



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: Eric Platt

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 05/30/2021

Date Revised (mm/dd/yyyy): 05/18/2023

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: The mask mandate in New Jersey schools was lifted effective Monday, March 7th, 2022. As of March 7th, the Little Silver Boro Schools became mask optional. Students and staff members who wished to remain in masks could. The only exceptions to this protocol are if students/staff are returning to school on day 6 after being identified as Covid Positive. In this scenario, the student or staff member must remain masked from day 6 through day 10. These individuals are permitted to remove their masks for brief periods when eating or drinking. **As of May 11, 2023 the National Emergency and Public Health Emergency Declaration around the Covid-19 Pandemic has expired.**

B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding): For the 2022-2023 school year we are not required to keep physical distancing and/or to conduct contact tracing for close contacts to a Covid positive staff or student. If we were faced with a spike or break out, this is a mitigation procedure we could implement. **As of May 11, 2023 the National Emergency and Public Health Emergency Declaration around the Covid-19 Pandemic has expired, as such physical distancing is not occurring.**

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette: All classrooms were equipped with handwashing stations that included a dispenser with appropriate hand sanitizer. All students are expected to clean their hands when entering any room and before and after snack/lunchtime. Additionally, all students are expected to wash their hands when returning from any outdoor activity. The custodial staff in both schools routinely checks and refills the sanitizer stations daily and upon request if needed.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation: To maintain the safest and cleanest possible setting in both schools, additional custodial services were secured and utilized throughout the school day all year. The focus of these additional services was cleaning and disinfecting the bathrooms and major touchpoints in the schools. During the summer of 2020, the air filters in both schools were all replaced with hospital-grade filters to significantly improve the quality of air circulation and cleanliness. These filters have continued to be replaced every 3 months. The additional custodial services will continue to the greatest extent possible and the new air filters will be maintained according to the specified expectations.

E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments: Effective February 8th, 2022 the Little Silver Boro decided that in-school close contact tracing would no longer be conducted. Over the previous year and 10 months, the local data collected showed that we quarantine large numbers of students and less than 1% of them became sick or tested positive for Covid while serving their quarantine. Following updated recommendations for the CDC and the NJDOH in the summer of 2022 we no longer contact trace, or quarantine for exposure. Covid positive staff and students are removed from the school setting for 5 days from the onset of symptoms or positive test result and can return masked on day 6 as long as they are fever and symptom free. They are required to remain masked day 6 through 10. **As of May 11, 2023 the National Emergency and Public Health Emergency Declaration around the Covid-19 Pandemic has expired.**

F. Diagnostic and screening testing: Before the start of the 2020-2021 school year, four temperature scanning machines were purchased and placed in the schools. Two devices were placed at strategic entrance points in both schools and have been used all year for all staff, students, and visitors as they entered the building. These scanners can digitally check individual body temperatures using a forehead or wrist scanner. Given that these devices resemble security devices found in airports, they have been used with ease and have become a regular part of the daily routine for everyone who enters the schools each morning. The district will be utilizing these scanners for the same purpose to start the 2021-2022 school year. On February 22nd, 2022 we removed the thermal scanners from the entrances of both schools. The scanners are stored and if the need arises we can bring them back as part of a layered mitigation plan. **As of May 11, 2023 the National Emergency and Public Health Emergency Declaration around the Covid-19 Pandemic has expired.**

G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible: Our district was able to partner with our neighboring districts and the local VNA, which provided the opportunity to have our staff vaccinated starting in February 2021. The process initially focused on individuals that fell into a high-risk category, and then the process expanded to include all staff members given the opportunity to receive the vaccination. To date, over 95% of all district staff have been fully vaccinated. The District has continued to promote and advertise local efforts to vaccinate and provide boosters to all community members 5 years of age and older.

H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities concerning the health and safety policies: From the outset of the 2020-2021 school we knew that our most involved special needs students would likely have the greatest negative impact by not being in school, the District decided to have those students (multi-disabled) attend school four full days per week, until all students returned for in-person school, five days per week in April of 2021. Since, September 1, 2021, all students have been in school for full-day sessions. Students with disabilities have received compensatory services when areas of deficiency have been identified.

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): In collaboration with the district administration and staff, decided to utilize available funds to provide after-school support services in the areas of ELA and Math. The academic support programs are by invitation only and will include those students who have been identified using district assessment data as needing Tier II and Tier III intervention services. The appropriate staff has been secured to deliver instruction to students that participate in this program for six weeks during the Spring of 2022. Additionally, summer intervention and enrichment programs have been established for the Summer of 2022. Staff was secured to provide intervention in the areas of ELA and Math, a summer reading enrichment program has been planned for and enrichment to any/all interested students in areas that include technology, STEM, and Music. In the area of social and emotional learning, teachers at each grade level have been expected to integrate SEL practices and components daily to help provide students with the support they need to regain comfort and confidence as needed from the circumstances associated with the pandemic. The guidance counselors in both schools collaborated to create and deliver SEL workshops to parents in the community as well. Along those same lines, members of the Child Study Team provided a variety of SEL resources to the staff during the year and throughout the 2022 ESY program. For the 2022-2023 school year. The District is providing professional development to the staff from George Scott and Koncious KYDS. The programs are working with all levels of the school district, administration, staff, students, and parents throughout the school year. The Superintendent and the BOE added a Supervisor of Pupil Services position. This additional administrator is tasks with leading our SEL programing, improvingthe climate and culture of our schools, and working with our mental health providers to expand supports for our students and staff.

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): Dating back to the summer of 2020, time was dedicated at each monthly Board meeting to allow for public comment and questions related to the district's reopening plans. Additionally, the Superintendent continues to send update letters to all staff and community members to notify and inform the public about events and decisions related to the pandemic. The community has been encouraged to share updates, questions, and concerns with the district's nurses, building principals, and Superintendent. Members of the administration and/or school nurses have responded to all correspondence. The information taken from these messages has been part of the agenda for discussion during Administrative and Covid Team meetings. This plan has been posted on the district's website for public review. Lastly, we continue to collect feedback from the community through the use of surveys (posted on our website, continually broadcast from the school district, and included in the Boro's monthly newsletter). **As of May 11, 2023 the National Emergency and Public Health Emergency Declaration around the Covid-19 Pandemic has expired.**

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's Reopening Plan as well as every update letter sent to the community has been posted on the district's website. Information from the CDC and the NJDOH is posted on the website and is updated as guidance is changed and/or as the Covid landscape in the local and regional areas fluctuates. The Superintendent has remained responsive to any/all comments and questions from the public. **As of May 11, 2023 the National Emergency and Public Health Emergency Declaration around the Covid-19 Pandemic has expired.**