



## LEA 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.

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

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LEA Name: North Caldwell

Date (06/04/2021):

Date Revised (5/24/23):

### 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 mask:

Masks will be optional. Respect for each individual's choice will continue to be enforced.

#### B. Physical distancing:

Physical distancing of 3 feet with all desks facing forward during periods of high community transmission.

#### C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette:

Proper hand washing procedures will be reinforced

- Students will be taught the five steps for washing hands correctly:
  - Wet hands with clean, running water, turn off tap and apply soap
  - Lather hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of hands, between fingers and under nails
  - Scrub hands for at least 20 seconds (Hum the Happy Birthday song)
  - Rinse hands well under clean, running water
  - Dry hands using a clean towel

Wash hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds

- After using bathroom

- Before eating
- After blowing nose, coughing or sneezing
- Before and after going outside
- If water not available hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol can be used

Cover mouth and nose with a tissue or sleeve when coughing or sneezing

- Students will wash hands following a cough or sneeze
- Hand sanitizer will be placed on desk and used after sneezing and coughing
- Wipe down desk areas and/or materials/surfaces with sanitizer following a sneeze or cough

Proper hygiene procedures will be taught and reinforced at all times:

- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick

#### **D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation:**

All CDC cleaning and disinfecting procedures will be implemented. More frequent cleaning of communal surfaces will be implemented throughout the day.

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

The school nurses attended a program at John Hopkins University to review the procedures required for contact tracing. The school nurses will continue to work closely with local health department to facilitate, to the extent allowable by applicable laws, systematic case investigation and contact tracing of infected students, teachers, and staff and consistent isolation of cases and quarantine of close contacts. Quarantine will be used for students, teachers, and staff who might have been exposed to COVID-19 unless the close contact is fully vaccinated, or has tested positive in the last 3 months and does not have any symptoms.

Quarantine Procedures:

CDC protocols will be followed and adhered to at all times. Students and/or staff who test positive for COVID-19 and/or symptomatic for COVID-19 will:

- Stay home and isolate for 5 days (Day 0 is the first day of symptoms)

- Return to school on Day 6 if fever free for 24 hours and symptoms have begun to resolve
- No test required to return to school

#### **F. Diagnostic and screening testing**

The CDC no longer recommends routine screening testing in schools. Parents will complete a single attestation at the beginning of the year to indicate that they will monitor their children for symptoms on a daily basis and not send a child who is sick to school. Parents will be encouraged to keep children home if they are feeling unwell and/or exhibiting any of the following symptoms compatible with COVID-19; fever, headache, cough, sore throat, and/or runny nose.

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

Efforts will be made to encourage all students and staff to stay up to date with their vaccines. Parents will be encouraged to provide the school nurses with dates of all vaccinations and/or booster shots.

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

Unless otherwise indicated due to medical reasons, students with disabilities will follow the health and safety protocols in place within the school environment. Each student's IEP will be systematically reviewed to ensure all programs and services are being delivered and/or if any additional modifications, accommodations are required. Additionally, for medically fragile students, medical plans will be developed in consultation with each child's physician.

## 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)**

### **Social Emotional Supports:**

The School Psychologist will consult with teachers and visit classrooms to look for signs of anxiety and stress.

- Teachers will be provided with training to develop and enhance their ability to identify warning signs that would suggest that a student may have been traumatized and/or experience some degree of emotional distress as a result of the public health emergency. These signs may include:
  - Anxiety, fear and worry about safety of self and others (clingier to parent or teacher)
  - Changes in behavior that may include;
    - Increased activity level
    - Decreased attention and/or concentration
    - Withdrawal from others
    - Angry outbursts and/or aggression
    - Increased somatic complaints (headaches, stomachaches, overreacting to minor bumps)
    - New fears
    - Absenteeism
- Teachers will incorporate mindfulness strategies into classroom settings
- Students who are evidencing signs of difficulty adjusting socially or emotionally will be referred to the School Psychologist or School Social Worker for counseling and/or assessment of extent of impact on overall emotional health
- Students will be provided with techniques for dealing with overwhelming emotional reactions
- Parents will be contacted to provide information regarding resources that they can access to assist their child to recover from a traumatic event
- Links to information regarding COVID-19 and links to information to help parents navigate discussions with children regarding COVID-19 will be place on district website
- Social Emotional programing will be implemented within the school setting
- School Psychologist and School Social Worker will monitor faculty and staff to provide support and/or recommendations to handle any anxiety or stress that staff members may be experiencing

**Behavioral Supports:**

- The BCBA will be available to consult with classroom teachers to develop behavioral plans and/or strategies and techniques to modify behavior
- The BCBA and School Psychologists will be available to provide support and guidance to parents as needed

**Academic Supports:**

- Baseline assessments will be administered to determine mastery of previously taught grade level concepts and standards
- Teachers will differentiate instruction to address areas of deficits/delays in academic areas within whole group, small group and 1:1 instructional paradigms
- Before and/or afterschool Title 1 tutoring will be provided for students at-risk for academic failure
- Students at-risk for academic failure will be referred to the I&RS committee to identify specific areas of academic challenge so that an individualized learning plan can be developed that includes specific goals and objectives to be implemented within the classroom and during pull-out basic skill instruction
- Enrollment in Basic Skills program to provide direct instruction to provide remediation for any area of delay in grade level standards in a 1:1 or 2:1 setting.
- Consultation with Learning Disabilities Teacher Consultant to identify strategies/interventions to assist students with meeting grade-level standards

**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)**

Representatives of all stakeholder groups (Teachers, Administrators, Board Members, Parents, School Nurses, Union Members, School Physician, Custodians) provided input to the school reopening plan via membership on the Restart Committee. The Board of Education created a COVID committee so that the plan could be consistently reviewed and updated based on the latest information from the CDC and NJDOH. The COVID committee reported on the plan and any updates during regularly scheduled Board meetings. Community members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions or comment on any procedures during the public comment section of the meeting. Additionally, community members were encouraged to reach out to members of the COVID committee and/or administration should they have any questions or concerns.

**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)**

To ensure that the reopening plan was in a format that was in a language that parents could understand, the school information system was reviewed to determine if any family required the plan to be translated into another language.