



## 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: Safe Reopening Plan

Date: 6/15/2021

Date Revised:

### 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

- The Rahway Public Schools continue to promote the wearing of face coverings at all times. Signs are posted around the buildings in English and Spanish reminding people of the safety behaviors. ([Please Click Here to View Signs](#))
- Face coverings are required on the school buses.
- Face coverings are required for everyone entering the school buildings – students, staff, and visitors.
- Face coverings are always required for visitors and staff unless it will inhibit the individual's health.
- All visitors must have appointments and wear face covering to enter the buildings. See [Board Policy 1250](#).
- The district will provide a face shield and mask to every staff person working in the school(s).
- The district will provide face covering for each student attending school in the buildings.
- See [Board Policy 5141.3](#).

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

- All rooms that will be occupied by students and/or staff will be set up for social distancing (ideal minimum of 6' between people).
- For those areas where social distancing may be more difficult (eg. Reception desk), additional physical barriers will be provided.
- When social distancing is difficult or impossible, face coverings are required. Face coverings are required for everyone entering the school buildings – students, staff, and visitors.
- Minimize co-mingling of students by: cohorting the students with their assigned class group, students remain with this cohort for as many classes as possible, teachers change classes not students, students may be eating lunch in their classroom or the cafeteria.
- If the cafeteria is used for lunches, social distancing will be maintained to extent possible and the cafeteria will be sanitized after use by different groups of students.
- Hallway and gym lockers will not be used by students.

#### C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

- Students will be taught appropriate hand washing procedures and procedures will be regularly reinforced.
- Time will be allotted in the school day for regular hand washing, at a minimum: when they arrive, before eating, after using the bathroom, after coughing/sneezing/blowing their nose.
- Rooms with sinks will have the needed supplies for hand washing.
- Hand sanitizing stations will be placed in the buildings at: entrances and exits, cafeterias, offices, occupied classrooms without sinks, faculty rooms.
- Young children (5 and younger) will be supervised in the use of hand sanitizer.

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

- Existing facility cleaning practices are posted to the reopen webpage ([Please Click Here](#)).
- Also posted to the webpage are allowable cleaners and disinfectants, including hand sanitizers and wipes ([Please Click Here](#)).
- Routine cleaning has been increased and will occur at regular intervals throughout the school day ([Please Click Here](#)).
- Special attention will be paid to cleaning 'high touch' surfaces, eg. Lunch tables (if used), handrails, door handles, light switches, and shared equipment.
- Disinfection will be done by trained custodial staff between room uses by different groups of students, and will occur after students and staff have left the building.

- Bathrooms will be cleaned regularly during the school day and disinfected every evening.
- Staff will be provided with EPA-registered cleaner or disposable wipes so they can wipe down commonly used surfaces, eg. Keyboards, phones, if they want to.
- Custodial staff have received and been trained on any specialized equipment, including PPE, they need to safely and effectively clean and disinfect.
- Maintenance staff is checking and repairing, if needed, heating, A/C, and ventilations systems, including windows, throughout the district.
- Unit ventilators bring in fresh air to the rooms; these must be kept de-cluttered to promote proper air circulation.
- Will use outdoor teaching spaces as much as possible, weather permitting.

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

- CDC guidance on Contact Tracing has been posted to the reopening dedicated webpage (<https://www.rahway.net/Page/7593>).
- School nurses have developed contact tracing procedures and are involved in some contact tracing tasks.
- In brief, the school nurse, principal and superintendent are notified of confirmed cases. The lead nurse informs the DOH Official and the district follows DOH guidance.
- Medical and personal identification information is kept confidential.
- See Board Policy 5141.2.

#### F. Diagnostic and screening testing

- All adults entering the building will be required to prescreen for COVID-19 symptoms and will have their temperature taken upon arrival.
- Staff will prescreen themselves at home (Staff Form), will enter each building through one door and will complete their health screening there.
- Students will be prescreened at home by parents/guardians using the form developed following CDC/DOH guidelines (Student Form).
- The district will take a temperature on anyone that appears ill. Ill students and staff will be sent home.
- Signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are required to be documented.
- See Board Policy 5141.3.
- Students/Staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 will be safely and respectfully isolated from others in dedicated rooms.
- When a school district becomes aware that an individual, who has spent time in a district facility, tests positive for COVID-19, district officials must immediately notify local health official, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality. See Board Policy 5141.2.
- Everyone is encouraged to be familiar with the signs/symptoms of COVID-19 (Board Policy 5141.3) and stay home if they exhibit one or more COVID-19 symptoms that cannot otherwise be explained, eg. allergies.

- After completely recovering from an illness, re-admittance to the building will be done after meeting with the school nurse ([Click Here to see Re-admittance Process](#)).

