



## Preschool Reopening Plan as of August 19, 2020

*(Subject to change as COVID-19 conditions change)*

In preparation for reopening our centers in August 2020, Mountainland Head Start, Inc. is committed to providing families with program options which best meet child and family needs. For this reason, we will be providing both in-person and online options. We have created the following plan after reviewing available reopening plans of school districts in our service area. Our plan aligns with current CDC guidelines, Child Care Licensing and directives issued by state agencies and the Utah County Health Department. We are exercising extreme precaution with top consideration being the safety of children, families, and staff. We took into consideration not only the need to take safety precautions but also the need to be nimble and prepared for whatever changes and challenges come our way. To protect the health and safety of all, we felt it wise to use an approach that was SMART as follows:

### Be **SMART**

- S**tay home when sick
- M**aintain clean and sanitized spaces
- A**dvocate for social distancing
- R**emember face mask
- T**rain on hygiene and safety

For this plan, we have mindfully considered how to address all the needs of children, families and staff, particularly those needs related to health, safety and social/emotional well-being. Our main objectives are as follows:

- To provide healthy and safe environments for children and staff
- To provide in-person, center-based and virtual service options
- Provide training and ongoing monitoring to incorporate and maintain safety parameters to mitigate risk
- To provide ongoing communication with staff and parents

### **HEALTH & SAFETY TO MINIMIZE RISK**

We developed critical strategies and protocols to mitigate the contraction and spread of COVID-19. We will be implementing the following safety precautions to protect children, families and staff.

1. All staff and children will be closely monitored for symptoms of COVID-19.
  - a. Sick children and staff will be asked to stay home



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- b. Every staff member will have their temperature taken before the start of work.
  - c. Children will have their temperature taken and undergo a health check during drop-off (exterior to the building) while parents answer questions regarding the health of the child and potential exposure before the child may enter the classroom.
  - d. Before entering the classroom, children will have hand sanitizer applied by staff and then directed to wash hands once in the building before touching any surfaces.
  - e. Any child with a temperature of 100.4 F or higher or show symptoms of COVID-19 will temporarily be asked to not attend class until the child has sought medical care and/or is no longer contagious as defined by physicians, CDC and/or the local health department.
  - f. Should a child begin to show symptoms during class they will be taken to a room separate from other children and supervised there while their parent/guardian is contacted to pick them up.
  - g. If a child has recently attended is diagnosed with COVID-19, parents of other children in the classroom will be notified, while maintaining confidentiality.
  - h. We will follow health department recommendations if there is a positive case. This may involve the classroom being shut down for 24-48 hours for intensive disinfecting. The same process will be followed for a staff member who is showing symptoms or is diagnosed positive for the virus.
  - i. We will assist with contact tracing per the Health Department instructions. The positive child will be put in self-isolation (by the Health Department) and all close contacts (anyone within 6 feet for longer than 15 minutes ) will need to be in quarantine for 14 days after the last close contact with the child. Essentially one positive case in a classroom may temporarily shut down an entire classroom.
2. While MHS has always taken strict measures to make sure our centers are sanitary, additional disinfecting measures will be taken to reduce the potential for spreading the virus.
- a. A regular disinfecting schedule has been created to be implemented throughout the day both in classrooms and on playgrounds. This involves disinfecting high-touch areas using disinfecting chemicals that are safe for children and are deemed effective against COVID-19 on the CDC website.
  - b. Electronics will be wiped down between child/staff use
  - c. There will be a daily sanitation of equipment
  - d. Supplies will not be shared within the classroom unless sanitized between use



