

Red Bank Regional High School

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.

Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

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:

1. Governor Murphy announced that mask wearing in schools is mandatory. The District will require all students, staff, vendors, contractors and visitors to wear masks as of 8/09/2021.

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

The District will provide social distancing within the classroom and other spaces/areas to the maximum extent possible.

1. Student schedules will be reviewed in order to balance classes.
2. The District will monitor common areas in order to minimize contact and ensure appropriate social distancing, when possible .
3. If the District experiences COVID 19 cases, options such as virtual, cohorts, etc will be considered.

C. Hand washing and respiratory etiquette

1. Multiple hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers will be available throughout the buildings for staff and students to utilize (classrooms, entrances/exits of buildings, near large common areas, near bathrooms, etc.).
2. Classrooms with existing hand washing stations will be outfitted with soap and paper towels.

3. Students will be encouraged to wash their hands at various times during the day, specifically before and after eating, after outdoor activities, after use of any shared equipment/materials, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose, coughing, and/or sneezing. If washing with soap and water is not possible, washing with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be required.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

1. After arrivals, all entrance touchpoint surfaces will be sanitized and disinfected. All touch points and surfaces will be wiped with disinfectant throughout the day. All bathrooms will be cleaned and sanitized throughout the instructional day.
2. Nightly cleaning procedures will include cleaning of all classroom surfaces and touch points with disinfectant spray bottles and electrostatic sprayers.
3. Custodians will restock all hand sanitizer and soap dispensers. Hand sanitizer stations will be readily accessible near all entrances, exits and common areas. Disinfecting spray and appropriate cleaning materials will be provided to all staff.
4. Air filters will be cleaned and replaced regularly. HVAC units will be maintained, repaired in the case of breakage and possibly replaced in appropriate. The District will investigate further air quality improvements.

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

1. Parents/Guardians will serve as the primary daily screening mechanism for COVID-19 symptoms. Students and staff exhibiting symptoms should remain home.
2. Health checks will be conducted in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. Screening protocols will include accommodations needed for students/staff with medical conditions or disabilities.
3. Staff and Students displaying COVID-19 symptoms will be sent home. A designated isolation space where those with COVID-19 symptoms will be provided.
4. The School Nurse/Health Office in coordination with the Principal's office will conduct contract tracing.
5. Those reporting positive results for COVID-19 or having close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 will follow quarantine guidelines as applicable.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

Parents/Guardians will serve as the primary daily screening mechanism for COVID-19 symptoms. Students and staff exhibiting symptoms should remain home.

1. Students are expected to stay home if they exhibit symptoms of COVID-19. The District will provide a checklist of symptoms and other guides to families.
2. If staff or students are found to exhibit symptoms, they will be sent to the health office for screening by the school nurse. Isolation space will be provided. The nurse will assess the individual and may send them home for medical attention and testing.
3. The District may require additional screening such as temperature checks and daily questionnaires depending on the current COVID climate in the District or community.
4. Diagnostics will be conducted within the guidance provided by the Office of the Governor, NJDOE, CDC and the Monmouth County Health Commission.

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

1. Earlier this year, we collaborated with the Community YMCA, the VNA and local Peninsula school districts. As part of our recruitment efforts, staff were emailed surveys and provided resources on the benefits of the vaccine. As a result of these efforts, over 60% of our staff are currently fully vaccinated.
2. On June 5, 2021 the District hosted a vaccine clinic for all district student and staff families 12 years of age and older.
3. The District will promote local vaccine clinics, including those at nearby school districts and other health providers.

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

In our effort to ensure the general well-being, health and safety of all students, the following protocols will be implemented.

- a. Maintain clear lines of communication between families and school staff, especially Nurses, Counselors and Leadership Team members. This will be done via phone, email, surveys and meetings (in person and virtual) as necessary.
- b. Seek information from families regarding their child's specific medical needs.

- c. Encourage all families to keep their children home when appropriate; promote the practice of hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette; post signs and messages in and around school buildings.
- d. Reasonable accommodations will be provided based on a child's IEP, 504 Plan or individual medical needs in order to maximize student learning in a safe manner.
- e. Encourage frequent communication between building based medical professionals and high risk students.

