

**American Rescue Plan Act
Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund (ESSER)
LEA Plan Template**

Background on ESSER

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) signed into law on March 11, 2021 provided nearly \$122 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund (ESSER). ARP ESSER funds are provided to State educational agencies in the same proportion as each State received under Title I-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in fiscal year (FY) 2020. An SEA must allocate at least 90 percent of its ARP ESSER grant funds to its local educational agencies

(LEAs) in the same proportion that the LEAs received under Title I-A of ESEA in FY 2020. LEAs must reserve at least 20 percent of their total ARP ESSER allocation to address the academic impact of lost instructional time on all students, through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) published Interim Final Requirements (IFR) on April 22, 2021 requiring LEAs receiving ARP ESSER funds to submit an LEA ARP ESSER Plan and an LEA Plan for the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services. If an LEA had already developed a plan for safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services prior to the enactment of ARP that meets the statutory requirements of section 2001(i) but did not address all of the requirements in the IFR, the LEA must revise and post its plan no later than six months after receiving its ARP ESSER funds. This applies even if an LEA has been operating full-time in-person instruction but does not apply to fully virtual schools and LEAs.

The IFR and ARP statute, along with other helpful resources, are located here:

- April 2021 Interim Final Requirements: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-04-22/pdf/2021-08359.pdf>
- ED Fact Sheet American Result Plan Act: https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/03/FINAL_ARP-ESSER-FACT-SHEET.pdf
- The American Rescue Plan Act: https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr1319/BILLS_117hr1319enr.pdf
- CDC COVID-19 School Operation Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html#anchor_1616080023247
- ED COVID-19 Handbook Volume I: <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/reopening.pdf>
- ED COVID-19 Handbook Volume II: <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/reopening-2.pdf>
- ESEA Evidence-Based Guidance: <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2020/07/guidanceuseseseinvestment.pdf>
- TEA ARP ESSER III Guidance: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/publish?EQBCT=f4b5d82938764f1f81573845021e58ed>

Purpose of the Template

The IFR issued by ED outlines several requirements for all Districts to ensure that funds under ARP (ESSER III), specifically, are spent in a manner consistent with the new statutory set-aside and that key stakeholders have been consulted in this process. The ARP also requires that LEAs have in place a plan for ensuring safety during in-person instruction (either in-progress or planned) as well as ensuring continuity of services should the LEA or one or more of its schools be required to close temporarily for COVID-19-related public health reasons in the future.

This template has been created to assist LEAs in the creation of these plans and to ensure all required elements are met. The following requirements and assurances pertain to both the statutory requirements and the IFR published by ED. Plans are required for all districts, regardless of operating status, unless a district is fully virtual with no physical location.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) may create a single plan that includes all the required elements or may add in additional requirements, as it deems appropriate. Districts may provide any additional information they believe are helpful in assessing their plan. LEAs are required to make these plans publicly available on the LEA's website.

According to TEA's guidance, local boards are not required to approve these plans; however, the local board is required to discuss the uses of funds. The District plan includes all schools, including campus charter schools without separate boards. Any in-district charter schools that have their own boards will need to develop their own separate plans and those plans must meet the requirements for stakeholder input and will be posted on the website.

All districts must share the web link with TEA in the application.

LEA ESSER III - Use of Funds Plan

The Education Center International Academy (ECIA) will ensure that its ARP Funds meet all the required elements and are spent in an allowable manner.

1. ARP ESSER funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent County Health Department guidance on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in person learning.

ECIA will use ESSER funds to operate their schools continuously and ensure safety for all students/staff, in accordance with the most recent County Health Department Guidelines.

- 2.. The District will address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after school programs, or extended school year.

Due to the learning time loss during the pandemic, ECIA will address each students' learning loss during the pandemic and implement accelerating learning strategies for each student enrolled for the 2021-2022 school year.

