



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: Allendale School district

Date (06/16/2021):

Date Revised (06/16/2021):

1. Maintaining Health and Safety

The plan is for a full return to in person instruction for September 2021 per the most recent guidance released by the Governor. Currently, the District is required to comply with the CDC and NJDOE/NJDOH guidelines. At the present time, this means all students, full day with no cohorts. The Allendale School District is prepared to open under these requirements, but will continue to monitor updated guidance and Executive orders as they are released. Updated guidance will be included in future versions of this plan and released to the public in a timely manner.

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 District will follow all guidelines and mandates as directed by the NJ Department of Education, NJ Department of Health, and the Bergen County of Health. In the case of discrepancy, the District will consult local health officials and professionals from the Re-Entry Committee.
- All buildings will have signage and picture displays modeling proper mask wearing.
- Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer before putting on your mask.
- Put the mask over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin.
- Fit the mask snugly against the sides of your face, slipping the loops over your ears or tying the strings behind your head.
- If you have to continually adjust your mask, it doesn't fit properly, and you might need to find a different mask type or brand.
- Make sure you can breathe easily.
- Extra masks will be available and the school nurses will provide a refresher video for all students and staff in September.
- Updates to this plan may change as new information, mandates, or situations arise.

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

- The District will follow all guidelines and mandates as directed by the NJ Department of Education, NJ Department of Health, and the Bergen County of Health. In the case of discrepancy, the District will consult local health officials and professionals from the Re-Entry Committee.
- At this time, the District is planning for a full return of all students for September 2021, based upon the most recent guidance from the Governor's Office.
- Students and staff will maintain physical distances as determined through guidelines and mandates directed by the NJ Department of Education, NJ Department of Health (NJ CALI Score), and the Bergen County of Health. In the case of discrepancy, the district will consult local health professionals from the Re-entry Committee. Enough space is available under the current requirements (3 feet) to allow all classroom students to be in a room at the same time.
- Updates to this plan may change as new information, mandates, or situations arise.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

- The District will follow all guidelines and mandates as directed by the NJ Department of Education, NJ Department of Health, and the Bergen County of Health. In the case of discrepancy, the District will consult local health officials and professionals from the Re-Entry Committee.
- Students and staff will wash hands frequently.
- Hand cleaner/sanitizer stations have been installed in each classroom and in common areas to facilitate hand washing.
- Cleaning will occur via bathrooms, sinks in rooms, and hand sanitizer stations.
- Students and staff will receive instruction from the school nurses on hand washing and respiratory etiquette.
- Updates to this plan may change as new information, mandates, or situations arise.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

- The District will follow all guidelines and mandates as directed by the NJ Department of Education, NJ Department of Health, and the Bergen County of Health. In the case of discrepancy, the District will consult local health officials and professionals from the Re-Entry Committee.
- The District uses a hydrogen peroxide based spray cleaner. Cleaning towels and paper towels will be used depending upon the surface. Fabric towels are used once, are laundered and replenished by an outside janitorial supply company biweekly.
- Cleaning products used are registered with the EPA and classified for residential use, including disposable wipes available in each classroom for immediate situations.
- Brooms and mops will be used to sweep debris from floors. Mop heads follow the same protocols as fabric towels.

Cleaning Schedules:

- 8:30 AM - 3:30 PM
 - Ongoing wipe down of bathroom facilities and high touch points to include door knobs, light switches, sink handles, countertops, handrails, water fill stations. Common areas, ie school entry points, hallways, will be cleaned at regular intervals
- 3:45 PM - 11:00 PM
 - Deep cleaning - Wipe down of all surface areas defined above, full cleaning of all bathrooms, and common areas.
- The disinfecting process will be accomplished with the use of three specific tools:
 - Electrostatic Sprayers
 - Hydroxyl Generators

- UV Lighting
- The electrostatic sprayers use an EPA approved disinfectant called thymol, a derivative of the thyme plant, organic and safe for school use. This will be the primary form of disinfecting each day
- Hydroxyl Generators are used to naturally clean and deodorize indoor environments in larger, common areas.

Disinfecting Schedule:

- 3:45PM - 11:00PM
 - Electrostatic with EPA approved products will be used in classroom and high occupancy areas. Hydroxyl Generators will be used in large common areas as needed.
- UV lighting is installed in all bathrooms District-wide. Motion sensors and timing controls to monitor bathroom occupancy turn the lights on and off accordingly, in addition to timed sanitizing periods.
- Sanitizing will take place should a COVID outbreak occur, and will be governed by the Federal and State protocols in place at that time.
- The District's HVAC system uses MERV filters. All rooms that house students and staff each day have operable windows to further facilitate ventilation.
- Updates to this plan may change as new information, mandates or situations arise.

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

- The District will follow all guidelines and mandates as directed by the NJ Department of Education, NJ Department of Health, and the Bergen County of Health. In the case of discrepancy, the district will consult local health officials and professionals from the Re-Entry Committee.
- When a student or staff member presents to the health office with a report of any infectious disease symptoms (Temp above 100.0, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, loss of taste or smell, chills, muscle aches,) they will be evaluated and triaged to ensure they are isolated if necessary.
- Appropriate PPE will be donned, student/staff member will be isolated.
- Face covering should be in place. Parent or family member will be contacted to pick up the child. Adults will be released to leave the building.
- District nurses will remain in constant communication with the Allendale Health President.
- Internal documents maintain records of contact tracing.
- Nurses and principals are well-versed in best practices for contact tracing, individual parents are updated by school officials, and the district by the superintendent.

