



August 14, 2020

Lower Columbia College Head Start & ECEAP Parents/Caregivers,

We look forward to serving your child and family this school year. With the COVID-19 pandemic still active, we have developed a plan to safely connect with you. During August, our staff are reaching out to you via phone/email/zoom to finalize your child’s enrollment. While our centers remain closed to the public at this time, staff may schedule delivery of paperwork/resources to your home. When deliveries occur staff will be wearing face coverings, maintaining physical distancing of at least 6 feet, and keeping their visit to less than 15 minutes. We ask that you also wear a face covering and stay physically distanced. Staff will have masks available to provide you if needed. Maintaining these required habits will protect the health of your family, the staff, and will bring us closer to reaching our goal. Our goal is to provide our full menu of services to your child and family including in-classroom preschool.

To determine how we can offer preschool this fall, we have reviewed the requirements and recommendations from the State Department of Health, State Department of Children Youth & Families, Cowlitz County Health & Human Services, Centers of Disease Control, Office of Head Start, and Lower Columbia College. Next, we surveyed parents and presented all data to our Parent Executive Policy Council, Lower Columbia College Leadership, and our Public School District Partners. All of this data led us to offer two models for the month of September. Both models work to limit the potential exposure and spread of the virus.

The first model is the safest:

Remote Modified Services – Begin September 1, 2020

Child Development Support	Family Support
Teacher will provide twice weekly instruction remotely to each child with their parent/caregiver	Family Advocate will maintain a minimum of once weekly contact with parent/caregiver

The second model provides limited in-classroom Preschool paired with remote Family Support:

Slow Start Center-Based Services - September 2020

Group 1	Group 2
Your child will attend in classroom two days each week on Mondays and Tuesdays through the month of September beginning 9/8/20.	Your child will attend in classroom two days each week on Thursdays and Fridays through the month of September beginning 9/3/20.
Maximum classroom capacity of 9 children and 2 teachers.	Maximum classroom capacity of 9 children and 2 teachers.

Some requirements we must follow for center-based services include:

- Daily temperature checks and health screenings will occur before any child or adult enters a center.
- Staff are completing temperature checks and health screenings daily prior to attending work.
- Face Coverings for adults and children (some accommodations are available).

Our enrollment is nearing 60% at this time. If classrooms are not fully enrolled by 9/1/20, then only one Slow Start Center-Based group will be able to open. Teachers will use the alternate group time to continue enrollment connections and remotely serve Group 2 children/families. While we understand this is not ideal, if assigned to Group 2, it is necessary to balance the Teacher's workload. Once the second group is near full enrollment then Group 2 will begin classroom services.

On Wednesdays, classrooms are closed for:

- Typical staff planning, meetings, trainings; and
- While daily cleaning, disinfecting, and sanitizing of classroom materials will be done, staff will use this day to deep clean classrooms, playgrounds, laundry, etc.

School bus transportation is yet to be determined.

Next Steps:

- Your child's Teacher or your Family Advocate will be connecting with you soon to note your preferences and address any questions you may have. We will do our best to meet your preferences. Your child and family are our reason for being here. Your safety is our most important concern and we recognize that increased spread of the virus can change our plans at any time. We thank you for your flexibility and partnership.
- On 9/18/20, the program will review countywide COVID-19 data from the previous two weeks. Plans for October services will be shared with parents by 9/23/20. The more every one of us adopts face coverings, physical distancing, and handwashing/hygiene in all the settings we are in, the sooner we can reach our goal.

Wishing you well,
Mindy Leasure, Director