



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: Lacey Township Board of Education

Date: September 1, 2020

Date Revised: June 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:

Mask wearing will be optional in the LTSD unless required by the Federal or State government Executive Order. The updated guidance from NJDOE on face coverings for students and staff includes several exceptions, including an exception for certain students and staff with disabilities. Accommodation for students and staff who cannot wear a face-covering should be addressed according to that person's need and according to all applicable laws and regulations in place at the time. All students and staff will be provided training on policies to reduce the spread of COVID-19 including information on face coverings (when appropriate). There will be strategies developed on an individual basis to manage students'/families and staff concerns over face coverings.

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

Every effort will be made to maintain proper physical distancing at the designated entrances. All schools will provide signage, hallway guides, and physical reminders to maintain proper social distance during arrival, hallway passing times, use of common areas, and common dismissal times. School protocols may include, but are not limited to the following: appropriate signage on walls both inside and outside

the building, one-way hallways when possible, use of separate entrances for arrival and departure (when possible), one-way stairwells (when possible) & limited and staggered passing times (when possible) & floor signage to remind students to remain socially distant while traveling between locations.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette:

Staff/Students/Visitors who are permitted into a building should wash his/her hands after coughing, sneezing, or blowing his/her nose. Individuals permitted to a building should properly sanitize their hands and stay home if they are sick. If permitted into a building, individuals should avoid touching his/her eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. The District will develop strategies to address handwashing and respiratory etiquette when concerns arise. Teachers and staff will be provided with hand washing/hand sanitizing breaks. Hand sanitizing stations are mounted in hallways throughout the building for student and staff use. Students will be directed to wash their hands as a cohort. Classrooms that have sinks will wash their hands in the classroom. Classes that do not have a sink in the classroom will use the nearest restroom to wash their hands. In addition, hand sanitizing units will be located throughout high traffic areas of each school building.

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

All cleaning and disinfecting products used in the school buildings will be used in accordance with the directions on the label and the manufacturer's instructions. Safety Data Sheets (SDS) are available for all products and may be found on the facilities section of the district website. When used, custodians will ensure appropriate ventilation in order to protect students and staff. When not in use, cleaning and disinfecting products will be securely stored away from students and staff. A portion of the grant will be dedicated to the replacement of poorly performing HVAC units based on a needs assessment conducted by the district architect. Units will be upgraded or replaced to meet or exceed ventilation and fresh air standards if they are not currently in compliance. Staff will be encouraged to open windows in classrooms and on busses when possible.

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

- Contact tracing will be conducted for close contacts of laboratory-confirmed or probable COVID-19 patients.
- Testing will be recommended for all close contacts of confirmed or probable COVID-19 patients.
- Those contacts who test positive (symptomatic or asymptomatic) will be managed as a confirmed COVID-19 case.
- If testing is not available, asymptomatic close contacts should self-quarantine and be monitored for a period of time after their last exposure, according to COVID 19 exclusion criteria.
- Contact tracing for the Lacey Township School District will be led by members of the school district administrative team along with the school nurses and in consultation with the Ocean County Department of Health.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing:

- Staff, students, and visitors will be required to complete a health screening prior to arriving in the building.
- Bus drivers will be screened before their shift begins pursuant to the District's policy for health screening employees.
- All positive COVID-19 tests will be documented.
- A student or staff member who has signs or symptoms related to COVID-19 will be excluded according to the COVID-19 exclusion criteria.
- A student or staff member who presents with a positive COVID-19 test will be excluded according to the COVID-19 exclusion criteria.
- Signage will be posted to remind all individuals entering Lacey Township School District facilities to remain home if they are experiencing COVID-19 like symptoms.

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

In collaboration with the Ocean County Department of Health, the Lacey Township School District has assisted and will continue to assist educators, support staff, and students (if eligible) to schedule and obtain a Covid-19 vaccination. These appointments are made available at various local locations in order to help ease the burden of searching for and obtaining a vaccine. Release time will be offered to staff and students to assist them in getting their COVID-19 vaccination.

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

Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS) is a systematic approach to prevention, intervention, and enrichment in grades Pre-K through twelve for academics and behavior that offers educators and families a mechanism to identify individual students who need extra support to include:

- Wraparound Supports such as Summer Enrichment Programs, After School Academic Programs, Family Engagement Programs, and quality childcare.
- Mental Health Supports for Staff Education and Health Well-Being with a focus on self-care and support for secondary trauma.
- Multi-tiered Mental Health Supports for Students, including prevention and universal supports for all students and families, and intensive support for at-risk students and families for mental health and substance abuse interventions.

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)

In order to ensure the continuity of services, the district will monitor student and staff well being both academic and social-emotional through the evaluation of data. This data will include things such as surveys, NWEA testing data, teacher input and recommendations, staff and PLC meetings, parent engagement opportunities, and local and state assessments.

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 Lacey Township School District will reference the updated Restart and Recovery Plan at the June 2021 public Board of Education meeting. Community members will be encouraged to provide feedback on the contents of the plan. The district will provide a dedicated email address (LTSDReopening@laceyschools.org) to receive all public comments. In addition, the district will accept responses on paper and phone calls for those individuals without reliable internet access. All feedback will be taken into account and the plan will be revised in accordance with the public comment when appropriate.

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;

The June 2021, updated version of the Lacey Township School District Restart and Recovery plan will be posted on the district website. Translated copies will be available upon request. Paper copies will be available upon request at the Board of Education Building located at 200 Western Boulevard, Lanoka Harbor, NJ for those who lack access to reliable internet. District personnel will provide assistance for those who need an oral translation of the plan.