



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: Bear Creek Community Charter School

Initial Effective Date: August 30, 2021

Date of Last Review: February 21, 2022

Date of Last Revision: April 7, 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?

All stakeholders should be mindful that as long as there are cases of COVID-19 in the community, there are no strategies that can completely eliminate transmission risk within a school population. The goal is to keep transmission as low as possible to safely continue school activities. Bear Creek Community Charter School understands that the modification of the educational process due to the ongoing pandemic places a great deal of stress and responsibility on all stakeholders of the school community. In the end, we have an obligation to prepare to educate children with the opening of school on August 30, 2021, and this plan represents our best efforts to balance all the demands placed on us – government mandates, health and safety guidelines, and parent expectations. We continue to face a challenging situation; however, we will be moving forward with a plan that we believe balances the need to educate our students with the health and safety of all involved, while complying with state and federal law. Bear Creek Community Charter School will continue to monitor CDC (Center for Disease Control) guidelines, PDE (Pennsylvania Department of Education) recommendations, as well as PDH (Pennsylvania Department of Health) recommendations in order to continue monitoring local health data and additional actions, orders or guidance provided to assess implications for school operations and potential adjustments throughout the school year.

Mitigation practices, such as physical distancing to the extent possible, ventilation, and spending time outdoors will continue to be utilized. Students will be seated as socially distant as possible with a minimum of three feet within the classroom setting, all forward facing. Face coverings will not be required, but are optional for all students and staff, regardless of vaccination status. Students and staff will be encouraged, but not required, to wear masks during small group instruction as well as small group activities. Students will travel in cohorts throughout the school day to minimize exposure within the school setting. **Students will each lunch at tables in grade level cohorts, utilizing the Dining Hall to provide eating space with social distancing to the extent possible.** Students and staff, regardless of vaccination status, will not be required to wear a face covering when outdoors. Cleaning and sanitizing of high-touch areas will also be continued, as this practice may help reduce transmission, even though the virus spreads predominantly from person to person through respiratory droplets (Ries, 2020).

Students and their parents as well as employees will be asked to self-monitor at home each day before sending children to school and/or reporting to school or work. Bear Creek Community Charter School will provide resources and guidance to assist students, parents and staff in this process, including guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Parents will be continually reminded as to the importance of keeping symptomatic children home from school. Each school day during morning announcements, there will be a reminder of everyday prevention actions to stay healthy, including but not limited to, washing your hands, covering coughs or sneezes with a tissue or an elbow then washing hands, avoiding touching the eyes, nose and mouth, staying away from people who are sick, and to stay home if you are sick. The school nurse will evaluate any individual who presents with symptoms. Staff members who feel ill will be requested to stay home from school/work.

If a staff, student, or other member of the school community becomes ill or has been exposed to an individual confirmed positive for COVID-19, that individual will be evaluated by the School Nurse. As necessary, the School Nurse will consult with the Pennsylvania Department of Health. The School Nurse's evaluation will include taking the temperature of the individual who presents with symptoms, isolating them from other students and staff, until they can be removed from the building.

Individuals will be isolated in the Nurse's Office, which is equipped with a supplemental ventilation system to evacuate airborne particles from the area. When the Nurse's Office is being used for isolation purposes, no other students and staff members will be permitted to enter. A "service desk" will be available to all others outside the Nurse's office for non-COVID related conditions. When used for isolation purposes, the Nurse's Office will be closed for the remainder of the school day and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Additional nursing and support staff will be called in as necessary to support school operations, based on the needs present on any given school day. The School Nurse will be provided with additional personal protective equipment such as N95/KN95 masks, disposable gowns and plastic face shields.

Bear Creek Community Charter School will consult with the Pennsylvania Department of Health regarding cases of students or staff who are exposed to COVID-19, including others that may need to be quarantined to due potential exposure, length of potential quarantine, and criteria for return to school/work.

Bear Creek Community Charter School will notify families and staff in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the school community. Notification would take place via letter to families, as well as posting on our weekly COVID numbers on the school website. Bear Creek Community Charter School will comply with the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act and the Health Insurance Privacy Portability act when disseminating health information. No student-specific or staff-specific information will be released.

