



ARP ESSER Health and Safety Plan Guidance & Template

Section 2001(i)(1) of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires each local education agency (LEA) that receives funding under the ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund to develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website a *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan*, hereinafter referred to as a *Health and Safety Plan*.

Based on ARP requirements, 90 percent of ARP ESSER funds will be distributed to school districts and charter schools based on their relative share of Title I-A funding in FY 2020-2021. **Given Federally required timelines, LEAs eligible to apply for and receive this portion of the ARP ESSER funding must submit a Health and Safety Plan that meets ARP Act requirements to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) by Friday, July 30, 2021, regardless of when the LEA submits its ARP ESSER application.**

Each LEA must create a Health and Safety Plan that addresses how it will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff, and which will serve as local guidelines for all instructional and non-instructional school activities during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. The Health and Safety Plan should be tailored to the unique needs of each LEA and its schools and must take into account public comment related to the development of, and subsequent revisions to, the Health and Safety Plan.

The ARP Act and U.S. Department of Education rules require Health and Safety plans include the following components:

1. How the LEA will, to the greatest extent practicable, implement prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning;
2. How the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services;

3. How the LEA 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 policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC:
 - a. Universal and correct wearing of [masks](#);
 - b. Modifying facilities to allow for [physical distancing](#) (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);
 - c. [Handwashing and respiratory etiquette](#);
 - d. [Cleaning](#) and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving [ventilation](#);
 - e. [Contact tracing](#) in combination with [isolation](#) and [quarantine](#), in collaboration with State and local health departments;
 - f. [Diagnostic](#) and screening testing;
 - g. Efforts to provide COVID-19 [vaccinations to school communities](#);
 - h. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and
 - i. Coordination with state and local health officials.

The LEA's Health and Safety Plan must be approved by its governing body and posted on the LEA's publicly available website by July 30, 2021.* The ARP Act requires LEAs to post their Health and Safety Plans online in a language that parents/caregivers can understand, or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to an individual with limited English proficiency, be orally translated. The plan also must be provided in an alternative format accessible, upon request, by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Each LEA will upload in the eGrants system its updated Health and Safety Plan and webpage URL where the plan is located on the LEA's publicly available website.

The ARP Act requires LEAs to review their Health and Safety Plans at least every six months during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. LEAs also must review and update their plans whenever there are significant changes to the CDC recommendations for K-12 schools. Like the development of the plan, all revisions must be informed by community input and reviewed and approved by the governing body prior to posting on the LEA's publicly available website.

LEAs may use the template to revise their current Health and Safety Plans to meet ARP requirements and ensure all stakeholders are fully informed of the LEA's plan to safely resume

instructional and non-instructional school activities, including in-person learning, for the current school year. An LEA may use a different plan template or format provided it includes all the elements required by the ARP Act, as listed above.

* The July 30 deadline applies only to school districts and charter schools that received federal Title I-A funds in FY 2020-2021 and intend to apply for and receive ARP ESSER funding.

Additional Resources

LEAs are advised to review the following resources when developing their Health and Safety Plans:

- [CDC K-12 School Operational Strategy](#)
- [PDE Resources for School Communities During COVID-19](#)
- [PDE Roadmap for Education Leaders](#)
- [PDE Accelerated Learning Through an Integrated System of Support](#)
- [PA Department of Health - COVID-19 in Pennsylvania](#)

Health and Safety Plan Summary: Environmental Charter School

Initial Effective Date: July 2, 2021

Date of Last Review: January 19, 2022

Date of Last Revision: January 19, 2022

- 1. How will the LEA, to the greatest extent practicable, support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning?***

The Health and Safety Plan, in coordination with local health officials and CDC guidance, supported a full return to in person instruction in August 2021. For the 2021–2022 school year, ECS students are participating in five days a week, in-person learning. During full-time in-person instruction, students and staff interact within the confines of the ECS Health and Safety Plan. Instruction includes both large and small group learning environments where students and staff work collaboratively through the curriculum. In order to support prevention and mitigation, small group, and one-on-one learning utilize all available technology and facility resources (social distancing, plexiglass barriers, virtual meetings, etc.). We also understand that many of our families continue to face different challenges and circumstances related to COVID-19. For that reason, any student that needs support in the second half of the 2021-2022 school year through a full virtual model will have the opportunity through our partnership with Waterfront Learning. ECS continues to monitor PA Department of Education, CDC and Allegheny Health Department recommendations regarding in person learning. Any changes to our 5 days a week in person model that are recommended or necessary according to our quarantining protocols will be communicated as quickly as possible.

