



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

LEA Information

1. LEA Name (one LEA per form)*

Toltec School District

2. Entity ID Number*

4450

3. CTDS Number*

110422000

4. Plan's Primary Contact Name*

Denise Rogers

5. Plan's Primary Contact Email Address*

drogers@toltecsd.org

6. Plan's Primary Contact Phone Number*

5204662363

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. *

08/31/2023

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://filecabinet5.eschoolview.com/F99E7A6F-807A-460E-AEB0-EB464D75D1B4/caca57d2-2467-416b-898c-7b66052e1965.pdf>

You can find our plan on [toltecsd.org](https://www.toltecsd.org) on the Students and Parents page under Announcements.

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.*

Governing Board Adopted GBGB-R Staff Personal Security and Safety and JICA-RB Regulations, in alignment with Governor Ducey's Executive Order 2020-51, describes the wearing of facecoverings as: "Students under the age of 5 are not required to wear facecoverings. Students shall not be required to wear face coverings when students can socially distance or are outside in playground settings with distancing. Students shall be allowed breaks to remove their face covering in a safe environment. The Superintendent may make other exceptions to the requirement to wear a face covering while keeping in mind the health and safety of everyone involved."

According to the Safely Returning to In-Person Instruction guidance provided by the Arizona Department of Health Safety, school operations in the minimal level of community spread do not require face coverings. On January 19, 2021, there were 933 COVID-19 cases in Pinal County. On July 6, 2021, there were 21 cases of COVID-19 in Pinal County. There has been enormous improvement in the number of cases in Pinal County.

House Bill 2989: K-12 Budget Reconciliation Bill (BRB) restricts Governing Boards from enacting a required mask mandate or a COVID-19 vaccine requirement as written:
15-342.05 Face Coverings: Requirement Prohibition.

A. Notwithstanding any other law or order. A county. City. Town. School District Governing Board or charter school governing body may not require the use of face coverings by students or staff during school hours and on school property.

B. A school district or charter school may not require a student or teacher to receive a vaccine for COVID-19 or to wear a face covering to participate in in-person instruction.

Therefore, face coverings will not be required, but can be worn at any time by staff or students who choose to do so.

Staff and students are required to wear face coverings for five days when returning to school after COVID-19 isolation.

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).*

We will continue to monitor the number of students in our classrooms to provide as much distancing as possible. If necessary, we will respond by dividing classes and placing a classified staff member with the students as the teacher divides his/her time between the two groups.

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.***

Handwashing stations have been installed on both campuses. Students will wash hands and/or use hand sanitizer before or upon entering the classroom/school facilities, after being outside, before and after eating, and after sneezing, coughing, or blowing their nose.

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.***

Campuses are cleaned and sanitized daily with the use of a disinfectant cleaning product designed to eradicate bacteria and sprayed with a disinfectant fog. Busses are disinfected in the same manner before and after students are picked up in the morning and dropped off in the afternoon. Restrooms are sanitized multiple times daily. Students are not allowed to enter any restroom in large groups.

Dampers on all air conditioning vents have been opened so that outside air circulates inside.

We are in the process of removing all carpet district-wide to improve air quality for students and staff. Carpeting is a trap for substances that can be medically harmful and impossible to remove by the cleaning/shampooing procedure.

Updating the flooring results in a drastic improvement in air quality within our classrooms and buildings. The cleaning of the floors is simplified with enhanced sanitation results.

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.***

Our Superintendent has been assigned a Pinal County School Health Liaison who provides ongoing guidance. All cases are reported to the Pinal County Health Department on a specific form that has been provided. The department performs contact tracing and directs appropriate responses.

Isolation and quarantine requirements are followed in alignment with the Pinal County Health guidelines.

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.*

Families are required to conduct health screenings at home prior to sending students to school. A child is not to be sent to school if he/she has a temperature of 100.4 or higher and/or coughing, sneezing, runny nose, shortness of breath, vomiting, or other visible signs of illness. Do not send a child to school if there are sick family members within the same household or the child has been exposed to COVID-19.

Students who manifest any symptom listed above at school, will be taken to the health office. The health aid will contact the family to determine if other symptoms have been present or if there has been exposure to COVID-19, if so, the child will be sent home. If other symptoms are not a factor, and the symptom is determined to be related to a different health issue, the student will return to class.

The temperature of each student will be taken before he or she boards the bus when picked up in the morning. If a student has a temperature and the parent/guardian is at the bus stop, the student will not be allowed to board the bus. If a student has a temperature and the parent/guardian is not at the bus stop, the student will be masked and sat on the front seat of the bus and will be escorted off the bus upon arrival at school. The family will be called and the student will be sent back home.

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.*

Toltec School District, in collaboration/partnership with a local health facility, has hosted two vaccination clinics for any/all staff members choosing to be vaccinated.

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.*

Even during distance learning scenarios, students with disabilities have been accommodated on-site. The classrooms are kept at a number that safely accommodates health protocols such as physical distancing and sanitizing student's hands, work area, and equipment.

