



## 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 2022-2023 school year as it becomes available (609-292-6000).**

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

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*The Safe Return Plan is subject to change as directed by the New Jersey Department of Education and the Governor.*

**LEA Name: The Oakland Public Schools**

**Date (06/08/2021)      \*Revision Due (11/24/2021; 06/23/2022; 12/23/2022; 6/15/2023,12/5/23)**

### 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**

Per Governor Murphy's announcement on June 28, 2021, New Jersey will not require students to wear masks in schools. The public health emergency as of May 11, 2023, has been lifted.

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

Physical distancing practices have been relaxed at this time. Oakland Public Schools will continue to monitor conditions and may make adjustments based on current data. We will continue to have full/all-day in- person learning for the 2023-2024 school year.

**C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette**

As of June 2022, Oakland Public Schools will continue to follow the CDC guidelines and the New Jersey Department of Health by promoting handwashing hygiene as an important action in our schools. Teaching and reinforcing handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds will continue to be in place. Hand sanitizers are available for teachers, staff, and students in multiple spaces throughout the buildings as well. Signs will continue to be posted in bathrooms and throughout the buildings for students, staff, and visitors to frequently wash their hands. We will continue to provide resources for performing hand washing and respiratory etiquette. Appropriate grade-level signs/posters for social distancing, face coverings, hand washing, hygiene, etc. will be posted at all PreK-8 schools. Signage and education materials posted at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) will continue to be utilized.

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

We will continue to follow the cleaning procedures outlined in the NJDOE Road Back Plan which will also continue to be made available on the district website. We will continue to follow all CDC guidelines and will continue to maintain our cleaning and disinfecting procedures per these guidelines. Univents were fitted with electronic actuators to allow a constant flow of fresh air. Classroom windows will remain open for additional ventilation when weather permits. Bipolar ionization systems for the Nurses' offices and portable air purifiers will continue to be utilized.

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

Contact tracing practices have been relaxed at this time. Per Governor Murphy's announcement on June 28, 2021, New Jersey will not require students to wear masks in schools. The public health emergency as of May 11, 2023, has been lifted.

**F. Diagnostic and screening testing**

The Oakland Public School District will continue to provide resources to parents, students, and staff regarding testing for COVID-19.

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

The district will continue to work with the Bergen County Department of Health Services Communicable Disease Division and community support from the Borough to provide access to vaccinations for those who request it.

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

All appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities will be implemented as per a student's individual learning plan.

## **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 Oakland Public Schools will ensure continuity of services for all students including sub-group populations to reduce the learning gaps with accelerated learning opportunities. Oakland will continue to develop a multi-tiered intervention model of school and district-based mental health supports and services to positively impact students in all sub-groups and to respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs. Counselors will continue to be available for staff and students.

The Oakland School District designed an in-person Summer Learning Academy eligible for Students with Disabilities, Multilingual Learners, and students with significant reading and math difficulties. Students will receive multisensory instruction in ELA and Mathematics. Social skill groups will be available.

The Oakland School District will continue to engage with West Bergen Mental Health in a collaborative partnership to increase our mental health services.

## **3. Public Comment**

**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.**

Public comment was available to the public at the June 8, 2021, BOE meeting. Additional public comment continues to be available on the district's website via a [Google form](#). The plan is posted on the District Website at [Oakland Public Schools](#) and can be translated by Google Translator on the website. Other specific accommodations can be made upon request to [oaktech@oaklandschoolsnj.org](mailto:oaktech@oaklandschoolsnj.org).