



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: Universal Vare Charter School

Initial Effective Date: July 29, 2020

Date of Last Review: April 20, 2021

Date of Last Revision: May 18, 2021

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?

The most up-to-date guidelines from the CDC for the opening of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning state that LEA's should prioritize the following: promoting vaccination; consistent and correct mask use; physical distancing; screening tests to promptly identify cases, clusters, and outbreaks; ventilation; handwashing and respiratory etiquette; staying home when sick and getting tested; contact tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantine; and cleaning and disinfection.

Universal Vare has implemented the mitigation policies and practices identified below to support the mitigation and prevention of SARS-CoV-2 transmission in school:

Promote vaccination

Universal Vare held virtual information sessions about vaccine efficacy and safety. Sessions were held for teachers, staff, students and their family members. Universal Vare will continue to hold information sessions to encouraging vaccine trust and confidence. Universal Vare has also provided information teachers, staff, students, and their families with resources to inform them where they can get vaccinated against COVID-19 in their community.

In March 2021 Universal Vare partnered with the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia which offered to provide COVID-19 vaccinations to all school staff. Each staff member received an invitation to register for, and to receive, the vaccine.

Consistent and Correct Mask Use

Universal Vare requires that teachers, staff, and students consistently and correctly wear a mask regardless of their vaccination status when indoors. Universal Vare also recommends and strongly encourages that masks be worn in crowded outdoor settings or during activities that involve sustained close contact, such as sports.

Teachers, staff, and students who cannot wear a mask, or cannot safely wear a mask due to a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.) will receive reasonable accommodations in accordance with the ADA. Subject to the aforementioned regarding disability accommodations all students and staff are required to consistently and correctly wear masks while utilizing school buses or other transportation. Universal Vare will provide masks to teachers, staff, and students who arrive without wearing a mask. No disciplinary action will be taken against a student



who does not have a mask.

Physical distancing

Universal Vare has surveyed its classrooms and determined that it is able to maintain at least 3 feet of physical distance between students within classrooms. Physical distancing will be combined with universal indoor mask wearing screening testing, cohorting, improved ventilation, frequent handwashing, temperature check stations, and policies which encourage teachers, staff, and students to stay home when sick with symptoms of infectious illness including COVID-19. Buildings and facilities will be deep cleaned regularly to help reduce transmission risk.

Screening Testing

Universal Vare will routinely test teachers, staff, and students. Testing will include screening testing and symptomatic testing. Teachers, staff and students will be tested to maintain a low positivity rate to minimize in-school transmission by identifying positive cases and quickly initiating prevention and control measures. Universal Vare has partnered with the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia which has provided testing training and supplies. Teachers and staff will be tested weekly. Special population students who are students at higher risk of infection due to the inability to wear masks or to independently maintain social distancing will be tested weekly. Students engaging in sports and other extracurricular activities such as close contact team sports, indoor sports, and other indoor extracurricular activities (i.e., those involving singing or close contact group activities), will be tested weekly. Otherwise, students will be tested: at the beginning of the academic year upon return to school; upon return to school after the Thanksgiving holiday; upon return to school after the Winter break; and, upon return to school after Spring break.

Universal Vare has developed a COVID Positive Result Response Protocol which specifies the timing and method of communicating positive test results to the affected school community while maintaining confidentiality and protecting the identity of the infected person. Universal Vare has also developed and implemented quarantine, isolation, cohort and class quarantine, grade level and school closure policies and procedures depending on the number of cases in accordance with Pennsylvania and local recommendations.

Ventilation

Universal Vare has engaged the services of electrical and HVAC contractors to update and improve ventilation in accordance with CDC recommendations for airflow and exchange. During transportation, windows will be open or cracked if doing so does not pose a safety risk.

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

Universal Vare will provide adequate handwashing supplies and requires schools to establish, implement, and monitor regular and consistent hand washing breaks. In all instances in which handwashing is not possible, hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol will be provided for teachers, staff, and students who can safely use hand



sanitizer. Hand sanitizers will be stored away and out of sight of young children. Hand sanitizer will be used only with adult supervision for children under 6 years of age.

