

Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan (ARP Act)



Updated May 1, 2023

Entity ID	CTDS	LEA NAME
4355	078754000	Benjamin Franklin Charter School - Queen Creek

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 policies, on each of the following safety recommendations established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

CDC Safety Recommendations	Has the LEA Adopted a Policy? (Y/N)	Describe LEA Policy:
Universal and correct wearing of masks	Yes	Executive Order 2021-10 provides face covering as an option to students and staff. Students and staff should bring their own face coverings if they choose to be worn. School sites will have a supply available to provide students and staff who do not have their own coverings. staff and students have the option to wear masks if desired but are not required to do so.
Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)	Yes	<p><u>Social Distancing</u> Elementary students primarily remain with the same groupings and with the same staff throughout the day.</p> <p><u>Recess</u> Individual elementary grade levels are assigned specific time slots to take students outside for physical movement.</p> <p><u>Lunch Rooms</u> Lunch periods may be staggered to reduce the number of students in one area. Outdoor eating areas will be offered.</p> <p><u>Bathrooms</u> Students will be educated and reminded regularly by staff members to maintain distance when feasible.</p> <p>Students use bathrooms in groups no larger than the number of stalls/urinals/sinks available in the bathroom.</p> <p>Posters reminding students of proper handwashing techniques are placed in all bathrooms.</p> <p><u>Classroom Layout</u> Student desks may be spaced apart unless that spacing is not possible due to the size of the</p>



		<p>classroom and the number of students assigned to it.</p> <p>Hallways Students are educated and reminded regularly by staff members to move through hallways in an orderly and safe manner, maintaining a safe and respectful distance from others as they walk.</p> <p>Transportation School buses will maintain proper ventilation at all times including open windows, when possible due to weather, and ventilation systems will be set on non-recirculating mode.</p> <p>Drop-off/Pick-Up Procedures Schools allow sufficient time for students to arrive on campus to minimize crowds arriving all at once. Pick-up times frames may be similarly staggered if needed. School administrators will determine the prolonged start and pick-up times in a way that best meets the individual school’s needs and accomplishes the goal of reducing the number of students in the common areas at the same time. High school pick-up will take place at multiple pick up locations around the facility.</p>
Handwashing and respiratory etiquette	Yes	<p>Reinforcement through announcements, teacher reminders, and posters reminding students and staff that hands should be washed or sanitizer used regularly. Classes sanitize hands out to recess and lunch and wash as they return to the building.</p> <p>Posters reminding students of proper handwashing techniques are placed in all bathrooms.</p> <p>All students and staff will be educated about washing their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or will use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol at the following times: -after being outside for physical activity -before and after lunch -after sneezing, coughing, or blowing nose -after physical contact with other staff or students</p>
Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation	Yes	<p>All frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains, desks, and learning tools will be cleaned and disinfected regularly.</p>



		<p>Where a school supply or piece of equipment is shared by students (for instance, a pencil sharpener or blocks/toys), the item will be wiped down with disinfectant by a staff member on a regular basis.</p> <p>Playground equipment, sports equipment, music equipment, and any other shared items will be cleaned regularly.</p> <p>Bus seats and windows will be cleaned regularly.</p> <p>Staff members are expected to clean and disinfect their workspaces regularly.</p> <p>Custodial staff will be assigned schedules for increased cleaning of surfaces and bathrooms throughout the day.</p> <p>Custodial staff will wipe desks and chairs in the classrooms, sanitize all high-contact areas and surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, handrails, elevator buttons, drinking fountains, etc., disinfect each classroom and restrooms and other common areas regularly.</p>
<p>Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><u>Confidentiality</u> All student health information will be maintained confidentially. The school nurse/health aide shall report information that a student has had a positive COVID-19 test or has become sick with a presumptive COVID-19 case to the Principal and necessary staff.</p> <p><u>Individuals with Symptoms Onsite</u> When there is an individual with symptoms onsite, the school will send the individual to the health office immediately. The school nurse/health assistant will isolate the individual, and determine if contacting the parent for pickup is necessary.</p> <p><u>Student or Staff Reports a Positive Test</u> When the school administration becomes aware that a student or staff member has tested positive for COVID-19, the following steps will be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any areas that a COVID-19 positive employee or student was in for a prolonged period will be closed off and disinfected.



- Students and employees who test positive for COVID-19 must be isolated at home and follow school policy and recommended guidelines to return to school.