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.*

Superintendent Rogers communicates with her assigned Pinal County Health Liaison and adheres to health and safety directives.

Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Ms. Ferguson, reports the positive cases and exposures, for contact tracing and guidance. She attends meetings with Pinal County Health Services when scheduled for school officials to keep up to date with any new or revised expectations.

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.

We have hired teachers to provide live online instruction for all students enrolled for the 2021-2022 school year who are at risk or have situations that prevent him/her returning to in-person instruction.

Meals are made available for pick up at the school sites as the need presents itself.

Staff are reminded of the emotional support/counseling services provided by our insurance provider.

School counselors are being sought for hire, after the resignation of the counselor on staff in December. To fill in the gap, certified and classified staff members are taking time to listen to students who need support. Horizon Health and Wellness, the agency we had a partnership with to receive counseling services for our students, has stopped providing services due to staffing shortages. We most recently received interest from a school counselor who will be hired to begin in the immediate future. Our students can once again receive professional emotional and mental health support.

We have hired classified staff members to provide a program we refer to as Respect and Responsibility Readiness for students who are struggling to be successful in the classroom. This limits some classroom disruptions and provides some additional support for students in need.

After reopening our schools, we are presented with an uprise in inappropriate student behavior. It is as if many students must be retaught how to learn respectfully and responsibly. It continues to be a challenge.

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

All students are welcome to attend in-person beginning on the first day of the 2021-2022 school year: Monday, July 26, 2021.

It is important for our students to return to the classroom. Any student choosing to remain at home and continue to engage in distance learning must meet the following protocols:

- Grades maintained at a C or better during distance learning in the 2020-2021 school year.
- Good attendance – missed less than 10 days during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Internet sufficient to accommodating distance learning in place and provided by the family.
- Responsibly maintained electronic equipment that was used during distance learning and returned in excellent condition.
- A student will be accepted into teacher-led distance learning if a parent makes this request due to health issues for either the student or a member of the household.

A modified school calendar was adopted that extends Fall and Spring Breaks from one week to two-week periods of time. This shortens the Summer Break so that learning is not impacted as negatively, due to lessening of retention loss.

In-person Summer School for all students began Monday following the last day of the 2020-2021 school year, continuing through the end of June. Students are only given a three-week break before the new school year begins. Summer School has already been scheduled into the academic calendar.

For the 2021-2022 school year, Summer School will be offered in shorter sessions to keep students actively engaged since attendance in the month-long June session tends to taper off after the first couple of weeks. Summer School was originally scheduled for four and a half weeks: June 1 – 30, 2022. Summer School is now scheduled as shorter tutoring sessions for a total of four and a half weeks: October 11 – 14, 2021 (second week of Fall Break), March 21 – 24, 2022 (second week of Spring Break), and June 1 – 16, 2022 (two and a half weeks). All students who would like to participate will be permitted to enroll.

Many teachers have provided additional tutoring sessions with students to accommodate learning needs.

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

Toltec School District understands this pandemic has impacted students negatively in areas beyond that of academic need to the social, emotional, and mental well-being. The school counselor position had been cut, due to financial shortages, a few years ago. We have had a certified school counselor for the past two years to provide student support.

The District has an official Memorandum of Understanding with Horizon Health and Wellness, Inc., for additional student support.

Training has begun for administrators and staff in the area of social/emotional support for our students. We will continue to implement strategies and programs that will support the social emotional well-being of our students.

A Kids at Hope training for July 15th and 16th is scheduled for all employees and focuses on creating and activating hope which will greatly benefit our employees and impact our campuses positively. All staff, who have not received Kids at Hope Module 1 training, will be trained. It is important that all staff members understand the vision and mission of Toltec School District to support and believe in the success of every student. Every employee serves as a Treasure Hunter for our students, making connections and supporting student confidence and dreams for his/her future.

Our District School Counselor for students resigned and her last day was December 07, 2021. We are advertising the position but have not received applicants for this very important open position.

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

This may include student health and food services.

During the period of distance learning, we provided meals for our students. We offered meals at bus stops and/or the schools for families to pick up for their children. We continue to provide meals for pick up at the school sites.

Free breakfast and lunch are offered for every student when school is in session as well.

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

This unprecedented pandemic has presented challenges for all of us. Changes are being implemented to provide staff additional opportunities for collaboration within the District, and the chance to develop professional partnerships with their peers.

We are a Kids at Hope District and have made plans for an event for all staff for July 15th and 16th. On July 15th, staff being can bring family members to participate. The entire event presents our employees, classified and certified, with an incredibly positive experience to kick-off the new school year.

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

We were happy to receive two grants a couple of years ago that provided us with two new busses. Our fleet is aged and in need of regular mechanical repairs, so we need additional new busses. Facility updates are another area that has been neglected over the past few years, so efforts to address these varied issues has been slowed due to insufficient budget capacity. A bond for the District was voted on in November 2020 which would have addressed these needs and provided the necessary finances to initiate regular preschool programs at both schools to benefit our community, but it was not approved.

