



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**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**

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**LEA Name: Lower Township Elementary Schools**

**Date 06/22/2021**

**Date Revised 06/15/21**

**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.

Listed in the Table below are the mitigation strategies required by Section 1 and the applicable sections and Appendices of the Fall 2020 Plan where the required mitigation strategies are addressed. (see attached appendices)

<b>Mitigation Strategy</b>	<b>Section of Fall 2020 Plan</b>	<b>Applicable Appendices of Fall 2020 Plan</b>
A. Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks  <i>*Anticipated to change pending new guidance from the New Jersey Department of Education July 2021*</i>	A.1.a.(1)(d)	A
	A.1.b.(2) & (3)	B
	A.1.c.(1) & (2)	C
	A.1.d.(2)	D
	A.1.e.(4) ;(5);(6); & (7)	E

B. Physical Distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)	A.1.b.(1); (2); (3); & (4)	B
	A.1.d.(2) & (3)	D
	A.1.e.(2)(a) & (c)(iv)	E
	A.1.h.(1)(a) & (d)	H
	A.1.i.(1)(b) & (3)	I
	A.1.j.(1)	J
C. Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette	A.1.a.(1)(d)	A
	A.1.b.(7) & (8)	B
	A.1.h.(1)(e)	H
	A.1.i.(1)(d)	I
	A.1.j.(1)	J
D. Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities, Including Improving Ventilation	A.1.c.(3)	C
	A.1.g.	G
	A.1.h.(1)(a) & (c)	H
	A.1.i.(1)(e) & (g)(i)	I
	A.1.i.(2)	I
	A.1.i.(3)	I

E. Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine	A.1.e. A.1.f. B.2.g.	E F M
F. Diagnostic and Screening Testing  <i>*The Lower Township Elementary Schools Day Care Program will also follow the district's screening procedures (Appendix E)*</i>	A.1.d.(1) A.1.e.	D E
G. Efforts to Provide Vaccinations to Educators, Other Staff, and Students	N/A	NEW
H. Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities	A.1.a.(1)(e) A.1.b.(2)(a) A.1.c.(1) & (2) A.1.e.(1)(d) A.1.e.(5) A.1.e.(6)(d)	A B C E E E

	A.2.	K
	B.1.d.	L

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

*Staff were given (2) COVID days to get their vaccinations. The superintendent continually updated staff with the latest vaccination information and sites.*

**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)

Applicable Appendix from Fall 2020 Pan- K

### **Learning Loss**

- **Description of Need:** Due to COVID-19, school closures in the spring of 2020, and the restrictions in place for the 2020-2021 school year our students experienced a disrupted educational experience resulting in learning loss. The district will employ (5) additional homeroom teachers to aid in class size reduction. The district will employ (4) Intervention Teachers in grades 3-6 to provide supplemental support in Language Arts and Mathematics.
- **Funding Source:** ESSR-II
- **Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources used to determine the need:** Student achievement, local assessments, and student work
- **Root Cause(s) of selected need(s):** COVID-19
- **Describe the evidence-based intervention(s) used to address the need (include URL or evidence source):**  
Response to Intervention: <http://www.rtinetwork.org/learn/research>  
Sonday System: <https://www.winsorlearning.com/research>

### **Mental Health**

- **Description of Need:** Due to COVID-19 and the disruptions of the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years many staff and students are facing serious mental health concerns. The district will contract with a mental health professional to provide counseling/trauma therapy for students and staff. The district will provide a motivational speaker at its opening day convocation. The district will provide professional development for Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). The district will furnish sensory rooms for students.
- **Funding Source:** Mental Health
- **Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources used to determine the need:** Staff survey, school climate and culture, and perceptions/expectations.
- **Root Cause(s) of selected need(s):** COVID-19/trauma
- **Describe the evidence-based intervention(s) used to address the need (include URL or evidence source):** CASEL: <https://casel.org/what-is-sel/>  
PATHS Program: <https://pathsprogram.com/>  
Pyramid Model: <https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/Pyramid/overview/index.html>

### **Learning Acceleration**

- **Description of Need:** Due to the disruptions in the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years students missed out on many of the afterschool activities that the district offers (i.e., clubs and supplemental after-school tutoring for Language Arts and Mathematics). The district plans to offer extended learning opportunities this summer. All students will have the opportunity for summer tutoring or enrichment in Language Arts and Mathematics. STEAM camps will be offered for all students entering grades K-5. Professional development for afterschool accelerated instruction will be provided to staff. A workshop will be provided for families to provide information on how the district monitors students' progress and makes decisions regarding the services and interventions students receive. The district will offer after school tutoring services in Language Arts and Mathematics during the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years..
- **Funding Source:** Learning Acceleration

- **Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources used to determine the need:** Student Achievement, Local Assessments, Student Work and School Climate/Culture Surveys.
- **Root Cause(s) of selected need(s):** COVID-19 restrictions
- **Describe the evidence-based intervention(s) used to address the need (include URL or evidence source):** Summer Academies will include tutoring/enrichment for L.A. and Mathematics. STEAM camps will include art, music and STEM, and will promote a growth mindset. <https://www.rand.org/topics/summer-learning.html>

### 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 formed School Pandemic Response Teams that included all stakeholders (teachers, parents, school nurses, guidance counselors, administration, board members, and community members) that assisted in the development of our Fall 2020 Restart and Recovery Plan. The Safe Return Plan 2021-2022 will be reviewed at the June board meeting and the board will seek public comment. Once approved by the board of education the plan will be posted on the district's website.*

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 worked with the School Pandemic Response team members to ensure that the plan was written in language that parents can understand and provided translation upon request for families with limited English proficiency. Alternative formats are available upon request for any parents with disabilities as defined by the ADA.*