Close Contact

It will be determined whether employees or students may have been exposed to a positive COVID-19 case (within 6 feet and for 15 minutes or longer (cumulatively) within a 24 hour period).

Staff members who have requested close contact notifications will be notified of the possible exposure. The name of the individual who has become sick will NOT BE DISCLOSED.

When determining who has been a close contact, the school administration will look at the two days prior to the onset of symptoms of the positive person, as they are considered infective two days prior to symptoms. Or, if the positive person did not have symptoms, the school administration will determine close contact persons during the two days prior to the positive person's testing.

The notification will recommend that exposed individuals should monitor their health closely, contact their health care provider if possible, and self-isolate if any symptoms develop.

Students will not be notified of possible exposure to COVID-19. Parents may reach out to campus health offices to inquire about current, reported COVID numbers at each campus.

Quarantine Procedure

Staff members who have experienced a potential close contact with a positive case will be allowed to work during the quarantine as long as they remain symptom-free.

School Health Policy

Students are permitted to be in school under the following conditions:

- 1 - fever free for 24 hours without medication
- 2 - no vomiting for 24 hours without medication and able to eat 2 meals without vomiting
- 3 - no diarrhea for 24 hours without medication



		<p>4 - sore throat and other symptoms (nasal congestion, coughing, etc) are improved.</p>
<p>Diagnostic and screening testing</p>	<p><u>Yes</u></p>	<p>Daily Home Screening It is important for families to be in full, honest communication with the school and to respect the well-being of the school community.</p> <p>Students and parents will be educated on self-screening expectations. Students must not come to school if they have any of the following symptoms OR IF PENDING THE RESULTS OF A TEST:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Temperature 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or higher when taken by mouth - Sore throat - New uncontrolled cough that causes difficulty breathing (for students with chronic allergic/asthmatic cough, a change in their cough from baseline) - Diarrhea, vomiting, or abdominal pain - New onset of severe headache, especially with a fever - New shortness of breath or difficulty breathing - New muscle or body aches or fatigue - New loss of taste or smell <p>Daily Screenings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Daily Screening At Home: Parents should screen students for the above symptoms each morning and must keep students at home and away from others if any symptoms are present. 2. Daily Screening Transportation: All buses will have visible signage communicating to parents that students should not enter the school bus with any of the above symptoms. 3. Daily Screening At School: Upon arrival at school, staff will visually screen each student. Any student with visible symptoms will be taken to the health office for evaluation.
<p>Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>BFCS will not provide vaccinations to school communities, but will do the following to support community vaccine efforts:</p> <p>The CDC currently recommends vaccines for children 5 and older. As a K-6 elementary school program, the school will work with families to accommodate time away from class without penalty when students are being</p>

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		<p>vaccinated and for potential time away from school due to resulting side effects. If a student misses school due to receiving a vaccine, the teacher will provide make-up work and tutoring as needed to get caught up from the absence.</p> <p>All staff members were informed through the school's human resources department about vaccine opportunities offered. The school will work to remove barriers for employees who want to get the vaccine.</p>
Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies	Yes	<p>The Special Education Director and 504 Coordinator will coordinate with site-based case managers to ensure that the needs of special education students and students with special needs are being met in the context of implementing any safety protocols.</p> <p>Standard procedures for students who qualify for homebound or chronic ill services will be followed. Similarly, routine procedures for employees requests for reasonable accommodations due to a disability will be followed.</p>
Coordination with State and local health officials	Yes	<p>The BFCS mitigation plan will be in effect until the Executive Director, in consultation with the Governing, and with guidance from state, federal education and public health experts, determines that the plan should be modified.</p> <p>At the school level, the Director of Education will coordinate all messages to the public regarding possible closure and other COVID-19 related information.</p>

How 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**

How the LEA will Ensure Continuity of Services?

BFCS will ensure the recommended health and safety actions are in place before the first day of school return date on July 25, 2023. BFCS will be prepared for a safe and healthy school environment for our learners and staff through preparation, training, and continuous monitoring. Standard procedures for students who qualify for homebound or chronic ill services will be followed. Similarly, routine procedures for employee requests for reasonable accommodations due to a disability will be followed.

The school mitigation plan will be in effect until the Executive Director, in consultation with the Governing Board and in compliance with guidance from state and federal education and public health experts, determines that the plan should be modified.

