

SY 2022-23 Continuous Education Plan (CEP)

LEA Name: The Next Step/El Proximo Paso PCS

LEA Head of School Name: Vivian Robledo

LEA Type: Adult

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Background and Purpose

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) required all local education agencies (LEAs) to develop **Continuous Education Plans (CEPs)** for the 2022-23 school year in order to communicate to OSSE and the public their plan for supporting **situational preparedness, student and staff well-being** and **accelerated learning**. For LEAs receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III-American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds, the CEPs also satisfy US Department of Education (USED) requirements for updating plans for a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. LEAs receiving ESSER III-ARP funds must review and update (as necessary) their plan every six months, at a minimum, between the date of publication and Sept. 30, 2023. **The plan below has been approved as an update for these purposes.**

The CEP application is closely aligned to OSSE's [Guiding Principles for Continuous Education](#). These guiding principles are intended to help LEAs develop effective and equitable CEPs that support situational preparedness, student and staff well-being, and accelerated learning for all students, especially those with the most significant learning gaps and students typically furthest from opportunity.

To inform the public of LEAs' responses, the CEPs will be publicly posted on OSSE's website and all LEAs and independent schools must share them directly with their families upon approval by OSSE. Additional questions pertaining to the implementation of these plans should be directed to the school and LEA.

Support Across Learning Environments

In the 2022-23 school year, there may be reasons that a group of students, a school or an LEA might need to transition from in-person learning to situational distance learning. Acknowledging this reality, OSSE is allowing LEAs to convert up to five days of their academic calendar to situational distance learning without needing to get approval from OSSE. The reasons for the transition to situational distance learning might vary greatly including but not limited to strains on a school's operational posture due to disease, inclement weather or other event and are ultimately up to each LEA's discretion. The following section is meant to engage and assess the LEA's ability to move to situational distance learning at any point in the school year. At a minimum, an LEA "ready" to transition to situational distance learning will have plans addressing the following listed provisions.

Q1. To be prepared for situational distance learning, the LEA has a plan for:

a. Provisions for learning

a. The provision of situational distance learning through either: (Select all applicable strategies below and complete only the questions associated with the selected options)

- ☒ 1. Provision of 1:1 learning devices.
- ☒ 2. Distribution of learning materials that are not digital, such as paper packets and other related learning materials.
- ☐ 3. Other

1. Provision of 1:1 learning devices

a1. As of the submission of this plan, the LEA has ____ learning devices.

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a2. Distribution Strategy:

The devices are:

Are distributed to all students at the beginning of the school year.

a3. An accurate assessment of current student access to broadband internet/WIFI.

☐

a4. Approximately __% of our students have access to broadband internet/WIFI at their situational distance place of learning.

25%

a5. In the space below, please describe the LEA's plan to provide internet access to students who do not currently

have it in the event of the need to move to situational distance learning.

Students are surveyed during the enrollment process to gauge their internet/wifi needs. All students are given the option to borrow a device to access broadband internet/WIFI from their situational place of learning at the beginning of each semester. Whether or not students indicated the need for technology during the enrollment process is not a factor to deny access to these devices at the start of the year. Technology distribution happens at the beginning of each semester when our IT Department reaches out to students by classroom, normally this process is completed during the first two weeks of classes. After our technology distribution process is completed, students are still able to request these devices by requesting directly to our IT Department during school hours. Our IT Department has a physical office located at our main building where students can make these requests.

a6. In the space below, please describe in detail the LEA's plan to distribute learning devices to students.

As with the internet/wifi process, students are surveyed during the enrollment process to gauge their need for devices. This gives us an estimate of what might be needed when students start the school year. Technology distribution happens at the beginning of each semester when our IT Department reaches out to students by classroom. Normally this process is completed during the first two weeks of classes. After our technology distribution process is completed, students are still able to request these devices by requesting directly to our IT Department during school hours. Our IT Department has a physical office location at our main building where students can make these requests. The process for borrowing internet/wifi and learning devices continues throughout the year so as to ensure students are able to maintain a level of connection and access to our online learning platforms at all times.

2. Distribution of Non-Digital Materials

1. In the space below, please describe in detail the LEA's plan to distribute materials such as paper packets, manipulatives, or other supplies to students.

The distribution of paper packets, manipulatives, and other supplies are done on an as needed basis in response to any malfunction or glitches in the use of internet/wifi and learning devices.

3. Other

Please describe, Other

b. Communication with Stakeholders

b. Communicating with all interested stakeholders, including:

i. Method for family engagement (including communication) during situational distance learning.

Describe the LEA's method for family engagement during situational distance learning in the space below.