Bear Creek Community Charter School will dismiss students in groups based on “colors” through the back door of the school, beginning at 3:15 p.m. daily. Parents will no longer be permitted to congregate in the gymnasium for student pick up. Parents are asked to wait outside the double gates near the rear play area to pick up their children. Parents will be encouraged to socially distance while waiting for their child(ren). All students will be placed into a color group (red, green, blue, purple, yellow, etc.) and will be dismissed by group, which will allow us to control the number of children being dismissed at any given time yet allow for students residing in the same household, but in different grades, to be dismissed at the same time.

Bear Creek Community Charter School will conduct Bus Dismissal by calling no more than two busses for boarding at a time. This practice will provide a ‘bus cohort’ to minimize student exposure to COVID-19 within the school setting while exiting the building to board the school bus.

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?

Bear Creek Community Charter School plans to reopen on August 30, 2021 with full in-person learning for all students, Kindergarten through Eighth grade. Bear Creek Community Charter School conducted full in-person learning for all students in Kindergarten through Eighth grade from April 6, 2021 through June 15, 2021 with no evidence of community spread within the school setting. Bear Creek Community Charter school and its stakeholders believe that it is in the best interests of the students’ and staff members’ social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, to be in person for learning based on our experience with both hybrid and virtual learning during the 2020-2021 school year. Being in-person provides all students access to school services, including but not limited to, academic instruction, school nursing services, school counselor services, food services for both breakfast and lunch, special education and gifted services, as well as socialization with peers and trusted adults.

Bear Creek Community Charter School recognizes that certain individuals are considered more vulnerable than others as it relates to COVID-19. Bear Creek Community Charter School will provide appropriate accommodations for students who qualify under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and will provide reasonable accommodations to employees under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Examples include implementing student-specific planning, increased social distancing strategies, increased communication with parents, the provision of additional personal protective equipment, etc.

The School Nurse will continue to coordinate and conduct annual Health Screenings, including but not limited to, vision, hearing, height and weight measurements, physical exams, dental screenings, scoliosis screening, and head lice checks. Students will be

sent to the nurse in small groups within their cohort to minimize potential COVID-19 exposure within the school setting.

If a staff, student, or other member of the school community becomes ill or has been exposed to an individual confirmed positive for COVID-19, that individual will be evaluated by the School Nurse. The School Nurse's evaluation will include taking the temperature of the individual who presents with symptoms, isolating them from other students and staff, asking guiding questions of the student and/or the parent in regard to possible COVID-19 exposure, vaccination status, and maintaining the student within the nurse's office until they can be removed from the building. The student or staff member will be required to wear a mask if they are demonstrating symptoms while awaiting to leave the school building. Upon notification of a positive COVID-19 case, the School Nurse and/or the Director of Student Affairs (or their designee) will consult with the Pennsylvania Department of Health as necessary to determine whether individual or additional quarantine or isolation is warranted.

Individuals will be isolated in the Nurse's Office, which is equipped with a supplemental ventilation system to evacuate airborne particles from the area. When the Nurse's Office is being used for isolation purposes, no other students and staff members will be permitted to enter. A "service desk" will be available to all others outside the Nurse's office for non-COVID related conditions. When used for isolation purposes, the Nurse's Office will be closed for the remainder of the school day and thoroughly cleaned and disinfected. Additional nursing and support staff will be called in as necessary to support school operations, based on the needs present on any given school day. The School Nurse will be provided with additional personal protective equipment such as N95/KN95 masks, disposable gowns and plastic face shields.

Food Service will continue to offer three options for breakfast, as well as three choices for lunch, using a point of service program. Students will be seated in the Dining Hall for breakfast, at tables with social distancing to the extent possible. **Students will be seated in grade level cohorts utilizing the Dining Hall and encouraged to utilize mitigation strategies, such as washing their hands or using hand sanitizer when finished eating.** Students may choose to put on a face covering when they are finished eating as a mitigation strategy, but it will not be required.

