

Child care for essential workers

Angela Lattin, who is coordinating the effort to provide emergency child care for those who must work during the coronavirus emergency, said they are prepared for 50 to 60 children.

The youngsters will be divided into groups of 10 or fewer and use the modular buildings at Brooklyn Primary School.

For now, care is offered from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

“But we’re offering an hour early or late as needed,” Lattin said.

Mandates from the governor may change the situation. For information, call the district office at 541-524-2260 or Child Care Resource and Referral at 541-523-7838.

Bulldog Pride

Baker School District 5J
2090 Fourth St.
Baker City, OR 97814
541-524-2260
www.bakersj.org

Baker School District Staff: Editor

Lisa Jacoby: Writer,
photographer, designer

School board:

Chris Hawkins, Katie Lamb, Kevin Cassidy,
Andrew Bryan, Julie Huntington

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Governor requires school district to offer emergency child care for essential workers

School may be closed but a limited number of children are still present at Brooklyn Primary as the school district fulfills a state mandate to provide emergency child care for essential workers.

On March 16, Oregon Governor Kate Brown extended the school closure to at least April 28. That order included a requirement for school districts to provide child care for parents who are still working throughout the emergency caused by the spread of coronavirus.

Angela Lattin is coordinating the child care at Brooklyn. Due to the contagious nature of coronavirus, the state requires certain safety steps for providing child care. For instance, there can be no more than 10 children in a classroom, and the children must be “stable” — meaning the same ones each day. Interaction between classes is limited and follows the social distancing guidelines.

“We can control that,” Lattin said.

This emergency child care is offered to health care workers, first responders, fire department, police department, nursing homes, pharmacies and Powder River Correctional Facility.

Upon checking in, each child’s temperature is taken and recorded, along with answers to basic health questions (staff also have their temperature checked every day). Children wash their hands before entering the classrooms, which are located in the modular buildings.

“Those all have exterior entrances with their own bathroom,” Lattin said.

The bathrooms are cleaned twice a day, and classrooms are fogged with disinfectant every night.

To reach eligible workers, Lattin has worked with CasSandra Zeller at Child Care Resource and Referral. She said they do not want to impact existing daycare providers, which are also being affected by the pandemic and limited to only providing care for children of essential workers.

Rather than use the playground (per ODE guidelines), the children are riding bicycles and tricycles on the blacktop.



Brooklyn custodian Stuart Carpenter disinfects the classrooms currently in use for emergency child care for essential workers.

Safety Procedures and Guidance

As per the state, emergency child care operating during COVID-19 will include certain health and safety standards:

- Wash hands frequently, avoid touching the face, cover coughs and sneezes, provide easy access to soap and warm water for handwashing
- To minimize contact, parents are to stay outside when signing their children in and out
- Spaces for children should be structured to implement social distancing guidelines
- Conduct daily health checks (this includes asking staff, children and families if they’ve had close contact with anyone diagnosed with COVID-19, or if anyone in their household has symptoms of respiratory illness. Also, temperature is taken of both children and staff — anyone with a fever is not allowed to stay
- Classroom practices: focus on outdoor activities when possible with no more than one group of children in one outside area at a time; ensure activities are small group or individual; postpone field trips to areas with large crowds