



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.

Dunellen Public Schools Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

LEA Name: Dunellen Public Schools

Date: 06/22/21

Date Revised (mm/dd/yyyy):

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

As per State mandate:

- All students and staff members will be required to wear a mask at all times.
- A parent of a student with a medical condition who is requesting their child not to wear a mask must provide a note from the student's physician with a specific reason. The district's School Physician will review such a request and a decision will be made.
- If a student or staff member forgets their mask, one will be provided to them for the day.
- Visitors entering the school must wear a mask.
- As per the Governor's guidance of June 7, 2021, the district will make a determination based on current air temperature.

[CDC Guidance-How to Wear Masks](#) (5/7/21)

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

- Students and staff must remain socially-distanced to the greatest extent possible.
- Students and staff will be required to wear a mask in the classrooms.
- Visitors will be allowed but must check in at the front office and will be required to wear a mask.
- Signage to remind people to maintain social distancing to the greatest extent possible.
- Respectful isolation of anyone who is symptomatic or has a temperature of 100.4°F (99 for student 5 and under) or higher. Standing orders from the School Physician states that students with temperatures of 100.4°F (99 for students 5 and under) or higher will be sent home.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

- Use of hand sanitizer or hand washing for 20 seconds is required. Students under the age of five will require supervision.
- Hand sanitizer will be made available at the entrance to each building. There will also be hand sanitizers found in each classroom.
- EPA approved disposable wipes will be available to all staff to clean commonly used surfaces such as keyboards, desks, and remote controls before use.
- The district will ensure adequate supplies to support cleaning and disinfection practices.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Routinely clean surfaces using Virex II-256 or equivalent EPA approved disinfectant of frequently high touched surfaces. While school is in session all common high touch areas will be cleaned multiple times during the course of the day. Unoccupied classrooms whenever practical during the school day and will be cleaned again in the evening.

Hand Sanitizer stations will be placed in various high traffic areas locations and in every hallway throughout the building for all schools. Additionally, hand sanitizers will be also placed outside recess locations at elementary schools. There will be daily routine walkthroughs to inspect that all antibacterial soap dispensers have product in them and are not empty or malfunctioning.

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

- Investigation: Upon confirmation of a COVID diagnosis, the district will work with a patient to help them recall everyone with whom they have had close contact during the time when they may have been infectious. For COVID-19, a close contact is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before the person began feeling sick until the time the patient is isolated.
- Quarantine: Contacts will be required to stay home and maintain social distance from others (at least 3 feet) until 7-10 days after their last exposure to the infected patient, in case they also become ill.
- CDC cleaning protocols will be implemented. Any quarantine or school closure will be determined in concert with the County Department of Health.
- The district will maintain logs in each building of contacts, dates of exposure, quarantine dates.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing:

All individuals entering the building will not be required to have a temperature check or complete a daily health-check form. However, all individuals are required to self-monitor. Any individual with COVID symptoms listed below, should not report to school.

Protocols for Symptomatic Students and Staff

- If a student or staff member becomes symptomatic during the school day, they will be:
 - Safely and respectfully be isolated from others.
- If the district becomes aware that an individual has spent time in the building and tests positive for COVID 19, the district will immediately notify the Middlesex County Health Department, the Executive County Superintendent of Schools and the school district physician and the family of the confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.
 - Follow current NJ Department of Health guidance
 - Contact Tracing procedures will be the responsibility of the school district and the Middlesex County Department of Health.

- Should an individual test positive for Covid-19, the district will request proof of a negative test or a doctor's note clearing the individual to return to school.

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

- District will collaborate with the Middlesex County Health Department and local health care facilities and disseminate vaccination information to all educators, staff and students through *School Messenger*.

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

As of June 24, 2021, the following guidelines will be in place:

The CDC recommends that masks be worn at all times by all people in school facilities, including students. For the **narrow** subset of students with disabilities who, because of their medical condition, cannot wear a mask or cannot safely wear a mask, the school must determine based on a student's individual circumstances whether that student is able to attend school safely if other prevention strategies can be followed, in accordance with CDC, OCR, and NJDOH guidance.

People with certain underlying medical conditions and certain disabilities can and should wear masks. Discuss with your healthcare provider the benefits and potential risks of wearing a mask.

A parent of a student with a medical condition who is requesting their child not to wear a mask must provide a note from the student's physician with a specific reason. The district's School Physician will review such a request and a determination will be made. If the request is approved, an Individual Health Plan (IHP) will be developed.

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.

Beginning September 20, 2021, the district plans to return to a pre-pandemic academic schedule inclusive of all extra-curricular and co-curricular activities. The district will follow all mandates put forward by the New Jersey Department of Education, the New Jersey Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control (CDC).

ACADEMIC SUPPORT:

The Dunellen Public Schools' framework is being revised to include additional academic and social/emotional support both during and after the school day.

The district will return to full in-person food services for students. The district will address the before and after school care program to be returned in the 2021-2022 school year.

The district will also look to provide an expanded afterschool program that provides academic and social/emotional support.

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.

The plan was provided on the district website and public comment was made available through the Pandemic Response Teams and a meeting of the Board of Education.

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.

The district will provide the translated plan to non-English speaking families via Google Translate or through other interpreter services as requested.

C. Briefly describe any guidance professional learning and technical assistance opportunities the LEA will make available to its schools.

Professional Development will be provided so that staff is comfortable teaching in a variety of formats that could be required during the school year. Our technical staff will be available daily to help them navigate through any problems that should arise.