

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



Entity ID	CTDS	LEA NAME
4313	078634000	Step Up Schools, Inc.

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	Y	<p>We will follow CDC recommended guidelines regarding masks.</p> <p>All staff are trained in the correct use of cloth face coverings/masks.</p> <p>Posters at the school entrance strongly encourage those who are not fully vaccinated to wear a cloth face covering/mask.</p>
Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)	Y	<p>Protocols cover spacing/safe etiquette in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• classrooms;</li> <li>• hallways;</li> <li>• restrooms;</li> <li>• lunch areas</li> </ul> <p>Staff training covered all aspects of the school's mitigation measures.</p> <p>Plexi-glass dividers were installed, assigned seats and lunch, water fountains replaced with refillable water bottle stations, social distancing required.</p>
Handwashing and respiratory etiquette	Y	<p>Purchased individual handwashing stations for the classrooms.</p> <p>Educational posters are placed around the school and in the restrooms detailing the proper method for handwashing.</p> <p>Wherever possible, no touch soap dispensers have been installed. In addition, no touch hand sanitizer stations are located throughout the campus and hand sanitizer is located in every classroom, as well as the front office.</p>
Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation	Y	<p>We have a detailed protocol for sanitizing throughout the school day, including with electro-static sprayers, and sanitizing each night.</p> <p>Teaching staff and classroom aides are responsible for sanitizing their classroom, on a specified schedule, during the school day.</p>

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		<p>Custodial staff are responsible for cleaning and sanitizing high traffic and touch points, on a specified schedule, throughout the school day.</p> <p>Deep cleaning will take place in a classroom where a positive COVID case is reported.</p> <p>Specific virus cleaning products provided by the county are used daily. This product is used by the staff in the classrooms and by the custodial staff.</p>
Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments	Y	<p>We are following guidelines from Maricopa County Health.</p> <p>A specific protocol for reporting exposures/positive cases to local/state agencies and receiving guidance from local/state agencies.</p> <p>Protocol for staff and students for isolation on campus and isolation/quarantine at home.</p>
Diagnostic and screening testing	N	
Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities	N	Information is provided to families re: vaccine availability in our neighborhood. We are also working to schedule a vaccination clinic at the school.
Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies	Y	Accommodations for students with disabilities will be made and needs for students with disabilities will be met. We are meeting any needs identified on an individual case by case.
Coordination with State and local health officials	Y	We are complying with all CDC and County recommendations. Our school nurse is the liaison with local and state health officials.

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?

We have been in person schooling throughout the pandemic. Our classrooms have remained open. Students are getting full academic instruction and support five days per week. Additional interventions are provided to help close the learning gap due to absenteeism. We have hired an Early Literacy Coach to help facilitate these interventions.

### Students' Needs:

Academic Needs	<p>We have been in person schooling throughout the pandemic. Our classrooms have remained open. Students are getting full academic instruction and support five days per week.</p> <p>Additional interventions are provided to help close the learning gap due to absenteeism. We have hired an Early Literacy Coach to help facilitate these interventions.</p>
Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs	Implemented new SEL curriculum Character Strong. Also started parent SEL program. Social interaction among children in grades K-

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	<p>12 is important not only for emotional wellbeing, but also for children’s language, communication, social, and interpersonal skills. Some students may have experienced social isolation and increased anxiety while not physically being in school due to COVID-19. Resuming in-person instruction can support students’ social and emotional wellbeing. Schools can provide a foundation for socialization among children. When children are out of school, they may be separated from their social network and peer-to-peer social support. Schools can facilitate the social and emotional health of children through curricular lessons that develop students’ skills to recognize and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, appreciate others’ perspectives, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.</p>
<p>Other Needs (which may include student health and food services)</p>	<p>We will meet and discuss any student needs on an individual basis. We continue to offer our weekend food program for nutritional support. We will serve individually plated meals and students will eat outside on the tables. Seated markings have been painted on all tables so students will have adequate space when eating breakfast and lunch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Use disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes).</li> <li>o If food is offered at any event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each attendee instead of a buffet or family-style meal.</li> </ul> <p>Students who rely on key services, such as school food programs, special education and related services (e.g., speech and social work services, occupational therapy), and after school programs are put at greater risk for poor health and educational outcomes when school buildings are closed and they are unable to access such school health programs and services. During periods of school building closures, students had limited access to many of these critical services, potentially widening educational and health disparities and inequities.</p>
<p><b>Staff Needs:</b></p>	
<p>Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs</p>	<p>Daily staff check-ins and weekly meetings with staff. Implement flexible sick leave policies and practices that enable staff to stay home when they are sick, have been exposed, or caring for someone who is sick.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Examine and revise policies for leave, telework, and employee compensation.</li> <li>o Leave policies should be flexible and not punish people for taking time off, and should allow sick employees to stay home and away from co-workers. Leave policies should also account for employees who need to stay home with their children if there are school or childcare closures, or to care for sick family members.</li> <li>o Develop policies for return-to-school after COVID-19 illness.</li> </ul> <p>Back-Up Staffing Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Monitor absenteeism of students and employees, cross-train staff, and create a roster of trained back-up staff.</li> </ul> <p>Staff Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Train staff on all safety protocols.</li> <li>o Conduct training virtually or ensure that social distancing is maintained during training.</li> </ul>

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Other Needs	We will meet and discuss any needs on an individual basis.
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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**

<b>Date of Revision</b>	<b>10/1/2022</b>
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### Public Input

Describe the process used to seek public input, and how that input was taken into account in the revision of the plan:	Survey was sent home to families. Information relayed to us from the surveys was used to develop our plan. Per the survey administered, the majority of our clientele prefer their children back in-school and on-campus. We were very successful in preventing the spread of COVID during school year 2020-21. No teachers or staff members ever tested positive for COVID. We had several students that did test positive. We instituted our COVID protocols and these students remained home until testing negative or meeting the quarantine guidelines. We cannot guarantee that children will not be exposed to any illness while on campus, much less COVID-19, but scientific data suggest that younger children tend to transmit and contract this particular disease at far lesser rates and with limited risk of critical impact.
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## 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