

Safe Return to In Person Plan-ESSER III

California Department of Education December 1, 2021 (6-month revised plan)

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.

- 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_FINA_Lb0cd6833f6f46e03ba2d97d30aff953260028045f9ef3b18ea602db4b32b1d9

Purpose of the Template submittal and Plan:

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

1. LEA Plan:

San Luis Obispo County Office of Education (SLOCOE) has developed this plan to ensuring safe in-person instruction and continuity of services.

SLOCOE has amended/created a plan compliant using the IFR template and has posted/will post it within 30 days of completing the 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.

1. Maintaining Health and Safety

For each mitigation strategy listed below (A–H), SLOCOE will describe how it will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.

A. Universal and correct wearing of masks:

- All students and staff members will be required to wear a mask at all times.
- A parent of a student with a medical condition who is requesting their child not to wear a mask must provide a note from the student's physician with a specific reason. The district will review such a request and a decision will be made.
- If a student or staff member forgets their mask, one will be provided to them for the day.
- Visitors entering the school must wear a mask.

B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts):

- Students and staff must remain socially-distanced to the greatest extent possible.
- Students and staff will be required to wear a mask in the classrooms.
- Visitors will be allowed but must check in at the front office and will be required to wear a mask.
- Signage to remind people to maintain social distancing to the greatest extent possible at school sites.
- Respectful isolation of anyone who is symptomatic or has a temperature of 100.4°F or higher. Students with temperatures of 100.4°F or higher will be sent home.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette:

- Use of hand sanitizer or hand washing for 20 seconds is required. Students under the age of five will require supervision.
- Hand sanitizer will be made available at the entrance to each building. There will also be hand sanitizers found in each classroom.
- EPA approved disposable wipes will be available to all staff to clean commonly used surfaces such as keyboards, desks, and remote controls before use.
- The district will ensure adequate supplies to support cleaning and disinfection practices- COVID carts will remain at each entrance of SLOCOE sites.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation:

- Routinely clean surfaces using an EPA approved disinfectant of frequently high touched surfaces. While school is in session all common high touch areas will be cleaned multiple times during the course of the day. Unoccupied classrooms whenever practical during the school day and will be cleaned again in the evening.
- Hand Sanitizer stations will be placed in various high traffic areas locations and in every hallway throughout the building for all schools. There will be daily routine walkthroughs to inspect that all antibacterial soap dispensers have product in them and are not empty or malfunctioning.
- Replacement of HVAC filters and increase fresh air flow when possible

E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments:

- Investigation: Upon confirmation of a COVID diagnosis, the district will work with a patient to help them recall everyone with whom they have had close contact during the time when they may have been infectious. For COVID-19, a close contact is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before the person began feeling sick until the time the patient is isolated.
- Quarantine: Contacts will be required to stay home and maintain social distance from others until 7-10 days after their last exposure to the infected patient, in case they also become ill.
- CDC cleaning protocols will be implemented. Any quarantine or school closure will be determined in concert with the local County Department of Health.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing:

All individuals entering the building will be required to have a temperature check or complete a daily health-check form. All individuals are required to self-monitor. Any individual with COVID symptoms listed below, should not report to school or a work site.

Protocols for Symptomatic Students and Staff

If a student or staff member becomes symptomatic during the school day, they will be:

- Safely and respectfully be isolated from others.
- If the district becomes aware that an individual has spent time in the building and tests positive for COVID 19, the district will immediately notify the local County Health Department, Superintendent of Schools, the school administrator and the family of the confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.
 - Follow current California Department of Health guidance
 - Contact Tracing procedures will be the responsibility of the school district and the local County Department of Health
- Should an individual test positive for Covid-19, the district will request proof of a negative test or a doctor's note clearing the individual to return to school.
- SLOCOE will responsible for the cost and coordination to complete student testing onsite in the event of modified quarantine or outbreak.