We have had to spend a large amount of our budget over the past four years to purchase curriculum since this was an area that had been neglected for the past few years. Due to the expense of new curriculum for English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science, our budget has been stretched thin.

We would like to have smaller class sizes at our larger school but have not had the financial means to employ additional staff to ensure success in doing so.

Employment of certified special area teachers for all these positions is another goal that we are attempting to meet.

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.*

08/09/2021 Revisions:

The plan was updated to notate that we have required students to have a temperature check before boarding the bus when being transported to school. If the parent/guardian is at the bus stop and the student has a temperature, the parent will be asked to take the student back home. If a parent/guardian is not at the bus stop and the student has a temperature, the student will be masked and sat on the front seat of the bus. Upon arrival to school, the student will be escorted off the bus. The family will be called, and the student will be sent back home.

If a student has a health issue, or there is a health concern with a member of the household, and a parent/guardian makes the request that the student be allowed to participate in teacher-led distance learning, that request will be granted even if the student has not met the criteria for distance learning enrollment.

Summer School will be offered in shorter sessions to keep students actively engaged since attendance in the month-long June session tapers off after the first couple of weeks. Summer School was scheduled for four and a half weeks (June 1 – 30, 2022) and will continue to be offered for that exact period of time, but in shorter sessions. Tutoring sessions: October 11 – 14, 2021 (second week of Fall Break), March 21 – 24, 2022 (second week of Spring Break), and June 1 – 16, 2022 (two and a half weeks).

This plan was shared at the District Board Meeting on July 12, 2021, and input was requested. The plan will be printed and sent home with every student the week of August 9, 2021, inclusive of a letter from the Superintendent inviting families to provide feedback by calling or emailing her Executive Assistant.

02/17/2022 Revisions:

The plan was updated with the following additions:

- Staff and students are required to wear face coverings for five days when returning to school after COVID-19 isolation.
- Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Ms. Ferguson, attends meetings with Pinal County Health Services when scheduled for school officials to keep up to date with any new or revised expectations.
- Our District School Counselor for students resigned and her last day was December 07, 2021. We are advertising the position but have not received applicants for this very important open position.

06/01/2022 Revisions:

- A District School Counselor for students was hired and began servicing students on March 1, 2022.
- We will continue to provide an online learning option that is staffed with teachers we employ but will be decreasing the number of teachers since the number of students choosing to learn online has consistently decreased.
- We have added new teaching positions for on-site learning to accommodate the upward trend in student enrollment.
- An Assistant Principal has been hired to assist on our larger campus and a teacher-on-assignment has been hired to assist on our smaller campus since additional assistance is needed to manage student discipline issues more effectively. Upon return to the campus on July 26, 2021, inappropriate student behavior escalated.
- It has been challenging to hire and maintain staffing on the campuses. Employee turnover is disruptive to the learning environment. In an effort to improve staff longevity, pay increases and/or stipend opportunities were approved for this upcoming school year.
- The flooring project initiated a year ago is nearing completion. The removal of all carpeting district-wide provides cleaner air and more sanitary conditions for the health and safety of students and employees.

10/31/2022 Revisions:

- Face coverings are not a requirement for staff or students at any time.
- We are short-staffed with both certified and classified employees. It is difficult to fill and maintain positions. We have experienced increased resignations and this issue continues to be ongoing and very problematic as we try to recover from the impact of COVID-19. It is extremely disruptive to the learning environment.
- A part-time counselor was hired to provide additional support for our students. This is in addition to the full-time school counselor that is currently in place.
- All carpeting has been removed. We are now in the beginning stages of purchasing air purifiers.
- Pinal County Health has discontinued the practice of reporting positive cases and exposures. In the event we have concerns, we will be in contact and adhere to all guidelines/expectations as received.
- Temperatures are no longer required before boarding the school bus. In the event a student or staff member displays symptoms of illness while on school property, his/her temperature is taken, and health safety protective measure are engaged. The expectation remains to stay home when sick.

05/25/2023 Revisions:

- We have increased pay rates for teachers and classified staff beginning July 2023. This has helped us fill open positions and we hope to fill all positions and have less turnover.
- A District Lead School Counselor/Director of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) has been hired for this next school year. Classrooms will be set up on each campus for the SEL program. We are hopeful that this addition will help with increased student misbehavior.
- A District Curriculum and Instruction Director position has been created and filled for this next school year. Much needed coaching for our teachers who are not yet appropriately certified will benefit instruction and student learning.
- Imagine Learning is being purchased for this upcoming school year to provide additional curriculum for our students in Title 1 reading and math intervention classes and to assist teachers to better meet the instructional needs of the students within all classrooms.
- We have hired nine special education teachers from the Philippines to sufficiently cover the open positions we have had in this area. These teachers are appropriately certified and will better serve our students with in-person

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