



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: Northfield City School District

Date (06/24/2021):

Date Revised (8/23/22):

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 Northfield City School District will adhere to current and relevant CDC guidance regarding universal and correct mask wearing as well as current Executive Orders issued by the Governor and the State of New Jersey. Students and visitors of the Northfield City School District will have the option to wear masks if they choose to. Northfield City School District policy 5141.10 addresses masking expectations and requirements.

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

The Northfield City School District will adhere to current and relevant CDC guidance regarding physical distancing as well as current Executive Orders issued by the Governor and the State of New Jersey. Pursuant with CDC guidance as of August 11, 2022 social distancing and cohorting will no longer be implemented.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

The Northfield City School District will adhere to current and relevant CDC guidance regarding handwashing and respiratory etiquette as well as current Executive Orders issued by the Governor and the State of New Jersey. Students and visitors of the Northfield City School District will be expected to properly wash their hands (if available, scrub hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water) or utilize the hand sanitizer (60% alcohol) that is in all classrooms and common areas throughout the facility during the school day or until different guidance is issued regarding handwashing and respiratory etiquette by the CDC and/or New Jersey Department of Health. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette signage will be visible throughout the schools and regular reminders through emails and social media will be communicated to students, parents/guardians, and visitors.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

The Northfield City School District will adhere to current and relevant CDC guidance regarding cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation as well as current Executive Orders issued by the Governor and the State of New Jersey. Northfield City School District policy 3510 addresses cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation. Furthermore, additional custodial help was hired to ensure implementation of increased cleaning needs. Additionally, the District HVAC system is required to bring in a percentage of fresh air and contains a Trane Catalytic Air Cleaning system. Upgrades to the HVAC control systems to improve functionality, as well as upgrades to the HVAC filters to MERV13 have occurred.

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

The Northfield City School District will adhere to current and relevant CDC guidance regarding contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine as well as current Executive Orders issued by the Governor and the State of New Jersey. Pursuant with CDC guidance as of August 11, 2022 contact tracing and quarantine will no longer be required for exposed individuals.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

Individuals that manifest or present symptoms of COVID-19, based on the health screening assessment questionnaire, will be directed and expected to follow the most current and relevant guidance regarding self-quarantine provided by the CDC and/or the New Jersey Department of Health. Pursuant with CDC guidance as of August 11, 2022 diagnostic and screening testing will no longer be required.

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

The Northfield City School District will continue to encourage families and staff to get vaccinated and boosted.

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

The Northfield City School District will adhere to current and relevant CDC guidance regarding accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies as well as current Executive Orders issued by the Governor and the State of New Jersey. All programming needs, as defined by a student's IEP and developed through the IEP process with input from the IEP team, will be met to the fullest extent possible. Accommodations for students with a 504 plan, as developed in consultation with the student's healthcare provider, the school nurse, and the District physician, will also be met to the fullest extent possible.

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)

The Northfield City School District will continue to use assessment data from the Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment three times per year (fall, winter, and spring), as well as data from the new State mandated "Start Strong" assessment in the fall of the 2022-2023 school year. Data gained will be used to differentiate instruction based on individual student needs for remediation or enrichment content. The District will also offer remediation and enrichment programming for all students during the summer of 2022 and throughout the 2022-2023 school year. Staff will continue to receive professional development training in areas identified through analysis of evaluation data and will have a focus on social, emotional, and mental health. Through the New Jersey Tiered System of Support Teams, students will be monitored and supported academically and behaviorally. Additionally, our Resiliency Teams will monitor and support students' and staffs' social and emotional needs. Meals including breakfast and lunch, will be available to all families who qualify for the free and reduced meal program. Students in grades K-8 will continue to be offered two hours of free tutoring per week throughout the 2022-2023 school year.

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)

This Safe Return Plan was shared with the District Pandemic Team, which includes community members. Additionally, the Safe Return Plan was shared with all families for review prior to the December, 2021 Board of Education meeting to allow time for families to provide feedback through a Google document available to all families. All comments were taken into consideration prior to submission to the New Jersey Department of Education. This process will be followed for each 60-day revision or sooner if necessary.

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 Northfield City School District provided the Safe Return Plan to all of the families in our community through the District's messaging system. Through community input, the Plan was created using language that is understandable by and uniform with the needs of the Northfield community. The Plan is also posted on the Northfield City School District website where it can be referenced by community members at any time. The District website offers a Google translate tool that allows viewers to translate the Plan into several different languages by cutting and pasting the Plan from the website. Upon parent request and/or to the extent that the District is aware of a family that needs the document to be translated, the District will assist such families with the translation process. The Plan on our website will also be able to be downloaded by visually impaired parents so that it may be translated through screen reader technology. Individual virtual or in-person meetings will also be made available to any family who requests it. Any other impediments to access of the Plan will be addressed on an individual basis as needed.