



## Joint ECESF/CPAC Meeting Notes Wednesday, April 22



### Important updates since the 4/22 meeting:

Monday 4/27 Shelter in Place has been extended through the end of May.

**Licensing is calling sites with this message:** *If you are planning to reopen on Monday, May 4 (or anytime in the future) for students, as of now it may ONLY be for those of essential workers. You must call your licensing analyst before you reopen. They will document how many families you are serving, how many classrooms you will have open, and more. Leave your analyst a message if they do not answer explaining that you wanted to get in touch about reopening.*

**Early Care Educators** and the **CPAC Workforce committee** held our 3rd joint meeting on 4/22 reviewing current provision of emergency child care, and continuing a conversation among educators: ***planning ahead for re-opening***. Our conversations are shared with educators in order to continue to build our planning and self-organizing for priority needs, *as well as* with San Francisco departments and agencies to inform supports and services needed, program development, and implementation.

The following are notes from the **4/22 educator conversation**, with responses to questions on the call gathered from those implementing program, or vetted websites. ***There are questions and identified needs that do not yet have responses***, as we as a community are working to define the best path forward in the face of the coronavirus pandemic. Your continued participation, organizing, and advocacy is needed to get your needs and the needs of our community met.

*Can't open a link in this document? See complete URLs included at the end of the document.*

**Join us at our next meeting: Wednesday, April 29, 1-2:30 pm.**

**Purpose:** We are coming together as an ECE community to share our knowledge as practioners, or to [gossip](#)\* collectively to strengthen the reproductive work we do, hear each other and organize to support our community (educator, children, & family) needs, and plan for a re-opening that is safe for families, children, educators, and the community ***from an educator perspective***.

*\*[Gossip](#) in the old and positive sense of the word – God and sibb, [referring to those] who stand in spiritual relation to the child to be baptized, in time expanding to mean ... companions in childbirth [and rearing] not limited to the midwife.*

**Planning Issue:** ECE is a social activity. Re-opening needs to be considered with the same care as K12 and colleges. How can emergency services to essential workers be provided while promoting community safety? What do we, as providers of child care and education know is needed to open more broadly than emergency care? How do we need to shape the protocols? What do we need to advocate for?

## A. What we know/what we don't

A brief summary was given on each area below to set the context for our discussion.

### 1. Shelter in Place timeline

San Francisco (and six surrounding Bay Area counties) have an order to Shelter in Place, extended twice, from May 3 as of the 4/22 meeting, **now till the end of May**. The Governor's order to Shelter in Place, issued on 3/19, is in place until further notice. The Governor put forward six key indicators that will be the framework for making the decision for modifying the stay-at-home order—rather than any precise timeline. These include the ability to monitor and test, and to support physical distance in schools and at child care sites. See all six and further explanation on the [California State Governor's website](#).

### 2. Program Funding for subsidized programs

from state—vouchers, 30 days after closure—*advocacy is needed to extend this*.

from SF—thru May 3 (with the extension, we are waiting to hear if SF-funding to sites will be extended given the extended Shelter in Place)

### 3. Economic relief: additional unemployment thru EDD, including Pandemic Unemployment Assistance for self employed—starts April 28; PPP and other loans; new & changing.

### 4. See compiled [ECE workforce resource list](#) (with frequent resource updates)

## B. Responses from Child Care Law Center—to questions raised at the 4/15 meeting

On 4/17, you contacted the Child Care Law Center with this question:

What is the legal liability to child care programs that re-open or stay open and require teachers to work? What happens if someone contracts the virus?

How does workers comp insurance look at risk in terms of teachers getting exposed and testing positive?

### Child Care Law Center Response:

The Child Care Law Center cannot give you individualized legal advice. However, we can provide you with some general information that should be useful.

If you reopen and your employee stays home, you may still have to provide some paid leave. Employers, including family child care providers, need to review the state, federal and local employment laws. These laws guarantee a certain number of days of paid, job-protected leave during an illness, or because a worker's family member is sick, or needs care because of school or child care closures related to the coronavirus.