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

- Superintendent, Dr. Patricia Camp, has worked closely with the Rahway Department of Health, RWJ and others to vaccinate staff and students when eligible.
- The Superintendent gave a presentation to staff, parents, and the Rahway community on Vaccine Development. That presentation is posted on the District website, under the Superintendent section (<https://www.rahway.net/Page/7966>).
- Under the Staff Area of the Rahway Public School's District Website, there is a dedicated webpage for staff on vaccine information and location suggestions. (<https://www.rahway.net/domain/1299>)
- Under Health Alert Information on the Rahway Public School's District Homepage (<https://www.rahway.net/Page/1>) and under Parent & Community, Community Information (<https://www.rahway.net/domain/233>), there is up to date information on available vaccine clinics to the community, including children eligible for the vaccine. The webpages are updated frequently to reflect current information.

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

- Parents currently have the option to have their child attend school following a Flex 2-1-2 Hybrid Option or have their child attend school through the Full Virtual Option. These options are available based on current local health statistics and from following the CDC guidelines.

## 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)

Our current Safe Reopening Plan addresses students' academic needs and students' and staff's social, emotional, mental health, and other needs by offering staff and student's many opportunities to return to the classroom safely following current CDC guidelines, as well as having increased cleaning procedures. In 2020-2021, Students have also had the option to stay fully virtual. Reasonable work flexibility arrangements have been made for staff when necessary. Our nurses are available to our staff and students, and have volunteered within the Rahway Community to help those eligible to get vaccinated. The Superintendent, Dr. Patricia Camp, gave parents and staff a Vaccine Development Presentation on the COVID-19 Vaccine, and has worked with the Rahway Health Department as well as RWJ and other resources to help staff and students get vaccinated when eligible.

The Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Tiffany Beer, has offered many Professional Development opportunities throughout the year for staff, and Rahway Parent Academy Workshops have been offered monthly to parents. Archives of Professional Development Sessions for staff as well as Archive Resources of Rahway Parent Academy Sessions have been posted on the District Website. The After School Tutoring Program for students was offered in October and November of 2020 and resumed in March of 2021. The Superintendent has also continued to host her bi-monthly Coffee with the Superintendent meetings virtually with Rahway parents to address any questions or concerns they may have had. Letters and Announcements to parents throughout the 2020-21 school year have been sent out via School Messenger, as well as posted in multiple locations on the District website ([www.rahway.net](http://www.rahway.net)).

Grab and Go Meals have been available to students throughout the 2020-21 school year. The Free Youth Meal Program information has been posted on the district website in multiple locations. Union County Emergency Food Distribution information, available in English and Spanish, is also frequently updated and posted to the Rahway School Community on the homepage of the District website, as well as under Parent & Community, Community Information, and on the individual school websites. Other community resources have been made available under Parent & Community, Community Information. This information is updated frequently.

Extracurricular Activities and Sports have been available to students following CDC and the Department of Health safety guidelines. Sports also had to follow NJSIAA safety protocols. Only district or school sponsored extracurricular activities were using district facilities. Virtual group meetings were and are encouraged for those extracurricular activities that can effectively function virtually. Virtual guest speakers have visited classrooms and students have been able to participate in Virtual Field Trips when available. Virtual Fundraisers have been held to raise proceeds for extracurricular activities when possible. Summer Programs are now being offered to students, including the Extended School Year Special Education Program, High School Readiness Program, Summer Reading Program, Summer Elementary ESL Program, High School and Middle School Summer School, Kindergarten Enrichment Program, STEM Camp, Math and ELA Summer Enrichment Program, Summer Music Workshop, etc. Many of our programs have already reached capacity enrollment.

### **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)

Our Safe Reopening Plan has sought public comment by being presented at Reopening Committee meetings that have been occurring frequently throughout the year. The Rahway Public School District's Reopening Committee is made up of the Superintendent, Business Administrator, Director of Curriculum, Director of Student Services, Manager of Buildings & Grounds, Manager of Technology, Supervisor of Early Childhood Education, Administrators, Rahway Board of Education Representatives, Rahway Community Member from the Rahway YMCA, Rahway Education Association Representatives, Rahway School Nurses, Rahway Support Staff, as well as Rahway Parent Representatives. This diverse group has and continues to work

hard to bring students back to the classroom and ensure a safe environment for the Rahway Public School students and staff. Any proposed changes to reopening plans have gone to the Rahway Board of Education and have been presented and voted on at Rahway Board of Education 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)

Our Safe Reopening Plan has ensured our plan is in an understandable format by organizing information into categories and offering additional information via hyperlinks within the document. Communications and changes are updated and documented in the plan to show a communication timeline to the Rahway Public Schools community. This document is available in English as well as in Spanish.