



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

LEA Information

1. LEA Name (one LEA per form)*

Highland Free School

2. Entity ID Number*

79061

3. CTDS Number*

108775000

4. Plan's Primary Contact Name*

Teresa Rodriguez

5. Plan's Primary Contact Email Address*

trodriquez@highlandfreeschool.org

6. Plan's Primary Contact Phone Number*

5206230104

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. *

08/03/2023

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://www.highlandfreeschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/fall-23-Highland-Free-School-Safe-Return-to-In-Person-Instruction-Plan-Template.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.*

Face Mask Policy: All students, staff, and visitors must wear a face mask on campus when Pima County is at High Covid Risk (in the red). If the Covid risk is low or medium, face masks will be optional. Students are reminded of proper mask wearing techniques. Disposable masks are available for all staff, students, and families. KN95 masks are provided for all staff.

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).*

Classrooms have enough space to allow for social distancing as needed. When Pima County is at High Covid Risk (in the red), socially distancing will be encouraged. Likewise, if there has been a positive case of Covid in a specific classroom, socially distancing will also be encouraged. Classrooms use separate bathrooms. Lunch is eaten outside.

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.*

Proper handwashing procedures are taught to students and staff. Frequent handwashing procedures are enforced. Handwashing and proper mask-wearing signs are posted.
For more information: CDC handwashing and CDC respiratory etiquette.

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.*

Equipment is sanitized as frequently as possible (including high touch surfaces like door knobs, toilet handles, and sink handles). Air exchange is increased with opening windows in classrooms and using UV and HEPA air filtration units.

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.*

Highland follows the most current CDC and Pima County Guidance on isolation, quarantine, and contact tracing. Current guidance as of submission of this plan:

- Current guidance says regardless of vaccination status, if exposed and symptom-free masking is urged for 10 days.
- Contract tracing has been suspended.

However, guidance is frequently changing. For the most up-to-date guidance:
 [Click here for Pima County's Healthy Schools and Childcare Page]
 [Click here for more information about Pima County's Community Contact Tracing.]
 [Pima County guidance if there has been an exposure.]
 [Click here for CDC guidance on quarantines and isolation.]

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.*

At Home Health Checks: If staff or students have ANY SYMPTOMS of any communicable disease, they should not come to school. If the student, staff member, or anyone in their household is showing any signs of Covid-19, please check with your health care professional. According to the Arizona Department of Health Services, "People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills • Cough • Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing • Fatigue • Muscle or body aches • Headache
- New loss of taste or smell • Sore throat • Congestion or runny nose • Nausea or vomiting • Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. Public Health will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19." For more information, please go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

- Arizona COVID-19 Hotline: 1-844-542-8201

Covid Testing: Each Friday, Highland offers weekly Covid-19 testing to staff and students on a voluntary basis. This testing is sponsored and funded by the Arizona Department of Health. If the test is positive families will be notified.

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.*

Information about vaccinations and availability will be sent to families and added to our webpage.

For more information about the Covid-19 vaccine for children, please visit the links below.

CDC: COVID-19 Vaccines for Children and Teens

World Health Organization: COVID-19 advice for the public: Getting vaccinated

American Academy of Pediatrics: COVID-19 Vaccines in Children and Adolescents

American Academy of Pediatrics: About the COVID-19 Vaccine: Frequently Asked Questions

Johns Hopkins: COVID Vaccine: What Parents Need to Know

Mayo Clinic: COVID-19 vaccines for kids: What you need to know

If you would like to schedule an appointment for a vaccination or a booster, information can be found here:

Pima County: COVID-19 Vaccine Information & Registration

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.*

To ensure the safety of all students, the CDC and Pima County Health Department recommended mitigation efforts listed above are in place. In addition, windowed face masks are provided for students enrolled in speech and language services.

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.*

Highland keeps updated on current state and local health guidance in terms of reporting guidelines.

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.

Highland is offering full-time in-person classes during the 2023-24. To help support home learning, technology is provided to families who need computers for homework. If a student is not able to attend school, online resources and programs are made available to allow students the opportunity to continue their academic progress at home.

Mitigation practices are in place to create a safe space for students in which to learn, which, in turn, will lessen the chance of spreading infection. Less transmission means less disruption to services.

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

To help support academic progress, research and evidenced-based curriculum in all academic areas has been adopted that can be implemented and used in-person as well as at home (if students are not able to attend school due to illness). Grant funding has helped to provide additional tutoring and support to help close the learning gaps caused by the pandemic.

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

In order to provide guidance and support to the school community, information about support services and community resources has been distributed to families and included on the school's webpage. Professional development will be provided to the staff focusing on Social-Emotional Learning and Trauma-Sensitive Practices. To make sure that everyone has a voice and can be informed about school events and happenings, teachers, aides, administrators, and families have numerous means to communicate.

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

This may include student health and food services.

See above

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

The teachers and aides are provided with opportunities to dialogue, mentor, and emotionally support each-other. This collegial and collaborative atmosphere allows teacher to feel comfortable to take personal time as needed- while knowing that their class will be covered.

As each day presents new challenges, support is available in technology, classroom management, and curriculum as needed to assist teachers in the classroom so that they are prepared and comfortable tackling each day's new challenge. Time off is also available as needed.

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

See above

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.*

Throughout the pandemic, Highland has regularly consulted with stakeholders regarding our mitigation plan (including the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services). The original Mitigation/Safe Return to School plan was developed and amended during the 2020-21 school year (in the form of the Distance Learning and Mitigation plans). During the second half of the 20-21 school year, surveys were distributed and an open-to-the-public virtual school council meeting was held to get input on our mitigation and curriculum. During the summer, more opportunities for input were presented to families in the form of emails and digital surveys (focusing on return-to-school thoughts). Using the information from stakeholders and guidance for the department of education as well as state and local health departments, Highland developed a return-to-school plan for the 2021-22 school year. Plans were included in the enrollment packet as well as discussed during the orientation meeting. After several weeks of school, community members were then given another opportunity to provide thoughts and suggestions regarding our current plan after it was observed in practice. ESSER funding grant ideas were also included where stakeholders were provided with opportunities to approve funding ideas as well as to offer suggestions. Summaries of the survey were sent to board members as well as to present and former employees so that suggestions can be made to help improve the mitigation and instructional plan.

Our mitigation and instructional models have been in place since the beginning of the current school year, with minor revisions made as needed. On November 23, 2021, the instructional model and mitigation plan were combined to form this "Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan". On March 16, 2022, all school stakeholders were invited to a school council meeting. No concerns were noted in regards to our mitigation plan. As the pandemic has evolved, so has guidance from local and national health departments. The current revision (9/15/22) /has been created as a result of the new guidance from the CDC and Pima County Health Department [including earlier changes in the CDC Covid tracking dashboard, as well as more recent changes in isolation/quarantining and contact tracing guidance].

The current revision (3/5/23) has been created as a result of the new guidance from the CDC and Pima County Health Department. In August 2023 staff and board members reviewed plan and made changes. Information from surveys were taken account.

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