

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:

Bishop Unified School District

Option for ensuring safe in-person instruction and continuity of services:
will amend its 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.

This plan has been updated within 30 days of the District submitting ESSER III assurances.

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.

The District participates in weekly meetings with our local Public Health office, along with neighboring school district leaders to stay informed about current guidance and local trends. Policies and practices are continuously updated according to the most recent guidance from CDPH (and CDC as applicable) including:

- Universal and correct wearing of masks at school and during school-related activities
- Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts / distancing of desks).
- Handwashing, hand sanitation, and respiratory etiquette (hand sanitizer available in all classrooms and offices, hand sanitation stations are posted at the entry/exit of each school building)
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation
- Diagnostic and screening testing (staff may voluntarily participate in PCR testing each week through the District)

- Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities (regular posts/outreach encouraging families to attend vaccination clinics and vaccine information/resources)

Employees have been provided with safety policies and expectations according to CalOSHA guidelines to ensure a safe workplace environment. The K-12 School Reopening Guidance and Framework is integrated into all our local mitigation measures. The CA Youth Sports guidance formed the foundation for operations within our athletic program and extracurricular activities. The District tracks, posts, and analyzes local COVID activity data on a daily basis (available on our COVID dashboard - <https://www.bishopschools.org/page/inyo-county-covid-tracking>). Districtwide and site-level COVID-19 mitigation plans and policies are readily available on our website: <https://www.bishopschools.org/page/busd-safety-policies>

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.

The District staffs 4 school counselors and 2 trained behavior aides to provide ongoing social, emotional, and mental health services at all school sites, including foster youth and homeless liaison services. A school nurse and site-specific health clerks work throughout the school year to provide preventative and as needed health-based services. The District regularly communicates with our local Rural Health Clinic and Toiyabe Indian Health Services office to refer families to for follow up services.

Free breakfast and lunch is provided to all students daily. Meals will be consumed outdoors as weather permits and social distancing will be maintained. Should weather conditions not allow outdoor meal service, students will eat indoors and social distancing will be monitored. If there should be a reason where our campuses are forced to close, meals will be available for pick-up on campus and various locations throughout the community. Distribution points will be available on our website.

The District coordinates with our local public health office directly to adhere to CDPH-compliant quarantine procedures. Close contact exposure criteria is followed throughout the District (i.e. within 6 feet of distance for 15 minutes or longer or a designated class cohort). Any school-based close contacts who have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus are notified where and when they were exposed, the length of quarantine and provided with a "close contact packet" provided by public health which outlines general quarantine requirements and guidance in both English and Spanish.

The District works with families, teachers, counselors and students to ensure all students with disabilities have safe and equal access to all services. Daily cleaning and disinfection is conducted in all classrooms but should a student be at a higher risk due to health issues, families will be offered remote learning and in-home services. Bilingual liaisons and support staff are staffed at each school site to provide Spanish-speaking support services to students and their families. Should parents feel the need to request accommodations, we ask them to contact the student's teacher, Administration, or one of our counselors for assistance.

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.

A COVID-19 update to the public has been provided during monthly regular School Board meetings throughout the school year, allowing time to share current information and policies as well as receive public input. All site-level and district-level plans and policies have been submitted and approved by our local Public Health office.

Negotiated agreements within the District, including meetings and collaboration with both classified and certificated union leaders, integrate and follow updated CDPH and CalOSHA guidance. The District and individual schools sites communicated with families throughout the year, especially prior to any instructional model transitions (i.e. distance learning, hybrid, in-seat schedules) and encouraged their input and involvement. Parents, students, and staff were surveyed throughout the year about their experiences, perspectives, challenges, and successes in school. In Summer 2020, a school reopening committee was established comprised of school and community stakeholders to help develop our return-to-school plans and policies. Feedback from these various stakeholder groups that have been incorporated into this plan include a preference for safe in-seat instruction, adherence to CDPH mask wearing and social distancing policies, continued weekly COVID screening (PCR testing) for staff members, and a general focus on social, emotional, and mental health.

In addition, the LEA provides the following assurances:

X 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:

<https://5il.co/ub2v>

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

X The LEA will periodically review and, as appropriate revise its plan, at least every six months.

X 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.

X 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.

X The LEA has created its plan in an understandable and uniform format.

X The LEA's plan is, to the extent practicable, written in a language that parent scan understand, or if not practicable, orally translated.

X 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.

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