

American Rescue Plan Act Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund (ESSER III) Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Local Educational Agency Plan Template

Background on ESSER

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) signed into law on March 11, 2021, provided nearly \$122 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund (ESSER). ARP ESSER, also known as ESSER III, funds are provided to State educational agencies in the same proportion as each State received under Title I-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in fiscal year (FY) 2020. The U.S. Department of Education (ED) published Interim Final Requirements (IFR) on April 22, 2021 requiring Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) receiving ESSER III funds to submit an LEA Plan for the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services. If an LEA had already developed a plan for safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services prior to the enactment of ARP that meets the statutory requirements of section 2001(i) but did not address all of the requirements in the IFR, the LEA must revise and post its plan no later than six months after receiving its ESSER III funds. This applies even if an LEA has been operating full-time in-person instruction but does not apply to fully virtual schools and LEAs.

The IFR and ARP statute, along with other helpful resources, are located here:

- April 2021 IFR: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-04-22/pdf/2021-08359.pdf>
- ARP Act text: <https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr1319/BILLS-117hr1319enr.pdf>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 School Operation Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html#anchor_1616080023247
- ED COVID-19 Handbook Volume I: <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/reopening.pdf>
- ED COVID-19 Handbook Volume II: <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/reopening-2.pdf>
- ESEA Evidence-Based Guidance: <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2020/07/guidanceeusesinvestment.pdf>
- ED FAQs for ESSER and Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER): https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/05/ESSER.GEER_FAQs_5.26.21_745AM_FINALb0cd6833f6f46e03ba2d97d30aff953260028045f9ef3b18ea602db4b32b1d99.pdf

Purpose of the Template

The IFR issued by ED outlines several requirements for all LEAs that receive ESSER III funds, including that LEAs have in place a plan for ensuring safety during in-person instruction (either in-progress or planned) as well as ensuring continuity of services should the LEA or one or more of its schools be required to close temporarily for COVID-19-related public health reasons in the future. LEAs who had a plan in place by March 11, 2021, which incorporated opportunity for public comment and was posted publicly have six months from the date their ESSER III Assurances were completed to update and revise the plans to meet those requirements. Examples of previous plans that may be allowable would be a completed Cal/OSHA or Assembly Bill 86 plan, as long as it meets the requirements previously stated. LEAs which did not have a statutorily compliant plan in place as of March 11, 2021, must create and post this plan within 30 days of completing their ESSER III Assurances.

If you have questions as to which category applies to your LEA, please contact EmergencyServices@cde.ca.gov. Plans are required for all LEAs, regardless of operating status, unless an LEA is fully virtual with no physical location. All plans must be reviewed, and, as appropriate, revised, at least every six months to incorporate new or revised CDC guidance and other changed factors.

This template has been created to assist LEAs in the creation of these plans and to ensure all required elements are met. The following requirements and assurances pertain to both the statutory requirements and the IFR published by ED. LEAs may provide any additional information they believe are helpful in assessing their plan. If you have any questions, please contact EmergencyServices@cde.ca.gov.

LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

LEA Name:

Sonora Elementary School District

Option for ensuring safe in-person instruction and continuity of services:
has developed a plan

1. Please choose one:

- The LEA had a plan, as of March 11, 2021, that is already compliant with the ARP statute and will review and, as appropriate, revise it every six months to take into consideration the additional requirements of the IFR; or

NOTE: If your LEA already has a compliant plan as of March 11, 2021, and has assured such by checking the box above, then you may skip questions 2-4 and complete the Assurance and Contact sections.

- The LEA has amended/created a plan compliant with the IFR using this template and has posted/will post it within 30 days of completing the ESSER III Assurances.

NOTE: If checking the box above that you are using this template to meet the 30 day plan requirements, you must respond to each question in the template.

Please note whether the LEA has a compliant plan and include a link to the plan, or acknowledge that the LEA is submitting a new plan and will post it within 30 days of receiving funds.

