



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: WEST CAPE MAY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Date (06/03/2021):

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:Policy 5141.3 HEALTH EXAMINATIONS AND IMMUNIZATIONS outlines the procedures for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Policy 4112.4/4212.4 Employee Health

A. Universal and correct wearing of masks:WCME will follow current state and CDC mask guidelines for staff and students.

- a. The district will require mask wearing in accordance with the guidelines that are current at the time. The expectations are that these guidelines will be congruent despite coming from multiple agencies including [The New Jersey Department of Education](#) (NJDOE), [New Jersey Department of Health](#) (NJDOH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC: [unvaccinated/vaccinated](#)) as well as all [Executive Orders](#) (EO) from the Governor.
- b. If masking is required, we will continue to educate staff and students on the correct wearing of masks. This initial instruction will be conducted by either the school nurse or the health teacher. Periodic refreshers and reminders will be provided by the classroom teachers and other staff.
- c. Adequate amount of personal protective equipment (PPE) shall be available, accessible, and provided for use by staff and students.
- d. School staff and visitors are required to wear face coverings in accordance to DOE/CDC guideline unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health or the individual is under two years of age.

E. Face masks exclusions include: The individual is in extreme heat outdoors, the individual is in water, a student's documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an IEP, precludes the use of face covering, during the period that a student is eating or drinking.

B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding): Policy 5141.2 Illness, Policy 4112.4/4212.4 Employee Health

Elementary: Our grade-level enrollment numbers in conjunction with the physical size of our classroom spaces, should allow for maintaining the three feet of physical distance between students in the classroom setting.

Implement physical distancing measures to the extent described in the regional risk matrix. RISK LEVELS GREEN, YELLOW, AND ORANGE

LOW RISK -GREEN: A minimum of 3 feet of physical distancing between students should be maintained in classrooms with strict adherence to mask-wearing. Permit activities involving interaction with multiple cohorts, ensuring adherence to precautions.

MODERATE RISK-YELLOW: A minimum of 3 feet of physical distancing between students should be maintained in classrooms with strict adherence to mask-wearing. Recommend minimizing activities that involve interaction with multiple cohorts (i.e. clubs, assemblies, sports).

HIGH RISK- ORANGE: A minimum of 3 feet of physical distancing between students should be maintained in classrooms with strict adherence to mask-wearing. Recommend restricting activities that involve interaction with multiple cohorts (i.e. clubs, assemblies, sports).

All instructional and non-instructional rooms have been measured for maximum capacity per the regional risk matrix requirements and per the public health guidelines.

Signage regarding social distancing will be highly visible throughout the school building including hallways, bathrooms, classrooms, vestibule and gymnasium

Student desks, workspaces, and eating spaces separated in accordance to the regional risk matrix guidelines. Students will be permitted to work in small groups per the regional risk matrix guidelines. Assemblies and large group meetings or gatherings will be in accordance with the regional risk matrix social distancing and mask guidelines.

STAFF

Staff must maintain the recommended 3 feet social distance while interacting with students and other staff members. Employees are required to follow all signage or instructions regarding the use of common spaces, hallways, or pathways through the building.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette: Policy 5141.2 Illness, Policy 4112.4/4212.4 Employee Health

Practicing specific hygiene measures will contribute to reducing the spread of COVID-19. All students and employees should follow these hygiene measures to help reduce the risk of transmission. WCMSD will provide alcohol based hand sanitizer stations throughout the school building including entrance/exits, common areas, classrooms, bathroom facilities. Instruction on handwashing and respiratory etiquette will be included during our back to school health classes. Students/Staff will be reminded to wash hands frequently--using soap and water-- for at least 20 seconds, particularly after coming into contact with high-touch surfaces, such as doorknobs, handrails, commonly used equipment, before and after eating, and when using restrooms. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol if hand washing is not feasible.

