

**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](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\\_FINAL\\_b0cd6833f6f46e03ba2d97d30aff953260028045f9ef3b18ea602db4b32b1d99.pdf](https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/05/ESSER.GEER_FAQs_5.26.21_745AM_FINAL_b0cd6833f6f46e03ba2d97d30aff953260028045f9ef3b18ea602db4b32b1d99.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](mailto: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](mailto:EmergencyServices@cde.ca.gov).



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.

Rocketship CA has developed regional health and safety policies grounded in the CDC's Prevention Strategies to Reduce Transmission of SARS-CoV-2 in Schools and compliant with CDPH's COVID-19 Public Health Guidance for K-12 Schools in California. In developing our plan we continue to monitor and incorporate the most current information from the CDC, CDPH, CDE and local county departments of health and education. In the 2022-2023 school year Rocketship CA adopted the California Department of Health's Testing Framework for K-12 schools.

Additionally, Rocketship CA created and publicly posted in a special COVID section of the Rocketship website Health and Safety Protocols for students, staff and visitors to our campuses. In the 2020-2021 school year, reopening plans were created and submitted to County Offices of Education.

The full plan, including family-facing materials and operational application to daily school routines can be found at <https://www.rocketshipschools.org/covid19-ca/#1614886772587-551d5d61-5bae>.

On February 28, 2023, Governor Gavin Newsom ended the COVID-19 State of Emergency. In line with guidance from the CDC, CDPH, CDE and local county departments of health and education, many prevention strategies such as required vaccination and required masking that Rocketship CA had adopted were ended over the course of the 22-23 school year.

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 food services.

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.

Rocketship's priority will be keeping students and staff learning and teaching in our buildings this year. However, in the event that isolation, quarantine, or future school closures are required, we will ensure continuity of services.

Students who must flex into distance learning will benefit from our experience building high-quality virtual learning options in 20-21. Depending on the extent of the exclusion/closure, students will either learn asynchronously with teacher check ins, or synchronously with their whole cohort. We will ensure that virtual instruction meets all requirements associated with fulfilling the needs of students with disabilities and English learners. For students with IEPs, we will implement instruction aligned with the Emergency Contingency Plan prepared during IEP meetings. Based on student needs, we will hold an IEP meeting to update elements of the program and Emergency Contingency plan.

For English Learners, daily Designated English Language Development will continue to be protected in the student's instructional schedule. Teachers will prioritize Integrated English Language development, by planning scaffolds at the students instructional level, as well as opportunities to produce language during virtual instruction. In the event that a multilingual student engages in asynchronous instruction, we will leverage the Seesaw platform so that students have audio instructions and can select different modes of communication to complete tasks. We also plan to supplement English Language Development, by using the online platform Lexia English, for additional speaking and listening opportunities throughout the day.

At Rocketship we believe that school provided breakfast and lunch enable children to continue to get healthy and nutritious meals, maintain a healthy immune system and focus on their studies. It is essential that students have the opportunity to have school provided meals no matter their learning environment. When on campus students will have their breakfast and lunches in their classrooms with their designated cohort.

During distance learning or quarantine due to COVID-19, our students will continue to access free breakfast and lunch. Schools will work with families of students in these learning environments to ensure that, at the very least, they always have meals available for pick up at their school. Parents will be informed of our meal program plans during student and family orientations as well as daily reminders during arrival and dismissal. We will also make sure to check in on families' needs during conference and Care Corps calls.

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.

Throughout the pandemic, Rocketship has been deeply committed to gathering feedback and input from stakeholders regarding our policies, practices, and actions. Our current plans and accompanying policies are informed by the last few years of engagement with families, staff, and local authorities. Families have responded to several surveys and provided comments via parent coffees/Cafecitos, community meetings and orientation events. Staff have also been surveyed multiple times, and our school leaders engaged staff members individually over the course of the spring regarding reopening plans. We will continue that same type of engagement as we enter and proceed through the school year.

We will continue to deeply engage staff and families as the school year continues, the public health context evolves, and we receive additional national and state guidance as we know comfort levels and community norms will continue to evolve over the course of the year.

In addition, the LEA provides the following assurances:

**X** 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:

**X** The LEA sought public comment in the development of its plan and took those public comments into account in the development of its plan.

**X** The LEA will periodically review and, as appropriate revise its plan, at least every six months.

**X** 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.

**X** 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.

**X** The LEA has created its plan in an understandable and uniform format.

**X** The LEA's plan is, to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand, or if not practicable, orally translated.

**X** 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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