The District has made every effort to stay compliant throughout COVID-19. SESD has provided continuous updates to stakeholders via social media, the district website, and our various reports. COVID-19 was a consistent conversation with parent groups, Unions, Board Trustees, County officials, and stakeholders since March 2020.

https://www.ses.k12.ca.us/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=474&dataid=1077&FileName=Health_and_Safety_Plan_during_COVID-19_Jan_20_2021_JB.pdf

2. The LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and LEA staff, and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the CDC's safety recommendations, including: universal and correct wearing of masks; modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing; handwashing and respiratory etiquette; cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation; contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments; diagnostic and screening testing; efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities; appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and coordination with State and local health officials.

Describe how the LEA will maintain, or continue to maintain, health and safety policies and procedures. Include a description of any adopted policies and procedures regarding the CDC's safety recommendations (or available LEA website links to such policies). Include descriptions of appropriate accommodations adopted and coordination efforts conducted with outside State and local health officials. Please include or describe current public health conditions, applicable State and local rules and restrictions, and other contemporaneous information that informs your decision-making process.

SESD has the responsibility to protect stakeholders from harmful situations. Some of the COVID-19 protocols put in place to bring students and staff back for in-person instruction will continue based on the CDC's safety

recommendations as well as State and County mandates. As of June 2021 the CDC recommends, in school environments, all students, staff, and visitors wear masks when inside classrooms and indoor school facilities. The CDC "does not currently recommend schools conduct symptom screening for all students in grades K-12 on a routine (e.g., daily) basis." (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>) Hand washing will continue to be expected of stakeholders as well as using hand sanitizer when sinks are unavailable. SESD also relies on information from Safely Reopening California (<https://covid19.ca.gov/safely-reopening/>). On June 15, 2021 the State of California retired the Blueprint Map which indicated the when/how every California county was assigned to a risk-level tier. Based on County positivity rate, adjusted case rate, and/or health equity metric (for counties with populations more than 106,000), counties faced varying degrees of activity and capacity restrictions. The weekly status was shown on a map with four tier colors: purple, red, orange, and yellow. However, this measurement was discontinued, but specific guidelines are in place for LEA's. As with other districts across the nation, SESD adjust our policies and procedures to match those that are required by the CDC, State of California, Tuolumne County Health Department, and the Tuolumne County Office of Education.

The following gives you insight into what our LEA compliant plan will include:

Face Coverings

We provide clean, undamaged face coverings and ensure they are properly worn by employees over the nose and mouth when indoors and where required by orders from the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) or local health department.

- Face covering will be provided when needed by employees, students, and visitors.
- Face coverings are provided in the form of both cloth and disposable face coverings.
- Face coverings are located in site offices, cafeteria, district vehicles and in portable kits for employee checkout and use.
- When an employee encounters a visitor not wearing a face covering, they are to direct the visitor/nonemployee to leave campus or to report to the office for a face covering.

Hand sanitizing

In order to implement effective hand sanitizing procedures, we:

- Evaluate handwashing facilities to ensure sufficient facilities exist and are fully functional.
- Encourage and allow time for employee handwashing.
- Provide employees with an effective hand sanitizer, and prohibit hand sanitizers that contain methanol (i.e. methyl alcohol).
- Encourage employees and students to wash their hands for at least 20 seconds each time.
- Have all students wash their hands upon entering the classroom.
- Posted signage regarding proper handwashing procedures and reminders to wash hands frequently.

Engineering controls

- Plexiglass dividers are available and have been installed where necessary.

We maximize, to the extent feasible, the quantity of outside air for our buildings with mechanical or natural ventilation systems by:

- Installed ventilation and air purifier systems throughout the District in all sites, offices, and classrooms. This system is run through the HVAC unit.
- Regularly checking and cleaning filters.
- Utilizing Air Purifiers in all classrooms.
- Opening doors and windows for increased ventilation when outside conditions permit.

Cleaning and disinfecting

We implement the following cleaning and disinfection measures for frequently touched surfaces:

- Cleaning kits are available in all classrooms.
- Ensure adequate supplies and adequate time for cleaning and disinfecting to be done properly.

