

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:

Orcutt Union 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.

The Orcutt Union School District is submitting a new plan. It will be posted within 30 days of completion of the ESSER III Assurances on September 15, 2021.

2. The LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and LEA staff, and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the CDC's safety recommendations, including: universal and correct wearing of masks; modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing; handwashing and respiratory etiquette; cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation; contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments; diagnostic and screening testing; efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities; appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and coordination with State and local health officials.

Describe how the LEA will maintain, or continue to maintain, health and safety policies and procedures. Include a description of any adopted policies and procedures regarding the CDC's safety recommendations (or available LEA website links to such policies). Include descriptions of appropriate accommodations adopted and coordination efforts conducted with outside State and local health officials. Please include or describe current public health conditions, applicable State and local rules and restrictions, and other contemporaneous information that informs your decision-making process.

The Orcutt Union School District is following the 2021 COVID-19 Prevention Plan and 2021 COVID-19 School Guidance Checklist that were posted on the district website on August 10, 2021. The prevention plan can be accessed at https://www.orcuttschools.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021_COVID-19_Prevention_Plan_Orcutt_Union_Elementary_School_District_20210810.pdf, and the checklist can be accessed at https://www.orcuttschools.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021_COVID-19_School_Guidance_Checklist_Orcutt_Union_Elementary_School_District_20210810-1.pdf. Both documents are in alignment with orders and guidance provided by the California Department of Public Health and Santa Barbara County Public Health Department.

The COVID-19 Prevention Plan is designed to control exposures to COVID-19 that may occur on district campuses. It includes specific plans for employee screenings, controls of COVID-19 hazards (face coverings, installation of partitions in inside spaces, ventilation of buildings, cleaning and disinfecting, hand sanitizing, use of personal protective equipment, and testing of symptomatic employees), investigating and responding to COVID-19 cases, employee training, exclusion of COVID-19 cases and employees who had a close contact, reporting and recordkeeping, and when employees who have tested positive for COVID-19 may return to work. The COVID-19 School Guidance Checklist provides attestations that the district is keeping students and staff in stable groups where applicable and that the district is meeting requirements for the following: entrance, egress, and movement within the school; face coverings and other essential protective gear; health screenings for students and staff; healthy hygiene practices; identification and tracing of contacts; physical distancing; staff training and family education; testing of staff; testing of students; identification and reporting of cases; and communication plans.

The district's internal systems have shifted and adapted as we have received new guidance and requirements for student testing, staff testing, and quarantines. The district has experienced COVID-19 cases this school year and is tracking student and staff cases by school site and department. For transparency, these cases can be viewed by the public on a "dashboard" displayed on the district website (<https://www.orcuttschools.net/covid-19-dashboard/>). When they occur, COVID-19 cases are reported to the assistant superintendent of human resources, who provides direction for contact tracing, quarantining, and communication to staff and families. The district's assistant superintendent of business services oversees a team of employees that does on-site testing for exposed students and staff utilizing BinaxNOW antigen test kits.

The district also has worked to make COVID-19 vaccinations available to staff, eligible students, and parents/guardians. To date it has hosted five on-site vaccination clinics: two in partnership with Albertsons, three in partnership with Santa Barbara County Public Health. It plans to host more vaccination clinics in the weeks to come.

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.

For individual students who are on a quarantine, the district makes available assignments and work via short-term independent study. Teachers typically assign this work within grade-level textbook programs so students can keep pace with their class. As needed, teachers also have the option of assigning grade-level work assembled by the district's educational services department. Students with disabilities have the option of live-streaming for speech or occupational therapy while on quarantine; additionally, Special Education providers work to make up missed services when these students return to school. English Language Development (ELD) assignments are embedded in short-term independent study work assigned to English Learners.

For students who need to miss longer periods of time, the Orcutt School for Independent Study (OSIS) provides options for long-term independent study. OSIS utilizes district adopted curricula, and students participate in all district assessment programs, including state CAASPP testing.

If school closures are required, the district has the ability to transition to distance learning in the format implemented during most of the 2020-2021 school year. Teachers are well versed in classroom management systems such as Google Classroom and SeeSaw, and most are skilled in using the online components of district adopted curricula.

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 district superintendent, with support from district administrators, has provided a COVID-19 update at each monthly board meeting since August 2020. At each board meeting, members of the public have an opportunity to provide comments, and many have. In the case of the Orcutt Union School District, most feedback from the public has advocated for the return and continuation of full-time in-person instruction to the fullest extent possible. Additionally, the superintendent provides periodic COVID-19 updates to parents in the form of videos and written messages in both English and Spanish. As for staff, the superintendent and assistant superintendents provide regular COVID-19 updates to the district's management team, and the superintendent regularly updates, and consults with, the leadership of the Orcutt Educators Association and California School Employees Association.

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.

o Please insert link to the plan:

https://www.orcuttschools.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2021_COVID-19_Prevention_Plan_Orcutt_Union_Elementary_School_District_20210810.pdf

- 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.

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