Proper [repository etiquette](#), covering your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing, will be emphasized as a mitigation technique not only for COVID-19 but for other infectious diseases as well

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation: Policy 3510 OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PLANT

Schools and districts must ensure that their indoor facilities have adequate ventilation, including operational heating, and ventilation systems where appropriate. Recirculated air must have a fresh air component. Open windows must be available if air conditioning is not provided and filter(s) for A/C units must be maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations. Dilution and filtration of air are the key fundamental focus measures for enhanced COVID-19 spread prevention. All indoor facilities will have adequate ventilation, including operational heating and ventilation systems where appropriate. Outside air dampers will be adjusted to introduce more fresh air to blend with return air.

Facilities Cleaning Procedures to Reduce the Spread of Contagion

The building principal in consultation with the maintenance supervisor shall develop a procedure for increased, routine cleaning and disinfection. The procedure shall include cleaning/disinfecting schedules, targeted areas to be cleaned, and methods and materials to be used, and shall address: Routinely cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched. This may include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily (e.g., doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops). Using all cleaning products in accordance with directions on the label. For disinfection most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. Whenever possible the list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 (available on the EPA's website) shall be used. The manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g., concentration, application method and contact time, etc.) shall be used. Sanitizing bathrooms daily, or between use as much as possible, using protocols outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

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

Contract Tracing Policy and Procedures Policy 5141.3 Health Examinations and Immunizations, Policy 4112.4/4212.4 Employee Health, Policy 5141.01 Readmittance – COVID-19

The school nurse shall consult with the local health department in the development, review and revision of the district contact tracing policy and procedures. The school nurse and the building principal are the designated staff liaisons responsible for providing notifications and carrying out other components of the board's contact tracing policy. When the individual exhibits symptoms the school nurse will ensure that the student is taken to the designated isolation area. The nurse will examine the individual and may refer them for testing and treatment. A student exhibiting symptoms of COVID 19 may be required to submit to a COVID 19 test. The school nurse shall require the certification of a physician that the student is contagion free before readmitting a student to school and proper quarantines have been carried out. The nurse shall report all students testing positive for COVID 19 to the health department. The health department shall conduct the contact tracing.

School Isolation Protocols

Students/staff may develop symptoms of infectious illness while at school. The school nurse shall be notified immediately and take action to isolate students, siblings if they have any, and staff who exhibit infectious illness symptoms. Students, siblings, and staff who develop symptoms while at school shall be placed in an isolation area until sent home. School staff (e.g., workers, teacher aides, school health staff) who interact with a student who becomes ill while at school should use Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions when caring for sick people; Students who are sick should go home or to a healthcare facility depending on how severe their symptoms are, and follow CDC, local health department, and NJ Department of Health guidance.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

Policy 5141.3- Health Examinations and Immunizations, Policy 4112.4/4212.4 Employee Health, Policy 5141.01, Policy 5141.01 Readmittance – COVID-19

To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the potential risk of exposure to our students and staff, district employees are required to complete daily multi-step self-screening protocols including temperature checks and questionnaires related to the Center for Disease Control Coronavirus symptoms. The daily health screening is accessible through the Student Information System. The school nurse shall observe pupils who show evidence of communicable disease and recommend their exclusion to the school principal. Recommendations shall be consistent with reporting requirements on communicable diseases as set forth in the New Jersey Health Code. Such pupils shall be isolated in the nurse's office until a parent/guardian picks them up, and any necessary measures have been taken to prevent spread of the infection. The school nurse, under the direction of the medical inspector, shall instruct all teachers in the symptoms of the most common diseases or conditions at least once a year. Parents/guardians are required to contact the school nurse and keep their children home if exhibiting Covid-19 like symptoms or any symptoms of any illness. If the school nurse is not contacted why children are absent, they will be called. If there are siblings in the building and have a sick sibling, they shall be kept home until the sibling exhibiting symptoms provides a negative COVID-19 test. The list of symptoms and health survey is available on the Student Information System. Parents/guardians are asked to screen their children before entering school, which involves taking temperatures daily and monitoring for the symptoms. If a child is symptomatic, the parent must keep the student at home and contact the school nurse for further instructions. The school nurse will conduct health screenings for any symptomatic staff and students. Health checks will be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. Any screening policy/protocol must take into account students with disabilities and accommodations that may be needed in the screening process for those students. Staff members who do not pass the diagnostic health screening will not return to work. The school nurse will follow up by phone to assess and discuss next steps. Staff members shall follow the school nurse and CDC guidance and be symptom free before returning to work.