- Frequently touched surfaces will be disinfected twice daily by staff.
 - Staff are informed regarding the frequency of cleaning and disinfection and where additional cleaning supplies are located.
 - All employees have access to disinfectants.
 - Wipes and hand sanitizer are available in all areas, especially those with high touch surfaces and machines such as the copy machine.
 - District vehicles are equipped with cleaning and disinfecting kits including gloves and masks.
 - Clorox 360 sanitizers are in use in vehicles, buses, and classrooms when necessary.
- Should we have a COVID-19 case in our workplace, we will implement the following procedures:
- The COVID-19 positive employee will be immediately sent home if at work, or told to stay home.
 - Contact tracing will be conducted by a member of the COVID-19 Response Team.
 - Employees who have had close contact with infected employee will be notified and informed of next steps.
 - All areas used by the COVID-19 positive employee will be closed for disinfecting and cleaning.
 - Notice will be sent to all employees and association representatives notifying them of a COVID-19 positive case, while protecting individual person.
 - Tuolumne County Public Health Department will be notified of a positive case.

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

PPE must not be shared, e.g., gloves, goggles and face shields.

Items that employees come in regular physical contact with, such as phones, headsets, desks, keyboards, writing materials, instruments and tools must also not be shared, to the extent feasible. Where there must be sharing, the items will be disinfected between uses by:

- Providing the employees with the materials and training to do it themselves and providing a regular disinfecting and cleaning schedule by custodial staff.
- Sharing of vehicles will be minimized to the extent feasible, and high-touch points (for example, steering wheel, door handles, seatbelt buckles, armrests, shifter, etc.) will be disinfected between users.

Training and Instruction

SESD provides effective training and instruction that includes:

- COVID-19 policies and procedures to protect employees from COVID-19 hazards.
- Information regarding COVID-19-related benefits to which the employee may be entitled under applicable federal, state, or local laws.

The fact that:

- COVID-19 is an infectious disease that can be spread through the air.
- COVID-19 may be transmitted when a person touches a contaminated object and then touches their eyes, nose, or mouth.
- An infectious person may have no symptoms.
- Methods of physical distancing of at least three feet and the importance of combining physical distancing with the wearing of face coverings.
- The fact that particles containing the virus can travel, especially indoors, so physical distancing and/or plexiglass barriers must be combined with other controls, including face coverings and hand hygiene, to be effective if/when COVID-19 requires another shutdown.
- The importance of frequent hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and using hand sanitizer when employees do not have immediate access to a sink or hand washing facility, and that hand sanitizer does not work if the hands are soiled.
- Proper use of face coverings and the fact that face coverings are not respiratory protective equipment - face coverings are intended to primarily protect other individuals from the wearer of the face covering.
- COVID-19 symptoms, and the importance of obtaining a COVID-19 test and not coming to work if the employee has COVID-19 symptoms.

Exclusion of COVID-19 Cases

Where we have a COVID-19 case in our workplace, we will limit transmission by:

- Ensuring that COVID-19 cases are excluded from the workplace until our return-to-work requirements are met.
- Excluding employees with COVID-19 exposure from the workplace for 10 days after the last known COVID-19 exposure to a COVID-19 case.

- Continuing and maintaining an employee’s earnings, seniority, and all other employee rights and benefits whenever we’ve demonstrated that the COVID-19 exposure is work related. This will be accomplished by employer-provided employee sick leave benefits, payments from public sources or other means of maintaining earnings, rights and benefits, where permitted by law and when not covered by workers’ compensation.
- Providing employees at the time of exclusion with information on available benefits.

Reporting, Recordkeeping, and Access

It is our policy to:

- Report information about COVID-19 cases at our workplace to the local health department whenever required by law, and provide any related information requested by the local health department.
- Report immediately to Cal/OSHA any COVID-19-related serious illnesses or death, as defined under CCR Title 8 section 330(h), of an employee occurring in our place of employment or in connection with any employment.
- Maintain records of the steps taken to implement our written COVID-19 Prevention Program in accordance with CCR Title 8 section 3203(b).
- Make our written COVID-19 Prevention Program available at the workplace to employees, authorized employee representatives, and to representatives of Cal/OSHA immediately upon request.
- Use the Appendix C: Investigating COVID-19 Cases form to keep a record of and track all COVID-19 cases. The information will be made available to employees, authorized employee representatives, or as otherwise required by law, with personal identifying information removed.

