

# Odyssey Charter Schools

## American Rescue Plan Act Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund (ESSER III) Safe Return to In-Person Instruction

### 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/BILLS117hr1319enr.pdf>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 School Operation Guidance: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schoolschildcare/operation-strategy.html#anchor\\_1616080023247](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schoolschildcare/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/guidanceuseseseinvestment.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



our school community. Odyssey Charter Schools has established safety measures already in place and will comply with the State's public health requirements for schools. We continue to work closely with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) and Pasadena Public Health Department (PPHD).

Odyssey Charter Schools continues to update and revise all health and safety policies and procedures per the guidance of Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), California Public Health Department (CPDH), Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) and Pasadena Public Health Department (PPHD) to ensure the health and safety of all students and staff. Current public health conditions in Los Angeles County, with rising case rates, require full implementation of the safety measures outlined below and in the school's policies; the school will continue to closely monitor local public health conditions and coordinate with state and local health authorities on adjusting its practices to meet current conditions.

1. Key Practices to Reduce Spread of COVID-19
2. Key Strategies to Ensure Continuity of Services

## **Key Practices to Reduce Spread of COVID-19 in Schools**

For the 2021-22 school year, the PUSD has updated and will implement the following key prevention strategies, based on CDC, CDPH, PPHD, and Cal/OSHA guidance for COVID-19.

### **Universal Wearing of Masks**

Universal face coverings decrease risk and will be required indoors per CDPH face mask guidance.

### **Facilities and Physical Distancing**

Consistent with CDPH K-12 School Guidance, in-person instruction can occur safely without minimum physical distancing requirements when other mitigation strategies (e.g., masking) are implemented. Per CDPH, due to the obstacles it would present to California schools' full reopening, physical distancing is recommended when possible but not required at this time. Our campuses will use verbal announcements, signage, and visual cues to promote physical distancing when and where possible.

#### *Cleaning, Sanitation and Classroom Environments*

Intensified cleaning and sanitation procedures have been put into effect at all schools and work locations, with regular cleaning schedules established at each site. Frequent cleaning and disinfecting of touched surfaces, (e.g., counters, shelving, displays) through disposable disinfectant wipes, cleaner, or sprays that are effective against COVID-19. Upgraded ventilation to include MERV – 13 filters, air purifiers for all classrooms and classroom furniture is arranged to support physical distancing where feasible.

#### *Stable Groups*

Per CDPH guidance, it is recommended to have a group with fixed membership that stays together without mixing with any other groups for activities with no limit on size or number of students per stable group. Teachers and staff can work with multiple groups and classrooms

without a maximum limit. However, for the start of the school year, our campuses will create grade level stable groupings for all meals and recesses schedules.

#### *School Meals*

All students have the opportunity for breakfast and lunch meals which will be eaten outside as much as possible. All the serving lines have been equipped with plexiglass shields and required signage for physical distancing. Staff will continue to wear masks and practice all safety standards in the preparation and serving of the meals.

#### *Campus Visitors and Volunteers*

At the start of the school year and dependent on public health conditions, visitors and volunteers to school campuses will be limited to those providing essential and direct services. All visitors, volunteers and direct support services are required to use a face mask, sign in before entry and screen for symptoms.

#### *Meetings and School Events*

At the start of the school year and dependent on public health conditions, IEP's, SPSST's, Parent/Teacher meetings, Back to School Night shall be conducted virtually. School events are on hold pending health conditions and will be conducted outdoors whenever possible.

### **Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette**

All students, employees and campus visitors are asked to follow these safety guidelines:

- Wash hands frequently for 20 seconds with soap and water — especially before and after eating, after coughing or sneezing, after sharing items in class and before and after using the restroom. All classrooms contain sinks and outdoor handwashing stations are placed throughout campus to encourage and ensure hand washing by all students and staff. In addition, hand sanitizer is available at dedicated locations throughout campus.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or elbow.
- Use tissues to wipe your nose.

### **Health Screenings**

Staying home when sick with COVID-19 is essential to keep COVID-19 infections out of schools and prevent spread to others. Students, teachers, and staff who have symptoms of infectious illness, such as influenza (flu) or COVID-19, should stay home and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care.

All students and employees will conduct a self-check for COVID-19 symptoms prior to arrival. Upon arrival, visual checks, health screenings and temperature checks will be implemented prior to entering campus.

