



Estell Manor  
School District

# Safe Return Plan

## 2021-2022 SY

Estell Manor Board of Education Approved:



## 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: Estell Manor School District

Date: 06/15/2021

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:** Currently, our “Restart and Recovery 2020” Plan follows the guidelines as established by the CDC and those mandated by the State of New Jersey. All students and staff in all grades and departments wear masks in accordance with these guidelines and given proper instruction on how to wear them. One of the most frequent corrective actions is to be sure students are aware of and compliant with the mask and the correct way to wear it as per outlined protocols published by the CDC, State of New Jersey, and/or Executive Order. It is noted that when in their classroom or office area without students or other staff they may take a mask break and remove their mask. As/if this requirement is lifted for schools then the district will comply with the newest requirement that is published/revised. Anyone entering the building must wear a mask at present. Students in PK – 8 will be required to wear face masks on school busses; in common areas, i.e. cafeteria, library, hallways, restrooms, offices and when moving about the classroom. With the new revisions to the protocol masks may be removed when outdoors for recess or physical education or when the heat is extreme. We will continue to implement the mitigation strategies that have been used and have allowed us to successfully open to full in-person instruction. When masks are not able to be worn while eating and drinking we will work to follow the recommendation of six (6) feet of physical distancing. We also recognize that the NJDOH (New Jersey Department of Health) continues to use proximity of six feet or less for more than 15 minutes to determine the need for quarantining persons in contact with a COVID-19 case. If the requirement for the wearing of face masks is lifted at any point in time students and staff will be advised of any revisions and follow any new

protocol established via CDC, State of New Jersey, Executive Order, etc. All modes of our normal communication systems will be used. We will communicate through some or all of our various district communication methods; website, parent email, and outreach calls.

- B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding):** Currently, our “Restart and Recovery 2020” Plan follows the guidelines as established by the CDC and those mandated by the State of New Jersey. All students and staff in all grades and departments are both in pods and/or cohorts and maintain 6 feet of social distancing. According to the most recent information as Executive Order 175 ends, “schools will be required to provide full-day, in-person instruction, all instruction will return to In-Person learning” Estell Manor School District will return to a full day, in-person instructional setting. The schedule will be constructed as prior to the COVID-19 pandemic with instructional modifications as denoted by the needs of the educational program. In carrying out the instruction, we will still adhere to social distancing of six feet or three feet as classroom size allows. Each grade level will be instructed at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year as to the social distancing parameters. In addition, the regular instructional programming will include all instructional pedagogies appropriate to meeting the learning needs of each student. Pods, cohorts, large group, small group, individualized instruction will accommodate student academic needs. In each of the instructional settings physical distancing will be maintained as a precautionary measure. Students will have access to lockers, lunch will continue to be provided in the cafeteria, physical education classes will resume, etc. Any changes that need to be made due to revised/mandated protocols will be communicated to the BOE, community, students, and staff. Revised protocols as presented will be implemented as appropriate. As with each of the plan elements, if the requirement(s) change at any point in time, community, students and staff will be advised of any revisions and follow any new protocol established via CDC, State of New Jersey, Executive Order, etc. All modes of our normal communication systems will be used. We will communicate through some or all of our various district communication methods; website, parent email, and outreach calls.
  
- C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette:** The District will continue to follow as established good habits that promote a healthy environment. As part of our recurring instruction, we teach and reinforce handwashing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring of students by staff when doing so to assess when/if re-teaching instruction is necessary. In addition to providing soap and water for hand cleaning, we also provide sanitizer appropriate to the age of the child. Older students of middle school age and staff are provided hand sanitizer with a 60% alcohol content. Funding provided is assisting in having adequate supplies including soap, hand sanitizer, tissues, paper towels, water bottle stations for drinking water. Students are taught the correct process for covering coughs and sneezes and using tissues when not wearing a mask. Students are taught how to dispose of used tissues in throwing them away in a trash receptacle and hand washing or use of sanitizer immediately after the use of tissue(s). There are several times built into the regular day schedule to provide for hand hygiene. The times include, but are not limited to, upon arriving at school, before and after breakfast, lunch and/or snack time, after using the bathroom, when returning to the classroom from an outside break, before being dismissed from school for the day, after blowing their nose or sneezing or coughing into a tissue, and any time that hands appear to be soiled. All staff observe, assist, evaluate, and re-teach as necessary to ensure correct handwashing procedures are being followed. If the requirement for the handwashing and respiratory etiquette is changed or adapted at any point in time students and staff will be advised of any revisions and follow any new protocol established via CDC, State of New Jersey, Executive Order, etc.