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 **Social and Emotional Learning** of students and staff is essential to re-engaging students, supporting adults and rebuilding relationships. SEL will be embedded throughout all professional learning and on an as-needed basis for individual support. We will continue to ensure students have access to breakfast and lunch . The District's Source School Based Services Program, the Guidance Department and the Special Services (CST) Department will work collaboratively to support all staff, students and families.

Academic Supports: All students will have access to a variety of after school and summer enrichment programming which is funded via ESSER II and ESSER ARP. Students will continue to receive literacy intervention, English as second language services, special education services, etc. Students will be provided an assigned Chromebook without cost and be provided free WiFi, if needed. Students will be supported by counselors, related services and outside providers as the need arises.

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.

- a. The draft of the Safe Return plan was shared with the following stakeholders: District Pandemic Response Team, Red Bank Regional Education Association, all District staff, parents/guardians and community members. The draft was shared in both English and Spanish on our website, via parent portal messaging system, Blackboard messaging system and email to staff and parents/guardians, and during a public

Board of Education meeting. A Google Form/Survey was shared with the draft plan where the public could comment on any and all elements of the plan.

- b. All comments received were reviewed by the Administration prior to any changes being made. As the COVID climate may change, changes may occur to the plan as new guidance is received from the NJDOE and CDC.

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.

- a. Our Safe Return Plan will be shared in both English and Spanish on our website, District messaging system and email to staff and parents/guardians, during a public Board of Education meeting.
- b. In the event an individual has questions or is in need of assistance reading or understanding the plan, appropriate support will be provided based on their need

Part II:

ESSER ARP - Plan for Use of Funds:

1. The extent to which and how the funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are to the greatest extent practicable consistent with the most recent CDC guidance on reopening schools in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning;

Mental Health Funds will be used to provide Professional Development for Faculty, Staff, Mentors, Student to Student Leaders (STS), students, and the community on Social Emotional Learning strategies and trauma-informed practices. These strategies can be incorporated into classroom lessons, and daily routines so that students are taught to respond instead of react.

2. How the LEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of

evidence-based interventions such as summer learning or summer enrichment extended day comprehensive afterschool programs or extended school year;

Grant funding will be used to expand learning during summer by extending the school-day in our rising 9th grade transitional program. In addition, summer enrichment will be implemented for students in preparation for their enrollment in top-tier ELA programs (Rutgers Writing, AP, IB). These programs will reinforce essential skills, study skills, and provide emotional and social support to students to promote their success. Grant funds will also be used to increase instructional time for students during and after school to offset losses linked to COVID-19.

3. How the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act;

The District will be investing in maintenance and possible replacement of HVAC units to ensure proper ventilation and air quality to help reduce the transmission of COVID. The District will also provide transportation to programs addressing learning loss.

4. How the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements, including but not limited to the interventions implemented under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, will respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students. Under this requirement, an LEA must engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders and give the public an opportunity to provide input in the development of its plan. Specifically, an LEA must engage in meaningful consultation with students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); and teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions.

Guest presenters will provide Social-Emotional Learning Strategies for all students each marking period during Health and PE classes. The goal of this curriculum is to provide students with coping and life skill strategies, which promote self-expression, self-confidence, leadership, increased competence in executive functioning skills, and sound decision-making. The plan is derived from the Learning Acceleration principles developed by the NJ DOE. Due to the COVID-19, many of our students, particularly students from lower socio-economic backgrounds, have suffered from interrupted education and skill development. Among other actions, an "all in" approach will be utilized to expand participation in top-tier academic programs. For example, the district will aim to enroll 80% of the current 9th grade in class in top-tier ELA courses (Rutgers

Writing, AP, and IB) as they begin 11th grade in September 2023. Students will be surveyed with follow-up focus group discussions led by external evaluators to measure success and identify areas in need of attention. Community and student advisory boards have been established to maintain open lines of communication and provide feedback to the district on the impact of grant-funded initiatives.

5. Additionally, an LEA must engage in meaningful consultation with each of the following, to the extent present in or served by the LEA: Tribes; civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

The District posted the Safe return plan on its website for all parents to review and provide commentary. The District has a community advisory board, a PTA and a student advisory board which meets monthly in which learning loss and programming were discussed. The District has many parent meetings especially with the ELL. Due to the District's diverse make-up of its clientele, we provide parent teacher conferences at the high school level, where many Districts do not. This gives parents another outlet to connect and learn about programming and ask questions. Parents are given many opportunities to provide feedback on programming being implemented.