Return-to-Work Criteria

COVID-19 cases with COVID-19 symptoms will not return to work until all the following have occurred:

- At least 24 hours have passed since a fever of 99.5 or higher has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- COVID-19 symptoms have improved.
- At least 10 days have passed since COVID-19 symptoms first appeared.

COVID-19 cases who tested positive but never developed COVID-19 symptoms will not return to work until a minimum of 10 days have passed since the date of specimen collection of their first positive COVID-19 test.

A negative COVID-19 test will not be required for an employee to return to work.

If an order to isolate or quarantine an employee is issued by a local or state health official, the employee will not return to work until the period of isolation or quarantine is completed or the order is lifted. If no period was specified, then the period will be 10 days from the time the order to isolate was effective.

Implementing Distancing Inside and Outside the Classroom

Arrival and Departure

Maximize space between students and between students and the driver on school buses and open windows to the greatest extent practicable. Two windows on a bus should be opened fully at a minimum.

Minimize contact at school between students, staff, families and the community at the beginning and end of the school day.

Ensure each school bus is equipped with extra unused face coverings for students who may have inadvertently failed to bring one.

Non-Classroom Spaces

We are limiting nonessential visitors, volunteers and activities involving other groups at the same time. School tours are considered a non-essential activity and increase the risk of in-school transmission.

3. The LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students’ academic needs and students’ and staff social, emotional, mental health and other needs, which may include student health and foodservices.

Describe how the LEA will ensure continuity of services in case isolation, quarantine, or future school closures are required, including how the LEA will meet the needs of students with disabilities and English learners.

As SESD provided continuity of services from Sept. 2020 through June 2021, we were able to more

quickly respond to any case of isolation, quarantine, or future school closures. English learners, Special Education, foster youth, homeless and low-income students had access to all services and programs provided to all students in the District.

4. The LEA sought public comments in the development of its plan and took those comments into account in the development of its plan.

Describe the LEA's policy or practice that provided the public with an opportunity to provide comments and feedback and the collection process. Describe how any feedback was incorporated into the development of the plan.

SESD has provided continuous updates to stakeholders via social media, the district website, and our various reports. COVID-19 was a consistent conversation with parent groups, unions, Board Trustees, County officials, and stakeholders since March 2020. All stakeholder had the opportunity to provide feedback during the informational meetings. In addition, a public hearing will be held Aug. 4 to gather community input.

In addition, the LEA provides the following assurances:

- The LEA has made (in the case of statutorily compliant plans) or will make (in the case of new plans) its plan publicly available no later than 30 days after receiving its ARP ESSER allocation.
 - o Please insert link to the plan:
- The LEA sought public comment in the development of its plan and took those public comments into account in the development of its plan.
- The LEA will periodically review and, as appropriate revise its plan, at least every six months.
- The LEA will seek public comment in determining whether to revise its plan and, if it determines revisions are necessary, on the revisions it makes to the plan.
- If the LEA revises its plan, it will ensure its revised plan addresses each of the aspects of safety currently recommended by the Centers for Disease Control(CDC), or if the CDC has revised its guidance, the updated safety recommendations at the time the LEA is revising its plan.
- The LEA has created its plan in an understandable and uniform format.
- The LEA's plan is, to the extent practicable, written in a language that parent can understand, or if not practicable, orally translated.
- The LEA will, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provide the plan in an alternative format accessible to that parent.

The following person or persons is/are the appropriate contact person for any questions or concerns about the aforementioned plan.

Please list name(s), title(s), address, county, and contact information for the person or persons responsible for developing, submitting, and amending the LEA plan.

Tami Beall, Superintendent, (209) 532-4828