



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: East Brunswick

Public Schools

Original Date: 06/21/2021

Latest Date Revised: 8/15/2022

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.

All items within this plan are based upon the current guidelines from the Middlesex County Department of Health. Updates will be made accordingly with any changes.

A. Universal and correct wearing of masks.

After evaluating the changes in mask wearing guidance recently released by the CDC and the State of New Jersey:

Beginning Monday, March 7, 2022, masks will be encouraged but optional in East Brunswick Public Schools. District staff and students, along with student’s families will have the option to decide if they will wear masks on school buses or inside school properties.

East Brunswick Public School retains the right to reimpose a requirement to wear masks on buses or in schools, *including* while participating in sports or activities where increased exhalation occurs, to mitigate COVID transmissibility in the following circumstances:

- **During periods of elevated community transmission**
- **During an active outbreak**
- **After returning from isolation or quarantine**
- **When illness occurs in school**

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

- **EBPS will not mandate a minimum indoor physical distancing requirement. All indoor spaces will be utilized efficiently and students will be separated from each other to the greatest extent physically permissible within occupied spaces.**

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

The District maintains hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol). Such stations are:

- **In each classroom (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).**
- **At entrances and exits of buildings.**
- **Near lunchrooms and toilets.**
- **Children ages five and younger should be supervised when using hand sanitizer.**
- **For classrooms that have existing hand-washing stations, stations should be prepared with soap, water, and alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol).**

The District-wide plan requires students to wash hands for at least twenty seconds at regular intervals during the school day and always before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose, coughing, and/or sneezing.

- **If washing with soap and water is not possible, washing with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) should be used.**

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation.

In line with CDC guidelines, the District's existing facilities cleaning practices will encompass the protocols for Frequently Touched Areas (FTA) and Other Areas. All practices shall continue to be implemented.

- **Each custodian will be dedicated to specific zones of the building to which they are assigned. It is the custodian's responsibility to ensure that they adhere to all facilities cleaning practices.**
- **Routine Cleaning and Disinfecting of FTA and other areas will be consistently implemented in accordance with the plan established by the District.**
- **Custodians shall check and refill as necessary hand sanitizer, paper towel, and soap dispensers while performing FTA protocols.**
- **Use of shared objects should be limited when possible or cleaned between uses.**

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

- **Upon notification that a resident has tested positive for COVID-19, the local health department will call the school district to determine close contacts to whom they may have spread the virus, where close contact is defined as being within six feet for a period of at least 15 minutes over a 24 hour period.**
- **The school district shall assist the local health department in conducting contact tracing activities, including ongoing communication with the identified individual and/or their contacts.**
- **The school district shall ensure adequate information and training is provided to the staff as necessary to enable staff to carry out responsibilities assigned to them.**
- **A staff liaison(s) shall be designated by the Superintendent or designee and shall be responsible for providing notifications and carrying out other components that could help ensure notifications are carried out in a prompt and responsible manner.**
- **School districts shall allow self-reporting of symptoms and/or suspected exposure.**

F. Diagnostic and screening testing – **Not applicable.**

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

The District has organized and operated vaccine clinics to provide opportunity for eligible staff and students. We will continue this practice as needed next year.

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

policies: **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)

The District's RTI multi-tiered approach to the early identification and support of students with learning needs will provide all struggling learners with interventions at increasing levels of intensity to accelerate their rate of learning.

Diagnostic screening tools will identify skill deficits and help teachers target small group instruction. Summer programs will identify and remediate learning gaps from the past school year and set students up for success in the fall. The CST/SAS are available for counseling and consultation for students experiencing social and/or emotional concerns. Effective School Solutions (ESS) will provide additional support to students experiencing mental health challenges. ESS will also provide professional development to support teachers.

Summer staff development across academic content areas is targeted at identifying student learning needs and planning small group instruction. Further, student and staff social and emotional learning needs will be addressed during New Staff Orientation as well as during staff development days.

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 Superintendent's Office communicates with the East Brunswick Community not less than weekly via a mass messaging system concurrently issuing telephonic, email, and text messages.

Parents and community members are encouraged to communicate with the District at Questions@ebnet.org where questions, comments, and concerns are received, reviewed, and issued a reply by the Superintendent's Office. Additionally, parents and community members at large similarly communicate with the Superintendent and the Board of Education at regularly held board meetings.

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)

East Brunswick Public Schools translated important documents into Spanish, Mandarin and Arabic. Additional translations are available upon request.