

Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan Template

CSDE ARP ESSER



August 15, 2022

Introduction

Our Connecticut school communities — with students at the center — continue to be bold and innovative as they respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The United States Department of Education (USED) has recognized the importance of supporting these efforts, particularly with the infusion of resources to support education in Connecticut. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ARP ESSER) has granted the State of Connecticut an additional \$1,105,919,874, providing the opportunity to develop bold, high-impact plans to address the substantial disruptions to student learning, interpersonal interactions, and social-emotional well-being. While earlier sources of federal relief funding during the pandemic supported our ability to first survive, and then thrive, ARP ESSER is Connecticut's opportunity to transform our schools.

The federal government requires that each Local Education Agency (LEA) create a *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* (the Plan). This plan must be publicly available online by June 23, 2021 and submitted to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) as a part of the ARP ESSER application due mid-August 2021. To aid in the planning process, CSDE is providing this template to guide LEAs planning as well as serve as an opportunity to share the Plan with the public.

Due to the expansive efforts of the CSDE and the educational community, as of the week of May 3–7, no district in the state of Connecticut was fully remote. This was achieved through extensive planning by each LEA; therefore, this template should be seen as a means to support LEAs' efforts to date and can be used to expand upon or revisit previous Reopening School Plans.

There are five areas that LEAs must consider when developing the *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan*:

- I. Health and Safety Strategies
- II. Continuity of Services
- III. Public Comment
- IV. Periodic Review Process
- V. Understandable and Uniform Format

The CSDE has maintained consistently that in-person learning is the preferred opportunity for students and that schools should work to safely open their buildings for the 2020–21 school year. We are proud to have led the nation in safe return to in-person instruction — as of April 30 nearly 82.7% of Connecticut school districts were offering a predominately fully in-person learning. Thank you for your work and helping us continue to be an example of how we can best serve our children safely in school buildings.





I. Health and Safety Strategies

Describe how the LEA plan includes (or will be modified to include) the extent to which the LEA has adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the strategies listed in the table on page 2:

The Interdistrict School for Arts and Communication has established a BOD policy related to mitigation strategies that will remain in place until further notice and/or guidance from the CDC and/or Connecticut State Department of Education. ISAAC will adhere to any mandates from Ledge Light Health District, SDE, and/or DPH for the 2022-23 school year. In addition, any recommendations from the aforementioned organizations along with the guidance from the CDC, our district medical advisor, and our Safe School Committee will be considered when making decisions. This includes the times that masks will be worn by selected or all individuals inside our building. Physical/social distancing will remain in place and as stated in our reopening plan will include the spacing between and among students to the greatest extent possible in all areas of the school as recommended by SDE and DPH. Moreover, . Our cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing process will continue to follow the CDC guidelines and through the additional hiring of daytime help to assure that this in place for high touch areas. Using additional funding, we upgraded and added new HVAC systems. In accordance with CSDE and CDC, contact tracing will continue as it has been throughout the Fall. ISAAC still does not have any plans, currently, for testing. All staff and students have recently had opportunities for vaccination at ISAAC from CHC and from the Griffin Mobile vans for 5-11 students.

Please complete the table below with the LEA's mitigation strategy for each category. In developing the LEA's response, please review and consider the [CDC guidance](#) and the [Connecticut DPH and CSDE guidance](#) for each category.

	Mitigation Strategy	ISAAC Response
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Universal and correct wearing of masks	Students and staff will not be required to wear face masks at all times unless they prefer to wear the mask as a choice or the school nurse has mandated for that individual to wear a mask based on symptoms. Based on recommendations from LLHD, CDC, DPH, our medical advisor, and our Safe School Team, ISAAC may mandate masks for all individuals if cases within the building and community rise. Signage in English and Spanish ensuring the suite of mitigation strategies (mask wearing, social distancing, hand washing & sanitation) will remain in hallways and other strategic locations. If a student forgets to bring his/her mask to school, one will be provided.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Physical distancing including the use of cohorts/podding	Social distancing will be maintained when feasible. In most instances, 6th grade students will be in common groups (cohorts) throughout the day. Most of the cohorting during the 2022-23 school year will come in Core courses, advisory, and PE classes. Most classes including elective courses for 7th and 8th graders will be mixed based on student interest with maximum social distancing measures in each classroom.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Handwashing and respiratory etiquette	Hand washing is key and will be required throughout the day by students and staff. Hand sanitizer is available in all classrooms and entrances to other areas including but not limited to the cafeteria and gymnasium.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation	<p>A cleaning and disinfecting plan for our school has been developed that identifies what areas need cleaning and disinfection, a schedule for cleaning and disinfection, what cleaning and disinfection products are needed, and the person responsible for the cleaning and disinfection. This plan reflects the guidelines and recommendations from the CT Department of Health (DPH). Moreover, each Friday, our custodians will perform a deep cleaning of the school.</p> <p>Our cycle for the service of our ventilation system will continue at the same rate since the beginning of the pandemic in the 2020-21 school year. This includes the increased flow of outside air along with the replacement of the filters will continue to be completed quarterly.</p>

