



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 (12/23/2021):

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 - Currently we are following the CDC guidelines. The guidelines we have implemented and continue to follow will ask for all un-vaccinated staff and students to continue wearing masks in-doors. As staff and students head outdoors, masks are not mandatory but are to be worn at the discretion of the staff and students/parents/guardians.

B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding) - Physical distancing is being implemented as needed for schools and classrooms where it has been determined that the majority of students aren't vaccinated. In these classrooms we are implementing 3 feet distancing of students and will continue to utilize desk guards for all students for the 2021-22 school year. To the extent possible, students will be encouraged to remain in their own classrooms and areas. For those students that have to move and go from class to class we will continue to ask students to remain vigilant with the use of masks and desk guards. Unvaccinated staff will also be required to use masks and utilize desk guards whenever possible.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette - Signs will be posted promoting hand-washing protocols often and whenever possible. In addition, hand sanitation stations will be located at the end of each hallway in every school.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation - We will continue our cleaning protocols as we have implemented for the 2020-21 school year. This link indicates the protocols that will continue to be implemented. The only adjustments that will be made is that disinfection spraying will only occur once a day prior and will be done before and after each lunch session in the cafeteria, media rooms, and auditoriums.

https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/11QsnBNZ4OKqi5IhkrHbA_MSrHlcDZNjnN7SVD_toZw/edit?usp=sharing

For the distribution of breakfast and lunch, the following document outlines the protocols that will be followed throughout the district. [Meals in January.pdf](#)

Additionally, with the use of the ESSER II funds, we are working to improve the air purification system with the installation of bi-polarization systems being added to the unit ventilators in all of the classrooms. In the meanwhile, we will continue to maintain the highest level of filtration allowed in each air system throughout the district, and all for the additional flow of air in each classroom 2 hours before and after in each classroom.

E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments - We will continue to follow our contact tracing, isolation and quarantine protocols established based on CDC recommendations.

<https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/10ape1FWksOEhjdA3BiA-xLUFQhsMi-3THwjlTooOrE/edit?usp=sharing>

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nidby7HXz2bFEY-sLZBhdjbmcc3Hub5WNI-MHiBFWAxs/edit?usp=sharing>

F. Diagnostic and screening testing: Since November of 2020, the Teaneck Public Schools has been partnering with Ruffin Medical Services to conduct COVID-19 screenings for students, staff, and parents. That initiative will continue into the fall with voluntary testing to be conducted every Wednesday during the academic year. For those students or staff who may be suspected of being exposed to COVID-19, the district is purchasing a rapid test that can be administered by our nursing staff to assess COVID-19 infection. Upon an indication of a positive test, that student or 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 partnered with Holy Name Hospital, our local health care provider to conduct mass vaccinations for our faculty, staff, and students. As a result of the work with Holy Name, 80% of the full-time staff in the district are currently vaccinated. Additionally, the district has begun the effort to educate parents and students on the importance of becoming vaccinated. As such, we have posted on our district website a webinar with medical staff from Holy Name to educate parents on the benefits of getting their children vaccinated. This effort continued over the summer and into the fall term. In late November 2021, Teaneck once again partnered with Holy Name to offer a pediatric clinic (at one of our schools) for all students and will be doing the same in January 2022. We also offered an opportunity for booster shot appointments for all staff.

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 continue to be identified via screener Renaissance Star; Start Strong; benchmark and teacher-created assessments. In PLCs, teachers develop data-aligned lessons to meet student needs. Planning focuses on rigorous tasks and high-level questioning. SEL skills: self & social awareness, self-management, decision-making and relationship-building are infused daily. Staff have access to SEL & Mental Health sessions and activities. Family-friendly sessions explaining services, curricula, interventions and resources are offered. The district implements regulations, updates IEPs and services students as identified. Access to meals is available to families and students throughout the district.

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)

On May 19th, the LEA through the Superintendent of Schools presented to the township community and the Board of Education its plans for a safe return to schools in the Fall. The presentation was followed by questions from the Board of Education members and questions from the public on the district's plans to return for full-day instruction in the fall. Community members have been encouraged to submit their feedback on this plan and any other concerns that they may have to the email address: superintendent@teaneckschools.org.

Moving forward ARP will be posted on the district's website for community members to view at their leisure. At any point in time, members of the community can submit to the Superintendent's office feedback on the plan to return in the fall and those comments will be evaluated accordingly.

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 in the township of Teaneck.