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
a. Universal and correct wearing of masks ;	All students and staff, regardless of vaccination status, will have the option, but will not be required, to wear face coverings within the school setting in alignment with the Pennsylvania Department of Health lifting the Universal

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	<p>Mask Mandate on June 28, 2021. All students and staff will be encouraged to utilize other mitigation strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19, such as social distancing to the extent possible, washing hands and/or using hand sanitizer frequently, avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth, stay away from people who are sick and to stay home if they, themselves, are sick.</p> <p>Students and staff will be encouraged, but not required, to wear a face covering while engaging in small group instruction as well as small group activities within the classroom setting.</p>
<p>b. Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);</p>	<p>Students will attend classes and travel throughout the building in cohorts to minimize exposure within the school setting. Students will eat in the Dining Hall for breakfast at tables with as much social distancing as possible. Students will eat lunch in grade level cohorts, seated at tables in the Dining Hall in order to provide as much social distancing as possible.</p>
<p>c. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All visitors will be provided with hand sanitizer upon entry to the building as part of a modified visitor check in process. (Visitors overall to the building will be limited.) - Students and staff will be encouraged daily, as part of morning announcements to wash hands often with soap and water, especially prior to eating, after using the restroom or after a cough/sneeze or blowing of the nose. Many classrooms have sinks, soap dispensers and paper towels within the classroom to facilitate this process. - Tissues will be available in all classrooms for student and staff use. - Hand sanitizer will be provided to all staff. Hand sanitizer, which is made up of an alcohol-based hand rub/hand sanitizer with

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	<p>greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol, will be available for students who do not have access to a sink within their classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Instructions will be posted in all restrooms reminding students and staff to wash their hands. - Students who are observed coughing or sneezing will be instructed to wash their hands. - Students will be required to wash their hands after each recess as well as before lunch. - Staff members shall wash their hands upon entering the building, after using the restroom, and prior to eating in-school breakfast or lunch. Staff members who cough or sneeze shall immediately wash their hands or use hand sanitizer. - Students will be assigned their own Chromebook and school supplies. Students will not share computers or educational supplies. Individual supplies, such as glue sticks, pencils, crayons, etc. will be provided for each student's personal use. - Students and staff will be encouraged, but not required to wear a face covering during small group instruction as well as small group activities within the classroom setting.
<p>d. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cleaning and disinfecting of all classrooms, offices, other work spaces and common areas by the housekeeping team will occur nightly between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. Bear Creek Community Charter School will use <i>CDC Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes</i> as the baseline for its cleaning and disinfecting practices.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bear Creek Community Charter School's facility is five years old. Our heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system is modern and meets all appropriate building codes and best-practices following the national consensus standard for outside air ventilation under ASHRAE, Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality and its published addenda. - Bear Creek Community Charter School will ensure its HVAC system is properly maintained and in good working order while school is in session. - The School Nurse's office, restrooms, and certain other spaces are also equipped with supplemental mechanical ventilation for additional exchange of indoor and outdoor air.
<p>e. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State and local health departments;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students and their parents, as well as employees will be asked to self-monitor at home each day before sending children to school and/or reporting to school or work. Bear Creek Community Charter School will provide resources and guidance to assist students, parents, and staff in this process, including guidance from PDH (Pennsylvania Department of Health) and the CDC) Center for Disease Control and Prevention - Parents will be continually reminded as to the importance of keeping symptomatic children home from school. - Each school day, the teacher that comes into contact with a student displaying signs and symptoms of COVID-19 will send the student to the school nurse. The school nurse will evaluate any individual who presents with symptoms.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Staff members who feel ill will be requested to stay home from school/work. - If a staff, student, or other member of the school community becomes ill or has been exposed to an individual who has confirmed positive for COVID-19, the school nurse should be contacted by the family or staff member (or the school nurse will reach out to the family of a child who has been absent three (3) consecutive days or more) to determine the reason for the prolonged absence. - In the event the student or staff member is in school at the time of the onset of symptoms, the school nurse will provide guidance to the student's family or the staff member in accordance with the most recent guidance available from the CDC and PDH and the individual will be sent home - The school nurse will triage student issues, with potential contagious students being maintained in the Nurse's Office, where there is increased ventilation, and other students will be seated in the School Commons, or treated at the 'Service Desk' outside of the Nurse's Office and returned to class, in order to minimize potential exposure within the Nurse's Office. - The School Nurse, the Director of Student Affairs or a designee will consult with the Department of Health, if necessary, on any known cases that occur either in or outside of the school setting in which there is the potential of other individuals within the school setting having been potentially exposed to COVID-19 to obtain guidance on other individuals who should quarantine, the length of

