q. Can we raise the ratio for school-age to 20:1? Is there any insight regarding programs going back to normal group sizes for other age groups as well?

A. OCCL: That decision is driven by the guidance OCCL receives from DPH. At this point, you can still request a variance if your room will support the larger size and you wish to return to your previous group size to avoid disenrolling children. It is not known when the requirement for the reduced group size will end.

Q. What if a NAICS code listed on my 2019 tax returns doesn’t match what you have listed as my accountant made a mistake and just applied NAICS code for education rather than child care center? Can I send in the license certificate that we received from OCCL?

A. If it doesn't match, you're still very much eligible for the grant. You just may not be able to credit your rent payments. You'd have to look for other expenses to credit, for example any kind of equipment purchases you've made or refinancing debt. You are still very much eligible and then the 7.5% revenue decline requirement is in place regardless of whether you’re in one of those disproportionately impacted industries or not.

Q. The guidance for children wearing masks I believe is 3 years and up. Do these children need to wear a mask all day in day care setting?

A. A mask is strongly recommended for children aged two to four, but it is not required. The current guidance is that a mask be worn by children kindergarten age and up.

Q. Can home daycares have more children then what they are licensed for?

A. OCCL: The only way home family childcares and large family child care can exceed their typical licensed capacity would be because they have school-age children of their own. OCCL will not actually increase the licensed capacity of a family or large family child care home but will permit the provider’s own school-age children to be present without reducing the number of children in care. There is no plan at this point to increase the capacity of family child care and large family child care.

Q. What makes a child care building safer than schools, especially since even in the old days schools had 22 student cap in classrooms and now child care allows 25 children?

A. I don't know that childcare classrooms are any more or less safe. If we're talking about the differences in the face covering requirements, again that's not something that applies specifically to child cares or schools. The change in requirements is because we've seen other areas using masks at a lower age, so we wanted to be more protective of the younger population.

Q. A family child care provider wants to know if such providers picking up children from their local school district who attended part-day pre-K is considered a field trip for the other kids?

A. No, we do not consider that a field trip.

Q. Regarding POC, we are seeing our rates change for specific age groups. POC states that children aged 2-5 are reimbursed at $31.72 and school-age is reimbursed at $30.11. This is a change from rates that were given out in 2019. When did this change go into effect? And if it was done in error, will sites get reimbursed going back to 2019.

A. The rates haven't changed since 2019. If you are seeing any irregularities in the rates or for your particular center or children, please reach out to the POC team at POCResource@delaware.gov.

Q. My center’s licenses expires in November. Will there be an extension given if specialists are not permitted to enter the center at that time? Will we be given advance notice of when in person visits will be made?

A. Extensions will be given to anyone who needs them. Providers will be informed prior to OCCL resuming visits.

Q. Is there a way for providers who have multiple sites to get an itemized statement for ER rather than a lump sums?

A. If you have questions about your ER payments, please send us an email at [enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us).

Q. Regarding the sample letters providers are to send out to notify families their child may have been exposed to COVID-19, do all families at the center need to receive the letter or just the families who have children who were exposed to COVID-19? Because of the social distancing guidelines we are following, anyone who is not part of the affected individual’s classroom would not have been exposed.

A. The letters are simply suggestions on ways to help providers. You are not required to use them. So, if you have a different way that you want to notify families, then could do so. Notifications only need to be given out to families whose children have been potentially exposed, not to all families.

Q. Does notification have to be provided in writing or can it be through a phone call?

A. The idea is to document the notification, which can best be done in writing. However, regulations say that you have to report it and that parents need to be informed. It doesn't specify the way in which that is to occur. Therefore, you could do it any way that was effective for your facility.

Q. It seems like a classroom would not have to quarantine even if there was an individual in the group who tested positive. I thought that everyone in the group would need to quarantine for fourteen days. Is that accurate?

A. Yes, everyone in the group would need to quarantine because they would have been considered in close contact (six feet for more than fifteen minutes). If you have classes that are a little bit more spread out or a child that hasn't been there for a certain amount of time or have a class that's effectively using face covering, then the whole class may not have to be quarantined. It was also suggested that this would further be up to the public health epidemiologists who could make that determination with that specific child care program.

Q. When the provider is contacted by DPH they would have a conversation based on the specifics of the case and whether that quarantine of everybody in the room needed to happen. Is that correct?

