



Great Oaks Legacy 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.

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

LEA Name: Great Oaks Legacy Charter School

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): June 24th, 2021

Date Revised (mm/dd/yyyy): September 22, 2021

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

On 5/17/2021, Governor Murphy [announced an update for K-12 schools](#) regarding statewide COVID-19 mandates:

- Schools Will Be Required to Provide Full-Time, In-Person Instruction Beginning Fall 2021.
- The remote instruction option for families will expire for next school year.

In accordance with federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance as well as state requirements, masks are required both indoors and outdoors at schools and daycare centers. Great Oaks Legacy Charter School (GOLCS) will continue to comply with official state and CDC guidelines, which includes universal and correct wearing of masks over the course of the school day for all students and staff.

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

Great Oaks Legacy Charter School will follow all health and safety guidelines from the CDC and state officials as provided and updated pertaining to ensure social distancing in school buildings and classrooms. At this time, “the New Jersey Department of Health recommends full in-person instruction

with a minimum of 3 feet of physical distancing between students maintained in classrooms for elementary schools across low, moderate and high risk and for middle/high school when the region is in low and moderate risk level. When the region is in high risk, middle/high schools should maintain 6 feet of physical distancing to the greatest extent possible and consider in-person instruction if they are able to maximize physical distancing of 6 feet or more. This additional space for middle/high school students is recommended because they have a higher incidence of transmission than younger children.”

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

At GOLCS, the health and safety of students and staff is our first priority. All schools will be stocked with hygienic supplies including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), paper towels, tissues, disinfectant wipes, and face masks. Each GOLCS classroom, building entries and exits, near lunchrooms and bathrooms, and all frequently traveled spaces will have an installed hand sanitizer machine (at least 60% alcohol). Existing handwashing stations in all facilities will be stocked with soap, water, and hand sanitizer. All indoor facilities will have adequate ventilation:

- When weather allows, windows will be opened to allow for greater air circulation.
- GOLCS will maintain operational heating and ventilation systems where appropriate.
- GOLCS will ensure that recirculated air has a fresh air component
- GOLCS will maintain filters for A/C units according to manufacturer recommendations.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

All GOLCS facilities will be regularly and thoroughly cleaned, with an emphasis on high-contact surfaces and high traffic areas. Adult bathrooms will include guidance for staff to wipe down after usage. All playgrounds/gym facilities at GOLCS campuses will be disinfected after each usage. All GOLCS school bathrooms will be sanitized daily and between use as much as possible.

All schools will have fresh air ventilation and cooling systems in all classrooms and common areas. In private offices not connected to the ventilation system, we will utilize air purifiers with HEPA-13 filters. GOLCS will continue to monitor and follow all NJDOH and NJDOE guidelines for facilities.

Hand sanitizer stations have been placed in various high traffic areas locations and in every classroom/office throughout the building for all schools. There will be daily routine walkthroughs to inspect that all antibacterial soap dispensers have product in them and are not empty or malfunctioning.

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

If an individual tests positive for COVID-19, GOLCS will notify local and state departments of health immediately upon being informed. GOLCS will support local health departments in tracing all contacts of the individual, in accordance with the protocols, training, and tools provided through the CDC and New Jersey Department of Health guidelines. Confidentiality will be maintained as required by federal and state law and regulations and GOLCS is committed to adhering to all applicable federal and state requirements regarding privacy of educational records 14 (e.g. FERPA).

GOLCS will also cooperate with local and state department of health contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine efforts. Moreover, all relevant policies will be shared with school administrators, school leaders, counselors, staff, families and students and we will continue to communicate NJDOH guidelines. Any student, family or staff member is strongly encouraged to self-report symptoms and/or suspected exposure.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

GOLCS will have daily health monitoring and screening of students and staff to ensure that we can appropriately exclude those who might be infected and prevent the risk of transmission. GOLCS will ensure that student and staff medical information is confidential. All students and staff will receive daily temperature checks upon arrival using non-contact thermometers prior to entry into the building. GOLCS staff will also continue to receive an additional daily Vital Check health screening questionnaire prior to reporting to work in person.

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

GOLCS staff that are still considering to receive the COVID-19 vaccine have been encouraged to do so, and unvaccinated staff are receiving consistent weekly testing in accordance with official regulations. GOLCS has communicated and shared resources with families of students aged 12-18 regarding access to the COVID-19 vaccination. GOLCS will continue to follow all official health guidelines regarding the COVID-19 vaccination.

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

We continue to be committed to providing all students with an educational experience that will prepare them for college and postsecondary success. We are determined to provide an equitable space for students to learn and access helpful resources. We are committed to recognizing our students' humanity, work, and effort every day.

GOLCS students who have a disability that require a reasonable accommodation during the pandemic (e.g. those with an underlying medical condition which also places them at a "high risk" for COVID-19 complications or mental illness exacerbated by COVID-19 crisis) may request an accommodation. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of students requesting an accommodation must obtain a medical notice from the student's primary care physician. Once the medical notice is obtained, students requesting an accommodation must submit that notice to their campus main office. Afterwards, GOLCS will evaluate and follow up accordingly.

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)

To ensure educational continuity in the event of an extended emergency, GOLCS will provide virtual learning in compliance with NJDOE regulations. Related Services and students receiving Eligible for Speech and Language Services: Google classroom lessons assigned by related services staff to target IEP goals and objectives; paper-based assignments for students without device and/or internet.

Counseling support will be provided via phone conference to address concerns. Section 504: School Counselors to monitor and provide additional support per individual plans. ADA Compliance: Assignments posted on the ADA compliant District Website. School Counselors/Child Study Team: promote student and staff mental wellbeing via in-services, individual and group counseling sessions. Central Business Office: will continue regular functioning from outside location if necessary. Food Service: SBA will arrange for food distribution as necessary. Non-perishable items will be provided to students who qualify for free meals.

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)

Great Oaks Legacy Charter School held a town hall on Wednesday, June 2nd, 2021 at 6:00 pm to discuss and invite feedback and questions from families about 2021-2022 return to school planning. GOLCS held a families town hall on July 27th, 2021 to continue seeking feedback and open discussion. GOLCS provided an opportunity for public comment at the 6/24/2021 School Board Meeting. Lastly, GOLCS families participated in a poll released in May, 2021. The poll results conveyed that families favor transparency on how new federal funding is used and high-quality tutoring, which GOLCS will continue to provide into the future.

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)

Great Oaks Legacy Charter School has constructed this Safe Return Plan to be accessible for GOLCS families. GOLCS will continue to provide oral and written translation services when needed. During the school year, on a week by week basis, phone calls and emails to each student/families in both native language and English are completed to support student materials and academics. Additionally, material and content is translated and/or interpreted by our District Coordinator with the support of Google translate. Upon request by a parent or family member who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, GOLCS will provide an accessible alternative format of the Safe Return Plan accordingly.