

Creativity Colaboratory Charter School

Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Pursuant to the Federal American Rescue Plan Act, Section 2001(i)

Introduction and Background

As announced in the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE)'s [April 28, 2021 broadcast](#), in March 2021 President Biden signed the Federal [American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act](#), Public Law 117-2, into law. The ARP Act provides an additional \$122 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) to States and school districts to help safely reopen, sustain the safe operation of schools, and address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nation's students. As with the previous ESSER funds available under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA), the purpose of the additional funding is to support local educational agencies (LEAs) in preparing for and responding to the impacts of COVID-19 on educators, students, and families. Additional information on ARP ESSER may be found in the NJDOE's [funding comparison fact sheet](#).

Section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act requires each LEA that receives ARP ESSER funds to develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website, no later than 30 days after receiving ARP ESSER funds, a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for all schools (Safe Return Plan) A Safe Return Plan is required of all fund recipients, including those that have already returned to in-person instruction. Section 2001(i)(2) of the ARP Act further requires that the LEA seek public comment on the Safe Return Plan and take those comments into account in finalization of the Safe Return Plan. Under the interim final requirements published in [Volume 86, No. 76 of the Federal Register](#) by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), an LEA must periodically, but no less frequently than every six months through September 30, 2023, review and, as appropriate, revise its Safe Return Plan.

Pursuant to those requirements, **LEAs must submit to the NJDOE and post on their website their Safe Return Plans by June 24, 2021.** The NJDOE intends to make LEA ARP ESSER Fund applications available in EWEG on May 24, 2021 and LEAs will submit their Safe Return Plans to the NJDOE via EWEG. To assist LEAs with the development of their Safe Return Plans, the NJDOE is providing the following template.

This template incorporates the federally-required components of the Safe Return Plan. The questions in the template below will be included in the LEA ARP ESSER Fund application in EWEG. LEAs will submit responses to the questions within the LEA ARP ESSER Fund application in EWEG by June 24, 2021. The NJDOE hopes that this template will allow LEAs to effectively plan for that submission and to easily post the information to their websites as required by the ARP Act.

Note that on May 17, 2021, Governor Murphy [announced](#) that upon the conclusion of the 2020-2021 school year, portions of Executive Order 175 allowing remote learning will be rescinded, meaning that schools will be required to provide full-day, in-person instruction, as they were prior to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The NJDOE and New Jersey Department of Health will share additional information regarding State requirements or guidance for health and safety protocols for the 2021-2022 school year as it becomes available.

Creativity Colaboratory Charter School

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

LEA Name: Creativity Colaboratory Charter School

Date: 06/24/2021

Date Revised (NA):

1. Maintaining Health and Safety

For each mitigation strategy listed below (A–H), please describe 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 CDC.

A. Universal and correct wearing of masks

All adults and children will continue to wear masks while indoors. This includes teachers, staff, volunteers, visitors, and outside contractors. The Board of Trustees has approved a Face Mask Policy in light of COVID-19 (Policy CO2020-002), which will be renewed for the 2021-22.

All students will continue to wear masks when indoors, except as noted below. At the same time, we are aware of the possibility of "mask fatigue". To address mask fatigue we have altered the schedule to have a longer morning break, which we will use on some days for additional physical education. We also have lunch and recess and an afternoon break. Then there are always a few minutes between classes. As long as students are socially distant they can use these times as mask breaks. Also, we plan to make use of our abundant outdoor space. To that end we are encouraging parents to send a beach towel, yoga or exercise mat with their children's school supplies to use when class can be held outdoors. Additionally there are four large outdoor covered spaces that are available for use as outdoor classrooms. Please note that students with medical conditions that prohibit them from mask use will be excused with medical documentation. And, in the same way, if a student or teacher has a condition that makes them more vulnerable, such that they need everyone using a mask in their classes, we will accommodate their needs as well.

The school will monitor CDC and NJDOE guidance for health and safety protocols and the board will adjust the mask-wearing policy as appropriate, based on the guidance and local conditions.

B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)

Physical distancing is an important strategy for Creativity Colaboratory Charter School. The school is fortunate to have small class size (12) and plenty of space. There is enough room in all the traditional classrooms for classes of 12 with students spaced according to CDC guidelines and wearing masks. In addition, classes will utilize the outdoors as much as possible.

When we send a list of school supplies we are going to suggest sending a beach towel or exercise/yoga mat for each child to keep in their cubby. That way our students will have something to sit on when outside for class time or lunch. And, we have four large covered outdoor spaces that we will use daily as "outdoor classrooms." We anticipate that out of the 7.5 hour school day, students will be outdoors a minimum of 2.5 hours per day. It should also be noted that we have no hallways. All classes open directly to the outdoors. All classrooms have their own bathrooms. We have no elevators. And, we have over 100 acres of lawn. So, by the nature of our campus we have eliminated some of the riskier places in a school. Also, our classrooms all have windows on two sides of each room, allowing us to have plenty of fresh air. Every classroom is equipped with a commercial grade HEPA air filtration system to support safe air circulation.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Regular handwashing and respiratory etiquette are essential safety measures. All regular 5th and 6th grade classrooms have a bathroom and sink. There are two bathrooms in the 7th and 8th grade area and each grade will have a dedicated bathroom and sink. Regular hand washing will be encouraged. Students will be asked to wash their hands minimally after recess, before and after lunch, after using the bathrooms, after coming in from outdoor breaks, and at other times as seems appropriate to the teachers in charge. Additionally, every classroom and the dining hall has a hand sanitizing station installed near the doorway. Students will be encouraged to sanitize their hands upon entry into the rooms.

