



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: Passaic Valley Regional 31-3990

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 06/19/2021

Date Revised (mm/dd/yyyy):

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

Passaic Valley will follow the protocols set forth by the CDC as they pertain to the wearing of masks. This includes prior to boarding the school bus, while on the bus and until the bus is completely empty. Accommodations for heat, outdoor activities and vaccinated individuals will follow CDC, NJDOH, and Updated COVID-19 Standards Child Care Centers, and COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Local Health Departments for K-12 Schools.

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

Social distancing practices in all instructional and non-instructional spaces will be maintained to ensure the health and safety of students and staff at Passaic Valley Regional. Student desks and seating in classrooms, cafeterias, multi-purpose rooms, school buses and other spaces will be separated by at least three (3) up to six (6) feet to the maximum extent practicable. Other modifications will manipulating desks and chairs in each classroom to allow for proper social distancing.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Passaic Valley Regional will promote behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19 including requiring staff and students to stay home when appropriate; encouraging the practice of hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette; requiring the use of face coverings as mandated; and signs and messages in and around school buildings. Schools will prepare and maintain hand-sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers that will be located in various areas in the building. Common areas such as hallways, classrooms and gymnasiums will be sprayed periodically. Appropriate signage and messages will be placed throughout the schools reminding students and staff about frequent hand washing and respiratory etiquette. The district will follow CDC, NJDOH, and Updated COVID-19

Standards for Child Care Centers, and COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Local Health Departments for K-12 Schools.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Schools will continue to adhere to existing enhanced facilities cleaning practices and procedures, and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise. All indoor facilities will have adequate ventilation, including operational heating and ventilation systems where appropriate. If air conditioning is not provided, then windows will be opened when possible. A/C units will be maintained and changed, and AC filters will be changed according to manufacturer recommendations. Bathrooms will be sanitized on a regular schedule.

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

Schools will closely monitor Daily COVID Symptom Screening reports from both staff and students. Procedures for isolation and quarantine will continue as in the 2020-2021 NJDOH guidance. School Nurses will work collaboratively with the Local Health Department, reporting cases and contacts as required. District administrators will notify affected students, staff, and community members of the need to isolate and/or quarantine as directed by the school nurse and Local Health Department. Alternative instructional options following district home instruction policies will ensure continuity of instruction for quarantining students.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

School Nurses will continue to monitor Daily COVID Symptom Screening reports from both staff and students. Staff or parents of students who have not completed the daily screening will be excluded from school until screening is complete. In consultation with the Local Health Department, we have concluded that contact tracing is an effective and efficient means of tracking COVID-19 cases and has mitigated in school spread.

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

Passaic Valley Regional continues to work collaboratively with the Local Health Department to provide vaccinations to staff, community members and eligible students. Passaic Valley Regional has also collaborated with the Little Falls ShopRite to publicize vaccination availability throughout Little Falls, Totowa and Woodland Park.

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

Student IEP and 504 plans will be adjusted as needed. Behaviorists and counselors will provide necessary intervention and resources including trauma informed compassionate classroom, nurtured heart and virtual calming room resources for students and staff will be employed.

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)

Return to full day, full time, five day per week in-person instruction, similar to pre-pandemic schedules. Instructional pacing and curriculum adjusted for learning acceleration. Remote learning has been rescinded by Executive order 175 and will no longer be offered unless this order changes. Provide home instruction and simultaneous synchronous offerings for quarantining students. Provide expanded summer school offerings open to all students for the summer of 2021 and the summer of 2022: Covid-19 Learning Acceleration Program and after school in – person and virtual tutoring options. Additional programs to support the whole-child in transitioning back to full-time in-person learning will include. Social Emotional Learning Programs: Imagine, hiring a Mental Health Clinician. Special Education programs expanded. Return to more normalized extra-curricular offerings. Leverage technology and remote support best practices. In accordance with NJDOH recommendations social distancing, barriers and alternative meal locations will be designated as appropriate for each school location.

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 Passaic Valley Regional Public School District sought public input through use of a community wide Survey for parents, students and staff. The feedback provided assisted in informing the writing of this plan and will be presented at the June 22nd Board meeting to allow for public comment. This public comment form will remain available for the duration of the plan implementation with responses incorporated into the June 24, 2021 upload and subsequent revisions.

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 will be presented publicly at the June 22, 2021 Board of Education Board Meeting and will be recorded and posted on the district website for future viewing. The plan will also be posted in English with translations in Spanish and Arabic available upon request. Parents and community members who require additional support to ensure equitable access may request an in-person or phone consultation from the Business Office at 973-890-2589.