A. Yes, either through conversation with the epidemiologists or through a conversation with the contact tracing program.

Q. If over twenty students can be together in a child care classroom, why can't they meet together in a school building? If 20+ school-age children can be together, when can Pre-K (4-5 year olds) be able to increase group size to 24?

A. The Governor and Dr. Bunting made the announcement that, based on the criteria that we've established for schools, all schools in Delaware can reopen in a hybrid scenario. There have been about five districts and a number of charters who are coming up with their own hybrid plans. Some have already gone back. We did not tell everyone to open or to stay closed. Everyone needs to open in the safest manner possible.

Q. Why do we have to work through OCCL to reach DPH? It causes a delay in getting answers. Also, why do school districts have a dedicated DPH person, but child cares do not?

A. For the school districts, they have public health liaisons who they work with for answers. The liaisons consults with DPH officials for answers. Child cares have licensing specialists who then reach out to, who in turn get guidance form DPH officials. This is sort of a Train the Trainer scenario where the public health liaisons are getting the same questions over and over and are eventually able to just answer them directly. At that point there is a faster turnaround for the questions.

Q. What is the website for the grant that is opening up on Tuesday?

A. The website is delbiz.com/relief.

Q. Are ER payments considered federal funds? The CACFP (food nutrition) program) has sent notice about the requirements for an audit of federal funds.

A. ER are federal funds. They have been for the duration of the ER program, and they will be through December.

Q. What are we doing about our license if we are coming up for renewal?

A. You will get an extension. We ask that you still send in your renewal application. It does not have to be notarized. Send in the renewal application as you would normally do.

Q. Most of the child care centers taking school-age children are private. However, some families that do not qualify for POC based on their income because the extra tuition increase threw them out of budget. Does DSS have any plans to provide any financial assistance to working families?

A. The eligibility for POC is zero, 285% of poverty. So, and there it has to be a need for PSC, which is working. So that's right now our limitation and the program, in terms of how we can help working low income working families. So if you know folks that are working, they should go apply and see if they meet those income standards.

Q. If before and after care at a school district location is open in September, can we submit for ER, even if the location was closed in July and August?

A. You cannot apply for ER if you were not open and serving children on July 1st.

Q. How do providers manage virtual learning while maintaining childcare responsibilities?

A. This is truly a personal and business decision. If you are able to offer support to families in remote learning for their children as well, and abide by the regulations you have to as a licensed provider, then you will need to figure out the best way to do that. Not all programs are going to be able to accommodate virtual learning on top of their other responsibilities. It really is going to be specific to that program.

The meeting wrapped up about 2:30 p.m. Minutes will be sent out following the meeting. Kim reminded everyone that there will be a series of webinars like there was before where you can ask these questions to both DPH and OCCL.

We appreciate everyone's time and patience with this brand new technology platform for us, and we will see moving forward whether or not this is the best choice. We know you have a lot of questions. Things are changing day by day and we understand that.

***Questions from the Chat Log that were not covered in the minutes above:***

***(Note answers were provided if the question was answered in the chat box or readily available.)***

*Q. Can we apply for Relief Grant if we are also receiving ER?*

*A. It depends. Most likely those receiving ER would not qualify for the grant. Providers should verify with their accountants that they will report this as gross revenue. Otherwise, they would need to show a 7.5% decline in 2020 to be eligible.*

*Q. Does ER qualify as revenue?*

*A. Yes, ER is revenue and you will be required to claim it on your taxes.*

*Q. If you are receiving ER, can you still apply for it?*

*A. As long as you are open now and were open and serving children as of July 1, you are eligible to apply for ER every (15th) month through the end of the year (unless changes are made to the overall program).*

*Q. What is the interest rate if you have to pay back the relief grant?*

*A. 7.5 - 8.5%.*

*Q. Is it a loan or a grant? A grant you don’t usually have to pay back?*

*A. It is a (relief) grant. You only have to pay it back if you do not see that 7.5% revenue decline or if you use the grant improperly; otherwise, you keep it and owe nothing back.*

*Q. How are part-time private pay children handled?*

*A. Part-time private pay children, in terms of ER, are considered one enrolled child on your ER application submission.*

*Q. What if we filed for ER on the 16th of last month and still have not received a confirmation call or been paid, what do we do next?*

