



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

### LEA Information

**1. LEA Name (one LEA per form)\***

Freedom Academy, Inc.

**2. Entity ID Number\***

89506

**3. CTDS Number\***

078528000

**4. Plan's Primary Contact Name\***

Julie Downing

**5. Plan's Primary Contact Email Address\***

jdowning@freedomacademyaz.org

**6. Plan's Primary Contact Phone Number\***

(602) 424-0771

**Please submit your Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan every six months from your prior submission date.**

Revision Timeline: May 2023-September 2023

**7. Since your last submission date, when did your LEA last review and/or revise your plan? Please provide the updated mm/dd/yyyy of your review/revision. This date should be updated from your last submission. \***

August 29, 2023

**All LEAs receiving ESSER III funds must make publicly available on their website, a plan for the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services. Please list the link where the plan/template is posted on the LEA's website.**

**8. Insert the link below with directions on how to find your LEA's Safe Return to In-Person plan located on your LEA website (do not link directly to the PDF). The plan must be on the ADE template that will be downloaded from EMAC after completing your responses.\***

[https://freedomacademyaz.org/Portals/0/Documents/Safe\\_Return\\_to\\_In-Person\\_Instruction\\_Plan.pdf](https://freedomacademyaz.org/Portals/0/Documents/Safe_Return_to_In-Person_Instruction_Plan.pdf)

**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)**

**9. Has the LEA adopted a Governing Board policy on universal and correct wearing of masks?\***

Yes

**10. Please describe the LEA's Governing Board policy on universal and correct wearing of masks.\***

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Freedom Academy (the "School") adopted a COVID-19 Mitigation Plan, which complied with then-current CDC guidance and applicable state or local government guidance and requirements. The Mitigation Plan covers on-campus and school-sponsored activities and establishes measures intended to limit the potential for virus transmission.

As part of its Mitigation Plan, the School implemented a Face Covering Policy in response to Executive Order 2020-51 and relevant

guidance from federal and local health officials. The face covering portion of Executive Order 2020-51 was subsequently rescinded on April 19, 2021, by Executive Order 2021-10. Additionally, Arizona statutes have been amended, effective June 30, 2021, to prohibit requiring face

coverings by students or staff during school hours and on school property, or as a condition of participating in in-person instruction. A.R.S. §15-342.05.

In light of these developments, the School has updated its Face Covering Policy and Mitigation Plan as follows:

1. Face coverings are no longer required on School campus or at School-sponsored events.
2. Face coverings remain permissible, and students and staff are permitted to wear face coverings on School campus or at School-sponsored events, so long as such face coverings are otherwise consistent with applicable dress code standards. The School will not tolerate any bullying, harassment, or discrimination arising from or related to students or staff wearing a face covering.
3. The School reserves the right to reinstate a face covering requirement on School campus and at School-sponsored events if future guidance from federal and local health officials suggests such a requirement is necessary or prudent, and if such requirement is otherwise permissible under applicable law.

The School may make additional modifications to, or may rescind, this policy at any time, in its sole discretion, and without advanced notice in order to adapt to changing public health guidance, legal obligations, and operational needs.

If any part of this policy conflicts with applicable local, county, state law, regulation, or public health guidance, the School will comply with the applicable law, regulation, or public health guidance.

**11. Has the LEA adopted a Governing Board policy on modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)?\***

Yes

**12. Please describe the LEA's Governing Board policy on modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding).\***

A modified grade level cohort model is in place. Grade levels will mostly stand alone and will not intermingle with other grades during the day. Social distancing protocols will be used outside the classroom along with limited use of common areas when feasible. We are still limiting large group meetings – this includes any additional assemblies outside of flag salute assembly and other community events.

**13. Has the LEA adopted a Governing Board policy on handwashing and respiratory etiquette?\*** Yes**14. Please describe the LEA's Governing Board policy on handwashing and respiratory etiquette.\***

The School will encourage and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or as appropriate, use of hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol after bathroom use, before and after recess, and at other appropriate times during the day. The School will support healthy hygiene behaviors by providing adequate supplies, including soap and hand sanitizer. The School will encourage staff and students to cover coughs and sneezes and follow hand-hygiene protocols immediately thereafter.

**15. Has the LEA adopted a Governing Board policy on cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation?\*** Yes**16. Please describe the LEA's Governing Board policy on cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation.\***

The School will clean frequently touched surfaces (e.g., playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) within the School and on buses (if applicable) at least daily or between uses, when reasonably feasible. The School will follow cleaning and disinfection best practices and procedures, to the extent possible. The School will ensure that building ventilation systems operate properly, to ensure circulation of outdoor air as much as possible. To the extent the School provides transportation for students, the vehicles used by the School will implement reasonable ventilation strategies. Activities, including lunches, may take place outdoors, if possible. The School will discourage students from sharing items that are difficult to clean or disinfect. If library books are available to students, they will not be re-shelved until they are disinfected or for at least 48 hours.

