



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

LEA Name: Hopewell Crest School

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 05/26/2021

Date Revised (mm/dd/yyyy):

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

- The LEA will carefully consider the most current and up to date CDC and NJDOE recommendations concerning face coverings when school reopens.
- Once guidelines are established the LEA will follow the recommendations for students and staff. Masks breaks will be scheduled into the day. Students will be reminded to wear masks properly by staff in class and general meeting areas.
- The LEA will pay specific attention to the guideline for masks and student lunches.

B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)

- The LEA will again carefully consider the most current and up to date CDC and NJDOE recommendations concerning physical distancing. Once those guidelines are established, we will review our class sizes and assess what distancing measures that must be taken in classes based on our sizes.
- We will continue to keep our hallways distance markers in place and students will walk in line that are at least two arm lengths apart.
- Hallways are marked for one way travel and classroom routes will be in place to minimize cross contamination.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

- The LEA will keep sanitizing stations in place for the foreseeable future and time will be kept in the master schedule for handwashing before and after group assembling such as bathroom breaks, lunch, recess, special area classes, and hallway trips.
- Teachers will be urged to sit all students facing the front of the room in the same direction to avoid face to face interaction or breathing.
- Clear dividers will be considered for small group meets.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation.

- Daily Cleaning and Sanitation will take place each day when the children are in the building. Deep Cleaning of hallways and bathrooms will take place during the remainder of the day when staff is in the building and the night crew will be focused on deep cleaning classrooms once staff leaves for the day.
- Bathrooms will be cleaned on a 30-to-60-minute rotation during the day. One student will be permitted to use hallway bathrooms at a time. Teachers will dismiss no more than one boy or girl to the bathroom at a time. Bathroom air dryers have been replaced with towel dispensers.
- Air Filters are changed Bi-Weekly.

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

- The district is confident about its current contact tracing and quarantining practices. It believes they are efficient and completely adhere to the state and local DOH requirements. The district will continue to utilize the same practices in cases of suspected and confirmed COVID cases.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

- Currently the district has a student and staff screener that is completed each day before entry to the building. Additionally, staff temperature is taken each day.
- The screener will stay in place for both students and staff based on the honor system. Parents will be urged to keep their children home if they are sick.
- Unvaccinated staff will still be required to have their temperature taken.

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

- The district will work with local health agencies to provide vaccinations for all eligible students and staff members once the vaccines are available.
- The district will help with providing literature, organizing mass vaccination sites if needed, and provide help to monitor the vaccination process.

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

- All students and staff will be required to follow the health and safety policies that are put in place by the district unless their disability or other contributing factor prevents them from doing so. Each case will be handled on an individual basis.

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)

The district will kickoff the new school year with a refreshed resilience and vigor for educating students. This will be met with improved education approaches through technology and measured interventions based on beginning of the year assessments. We will offer PD in recognizing, preventing, and addressing student and staff mental health problems, mindfulness practices, and the importance of mental health. Helping our teachers in addressing anxiety, stress, and lack of motivation. Our anticipated outcomes are to increase overall motivation and confidence of our staff. We will provide a training on noticing and acknowledging mental health struggles among students in the classroom. This will increase awareness of students with mental health struggles, unsafe home environments, and suicidal ideations to get them the appropriate help and outside counseling/mental health resources.

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)

The district began its public comment on the plan in the summer of 2020 with our reopening committee for the 2020-21 school year. The committee as well as a FAQs section of the school opening website that was updated weekly joined as the public input to our plan. The public input continued throughout the school year as our plan changed with the rise and fall of cases throughout 2020-21. The input was done again through committee reports, FAQs, and during our public board meetings. We will continue to seek public input with the reopening of school in 2021-2022 through the same avenues that we have utilized because we feel that has been our most successful approach.

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)

The district published its guidelines for reopening though an added site to the district's website. This site has been constantly since our October reopening and is available in English and capable of being translated to Spanish or another language. The website is laid out with categories for each section and can be found here <https://sites.google.com/view/hcsroadback/home> .

The information on the website is also available in a print version for individuals that do not have internet access or have a disability that will not allow them access to navigating a website. This information can be obtained by contacting the school.