Students' Needs:

Academic Needs	<p>Elementary: Benjamin Franklin Charter School is committed to providing quality instruction aligned to state standards to Arizona students in the basic skills of reading, writing, mathematics, history, science, and research.</p>
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Benjamin Franklin Charter School, in concert with parents, regards the development of children's academic abilities and knowledge as its primary focus and fundamental to its success. Enhancement areas of music, art, physical education, clubs and sports support the overall goal of a well-rounded education. The philosophy of Benjamin Franklin Charter School is to emphasize the teaching of basic skills and information. Its purposes are to:

- Train the intellect
- Teach skills
- Instill a sense of pride in and respect for self, others, and country
- Motivate students to strive toward standards of excellence in all fields of endeavor
- Equip students with the necessary skills to become decision makers and problem solvers
- Prepare students for the world outside by challenging them to compete for achievement of standards in the classroom
- Develop an atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance of all students regardless of physical appearance and culture

Secondary:

The mission of Benjamin Franklin High School is to encourage students to be intellectually curious - akin to the namesake of our school. Through intensive study of the true, the good, and the beautiful, students develop to their academic and personal potential. Additionally, the school will train the heart of students according to universally accepted and eternal virtues – understanding that the best education is only valuable upon a moral foundation. Thus, our students walk with integrity and character, knowing what it is to be a thoughtful citizen in a democratic-republic and a positive force in their community.

Benjamin Franklin High School will provide to our students and for our parents rigorous, classical, college preparatory education delivered in a safe, nurturing environment. Students, teachers and staff will be held to the highest standards of professionalism, personal conduct and character, understanding that what we teach implicitly is as important as what we teach explicitly. Our students will receive a comprehensive, content-rich, integrated 7th-12th grade education whereby each grade builds upon previous learning, culminating in students that excel academically, artistically and philosophically and thus are prepared to enter a four-year university and life. Academic excellence and personal character are developed and refined through the creation of sound habits and the perseverance to complete difficult tasks. Problem-solving opportunities and responsibility will be given to students in order that graduates may reflect on their experiences and learn from their successes as well as failures. Parents should understand that a charter school specializes in one pedagogy or methodology and does not provide, by design, all that a district school offers.

BFCS Learning Remediation Plan

Benjamin Franklin Charter Schools will implement programs and practices that improve Math and English & Language Arts assessment scores where needed and as described below:

Elementary Program (K-6th) Remediation Plan

Teacher Responsibility

The teacher is responsible for the mastery of each concept by all students. Teachers have minimal outside-of-classroom duties. Great effort is made to free up teachers to provide them with pre-teaching and re-teaching time for students with additional needs. Before school, during recess, and after school times should be utilized for tutoring and interventions aligned to meet student needs.

iSTEEP Testing

All students participate in regular iSTEEP screenings and diagnostics to evaluate growth and progress. During the first week of school, students will participate in a baseline screening in basic reading and



math skills. Students in grades who are found to be at-risk will then be further assessed to determine specific needs.

Intervention Groups

Intervention groups targeted to specific skills may then be provided in the school's intervention program. Students are screened and progress checks conducted once again at mid-year and at the end of the school year. Parents will be provided with the screening results and any plans for targeted skills practice and interventions.

State Testing

Students in grades 3-6 participate in state mandated testing (English Language Arts and Math) that takes place each spring. Students in grade 5 participate in AzSCI (science) testing as well. Parents will be notified when testing is to take place and will receive information regarding their child's performance when test scores are released.

Using Data to Promote Growth

Students also participate in monthly testing of basic skills that correlate to progress and success in the BFCS curriculum. Teachers monitor student progress each month and work collaboratively to assess data and tailor instruction to ensure the continued growth and success of each student across every subject area.

Before and After-school Tutoring

Before and after-school tutoring is offered by classroom teachers. Students who experience lack of progress, low grades, or struggle with concepts may be offered tutoring with the classroom teacher. Teachers will reach out to parents to invite students to tutoring sessions.

Child Find Process and the Child Study Team

Students who consistently struggle with growth despite classroom interventions may be referred to the Child Study Team via the Child Find Process for further evaluation and possible consideration for 504 Plan or Exceptional Student Services placement.

