

NORTH COUNTRY CHARTER ACADEMY

LEA Plan on the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services 2021-2022

This document is intended to meet the federal statutory requirement that, within 30 days of receiving ARP ESSER LEA allocation (anticipated May 24th), an LEA shall publish an LEA Plan on the Safe Return to In Person Instruction and Continuity of Services, which is often called a “school district reopening plan.”

Note, if an LEA developed a plan before The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was enacted on 03/11/2021 that complied with the federal statutory requirements for public posting and comments but does not meet all of the requirements below, then the LEA must revise its plan no later than six months after receiving ARP ESSER funds

For further context, please reference ARPA (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/housebill/1319/text>) or the Interim Final Requirements of ARP ESSER (<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR2021-04-22/pdf/2021-08359.pdf>).

I. General Information

1. LEA Name: North Country Charter Academy (NCCA)
2. Date of Publication: August 20, 2021

II. Transparency and Accessibility

1. This plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services was published and made publicly available online here:

Description: www.northcountrycharteracademy.com

2. Before making the plan publicly available, the LEA sought public comment on the plan and took such comments into account in the development of the plan (please check one).

Yes: Somewhat: No:

Description:

- 1) A survey to every NCCA parent/guardian and student was sent out seeking input in the development of the plan
- 2) North Country Charter Academy works closely with all of its 10 founding school districts in northern Coos and Grafton counties. The collaboration and communication within this consortium is strong and supportive. NCCA representatives meet regularly with the 10 school district leaders at North Country Superintendent and Principal Associations meetings. Seeking input and sharing district plans has been on the agenda and forefront for over a year. The Associations meet monthly and more when concerns or sharing of information is needed. NCCA serves students in over 4,000 geographical square miles. As a result, NCCA utilizes the data from the other 10 districts to develop the plan. Such valuable data included survey results from their district.

3) Throughout last year, teachers and staff met face to face with each student and parent/guardian to obtain feedback and comments on the plan. This ongoing effort provided NCCA with direction and support of plan updates.

4) Re-opening Task Force met on a monthly basis to ensure continuous improvement and updates needed were addressed as the pandemic unfolded. The Task Force met for a full day on June 22, 2021 to address the 2021-2022 reopening plan and again on August 12, 2021 to finalize the plan. The Task Force includes community, board members, teachers and staff.

5) Attends every state meeting: NH Department of Education, NH DHHS & CDC agency meetings.

3. The plan is in an understandable and uniform format (please check one):

Yes: Somewhat: No:

Description: Teachers meet with each and every student and parent/guardian face-to-face to review the plan and answer any questions. The plan is written in a format that is clear, easy to follow and understand.

4. The plan, to the extent practicable, is written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable, orally translated (please check one):

Yes: Somewhat: No:

Description: Teachers meet with each and every student and parent/guardian face-to-face to review the plan and answer any questions. English is the primary language of all of our students and parents/guardians. In our registration process, we ask parents what their primary language is. If we have a student or parent with a different primary language we will make every effort to translate into their language.

5. The plan, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, is provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent (please check one):

Yes: Somewhat: No:

Description: Upon request, we will make every effort to accommodate the disabled in the presentation and access of our plan. Please note as stated above that our teachers review the plan in person with every student and parent/guardian. This is a prime opportunity for us to identify and assess the need.

III. Health and Safety

1. How the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and LEA staff:

Description during SY20-21: In our Education Re-entry Plan 2020-2021 we clearly listed and outlined our health and safety protocols required for transportation, classroom practices and protocols, all of which addresses this for our students, teachers and staff.

Description during SY21-22: The protocols, mitigation practices addressing health and safety measures will remain in place for the health and safety of our students and staff.

Protocols were reviewed and updated based on student and parent and community input along with significant work by task force members and community matrix outbreaks.

2. The LEA's adoption of the following CDC health and safety strategies are described below: (Note federal regulation on this plan requires such reporting, but does not require adoption of CDC safety recommendations. The NH DOE recognizes schools will implement localized safety measures based on the guidance provided by the CDC, NH Public Health, and local public health officials.)

a. Universal and correct wearing of masks:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No:

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No:

Description: Required last year and at the time of this submission, masks will be optional this year. This is subject to change.

b. Physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding and modifying facilities):

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No:

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No:

Description of both SYs: Physical distancing will remain with 6ft distancing. NCCA's classroom is large enough to accommodate this distance.

c. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No:

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No:

Description of both SYs: Students will engage in handwashing and hand sanitizing practices each day following our protocols. Hand sanitizer and a box of tissues is at each student's desk. Students are assigned to their computer station all year.

d. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No:

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No:

Description of both SYs: We have hired professionals to clean our 1 room classroom and main office, we have air purifiers, proper filters and scheduled air return intakes in classrooms. NCCA also has strict sanitizing procedures which includes wiping down each and every computer station upon entering and leaving. Staff follow specific written cleaning protocols.

e. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, and/or Tribal health departments:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No:

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No:

Description of both SYs: Contact tracing will not continue this year. NCCA will continue with NHDHHS recommendations for isolation & quarantine. NCCA has assigned seating in the classroom and on buses.

f. Diagnostic and screening testing:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No: X

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No: X

Description of both SYs: We promote diagnostic and screening testing and provide resources showing testing and vaccination sites.

g. Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No: X

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: Somewhat: No: X

Description of both SYs: NCCA provides resources for access to vaccination sites and literature about the vaccination.

h. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: X Somewhat: No:

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: X Somewhat: No:

Description of both SYs: NCCA meets face to face with each student and parent/guardian during an intake interview to address appropriate accommodations with respect to health and safety policies. We also work collaboratively with the founding 10 sending school districts to monitor and work closely with those in need of accommodations. The 10 sending districts provide NCCA with specific information needed should there be a need for accommodations.

i. Coordination with state and local health officials (please check one):

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: X Somewhat: No:

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: X Somewhat: No:

Description of both SYs: NCCA representatives make every effort to attend every meeting hosted by NH Department of Education and NH Health & Human Services/CDC.

IV. Continuity of Services

1. The LEA has provided continuity of services in addressing student academic needs:

Description during SY20-21: We have included procedures and expectations so that all students can continue to receive teaching and learning. Our plans include 3 phases which provide continuity of services and in ALL phases students are face to face with every teacher during their full regularly scheduled class. NCCA met face to face with students all year last year and plans to do so again.

Description during SY21-22: We will continue with our practices as last year. Every student will have full access to their teachers face to face for the entire scheduled school time.

2. The LEA has provided continuity of services in addressing student social, emotional, mental, and other health needs, which may include student health and food services:

Description during SY20-21: We do not provide food services directly; our students are welcome to return to the sending school district for meals. Many students are dually enrolled and receive meals at their sending districts. However, we provide social, emotional and mental health needs services through our Student Assistant Program. Through this program, students have 1:1 access to address social, emotional and learning issues. We have also added additional resources for this need in our student and parent handbook.

Description during SY21-22: NCCA will continue with the same practice as last year but increase the time allocated to students.

3. The LEA has provided continuity of services in addressing staff social, emotional, mental, and other health needs:

Description during SY20-21: Resources are also for staff and teachers. We also have an Employee Assistance program through our health insurance plan. NCCA will increase the opportunity for reflection, professional development and incentives to support social, emotional and health needs.

Description during SY21-22: Resources are also for staff and teachers. We also have an Employee Assistance program through our health insurance plan. NCCA will increase the opportunity for reflection, professional development and incentives to support social, emotional and health needs.

V. Plan Review

1. The LEA will meet the federal regulatory requirement to review and, as appropriate, revise its Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through September 30, 2023 (the award period including the Tydings period). (Note an LEA that developed a plan before ARPA was enacted on 03/11/2021 that complied with the federal statutory requirements for public posting and comments but does not meet all of the requirements above must revise its plan no later than six months after the LEA receives LEA ESSER funds.) Yes: No:

Description: The plan will be reviewed monthly by all staff and data collected will be shared with the Task Force at least every six months.

2. In doing so, the LEA will meet the federal statutory requirement to seek public input and take such input into account in determining whether to revise the plan and, if revisions are determined necessary, on the revisions it makes to its plan.

Yes: No:

Description: We sent out a survey to students and parents seeking input. We attend several meetings to share plans, seek guidance and input which includes the NC Superintendent and Principal Association meeting and attend state agency meetings. NCCA will continue to work collaboratively with all its stakeholders to determine necessary revisions.

3. In doing so, the LEA will also meet the federal regulatory requirement to address CDC safety recommendations and, if the CDC has updated its safety recommendations at the time the LEA is revising its plan, each of the updated CDC safety recommendations. (Note federal regulation on this plan requires such reporting, but does not require adoption of CDC safety recommendations. The NH DOE recognizes schools will implement localized safety measures based on the guidance provided by the CDC, NH Public Health, and local public health officials.)

Yes: X No:

Description: Yes, we addressed CDC guidelines and recommendations in our plan but also recognizes the need for localized safety measures based on NH Public Health and local public health officials.

VI. Authorization

LEA Superintendent's Signature: Lisa Lavoie Date: June 24, 2022
