



## 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

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LEA Name: **TEAM Academy Charter School**

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): **06/20/2021**

Date Revised (mm/dd/yyyy): **06/20/2021**

### 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

- Teachers, staff, visitors, and students shall wear masks at all times while in buildings.
- Extra masks on hand at every school in case visitors don't have them
- All students, regardless of age, shall wear face coverings or masks to school, including during arrival/dismissal, transitions (including bathroom breaks), at the bus stop, or on the bus.
- Students wear masks all day including in classrooms except when eating or exercising, including indoor recess activities that require physical exertion.
- Staff are trained in how to properly instruct students on the correct way to wear a mask.

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

- Maintain students in the same group all day if possible
- Permit enrichment activities and events that mix cohorts. Hold outdoors if possible.
- All classrooms are configured to ensure physical distancing.

#### C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

- All staff and students are encouraged to practice good hygiene and routinely wash their hands.
- Hand cleaning supplies are readily available in classrooms, bathrooms, and offices (water-free sanitizer).
- All children will be supervised when they use hand sanitizer to prevent ingestion and to ensure they are using it properly.
- Explicitly teach hand washing expectations and supervise as needed.
- Place posters describing handwashing steps near sinks.
- Signs will be posted throughout buildings promoting proper ways to cough and sneeze.

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

- All HVAC units have been upgraded with MERV-13 filters. For facilities that don't have an HVAC system, air purifiers have been installed in each classroom and space in the building.
- Regular daily cleaning of all spaces and surfaces
- School buildings will be cleaned nightly by the cleaning company engaged.
- Special emphasis will be given to high touch surfaces and bathrooms which receive mid day cleaning.
- Cleaning/ disinfection vendors and staff will take inventory of all supplies and evaluate quantities required for the school year.
- Products will be cross-referenced with the list of Disinfectants for Use Against SARS-CoV-2, published by the EPA, referenced by CDC.

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

- Pandemic response team in each school responds when a student or staff member who has been in building tests positive to COVID-19. The team ensures that contact tracing is completed.
- Schools will continue to report all required data to the Department of Health.

#### F. Diagnostic and screening testing

- Staff are required to undergo weekly PCR testing at their school site. Vaccinated staff members will not be tested.
- Students are not being required to be tested at this time. Students who participate in extracurricular activities must be tested in order to participate in activities.

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

- Schools scheduled appointments for all staff members who opted in to be vaccinated.
- Staff panel with physicians held a meeting to answer staff questions about vaccination.
- Family panel with physicians was held to answer all questions about vaccination.

- Vaccine clinics on site for students and families over the spring and summer.

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

- We provide face shields when needed as well as additional PPE in classrooms.
- We have developed lessons to support students with special needs, specifically around hand washing, social distancing and mask wearing.
- Students who are unable to wear a mask due to health reasons are exempt from the mask requirement. Other measures are taken to ensure that these students maintain their distance from others.

## 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)

We will continue all services for its staff, students, and families. This includes food service 5 days a week as well as nurse appointments. School buildings remain open and staff are readily available to all families via phone or video conferencing. We will continue with family meetings and report card nights. We will continue to provide all mental health services to students, including access to social workers and other behavioral support staff.

In addition, staff will continue to receive mental health support as needed, as provided in their benefits plan.

## 3. Public Comment

A. Describe how the LEA sought public comment on its plan, and how it took those public comment 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)

We sought public comment since the pandemic began from various stakeholders. This included virtual town halls with families, hotlines, surveys, and communication with the Executive Director. This plan was discussed at a public board meeting on June 22, 2021. In addition, the public had the opportunity to provide public comment via phone call or email. The plan will be posted on our website.

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)

We will translate this document into Spanish. If there is a request in an additional language then we will provide the document in the requestor's native language.