

Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan Addendum Guidance 2023

LEAs are required to update the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan every six months through **Sept. 30, 2023**. Each time, local education agencies (LEAs) must seek public input on the plan and any revisions and must take such input into account. The purpose of the plan is to keep stakeholders informed.

Every LEA should complete the addendum and upload it to ePlan in the LEA document library and post it to the LEA's website (**March 1 and Sept. 15**). 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.

Please consider the following when completing the addendum:

- Ensure the LEA used multiple models of engagement offered to stakeholders. Examples may include surveys, in-person or virtual committee meetings, town hall meetings, or other inclusive engagement opportunities.
- LEAs should engage all applicable groups noted in meaningful consultation during the crafting of the plan and when making any significant revisions or updates to the plan.
- The number of stakeholders engaged should represent the composition of students. For example, if students with disabilities make up 15 percent of students, then 10-20 percent of respondents should represent this subgroup.
- Ensure the stakeholder engagement happened prior to the development/revision of the plan.
- The LEA must engage the health department in the development and revision of the plan. This is different from providing the health department with COVID-19 numbers.
- Plans must explicitly address every bullet point in Question 3 regarding district policies and strategies.
- Plans require local board approval and public posting.
- LEAs must update the *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* at least every six months through Sept. 30, 2023, seek public input on the plan and any revisions, and take such input into account. All revisions must include an explanation and rationale of why the revisions were made.
- All revisions must include an explanation and rationale, with meaningful public consultation and in an understandable format. The American Rescue Plan (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.

Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan Addendum

The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief 3.0 (ESSER 3.0) Fund under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, was enacted on March 11, 2021. Funding provided to states and local educational agencies (LEAs) helps safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the nation's students.

In the fall of 2021, LEAs developed and made publicly available a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan. All plans were developed with meaningful public consultation with stakeholder groups. LEAs are required to update the plan every six months through Sept. 30, 2023, and must seek public input on the plan and any revisions and must take such input into account. LEAs also must review and update their plans and ensure they align with any significant changes to 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.

The following information is intended to update stakeholders and address the requirement.

LEA Name:

Date: 9/8/23

1. Describe how the LEA has continued to engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders in the development of the revised plan.

A Community survey and open office hours were used to engage stakeholders. Invitations to complete the survey were sent via social media, district wide call, and the GCS website. GCS students, teachers, and parents participated in a survey to provide input and gather information. GCS supervisors and principals then met to analyze feedback relating to the survey.

2. Describe how the LEA engaged the health department in the development of the revised plan.

GCS supervisors meet with members of the local health department to help develop our revised plan. The local health department provided details and ideas of how to return to safe in-person instruction.

3. Provide the extent to which the LEA has updated adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the following health and safety strategies.

<p><i>Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies</i></p>
<p><i>Physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)</i></p> <p>Social distancing will be utilized as much as possible. Students will be changing classes in all the schools except for a self-contained environment. Frequent hand washing will be encouraged and access to hand sanitizer for all classes will be available. Meals will only be served in the cafeteria. Meals will not be delivered to other locations in the school unless local COVID conditions warrant distancing that requires optional locations for meals. Meals may not be served outside the cafeteria without explicit written approval by the Director of Schools.</p>
<p><i>Hand washing and respiratory etiquette</i></p> <p>Respiratory Etiquette will be followed:</p> <p>The national Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urge all individuals to observe “respiratory etiquette” to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including COVID-19, influenza (flu), colds and pneumonia.</p> <p>The principles of respiratory etiquette are simple:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing. Do this either with a tissue or your inner elbow. 2. Wash your hands frequently. This is the single most important thing you can do to stop the spread of disease. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Frequent hand washing will be encouraged and access to hand sanitizer for all classes will be available.
<p><i>Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities including improving ventilation</i></p> <p>Daily cleaning and disinfection of all buildings and buses will continue. Grainger County will use funding to provide HVAC system upgrades, filtering, purification, and window and door repair.</p>
<p><i>Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine</i></p> <p>Students who test positive for COVID-19 are allowed to return to school when they are fever free for 24 hours without medication, or if they have a doctor’s note. Staff and students will not be sent home based on COVID symptoms.</p>
<p><i>Diagnostic and screening testing</i></p> <p>Temperature checks will not take place for all students daily; however, students who have symptoms or visit the nurse may have his/her temperature taken. We ask parents to monitor children health conditions</p>

and not send students to school if they have a fever or experiencing some other type of health issue. Any such absence would be unexcused without medical documentation.

Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible

There are no new efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, or students.

Previously:

Grainger County Schools and Grainger County Health Department partnered together to offer a drive-thru vaccination clinic for any employee interested in taking the vaccination. The health department also offered appointments to employees on work days.

Students are able to set up an appointment at any time to receive their vaccination for ages 5-18 at The Grainger County Health Department.

Booster vaccinations will be on appointment only at the local health department as needed for employees.

Universal and correct wearing of masks

Face coverings or masks for all students and staff (PreK-12) are optional. Masks will be provided by the school system for both students and staff if they so choose to wear.

4. Provide a current description as to how the LEA is ensuring continuity of services including but not limited to services that address students’ academic needs and students’ and staff’s social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

Grainger County Schools are determined to remain open for in-person learning in 2023-2024. The district provided academic support for students by holding 4-week summer learning camps in June 2023 and will continue in June 2024. ELA and Math interventionist have been hired to provide more reading/math support to teachers/students with skill gaps in identified schools. Technology will continue to be upgraded to provide opportunities for collaboration, and a way to stay connected in the event of a short-term quarantine. GCS has committed to hiring additional teachers to help reduce class size and address learning loss. To address the social emotional/mental health needs of students, the district has hired a new mental health counselors. Meals are only free to those who are eligible this year.