English Language Learners

English Language Learner students are identified through the Home Language Survey, completed by parents upon enrollment. These students take the AZELLA (the Arizona English Language Learner Assessment) to determine their eligibility to enroll in our EL Program. Benjamin Franklin has chosen the Pull-Out SEI Model to implement at our three elementary campuses and one JH/HS campus for students who are enrolled in the EL Program.

Questions or Concerns About Progress

Parents who have concerns with the progress of their child made at school may reach out to the teacher to schedule a conference.

Secondary Program (7th-12th) Remediation Plan

Teacher Responsibility

Each content teacher is responsible for the mastery of each concept by all students. Teachers have minimal outside-of-classroom duties. Great effort is made to free up teachers to provide them with pre-teaching and re-teaching time for students with additional needs. Before school, during conference (study hall), lunch and after school times should be utilized for tutoring and interventions aligned to meet student needs.

Ongoing Content Testing



All students participate in regular assessments covering material learned in class to evaluate growth and progress. Students who are found to be at-risk are flagged to participate in Student Support Study Hall where they receive targeted support and individual guidance from Academic Advisors and Administrators.

Student Support Program

Students who have been identified as at-risk are placed in the Student Support program. These students attend study hall with the Academic Advisors and Administrators. During this time the students are able to work on homework, study for exams, sign out to visit tutoring sessions with teachers and meet one on one with their advisor to review their academic progress. Plans are created on how to best support the student to get back on track with his/her studies.

Athletic Study Hall

Student athletes who are identified as ineligible for athletic games and practice due to grades are assigned to Athletic Study Hall until grades improve. Athletic Study Hall is managed by the Athletic Director and students receive tutoring from content and grade level teachers as well as meet individually with the Athletic Director to review grades and create a plan for improvement.

State Testing

Students in grades 7, 8 and 10 participate in state mandated AzM2 testing (English Language Arts and Math) that takes place each spring. Students in grade 11 participate in the ACT exam as part of the mandated state testing. Students in grade 8 and 11 participate in AzSCI (science) testing as well. Parents will be notified when testing is to take place and will receive information regarding their child's performance when test scores are released.

Classical Education Coaches

We have two Classical Education Coaches on campus that work with the academic team to support teachers. Our coaches conduct observations and then meet with teachers to discuss areas of strength as well as areas of improvement within the learning environment. They provide strategies and modeling to help the teachers grow in their instructional methods. These coaches also work with teachers to support struggling students. They provide guidance and techniques to meet the needs of their students and support the CST team with interventions as well.

Using Data to Promote Growth

Teachers monitor student progress through each specific unit related to the content and work collaboratively to assess data and tailor instruction to ensure the continued growth and success of each student across every subject area.

Tutoring

Before and after-school tutoring is offered by all classroom teachers. Students who experience lack of progress, low grades, or struggle with concepts may be offered tutoring with the classroom teacher; however all students can receive support as needed. Teachers will also reach out to parents to invite students to tutoring sessions as needed.

Conference Period

Each week the students have a conference period built into their schedules. Conference periods fall on the block days which are Wednesday and Thursday. During this time students are able to sign out of their current classroom and visit any of their teachers to receive targeted tutoring and support. Students can also use this time to complete homework, work on projects and make up exams to stay on top of their studies.

Child Find Process and the Child Study Team



Students who consistently struggle with growth despite classroom interventions may be referred to the Child Study Team via the Child Find Process for further evaluation and possible consideration for 504 Plan or Exceptional Student Services placement.

English Language Learners

English Language Learner students are identified through the Home Language Survey, completed by parents upon enrollment. These students take the AZELLA (the Arizona English Language Learner Assessment) to determine their eligibility to enroll in our EL Program. Benjamin Franklin has chosen the Pull-Out SEI Model to implement at our three elementary campuses and one JH/HS campus for students who are enrolled in the EL Program.

Questions or Concerns About Progress

Parents who have concerns with the progress of their child made at school may reach out to the teacher to schedule a conference.

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs

The social emotional needs of the students are met through the implementation of the BFCS Core and Roman Virtues program. The program is implemented through the use of daily presentations in a whole school format, quote memorization and discussion books, videos, interactive classroom displays, and curriculum connections, and other activities. The Virtues align with SEL competencies in the following ways:

Benjamin Franklin Charter School Virtue Development Program and SEL Alignment

Benjamin Franklin Charter School holds five Core Values for Teachers; Practice and Emulate Virtue, Be Intellectually Curious, Growth Mindset, Be Intentionally Positive, and Promote Civility. Part of the core value of Promote Civility is Virtue Development. This entails developing the students’ vision of virtue, character, and citizenship through the implementation of the Core Virtues/Roman Virtues programs. The daily promotion of character is part of the Arizona Department of Education’s Social and Emotional Learning competencies.