### **Diagnostic and Screening Testing**

Odyssey Charter Schools provide access to testing for all individuals who are exposed to a COVID-19 case, and in the case of multiple infections or a major outbreak within the school as the basis for further

control measures. In addition, implementation of weekly workplace testing for employees will provide opportunities for COVID-19 Testing to reduce the risk of transmission and to prevent outbreaks.

### **Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine**

Contact Tracing Contact tracing protocols have been established to follow up with every reported COVID-19 case among our staff and students. We follow the LACDPH and PPHD Guidance for isolation and quarantine in cases of COVID19 symptoms, positive tests, or close contact. Our trained staff interview multiple individuals in every positive case to identify any potential close contacts, dates of potential exposure, and locations that need to be deep cleaned. We notify the affected individuals, the LACDPH and PPHD, support staff, and our custodial team, to respond as quickly as possible in support of our staff, students, and community.

- Quarantine (send home) everyone who came into close contact (within 6 feet for a cumulative 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, regardless of whether a mask was worn) with someone with confirmed COVID-19 within the past 10 days. They must maintain quarantine at home for 10 days, regardless of any interim test results.

In Los Angeles County, if you have been in close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 unless you are fully vaccinated for COVID-19 you are required to:

- Quarantine - stay home and separate yourself from others for 10 days and monitor your health for 14 days
- Follow the Health Officer Quarantine Order along with the steps below
- It is still recommended that you get tested for COVID-19 if you have been vaccinated and come into close contact
- You do not need to quarantine or get tested if you have no symptoms AND you either:
  - Are fully vaccinated for COVID-19. This means 2 weeks have passed since your second dose in a 2-dose vaccine series or 2 weeks have passed since a single-dose vaccine.
  - OR have recovered from laboratory confirmed COVID-19 in the past 3 months (90 days). This means you had a positive COVID-19 viral test (swab or saliva) test and you completed isolation.

### **Vaccinations to school communities**

Odyssey Charter Schools will continue to implement a Flu Vaccination Program, COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ and partnership with LACDPH and PPHD supported education and promotion of vaccine education in our community for all who are eligible via email, school weekly communications, and town hall meetings.

## **Key Strategies to Ensure Continuity of Services**

Odyssey Charter School is committed to providing continuity of services when students and their families are impacted due COVID-19 exposure. This includes but is 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 and which take into consideration the needs of students with disabilities and English learners.

The following goals ensure continuity of instruction in any format: in-person, hybrid, or full distance as we navigate COVID-19 for the 2021-2022 school year. As Odyssey Charter Schools prepares for a full return to in-person learning, the planning and implementation of our recent distance learning and hybrid models, positions the organization to navigate future interruptions to in-person learning.

- Clear and consistent curriculum expectations, technology platforms, and schedules to ensure the seamless transition between in-person, hybrid, or full distance
- Design and delivery of high quality learning programs offers a predictable school day balanced with social emotional support, small group instructions and interventions that support the individual learning needs of our students.
- Design and delivery of high-quality professional development to teachers and support staff
- Director of Student Support Services ensure tiered academic and social-emotional resources for students
- Increase in personnel to include full-time and part-time Teacher Assistants to support the implementation of intervention/tutoring for unduplicated students, English Learners and students with disabilities
- Enhancement and resources in K-2 Supplemental Phonics Program to accelerate student academic proficiency in reading and robust guided reading kits
- Increase and improve services to the unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth
- Social Emotional Wellbeing supports for all grades levels thorough restorative practices with increased supports through Student Support Counselor and school based counseling services
- CareSolace supports teleherapy to ensure students and families have access to mental health counselors. CareSolace is a confidential online concierge service that allows students, families, and staff to access local mental health programs and counseling services that have been vetted by Care Solace to ensure accreditation, safety, and accessibility. Care Solace has a live 24/7 concierge line to assist families in finding local mental health-related programs and services, and access to the service will continue throughout this school year.
- Procurement of additional chromebooks to ensure there are age-appropriate devices available for all students.
- Improve the preparedness and our on-going effort and response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Students with specialized assistive technology requirements are being distributed the requisite devices and software.
- Maintain use of Instructional Platforms: Google Classroom, Seesaw, i-Ready, and Zoom
- Principals, Director of Student Support and Special Education Directors work with grade levels collaborating on addressing EL needs and the needs of students with disabilities and 504 plans

