

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: September 13, 2023

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

During the initial planning stages, the Cocke County School System utilized its mass communication system to deliver a survey to every student, family, and district employee to seek input for the purpose of soliciting public input for the utilization of ARP ESSER funds. The district also made direct contact with stakeholder organizations local government bodies including the school board, local government officials, members of local emergency response organizations, medical providers, and interest groups including activists' groups supporting students with disabilities, migrant students, foster care, and incarcerated youth. In addition to the survey and direct contact the district hosted open public meetings to seek input from community stakeholders. The district has had very limited changes to its plan. The goals continue to focus around learning loss, health services and facilities improvements. Following the initial planning the district has continued to engage stakeholder in a wide variety of ways both sharing information and receiving input to update the plan and insure that the plan continues to meet the needs other district and its stakeholders. Cocke County School System continually provides and accepts information in opportunities including but not limited to: • School Board meeting: A public ESSER update is given at each meeting on the second Thursday of each month with additional called meetings as necessary • Staff and faculty meetings: Information is provided to faculty and staff following principal meetings and at federal programs meetings. • Parent and student information and input: Information is provided and input accepted from parents and students at open house and family engagement events. • Principal meeting: monthly • District Level Supervisors meeting: monthly • District Web Site Posting Soliciting Parent and Community Input: <https://cockecountyschools.org/esser/> . The survey document is regularly monitored by the Director of Federal Programs and Special Populations. The district also maintains an ESSER email address / link on the ESSER page of the district website esser@cocke.k12.tn.us . The email address is monitored by the ESSER Director. Entering the final year of ESSER 3.0 funding, the school district continued to engage stakeholders in meaningful consultation in the development of the revised plan. The ESSER Director attended community meeting that had been utilized in the previous years and added additional community groups such as Cocke

County Cradle to Career Coalition (C-5), Unify Cocke County, Mayor’s Community Roundtable, AWARE Advisory Council, CAB (Community Advisory Board), Cocke County Leadership Team, County Health Council, and Mayor’s Leadership Council. At each meeting, the ESSER Director presented an update on the district ESSER plan, and attendees provided input on the current plan as well as identified additional needs and made suggestions on how to meet those needs. In addition to presenting updates and gather input at community meetings, extra effort was given to collecting new surveys. At present, over 225 surveys have been collected. Surveys will continue to be available on the district website throughout the year with responses being monitored by the ESSER Director.

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

Cocke County School System District Leadership has previously participated in the regularly scheduled Cocke County Covid-19 Task Force Meeting. Health Department officials were also part of this task force which guides county level decision making and planning surrounding Covid-19 and its impact across the community. With dwindling numbers of Covid-19 cases the task force has evolved to the Mayor’s Key Leader Council. The Council continues to meet regularly. Covid-19 is no longer the primary focus, but the group continues to be available to provide input on planning and community support for district plans. The ESSER Director collaborated with the local Health Department to ensure the school system is following the most current and effective ways of managing COVID 19 health issues. The School System ESSER Director met with the local Health Department Director and her staff to discuss current protocols and to develop a plan to ensure students can have a safe, in-person, continuation of their education. In addition, each member of the Cocke County Health Department completed our ESSER 3.0 Input Survey, sharing input on all of focus areas and the revision of our ESSER 3.0 plan for FY 24.

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.

<i>Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies</i>
Families of students with disabilities can request a 504 or IEP meeting to discuss the individual needs of the student. The district will provide identified accommodations to support the student's access to their educational services.
<i>Physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)</i>
The Cocke County School System will encourage and support social distancing to the extent feasible given limited space during full-time in-person instruction. ESSER funds have been used to renovate some physical areas to provide additional space for social distancing.
<i>Hand washing and respiratory etiquette</i>
* Frequent and thorough hand washing will be encouraged. Educational videos provided by the CDC for handwashing https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1YdfLYhqu4Y and Respiratory Etiquette https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sLXzw6j9JVw are posted on the school system website https://cockecountyschools.org/esser/ . * Hand sanitizer stations are located throughout school facilities. Students and staff are encouraged to wash and/ or sanitize their hands frequently.
<i>Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities including improving ventilation</i>
* The Cocke County School System will continue to utilize available resources to improve and maintain school facilities to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Ventilation for schools continues to be improved through the purchase and installation of HVAC units in identified areas. Ionization and air purification units have been purchased and continue to be installed throughout schools. * The district will continue to regularly disinfect high traffic area surfaces throughout all facilities.
<i>Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine</i>
Per the guidance provided by the Cocke County Health Department, the Cocke County School System will not conduct formal contact tracing during 2023-24. The school district will shift from universal case investigation and contact tracing for individual cases to identifying and tracking outbreaks in both whole school population and student clusters. At the health department’s request, the district will share necessary information with the health department to support their data gathering and public health response. Students and staff identified as positive for Covid-19 will be excluded for the length of their illness. Individuals who are positive for Covid-19 should remain in isolation for up to 5 days or until fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medication and exhibiting lessening symptoms. Individuals may return to the school environment when they are asymptomatic and following their health care provider’s orders. The district will maintain regular collaboration with the Cocke County Health Dept. and planning contact through participation in the Mayor’s Key Leader Council (previously the Covid-19 Task Force) meetings. District level leadership will maintain participation in the regularly scheduled meetings.
<i>Diagnostic and screening testing</i>
Voluntary Covid-19 testing is available to all district faculty and staff. The district provides free covid-19 tests upon request to any staff member. Covid-19 tests are also available to students. A parent or guardian must request and pickup, and administer the test. The district reports the number of Covid-19 tests requested and distributed each week. The district does not report positive cases on the dashboard.
<i>Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible</i>
The Cocke County School System encourages Covid-19 vaccination, but recommends that students and staff consult of their individual health care provider concerning vaccination decision making.

Universal and correct wearing of masks

At the current time the Cocke County School System will not require a face mask to be worn in its facilities. The district recommends that you get tested if you have symptoms. Wear a mask if you have symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19. You may choose to wear a mask at any time as an additional precaution to protect yourself and others. If you are at high risk for severe illness, consider wearing a mask indoors in public and taking additional precautions. Educational videos provided by the CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/cdctv/emergencypreparednessandresponse/how-to-wear-a-mask.html> supporting the universal and correct wearing of masks are posted on the school system website and shared with all students, families, and school system employees

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.

The Cocke County School System is offering in-person instruction and direct services to all students in the district. The district is not offering a fully virtual option for the 2023-24 school year. Students who become excluded or quarantined as a result of a positive test for or direct exposure to Covid-19 will be offered remote instruction opportunities with every effort made to return the students to in-person instruction as soon as possible. Based on the district's focus on maintaining in-person instruction, the Cocke County School System plans to provide students and families services to address academic needs, including learning loss and acceleration as well as services and activities to support social, emotional, and mental health needs. Academic needs will be addressed through Tier I, II, and III instruction. ESSER funding has been utilized to purchase and implement researched-based, skills and standards-based curriculum and interventions to help address learning loss and to support student acceleration based on Tennessee State Standards. The urgent needs related to learning loss are being addressed through closely monitored research-based intervention and tutoring in coordination with TN ALL Corps. Focused services for identified subgroups are provided through the implementation of Instructionally Appropriate Individual Education Plans and Individual Learning Plans. The district's AWARE Grant provides social and emotional supports to student and staff. All schools have a School Nurse to address health concerns and conduct any necessary actions regarding COVID-19. The Cocke County School System Food Service program continues to operate under the participation in full community eligibility in every school. The district is utilizing funds to support foundational literacy skills through participation in the TDOE directed Early Literacy Network. Additional math improvements are being implemented through the TDOE directed Math Implementation Support Grant.