



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: **SUMMIT PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Date (05/25/2021):

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

We recognize and adhere to the CDC Guidance for Wearing Masks as supported by the NJDOE requirements and recommendations for schools. In line with the necessary guidance we recognize that: “A mask is NOT a substitute for social distancing. Masks should still be worn in addition to staying at least 6 feet apart, especially when indoors around people who don’t live in your household.”

As long as students and staff are required to wear masks, they will be worn to completely cover the nose and mouth and fit snugly against the sides of face without gaps.

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

Physical distancing will continue as required by the NJDOE guidance and be adjusted (tightened/relaxed) based on changes in place for September 2021. We continue to remain ready for the following as necessary:

- All schools have implemented layer prevention strategies to include 6’ distancing between desks and chairs, as well as a modified 3’ plan for classrooms based on the change in distancing requirements along with plexi/acrylic barriers on all student desks as needed.

- We maintain plexi/acrylic barriers on all activity tables used for one-to-one therapy, educational and treatment purposes.
- We will continue to implement as needed to stagger scheduling to include school arrival and drop-off times and or locations by cohort; **however, expect and plan to bring back all students in the fall (September 2021).**
- The High School and Middle School have put in place other protocols to limit contact between cohorts, if needed, as well as direct contact with parents; **however, expect and plan to bring back all students in the fall (September 2021).**

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

The district has made significant progress during the 2020-2021 school year in enforcing proper handwashing technique with all students, faculty and staff and will continue in 2021-2022 and beyond to:

- **Teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure adherence among students, teachers, and staff. If handwashing is not possible, hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol should be used.**
- **Encourage students and staff to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue when not wearing a mask and immediately wash their hands after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing.**
- **Assist students with disabilities who might need assistance with handwashing and respiratory etiquette behaviors.**
- **Maintain adequate supplies: Support healthy hygiene behaviors by providing adequate supplies, including soap, a way to dry hands, tissues, face masks (as feasible), and no-touch/foot-pedal trash cans. If soap and water are not readily available, schools can provide alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer).**

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

The district has established COVID-19 District Cleaning Practices and utilizes corona virus approved cleaning products (Bioesque Disinfectant) (Enviro Solutions ES64) to ensure all touch surfaces and classrooms are properly maintained free of contaminants.

– These are posted on our website: <https://www.summit.k12.nj.us/district/business-office/facilities>

With respect to ventilation, we posted and follow the code requirement for Air Quality and upgraded our filters to MERV-13:

Certification Letter on Code Requirement for Air Quality

Code Requirement for Air Quality:

Per the International Mechanical Code (IMC) 10 cubic feet per minute (CFM)/occupant and .012 CFM/square foot (SF)

Based on a 1000 SF classroom with 25 occupants that is 400 CFM minimum.

Outside air rate for example:

- Standard minimum outside air operation 2.7 air changes per hour
- Enthalpy mode 100% outside air (OA) 8 air changes per hour
- Air needs to be filtered and heated; there is no code requiring air conditioning.
- Summit meets all these requirements for any area designed by EI Associates and installed over the past 15years. This covers most of the District facilities.

We adhere to and will continue for the future the following practices:

- **Core principle for cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities: Make changes to physical spaces to maintain a healthy environment and facilities, including improving ventilation. Routinely clean high-touch surfaces (such as doorknobs and light switches).**
- **Ventilation: Improve ventilation to the extent possible to increase circulation of outdoor air, increase the delivery of clean air, and dilute potential contaminants. This can be achieved through several actions.**
- **Bring in as much outdoor air as possible.**
- **Ensure Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) settings are maximizing ventilation.**
- **Filter and/or clean the air in the school by improving the level of filtration as much as possible.**
- **Use exhaust fans in restrooms and kitchens.**
- **Open windows in buses and other transportation, if doing so does not pose a safety risk. Even just cracking windows open a few inches improves air circulation.**

- **Modified layouts:** Adjust physical layouts in classrooms and other settings to maximize physical space, such as by turning desks to face in the same direction.
- **Cleaning:** Regularly clean high touch surfaces and objects (for example, playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, toilets, drinking fountains) within the school and on school buses at least daily or between use as much as possible.
- **Communal spaces:** Close communal use of shared spaces, such as cafeterias, if possible; otherwise, stagger use and clean regularly (for example, daily or as often as needed). Consider use of larger spaces such as cafeterias, libraries, gyms for academic instruction, to maximize physical distancing.
- **Food service:** Avoid offering any self-serve food or drink options such as hot and cold food bars, salad or condiment bars, and drink stations.
- **Water systems:** Take steps to ensure that all water systems and features (for example, sink faucets, decorative fountains) are safe to use after a prolonged facility shutdown.

