



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Child Development
and Early Education



June 8, 2020

Dear Early Learning Partners,

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to support young children and their families through the pre-school programs across North Carolina. Your leadership has allowed for perseverance through the challenges of COVID-19 and adjusting what it means to support early childhood educators as they tackle remote learning and the stress of the pandemic.

Today, our state released [StrongSchoolsNC: Public Health Toolkit \(K – 12\)](#), guidance supporting our public schools to safely reopen across North Carolina.

We know that our preschool programs located in public schools will be learning more about this guidance in the coming days. We want to provide clarification that **preschool programs in public schools and in private sites (including NC Pre-K, EC, Title 1, and Head Start) are expected to follow the [child care health guidance](#), and are not expected to follow all requirements outlined in the new K – 12 schools public health guidance.** While the child care and K – 12 guidance is similar, there are a few areas where the child care guidance is better aligned to the needs of our early learners, our staff, and families.

However, preschool programs in public schools (including NC Pre-K, EC, Title 1, and Head Start) are expected to follow any additional health protocols their school is implementing in response to the new [K – 12 schools public health guidance](#). For example, while preschool children would normally not be expected to social distance, they may be asked to social distance while eating in the cafeteria.

If you have any questions or concerns that come up, please reach out to any of us for further clarification and support.

Thank you for all you do,

Handwritten signature of Kristi Snuggs in black ink.

Dr. Kristi Snuggs, Interim Director
NCDHHS Division of Child Development
and Early Education

Handwritten signature of Amy Rhyne in black ink.

Amy Rhyne, Director
NCDPI Office of Early Learning