	Mitigation Strategy	ISAAC Response
	Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments	ISAAC will no longer contact trace for COVID-19 exposure. A quarantine area will be established in the nurse's office based on case by case basis. Plans for creating a separate room within the nurse's office have been established and will be utilized when a need is presented. The nurse's office will include proper ventilation and sterilization according to the guidelines set by DPH and Ledge Light Health District. Our nurse and COVID Liaison along with the Executive Director will continue to consult with LLHD and the district medical advisor throughout the pandemic.
	Diagnostic screening and testing	<p>ISAAC will adapt several of the recommendations as distributed by the SDE and DPH. In collaboration with the Safe School Team, district medical advisor and LLHD Director, ISAAC will follow a <i>TEST-GO</i> initiative that allows students to remain in school when presented with respiratory symptoms through the means of self-testing. If a student or staff member present respiratory symptoms, they will be provided with 3 or more COVID-19 Test Kits for the purpose of testing prior to coming to school or work each morning. However, any student or staff member who exhibit significant respiratory symptoms as determined by the school nurse, will be required to wear a mask throughout the school day. The school nurse shall have sole authority in this decision in collaboration with the district medical advisor.</p> <p>With the anticipation that the spread of COVID-19 infection will increase in November/December 2022, it is possible that students participating in winter after-school athletics will be checked for symptoms in the morning through the daily online screener and in the afternoon by the Athletic Director. In collaboration with the ISAAC District Medical Advisor, this process will provide another layer of mitigation towards the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses.</p>
	Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible	Staff and student vaccine clinics have been held in accordance with CDC guidelines and in collaboration with Community Health Center (CHC) and the Governor's Office. In addition, ISAAC will continue to host additional clinics for our school and community. These clinics will include boosters and initial vaccinations for all eligible people in the community. Moreover, ISAAC will continue to adhere to all applicable state laws and regulations regarding vaccinations and COVID-19 testing requirements.
	Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies	ISAAC is prepared to provide all special education students with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). When considering the least restrictive environment, ISAAC will pay particular attention to minimizing the number of different "groups" a student interacts with within a given day. In an attempt to limit the number of "groups", intensive planning and flexibility in the delivery of services will occur. Face shields may be worn by staff and students during speech and language exercises when mandated face coverings/masks are not appropriate for the activity.

II. Continuity of Services

Describe how the LEA plan will ensure continuity of services including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services:

Our food service department will continue to provide meals for all students following all federal and state guidelines. Lunch is served in individual containers that are delivered directly to the student in a banquet style format. .

Social Emotional Learning

The school staff will identify at-risk students and prepare supports for a safe return to school in the following ways:

- Advisory curriculum aligned to the CASEL standards
- Social supports for students who require repetition and support in understanding the changes in the school day
- Develop transition plans for students struggling with re-entry
- Respond proactively to families and students through regular communication, meetings, and phone calls
- School staff will receive training in trauma-based interventions
- School staff will engage in conversation and receive training in diversity, equity, and inclusion
- School staff will receive training in tiered intervention strategies

Return to School:

- SRBI teams will develop and implement individualized intervention plans to support students in need
- Continued consultation and check-ins with students academically and emotionally
- Universal implementation of scientific research-based instruction in social skills and emotional regulation
- Evaluate and measure student growth and response to interventions
- Provide additional supports to students/families experiencing difficulty after returning to school
- Continue training and community conversations in English and Spanish

III. Public Comment

Public comment is a key element of stakeholder engagement, and at times a stand-alone element which may include dedicating time to open forums at board of education meetings, conducting surveys, or soliciting written input from external residents not involved in the decision-making process. Describe how the LEA plans to provide the public the opportunity to provide input and for public comment in the development of the plan, a summary of the input (including any letters of support), and how the LEA took such input into account:

ISAAC will engage in stakeholder engagement through a combination of virtual methods.

The following sessions were held:

September 2022 PTO Meeting in English and Spanish; August 2022: Plan shared and discussed with ISAAC Teacher Union and ISAAC Faculty; August 2022: Plan distributed for public input on our school website; August 2022: Discussion at the Board of Directors Meeting

These efforts to gain public input will continue every six months unless guidance is postponed from SDE/DPH.

Requested input in response to the written plan distributed to all families through a dedicated email: reopening@isaacschool.org. Input will be considered in our regular reviews of the plan.

For each round, the same type of format will be used at the designated intervals on or before the following dates:

- December 23, 2022
- June 23, 2023 unless following school guidance is postponed

IV. Periodic Review Process

LEAs are required to periodically review and, as appropriate, revise their *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* **at least every six months** through September 30, 2023. Each review must include seeking public comment on the plan and developing the plan after taking into account the public comment.

Below are the dates that LEAs must submit a refreshed or updated plan to CSDE via eGMS.

Review/revisit Dates:

- June 23, 2021
- December 23, 2021
- June 23, 2022
- December 23, 2022
- June 23, 2023

V. Understandable and Uniform Format

Federal regulations require that this plan be in an understandable and uniform format, to the extent practicable; is written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable, orally translated; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent. Describe the unique needs of the LEA's audience and confirm the LEA's approach to ensuring the document is accessible:

This document will be available in English and Spanish for our stakeholders on our website at: www.isaacschool.org. Furthermore, staff will be available along with building administrators to speak to any and all aspects of the plan in an effort to support anyone needing further understanding of the process and procedures for next school year and beyond.

Should we receive any requests for individuals needing access to this plan, we will provide the accommodations necessary for those who are unable to access the plan in its current format.