Student will be reminded consistently to cover coughs and sneezes, and all classrooms will provide tissues and hand sanitation stations.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

The school has taken extra measure to ensure a safe and sanitary facility. In addition to regular contracted cleaning of all spaces, the school has contracted with a company (Cintas) that regularly sanitizes all surfaces according to CDC guidelines. A commercial grade HEPA air filtration system has been added to support safe air circulation in all classrooms.

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

The Creativity Colaboratory Board of Trustees has approved a detailed Contact Tracing Policy that aligns with recommendations from the CDC, John Hopkins University Contact Tracing Course and the New Jersey Department of Health (Policy CO2020-006). Some of the important provisions address:

- Students or student guardians who report positive test results, either prior to or subsequent from being present at the school
- Students with evidence of one or more COVID related symptoms
- Employees who have symptoms or test positive for COVID-19
- Employees who live with someone with symptoms or a positive test result

All contact tracing procedures described in the policy include immediate communication with the appropriate teacher, supervisor, or office staff, followed by C3's Certified Contract Tracer identifying students or staff who were present and at risk. Risk mitigation measures may include quarantining at home for employees and/or students; remote teaching/learning capacities will be maintained. Employees with exposure will complete the Health Services Reporting Form.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

We will regularly remind parents to screen their children for fever and monitor any COVID like symptoms before sending your children to school. And we will remind parents to keep their children home when there is any doubt. In addition, the school will screen all children upon arrival. That will involve a quick temperature check and questions. Staff conducting the screening, will also have sensitivity training to ensure every student is supported with kindness if a screening produces a red flag and requires further dialogue with parents. All staff will have a temperature screen and symptom check off at sign-in each morning. All visitors and contractors will be screened prior to entry into the school. Our nurse has written screening and isolation procedures.

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

The school encourages all staff and eligible students to get vaccinated against COVID-19. The school nurse will maintain a list of resources and vaccination sites to assist individuals seeking vaccination.

H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies

Creativity Colaboratory Charter School is committed to accommodating children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies. Students with documented needs, such as in a 504 Plan or Individual Education Plan (IEP), will be accommodated according to those plans, which will be updated as needed.

Most students, including those with disabilities, can tolerate and safely wear a mask. However, a narrow subset of students with disabilities might not be able to wear a mask or cannot safely wear a mask. Those who cannot safely wear a mask—for example, a person with a disability who, for reasons related to the disability, would be physically unable to remove a mask without assistance if breathing becomes obstructed—should not be required to wear one. For the remaining portion of the subset, the school will make individualized determinations as required by Federal disability laws in order to determine if an exception to the mask requirement is necessary and appropriate for a particular student. If a child with a disability cannot wear a mask, maintain physical distance, or adhere to other public health requirements, the student is still entitled to an appropriate education, which in some circumstances may need to be provided virtually. Some students with disabilities might need assistance with handwashing and respiratory etiquette behaviors.

2. Ensuring Continuity of Services

A. Describe how the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students’ academic needs and students’ and staff’s social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services. (1000 character limit)

Over the past year, the school has maintained the continuity of services through both in-person and remote learning, when necessary. Because of its ample classroom and outdoor space, it has been possible for the school to provide in-school learning for most of the year, in spite of the pandemic, along with options for remote learning as needed.

In the fall, academic needs will be assessed to determine how pandemic-related disruptions may have affected academic progress. In addition, students’ social emotional needs will also be assessed. This will help what curricular programs and other interventions are necessary. Teachers will be receiving additional professional development to help them identify and address student mental health needs, and the school will continue to provide support through student mental health initiatives. Furthermore, there will also be professional development for the staff on the impact of the pandemic on the community.

3. Public Comment

A. Describe how the LEA sought public comment on its plan, and how it took those public comment into account in the development of its plan. Note, the ARP requires that LEAs seek public comment for each 60-day revision to the plan. (1000 character limit)

The school has been in ongoing communication with parents and other stakeholders, throughout the pandemic. Through its public board meetings, the school has received parental input on many aspects of the school, including those related to the pandemic. The school, through its teachers, nurse, counselor, and administration will continue to engage with families directly to address their concerns about the plan and its implementation.

B. Describe how the LEA ensured that the plan is in an understandable and uniform format; is to the extent practicable written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, will be orally translated for such a parent; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, will be provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent. (1000 character limit)

The plan will be available in English on the website; translations will be provided as needed, based on the school's family language survey. During Parent Orientation, the plans information will be given out to all families and explained in non-technical language.

As a small school with fewer than 200 students, Creativity Colaboratory Charter School has the ability to work individually with students and their families to ensure they have an understanding of the school's policies and procedures, and to develop accommodations based on individual needs. The school is committed to learning about, and addressing, student and family needs as they arise and as the circumstances of the pandemic change.