

# Supplemental Guidance for Outdoor School Programs

May 7, 2021

This supplemental document outlines the key elements and considerations for Outdoor School providers and participating schools and districts. Outdoor School host sites and organizations, Outdoor School, and participating schools and districts should operate under all [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) guidance and specific sections of other relevant ODE and OHA guidance referenced below. This document aims to provide guidance on areas not addressed in [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) that are relevant to Outdoor School and to clarify [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) guidance as it pertains to them.

Note that Outdoor School providers, host sites, and schools must follow [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) in its entirety and that the specific references listed below are those where additional clarity has been given; guidance is not limited to only those sections.

**Table 1. Outdoor School Operations – Indoor and Outdoor Distinctions**

	<b>Outdoor School Operated <u>Inside</u></b>	<b>Outdoor School Operated <u>Outside</u> when meeting “On-Site” metric</b>	<b>Outdoor School Operated <u>Outside</u> when <i>not</i> meeting “On-Site” metric</b>
Metric Considerations	The participating school should meet the Green “On Site” criteria in the metrics.  If the school and site are in different counties, both counties should meet the Green “On Site” criteria in the metrics.	The participating school should meet the Green “On Site” criteria in the metrics.  If the school and site are in different counties, both counties should meet the Green “On Site” criteria in the metrics.	The participating school must meet additional requirements below.  If the school and site are in different counties and one or both counties do not meet the Green “On-Site” criteria in the metrics, the additional requirements in section d must be met.
Guidance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Ready Schools, Safe Learners</a></li> <li>• OHA guidance relevant to host facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Ready Schools, Safe Learners</a></li> <li>• Learning Outside</li> <li>• OHA guidance relevant to host facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Ready Schools, Safe Learners</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Learning Outside</a></li> <li>• OHA guidance relevant to host facility</li> </ul>
Cohort Size	Schools and Outdoor School providers should follow their district’s plan for cohorting in accordance with <a href="#">Ready Schools, Safe Learners</a> . Physical Distancing should follow the requirements of section 1d or the host facility, whichever is more	Schools and field trip providers should follow their district’s plan for cohorting in accordance with <a href="#">Ready Schools, Safe Learners</a> . Physical Distancing should follow the requirements of section 1d or the host	Schools and Outdoor School providers should follow their district’s plan for cohorting in accordance with <a href="#">Ready Schools, Safe Learners</a> . Physical Distancing should follow the requirements of section 1d or the host facility, whichever is more restrictive.

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Maximum Number of Students and Staff	Limited by OHA guidance relevant to host facility.	Limited by OHA guidance relevant to host facility.	Limited by OHA guidance relevant to host facility.
Instructional Minutes	May or may not meet instructional minute requirements.	May or may not meet instructional minute requirements.	May or may not meet instructional minute requirements.
Time On-Site	Not limited	Not limited	Not limited

## A. For all Outdoor School operations:

### Required:

- The participating school is responsible for maintenance and retention of logs and records in the CDP. They should work closely with any third-party providers to ensure comprehensive systems and procedures to meet the requirements of section 1a of [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#).
- In the case where a participating school is located in a different county than the Outdoor School site, the LPHA of the *hosting site* is in charge of coordination with the other LPHAs of participating schools for planning, recording, and creation of CDPs and other aspects of planning and communication. All LPHAs may request records for public health purposes (e.g., contact tracing).
- Schools and providers must follow the administrative requirements for record-keeping for the purposes of contact tracing in [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#).
- If multiple schools are attending an Outdoor School site simultaneously, students must remain in stable cohorts within their school and not be combined or mixed with students from other schools. The maximum number of students and staff from all schools combined is limited by OHA guidance relevant to host facility.
- As per RSSL, face coverings are required for all students in grades kindergarten and up, along with all staff. This includes Outdoor School operations of any type. Schools and Outdoor School providers should see and reference section 1h of [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) for further requirements and recommendations with regard to face coverings.
- Schools and providers should follow their district’s plan for cohorting in accordance with [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) and in a way that best ensures Cohort and Physical Distancing requirements of sections 1c and 1d.
- At least 48 hours prior to Outdoor School participation, schools must receive and document notice from the host facility that they have prepared for and meet [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) requirements.

