

Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan Addendum Guidance 2023

LEAs are required to update the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan every six months through **Sept. 30, 2023**. Each time, local education agencies (LEAs) must seek public input on the plan and any revisions and must take such input into account. The purpose of the plan is to keep stakeholders informed.

Every LEA should complete the addendum and upload it to ePlan in the LEA document library and post it to the LEA's website (**March 1 and Sept. 15**). Like the development of the plan, all revisions must be informed by community input and reviewed and approved by the governing body prior to posting on the LEA's publicly available website.

Please consider the following when completing the addendum:

- Ensure the LEA used multiple models of engagement offered to stakeholders. Examples may include surveys, in-person or virtual committee meetings, town hall meetings, or other inclusive engagement opportunities.
- LEAs should engage all applicable groups noted in meaningful consultation during the crafting of the plan and when making any significant revisions or updates to the plan.
- The number of stakeholders engaged should represent the composition of students. For example, if students with disabilities make up 15 percent of students, then 10-20 percent of respondents should represent this subgroup.
- Ensure the stakeholder engagement happened prior to the development/revision of the plan.
- The LEA must engage the health department in the development and revision of the plan. This is different from providing the health department with COVID-19 numbers.
- Plans must explicitly address every bullet point in Question 3 regarding district policies and strategies.
- Plans require local board approval and public posting.
- LEAs must update the *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* at least every six months through Sept. 30, 2023, seek public input on the plan and any revisions, and take such input into account. All revisions must include an explanation and rationale of why the revisions were made.
- All revisions must include an explanation and rationale, with meaningful public consultation and in an understandable format. The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires LEAs to post their Health and Safety Plans online in a language that parents/caregivers can understand, or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to an individual with limited English proficiency, be orally translated. The plan also must be provided in an alternative format accessible, upon request, by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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

The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief 3.0 (ESSER 3.0) Fund under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, was enacted on March 11, 2021. Funding provided to states and local educational agencies (LEAs) helps safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the nation's students.

In the fall of 2021, LEAs developed and made publicly available a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan. All plans were developed with meaningful public consultation with stakeholder groups. LEAs are required to update the plan every six months through Sept. 30, 2023, and must seek public input on the plan and any revisions and must take such input into account. LEAs also must review and update their plans and ensure they align with any significant changes to CDC recommendations for K-12 schools. Like the development of the plan, all revisions must be informed by community input and reviewed and approved by the governing body prior to posting on the LEA's publicly available website.

The following information is intended to update stakeholders and address the requirement.

LEA Name: Newport City School District

Date: September 1, 2023 _____

1. Describe how the LEA has continued to engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders in the development of the revised plan.

The district continues to engage with stakeholders as part of the planning and spending process for our ESSER program. Similar to the initial plan, a survey was developed and posted publicly requesting stakeholder input. The survey was developed in a way that would indicate whether the respondent was a student, family member, school staff member, or public official. Other questions helped to determine subgroup affiliations and/or association with rights organizations. The survey was administered directly by district administration in various public meetings, during parent meetings, and open to the public for participation. Additionally, school staff were emailed regarding their opportunity to take the survey. The district continues to open participation in feedback to all members of stakeholder groups, including posting the feedback survey publicly, through school-family communication platforms, providing print copies when necessary, allowing feedback submissions, and engaging in discussions at School Board meetings. In an attempt to review and address the needs of the students and school, the district has provided opportunities to discuss and review needs through engaging with staff members to provide open-ended submissions.

2. Describe how the LEA engaged the health department in the development of the revised plan.

For the 2020-2021 school year, the Health Department and district Health Coordinator partnered to do contact tracing. The health department sent the Health Coordinator notifications when the district had a positive or exposed student (per parent permission). The Health Coordinator provided a line list of exposed students to the Health Department when a positive or exposed student was at school 48 hours prior to the test result.

Beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, the Health Department discontinued contract tracing. This continued to be the case for the start of the 2022-2023 school year.