Employment law, liability, and workers compensation are outside our area of expertise. To find an attorney who specializes in employment law, try these resources:

- Contact your **local bar association**. If you call them, their Lawyer Referral Service can help you find an attorney to talk to.
- You can find more lawyer referral services here: <https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Public/Need-Legal-Help/Lawyer-Referral-Service>

## **D. Planning for reopening: Shared Experience & Discussion**

### **1. Shared experiences from programs operating Emergency Child Care**

#### **Main areas of discussion for health & safety protocols**

- Concerns about wearing face masks with infant and toddlers, in particular the impact on social development for young children not being able to see facial expressions; about lack of ability/desire to physically distance from infants/toddlers; desire to balance what's best for children's learning and development with health safety of teachers and the community
- Physical distancing hard to do – no guarantee children won't get sick; how do we support children w/compromised immune systems?
- How to keep materials separate with little hands
- COVID-19 testing needed for teachers, parents, and children in groups
- Push to base guidance on science to support programs to truly open safely
- Concerns about having to make a choice about what families to serve given relationships with existing families. Who gets priority? Request for guidance. And where do the other families go?
- Recommendations to keep siblings together. How to best do this when the space isn't set up for mixed ages
- Multiple comments re: concern of how to make it work financially with lower enrollment
- Importance of putting a focus on ECE safety and reopening with the same attention given to K12.
- A currently operating program reported finding that our children as a whole are far healthier than they are on a regular basis (the runny noses are completely gone!)

#### **Masks**

- Multiple comments were made expressing concern for the importance of young children seeing facial expressions for social and language development.
- Educators need to protect themselves, and this should not be a personal choice until the virus is understood better. Possibly addressed with clear face shields, or very small group size—comparable to an intimate family setting.
- Roll out after Shelter in Place may happen slowly. So educators and families can be best protected, infant/toddler care may have to be limited to only essential workers who can find no other family-based solutions, and then only mixing 1-2 families—so very small group size, so could be considered as a private space—no mask needed, until we have more science-based solutions—and can provide safe and developmentally supportive care.
- **Questions: Do children wear mask all day to?**

Children 2 years and under are not be allowed to wear mask for possible choking hazard. Children 3 -12 may wear a mask only if they are supervised but they are not required to. Adults are required to as per the guidelines below.

Link to mask regulations: <https://sf.gov/information/masks-and-face-coverings-coronavirus-outbreak>, <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/OrderNoC19-12-RequiringFaceCovering-04172020.pdf>

#### **Discussion on other distancing practices**

- Current San Francisco guidelines for health and safety emergency care for essential workers include operating with half your licensed capacity, up to a maximum of 10 in a group, lots of

cleaning and disinfecting every day, and a 6 foot distance requirement, which has not been working for a 9 hour day with children.

- Rotating schedules, half-days—If you rotate the children’s schedule, you’d have to rotate the staff. Teachers need to be with only 10 children.
- Even with rotating, we need to understand time, disinfectant, and airflow need better. What is needed before the next group uses the same space?
- How do we address parents’ need for a full day at work? (We need to advocate with parents for what is safest for their family and educators—shorter work days until safe as part of a slow roll out.)
- Current distancing guidelines by DSS/CDE are in place through June 30.
- There are differences in state and San Francisco guidelines, and some question regarding which will supersede. In some instances this may be the stricter rule, in other cases SF will have guidelines that only apply to the sites receiving SF funds—or are recommendations.

### Testing

- Large scale testing is needed. Many carry the virus but are asymptomatic. Will we be testing all, including staff, families, and children?
- Note: Mayor Breed just announced expanded access to CityTestSF to any essential workers, public & private, as well as residents who can’t access testing: [sf.gov/citytests](https://sf.gov/citytests)

### Supplies

Touch-less thermometers are needed. On recent attempt to order, they are out until June.

## 2. Breakout Discussion Reports

Breakout Group 4:

We need to identify strategies for physical changes to the classroom, for safety of the staff, that are rooted in science-based protocols; for example UV light sterilization. Advocacy for our protections and the policies **must** include scientifically creative solutions for us to go back to work. What is the purpose of opening the schools? Are we focused on providing care for people who need to get back to work? Or are we opening so we educate young children? With a, curriculum, etc.

