

## Childcare for Essential Personnel FAQ for SU/SDs that Operate School-based Prekindergarten Education Programs

**Question:** If a school district or supervisory union (SD/SU) operated a school-based prequalified public prekindergarten education program (PreK), 10 hours or more per week, during the regular school year, must it provide emergency childcare for those enrolled PreK students whose parents are essential personnel (see: Vermont Emergency Management [Essential Persons List for COVID-19 Response](#))?

**Answer:** Yes. If an SD/SU already operated a school-based prequalified public PreK program, then the SD/SU is obligated to provide emergency childcare to PreK students who were enrolled and whose parents are considered essential persons.

1. **Question:** If an SD/SU operated a school-based PreK education program for at least 10 hours per week (Act 166 requirement), does the SD/SU need to consider providing more than 10 hours in order to accommodate full day/full time childcare for eligible parent/s?

**Answer:** Yes. Districts must offer childcare service for each PreK student whose parent/s are considered essential persons. The number of childcare hours provided would be contingent on the work needs of the eligible parent/s.

2. **Question:** Some districts' early educators work less than full-time for the SD/SU. What are some options to consider in order to support immediate staffing needs?

**Answer:** Some districts with less than full-time PreK programs are requiring existing PreK teachers and staff to switch to full-time hours or staggered shift hours during the emergency period; some are partnering with local private childcare providers to extend service hours to full-time; and some are engaging in creative community-based solutions to meet this need.

3. **Question:** If an SD/SU does not operate a school-based public PreK program what is their obligation to provide emergency childcare service?

**Answer:** SD/SUs that do not operate school-based PreK programs are not obligated to provide childcare for eligible children under the age of 6 and are not yet enrolled in kindergarten. SD/SUs would be responsible to provide childcare for eligible families whose children are enrolled in kindergarten through Grade 8. **Essential workers with younger children who need help finding child care should visit the [Essential Workers Who Need Child Care Counter](#) or call 2-1-1 ext. 6**

### Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information, please contact: Kate Rogers, Student Support Services, at [Kate.Rogers@vermont.gov](mailto:Kate.Rogers@vermont.gov) or (802) 828-5042.

**Note:** Some eligible parents of PreK students may choose not to have their child go to their regular enrolled program at the school. For instance, some parents might want to keep their children together in one private childcare setting. Nevertheless, the parent must be offered the opportunity for their PreK student to receive childcare at the school. LEAs should carefully record who is attending childcare offerings and who has opted out.