For the 2023-2024 school year, the Health Coordinator does continue to communicate and reach out to both the Health Department and community safety teams regarding operations and practices. This engagement began in the previous year, but has continued after it allowed for planning measures to reduce the spread of illness among students/staff.

3. Provide the extent to which the LEA has updated adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the following health and safety strategies.

<i>Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies</i>
Beyond the current health and safety protocols in place for the district, Newport City School System staff utilize enhanced cleaning and safety protocols in working with medically fragile students. The district has also hired additional educational assistants to reduce student:staff ratios in efforts to provide additional protections through smaller group instruction.
<i>Physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)</i>
At this time, students will not be cohorted during the day. However, the district is prepared to place students back into cohorts if the need arises. All students will utilize the main cafeteria, but that too can be amended if the need arises.
<i>Hand washing and respiratory etiquette</i>
Proper handwashing technique continues to be encouraged, and monitored, by school staff. Hand sanitizer will continue to be utilized in areas where handwashing is not immediately available.
<i>Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities including improving ventilation</i>
Air purifiers are continuing to be used in all classrooms. Teachers continue to have students wipe down desks and chairs throughout the day with disinfecting wipes. Custodial staff utilizes spray disinfectant multiple times a week in classrooms and common areas. Utilization of a “fogger” is also part of the routines for deeper cleanings as needed, especially for “hotspots”.
<i>Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine</i>
The School Health Coordinator continues to collect information from families and doctors’ offices pertaining to students and staff who need to be excluded from school attendance. The length of time that one must be excluded from attendance depends on their contact with positive cases as well as their vaccination status. The school follows CDC guidelines if a doctors’ office does not provide a return to school date. The School Health Coordinator relays this information to the appropriate teachers, as well as school administrators. The School Health Coordinator contacts school administration in the event that a student is at school and needs to be excluded from attendance. They are immediately removed from the classroom and walked to the Isolation Room to await pick-up.
<i>Diagnostic and screening testing</i>
Although the school is not currently administering tests this school year, the school nurse has been trained and equipped with Covid-19 PCR screening tests, and is now able perform them on staff and students. If a student or staff member presents with symptoms, they are given the option to be tested by the nurse or to go to a medical facility to be tested. This has allowed for quicker identification within the school of positive cases. There is also an onsite pediatrics clinic that families can utilize each morning to have students tested.
<i>Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible</i>
Local health care agencies continue to provide vaccines and boosters to all eligible individuals. Students and staff are made aware via email, social media, and/or parent-school communication tools when a vaccination clinic is being held. Additionally, the School Health Coordinator has worked with local health providers to set up vaccination opportunities for staff members. These include flu and other vaccines being offered, as well as after school opportunities for staff members seeking initial or booster doses of Covid-19 vaccine. The opportunities include both on and off-campus vaccination clinics to meet the needs of those interested.
<i>Universal and correct wearing of masks</i>

At this time, the school board can no longer require students, staff, or visitors to wear masks inside the building per Tennessee legislation. The district is equipped to make masks available for those who wish to wear them, based upon CDC guidance and current levels of risks within the school. Masks are encouraged for those returning at the end of quarantine after a positive Covid result.

4. Provide a current description as to how the LEA is ensuring continuity of services including but not limited to services that address students' academic needs and students' and staff's social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

Teachers and students continue to incorporate technology into the teaching and learning process on a weekly basis. This will allow for a smooth transition in the event a student, grade-level, or the entire school goes remote. There are currently multiple interventionists who are working with students who are showing gaps in their learning. Students are identified using AimsWeb as a universal screener.

When students are excluded from school attendance, every effort is made to provide them with access to the materials being studied in their classes. This is done using packets, textbooks, and/or chromebook technology, as well as access to internet hotspots when needed.

The school counselors meet with students identified by staff or parents as in need of an outlet for their emotional well-being. A school-based mental health liaison has been contracted to help students in need of counseling beyond what is offered by the school counselors.

Currently, all students who are at school are offered universal free breakfast.