

**JOINT LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE  
ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**



# **COVID-19 Impact on Children**

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# Snapshot of COVID Impact on NC's Child Care System

- Child care has remained open throughout pandemic
- ~ 90% of private child care facilities traditionally open in the summer have reopened
- Only 43% children (106,000) currently attending child care vs. 245,000 in Feb. 2020
  - 70% of children receiving subsidy currently attending
  - 35% of children whose families pay private tuition attending
- Significant vacancies among private tuition paying families hurt child care businesses
  - 60% of child care revenue comes from private tuition

# Snapshot of COVID Impact on NC's Child Care System

- Child care workforce is more than 50% women of color, the majority of whom fall into one of the high-risk categories for COVID-19
- Average salary – \$11 per hour
- Since NCDHHS started public reporting of clusters on June 22, there have been:
  - 21 clusters in child care settings
  - 65 cluster-associated cases among staff
  - 1 cluster-associated death among staff
  - 76 cluster-associated cases among children
  - 0 cluster-associated deaths among children

# CARES Act Funds for Child Care

- **NCDHHS anticipates expending all CARES funds allocated for child care**
  - \$34.7M for emergency child care subsidy which served 20,000+ children
  - \$38M for teacher and staff bonuses (for 25,000+ individuals)
  - \$57M for operational grants for 3,800+ open programs in April, May, June (66%)
  - Projected \$23M for final round of operational grants in July
  - Purchased \$6.2M PPE and cleaning supplies for 4-8 week supply for ~4,200 programs
  - Projected \$10M to cover parent copayments for families receiving subsidy in June and July at open programs

# COVID-19 Child Care Response

## Health and Safety



- Published health and safety guidance on March 23, and regularly update to align with CDC recommendations



- Issued Executive Order in April to **ensure child care only for essential workers** during stay at home order



- Held **webinars** with 3,500+ providers on Emergency in March and Reopening Guidelines in May



- Established network of child care health consultants, who have fielded 2,200+ calls from child care providers



- Established partnership with **local Smart Start** to help find essential supplies
- Purchased **4-8 weeks of PPE and cleaning supplies** for child care centers

# COVID-19 Child Care Response

## Access and Affordability



- Launched child care hotline with CCR&R system in March to provide enhanced child care referrals to 2,700+ families for 4,000+ children through July 2



Covered parent copayments for families receiving subsidy for April, May, June, and July



Launched Emergency Child Care Subsidy program for essential workers (up to 300% FPL) during stay at home order, serving 16,800+ children in April and 19,400+ children in May

# COVID-19 Child Care Response

## Operational Support



- Provided **subsidy stabilization to all child care programs**, open or closed (April and May)
- Provided **subsidy stabilization to open programs** (June and July)



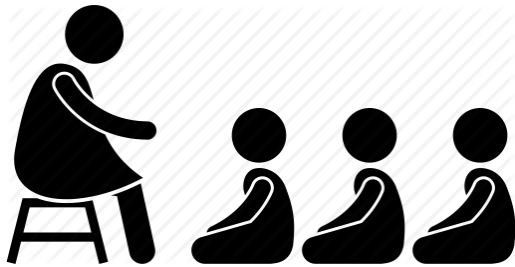
- Provided **NC Pre-K payment stabilization** from March through end of school year
- Issued **NC Pre-K reopening guidance**



- Provided **operational grants based on fixed costs** to open child care programs (ranging from \$500 to \$30,000 per month for centers, and \$359 to \$2,500 for homes) for April through July

# COVID-19 Child Care Response

## Child Care Workforce Support



Provided **bonus payments** of \$950 per month to teachers and \$525 per month to staff for 25,000+ employees for April and May



Provided **10% additional payment to child care programs** to cover administrative costs like payroll tax associated with bonus payments



Launched Hope4Healers mental health helpline for child care and health care workers experiencing stress from being on the front lines



# **Address School Age Child Care Needs for Families**

- 1. Leverage ~30,000 existing slots at child care facilities that are licensed for school age care**
- 2. Expand capacity for licensed child care facilities that aren't currently licensed for school age**
- 3. Public schools offer school age care on-site at school**
- 4. Public schools contract with community-based organizations (CBOs), with care provided at CBO**

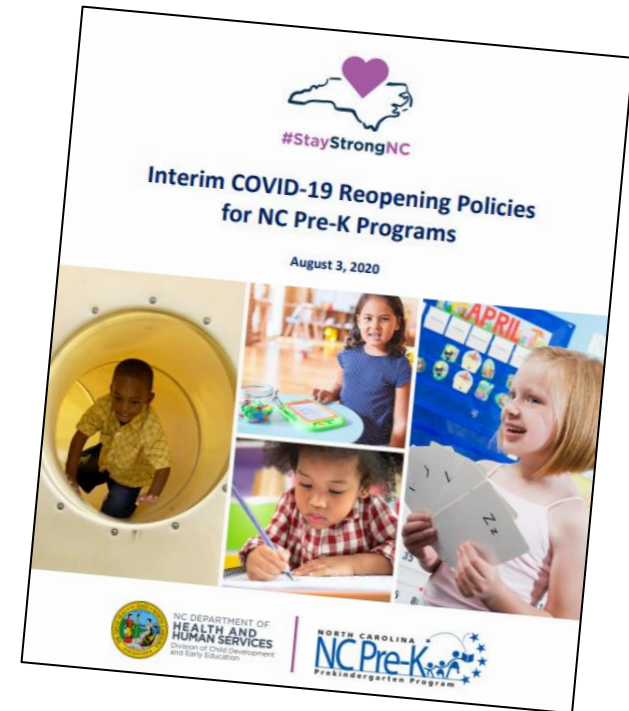
# Financial Assistance for School-Age Care