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

Two of our district nurses have completed the six-hour Johns Hopkins University's COVID-19 Contact Tracing Course to help **initiate** contact tracing **within the school setting** once notified of a confirmed positive case, and in conjunction with local public health officials, determine what additional steps may be required.

If contact tracing is required for any member(s) of the school community, the Contact will only be informed that they may have been exposed to someone with the infection; they will not be told the identity of the person who may have exposed them.

In accordance with the NJ Department of Health guidelines:

- A Contact is someone who meets the following criteria:
 - a person who was within six (6) feet of someone who had COVID-19 during the infectious period;
 - for a period of approximately 15 minutes cumulative or longer; and
 - Regardless of who was wearing a mask (you or the person who tested positive), individuals who were in close contact (within 6 feet for more than 15 mins) are considered close contacts and should self-quarantine and be included on the list provided to contact tracers.

- Contacts will be provided with education, information, and support to understand the risk, what they should do to separate themselves from others who are not exposed, monitor themselves for illness, and the possibility that they could spread the infection to others even if they themselves do not feel ill.
- Contacts will be encouraged to stay home and maintain social distancing from others (at least 6 ft) until 14 days after their last exposure, in case they become ill.
- Contacts who develop symptoms should promptly isolate themselves and notify the school nurse and public health staff.
- [NJ Department of Health COVID-19 Health Actions to Protect You and Your Family](#)

In the Schools

If there is a confirmed or suspected case of COVID-19 in a student or staff member the nurses will work in conjunction with local public health officials to determine what additional steps may be required and, where indicated, will initiate contact tracing should a member of the school community be potentially impacted.

- School nurses will follow CDC guidelines and consult with local health officials when determining if a member of the school community does in fact meet the criteria of a Contact.
- If contact tracing is required for any member(s) of the school community, the Contact will only be informed that they may have been exposed to someone with the infection; they will not be told the identity of the person who may have exposed them.
- If a Student or Staff member meets the criteria as a Contact they must:
 - Self-quarantine for fourteen (14) days from the last exposure to COVID-19;
 - Contact their healthcare provider, and;
 - Self-check symptoms daily
- In addition to following CDC guidelines, nurses will communicate contact tracing efforts with local health authorities so that local health authorities may be better able to offer support to any Contact through the quarantine period.

Return to School

- A student or staff member who has been identified only as a Contact may return to school following the end of the fourteen (14) quarantine period if they do not become infected with COVID-19.
- A student or staff member who tests positive for COVID-19 must isolate at home according to CDC and NJ Department of Health guidelines.
- Students and staff may return to school following the end of the isolation period if they meet the following criteria:
 - It has been ten (10) days after symptoms first appeared, and
 - Fever free for twenty-four (24) hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
 - Any other symptoms have improved

Students in Households of a Lab Confirmed Case of COVID-19

Students who are household contacts of people who are lab confirmed cases of COVID-19 cases who are asymptomatic may not return to school until they have self-quarantined for fourteen (14) days after the isolation period ends for the who is the confirmed COVID-19 case.

- Students who are household contacts of a lab confirmed case of COVID-19 persons who are experiencing symptoms must quarantine at home until they are fever free for twenty-four (24) hours without the use of fever reducing medicines, AND other symptoms have improved, AND at least ten (10) days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

In response to the COVID-19 crisis the CDC and local health authorities support a daily screening for symptoms associated with COVID-19. Daily screening permits early intervention and supports prompt care for a person infected with the virus as well as effective contact tracing and reduction in the spread of infection. To support the students, staff and entire Summit school community, the district has established a compendium of measures for the safety and health of the community.

School policies regarding temperature screening and symptom checks must balance the practicality of performing these screening procedures for large numbers of students and staff with the information known about how children manifest COVID-19 infection, the risk of transmission in schools, and the possible loss of instructional time to conduct the screenings.