**17. Has the LEA adopted a Governing Board policy on contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments?\*** Yes

**18. Please describe the LEA's Governing Board policy on contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments.\***

When a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19, the School will communicate with and follow the guidance of local health officials in making decisions regarding appropriate reactive mitigation measures, including the extent to which School operations should be temporarily restricted or closed, in whole or in part, and if so, for how long. School Notification of Positive Test. The School will encourage staff and students/families to notify School's designated COVID-19 Point of Contact regarding any positive test result for COVID-19 with respect to any student, staff member or household member. Coordination with Local Health Officials. Upon learning of a positive COVID-19 test result in someone who has been in the School, the School will promptly seek guidance from local health officials to determine an appropriate course of action in light of the circumstances. At a minimum, the affected individual will be quarantined from the School on-site environment (including on-site support services or in-person instruction) and other responsive actions will be taken, as directed in consultation with local health officials or in compliance with their guidance. If an outbreak\* of COVID-19 occurs at the School, the School will notify the local health department using any required or suggested notification method. Such actions may include, but are not limited to:

- Short-term limitations on, or restrictions for, on-site support services or in-person instruction with respect to a particular student, cohort, or the School generally.
- Enhanced cleaning/disinfection of areas of the School used by the affected individual.
- Extended school dismissal/closure, either for a portion of the School or the School entirely.<sup>1</sup>

\* An "outbreak" is defined as two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases among students or staff with onsets within a 14 day period, who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting.<sup>2</sup>

Communication with Staff, Parents, and Students. Consistent with privacy requirements, including those of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), and in consultation with local health officials, the School will provide notification to appropriate staff and parents regarding confirmed COVID-19 cases in the School.

**19. Has the LEA adopted a Governing Board policy on diagnostic and screening testing?\*** Yes**20. Please describe the LEA's Governing Board policy on diagnostic and screening testing.\***

We provide information for families to engage in diagnostic testing in the case of any symptoms. The school is not currently participating in universal pool testing.

**21. Has the LEA adopted a Governing Board policy on efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities?\*** Yes**22. Please describe the LEA's Governing Board policy on efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities.\***

The school is providing information for staff and families to receive vaccinations.

**23. Has the LEA adopted a Governing Board policy on appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies?\*** Yes

**24. Please describe the LEA's Governing Board policy on appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies.\***

The school is providing accommodations as needed for each individual student to safely participate in safe in-person learning.

**25. Has the LEA adopted a Governing Board policy on coordination with State and local health officials?**

\*

Yes

**26. Please describe the LEA's Governing Board policy on coordination with State and local health officials.\***

The School's designated point of contact for COVID-19 related concerns, including reporting positive test results or COVID-19 symptoms, is:  
Keven Barker, KBarker@RidgelineAcademy.org, 623.223.1335.

## 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.

### 27. How will the LEA ensure Continuity of Services?\*

Briefly describe an overview of the continuity of services and in the following questions you will provide more detailed information.

First and foremost, our LEA is dedicated to remaining open. We have increased substitute teacher pay, increased the number of educators in the building, and created contingency plans for mass absences – especially of educators and key personnel. If we are forced to close our campus, we have devices available for every family to continue online learning. We are prepared to administer state and district benchmark testing. We will continue special education evaluations and meetings. Our Social Worker will remain on duty working with students, educators, and our families. We are also prepared to return to seamless summer meal delivery and distribute meals and other necessities through contactless pickup.

### 28. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services for students' academic needs?\*

Freedom Academy has been open and is committed to continuing to provide in-person learning for all students. The school has hired additional teachers and Education Professionals to provide targeted instructional support. Our educators consistently review curriculum and student outcomes in weekly data meetings so that adjustments to the curriculum can be made quickly to best support student needs. Freedom Academy also provides targeted support before and after school as well as in our summer school program that is free and available to all students.

### 29. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services for students' social, emotional, and mental health needs?\*

Freedom Academy consults with a local social worker and has contracted with "All Things EQ," a local SEL curriculum provider which the students interact with daily. We also have a school psychologist that is on-site several times a month who consults with students.

### 30. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services for students' other needs?\*

This may include student health and food services.

Freedom Academy has a full-time health aide and an NSLP program that is engaged to serve all students year-round and any community members under the age of 18 during the summer months.

### 31. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services for staff's social, emotional, and mental health needs?\*

Our social worker dedicates time to educators as well as students. Our employee benefit plan also affords all employees and their families access to a suite of mental health providers. Further, we have engaged a therapist to provide a monthly support group for all educators.



**32. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services for staff's other needs?\***

We meet with all educators weekly to ensure that we are meeting the needs of our students, our families, our educators, their families, and our community.

**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**

**33. Describe the process used to seek public input, and how that input was taken into account in the revision of the plan.\***

We provide ongoing surveys to receive ongoing feedback from our parents, students, and educators through our weekly emails. We also have the plan as an ongoing meeting agenda item to be discussed each month at our monthly board of directors meeting and make updates to the plan as often as necessary.

**After completing all responses in EMAC, save your information. Then, use the red download button to create a copy of your completed form to be uploaded to your LEA website. Once your form is uploaded to your LEA website, log back into EMAC to click the blue submit button and submit your form to be reviewed by your specialist. Your EMAC submission will not be approved unless this updated form is on your LEA website.**

**34. Did you upload the completed EMAC form to your LEA website?\***

Yes