Other questions:

How to resolve issues of transportation for workers who come from far away and using public transit? How can teachers work in small groups to ensure less contact? What about people’s contact as they come back and forth from work—for teachers as well as families? For example, does everyone have their own car? We are already starved for funds how are we going to increase the number of staff required to work a small group of children in the case of providing care for all children that are enrolled?

Breakout Group 5:

Living with new normal of wearing masks. Group agreement with points Bethica raised. Looking at our human face is so important. A couple of coaches have made masks of clear material.

Questions were raised for reopening for children with special needs. How do we keep them safe, and their families safe? There can be carriers that would put vulnerable children at risk.

As the process of reopening happens, what do activities look like? For instance, particular toys, steps to cleaning, details.

#### Group 8 Breakout:

There was a question about enrollment; how can FCCs or centers prioritize which family can be enrolled once the shelter in place order is lifted?

The group discussed masks being worn by staff. The group agrees that it is important for children to be able to learn social cues (i.e. facial expressions, etc.) and for their development, however, they can also learn from home, from their parents, through virtual Zoom with loved ones, etc. Children can adapt and learn through body language and voice tone. The group is more comfortable with the staff wearing a mask throughout the day.

There were questions and discussion on the following: how to maintain social distancing with younger children; would there be additional funding to help small businesses/programs if the group size continues to be low; added resources or funding for disinfecting supplies, etc.

Some have asked if others can share ideas on how they are enforcing social distancing with children in their programs.

Other Breakout Group comments: Discussed social distancing as hard to do. Particularly challenges with children with IEPs and challenging behaviors. How to share materials, mealtime, food safety, and grouping? How will we serve only ½ capacity? One group could do distance learning, while the others comes back to the site. One could come in the AM, one in the afternoon. Mixed age group with preschool & infant.

A recommendation for reopening is to keep siblings together. This works if they are both in same age-group, but is difficult if as wider age spread. Children in emergency sites have their own set of materials. FCC provider open for 5 children would have 5 containers of crayons, and 5 containers of playdough.

Five-year-olds who are due to move to the school district, may be delayed due to the school schedule.

We need numbers: how much air-flow, what size fan? Sterilize air with UV light. Touching is the secondary way of passing the virus. Breathing is primary.

**Early Care Educators of San Francisco** is a grassroots educator group for educator organizations and individuals to organize across ECE's diverse system of delivery, and define common needs and priorities that support the delivery of the well-resourced early care and education system with a stable workforce needed to best meet the needs of *all* families and children. Sara Hicks-Kilday, [sara@ecesf.org](mailto:sara@ecesf.org), is the director.

**CPAC Workforce Committee** is dedicated to amplifying the educator voices, and understanding educator experience to inform program design and decision making recommendations of the

San Francisco local planning council, [Child Care Planning and Advisory Council](#) (CPAC). Sara Hicks-Kilday, [sara@ecesf.org](mailto:sara@ecesf.org), and Mona Malan, [mona@childrenscouncil.org](mailto:mona@childrenscouncil.org), co-chair the committee.

**Links referenced in this document**

1. On gossip: <http://inthesetimes.com/article/21707/the-subversive-feminist-power-of-gossip>
2. Governor's 6 critical indicators: <https://www.gov.ca.gov/2020/04/14/governor-newsom-outlines-six-critical-indicators-the-state-will-consider-before-modifying-the-stay-at-home-order-and-other-covid-19-interventions/>
3. Compiled [ECE workforce resource list](#): <https://sfoece.org/covid-19-workforce-support/>
4. San Francisco Mask regulations <https://sf.gov/information/masks-and-face-coverings-coronavirus-outbreak>, <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/files/OrderNoC19-12-RequiringFaceCovering-04172020.pdf>
5. Early Care Educators of San Francisco website: [ecesf.org](http://ecesf.org)
6. Child Care Advisory and Planning Council (CPAC): [sfcpac.org](http://sfcpac.org)