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- e. Electrostatic disinfectant sprayers will be used on all surfaces at the end of each day
3. Increased measures of social distancing will be put in place and face masks will be encouraged for children (agency provided) and mandatory for staff. (We recognize it is hard for a three or four-year-old to wear a mask).
  - a. Class sizes will be reduced to no more than 10 children per classroom so that social distancing can be safely maintained. This number may increase by one or two in some classrooms if conditions allow.
  - b. Double session classrooms are temporarily suspended in order to reduce the potential of exposure. Only one group of 10 children will be utilizing a classroom. This number may increase by one or two if conditions allow.
  - c. Exterior drop off and pick up areas with social distance markers used
  - d. Teacher home visits will be conducted virtually
  - e. Parent-teacher conferences to be conducted virtually
  - f. Assigned seating where possible.
  - g. Only one group of children will use the playground at a time with equipment being cleaned and disinfected with an electrostatic sprayer after each classroom use
4. Meals will be pre-plated by the teachers and, where possible, each child will be supplied with their own consumables and curriculum supplies to limit sharing.
5. Temporary suspensions to mitigate spread:
  - a. Toothbrushing
  - b. Water fountains
  - c. Lending library and Books and Buddies
  - d. Parent and community volunteers in the classroom
  - e. Field trips/curriculum extenders
  - f. Items brought from home
  - g. STEM lab
  - h. Backpack food program
8. Children will be trained in and practice effective hygiene practices such as proper hand washing, coughing into the elbow, and the importance of masks and trying not to touch their eyes, nose or mouth.



9. Where possible children will work and play in assigned small groups to limit the number of other children they come in direct contact with. This will also aid in contact tracing.
10. Accommodations will be made for students with and IEP and/or unique circumstances. Reasonable accommodations for staff in consultation with HR.

### **TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

11. In our rural center in Nephi where we provide limited bus service, we will follow a similar classroom protocol during bus stop pick-up and while in transit.
  - a. Child's temperature will be taken and a well health check performed prior to entering bus
  - b. Child hands sanitized prior to entry with assistance from staff
  - c. Assigned seating and children will be encouraged to wear a mask
  - d. Staff required to wear mask
  - e. Social distance where possible
  - f. Bus cleaned, sanitized and disinfected regularly
  - g. Use of electrostatic disinfectant sprayer at end of day

Agency checkout vehicle fleet for staff use to follow similar disinfecting protocol

### **TRAINING AND MONITORING**

12. Agency will provide COVID-19 hygiene and safety protocol training and symptom monitoring training for staff.
13. Teaching staff will train children on proper hygiene and cleaning protocols for COVID-19
14. Center Managers will monitor COVID-19 protocol implementation at centers
15. The Administration and HR Director will monitor COVID-19 protocol implementation at the Administrative Office
16. Parents will be provided with school re-opening plan which includes COVID-19 Protocol



17. Parents will be provided with Health Department COVID-19 informational brochures to assist with COVID-19 awareness and symptom checking
18. Administrative Office staff will be trained on procedures for visitors
19. Staff and children movement will be minimized in buildings through flow patterns and/or transitions
20. Agency will utilize and monitor the use of open spaces (auditoriums, common spaces, etc.) to increase physical distancing and limit group sizes in offices and meeting rooms
21. Hygiene and safety instructions and reminders posted in hallways, restrooms, and classrooms

## IN-PERSON SERVICES

As centers reopen and considerations are made to meet the above *Health and Safety* guidelines, the following are two service options for families to carefully consider for the social, emotional, and educational needs of children.

### Center-Based Services

Extended Day Classes: All preschool classes that were extended day classes last year will continue to be extended day classes this year. The classes will be 5 hours and 50 minutes a day Monday through Thursday with 3.5 hour days on Fridays. These classes will have a maximum of 10 children enrolled per class in order to minimize risk, protect staff and children and facilitate safe social distancing. This number may increase by one or two in some classrooms if conditions allow.