For the 2021–2022 school year, the district's established Crisis Management Team is responsible for supporting the COVID-19 prevention and mitigation procedures in each building. The Crisis Management Team is a group of diverse individuals including; school nurses, teachers, administrators, the special education department, facilities, office managers, EDay, and communications. The Crisis Management Team was created to support the school in prevention, mitigation, and response to any and all crises within the school and community. This team meets regularly to review any new guidance from the CDC and PDE. Any updates to the Health and Safety Plan will be reviewed for consistency between the plan and the current collective bargaining agreement with the ECSFT. Additionally, the Board of Trustees will review the updated Health and Safety Plan every 6 months beginning in July, and public review of the plan will be available on the ECS website.

2. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services?

ECS is committed to ensuring continuity of services throughout the 2021–2022 school year through relationship building and mission based social emotional learning. Our goal for 2021–2022 is to implement a high-quality, culturally responsive, standards based instructional program with appropriate intervention support and a focus on a systematic approach to social-emotional learning for all students. Along with a robust commitment to high quality instruction and mission grounded academics, student emotional well-being inside and outside of the classroom is ECS's primary focus. The Student Services Team will continue to support students with 504 Plans, IEPs, school-based mental health services, school counseling, social work, Student Assistance Program (SAP), and individual student support services. Our employees will also continue to have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to support both personal and work-related needs. Communication and information sharing from the district and building levels will continue to take precedence, and students will continue to have access to Learning Management Platforms (Google Classroom and Schoology) that have provided communication channels between school and home and have allowed for successful implementation of remote instruction. As a district, we shifted from E School Plus to the Alma platform to allow for increased engagement between families and staff while acting as the go to place to review your student's academic progress.

ECS will continue to require face coverings when students are in the building and will encourage appropriate social distancing in all areas of a student's day. Based on guidance, additional spaces may continue to be provided to lower the student density in common areas such as the cafeteria. Hybrid lunch service will continue as needed and when feasible. In a hybrid lunch service, students will be split between the cafeteria and additional spaces to lower student density and preserve social distancing where possible. Breakfast service continues to be "grab and go" style with students eating in classrooms. Social distancing and plastic dividers are provided for layered mitigation when students eat in classrooms. Students will be encouraged to eat outside (as the weather permits) and to wash their hands frequently and before and after lunch. Indoor and outdoor recess will include access to the playground equipment and resources. During recess, students will be encouraged to play outside and may wear face coverings.

ECS will follow CDC guidance and require face coverings for all staff and students inside school facilities for all school related activities. Gatherings, concerts, events, assemblies, and extracurricular activities resumed for the 2021–2022 school year when feasible. ECS follows all CDC, state, and health department guidelines on social distancing, and occupancy limits for any events and gatherings. Field trips will continue to be assessed based on current state guidelines, and all clubs and activities will continue when and where appropriate.

ECS will only allow visitors that are direct partners to schools or grade levels. Visiting

partners must be necessary for academic programming. All partners are required to follow our vaccination and face covering requirements at all times. ECS will review our visitor procedures when the Allegheny County transmission rate falls below the substantial rate.

ECS recognizes that information and safety recommendations are rapidly changing. The District continues to develop ongoing communications to provide staff and parents/guardians with timely information on the District’s preparation for, the incidence of, and response to the transmission of COVID-19. It remains our commitment to provide our community with factual, transparent, and critical information in a timely manner while respecting the privacy of our students and staff.