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	<p>an individual's quarantine and the criteria for return to school/work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bear Creek Community Charter School will notify families and staff in the event of a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the school community. Notification would take place via letter to families, as well as posting on our weekly COVID numbers on the school website. Bear Creek Community Charter School will comply with the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) as well as the Health Insurance Privacy Portability Act (HIPPA) when disseminating information regarding a potential COVID-19 exposure within the school setting. No student-specific or staff-specific information will be released. - The School Nurse will contact and communicate with any families in which a student will be required to quarantine due to potential exposure within the school setting.
f. Diagnostic and screening testing;	<p>Bear Creek Community Charter School utilizes the I-Ready program to conduct individual diagnostic assessment to determine individual student academic needs. This program is used as a diagnostic three times a year (Fall, Winter, Spring) to determine individual student growth throughout the school year. The I-Ready program is also used on a weekly basis throughout the school year to provide individualized instruction for remediation of skills and continued skill growth.</p> <p>Bear Creek Community Charter School will suggest that families consult with their medical practitioner or utilize a home test in regard to COVID-19 testing. The Bear Creek Community Charter School will not be providing COVID-19 testing within our facility, but will work collaboratively with local providers in this regard.</p>

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
g. Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities ;	Bear Creek Community Charter School provided two vaccination clinics at the school campus on Wednesday, May 19, 2021 for the first vaccination dose and on Wednesday, June 9, 2021 for the second vaccination dose for individuals age 12 and older. Bear Creek utilized a survey method to determine if parents were interested in a vaccination clinic at the school. Based on the results of the survey, the school has not offered a clinic but has provided information to parents when vaccination clinics in the area are being held.
h. Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and	Any student who cannot wear a face covering or face shield due to a medical condition, including those with respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition, or disability, and students who would be unable to remove a face covering without assistance are not required to wear face coverings. These, as well as other individual needs, would be addressed through the individual student's Chapter 15/Section 504 plan, Individual Safety Care plan, or through the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Individuals who choose the option of wearing a face covering and are communicating or seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing impaired or who has another disability, where the ability to see the mouth is essential to communication, will be provided with a plastic face shield or another type of face covering with a clear window panel so the mouth can be seen while speaking.
i. Coordination with state and local health officials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bear Creek Community Charter School will continue to monitor CDC (Center for Disease Control) guidelines, PDE (Pennsylvania Department of Education) recommendations, as well as PDH (Pennsylvania Department of Health) recommendations in order to continue monitoring local health data and additional actions, orders or guidance provided to assess

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	<p>implications for school operations and potential adjustments throughout the school year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Upon notification of a positive COVID-19 case, the School Nurse and/or the Director of Student Affairs (or their designee) will consult with the Pennsylvania Department of Health as needed to determine whether individual or additional quarantine or isolation is warranted.

COVID Positive - Quarantine

Students or staff members who test positive for COVID-19 will quarantine at home for ten (10) days and will be permitted to return to school following the ten day period as long as they are symptom free (including fever) for a 24-hour period without the use of fever-reducing medication.

If a student or staff member continues to exhibit symptoms beyond ten days, they will be required to extend their quarantine until they are symptom free (including fever) for a 24-hour period without the use of fever-reducing medication.

*No note from a physician or negative test result is required for return to school.

COVID Exposure - Isolation

- a. Students or staff members who are fully vaccinated with booster or fully vaccinated and not yet eligible for a booster and NOT exhibiting symptoms will be permitted to attend school without quarantine but will be required to wear a mask for ten (10) days within the school setting. (If the person begins to demonstrate any symptoms, the person should follow the recommendations for isolation and seek a COVID test.)
- b. Students or staff members who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated with booster and NOT exhibiting symptoms will isolate at home for five (5) days and return on Day 6 but will be required to wear a mask for five (5) days within the school setting. (If the person begins to demonstrate any symptoms, the person should follow the recommendations for isolation and seek a COVID test.)

*No note from a physician or negative test result is required for return to school.

Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for **the Bear Creek Community Charter School** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on **Thursday, May 5, 2022**.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

_____ **Yes**

_____ **No**

Affirmed on:

By:

(Signature of Board President)*

(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.