- Once the student or staff member with symptoms related to COVID-19 leaves the office. All areas of contact will be disinfected by the school nurse/and or custodian before future use. Please see Custodial Cleaning Manual.
- Updates to this plan may change as new information, mandates, or situations arise.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

- The District will follow all guidelines and mandates as directed by the NJ Department of Education, NJ Department of Health, and the Bergen County of Health. In the case of discrepancy, the district will consult local health officials and professionals from the Re-Entry Committee.
- The District will utilize its standardized screening process for all students and staff.
- Diagnostic testing will be completed through referral to outside testing sites, private medical practitioners, and the Bergen County Department of Health.
- Updates to this plan may change as new information, mandates, or situations arise.

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

- The District has and will continue to keep all members of the school community informed.
- Parent volunteers scheduled appointments for staff as soon as the opportunity became available. All staff that were interested in receiving a vaccine have already been vaccinated. Local resources are available for any parents choosing to vaccinate their child.
- A resident who is the Director of Pediatric Emergency Medicine for a tri-state area hospital presented to parents on vaccines, their efficacy, and safety to help inform our school community.

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

- We will follow all common guidelines and mandates as directed by the NJ Department of Education, NJ Department of Health, and the Bergen County of Health. In the case of discrepancy, the district will consult local health professionals from the Re-entry Committee.
- The Supervisor of Special Services and the Child Study Team are meeting with any families who have classified children to write and/or amend IEP's based on potential issues that may impact health regulations, academic, social, or emotional needs from the 2020-2021 school year.

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 District is beginning the 2021-2022 school year in a well-prepared position for student learning. During the 2020-2021 school year, all students received live instruction, 5 days a week (similar amounts of time in Language Arts and Math prior to the Pandemic). A very small population received the same opportunity, but virtually.

Curriculum and Instruction

- To accelerate students' progress during the upcoming school year, administrators and educators will be tasked with identifying what unfinished learning needs to be addressed in all subject areas including special areas such as STEM and VPA. Accelerated learning will provide students with resources, tasks, and assignments along with the appropriate supports necessary to fill the most critical gaps in learning. Accelerated learning seeks to help educators utilize classroom time as efficiently as possible.
- A summer program addressing student needs in K-8 was developed and will be implemented over a 5 week period of time.
- Upon return in September, eligible students will have the opportunity to attend a before school "zero" period for extra support.

Learning Environment

- Benchmarks have been established with data collected during the 2020-2021 school year.
- Educators will focus on locally developed pre-assessments and formative assessments upon returning to school. In the absence of Spring 2021 state assessment data, we have identified alternate sources assessment data which may complement data-driven decision-making regarding remediation efforts such as Start Strong.
- The District has allocated funds to modify curriculum scope and sequences in all core academic content areas to address any perceived or real needs. Summer curriculum work will occur with staff over the summer.
- ELL staff will work closely with students and their families and the building principals to ensure a smooth September transition.
- Social and emotional learning strategies that have been taught will be incorporated in all classes.

Assessment

- The Academic Support Team and Data Team will support progress monitoring.
- A revised assessment calendar established over the summer.
- Link-It, STAR, and Reading Assessments will be provided to each student at the beginning of the year that will continue to inform teacher instruction. These assessments will be repeated on a calendar throughout the year to continually monitor growth and inform instruction.
- The District will continue to utilize reader/writer/math workshop models. Small-group instruction based on data and classroom observations will be developed and scheduled within the school day.
- Time will be dedicated at monthly after school PD meetings for academic support teachers and CST to work with teachers on data analysis.
- For students who need additional support based on their performance and areas of improvement, students can enter the Academic Support Program.

Social, Emotional, and Mental Health

- Wellness Committees (composed of teachers/staff in both buildings) will continue to meet and create opportunities for students to address anxiety and provide students with resources to address their needs.
- The District added another full time mental health professional for the 2020-2021 school year who will remain moving forward.
- A partnership has been developed for training and professional development with the American School Counselors Association.
- Student engagement activities were incorporated and will continue as we continuously seek ways to help meet our students' needs (Robin).

Professional Learning

Our professional learning will better equip leaders, staff, substitutes, and students to adapt to a full return to school educational environments and experiences. Professional Development Plans (PDPs) for teaching staff and administrators, as always, should remain flexible and adaptable to the changing needs of the District, school, and individual educator.

3. Public Comment

A. Describe how the LEA sought public comment on its plan, and how it took those public comments 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)

A presentation of this plan was made publicly at the District's June 16, 2021 Board of Education meeting. The meeting was held in person at Brookside School as well as made available via Zoom. The plan was posted to the District website on June 16, 2021. Public comment was available at the Board of Education meeting or through submission of questions/feedback at the following address mfisher@allendalek8.com.

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 plan was posted on the District website. In addition, any family who has any questions or needs translation may contact the District for the appropriate service.