

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:

Reef Sunset 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.

https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1187153/RSUSD_IIPP_Addendum_COVID_19_-_March_25_21_draft_.docx.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.

Reef-Sunset Unified School District maintains protocols for all office and school settings that are consistent with the guidelines of the California State Department of Public Health (CDPH), health orders issued by the Kings County Department of Public Health (KCDPH), and the rules of the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal-OSHA). These are maintained in a COVID-19 Safety Program (CPP) plan that will be maintained and updated as needed as long as required by Cal-OSHA rules. The guiding principles for the development of our reopening plan focused on healthy and safe environments, student engagement and learning, and collaboration and transparency to ensure effective communication and collaboration with all stakeholders

Training

RSUSD will provide training in the general description of COVID-19, symptoms, when to seek medical attention, how to prevent its spread, the importance of frequent hand washing, the proper use of face coverings, and the employer's procedures for preventing its spread at the workplace. The training incorporates reviewing written documentation, online video trainings including the COVID-19 School -Based Guidelines module, and acknowledging receipt of the RSUSD's COVID-19 Injury and Illness Prevention Program addendum.

Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities

Daily cleaning and disinfecting of schools and frequently touched surfaces occurs at least daily. This also includes ensuring that ventilation systems operate properly, regular inspection of filters, and quarterly replacement of all filters takes place. The district follows all American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) guidelines for proper air filtration. Each school site has specific entry points, a designated wellness center, signage, and sanitizing stations.

Health Screening

The Student In-School COVID-19 Symptom Review and Visitor Symptom Review Staff protocols for screening were established. Protocols include guidance on how to address suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases and how to ill students or staff will be separated from others and sent home immediately. We will continue to follow local health department and CDC guidelines for appropriate accommodations and safety practices for students with disabilities, work with families to better understand the individual needs of students with disabilities, provide access to direct service providers and services, and adjust strategies as needed.

Contact Tracing

We have developed contact tracing protocols within the district to follow up with every reported COVID-19 case among our staff and students. We follow the Kings County Public Health Guidance for isolation and quarantine in cases of COVID19 symptoms, positive tests, or close contact. Our trained staff interview multiple individuals in every positive case to identify any potential close contacts, dates of potential exposure, and locations that need to be deep cleaned. We notify the affected individuals, the Kings County Public Health Department, district supervisors, and our custodial team, to respond as quickly as possible in support of our staff, students, and community.

Vaccinations

The district has partnered with the Kings County Office of Education and the Kings County Department of Public Health to provide vaccination opportunities for all staff members. The district has hosted on-site vaccination events for both staff and students who are 12 years and older. The district continues to provide education and information around the benefits and safety of vaccinations and information about upcoming local vaccination events

Link to protocols and plans remaining in effect for RSUSD:

https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1187153/RSUSD_IIPP_Addendum_COVID_19_-_March_25_21_draft_.docx.pdf

These protocols will be continually reviewed and modified based on 1) level of community transmission of COVID-19; 2) COVID-19 vaccination coverage in the community and among students, faculty, and staff; and 3) any local COVID-19 outbreaks or increasing trends, and the ongoing and updated guidance from the CDC, CDPH, KCDPH, (state and local public health agencies), and RSUSD policies, procedures, and operations.

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.

To ensure continuity of services in case isolation, quarantine, or future school closures, Reef-Sunset Unified School District will provide quality, challenging content aligned to grade level standards. RSUSD recognizes that intentional instructional choices will be essential to support all students to mastery, and that this is especially true for students with specialized learning needs. All students will engage in lessons with their teachers and peers, participate in small group instruction, and practice strategies to further their understanding of each subject. We will concentrate instruction and intervention on focus skills – those which are fundamental to each student’s development at each grade level, are the most essential in closing learning gaps, and serve as strong prerequisites for new skills. Throughout the school year, we will use district assessments for universal screening, progress monitoring, and goal setting.

RSUSD uses a multi-tiered support system that looks at behavior, attendance, and mental health factors to determine the best system of support for the student. This system involves several resources, teachers, nurses, counselors, administrators, school psychologists, and outside agencies to help the student become successful. Students and their families are offered support through student success teams, counseling, parent teacher conferences, 504's, IEP's, Behavior Plans, SARB, referrals to outside agencies, and community engagement efforts, such as parenting classes, digital literacy, and family resource center events.

RSUSD recognizes that uncovering and addressing the learning, social-emotional, and other integrated student supports needed will require ongoing monitoring throughout the school year. Students' learning status will be measured by grade level assessments. Data will be disaggregated by student groups, including English learners, foster, homeless, and students with disabilities. A District Progress Monitoring Schedule is used to monitor district wide student progress. RSUSD will address learning loss and accelerated learning for pupils using a tiered instructional delivery system. Students are identified through screening and other data sources after Tier 2 strategies have not been successful, per assessment data. Students with disabilities, English learners, foster and homeless youth will be targeted for supplemental tutoring and mental health interventions.

RSUSD understands that for English learners, language and content development are simultaneous. Additional support to English learners will include tutoring, parent meetings, the use of Ellevation to monitor data, and documentation of services, supports, and accommodations provided. To ensure EL students are showing growth, regularly scheduled assessments allow teachers to monitor student progress and identify areas for improvement and further support. School staff also provide bilingual interpretation and translation to help families communicate with teachers.

RSUSD will monitor and support mental health and social emotional well being of pupils and staff by providing resources throughout the school year to address trauma and other impacts of COVID-19. The Student Services Team collaborates with school sites and parents to provide outreach and support. The social and emotional well-being of students will be supported by social and emotional learning (SEL) lessons and resources. An SEL Team was established to create SEL resources based off of the CASEL framework.

RSUSD food services will continue to provide meals to all students. Meals will be prepackaged and distributed at designated pick up areas. Meals will be available at sites throughout the district at a uniform distribution time. Meals will also be made available for students that live in the outlying areas of town. The district is classified as a "Provision Two" district under Federal Guidelines, therefore student meals are provided to all students at no cost.

If a full or partial school closure is required, the district is equipped to begin a virtual model using Google Classroom and Zoom. Technology for students and staff is available and ready for distribution as needed. Virtual systems to serve students with a disability or English Learners, such as tele-therapy platforms, can also be redeployed as needed.

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.

RSUSD stakeholders, including: students, families, school and district administrators, teachers, school staff, community members, and unions had many opportunities to provide input on district plans for a return to in-person instruction. Parents and community members were provided opportunities to provide input on school reopening plans at site level meetings/forums, and Board meetings.

Communication took place through District and School websites, surveys, and parent stakeholder groups, all of which were offered in English and Spanish. In order to ensure feedback from all stakeholders, RSUSD sent a hard copy of the district needs survey to each home. Each site met with School Site Councils and English Learner Advisory Committees for recommendations. A study group was also developed at the secondary level to get input from students. Feedback received was considered in development of the final draft of plans.

RSUSD developed the District COVID Task Force which included certificated and classified employees and served as an action research group to provide recommendations to the superintendent and school board relative to elements that should be present to establish our Reopening Plan. The committee followed guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), reviewed local and state recommendations from county offices of health and education on reopening school. A Curriculum and Instruction Planning Team was also established to address all instructional aspects of reopening.

Data collected from stakeholder input provided consistent feedback indicating three important areas of focus related to school re-opening plans: 1) access to student mental health and well-being supports, 2) safety protocol requirements, and 3) increase in student interaction with others per current CDPH and KCDPH requirements.

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.
 - 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.

Lori Aragon, Executive Director of Learning Services, 205 North Park Avenue, Avenal, CA 93204, Kings, 559-386-9083