3. Use the table below to explain how the LEA 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 policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
<p>a. Universal and correct wearing of <u>masks</u>;</p>	<p>ECS will continue to require students and staff to wear face coverings in accordance with CDC guidance for K-12 schools. Universal masking will be reviewed only if the CDC guidance changes and the Allegheny County transmission rate is low. Any changes will be communicated with families promptly.</p> <p>As of July 27, 2021, the CDC updated its guidelines and recommended universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, and students in K–12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. Based on these updated recommendations from the CDC and other experts in health and safety, ECS will require face masks for any individual entering a building.</p>
<p>b. Modifying facilities to allow for <u>physical distancing</u> (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);</p>	<p>Students and staff are encouraged to socially distance as much as possible in hallways and stairwells. Our schools have well marked hallways with directional arrows to allow for an ease of flow and limiting large groups of students in any one area. To the greatest extent possible, movement is staggered or strategically redirected to minimize the number of individuals in hallways and common areas. Specific times and locations of potential congestion are examined regularly, and ECS implements strategies to reduce congestion when necessary.</p> <p>Student desks and seating are set up in a manner promoting social distancing to the greatest extent possible within the 3 feet recommendation, with allowable time for</p>

	<p>collaborating on projects and social interaction. Classroom set up allows for maximized safety and space by removing unnecessary items where possible.</p> <p>Staff and students will be encouraged to go outside for class, lunch, or any activity that can be done outside of the regular classroom and weather permitting. Additional outside seating will be provided at each building to encourage the use of outdoor spaces.</p>
<p>c. <u>Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;</u></p>	<p>Students and staff are encouraged and reminded to follow good hygiene practices, including frequent hand washing and/or hand sanitizing. Students are asked to wash or sanitize prior to and after eating and when entering classrooms. Students and staff are reminded of good respiratory etiquette (covering coughs and sneezes with an elbow or tissue). Hand sanitizer is available in all classrooms and in strategic locations throughout each building.</p> <p>Teachers reinforce both handwashing and respiratory etiquette in morning meetings and CREW lessons. Signage at all buildings reinforces both handwashing and respiratory etiquette.</p>
<p>d. <u>Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation;</u></p>	<p>ECS continues to follow the cleaning and disinfecting recommendations and guidelines set forth by the CDC and other government agencies to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The Facilities team and its approved contractors have established procedures to promote a healthy environment. These procedures are reviewed and updated by the ECS Facilities Manager regularly. Additionally, ECS buildings undergo a secondary deep cleaning on a rotating basis.</p> <p>Signs promoting safe distancing, hand washing, masks, and single direction foot traffic are posted in high traffic areas throughout the schools. ECS facilities staff conduct frequent cleaning of high traffic areas throughout the school day. Any increased cleaning and sanitizing is conducted as recommended by the CDC with a focus on high touch areas, as well as classrooms and furniture, restrooms, and water fountains/bottle filling stations as necessary. The use of an electrostatic cleaning solution is used on a case by case basis. Additionally, personal disinfecting supplies are made available for staff to use throughout the day as they are needed.</p>

	<p>Portable HEPA air filters are utilized in all classrooms, offices, and large group spaces to promote healthy indoor air quality. Air quality testing will continue, as will frequent air filter changes on the HVAC systems at the schools.</p> <p>Only water bottle filling stations are used in buildings and students are encouraged to bring in reusable water bottles.</p> <p>Instructional supplies and materials are either online, personalized or sanitized regularly.</p>
<p>e. <u>Contact tracing in combination with <u>isolation</u> and <u>quarantine</u>, in collaboration with the State and local health departments;</u></p>	<p>ECS continues to support the Allegheny Health Department with their contact tracing efforts.</p> <p>Students and staff were made aware of the CDC screening questions related to exposure or potential exposure to COVID-19 in August. Caregivers were provided an updated list of signs and symptoms of COVID-19 prior to the first day of school in August. Caregivers who notice any sign or symptom of COVID-19 will be instructed to keep their student at home and seek medical attention if necessary. Caregivers will be asked to self-report any diagnosis of COVID-19 or the seasonal flu to our school nurses.</p> <p>If a child has health symptoms and is unsure if it is related to COVID-19 (no testing done), they'll need to be home "fever free" for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications and alert their school's nurse.</p> <p>Any student or staff member experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 within the school day will be considered ill and caregivers will be notified. Ill students/staff will be isolated until they can go home. Caregivers will be asked to pick up within a 2 hour period. While waiting for a caregiver, students will isolate themselves in the health office. After student pick up a deep cleaning of affected spaces will take place before nurses/students can return to the spaces.</p> <p>Upon exposure to someone who tests positive for COVID-19 a student/employee should contact the school nurse/school administrator before coming to school.</p> <p>ECS will follow our updated "Quarantine and Isolation FlowChart" for exposure and positive case identification. The chart can be found on the district website and will be</p>

