



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.

LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

LEA Name: Elsinboro Township School District

Date: 06/02/2021

Date Revised: 07/21/2021

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
 - a. When to wear a mask:
 - i. Masks will be required for staff and students throughout the day and on school-related transportation
 - ii. Mask breaks will be permitted, particularly in warm weather and as long as students maintain safe distancing
 - b. Proper wearing of masks:
 - i. Wash hands prior to putting on mask
 - ii. Masks must be worn over the nose and secured under the chin.

- B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)
 - a. Students will be seated three feet apart in all classroom settings when possible.
 - b. Shared workspaces and materials will be sanitized/cleaned at the conclusion of each classroom session.
 - c. Outdoor learning will be encouraged, if appropriate

- C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
 - a. Students and staff will use CDC/DOH-approved hand sanitizer before entering the classroom (provided by the district).

- b. Students and staff will sanitize hands before using restroom and wash hands after.
 - c. Students must sanitize hands upon returning to the classroom from elsewhere in the building.
 - d. All hands must be washed before and after meals.
 - e. Students and staff are to cover their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing.
- D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation
- a. All products used for cleaning/sanitizing will be on the CDC/DOH – approved list.
 - b. Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected throughout the day.
 - c. Custodian will use disinfectant to clean and sanitize all high-touch areas throughout the day (doorknobs, handrails, office copiers, etc.)
 - d. Custodians will thoroughly clean/sanitize all classrooms at the end of each day.
 - e. Hand sanitizer dispensers are accessible throughout the building.
 - f. Custodians utilize disinfecting electrostatic sprayers for daily disinfecting.
 - g. Ventilation systems were upgraded prior to COVID-19. Maintenance on the systems are provided in a timely manner.
- E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments
- a. The Elsinboro Township School District will continue to follow the contact tracing and quarantine recommendations of the Salem County Department of Health and the CDC.
 - b. Updates and changes to said protocols will be communicated to the ETSD community when necessary.
- F. Diagnostic and screening testing
- a. Diagnostic and screening site information provided as needed.
 - i. Sites include but are not limited to the following: Inspira Health Network, Salem Medical Center, RiteAid Pharmacy of Salem, and the Salem County Department of Health.
 - b. Positive test results are communicated by the provider to the Salem County Department of Health.
- G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible
- a. ETSD coordinates with the Salem County Department of Health to inform stakeholder of vaccination opportunities
 - i. Sites include but are not limited to the following: Inspira Health Network, Salem Medical Center, RiteAid Pharmacy of Salem, and the Salem County Department of Health.
- H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies
- a. Students with disabilities will be afforded accommodations in accordance with their IEP or 504 plans to the greatest extent possible.

- b. Students with verified health conditions may be granted exceptions to the District’s mask-wearing protocols.

I. Meals

- a. For meals offered in our cafeteria or classrooms, where masks may not be worn, the Elsinboro Township School will implement the following layered preventative strategies to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19. These strategies include?
 - i. Maintaining physical distance as much as possible when moving through the food service line and while eating.
 - ii. Student seating charts maintained
 - iii. Staggering of eating times to allow for greater physical distancing.
 - iv. Discouraging students from sharing food items.
 - v. Routine cleaning between groups
 - vi. Limited movement while in the cafeteria

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)

On September 8, 2020, ETSD returned all students in kindergarten through eighth grade to a traditional full-day schedule. Barring a resurgence of COVID-19 cases, ETSD will maintain a traditional schedule for the 2021-2022 school year. Using ESSER funding, ETSD is providing summer school to address the needs of struggling/failing students, implement a “summer-slide” program in ELA and mathematics, increase after-school offerings in 2021-2022, and employ at least one additional full-time educator in the area of basic skills instruction. ETSD will also employ a part-time counselor to address the social/emotional/mental health of students and staff. ETSD has been informed that the free lunch program will continue to be available to all students and the District will implement a “grab and go” breakfast program for students in September 2021

The district acknowledges the impact the pandemic has caused to families in all capacities, including the need for food service. Food insecurity is an issue that affects the students physically, mentally, and emotionally. The district continues to reach out to families to provide breakfast and lunch offerings throughout the school year with the expansion of the federal food grants. The ETSD will provide breakfast and lunch to all district students during the 2021-2022 school year.

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:7F-9, schools must be in session for 180 days to receive state aid. The statute requires that school facilities be provided for at least 180 days during the school year. Section (b) notes that where a district is required to close the schools of the district for more than three

consecutive days due to a declared state of emergency, declared public health emergency, or a directive and/or recommendation by the appropriate health agency or office to institute a public health-related closure, days of virtual or remote instruction commensurate with in-person instruction will count towards the district's 180-day requirement. The minimum hours of instruction for a virtual or remote day is four hours for grade one through eight and 2 hours of instruction for kindergarten. This excludes the time set aside for lunch and recess.

LEAs may be confronted with the incidence of COVID-19 positive cases amongst staff and or students. If an LEA is required to exclude a student, group of students, a class, or multiple classes as a result of the scenarios listed above, while the school itself remains open for in-person instruction, ETS is prepared to offer virtual or remote instruction to those students in a manner commensurate with in-person instruction to the extent possible. In circumstances when the school facility remains open and in-person instruction continues in those classrooms that are not required to quarantine, those days in session will also count towards the district's 108-day requirement in accordance with N.J.S.A. 18A:7F9.2.

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 Elsinboro Township School District placed a copy of the District's Safe Reopening Plan on its website for public review and comment. Additional input will be sought in the event revisions are necessary.

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 plan is listed in both English and Spanish for community members. If necessary, should an individual with a disability require the plan to be communicated in an alternate format, the District will accommodate to the greatest extent possible.