

Safe Return Plan

2021-2022



Fairfield Public Schools

June 1, 2021

Revised: October 1, 2021

Revised: March 7, 2022



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: **Fairfield Public Schools**

Date: 06/01/2021

Date Revised: 10/01/2021, 03/07/2022

1. Maintaining Health and Safety

For each mitigation strategy listed below (A–J), 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.

Section A - Universal and Correct Wearing of Masks

The district will follow the current guidance in place, either through Executive Order or through directives from the New Jersey Department of Health or the New Jersey Department of Education, with regard to the wearing of masks in school by staff and students.

- As outlined in [Executive Order No. 292](#), effective Monday, March 7, 2022, the Public Health Emergency declared in Executive Order No. 280 (2022) is hereby terminated. Furthermore, [Executive Order No. 251](#) (2021) is hereby rescinded. Mask wearing protocols in regard to isolation will follow the most up-to-date CDC recommendations.
- We recognize that wearing a mask remains a choice for all individuals. No harassment of any masked or unmasked individual in a school facility or on school grounds shall be tolerated with regard to a personal choice about masking.
- The district notes that it shall continue to monitor the level of virus activity in the schools and in the community. As per the NJDOH guidance, masking may be indicated at some time in the future should a significant outbreak occur in the classroom, school, or community. Any such decision would only be made in consultation with the local health department.
- Website Link to Fairfield Public School, School Nurses information page: sites.google.com/fpsk6.org/fps-schoolnurses/home

Maintaining Health and Safety

Section B - Physical Distancing

The district will follow the current guidelines for physical distancing as provided by the New Jersey Department of Health.

Physical distancing of 3 feet will be observed in all classrooms to the extent that it is practicable.

Physical distancing of 6 feet is recommended between students and staff and will be observed to the extent practicable.

The additional mitigation strategy of physical distancing is supplemented with optional desk shields in the classrooms.

- See Board Policy #1648.11
 - ➔ Appendices D and G
- Website Link to Fairfield Public School, School Nurses information page:
sites.google.com/fpsk6.org/fps-schoolnurses/home

Maintaining Health and Safety

Section C - Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette

Hand sanitizer is provided at the entrance to each classroom. Students and staff are advised to frequently wash/sanitize their hands.

Students and staff are reminded to use proper etiquette when they sneeze or cough.

- See Board Policy #1648.11
 ➔ Appendix E
- Website Link to Fairfield Public School, School Nurses information page:
sites.google.com/fpsk6.org/fps-schoolnurses/home

Maintaining Health and Safety

Section D - Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities, Including Improving Ventilation

Cleaning protocols in place during the 2020-2021 school year will continue.

School buses will be cleaned and disinfected daily.

- See Board Policy #1648.11
 - ➔ Appendices G and H
- Website Link to Fairfield Public School, School Nurses information page:
sites.google.com/fpsk6.org/fps-schoolnurses/home

Maintaining Health and Safety

Section E - Contact Tracing in Combination with Isolation and Quarantine, in Collaboration with the State and Local Health Departments

Work with our local health department with regard to contact tracing.

Current guidelines provided by the New Jersey Department of Health with regard to isolation and quarantine will be followed.

If a child is identified as a close contact of a positive case over the weekend, the child should not be sent to school until the parent confers with the school nurse.

Fully vaccinated students and staff will follow the guidance issued by the NJDOH with regard to the need to quarantine following close contact with a positive case.

- See Board Policy #1648.11
 - ➔ Appendices B, I and J
- In accordance with Executive Directive 21-011, the Fairfield Public School District must report weekly student and staff case count as well as information on student/staff censuses to the New Jersey Department of Health through the surveillance for influenza and COVID-19 (SIC module) in the CDRSS.
- Website Link to Fairfield Public School, School Nurses information page:
sites.google.com/fpsk6.org/fps-schoolnurses/home

Maintaining Health and Safety

Section F - Diagnostic and Screening Testing

All parents will be required to perform a screening of their child for symptoms daily. Staff members will do a self-screening.

Anyone exhibiting symptoms should not attend school and should seek an appointment for COVID-19 testing.

- See Board Policy #1648.11
 ➔ Appendix I
- Website Link to Fairfield Public School, School Nurses information page:
sites.google.com/fpsk6.org/fps-schoolnurses/home

Maintaining Health and Safety

Section G - Efforts to Provide Vaccinations to School Communities

The district will continue to work with local providers to facilitate access to vaccinations for staff and students as necessary.

- See Board Policy #1648.11
 ➔ Appendix A
- Executive Order 253
- Website Link to Fairfield Public School, School Nurses information page:
sites.google.com/fpsk6.org/fps-schoolnurses/home

Maintaining Health and Safety

Section H - Appropriate Accommodations for Children with Disabilities with Respect to Health and Safety Policies

The district will work to ensure that the specific needs of students with disabilities are addressed with regard to any necessary health accommodations in the classroom with regard to in-person instruction.

For the 2021-2022 school year, only those students who have a documented medical condition, which prevents them from attending school in person, will be exempt from attending school in person. For those students, home instruction will be provided in accordance with District Policy #2412.

Section I - Meals

- See Board Policy #1648.11
➔ Appendix F

Section J - Transportation

- See Board Policy #1648.11
➔ Appendix G

2. Ensuring Continuity of Services

Section A – Describe how the LEA (Local Education Agency) 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.

Fairfield expanded its Summer Skills Program 2021 to address students’ academic needs. The goal of this five-week program was to solidify necessary skills from the year the student just completed and skills covered in the Fall to boost them into the next school year. We will offer the same program for Summer of 2022. The district has been committed to providing additional instructional support in the Fall. Fairfield employs an RTI Model for social/behavioral support and has a full-time guidance counselor in each school. Counselors visit classrooms regularly to deliver the district’s SEL curriculum. A universal screener is utilized in grades K-6 to identify those students who may be in need of individualized mental health interventions. Teachers are encouraged to check in daily with students to talk about their emotional state and with a counselor, when needed, to discuss his/her own emotional state.

3. Public Comment

Section A - How did the district seek public comment on its plan?

The Safe Return Plan was approved at the June 10, 2021 Board of Education meeting. Public had an opportunity to comment on agenda items.

A revised Safe Return Plan was approved at the October 19, 2021 Board of Education meeting. Public had an opportunity to comment on agenda items.

A revised Safe Return Plan was approved at the April 28, 2022 Board of Education meeting. Public had an opportunity to comment on agenda items.

Section B - How will the district ensure the plan is understandable for parents?

The district has adopted the basic plan template provided by the New Jersey Department of Education.

Following Board approval, the plan will be posted on the district website.