- No new funding currently available for families who may need help paying for school-age care
- There are ~13,700 children on the subsidy waiting list, of whom 3,312 are school-age children (age 5-12)
  - Subsidy eligibility stricter for school-age children
    - For children 0-5, limit of 200% FPL (~\$52k family of 4)
    - For children 6-12, limit of 133% FPL (\$34k for family of 4)
- Any financial assistance for school-age care should prioritize children on waiting list
- Consider raising subsidy eligibility for school-age children to 200% FPL

# NC Pre-K Reopening

DCDEE issued NC Pre-K guidance, which explains:

- NC Pre-K will be offered the full 36 weeks in a typical program year
- DCDEE strongly promotes (and if possible, financially incentivizes) in-person instruction as the first and best choice for children
- Remote learning only option will be available as alternative to in-person for specific circumstances
- Remote learning only option available through at least Nov. 6, with option to extend pending COVID metrics and future state directives
- DCDEE will issue NC Pre-K payments over program year, regardless of enrollment (to stabilize Pre-K infrastructure)
- Guidance provided on how to provide remote learning, including expectations around teacher training, Remote Moments, family check-ins 1-2x a week

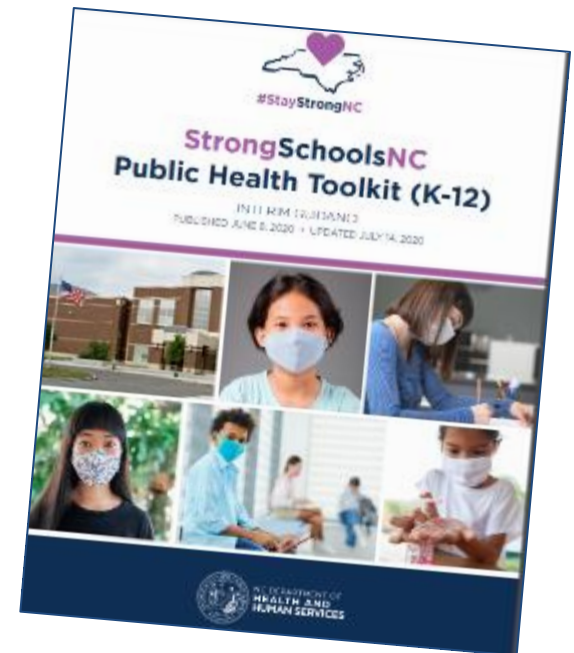


Currently ~26k applications out of 30k slots; NCDHHS polling Pre-K sites to ask how they will open (in-person, hybrid, remote learning)

# K-12 School Reopening

## How Did We Get Here?

- On March 14, Governor Cooper closed public schools for in-person instruction through the rest of the 2019-2020 school year.
- On June 8, NCDHHS released the StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit (K-12), frequently revising with new information
- On July 14, Governor Cooper announced that the state would be moving forward with a plan to get students in the classroom, while also prioritizing public health and safety



- <https://files.nc.gov/covid/documents/guidance/Strong-Schools-NC-Public-Health-Toolkit.pdf>

# Overview of NCDHHS K-12 Guidance



Face coverings required for every teacher, staff, and student

Decreased number of students, teachers, and staff so people can stay 6 feet away from each other



Frequent hand washing and cleaning classrooms, bathrooms, buses and equipment

Seating on buses will be limited to one student per seat



Symptom screenings, including temperature checks\*

Procedures for suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19



Mental Health, Coping, Resilience support

Plans for vulnerable teachers and staff



Remote learning option available for students and families

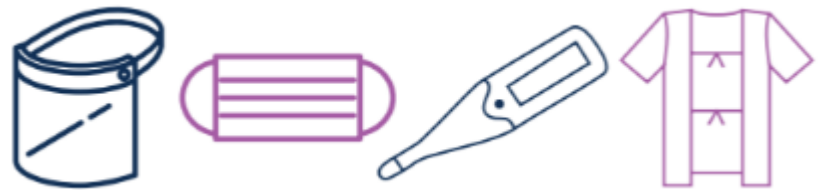
# Providing Access to Face Coverings & PPE

- The State has purchased **5 reusable cloth face coverings** for all K-12 students, teachers and staff in NC public and charter schools



- The State has supplied a **PPE Starter Pack** for school nurses and delegated staff at all NC Public School Units, which includes:

- Temporal touchless thermometers
- Disposable procedural masks
- Reusable face shields
- Disposable gowns



- PPE Starter Pack supply will last schools **approximately two months**

# Resources Overview



**StrongSchoolsNC**

## Additional Information

- FAQs  
[English, Spanish](#)
- Social Media Outreach  
[English, Spanish](#)
- What are we learning about COVID-19 and Children?  
[English, Spanish](#)
- Memorandum on Preschool Programs and K-12 Public Health Guidance  
[English](#)



Reference Guide for Suspected,  
Presumptive, or Confirmed Cases  
of COVID-19 (K-12)  
INTERIM GUIDANCE AS OF JUNE 30, 2020



## Additional Information

- Screening flowchart for students and staff
- Positive screening protocol checklists (upon arrival and during the school day)
- Available online in [English](#)



**StrongSchoolsNC**  
Infection Control and PPE Guidance (K-12)  
INTERIM GUIDANCE AS OF JUNE 18, 2020

## Additional Information

- Infection control and PPE guidance
- PPE training for school nurses and designated staff
- Infection control checklist
- Recommendations on supply quantities
- Recommendations on how to purchase items from checklist
- List of PPE vendors with statewide contracts
- Available online in [English](#)