

Updated:
September 1, 2023



STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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.

Updated:
September 1, 2023

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

LEA Name: Vineland Public Charter School

Date: (06/07/2021)

Date Revised: 9/1/2023

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
 1. The school will follow NJDOH requirements for wearing face coverings.
 2. In accordance with the Governor’s order and the New Jersey Department of Health, the “Mask Mandate” has been lifted
 - Students will be required to wear face covering / masks:
 - Students exhibiting COVID like symptoms while in the school setting. They will be placed into the quarantine room until they can safely leave the school premises.
- B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)
 1. Classroom -Physical distancing will be in accordance with guidelines set forth by the CDC and the local Department of Health. School furniture will be adjusted accordingly to accommodate social distancing.
 2. Cafeteria (Breakfast /Lunch) –Physical distancing will be in accordance with guidelines set forth by the CDC and the local Department of Health. Currently, all meals are served within the classroom environment.
 3. Transportation-Physical distancing will be encouraged where possible. Seating assignments will be created by the home districts transportation office. Buses will be sanitized in between routes. Weather permitting, windows on the bus will be opened to improve ventilation. As updates are released by the CDC and local Health Department policies and procedures will be updated.

Updated:
September 1, 2023

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

1. Staff and students will be retrained on proper handwashing practices and PPE as prescribed by the CDC.
2. Resources from the CDC and guidance documents that provide handwashing etiquette will be displayed throughout the school building.
3. Hand sanitizing stations are available in the school's hallways, classrooms, and cafeteria.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

1. Cleaning practices

- a. Classrooms- In accordance with internal checklists, classrooms will be cleaned daily. High contact areas including door handles, light plates, desks, chairs, shelving, handrails, telephones, etc. will be sanitized with approved disinfectant.
- b. Nurse's office and Isolation Room- Nurse's office and isolation room will be cleaned daily in accordance with deep cleaning procedures.
- c. Cafeteria-will be cleaned daily when utilized for meals in accordance with deep cleaning protocols. High touch points such as tables, chairs, desks, door handle, push plate, light switches, food distribution areas, cash register etc. will be disinfected after each cohorts use.
- d. Restrooms-will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day and after school hours.
- e. High traffic areas-Common areas, vestibule area, hallways, main office is cleaned and disinfected daily.
- f. Water fountains-Have been replaced with bottle fill stations and bubbler lockout covers have been installed.
- g. Deep cleaning practices-Occurs daily utilizing school approved disinfectant in electrostatic sprayers or misters.
- h. Monitoring and Quality Control-Night custodians will inspect school environment at night. Inspection sheets will be completed each night and reviewed daily. School day custodian will be responsible to inspect all areas of the building prior to the start of the school day and report all issues to the facility manager.
- i. Disinfectant-Primary and secondary disinfectants have been identified to ensure that adequate levels can be maintained. All utilized disinfectants are listed on EPA List.
- j. Sanitizers-Primary and secondary sanitizers have been identified to ensure adequate supply can be maintained. All sanitizers contain a minimum of 60% alcohol. Sanitizer locations are located in high traffic areas such as hallways, entrances/exits, classrooms, and cafeteria.
- k. A daily schedule of cleaning methodology—cleaning checklist, product list and related documentation will be maintained by the facility manager and building main office/custodian.
- l. Additional cleaning periods may take place to sanitize high touch and high traffic areas due to potential contact or positive cases as per the guidance from the CDC and the local Department of Health.

Updated:
September 1, 2023

2. HVAC-

Air Exchange-Building is routinely checked to ensure positive pressure and occupied spaces will purge air routinely and effectively.

Routine maintenance – Routine daily maintenance will be performed in accordance with the checklist released by ASHRAE.

1. Filter maintenance –Filters will be verified that they have been installed properly with documented installation dates. Filter evaluations and changes will be conducted regularly in accordance with network practices.
2. Coil cleanings-Coils will be evaluated for cleaning pursuant to ASHRAE checklist.
3. Controls-Modifications to controls systems have been made to purge air when levels increase above ASHRE recommended set points.
4. Inventory Management-Inventory will be reviewed regularly by custodian and facility manager.
5. Resources:
 - CDC-COVID-19 Resources
 - CDC- Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes.
 - ASHRAE – Epidemic Task Force for Schools and Universities
 - OSHA- COVID-19 Resources
 - EPA- COVID-19 Resources

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

1. The school will allow staff, students and families to self-report symptoms and/or suspected exposure.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

1. The school nurse shall screen students and employees who show or indicate they are experiencing COVID symptoms.
 - a. Screening by the school nurse will be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with applicable privacy laws and regulations.
 - b. Results will be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are observed.
 - c. The screening protocol will take into account students and employees with disabilities and accommodation that may be needed in the screening process for those students and employees.
 - d. Students and employees with symptoms related to COVID-19 will be safely and respectfully isolated from others.
 - e. CDC guidelines for quarantine timeframes will be followed.