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## B. Additionally, for indoor Outdoor School operations:

### Required:

- Schools and Outdoor School providers should follow their district's plan for cohorting in accordance with [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#). Physical Distancing should follow the requirements of section 1d or the host facility, whichever is more restrictive.
- The total daily maximum number of students and staff is limited to the relevant OHA guidance for the facility.

### Recommended:

- ⇒ A school should meet the "On Site" criteria in Section 0 of [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) in order to attend and/or host Outdoor School with any indoor component.
- ⇒ If the Outdoor School site is in a different counties as the school, both the school and the county in which the Outdoor School site is located should meet the "On-Site" metrics.

## C. Additionally, for Outdoor School operating outside when meeting "On Site" criteria:

### Required:

- The total daily maximum number of students and staff is limited to the relevant OHA guidance for the facility.

### Recommended:

- ⇒ If both the school and hosting site meet "On-Site" criteria, they should follow the guidance in [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) and any OHA guidance relevant to the host facility.

**D. Additionally Outdoor School operating outside when not meeting "On-Site" criteria in the RSSL metrics:** If the school or host facility do not meet the "On-Site" criteria, the hosting site must meet the following requirements:

- Any Outdoor School space where students will congregate for learning or any other activity must meet the definition of an "outside learning space" as defined below.
- If a school is using multiple separate outside spaces on during Outdoor School, each outside space must have separate drop-off and exit space, separate bathroom and hand washing facilities (these can include portable facilities), and separate food distribution centers.
- Establish a master calendar with the host facility showing how outside spaces will be used simultaneously or sequentially by different groups or people.
- Each cohort must have its own meeting space.
- Establish protocols to support students' IEPs and 504 plans as necessary for Outdoor School. Engage district/school special education specialists, case managers, parents, and regional ESD specialists.
- If bathroom facilities from a building are used they must be exclusively used for students and staff from one learning outside area from one school.
- Schools and Outdoor School providers should follow their district's plan for cohorting in accordance with [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#). Physical Distancing should follow the requirements of section 1d or the host facility, whichever is more restrictive.
- Total daily maximum number of students and staff is limited by OHA guidance relevant to host

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**E. Outside Learning Space Definition:** An “outside learning space” must have 75% of its sides (wall area) open for airflow. For an Outdoor School to offer multiple outdoor learning spaces there must be sufficient size to accommodate the number of students and staff up to the maximum number in any outside learning space with 6 feet of separation, a natural or artificial barrier separating the spaces, separate drop-off and exit sites, separate bathroom and handwashing facilities, and separate food distribution centers. Separate learning spaces should not have any mingling of individuals between the spaces.

*Operations:*

- Meals must be delivered, served, and eaten in accordance with RSSL safety protocols.
- Update emergency planning related to RSSL safety considerations presented in the outdoor space.
- Develop diagrams for seating arrangements, if necessary, that reflect distancing requirements in RSSL (see [Outdoor Infrastructure Planning Strategies and Overview](#) for example diagrams).

**F. Outdoor School Specific Considerations:**

- Outdoor School would be considered an instructional activity requiring additional health and safety consideration (RSSL, pg 74). This entails following the [Ready Schools, Safe Learners recommendations](#) under those educational activities that will need to follow specific health and safety protocols to protect staff and students. Program specific guidelines which may be helpful to Outdoor School include, but are not limited to those for [Physical Education](#) and [Laboratories](#).
- As of April 23rd, 2021, overnight field trips to overnight camps as defined by OHA’s [Statewide Reopening Guidance – Youth Programs](#) are allowable. Schools and districts must follow the “Overnight Camps” section of the OHA’s [Statewide Reopening Guidance – Youth Programs](#). Overnight field trips to overnight camps allow for operations that, due to their largely outdoor environment, allow transmission risk to be more readily mitigated than for indoor spaces.
  - For staff, follow Section 21. “Boarding Schools and Residential Programs” of [Ready Schools, Safe Learners](#) for staff only as it pertains to any staff remaining overnight at Outdoor School sites.

**To the extent possible, field trips traveling should, but are not required to:**

- Follow the OHA Guidance (Recommendations) for Travel.
- Travel, explore, and return to school on the same day to avoid overnight stays, when feasible. For overnight stays or same-day travel, prepackaged meals or room service should be considered. If restaurant dining is the only option, consider take-out food or outdoor eating as alternatives.