G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible: Throughout the pandemic the administration has worked with faculty/staff to secure vaccination appointments with the state/local health agencies, and have provided release time to make securement of appointments more available. WCMUSD is not a designated vaccination site. The district will provide information on available vaccination sites within the

local area to staff and eligible students. At this time, due to our students' age-group and demographic, as there is not a recommended vaccine for our students, we are adhering to proper quarantine guidelines, and restrictions until a potential vaccine is available. We as a school district will continue the situation and adjust as more information becomes available.

H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies Policy 5141.01 Re-admittance - COVID-19, Policy 6171.4 Special Education ,

Necessary services for children with special healthcare needs shall be provided as necessary and appropriate. The district may work with the state's Title V Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs (CYSHCN) Program in providing essential medical and social services. The board of education will provide the kind and quality of those special education-related services prescribed in the IEP to enable educationally disabled pupils to participate in regular educational programs to the maximum extent appropriate.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for medically fragile students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), Students with complex disabilities with IEPs, Students who require accommodations under a Plan in accordance with the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 Plan). If the school district is providing transportation services on a school bus, face coverings must be worn by all students in accordance to the current mask guidelines unless doing so would inhibit the student's health. It is necessary to acknowledge that enforcing the use of face coverings may be impractical for young children or individuals with disabilities. Accommodations for students who are unable to wear a face covering should be addressed according to that student's particular need and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. While only a small introduction to these elements is included in this Plan, a more detailed explanation and further considerations in the NJDOE Guidance are under the Academic, Social, and Behavioral Supports section to reference as the Plan is being 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. (1000 character limit)

Continuity of Instruction: Policy 6171.4 Special Education, Policy 6164.2 Guidance, Policy 4112.4/4212.4 Employee Health, Policy 3542.1 Wellness and Nutrition

Trauma Informed Instruction and Emotional/Mental Health Support: Social emotional learning, the ability of children and adults to understand and manage emotions , set goals, show empathy for others, establish positive relationships, and make responsible decisions will be integrated into teaching practices. The school counselor will provide staff professional development in trauma informed classroom practices. Mindfulness practices using daily focused attention/breathing exercises in the classroom. The school counselor will provide classroom lessons focusing on coping skills, mindfulness, and breathing exercises, problem solving/ self-regulation.

School Climate & Culture: We will prioritize creating a warm, safe environment for students, families, and staff with a focus on reconnecting, relationships, and self-care. The school counselor will collaborate with school staff to identify and provide needed support for students and staff members. The school counselor will work with students individually and/or in small groups to address any well-being needs.

Special Needs Students The district will provide services and appropriate public education for medically fragile students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), students with complex disabilities with IEPs; or students who require accommodations under a plan in accordance with the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 Plan). The board of education will provide the kind and quality of those special education-related services prescribed in the IEP to enable educationally disabled pupils to participate in regular educational programs to the maximum extent appropriate. Such education-related services shall include transportation, ensuring that hearing aids worn by deaf and/or hard of hearing children in school are functioning properly, etc.

FOOD SERVICES: As we have relinquished our SFA to the Cape May City School District for the upcoming school year, we are subject to the procedures and policies of this District. If remote distribution is needed again, the Cape May City School will be utilized as a pick up site for all community members.

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 district will present the plan during the June 22, 2021 , BOE meeting. During this time it will be reviewed and public comment allowed. The plan had been posted on the district website, along with school contact information for public comments regarding the plan.

The SRP will be open for public comment during BOE meetings no less frequently than every six months through September 30, 2023, review and, as appropriate, revise its Safe Return Plan.

The SRP will be open for public comment on the district's website no less frequently than every six months through September 30, 2023, review and, as appropriate, revise its Safe Return Plan. Public comments will be reviewed by the district's safety committee and the SRP will be revised as 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 Safe Reopening Plan is available on the district's website which includes ADA compliant features and translation features. The Safe Reopening Plan will be translated into both English and Spanish for the general public.