**D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation:** The District will continue our efforts used during the pandemic to maintain a healthy environment. Cleaning and disinfecting is conducted daily and as appropriate between changes of the student population in frequently used areas, i.e. cafeteria setting, lavatories and library. Requirements to be followed will continue to be reviewed by our School Safety Team. Appropriate disinfectant solution will be used on a regular basis on desks, doorknobs, foyers and entrances, computer keyboards and mouse devices, pencil sharpeners, hand sanitizer canisters, lunch tables after each use, and playground equipment. All bathrooms throughout the day are continuously monitored and cleaned with Clorox Cleanup and Disinfectant. We will continue this protocol. Flooring will be swept, vacuumed and/or mopped as appropriate to the type of flooring. Disinfectant will continue to be used in classrooms, hallways, offices, cafeteria, kitchen and bathrooms. Each of these cleaning protocols will be updated as necessary and appropriate. During the onset of the pandemic we assessed our ventilation equipment and made certain the filters used to maintain our systems were changed frequently. The filters were upgraded from Merv 7 and 8 to Merv 13. In addition, we allow windows to be opened during the regular school day. Outside doors remain closed and locked on the outside. No door is locked from the inside. Whenever a process is revised or a change is mandated by the various agencies the district will respond and advise those impacted of any changes made. If the requirement for cleaning and maintaining a healthy facility and ventilations system is changed or adapted at any point in time, students and staff will be advised of any revisions and follow any new protocol established via CDC, State of New Jersey, Executive Order, etc.

**E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments:** Contact tracing will continue to be conducted according to CDC guidelines as they are offered by the NJDOH and Atlantic County Department of Health Guidelines. As a district our school nurse will continue to be in contact with the appropriate agencies to report any known cases of COVID-19. We will continue our efforts and our due diligence in providing the necessary information to the agencies in an effort to continue to promote a safe and healthy environment where all of our students can learn. It is understood that contact tracing is among the strategies utilized to determine the source of infection and a method to minimize and control undue spread of any contagious disease. While we will work in cooperation with our state and local health agencies in providing appropriate and necessary information, the agency will conduct the actual process of contact tracing. It is hoped and encouraged that the agency will provide as appropriate information to the District that will help/assist in containing any spread of an infection. Where appropriate and necessary and within the guidelines presented by the state and local agencies exclusion and quarantine criteria for persons with or exposed to COVID-19 or who have symptoms and those identified to have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 will be followed. Any student required to be medically excluded for a period of time, upon documentation of the medical need, will be provided Home Instruction by certified staff through a remote/virtual instructional platform. Close contact at the present time is defined as being within 6 feet of someone with suspected or known COVID-19 for 15 or more minutes during a 24-hour period. The need to expose an entire pod, cohort, classroom, small instruction group or larger instruction group of students should be minimized by following social distancing protocols. The school nurse will assist staff in identifying school based close contact cases of positive COVID-19 cases in school situations. The school nurse will communicate the information with the appropriate local health agencies in order that contact tracing can

be conducted and spread of the disease lessened. Implementing guidance received via the state and/or local health agency the school (through the School Nurse, Supervisor, Principal and/or Superintendent) will be responsible for notifying parents and staff of any close contact exposure and any exclusion requirements that may be prudent. Confidentiality to the highest degree possible will be maintained. If the requirements, guidelines and/or definitions related to contact tracing, exposure, quarantine, exclusion is changed or adapted at any point in time students and staff will be advised of any revisions and follow any new protocol established via CDC, State and local health agencies, State of New Jersey, or Executive Order, etc.