G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible:

- District will collaborate with the local County Health Department and local health care facilities and disseminate vaccination information to all educators, staff and students through SLOCOE website.
- Per CDPH guidance, SLOCOE will verify the vaccination status of all workers, including all paid and unpaid adults serving in the school setting. Verification of vaccination status is an important tool for use in determining the need for testing, contact tracing, quarantine, and isolation. Vaccination status will be documented with proof of vaccination. If a student or staff member is unable or unwilling to share their vaccination status, they will be treated as not vaccinated for all purposes of this plan.
- The District recognizes that a worker who cannot get vaccinated due to a disability

(covered by the ADA), has a disability that affects their ability to have a full immune response to vaccination, or has a sincerely held religious belief or practice (covered

by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964), may be entitled to a reasonable accommodation that does not pose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's business. Staff requesting accommodations must contact SLOCOE Human Resources.

- Workers/adults not fully vaccinated, of unknown status, or who have not provided verification documentation must be considered unvaccinated and are required to undergo diagnostic screening testing (at least one time/week).
- Any PCR (molecular) or antigen test with Emergency Use Authorization may be used.
- No exemptions to testing are available, but Per San Luis Obispo Public Health Department (SLOPHD), individuals who have tested positive within 90 days should not undergo screening testing. Screening testing should resume on the 91st day after a positive test.
- According to the CDPH, only the following modes may be used as proof of vaccination:
 - COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card (issued by the Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control & Prevention or WHO Yellow Card) which includes name of person vaccinated, type of vaccine provided and date last dose administered); or
 - a photo of a Vaccination Record Card as a separate document; or
 - a photo of the client's Vaccination Record Card stored on a phone or electronic device; or
 - documentation of COVID-19 vaccination from a health care provider; or
 - digital record that includes a QR code that when scanned by a SMART Health Card reader displays to the reader client name, date of birth, vaccine dates and vaccine type; or
 - documentation of vaccination from other contracted employers who follow these vaccination records guidelines and standards.

H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies:

The following guidelines will be in place:

- The CDC recommends that masks be worn at all times by all people in school facilities, including students. For the narrow subset of students with disabilities who, because of their medical condition, cannot wear a mask or cannot safely wear a mask, the school must determine based on a student's individual circumstances whether that student is able to attend school safely if other prevention strategies can be followed, in accordance with CDC, CDE CDPH guidance.
- People with certain underlying medical conditions and certain disabilities can and should

wear masks. Discuss with your healthcare provider the benefits and potential risks of wearing a mask.

- A parent of a student with a medical condition who is requesting their child not to wear a mask must provide a note from the student's physician with a specific reason. The district will review such a request and a determination will be made.

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 food services. 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.

Ensuring Continuity of Services

Mitigating Measures/Safety Protocols:

- Our goal is to continue to provide in-person learning to all students, addressing their academic, social, emotional, and mental health via the many programs in place within our schools. We will return to a regular school year schedule that follows our normal curriculum and assessments.
- Prolonged periods of remote or virtual learning can have negative effects on educational progress for students, potentially slowing or reversing academic gains. Additionally, students from low-resourced communities, English learners, and students with disabilities might disproportionately experience learning loss due to limited access to remote learning technology and fewer learning support symptoms and services outside of schools. Safe, in-person schooling can also offset the negative social, emotional and mental health impacts of prolonged virtual learning. SLOCOE has developed a comprehensive PS-12 transition plan which includes on-site and virtual interventions and services for students.
- If COVID cases rise significantly and we are required to close a school, every effort will be made to provide these services virtually, all special education services will be provided according to students' IEPs, and families will be provided with access to free meals.
- Additional Chromebooks have been purchased in order to ensure equitable access for students.

Food Service

- Water fountains will be reopened. However, students and staff may bring water bottles to school. Refilling stations will be available throughout the day.
- Self-service food options will not be offered. Items will be pre-packed and/or served to students via school site staff.
- If cases rise to the level where hybrid or home-based learning is required arrangements will be made for families to continue receiving free student meals.

Additional Measures

Professional Development will be provided so that staff is comfortable teaching in a variety of formats that could be required during the school year. Our technical staff will be available daily to help them navigate through any problems that should arise.

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.

- The plan will be provided on the district website and continue public comment will be made available through the Pandemic Response Team and SLOCOE Board meetings
- The district will provide the translated plan to non-English speaking families via Google Translate or through other interpreter services as requested.
- SLOCOE is committed to providing students and staff with a safe, in-person learning environment. The strategies outlined within this plan will be implemented to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 spread within our schools. These strategies will be revised periodically (at least every 6 months) based upon COVID cases within our schools and community and any new research/evidence that becomes available.

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.
- 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 parents 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.

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