Core Virtue and SEL Correlation (Grades K-6)

Character Trait	Virtue	SEL Competency
Charity - act of helping others in need	Civic	Relationship skills
Citizenship/Responsibility - doing your part for the groups that make us whole	Civic	Responsible decision-making
Compassion/Empathy - feeling what others are feeling	Moral	Social awareness
Confidence – believing in one’s ability	Performance	Self-awareness
Courage - doing what is right when afraid	Moral	Responsible decision-making
Courtesy - showing respect through kindness	Moral	Social awareness
Creativity – turning new and imaginative ideas into reality	Intellectual	Responsible decision-making



Curiosity/Wonder - first steps to knowledge	Intellectual	Responsible decision-making
Determination – a fixed intention to achieve a desired end	Performance	Self-management
Diligence - working your hardest and doing your best	Performance	Self-management
Faithfulness - standing by those we love and serve	Moral	Relationship skills
Forgiveness - forget wrongs done to us	Moral	Relationship skills
Gratitude - thankfulness for gifts of life	Moral	Social awareness
Heroism - taking noble action for a good cause	Civic	Social awareness
Honesty - telling the truth	Moral	Responsible decision-making
Hope - trusting in right endings	Moral	Self-awareness
Humility - knowing that I am not perfect	Moral	Self-awareness
Independence – being independent in thoughts and action	Intellectual	Self-management
Joy - a feeling of great happiness	Moral	Self-awareness
Judgment – making decisions wisely towards good action	Intellectual	Responsible decision-making
Love of country - being devoted to our nation	Civic	Social awareness
Loyalty - being faithful to your ideals	Moral	Relationship Skills
Mercy - showing compassion to all	Moral	Social awareness
Perseverance/Resilience - commitment, hard work, patience and endurance	Performance	Self-management
Respect - treating others politely and kindly	Moral	Social awareness
Self-discipline - giving the best of ourselves	Performance	Self-management
Service - helping others unconditionally	Civic	Relationship skills



Teamwork/Cooperation	Performance	Relationship skills
Wisdom - knowledge of things that matter	Intellectual	Responsible decision-making

Roman Virtue and SEL Correlation (Grades 7-12)

Personal Virtues:

These are the qualities of life to which every citizen (and, ideally, everyone else) should aspire. They are the heart of the Via Romana — the Roman Way — and are thought to be those qualities which gave the Roman Republic the moral strength to conquer and civilize the world. Today, they are the rods against which we can measure our own behavior and character, and we can strive to better understand and practice them in our everyday lives.

Public Virtues:

In addition to the private virtues which were aspired to by individuals, Roman culture also strove to uphold virtues which were shared by all of society in common.

Roman Virtue		Character Trait	SEL Competency
Auctoritas	Personal	Spiritual Authority - The sense of one's social standing, built up through experience, Pietas, and Industria.	Social awareness
Clementia	Personal	Mercy - Mildness and gentleness.	Social awareness
Comitas	Personal	Humor - Ease of manner, courtesy, openness, and friendliness.	Relationship skills
Dignitas	Personal	Dignity - A sense of self-worth, personal pride.	Self-awareness
Felicitas	Public	Happiness, prosperity - A celebration of the best aspects of Roman society.	Social awareness

Fides	Public	Good Faith - Respect for the pledged word and the expressed intention.	Responsible decision making
Firmitas	Personal	Tenacity - Strength of mind, the ability to stick to one's purpose.	Self-management
Frugalitas	Personal	Frugality - Economy and simplicity of style, without being miserly.	Responsible decision making
Gravitas	Personal	Gravity - A sense of the importance of the matter at hand, responsibility and	Responsible decision making