- F. Diagnostic and screening testing:** Based on the best available evidence at this time, CDC does not currently recommend schools conduct symptom screening for all students in grades K-12 on a routine (e.g., daily) basis. Parents, caregivers, or guardians should be strongly encouraged to monitor their children for symptoms of infectious illness every day through home-based symptom screening. Students who are sick should not attend school in-person. As per NJDOH and local health agencies, the school continues to work to identify various testing options in our community and provide this information to our community and school families via email. Information for diagnostic and screening testing as well as vaccination opportunities will be communicated through our normal communication systems if/when they become available to the school. We communicate through our website, text messages, and outreach calls. We also inform parents via email and telephone calls to offer information and options to promote the safety and well-being of students and staff. Parents are required to screen their child(ren) for illness prior to sending/bringing them to school. Any child who exhibits two or more of the following symptoms be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school: Fever, chills, rigors (shivers) myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose. If a child exhibits one of the following symptoms: cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, new taste disorder, he/she will be isolated and excluded from school. It will be communicated to the parent that they should not send their child (ren) to school if they observe symptoms. Anyone testing positive for COVID-19 should not come to school. Parents will be required to sign an acknowledgement noting that they will comply with the student health daily home screening and follow the directions outlined in the plan. As requirements/guidelines related to diagnostic and screening testing are updated by the CDC, State and local health agencies, State of New Jersey and/or Executive order the district will communicate any changes using our normal means of communicating with parents, students, staff and community. Those resources include, but not limited to, our website, email, text messaging, telephone calls, home visitation if needed. As more information becomes available, CDC will continue to update and share information. As knowledge and understanding of COVID-19 evolves, this guidance may change.
- G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible:** This is a process that continues with time. As vaccinations are more readily available we can provide notification including flyers when received regarding vaccination sites, times, walk-in availability and contact information for appointments. Many staff members were able to schedule appointments for whatever time was available to them including when school was in session. They were permitted to use accumulated sick days to recover from any reactions to the vaccination. As vaccinations are now open to children ages 12 – 16 we have published on our website, and through email, local vaccination site offerings for 12 – 16-year-old children and adults. We plan to continue our efforts in providing information as we receive it to offer vaccination opportunities to our students, staff, parents their families and the community in general.

H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies are the same as those accommodations for children without disabilities. Any time a special circumstance is presented, a plan is developed to meet the needs of the student and promote their health and safety and instructional program. Students qualifying for special education programs and services will attend school in person the same as other students in the district. If a certified medical encumbrance is presented, the student will be provided homebound instruction. Special needs children will follow the same school schedule as regular education program students. The schedule will include all special areas of instruction. Special education student schedules may be modified as appropriate to provide opportunities for related services and instructional reinforcement activities. Special education students who receive auxiliary service, i.e., speech, OT, PT will have these services as outlined in their educational programs. Policies 5120, 5145, and 6171 provide that all programs and support activities will be available to all students without discrimination. Equity in guidance programs and support services are accessible for all students, including students with disabilities. A full range of programs are available to both special education and general education students.

## 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 Estell Manor School District has identified the following needs projected to occur for the 2021-2022 school year to ensure continuity of services: 1. Improved Attendance Support Program. Strategies can help in all facets of the school district to promote better student attendance. These might include tangible incentives for students' positive recognition, parent/family workshops, evening family activity sessions, informational literature, and additional psychological and educational supports. 2. Providing Additional Educational Support Programs. Continuing to support student growth for every learner is our main objective. The district intends to purchase and utilize a Reading/Writing benchmark tool to measure student growth and identifying areas of strengths/weaknesses in all students, in addition to an online math fluency program geared toward students in all grade levels to assist in identifying needed areas of support and general curricular direction. We will increase Wilson reading support, extended afterschool support in all academic areas, and summer learning camp for summers of 2021 and 2022. Additional support will be provided in the mental health area. Our district has identified a variety of needs that would best support our school community for future years. These are increased hours for push-in and pull-out programs, staff professional development for Intervention & Referral Services Team Training, Second Step Program License Renewal, additional days for School Social Worker, and student SEL & academic initiatives

### 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).

Estell Manor School District took input from the original Restart and Recovery Plan. We also elicited input from the grant writing team for a clearer picture of our educational plan. These participants were composed of administrative, supervisor, safety specialist, custodial, health service, school community, and Board of Education personnel. Teams met virtually and/or in person to develop the Safe Return to Instruction Plan. Adjustments to the plan are ongoing and reflect guidelines and requirements of Executive Orders, CDC, and state and local health agencies. The original plans were presented at the Regular Board of Education meetings where public comment is addressed. The new Safe Return Plan was presented at the regularly scheduled Board meeting and any changes will be presented as appropriate. Modifications to the developed plans are incorporated as suggested or required when changes in guidelines and/or requirements are updated by the CDC, State and local health agencies, State of New Jersey and/or Executive Order. The district communicates any changes using our established means of communicating.

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 is written to be easily understood and is reviewed by various individuals for understanding and uniformity prior to being presented publicly. Any language that might still be in question at that point is reviewed and changes made for clearer understanding. The district will have the document translated for a parent should the need arise. In addition, the district has the availability of the resources needed to translate the document into the individual's language. At any point in time an individual with a disability would need an alternative format, the district also has resources to be able to accommodate that need. The district ensures that the plan is transparent and understandable by asking anyone needing assistance for any reason in reviewing the plan to please contact the secretary in the main office and we will assist in order to promote understanding.