The Next Step PCS (TNS) maintains regular contact with students, families, and stakeholders during the summer and school year. Students are kept informed of school protocols through regular communication, such as emails, texts, and phone calls. Should there be a pivot to situational distance learning, those same methods will be used and the following added: the school website and social media accounts. We will also place information at the doors of

the school. All communication will include how information will be disseminated during situational distance learning. All instructions will be provided in the languages of our students, families, and stakeholders.

ii. Means of communication to reach all students enrolled in a given school to alert them of a move to situational distance learning in a timely manner.

Describe the LEA's communication plan to alert students, educators and families of a move to situational distance learning in a timely manner in the space below.

During the school year, students will receive wifi/internet and learning devices. Students will learn how to use the school's learning management system (LMS), Schoology. All other digital platforms are accessed through the LMS. As part of classroom procedures, students will be taught the process of accessing the LMS should a pivot to situational distance learning need to occur. Students will access the LMS where they will find the teacher's zoom link for synchronous learning as well as instructions for any asynchronous work. Attendance will be monitored and uploaded to Quickbase. All instructions will be provided in the languages of our students, families, and stakeholders.

c. Additional Considerations

i. Family training and support.

Describe the LEA's situational distance learning training and support for families in the space below.

TNS will provide written (hard copy) and digital (video) instructions for families to support students with situational distance learning. All instructions will be provided in the languages of our students, families, and stakeholders.

ii. Teacher training on technology, tools, and remote instruction models before the school year.

Describe the training for teachers on the LEA's technology, tools, and remote instruction model in the space below.

During the opening of school, all teachers are trained on the following digital platforms: Schoology (LMS), Achieve 3000 for GED and ESL classes, and IXL for ESL classes. As stated all platforms are digital, which allows for a quick pivot to situational distance learning. All teachers have Google Meet and a professional Zoom account and their use is reviewed at the start of the year. Teachers will also plan synchronous and asynchronous lessons to provide and easy shift to situational distance learning as well.

iii. Articulation of clearly communicated student, teacher, and family situational distance learning expectations.

Describe the LEA's expectations in the space below.

Since the return to in-person learning, TNS has maintained detailed Covid-Protocols which include distance learning processes and procedures. Our academic department ensures that all teachers are aware of the instructional expectations and they are shared with students and families at the start of the year as part of opening of school information. Should a pivot to distance learning occur, the expectations are shared in written and digital form (including video). The expectations mimic classroom procedures very closely in order to make the pivot

easier for students and families. Again, all information is provided in the languages of our students and families.

iv. Established schedule and expectations for a situational distance learning day, including how attendance and engagement will be measured.

Describe the LEA's schedule and expectations for a situational distance learning day, including how attendance and engagement will be measured, in the space below.

Due to the extended period of situational distance learning last year, TNS is able to provide students the ability to continue to attend classes in their regular schedule by connecting to classes through the school learning management system, Schoology and Zoom. teachers are responsible for taking attendance on Quickbase and for making all resources available on schoology for synchronous and asynchronous learning.

Student and Staff Well-Being

Beyond 2022-23 Health and Safety Plans, OSSE is not asking LEAs to submit further plans for student and staff well-being in SY22-23. This does not discount the pandemic's impact on the physical, social-emotional, mental and behavioral well-being of those in the community. LEAs should continue to pursue strategies to promote the health of students, staff and families, and OSSE stands ready with support and technical assistance. To learn more about how LEAs should promote student and staff well-being, see [OSSE's 2022-23 Guiding Principles for Continuous Education](#) .

If the LEA is interested in additional technical assistance from OSSE, please select the checkbox below.

☐ The LEA is interested in receiving additional technical assistance related to student and staff well-being.

2022-23 Health and Safety Plans

LEAs should have a publicly accessible health and safety plan outlining its approach to help prevent and respond to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission among students, staff and visitors in the 2022-2023 school year. If helpful, as of the release of the current continuous education plan survey, current DC Health guidance for schools can be found [here](#) .

Q2. In the space below, please provide the exact URL where the LEA's current health and safety plan can be found. The plan should take applicable DC Health guidance into consideration and describe how the LEA will reduce the risk of transmission of the COVID-19 virus in its facilities.

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5910f3ec86e6c0368e043abc/t/62e403ad856a131e1f9cde71/1659110318038/TNS+Health>

Accelerated Learning

Employing Intentional Strategies for Accelerating Learning

Q3. Describe how the LEA will maximize accelerated learning opportunities for students by indicating the specific strategies that the LEA plans to use (select all that apply).

a. Adjusted Scheduling

i. Adjusted class/block/bell schedules

b. Instructional Changes

High-impact tutoring ; New uses of staff planning time for accelerated learning

c. Staffing and Related Support

Additional vendor and/or community partner support

d. Any Other, Please Describe

e. In the space below, please describe in detail the LEA's approach to implementing each strategy selected above and how it will accelerate student learning.

