



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. Further 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 the 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 developing 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 plan for that submission effectively and 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 before 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: Weehawken Township School District

Date (06/15/2021):

Date Revised 11/17/2022, 6/9/2023, 12/15/2023, 6/30/2024

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

Executive Order No. 251 declared mask requirements for public schools must continue to be followed in all circumstances with the following updated exception: individuals on school property, but outdoors and outside of regular school hours, are not required to wear masks.

The following rules will be adhered to:

- All staff members can wear face coverings unless medically prohibited
- Teach and reinforce the use of face-covering
- Signage promoting face coverings
- All Students can wear face coverings in school unless doing so inhibits student’s health, the student is in extreme outdoor heat, the student is in water, the student’s documented medical condition, or disability as reflected in an IEP, precludes the use of face covering, during a period a student is eating or drinking, the student has trouble breathing or is unconscious, or is incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance (e.g.) face coverings should not be worn by Pre-K students during naptime, the student is engaged in high intensity aerobic or anaerobic activities or when wearing a face-covering creates an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task. Face coverings may be removed during gym and music classes when students are in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six (6) feet apart
- Face coverings must be plain in nature with no symbols, writing, or messages deemed inappropriate

- No face coverings will be used during high-intensity aerobic activity.
- Anyone not engaged in high-intensity aerobic activity will wear a face covering.
- Coaches, athletes, and district personnel will not be required to wear face coverings outdoor.
- No face-covering in heat.

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

The district will open doors during lunch when possible.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

The district will train hand-washing techniques and ensure access to handwashing/sanitizing stations throughout the day. Furthermore, training will include respiratory etiquette.

An example of scheduled hand sanitizing/washing is:

- Before and after class
- Before and after lunch
- Before and after specials
- When entering or exiting the building
- When entering or leaving the classroom
- When using community areas

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. You can tell if the sanitizer contains at least 60% alcohol by looking at the product label. Swallowing alcohol-based hand sanitizers can cause alcohol poisoning if more than a couple of mouthfuls are swallowed. Children must be supervised when hand sanitizing.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Our cleaning and disinfecting practices at WBOE will continue to meet local, state, and CDC guidelines. WBOE will also develop a schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfecting, especially frequently touched surfaces and objects. Restrooms will be sanitized daily. These procedures will include two stages: (1) Cleaning, removing dirt and germs from surfaces, and (2) disinfecting, which kills germs on surfaces that remain after cleaning. The cleaning process will require EPA-approved disinfectant products. If such products are not available, 1/3 cup of bleach added to 1 gallon of water is allowed as an alternative.

Frequently touched surfaces and objects

All frequently touched surfaces and objects should be cleaned and disinfected with EPA-approved disinfectant products. Examples of frequently touched surfaces and objects that will need routine cleaning and disinfecting are the following:

Tables	Railings	Windows
Doorknobs	Sinks and faucets	Light switches
Tables	Handles	Countertops
Shields	Desks	Window handles
Toilets	Phones	Closet or cabinet handles

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

- We will follow physician recommendations.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

If students feel sick, they will visit the nurse and if sick, be sent home.

If the Health Dept requires this, we will adhere.

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

Families are provided vaccination information, when available.

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

Accommodations in the IEPs of students with disabilities will be adhered to.

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)

Social-Emotional Learning:

In addition to the programs and activities already in place, training will be provided to all school instructional staff and administration in areas of SEL, trauma training, and mindfulness.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying

In addition, the district will be investing in a digital platform that is implementing a resolve, remediate and restore program. This program utilizes cognitive behavior therapy techniques to teach students the skills they need to prevent future occurrences of problematic behavior. Post-incident and investigation remediation will be a focus of the program. Reporting possible incidents of Harassment, Intimidation, or Bullying (HIB) continues. If any student is being bullied, intimidated, or harassed, our Principal and ABS will immediately initiate a virtual investigation. We will notify the parents immediately and speak to all parties involved. Remediation and restorative practices will follow. Acts of harassment, intimidation, or bullying will NOT be tolerated in a typical school setting or a remote school environment. All students should be tolerant and kind to each other at all times, especially during this health crisis.

We contract with Effective School Solutions to provide targeted counseling support for special needs students in grades 3-12.

II. Multi-Tier Systems of Support

Each school building has its own Response to Intervention Team that assists staff in coordinating interventions for students and their families in the areas of academic, behavioral, and social-emotional support.

To provide the most effective education for ALL students, we believe we must provide an adequate education for EACH student. In the Weehawken Public Schools, we utilize a three-tiered approach with varying levels of support beyond the general education or core curriculum. In the first tier (Tier 1), the classroom teacher will use different strategies and may use additional or other materials so that your child's progress is successful. In Tier 2, we employ a grade-level team approach where school staff meets to review your child's progress and to tailor an individual academic support plan that provides supplemental instruction to your child in the area of need. The Tier 2 interventions are applied for a minimum of 6-8 weeks. During this period, we give your child additional instruction using scientifically-based materials and strategies to allow your child to achieve the educational standards necessary for academic success in the District.

If your child needs additional help to meet the standards, we will utilize a third tier (Tier 3), which provides extra and more frequent support. A problem-solving team meets to address your child's needs and review your child's progress during the intervention period. We will keep you informed of

your child's progress with the interventions. At this tier, it may be necessary to alter your child's schedule and make some choices regarding subjects and the provision of courses so that educational interventions may occur.

The district will universally screen all students periodically. The district utilizes LinkIt! platform that acts as our data warehouse. This platform monitors student progress and identifies areas of need. Staff regularly engage in collaborative sessions to determine the focus of instruction. RTI is and will continue to be provided in all instructional models.

The district Child Study Teams continue to reach out to students at risk and provide in-person contact upon school reopening. Procedures are in place to ensure any student in danger is contacted as soon as possible within 24 hours. Additionally, All students have access to counselors and at the high school Effective school solutions. To assist with the improvement of Readers and Writers Workshop models, additional coaching and training will be provided to ELA and Spec Education Teachers for these ELA models. Additionally, Music, Art, Media, and PE teachers will receive training.

III.Wraparound Supports

Wraparound programs such as Academic Support Instruction differentiate instruction to struggling/at-risk students as a preventative measure that supports the general education program. We have a school counselor in each building as well as counseling support services.

A Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) will be hired for a new district position of coordinator of behavioral services. The coordinator of behavioral services will coordinate training, develop individual student and district-wide plans. A mental health clinician will be hired to work between TRS and WHS with at-risk students. In addition, the district will create a new wellness center in TRS. Furthermore, ESS will be returning to the high school that features the mental health best practices and innovative clinical programs into a traditional school day, providing each student with comprehensive support tailored to their needs.

Students diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, ADHD, and/or other related disorders that have not come into contact with a structured learning environment within the past few months will likely exhibit non-compliant behavior, tantrums, elopement, property destruction, aggression, and/or self-injurious behavior. To best control for these behaviors, staff will require training in antecedent strategies and powerful strategies. These include but are not limited to shaping/reinforcement procedures, crisis management/de-escalation procedures, and a new sensory room in DWS.

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 district posted a survey soliciting feedback on the safe return to in-person plan on the district website. The feedback received was incorporated into the plan where applicable. The district acknowledges that this is a living document based on Governor and NJDOE mandates.

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 district posted the plan in multiple languages to ensure inclusion among our non-English-speaking parents.