Staying Home When Sick and Getting Tested

Universal Vare has and will notify teachers and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19 to stay home and be referred to their healthcare provider for testing and care. Universal Vare has developed policies which permit, to the extent practical, possible, and reasonable, remote work for affected teachers, staff, and students. Teachers, staff, and students who become sick at school will be required to leave the building immediately. Students who become sick or symptomatic at school will be quarantined in a separate room and their parent or caregiver will be notified that the student must be retrieved from school immediately.

Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine

Universal Vare will continue to collaborate with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health to confidentially provide information about people diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19. To the extent permitted by applicable privacy laws Universal Vare will notify as soon as possible, teachers, staff, and families of students who were close contacts of a positive case or exposure that someone in the school has tested positive.

Cleaning and Disinfection

Universal Vare will be cleaned daily using disinfecting cleaners approved for use as effective against the Sars-Cov 2 virus by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

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?

The Universal Companies Health and Safety Plan includes the “Accelerated Learning Through and Integrated System of Support” and is designed to ensure continuity of services in the following ways: We will continue to focus on “high-quality academics through best instructional practices; create and maintain a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment; and ensure that all stakeholders are “fully engaged” in creating and maintaining a safe-and healthy teaching and learning environment that reaches beyond our classrooms into our communities.

We will fully re-open our schools with 100 % in-person instruction with options for scholars who are unable to be physically present. To ensure there is no break in access to instruction, our plan requires teachers to be ready to deliver remote instruction at all times. To ensure we are addressing the academic needs of all of our scholars, our plan includes flexible instructional schedules with the understanding that we may start the school year with one instructional schedule and as new information becomes available about health and safety, we may transition to a different model.

ACADEMIC NEEDS: To eliminate the barriers to student success that existed before the closure, during, and post-Covid learning, our Professional development plan for



teachers includes –but is not limited to—ways to utilize core materials and other resources to address learning gaps, and promote learning recovery and acceleration. The proper use of instructional and assessment data cycles (Development of Data cycles that use alternative ways to assess and monitor student’s academic needs and learning competency); and how to address specific needs of scholars with special needs.

- To ensure academic continuity for all scholars, we have utilized the following
 - Surveyed families and staff about instructional resources and professional learning needs (e.g.), differentiating instruction and supporting special populations
- Created and offered extended learning opportunities (summer school, after-school programs) to mitigate learning loss, resolve incompletes, and support credit recovery
- Determined initial baseline assessments for specific groups: incoming Kindergartners, New Scholars of any grade, graduating scholars and scholars receiving specialized services, etc.

STUDENT HEALTH, SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS:

In addition to our enhanced instructional approach, Universal Schools will emphasize social-emotional learning (SEL) and community-building for students, staff, and families. Pursuant to the National School for Mental Health, “Staff and Student wellness is supported by intentionally planned schoolwide and classroom activities designed to “foster positive social, emotional and behavioral skills and well-being of all students, regardless of whether they are at risk for mental health problems”. Therefore, we have placed “equitable, trauma-informed principles at the core” of our intent to create a safe, equitable, and inclusive space for learning, form positive and supportive relationships, and support students and staff mental and socially recovery.”

We have included new members of our staff who are professionally trained to address and teach social & emotional and trauma-informed approaches. We have also designed year-round training for staff, our board, and our families which includes townhall meetings to ensure there is continuation of communication in safety, health and wellness practices.

We have included communication protocols to identify and support staff, scholars and their families who have been and/or are affected by illness/quarantine and/or family decisions not to return to school. To support our plan, we have and continue to collaborate and coordinate with community partners, organizations and agencies to support our staff, our scholars and our families.

FOOD SERVICES: In addition to implementation of fully safety and healthy protocols, we have adopted the Mitigation Strategies for All School Meal Distribution Models outlined by the CDC.



Meals in the Classroom Model: When meals are served in the classroom, rolling carts or coolers are used to deliver with no-contact grab and go meals to the classroom. To avoid crowding, staff will deliver meals to the scholar’s desks. This model includes a plan in which staff return reusable items to the cafeteria in a bin.

