

Here is where we are in this process and the next steps we must take.

- All organizations who plan to offer any childcare or school age support program during the school year must be licensed by the state's Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC) in order to operate legally and within the standards that provide quality care and keep children safe.
- All Hockomock Area YMCA childcare and before and after school care programs are licensed by DEEC and we follow their guidelines strictly.
- While local school districts have submitted their final plans to the state's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for approval, and have communicated these plans to families within their community, the DEEC that we depend upon for licensing has not yet issued their revised COVID-19 standards or guidelines. These two state departments coordinate efforts to make sure guidelines are consistent.
- Until these guidelines are released, no program can operate, and we cannot finalize key elements, including staff to child ratios, the number of children allowed per classroom, and revised cleaning protocols.

According to the DEEC, the state should be providing us with the necessary guidelines **by the end of this week or early next week**. It has been shared with us that organizations like our Y who already have a license will be first in line to expand their care and be approved for the full day remote learning support program.

We will be moving forward in the next few days on anticipated program guidelines and making registration for families available, with the understanding that the entire program is pending on state approval.