Because we are able to pivot to situational distance learning, students will be able to maintain their in-person schedule by zoom and use of our Learning Management System, Schoology, in the same manner they use it in the building. When students return to the building after a situational distance learning situation, they will be regrouped and skills assessed to see what learning loss may have occurred. If needed classes will be adjusted to provide high-impact tutoring. Staff will use their planning time to reviews student needs and regroup and reteach as needed. If needed, we will use outside support to meet any gaps where additional support is needed.

Q4. Describe the LEA's plan to ensure that students who require initial or reevaluation for special education service eligibility receive timely assessments and final eligibility determinations as required by IDEA and local special education requirements.

Identify:

i. Any barriers that the LEA has in meeting these requirements

The major barrier during situational distance learning is completion of any battery of testing needed for an initial evaluation or a reevaluation; however, compliance with state and federal regulations regarding students' annual IEP reviews, re-evaluation procedures, and periodic program updates must continue as we utilize state and federal guidelines to maintain timely procedures for the identification processes for students suspected of having disabilities.

Special educators are expected to continue to maintain required deadlines and timelines unless OSSE shifts guidance and provides some relief due to the COVID-19 crisis. Meetings will be held via Zoom, Google hangouts, phone conferences, etc. These meetings will follow a typical process and develop an IEP as if the student was in school and should not be reviewed from the perspective of a distance learning plan. The IEP teams will discuss the distance learning plan following the review and revision of an annual IEP. This means, writing the IEP and discussing it as if the school were in session...then discussing the Continuous Education Plan that will be implemented until the end of the school closure due to COVID-19. There will be two documents: the IEP and the Continuous Education Plan.

ii. The LEA's plan to address those barriers

Special Education Evaluation Referrals

The Next Step Public Charter school must consider referrals to special education during this time of challenge. A referral shall result in an evaluation planning team meeting to consider the need for a special education evaluation. If the team determines that a special education evaluation is necessary, the team will create a plan that will be attempted to be completed in 60 school days. If the evaluation cannot be completed in 60 school days because distance evaluation is not possible, then an extension will be necessary with required forms such as a Prior Written Notice (PWN) as COVID-19 school closure may not be an acceptable reason for an evaluation delay.

Special Education Re-evaluations

The special education department will complete re-evaluations by the due date of the evaluation. We will consider the possibility of conducting a distance evaluation. If this is not possible, we will complete a Prior Written Notice indicating no evaluation needed at this time with a clear direction to complete a new evaluation upon return to school in order to continue eligibility. Additionally, we may also complete a file review and utilize existing information if appropriate.

iii. The LEA's plan for communication with families to ensure completion of evaluation requirements.

Special Education Teachers will communicate with parents/caregivers via phone, text, and/or email to schedule any meetings related to the completion of any evaluation due while on situational distance learning. Meetings will be held by zoom or phone, depending on the comfort of the family/caregiver. We use various methods to receive signatures such as PandaDoc and DocuSign, and we will walk the parents/caregivers through that process. The special education team will continue to uphold parental rights during this time. The special education team will follow up with families after any virtual meetings to see if they have any questions. Special educators will be encouraged to remind families to speak up if they are in disagreement with what is happening during a meeting.

Q5. Describe the LEA's plan to ensure IEP teams make individualized decisions (whether and to what extent) for students with disabilities who are eligible for special education services under IDEA, who have compensatory services necessary to mitigate the impact of periods of school closure or distance instruction in the 2020-21 or 2021-22 school year.

The special education team will ensure that students with disabilities are provided access to the general education curriculum and extra-curricular activities in the regular education setting to the maximum extent possible with assistive support to maintain the student's progress.

The special education team will look at each individual student to determine whether compensatory services are needed. The extent of a student's compensatory services, if needed, will be an individualized determination made by the team. Some illustrative, non-exclusive elements included:

If special education and related services could not be modified to a continuous learning/distance learning environment

If some special education and related services were modified but did not fully meet the student's education needs

The student's IEPs: pre-extended closure, amended, and revised

The duration and circumstance of the school closure)e.g. Full closure or continuous learning/distance learning).

If a student did not receive services during the school's closure, our special education team will make an individualized determination as to whether and to what extent compensatory services are needed to make up for any skills that might have been lost. The special education team will ensure the delivery of services designed to mitigate student regression and address recovery of loss of learning that may have occurred during school closure due to COVID-19, as appropriate, to all students enrolled. The decisions will be based on a qualitative analysis of

what the student received, what progress or regression the student experience, and what is needed to address recovery of lost learning and mitigate student regression.