Meals in the Cafeteria: This model requires that safety protocols and social distancing are emphasized and executed with the following modifications:

- Meal distribution times are staggered
 - Multiple food pick-up points to facilitate social distancing, as well as multiple drop-off points where students or a staff member can throw away disposable trays, utensils, and leftovers or return non-disposable food service items.
 - For schools with limited space, consider using tables or rolling kiosks to offer meals in a nearby area, like the hallway, to set up meal service.
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 ;	Universal masking is required for all teachers, staff, and students. Reasonable accommodations will be implemented for persons unable to wear a mask due to disability. Teachers, staff, and students will be provided with graphics and instruction on proper mask use.
b. Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);	All facilities have been examined and surveyed. Physical distancing of 3 feet between students is possible in most instances. Plastic desk shields/barriers have been purchased and will be utilized. Cohorting will be used to the maximum extent possible. Cohorts will be separated and identified by grade group, transportation status, and extracurricular activity involvement.
c. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette ;	Schools will include in the safety and healthy training and implementation, “the following module and practices: How to prevent germs (infectious organisms) from being transmitted (spread) and/or cause respiratory concerns with proper (hand hygiene) handwashing and respiratory etiquette: Staff and scholars will learn how to properly wash their hands; when and how to properly use hand sanitizers;



ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	<p>techniques to cover coughing and/or sneezes to prevent spreading potential germs to others and; and the proper use of hand sanitizers.</p> <p>Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette posters will be displayed throughout the building and in all classrooms.</p> <p>School Implementation includes but is not limited to—established and required handwashing break schedules.</p> <p>Hand sanitizers will be accessible throughout the school buildings and provided to all staff and children. All handwashing and hand sanitizers practices for scholars during the school day will be supervised by a staff member. Please note: Universal masking is required except for persons unable to wear masks due to a disability.</p>
<p>d. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation;</p>	<p>Schools will be cleaned daily using disinfecting cleaners approved for use as effective against the COVID-19 virus by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. HVAC and electrical contractors have been engaged to update the facilities to improve ventilation, air exchange, and air filtration in accordance with CDC recommendations.</p>
<p>e. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State and local health departments;</p>	<p>The school collaborates with the Philadelphia Department of Public Health to confidentially provide information about people diagnosed with or exposed to COVID-19. Infected persons are required to isolate. The school has established and implemented a policy in which close contacts of an infected person are required to quarantine.</p> <p>In the event of a single case of COVID in a class the entire class will be</p>



ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	<p>quarantined for 10 days. If there are two or more positive cases in the same grade, the entire grade will be quarantined for 10 days. In the event there are multiple cases between teachers, staff, and students the entire school will be quarantined for 10 days.</p>
<p>f. Diagnostic and screening testing;</p>	<p>Teachers, staff, and high-risk student populations will be tested weekly. Symptomatic persons will be tested upon presentation. The general student population will be testing at the beginning of the academic year, after returning from multiple day holiday breaks, and after Spring break.</p>
<p>g. Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities;</p>	<p>The school has held, and will continue to hold, virtual vaccine information sessions. The school has also provided information to teachers, staff, students, and their families with resources to inform them where they can get COVID-19 vaccinations.</p>
<p>h. Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and</p>	<p>Universal Schools will continue to consider relevant guidance regarding accommodations for children with disabilities from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual student needs will continue to be addressed through IEPs, 504 Plans, individual medical plans, and other existing mechanisms as needed to ensure access to educational services for all eligible students. • All plans and programs will continue to be designed to ensure the district is meeting IEP obligations to students with disabilities to the greatest extent possible. • Continual monitoring of the health status and well-being of the students will continue to be done in coordination with the school nurses, the school physician,



ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	<p>parents/guardians, private providers, and school counselors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselors, CST members, and school nurses will continue to communicate frequently with the families of students with significant medical risk factors to determine if additional precautions or unique measures are necessary. • Individual Health Care Plans will be developed to protect and support staff, students, and their family members who are at higher risk for severe illness. • Individualized emergency healthcare plans will be developed for students with chronic medical conditions, including diabetes, asthma, and life-threatening allergies, requiring special health services. Possible accommodations could be, but are not limited to, additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), room relocation, and/or schedule adjustments. • If local health data, local needs, and guidelines change throughout the year, the district may adjust its accommodations policies and protocols accordingly.
<p>i. Coordination with state and local health officials.</p>	<p>Positive cases and exposures are reported to the Pennsylvania Department of Health and Philadelphia Department of Public Health as required.</p>





Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for **Universal Vare Charter School** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on **May 18, 2021**

The plan was approved by a vote of:

4 Yes
0 No

Affirmed on: **July 23, 2021**

By:

Curtis Savoy

(Signature* of Board President)

Curtis Savoy

(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.

