



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: Roxbury Public Schools

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 06/01/2021

Date Revised (mm/dd/yyyy): 1/5/2022

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.

Should the Governor keep Executive Order 175 in place and deem that the state is in a health crisis, the following mitigation strategies will be employed.

A. Universal and correct wearing of masks: ***Signage will be posted at the entrance of buildings that clearly illustrates expectations for the wearing of masks if EO 175 remains in place. If trends continue to illustrate improved health conditions, masks will be optional.***

B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding) ***If necessary, signage will be posted on floors to designate appropriate social distancing expectations. Classrooms will be set up to ensure social distancing. Classes may be cohorted to further support social distancing. Items can be removed from classrooms so that the full square footage of the room can be used to space desks, if such a need arises.***

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette : ***Elementary nurses will hold classroom presentations on proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Proper signage will be displayed at all schools in the appropriate areas, bathrooms, nurses' offices, at sinks, and in classrooms.***

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation: ***Protocols will continue with additional deep cleaning. Frequency of cleaning will increase. Air purifiers are provided for any rooms that do not have a window and are available as requested. All air handling units and unit ventilators throughout the entire district were equipped with air purifiers as well.***

E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments. ***Current protocols will continue. Schools will have a space to isolate. All nursing offices will have signage related to isolating and quarantining. As the timelines are amended by the State, local, territorial, or tribal health departments, those amendments will be shared with staff, students and community through appropriate correspondence.***

F. Diagnostic and screening testing: ***If there continues to be health crisis concern, rSchoolToday app, or a similar application, will register the daily health of every student. Parents will be called for any child who has not completed the health screening. Teachers will sign in, acknowledging that they are symptom-free. Nurses will continue with health protocols, and, if necessary, reinstate their quarantining/isolation rooms. If we continue to trend positively with fewer cases, then the superintendent and principals will share expectations in correspondence and parents will acknowledge an understanding, but no app will be employed.***

G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible. ***Correspondence has been sent to staff notifying them of available vaccination sites. Information on vaccinations will be provided on the district website within the proper section. Contact with local health officials will provide information on vaccine sites and the general health of the community.***

H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies. ***Student needs will be addressed as appropriate and in alignment with their IEP and personal goals.***

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 order to ensure the continuity of services and provision of a free and appropriate education with access to a variety of supports that extend beyond only academic needs, the district will continue to include social/emotional and mental health as a part of the student learning experience in grades K - 12 with both formal and informal curricular experiences. For example, teachers at all levels have and will continue to take advantage of mindful moments and calming breaks to ensure all students' readiness to learn. We partner with the township library to offer all students a multitude of literacy experiences that are recommended so that they can stay engaged in learning experiences that are of high interest which are connected to social studies and civic responsibility, while also providing recommended experiences in math and science. The district will continue to support staff mental and physical health by the extensions of its three pronged approach: subscriptions to the Calm.com app, subscriptions to Burn Along (physical and mental wellness), and access to a wellness coach to support classroom instruction/experiences as well as personal and professional support. The school district will also continue to provide students with support through the Saturday Support Program for the duration of the 2021 - 2022 school year. This program not only includes wellness support and goal setting, but also individual and small group instructional support. Finally, the curriculum continues to be adapted to the ever-changing landscape and needs of our community through the use of an inclusivity rubric to ensure that classroom practices align with the standards and curriculum, as well as the portrait of our community and the community beyond our town.

Thanks to the USDA, the District will continue to provide free healthy and nutritious meals to all students this year.

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).

The plan was shared in advance of the June 21, 2021 Board of Education Meeting for parents and community members to review (in English and Spanish). It was also read through as a part of the June 21, 2021 reports to the public and finally, an opportunity was made for members of the public to share questions, concerns, or comments in the public comment section of the Board of Education meeting on June 21, 2021. This plan as well as the spending of additional grant money (ESSER III- ARP) was discussed at the November 2021 Board of Education meeting.

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)

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