*A. Email* [*enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us*](mailto:enhanced.reimbursement@doe.k12.de.us) *to inquire about your payment.*

*Q. What is deemed "age appropriate discretion"?*

*Q. If these students were with each other all summer long, why does them wearing a mask now matter?*

*A. As other states have implemented more stringent requirements to improve the safety of children, Delaware has done so as well.*

*Q. For all essential sites with POC, do we mark present for children who are not present during the month of September, if they are authorized for POC?*

*A. Please contact Tom Hall or the* [*POCResource@delaware.gov*](mailto:POCResource@delaware.gov) *for further assistance.*

*Q. Are vinyl/clear mask acceptable for providers so children can develop language skills and see facial expressions?*

*Q. How will we get the communication of child care centers closing because of COVID-19?*

*Q. Doctors are NOT recommending testing when we send children with fevers. Why shouldn't children be tested, especially if they are in childcare? What is going out to pediatricians for guidance?*

*Q. What if all of our school-age children are fully virtual and have been with us since the start of the closures? They won't be going for hybrid schooling, since their district isn't offering it, so their exposure is no different than months ago.*

*Q. Can you clarify the amount of time staff and children need to quarantine if they test for COVID-19? What are the differences for quarantine requirements for positive testing versus negative testing?*

*A. Please see previous ECE provider call minutes* [*here*](https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/3760)*. This was explained in a previous set of minutes.*

*Q. How long will ER last?*

*A. As shared earlier in the call, the state's intention is to provide ER through the end of this calendar year, with the caveat that we will review each month to ensure we are still able to use these funds based on any updated guidance from the federal government or any changes happening here in Delaware.*

*Q. Why are school-age students required to wear masks now, but weren't required before now? What are we supposed to do if a student is refusing to wear it?*

*A. As other states have implemented more stringent requirements to improve the safety of children, Delaware was done so as well.*

*Q. If we have school-age children who are going to in person learning for 2 days and with us 3 full days, do we enter it as exactly that or will school-aged children be paid at full time during this time even if they are part-time on some days?*

*A. You would enter full time for every day.*

*Q. If a child has a 100.4 degree fever, can you clarify what is required? Is a doctor’s note needed to return if they also show COVID-19-type symptoms?*

*A. Please see previous ECE provider call minutes* [*here*](https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/3760)*. This was explained in a previous set of minutes.*

*Q. When will OCCL visit to centers begin again?*

*A. Contact OCCL through your licensing specialist to determine when visits will resume.*

*Q. As a home daycare provider am I qualified to apply to serve at the school? If yes what would I do with the children that are not school-age?*

*Q. We can now have 25 school-age children in one classroom but children can only sit 3 feet apart and would have to face one direction. How is that supposed to work based on the fact that all children need to sit at tables to do virtual learning? That would require a lot more tables in the classroom if we can have 25 children. And now you have allowed possibly one person to direct 20 children on virtual learning. It’s hard to understand how these decisions are being made. Safe for us to be 20:1, but not safe for a public school classroom? Can you please explain the rationale behind these decisions?*

*Q. When will the facial covering rule be lifted? Are you truly waiting on a vaccine? Schools in Sweden have had children attending without facial coverings and they are not experiencing any worse numbers than we are based on the article I read yesterday. The science and statistics are not supporting this any longer yet rules are getting stricter. Those dying are elderly with underlying health conditions so why are we not allowing children to go back to school 5 days per week and why are they having to wear facial coverings when science/statistics show children are not a vulnerable population?*

*Q. As a provider that is venturing into the world of virtual learning on Tuesday, what supports will be in place for our technical questions if parent is not able to assist? Is there any thought to a Help Desk set up for us in the field at the centers?*

*Q. Has anyone made it clear to the community at large that the pop-up, unlicensed babysitting services advertising as child care, are not actually licensed child care services? Centers are concerned about the backlash that the community will have if something happens from/in an unlicensed operation.*

*Q. Can you confirm the POC daily rate for a school-age and a 2-5 year old child for New Castle County?*

*A. Please email the* [*POCResource@delaware.gov*](mailto:POCResource@delaware.gov) *for a response.*

*Q. When will Delaware Stars assessments resume?*

*A. This is yet to be determined.*

*Q. Are there any grants in place to help childcare provides to accommodate children?*

*Q. If we are taking our younger children outside, will we be able to let the school-age kids remain inside?*