The special education team will prioritize the most critical prerequisite skills and knowledge for each subject area on behalf of the students. We will utilize student assessments to diagnose the student's unfinished learning in the prerequisite content knowledge and skills. The scope and sequence/pacing guidance for each subject area will be adapted to reflect where teachers might need to provide acceleration support. Teachers will be trained to diagnose students' unfinished learning and provide acceleration support. The students' progress on grade-appropriate assignments will be monitored and adjusted based on student results.

a. Identify how and when the LEA will communicate IEP team decisions regarding eligibility for compensatory education to families, and how the LEA plans to ensure the delivery of these services to students.

Special Education Teachers will provide guidance to parents/caregivers via phone and/or email a minimum of twice bi-weekly, providing additional resources as needed. Special education teachers will be available via email for questions relating to student learning activities during the school day during designated office hours. Depending on the age of the student and their level of independence, parent roles will vary. We do not intend for parents to become 'the teacher', but we know that many parents will be assisting, supervising, and helping. Parents/caregivers can contact the special education director with questions and request support if necessary.

CEP Assurance Statements

Assurance Statement for Continuous Education Plans (CEPs) :

The LEA attests to the following statements regarding delivery of instruction :

- ☒ The LEA grounds instruction in the District of Columbia's approved state academic standards (and/or the LEA s approved standards) in English language arts, math, and science across grades K-12.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding 2022-23 school year attendance:

- ☒ The LEA assures that it will collect and report daily attendance through the LEA's student information system (SIS) consistent with OSSE's regulations and policies for 2022-23.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding graduation and promotion for 2022-23

- ☒ The LEA assures that it will abide by the statewide graduation requirements enumerated in 5A DCMR § 2203 and/or in accordance with its charter agreement - if applicable.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding serving students with disabilities including students in non-public special education school settings (please check all boxes):

- ☒ Students with disabilities have equitable access to situational distance and in-person learning opportunities as

possible in accordance with the guidance above and issued by the US Department of Education.

- ☒ LEAs will ensure timely completion of IDEA procedures, including but not limited to initial and reevaluation for eligibility and IEP development and revision, in both situational distance and in-person learning models.
- ☒ LEAs will ensure that school professionals delivering IEP services to the student regularly communicate with families throughout any periods of situational distance learning. Consistent and clear communication encourages parent and student participation in situational distance learning, in-person learning, recovery service delivery, and other educational opportunities.
- ☒ LEAs will ensure recovery planning and implementation includes strategies to assess students with disabilities, formally or informally, to determine a baseline measurement for recovery service delivery, as well as strategies to address any identified student regression and loss of educational benefit. These strategies will take into consideration and seek to address the achievement gap of students with disabilities in comparison to their non-disabled peers prior to loss of services due to school closure.

The LEA attests to the following statements regarding serving English learners (please check all boxes):

- ☒ The LEA will ensure that English learner students are identified in a timely manner as required by state policies and guidance identified above.
- ☒ The LEA will develop a plan for ensuring continuity of its English learner program and services to all English learner students across both situational distance and in-person learning environments.
- ☒ The LEA will monitor implementation to ensure that English learner services and access to grade-level content classes are advancing English learners language and academic goals.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding technology (please check all boxes):

- ☒ The LEA will ensure that, to the extent its situational distance learning program uses technology, each student will have access to a device, other needed technology, and internet connectivity sufficient to fully participate in the school's learning program.

The LEA attests to the following statement regarding family, stakeholder and public engagement (please check all boxes):

- ☒ The LEA has given the public an opportunity to provide input in the development of the CEP and engaged in meaningful consultation with a broad group of stakeholders. Specifically, the LEA has engaged in meaningful consultation with students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); and teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff and their unions; 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, migrant students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.
- ☒ The LEA has taken comments of the above-named groups into account in the revision of the CEP.
- ☒ The LEA will ensure translation of family-facing documents into the major non-English language(s) spoken by families served by the LEA, consistent with DC Code §2-1931, et seq.
- ☒ The LEA will provide, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, an alternative format of the plan accessible to that parent.

☒ The LEA will ensure publication, in a conspicuous place on its website, of the following resources by the beginning of school during the 2022-23 school year and provide families awareness of:

- An accessible, family-facing description of their continuous education plan for the 2022-23 school year, in an understandable and uniform format; and
- An accessible, family-facing description of their health and safety plan for the 2022-23 school year, in an understandable and uniform format; and
- Contact information of key points of contact including technical support, language access, school administrators, faculty and staff.

☒ Submission of the 2022-23 school year CEP is considered a six-month update of the LEA's 2021-22 CEP, consistent with requirements asked of LEAs receiving ESSER III-ARP funds. The LEA will update the 2022-23 school year CEP every six months, at a minimum, between the date of publication and Sept. 30, 2023.

Health and Safety Assurance

Assurance Statement for Health and Safety Plans :

☒ The LEA ensures that it will adopt any required measures from applicable DC Health and OSSE COVID-19 guidance to help respond to and reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission among students, staff, families and the community.