pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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 Thorough an Integrated System of Support
- PA Department of Health - COVID-19 in Pennsylvania

Health and Safety Plan Summary: Pennsylvania Distance Learning Charter School

Initial Effective Date: July 23, 2021

Date of Last Review: May 18, 2022

Date of Last Revision: June 13, 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?

   As a public cyber charter school, Pennsylvania Distance Learning Charter School (PDLCS) will continue to offer online learning for all enrolled students, as outlined in the PDLCS Charter. Students do not report to the school building. The School will operate with all staff reporting to the office a minimum of 3 days per week, and working remotely for the remaining work week.

   The health and safety of PDLCS's families, staff and contracted service providers is paramount. Decisions regarding in-person services for special education students shall be made on an individual basis by each student's IEP Team. However, no in-person services will be permitted, unless the health and safety guidelines of this plan, together with applicable county, state and federal mandates regarding health and safety are followed during the provision of any in-person services.

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?

   As a public cyber charter school, PDLCS will continue to offer online learning for all enrolled students, as outlined in the PDLCS Charter. Students do not report to the school building. The School will operate with all staff reporting to the office a minimum of 3 days per week, and working remotely for the remaining work week.

   The health and safety of PDLCS's families, staff and contracted service providers is paramount. Decisions regarding in-person services for special education students shall be made on an individual basis by each student's IEP Team. However, no in-person services will be permitted, unless the health and safety guidelines of this plan, together with applicable county, state and federal mandates regarding health and safety are followed during the provision of any in-person services.

   The school nurse and/or assistant to the nurse (a certified RN) will be available to all students and staff as a resource to address any health related needs. The school

nurse is available during the school day from 7:30am to 3:30pm. The school community has access to the online School Nurse's Office that houses a wealth of information on health and safety, as well links to available resources. The School Nurse's Office is located through the Student Information System (SIS) in the Parent/Student Resource Center.

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;	- Vaccinated and Unvaccinated staff and school visitors will not be required to wear masks. - Masking requirements may be amended as needed based on community spread metrics and recommendations as shared by the County and State Health Departments, and CDC Guidance. - Staff and Visitors with complex needs may contact the school nurse to address those needs when visiting the school office or school sanctioned events (testing, field trips, etc.). - When traveling for school business, staff, students, and families in attendance will follow the guidance set forth by the establishment where the event is taking place.
b. Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding) ;	- Work areas are to be structured to ensure social distancing where feasible and appropriate, consistent with applicable state and federal laws and health and safety guidelines.
c. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;	- Masking will be voluntary, regardless of vaccination status. - Masking requirements may be amended as needed based on community spread metrics and recommendations as shared by the County and State Health Departments, and CDC Guidance. - Hand Washing Reminders have been posted in common areas within the school building. - Hand sanitizing stations have been setup in 28 locations throughout the building, including the entrances of the building, common areas, restrooms, elevators, and at copy machines.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
d. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation;	- The contracted cleaning services company follows agreed upon schedule below for cleaning and disinfecting beyond regular nightly janitorial services: o Building wide Environclean Surface Disinfecting will occur quarterly throughout the year. o Building wide disinfecting fogger will be applied 6 times per year. o Emergency Disinfecting services are available if needed. - The school's landlord uses HEPA air filters and maintains the HVAC systems regularly for air quality. - Cleaning and disinfectant spray, paper towels, and disinfectant wipe will be made available to all staff members to maintain cleaning and disinfecting of his or her work station, or for use in common areas such as conference rooms. Hand sanitizing stations have been setup in 28 locations throughout the building, at the entrances of the building, common areas, restrooms, elevators, and at copy machines.
e. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State and local health departments;	- The school nurse and/or assistant to the nurse (a certified RN) are available to students, families, and staff during the school day from 7:30am to 3:30pm. The school community has access to the online School Nurse's Office that houses a wealth of information on health and safety, as well links to available resources. The School Nurse's Office is located through the Student Information System (SIS) in the Parent/Student Resource Center. - Prior to departing for work each day, all staff members must complete a self-medical check. The following should be observed and monitored: o Temperatures over 100.4 degrees o Chills o Dry cough with shortness of breath o Sore Throat - Should any staff member exhibit symptoms listed above, he/she is required to notify the Human Resources Coordinator (via phone call) use a personal day and stay at home. Consult with his/her/their doctor or telemedicine provider regarding whether or not a COVID test is required. o https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html - Staff members who feel sick while on site are to self-isolate in the closest office, teaching room, or conference room. Contact the Human Resources Coordinator

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	immediately by telephone to coordinate with the School Nurse on a safe plan for care and exiting of the building. Staff members or a family member diagnosed with COVID, are not to share this information with colleagues. Notify the Human Resources Coordinator immediately. Privacy of all individuals must be maintained. Measures will be taken to ensure that other staff members on site are provided with a safe working environment. The HR Coordinator will work with the staff member on the available leave options, reporting back to work requirements, etc. **Staff members unable to report to the office for any reason on their assigned in-office days must use available Personal Leave.** If a staff member has been in close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID, please notify the Human Resources Coordinator and follow the protocol set forth by the CDC. CDC guidance determining whether or not a person has been in close contact, and the current recommendations for actions related to being in close contact can be found at https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/determine-close-contacts.html Staff members that choose to quarantine ***must*** utilize personal leave time when not reporting to the office on days they are scheduled to be on-site.
f. Diagnostic and screening testing;	- The school nurse, health care providers and contracted health and insurance brokers will provide information to students, families and staff on diagnostic and screening testing as needed. PDLCS will not facilitate those tests.
g. Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities';	- PDLCS will provide information to students, families and staff about available vaccination clinics in local area, as appropriate. - PDLCS will not provide or facilitate vaccinations.
h. Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and	- In the event that an IEP Team determines the necessity for an in-person service to take place, CDC guidelines and this plan must be followed. Work areas are to be structured to ensure social distancing where feasible and appropriate, consistent with applicable state and federal laws and health and safety guidelines. Professional learning will be available for parents, students, and contracted service providers for safety and social distancing protocols. All parties must sign an affirmation sheet stating they watched the learning videos and will enact the measures identified in the safety plan, including, but not limited to cleaning, disinfecting, all areas and items used, hand sanitizing, and wearing of masks or shields in accordance with guidelines.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
i. Coordination with state and local health officials.	- Coordination with state and local health officials will occur through the School Nurse's office.
j. Support for staff with Confirmed COVID diagnosis	- A staff member who has a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 or a variant of COVID-19 from a PCR test must supply the Human Resources Coordinator with a dated copy of the PCR test results. At-home test results will not be accepted. - Upon confirmation by the Human Resources Coordinator of a positive PCR test result, the staff member will be eligible for a maximum of five (5) paid Confirmed COVID sick leave days without depletion of available personal or vacation days. - Staff members are eligible for a maximum of five (5) paid Confirmed COVID sick leave days in the 2022-23 school year. All additional leave will need to follow the *2022-23 Employee Handbook* guidelines.

Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for **Pennsylvania Distance Learning Charter School** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on **March 13, 2023**.

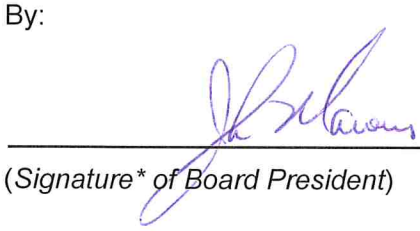
The plan was approved by a vote of:

✓ **Yes**

____ **No**

Affirmed on: **March 13, 2023**

By:



(*Signature* of Board President*)

John Marous

(*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.