



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: Teaneck Public Schools

Date: 06/20/2021

Date Revised (mm/dd/yyyy): 12/23/2021, 07/19/2022

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

We continue to follow the CDC guidelines. Currently, we have no mask mandate but masks may be worn at the discretion of the staff/students/parents/guardians. Moving forward, we will follow the CDC guidelines and collaborate with the NJDOH and local health authorities in making decisions and crafting our protocols.

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

We will not be implementing physical distancing strategies at this time, but we do have a plan to quickly return to physical distance models as needed.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Signs that promote hand-washing protocols will continue to be posted in our buildings. Hand sanitation stations are located at the end of each hallway in every school. Hand sanitizer is provided in our central office building. Health and wellness education promotes coughing and sneezing safety.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

We will continue the cleaning protocols implemented for the prior year. Disinfection spraying occurs once a day at touch points throughout the buildings. Work to improve air quality in all instructional areas is ongoing. We have air purifiers in each building's main office, nurse's room and

care room. Every univent at Teaneck High School has been replaced. ESSER funds are being used to provide HVAC Unit upgrades to cafeterias at Benjamin Franklin Middle School, Thomas Jefferson Middle School and Lowell Elementary School. ESSER funds are used to provide HEPA filters where feasible.

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

We continue to follow our established contact tracing, isolation and quarantine protocols based on CDC recommendations.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

In 2021, The Teaneck Public Schools partnered with Holy Name Medical Center and Ruffin Medical Services to conduct COVID-19 screenings for staff, students, and parents. That initiative will continue through the fall of 2022. For those staff who may be suspected of being exposed to COVID-19, the district has rapid tests on hand to assess COVID-19 infection. Upon indicating a positive test, that staff member will be referred for a Nasal PCR test to confirm status.

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

The Teaneck Public Schools have partnered with Holy Name Medical Center to provide faculty, staff, and student vaccinations and booster shots. The Teaneck Public Schools will continue to partner with Holy Name Medical Center to provide vaccinations for students, staff, and parents. That initiative will continue into the fall.

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

All children and adolescents with a disability are entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Special services are provided based on an individualized education program (IEP) or a 504 Plan. In order to effectively address the appropriate health and safety guidelines and the needs of the individual child, the Department of Special Services will utilize creative solutions, on a case-by-case basis. Safety measures for teachers and staff working with students with disabilities will be considered to ensure optimal safety for all. Accommodations for students with disabilities, with respect to the health and safety policies, will follow the most current recommendations set forth by the local, county, state, and federal organizations and the student's IEP or 504 team. These teams will determine individual plans to accommodate the needs of students such as social distancing, mask wearing, mask breaks and/or length of the school day.

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)

Academic gaps will be identified via the following assessment tools: Renaissance Star Assessment, 2022 Fall Start Strong, reading and mathematics benchmark data. The 2022-2023 school year will include richer interventions including: multisensory instruction, supplemental mathematics lessons, realigned mathematics and English/Language arts pacing calendars, and phonics-based interventions for elementary students to address reading foundational skills.

Staff will have access to SEL sessions, mindfulness and counseling support. Leaders will be trained on the principles of leveraging observation/evaluation tools and constructive feedback to drive effective instruction, best practices for math, literacy and emotional/behavioral interventions to support teaching and learning, and creating a culture of inclusion.

Students in grades kindergarten through twelve receive a school-provided Chromebook. When needed, the district provides families with hotspots for families who are in need of internet access. The district continues to support families with professional development and how-to videos/resources through the [Teaneck Schools website](#). Throughout different parts of the year, the district's technology department will continue to provide Chromebook Depot support as a means of updating or replacing devices.

Family-friendly sessions explaining services, curricula, interventions and resources will be offered. The TPS Special Education Parent Advisory Group and ESL Parent Committee will continue to engage families, teachers and administrators in community-based conversations and feedback sessions. The district will continue to implement regulations, update IEPs, consider compensatory education needs and service students as identified. Access to meals will be available to families and students in identified locations throughout the township.

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 Superintendent of Schools will present the revised plan (for safe return to schools in September) to the community and the Board of Education during the August 23, 2022 Board of Education meeting. The presentation will be followed by questions from the public and the Board. The revised plan will be posted on the district website (www.teaneckschools.org). Ongoing feedback and suggestions have been and will continue to be sought through the email address: superintendent@teaneckschools.org and through the parent organizations in our schools.

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 ARP plan will be published on the district website which includes a function for translation services. As a result, all components of the ARP plan will be able to be translated in all of the languages that are spoken throughout Teaneck Township.