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

Updated:
September 1, 2023

1. Staff/family vaccinations will be in coordination with Cumberland County Department of Health. Information regarding optional vaccination pop up clinic was made available to school families and staff. Any additional information regarding vaccination sites will be forwarded to staff, students, and families.
- H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies
1. The school special education department, principal, school physician, school nurse, staff and parents have engaged in discussion to meet the health and safety needs of students with disabilities, nursing service plans, and specific requests due to COVID 19.
 2. The Director of Special Education and school principal will address parental concerns related to COVID 19 and Special Education.
 3. Case managers/Building administration will continue identify/work with students prone to anxiety, diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, or school refusal and will develop plans to address with guidance/mental health professionals, school social worker.
 4. The school will employ a guidance counselor and school nurse who can assist staff and students with their needs related to COVID-19.

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.

1. Professional Development-The school is in the process of scheduling professional development opportunities that address the health and wellness of our staff and the identification of support for our students (i.e. SEL, trauma informed training).
2. SEL and Mental Health- Instructional staff will continue to integrate SEL into the daily curriculum. In addition, the school will do the following:
 - a. Each building's I&RS Team will meet routinely to review student/families to identify areas of need and/or support.
 - b. Provide guidance counselor/social worker to work with students and families who have emergent needs.
 - c. Admin/school counselor will review student progress, attendance, and discipline routinely.
 - d. To support students, Instructional staff will deliver curricular lessons to the classroom.
 - e. Coordination by building administration of school counselors, CST to discuss students trending needs.
 - f. CST Members will support current caseloads and be made available to support students and staff if needed.
 - g. Students who have emergent needs will be addressed by school support service referrals for outside services and referred to the I&RS Team.
 - h. Students who were full-remote during the 2023-2024 school year will be assisted with the transition from home to school.
2. Food Service- The school will be operating full day schedules during the 2023-2024 school year which includes breakfast and lunch. The district participates in the National School Lunch Program and will apply for a waiver for the 2023-2024 school year which will allow for all students to receive meals free of charge. In the event of a school closure, the school will have access to meals similar to the 2023-2024 school year.
3. Remote Accessibility- Teachers have access to a 1-on-1 laptop that they can use in school and at home. Students in grades 4-8 will have access to a 1-on-1 device in school and that they can take home. Grades 2-3 students will have access to a Chromebooks while in school and

Updated:
September 1, 2023

will be permitted to take those devices home if necessary. Students in PK-1 have access to a device that they use in school, but they could be permitted to take home if necessary and if the family does not have another device option at their home. In the unlikely event that a school is closed temporarily:

- a. Students will be able to continue their academic work using those school provided devices and services at home, such as Google Classroom, Gmail and the basic versions of Google Meet, Zoom, or another video conferencing platform.
- b. Other staff member who are not typically provided a 1-on-1 device may request one from their school's technician for temporary at-home use.
- c. Technical support will be provided by phone, email and video conference. In-person repairs and support are anticipated to continue via a curbside drop-off model by appointment.

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.

1. June 11, 2021 – After the release from the plan template on May 24, 2021, School Administration compiled information into the template. The school scheduled a Parent Forum for June 11, 2021, to receive feedback on the plan.
2. June 14, 2021 – School Administration presented a brief overview of its “Fall Forward” plan to the staff at a regularly scheduled Staff Meeting.
3. June 21, 2021 – School Administration will submit the plan to the Board of Trustees for approval. Public comment on the plan will be taken again at this time.
4. July 2021 – School Administration will monitor changing guidance and update the community accordingly.
5. August 23, 2021- School Administration will present to the Board of Trustees any changed to the plan based on changing guidance throughout July and August 2021.
6. December 2021 – Review of plan with the Restart and Recovery Committee.
7. February 2022 – Board of Trustees meeting – review of mask mandate expiration/lift
8. September 2022 – Review of updated protocols with school parent committee.
9. June 7, 2023 – Review of updated protocols with school parent committee.
10. September 1, 2023 – Review of updated protocols with school parent committee.

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.

Updated:
September 1, 2023

1. Translation – Translators have been identified throughout the school district to assist with translating the document with parents that have limited English proficiency.
2. Accessibility – This document will be added to the district website after being run through an accessibility check.