### **Exposure Management and Temporary Class or School Closure**

Odyssey's Exposure Management Plan required by the Pasadena Public Health Department. The criteria for assigning an individual class or school from in-person learning to temporary distance learning mode is recommended based on the number of cases and stable groups impacted, which suggest that active in-class or in-school transmission is occurring. Closure will be done in consultation with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LACDPH) and Pasadena Public Health Department (PPHD),

To ensure continuity of services in cases where our Covid-19 Compliance Team identifies need for an individual student to isolate or quarantine due to Covid-19 exposure or testing positive, the following steps are planned:

- Goggle Classroom, Seesaw and i-Ready learning platforms will remain in place for school year 2021-22, allowing students to access weekly assignments provided by teachers virtually if they are required to isolate or quarantine at home.
- Designated staff will manage services for quarantined students and will provide information to students and family on quarantine or isolation procedures; access to food, health, mental health and social services; and instructions for accessing chromebooks or WiFi connectivity as needed.
- Curbside meals will be provided for student
- Student and family will be connected to mental health and social services for supports
- In cases where an entire class has close contact exposure to a positive COVID-19 case , students will quarantine at home and classes will be conducted virtually by teacher if not symptomatic, or by substitute teacher. If a determination includes school closure, a temporary “distance learning” mode will be activated for the school site.
- In the event *Students with Disabilities* must be medically quarantined or isolated, case carriers will contact family to discuss virtual service delivery and coordinate with service providers.
- In the event an *English Learner* student is required to quarantine, the Director of Student Support Services will collaborate with the teacher to tailor support based on the assignments. Students in quarantine will be invited to virtual tutoring and English Language Development sessions.

### **Classroom Exposure or School Closure**

In cases where an entire class has close contact exposure to a positive COVID-19 case, students will quarantine at home and classes will be conducted virtually by teacher if not symptomatic, or by substitute teacher if they are. Determination of need for classroom or school closure will be done in consultation with LACDPH and PPHD.

If an entire class has exposure to positive COVID-19 cases, students will quarantine at home and learning will be delivered per our distance learning model. If a determination includes school closure, a temporary “distance learning” model will be activated for the school site.

### **Stakeholder Engagement**

Stakeholder engagement has long been a value and strength in Odyssey Charter Schools and is critical to the success of our organization. All stakeholders bring a substantial body of experience, knowledge, skills and talents that enrich the school and the learning experience of each child. Fortunately, we had a strong foundation in established forms of communications; however, at the onset of the pandemic we made a concentrated effort to improve our outreach and communications strategies to ensure we were expanding our effort to solicit stakeholder feedback. To the largest extent possible, feedback obtained throughout the year has been integrated into the considerations used by Odyssey Charter Schools staff to prepare for return to in-person instruction and to provide feedback.

When designing and developing our SRIPICS, we analyzed and reflected on our communication strategies and surveys conducted throughout the pandemic. We then held specific meetings via zoom and town hall zooms with our stakeholder groups and a recording of those meetings and surveys were sent to all

stakeholders after each meeting to ensure all stakeholders had an opportunity to provide feedback throughout our response to the pandemic.

Below is a partial list of community engagement forums and activities:

- The Safe Return to In Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan was presented to the community at our August 4, 2021 Town Hall meeting and to our Governing Board on August 5, 2021 for community feedback.
- Reopening Taskforce established to create a high-quality, comprehensive educational experience whether in person or distance learning.
- Surveys conducted throughout the year as a forum to gather stakeholder input and seek community input.
- Town Hall meetings via Zoom to engage and provide opportunities for community questions, comments, concerns and feedback. Meetings were recorded and shared with all stakeholders to provide access to information.
- Governing Board Meetings and Special Governing Board meetings included presentations on COVID-19 to discuss reopening plans, health and safety updates and provide community input
- Families participated in a reopening surveys in March 2021 to gauge in-person instruction plans and to help the shape the development of educational options
- Odyssey Charter School re-opened to in-person instruction via a hybrid model on March 22, 2021

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 is the appropriate contact for any questions or concerns about the aforementioned plan.

Executive Director Lauren O'Neill is responsible for the development, submission and amending of this plan.

Email contact: [laurenoneill@gmail.com](mailto:laurenoneill@gmail.com)

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