

Due to COVID-19 many of Indiana's children are engaging in digital learning which refers to any instructional practice that effectively uses technology to strengthen a student's learning experience. As part of the student's digital learning experience the Indiana Department of Education has defined three pillars that ensure a robust and highly effective digital learning program. Those pillars are Leadership, Teaching and Learning and Community Engagement. Community support and involvement in the local school district is essential to supporting families in this time of digital learning and the strategic partnership between families, businesses and other community organizations can help to bridge the gap between home and school.

The following guidance is meant to support Governor Holcomb's Executive 20-40 outlining how community based programs can offer care and support to children who are engaged in digital learning so that their parents can stay engaged in the workforce and provide high quality environments for school age students to attend each day.

### Options in Providing School Age Care specific for Digital Learning

#### **Option 1: School Corporation and Community Partnership**

School Corporations may enter into an agreement with community based programs to operate programs, specific to provide care for school age children in their communities, during times of digital learning. This option expands the definition of a latch key program and would allow for operation in environments other than public school buildings in order to support community needs. In the case where an agreement has been completed between the school district and the community based provider, and under Executive Order 20-40 and I.C. 12-17.2-2-8(10), these programs would be exempt from licensure.

Click these links for a sample [Agreement](#) and [template](#).

#### **Option 2: Learning Collaborative**

For families who have chosen to come together and create learning collaborative in their homes, Executive Order 20-40 has temporarily suspended child care home licensure requirements to allow for up to 10 unrelated children in a residential setting on school days when engaging in digital learning. This option is only applicable to a newly operating learning collaborative and cannot apply to currently licensed or licensed exempt child care homes. In order to operate under this exemption the learning collaborative must follow guidelines with child safety in mind.

#### **Option 3: Employer Sponsored Support**

For organizations/companies that offer to allow their employees to bring their school age children to the workplace, who are participating in digital learning, they would not meet the definition of a child care and thus be exempt from child care licensing, if the following conditions were met.

1. Only children who reside with the staff members were allowed to attend. This services may not be extended to other family or community members.
2. The child's parent was onsite where the child is completing their E-Learning activities.
3. No additional staff were brought to the place of business for the sole purpose of providing care to the students to support their E-Learning.
4. Any compensation received by an adult in the organization is part of their normal compensation and not being provided for the sole purpose of providing care to students completing their E-Learning.

### General Safety Conditions

While the above options are exempt from licensure the following general safety guidelines are recommended for all types of care.

- Adults and children 8 years and up should wear face coverings.
- Social distancing should be practiced and close physical contact should be avoided when possible.
- Family style meals should not occur and social distancing should be practiced during meal times.
- Cleaning and sanitizing should be ongoing and include the disinfecting of items that are easily put into the mouths of small children.
- Ensure that adults and children have frequent access to hand washing and hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizers are acceptable products for use so long as they are kept out of the reach of young children and administered by an adult.

For more comprehensive guidance to follow please read the guidance specific to child care programs that can be found [here](#).

For more comprehensive guidance specific to school age programs please go [here](#).