3. The District will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act.

ECIA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds in the following ways:

- A. Activities to address low-income students, children with disabilities, English language learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.
- B. Training and professional development for staff of the ECIA on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.
- C. Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of ECIA including buildings operated by ECIA.
- D. Purchasing educational technology (hardware, software, and connectivity) for ECIA students that aids in regular/substantive education interaction between students and instructors, including low-income students, and students with disabilities, which may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.
- E. Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation and continuity of services at ECIA. Other activities that are necessary to ECIA continuing to employ existing staff of ECIA.
- F. Address learning loss among students, including low-income students, SWD, English language learners, racial & ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness & children in foster care.
 - a. By administering and using high quality assessments

- b. By implementing evidence-based activities to meet community needs of students
 - c. By providing information and assistance to parents & families on effectively supporting students
 - d. By tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education
- G. School facility repairs and improvements enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs.
- H. Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities including
- a. Mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems
 - b. Filtering purification and other air cleaning fans, and control systems
 - c. Window and door repair and replacement

4. The District will ensure that any implemented interventions, including those implemented under ARP section 2002(e)(1) to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, will respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students.

ECIA has developed strategies for accelerating instruction for students in need of assistance. Students will be assessed at the beginning of the year, the middle of the year and the end of the year. Principals and teachers will meet and adjust strategies according to the assessments. Individual plans for student success will continue to be monitored during the year. All staff will implement Social Emotional Learning at the beginning of each day for all students.

5. The District made its plan available to the public and provided an opportunity for feedback that was collected and incorporated into the plan.

ECIA has published its plans on its website. A parent can have a hard copy of the plans if requested. The district holds monthly meetings to address feedback collected as well.

6. The District engaged in timely and meaningful consultation with students, families, school and district administrators (including special education administrators), teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff and their unions, tribes, civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

Each parent will have a conference at the beginning of the year to discuss the individual learning plan developed for their student. Parents will receive updates of student progress continuity.

In addition, the ECIA Charter School provides the following assurances:

X The District engaged in meaningful consultation with the following groups:

- a. Students, families, school and district administrators (including special education administrators), teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions.

X The District engaged in meaningful consultation with each of the following groups, to the extent present in or served by the LEA:

- b. Tribes, civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

X The District has created its plan in an understandable and uniform format.

X The District's plan is, to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand, or if not practicable, orally translated.

X The District will, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provide the plan in an alternative format accessible to that parent.

X The District provided the public an opportunity to provide input on its plan and took such input into account.

X The District has made its plan publicly available on its website.

- o The link to the plan is here: WWW.ECIACHARTER.COM

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

The ECIA has developed a plan for ensuring safe in-person instruction and continuity of services.

1. ECIA has a plan that is already compliant and will review it every six months, or ECIA will amend a plan and post it within 30 days of receiving funds.amend/create a plan and post it within 30 days of receiving funds.

ECIA district plan will be reviewed by the ESSER committee every six months and will place it on the website to be reviewed and revised.

2. The LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and LEA staff, and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the CDC's safety recommendations, including: universal and correct wearing of masks; modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing; handwashing and respiratory etiquette; cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation; contact tracing in combination with

isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments; diagnostic and screening testing; efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities; appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and coordination with State and local health officials.

ECIA will maintain, or continue to maintain, health and safety policies and procedures. ECIA will follow the guidelines of the County Health Dept., TEA, and Governor Abbott.

3. The LEA will ensure 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.

ECIA developed an effective plan to keep our students and facility safe during the pandemic. Those policies will stay in place, as well as, any new guidelines from the County Health Dept. and our local and state authorities.

4. The District sought public comments in the development of its plan and too those comments into account in the development of its plan.

ECIA sent a survey to students, teachers, parents, and community members in May of 2021. Results were tabulated and given to the ESSER committee for consideration.

In addition, the Education Center International Academy provides the following assurances:

X The District made its plan publicly available no later than 30 days after receiving its ARP ESSER allocation.

- o The link to the plan is here: WWW.ECIACHARTER.COM

X The District sought public comment in the development of its plan and took those public comments into account in the development of its plan.

X The District will periodically review and revise its plan, at least every six months.

X The District will seek public comment in determining whether to revise its plan and, if it determines revisions are necessary, on the revisions it makes to the plan.

X If the District revises its plan, it will ensure its revised plan addresses each of the aspects of safety currently recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), or if the CDC has revised its guidance, the updated safety recommendations at the time the LEA is revising its plan.

X The District has created its plan in an understandable and uniform format.

X The District's plan is, to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand, or if not practicable, orally translated.

X The District will, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provide the plan in an alternative format accessible to that parent.