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			earnestness.	
	Honestas	Personal	Respectability - The image that one presents as a respectable member of society.	Social awareness
	Humanitas	Personal	Humanity - Refinement, civilization, learning, and being cultured.	Social awareness
	Industria	Personal	Industriousness - Hard work.	Self-management
	Laetitia	Public	Joy, Gladness - The celebration of thanksgiving, often of the resolution of crisis.	Self-awareness
	Pietas	Personal	Dutifulness - a respect for the natural order socially, politically, and religiously. Includes the ideas of patriotism and devotion to others.	Social awareness
	Prudentia	Personal	Prudence - Foresight, wisdom, and personal discretion.	Self-management
	Salubritas	Personal	Wholesomeness - Health and cleanliness.	Responsible decision making
	Veri/Veritas	Personal	Truthfulness - Honesty in dealing with others.	Relationship skills
Other Needs (which may include student health and food services)	A trained health assistant is present on campus and available during school hours. Parents are responsible for providing food for their children when they are at school. If a student does not have food for the day, a meal can be provided by the school.			
Staff Needs:				
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs	<p>Principals and other administrators, including junior high and high school advisors will assess needs and determine the appropriate avenues for support.</p> <p>Instructional coaches provide monthly newsletters with guidance on self-care and SEL needs for staff members.</p> <p>Professional Development classes geared towards self-care and the social emotional support of self and others are regularly provided.</p> <p>Human resources provides a connection to pursue support, FMLA, PTO, insurance supports, referrals, and direction in seeking help and support from a variety of resources.</p> <p>Social committees on each campus provide interaction and activities designed to build school culture and sense of community.</p> <p>Prior to students returning to campus, all staff will be trained to consistently implement the COVID protocols with fidelity.</p> <p>Staff members have avenues to express concerns and request supports for needs via campus administrators and the human resources department.</p>			

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Other Needs

The LEA must **regularly, but no less frequently than every six months** (taking into consideration the timing of significant changes to CDC guidance on reopening schools), **review and, as appropriate, revise its plan** for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services **through September 30, 2023**

Date of Revision

May 1, 2023

Public Input

Describe the process used to seek public input, and how that input was taken into account in the revision of the plan:

Surveys:

Parent Experience Surveys:
Sent out in the Fall and Spring.
Staff Experience Surveys:
Sent out in the Fall and Spring.
Student Surveys:
Sent out in the Fall.

Governing Board Meetings:

Regular, public school governing board meetings are held with a call to public agenda item for any member of the public who wishes to comment before the board.

Clarity Email:

This email is provided to all stakeholders as a way to voice concerns, ask questions, and give feedback regarding all aspects of school operations. Emails are answered primarily by the Director of Education and other upper-administrative leadership team members.

Examples of revisions based on public input that prompted a revision of the mitigation plan:

1. PikMyKid: Parents rated pick up system Pik My Kid on a recent survey. PikMyKid was implemented to enforce distancing during pick up after school. Comments indicated that on two campuses, this was not a program that they wanted to continue. Two campuses did not renew PikMyKid while the third campus continued on with it the following school year.
2. Face Covering Policy: When the Governor lifted the mask mandate in schools, we responded with communication to our stakeholders that same day based on the urgency expressed by many parents to make a change to the face coverings policy.

U.S. Department of Education Interim Final Rule (IFR)

(1) LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

- (a) An LEA must describe in its plan under section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services—
 - (i) 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.
 - (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 the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments.
 - (F) Diagnostic and screening testing.
 - (G) Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities.
 - (H) Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies.
 - (I) Coordination with State and local health officials.
- (ii) how it 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.

(b)(i) During the period of the ARP ESSER award established in section Start Printed Page 212022001(a) of the ARP Act, an LEA must regularly, but no less frequently than every six months (taking into consideration the timing of significant changes to CDC guidance on reopening schools), review and, as appropriate, revise its plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services.

- (ii) In determining whether revisions are necessary, and in making any revisions, the LEA must seek public input and take such input into account
- (iii) If at the time the LEA revises its plan the CDC has updated its guidance on reopening schools, the revised plan must address the extent to which the LEA has adopted policies, and describe any such policies, for each of the updated safety recommendations.

(c) If an LEA developed a plan prior to enactment of the ARP Act that meets the statutory requirements of section 2001(i)(1) and (2) of the ARP Act but does not address all the requirements in paragraph (a), the LEA must, pursuant to paragraph (b), revise and post its plan no later than six months after receiving its ARP ESSER funds to meet the requirements in paragraph (a).

(d) An LEA's plan under section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services must be—

- (i) In an understandable and uniform format;
- (ii) To the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, be orally translated for such parent; an
- (iii) Upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent