

ESSER III Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

Per the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), the Institute is required to submit a plan that addresses needs due to COVID-19 and the continuation of safe in-person instruction at schools and must provide input regarding how schools are supporting a return to in-person learning and/or the health and safety of students in order to receive ESSER III funding.

Public feedback must be collected on this plan at minimum every 6 months.

If feedback initiates changes needed to the plan, the plan must be updated accordingly and resubmitted.

1. Description of maintaining health and safety of students, educators, and other school and LEA staff; generally if/how policies and practices are based on CDC safety recommendations:	Virtus Academy will take a variety of actions every day to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, including the virus that causes COVID-19. Virtus will encourage staff of the following: Staying Up to Date on Vaccinations, Staying Home When Sick, Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette, Masking, Management of Cases and Exposures
2. Universal and correct wearing of masks:	Wearing a well-fitting mask or respirator consistently and correctly reduces the risk of spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. At a high COVID-19 Community Level, Virtus Academy will recommend universal indoor masking, as it is in the community at-large. Policies for use of masks in school nurse offices will follow recommendations outlined in the Infection Control: Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) guidance. Recommendations for masking in nurses' offices may depend on factors such as COVID-19 Community Level, outbreak status, and patient access. People who have known or suspected exposure to COVID-19 should also wear a well-fitting mask or respirator around others for 10 days from their last exposure, regardless of vaccination status or history of prior infection.
3. Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding):	N/A
4. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette:	Practice handwashing and respiratory etiquette to keep from getting and spreading infectious illnesses including COVID-19. Virtus Academy will encourage hand washing strategies which include washing with soap and water. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, students will be encouraged to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that

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	<p>contains at least 60% alcohol. Handwashing strategies will be encouraged after going to the bathroom, before eating, after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, and after touching your face.</p> <p>Virtus Academy will encourage respiratory etiquette which includes covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, using tissues and throwing them away, and washing your hands or using hand sanitizer every time you touch your mouth or nose.</p>
5. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation:	Virtus Academy will clean surfaces at least once a day to reduce the risk of germs spreading by touching surfaces. Additionally, Virtus will follow recommended procedures for cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfection in their setting such as after diapering, feeding, and exposure to bodily fluids.
6. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine:	Virtus academy will require those with COVID-19 to isolate away from others and do not attend school until they have completed isolation. Once isolation has ended, those individuals should wear a well-fitting mask or respirator around others through day 10.
7. Diagnostic and screening testing:	Virtus Academy will not offer diagnostic or screening testing.
8. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible:	Vaccination is currently the leading public health prevention strategy to end the COVID-19 pandemic. People who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 are at lower risks of symptomatic or severe infection and transmitting COVID-19 to others than people who are not fully vaccinated. In most settings, people who are fully vaccinated can safely resume activities they did before the pandemic, except where prevention measures are required by federal, state, local, laws, rules, and regulations, including local business and workplace guidance.
9. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies and practices:	Federal and state disability laws require an individualized approach for working with children and youth with disabilities consistent with the child's individual educational plan (IEP), Section 504 plan, or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Reasonable modifications or accommodations, when necessary, will be provided to ensure equal access to in-person learning for students with disabilities. Administrators will consider additional prevention strategies to accommodate the health and safety of students with disabilities and protect their civil rights and equal access to safe in-person learning. The U.S. Department of Education provides guidance and resources for schools and ECE programs to ensure students with disabilities continue to receive the services and supports

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	they are entitled to so that they have successful in-person educational experiences.
10. Coordination with state and local health officials:	Virtus academy administrators will work with local health officials to consider other local conditions and factors when deciding to implement prevention strategies. Virtus academy will consider rates of absenteeism among students and staff or presence of students or staff who are at risk of getting very sick with COVID-19 to help with decision-making.
11. Response on continuity of services:	SEL Support - We hired an additional school counselor in the spring of 2021 who will continue with VASC through the 22/23 and 23/24 school years. Our school counselors work together to screen our students for SEL needs and provide weekly lesson plans, newsletters, and small groups to help meet the SEL needs of our students. We have also purchased the Leader in Me program to help our students regulate emotional needs. - Health Support - We created a Wellness Committee that will implement programs for water consumption, healthy eating habits, and movement for the 23/24 school year. - Food Services - Our food services provider follows the USDA guidelines for providing balanced meals to our students. - School Closures - Our school counselors, health support, and food services continue to provide services even during school closures.
12. Response on ensuring periodic updates to plan:	Our COVID-19 Task Force, including Board of Directors members, school administration, teachers, parents, and health care representatives meets quarterly to review and update our safe return plans.
13. Response on public input in development of plan:	We will post our Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan to our school website and school-based parent communication platform, ParentSquare, and ask for public comment through Google forms.