	<p>updated following district medical professional, CDC, PDE and Health Department guidance as necessary. Any updates to this chart will be communicated to the community quickly.</p> <p>If a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, with or without a positive test and/or symptoms, the District will follow applicable health department protocol and guidance on contact tracing, quarantine, and/or isolation while respecting the confidentiality of those involved.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If your student or someone in your student's household is being tested for COVID-19, immediately notify your building nurse. 2. If a student or staff member develops COVID-like symptoms, they will be asked to follow-up with their PCP and may be asked to remain home in isolation for up to 7 days, depending on circumstances. <p>ECS will continue to utilize the COVID-19 dashboard on our website to provide transparency to our community. We will also notify caregivers when their students have been in close contact with someone who is known to have tested positive for COVID-19. The notification includes any action steps to be taken and recommendations provided by the Allegheny County Health Department.</p>
<p>f. <u>Diagnostic and screening testing;</u></p>	<p>Diagnostic and screening testing is recommended by the CDC for communities designated as moderate, substantial, and high transmission. It is not recommended if a community is designated as low transmission.</p> <p>ECS will recommend that students and staff are tested for COVID-19 at any level of community transmission if symptoms are present or if an individual has come in contact with a known positive case of COVID-19, is symptomatic and is not fully vaccinated.</p> <p>Additionally, ECS will continue to participate in the pooled testing program offered through PDE. Caregivers can sign their students up on our website.</p>
<p>g. <u>Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities;</u></p>	<p>ECS has adopted a vaccination policy, including applicable boosters, for all staff.</p> <p>Students are encouraged to get vaccinated whenever they are eligible. They are also asked to submit a copy of the vaccination card to their school's nurse once they are fully vaccinated.</p>

	<p>In March, ECS worked with the PA Department of Education and our local Intermediate Unit to provide staff vaccination appointments. In the 2021-2022 school year, ECS completed multiple vaccine clinics for students and will work with local partners to determine if another clinic is necessary.</p> <p>The ECS School Health Department continues to provide information to families on available vaccination clinics and COVID testing facilities in the community.</p>
<p>h. Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and</p>	<p>All special education supports are an additional layer on top of what is provided to all students.</p> <p>ECS provides students and staff with the appropriate accommodations needed with respect to health and safety policies. For example, medical exemptions will be considered for masking and face shield options. Also, face shields, with additional plexiglass barrier, or masks with plastic around the mouth could be used to allow the ability to see faces if needed.</p> <p>Close proximity or physical assistance from teachers and support staff (who are provided with additional PPE) will be provided to those students who need it.</p>
<p>i. Coordination with state and local health officials.</p>	<p>ECS continues to use our school physician, CDC and the Allegheny Health Department guidance when reviewing and/or revising the existing Health and Safety Plan. Our ECS School Health Department connects with the Allegheny Health Department for contact tracing and case identification.</p> <p>The ECS Crisis Management Team will continue to collaborate regularly to review procedures and refine as necessary.</p>

Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for **Environmental Charter School** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on January 19, 2022.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

12 Yes

0 No

Affirmed on: January 26, 2022

By:



(Signature* of Board President)

Benjamin Witsberger

(Print Name of Board President)

*Electronic signatures on this document are acceptable using one of the two methods detailed below.

Option A: The use of actual signatures is encouraged whenever possible. This method requires that the document be printed, signed, scanned, and then submitted.

Option B: If printing and scanning are not possible, add an electronic signature using the resident Microsoft Office product signature option, which is free to everyone, no installation or purchase needed.