



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(j)(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: East Amwell Township School District

Date: 5/25/21

Date Revised: 1/15/24

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 East Amwell Township School District applies a mask optional policy at the current time.

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

The East Amwell Township School District is no longer operating a cohort or hybrid schedule.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Students will be encouraged to wash their hands according to the following CDC guidelines. Frequent hand washing and hand sanitizing will occur throughout the school day for all staff and students.

According to the CDC, covering coughs and sneezes and keeping hands clean can help prevent the spread of serious respiratory illness. Students will be taught and reminded to use proper etiquette.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Facilities and Cleaning:

The district will ensure the safety and health of all students and staff by implementing the following practices on an as needed basis throughout the year:

- Facilities staff will review and receive retraining on cleaning and enhanced sanitation practices and safety protocols, when necessary.
- Conducting daily cleaning of classrooms, restrooms, cafeterias, kitchens, and hallways.
- Conducting periodic and/or necessitated deep cleaning using enhanced protocols if illness is observed in specific classrooms.
- Supplying hand soap, disinfecting wipes, and hand sanitizing gel in classrooms, main entrances, and high use areas. In areas where hand washing may not be available, sanitizing gel will be available.
- Cafeteria tables/seats/chairs will be cleaned between lunch periods.

School Closure:

Should the building be required to close for an extended period of time, the custodial staff will continue to maintain the facilities following updated guidelines from the NJDOH

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

Contact tracing will be completed in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments. Based on the NJDOH recommendations, the East Amwell Township School uses a routine disease control model. This model focuses more on responding to clusters of cases, outbreaks, and evidence of ongoing transmission in schools, and less on individual case investigation and contact tracing. East Amwell school will review NJDOH, State, Local or Tribal Health Department guidance to determine if any additional response to symptomatic staff or students or non symptomatic individuals who have been exposed to an illness, would be warranted.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

The East Amwell Township School District will consider the applicable State, local, territorial, or Tribal health and State, Federal and local educational department guidance to determine in what circumstances screening testing may be required.

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

The East Amwell Township School District collected vaccination information when required by Executive Order 253. The District has shared information with staff regarding ways to access the COVID-19 vaccine. The district provided access to the flu vaccine onsite in the fall of 2023.

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

The East Amwell Township School District will continue to follow applicable State, Federal & Local health and education department guidance to ensure students with disabilities receive appropriate accommodations with respect to health and safety needs, as needed.

Parents and/or students should work with their Case Manager or School Counselor to discuss reasonable accommodations, if current precautions do not meet the needs of an individual student. Such accommodations will be considered on a case by case basis.

I. Essential Employees

The following are East Amwell Township School District essential employees:

John Capuano	Superintendent
Erin Dolan	Interim Principal
Dr. Jacqueline Royer	CST/Curriculum Director
Jesse Fry	Facility Director

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)

For students with IEPs or those with a 504 plan who are unable to attend school in person, provisions will be made to provide a remote or virtual program of studies to the greatest extent appropriate and practicable with the student's IEP/504 plan. The impact of the remote or virtual setting will be taken into consideration to meet the individual needs of students. Should the need arise, IEP meetings and student evaluations may be conducted virtually.

Academic Support

Staff members will review the data results, from student's baseline assessments, to determine which students need supplemental academic supports. Teachers use differentiation within the classroom.

Athletics/Co-Curricular

After school co-curricular and athletic activities are available for student participation, to strengthen social skills and connection to peers, teach teamwork and a healthy lifestyle.

Attendance

Student attendance will be monitored per the District Attendance Policy, as shared with families in the annual Parent Handbook.

Before and After Care

East Amwell School District continues its partnership with the Hunterdon County YMCA for the provision of Before and After Care services on school premises. Childcare is also available during certain school closures.

Behavioral Supports

The school behaviorist will work with students who require extra behavioral support. The behaviorist works with staff members to provide professional development on how to implement the needed behavior systems for the students. They also visit classrooms to provide additional support as needed.

Delivery of Meals

The district will continue to provide a healthy school lunch on each school day, meeting the nutritional requirements of the National School Lunch Program. As participants in the NSLP, families are eligible to apply for the free or reduced lunch program. District personnel will work with families to ensure all eligible students are enrolled in the program.

Missing Assignments

Student assignments and homework will be monitored per the District Policy, as shared with families in the annual Parent Handbook.

Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) The MTSS committee will meet as needed throughout the year to discuss any student academic and behavioral concerns and provide resources and supports if warranted.

Social Supports

The counselor and additional mental health providers will visit classrooms to provide SEL support to students. Students will also be able to meet individually with a counselor should the need arise. Resources will be available, as needed for staff support. The district will continue to offer team building activities and opportunities for staff to reconnect and build relationships and support systems.

Technology

The District will continue its 1:1 device policy for all K-8 students and work with families to ensure access to assignments and instruction during a long-term school closure.

Wraparound Supports

The school counselor, social worker, and psychologist will provide information to parents whose children may need academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs for students who may need interventions both inside and outside of the school environment.

3. Public Comment

A. Describe how the LEA sought public comment on its plan, and how it took those public comments 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 original plan was available for review prior to approval in May 2021. The May 2021 Safe Return plan was reviewed and updated in September 2021, March 2022, September 2022, July 2023 and January 2024. Each revision is a collaboration between parents, staff and administrators, and discussed at board meetings, with the current plan available on the District website, after discussion with the Board.

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)

Each revision of the plan will be submitted to the Board of Education, parents, and staff, as well as being posted on the school website which is ADA compatible. The school website allows for translation into several languages.