Daily Screening

- Due to the large number of staff and students daily screening and symptom checks are impractical to perform on-site.
- Prior to the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year parents and staff members will complete an attestation affirming that they will conduct daily symptom and temperature checks prior to coming to school.
- Regular reminders and educational tools will be sent to parents, students and staff about the importance of daily symptom checks.
- Staff will conduct daily visual symptom checks as students enter the buildings and upon arrival in the classroom.
- The District will follow NJDOE recommendations and require that students and staff remain home if they have a temperature of 100.4 or greater.
- Students and Staff members should not come to school if they are sick, even if they do not suspect that they have COVID-19. The symptoms of COVID-19 are listed below and may present as another illness.
- [Signs and Symptoms of COVID-19](#)
 - Fever 100.4 F

- Chills
 - Cough
 - Nasal Congestion
 - Runny nose
 - Shortness of breath
 - Difficulty breathing
 - Diarrhea
 - Nausea/Vomiting
 - Fatigue
 - Headache
 - Muscle or body aches
 - New loss of taste or smell
- [Signs and Symptoms of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children \(MIS-C\)](#)
 - Rash
 - Red eyes
 - Cracked/swollen lips
 - Red/swollen tongue
 - Swelling hands/feet
 - Stomach pain

School nurses and/or principals must be notified when a staff member or student is exposed or has had close contact to someone diagnosed with COVID-19. Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of someone for approximately ten (10) minutes or longer.

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

The Superintendent worked closely with Atlantic Health Administrators as soon as the vaccine became available. Once the CDC announced that educators were eligible to receive the vaccine, an email (Google Form) was sent to all staff asking if they wanted to be put on the list to be sent to Atlantic Health. Staff members were contact by Atlantic Health when a vaccine became available for them. The same procedure was followed for parents and students of Summit Public Schools.

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

Appropriate health and safety accommodations will be provided to students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPS) and Section 504 Plans as stated in their plans. See the Health and Safety Section for the District's maintenance of all health and safety protocols established by the CDC, N.J. Department of Health, and N.J. Department of Education with regards to Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks, Physical Distancing, Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette, Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities, Contact Tracing, and Diagnostic Screening and Testing.

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:

The instructional program for the 2021-2022 school year will reflect the following:

1. **Elementary:** Full day from 8:15 am -3:00 pm to include all major content areas, specials (art, music, PE, and library), instrumental, chorus, gifted and talented, and lunch. Support services, i.e. basic skills, will be provided during the school day as well as extra programming before and after school.
2. **Middle:** Full day from 7:55-2:45 to include all major content areas, electives (art, music, drama, etc.) PE, instrumental, chorus and lunch. Support services, i.e. basic skills, will be provided during the school day as well as extra programming before and after school.
3. **HS:** Full day from 7:45-2:49 to include all major content areas, electives, PE, instrumental, chorus and lunch. Support services, i.e. basic skills, will be provided during the school day as well as extra programming before and after school.
4. **ESL:** Services will be provided during the school day for students who are currently enrolled and for the those who qualify upon entering the school district.
5. **Special Education:** Special education programs will follow the full day schedules in their respective buildings. Related services will be scheduled during the school day. ABA self-contained classes will follow the same pre-COVID schedules which allows for staff training and programming.

STAFF: Staff support services and resources will be implemented through a collaboration among district leadership and outside sources, led by the Director of School Counseling, Director of Special Services and Director of Student/Personnel Services. Staff will receive information and support and resource options throughout the year. Professional development will include topics about the importance of self-care, practical strategies for self-care, as well as tools and strategies to support students.

STUDENTS: Through our social-emotional learning curriculum and programs, we are prepared to address the impact of trauma, loss, isolation, anxiety and/or depression due to COVID-19. Whether learning has been in-person or remote, we recognize that students will be returning to school with different needs, and we remain committed to supporting the social-emotional wellbeing of our school community. We will continue to integrate the services of a mental health clinician and to enhance SEL programs across the District.

FOOD SERVICES: Plans have been made for each school to return to school-wide lunch service, for each grade level in each building. Each Principal has met with our food service management company, Pomptonian. They determined appropriate times based on available space to conform to CDC guidelines during serving of meals.

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)

The Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Pursuant to the Federal American Rescue Plan Act, Section 2001(i) is on the June 10, 2021, Board of Education Agenda under School Board Operation: B. Notice of the meeting was posted 48 in advance. The public is given an opportunity to speak at the meeting.

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 Return Plan will be posted on our website in English and Spanish. A copy of the Plan will be sent to any parent that requests same. Any individual requesting an oral translation or a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, will be provided the Plan, in an alternative format that is accessible to that parent.