Double Session Classes: To reduce the risk of exposure by having two groups of children sharing the same classroom and materials, and in trying to align with best practices in childcare and preschool settings, all classes that were double session classes last year will be single session classes this year. These classes will be extended to 5 hours and 50 minutes a day to meet the needs of families whose children need either morning or afternoon preschool services. The families will be able to drop off their children throughout the day as needed to fit with their schedule. These classes will be called “mixed” and held Monday through Thursday. These classes will have a maximum of 10 children enrolled per class in order to minimize risk, protect staff and children and facilitate safe social distancing. This number may increase by one or two in some classrooms if conditions allow.



## **Early Head Start Home Based Services**

Early Head start services in Juab county and in the southernmost part of Utah County will continue to operate using a hybrid model that was put in place during the soft closure. Home visits will be conducted virtually, outdoors or in a location outside the home and center large enough to facilitate social distancing. The

Family Educator will continue to work in partnership with each family to determine the best place to hold weekly visits or offer virtual services at the request of families. In-home visits may be held if conditions allow and if families and staff are able to safely social distance within the home. Group socializations are temporarily suspended.

## **TEMPORARY RECLOSING**

Mountainland Head Start, Inc. will establish a plan in consultation with local health officials on responding to confirmed COVID-19 cases and the coordination of a temporary closure of a classroom or center as necessary.

## **VIRTUAL SERVICES**

If there is sufficient need, we will offer a virtual Head Start preschool class option where there will be teacher guided activities and check in times throughout the day with groups of children. This program option requires parent support and help at home. The design and specifics of this option is still being developed.

***Virtual Services** is where the child and teachers are not physically present in a traditional classroom environment. Services are conducted through technology.*

## **DISABILITIES AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Services will continue as usual following social distancing measures and COVID-19 Protocols. Staff will wear Personal Protective Equipment when conducting Developmental Assessments. Those that are provided in collaboration with a school district or a community partner will continue and be arranged keeping health and safety as a priority. Home Visits and/or consultations to address social/emotional concerns and behavior management training to parents will be conducted virtually.

## **HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES**

Health and nutrition services will continue as usual following social distancing measures and COVID-19 Protocols. Personal Protective Equipment will be used



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by staff while conducting required health screenings. Meals will be pre-plated as explained above. Nutrition staff will wear masks while preparing meals and follow all usual food safety protocols.

## **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

Family and Community services will continue as usual following social distancing measures and COVID-19 Protocols. Enrollment intake, orientation and home visits will be conducted virtually.

## **PARENT COMMITTEE, POLICY COUNCIL AND BOARD MEETINGS**

Meetings will continue, however, they will be conducted virtually or in meeting rooms not utilized for classroom instruction, where safe social distancing is possible.

## **IN-PERSON CLASS START DATES & TIMES**

Class Start Dates: At this time, we are planning to start school a week later than planned to give staff time to safely implement new COVID-19 protocols. Class start times are still being determined and will be posted on the agency website.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Mountainland Head Start, Inc. and each of its individual centers and classrooms will implement clear, consistent, and specific protocols for effective communication about *Health and Safety* and *services*.

### **The agency will communicate the following:**

- Mountainland Head Start's Fall 2020 Reopening Plan
- Website and Facebook COVID-19 Updates

### **Center/classroom will communicate the following:**

- The point of contact for each center (Center Manager)
- The point of contact for each classroom (Teacher)
- Virtual services information and point of contact (Teacher, Family Advocate and/or Health Specialist)
- Virtual platform information
- Ongoing plans for health & safety, services, and communication
- Accommodations for Child Health Plans, Individualized Education Programs, and Special Meal Plans developed with team members, including LEA staff, as necessary



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- Specific health & safety protocols (i.e. schedules, sanitation, general spaces guidelines)
- Sanitation protocols of center and classroom settings
- Schedules, drop off and pick-up information, flow patterns, and/or transitions
- In Nephi, bus route and pick-up points and protocols
- Individual classroom protocols for physical distancing, small group instruction, and other safety measures
- Parent Committee meetings
- Health and wellness best practices for individual child needs
- Individualized child goals, child assessment data, health screening results data
- Health follow-up & behavior plans