

Final Plan Approved at the June 28, 2021 Board of Education Meeting



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.

LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

LEA Name: Denville Twp Public Schools

Date: 06/03/2021 BOE Approval 06/28/2021

Date Revised:

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: Barring a significant change in health metrics from the current state and without contravening guidance from The NJ Departments of Education and/or Health, our local health department and medical experts, the Denville School District will consider making masks optional in school buildings for the 2021-2022 school year. At the present time, all schools in New Jersey are mandated to require face coverings in schools per Governor Murphy’s executive orders [# 175](#) and [# 241](#). This website is the main source of guidance for New Jersey school personnel regarding face coverings [Click here.](#) [Link to the Department of Health COVID Activity Report website, the most used source for local COVID metrics.](#)

*Masks on buses- at the current time masks will be required on buses.

*Masks outdoors- at the current time masks will not be required while outdoors.

B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding): The Denville School District will provide as much social distancing as possible in classrooms, buses, common areas and outdoor space. We will consult with the Denville Department of Health and review guidance provided by the NJ Departments of Health and Education. During lunch periods, additional staff will be utilized to provide the recommended social distancing. [This website will be used for the most recent guidance.](#)

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette: The Denville School District will continue to educate the students, staff and the general public on the importance of handwashing and respiratory etiquette. [This website from the NJ Department of Health will be our main source of information.](#)

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D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation: [See Appendix A](#)

E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments. [See Appendix B](#)

F. Diagnostic and screening testing: The Denville Public Schools will continue to require screening of students and staff if it is recommended by the Denville Department of Health. For the 2020-21 School Year, all staff and students were required to fill out a screening form online each school day. This form changed as the COVID Activity Report changed as well as when guidance from the Local and State Departments of Health changed.

G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible: The Denville Public School District partnered with St. Clare's Medical Center in April 2021 to provide vaccinations for all staff who wanted to participate. The nurses are providing information to parents in our weekly messages regarding vaccinations for COVID. [Click here for communications.](#)

H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies: If the need arises to quarantine a full class in 2021-22, the class can be moved to fully remote instruction with their teacher. In the event that a student needs to quarantine, the student will be educated through the Home Instruction Program. The teacher shall provide instruction for the number of days and length of time sufficient to continue the student's academic progress and dependent on the student's ability to participate. This will be accomplished through virtual means during the quarantine period. Home Instruction shall be consistent with the student's IEP if applicable. Students who require additional accommodations will be addressed on a case by case basis.

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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) [See Appendix C](#)

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)

This plan was developed by a committee of staff members and it was/will be reviewed by the Board of Education, district health advisors, Department of Health, School Physician and will be available for review by members of the public and the full staff in draft format on the district website. The plan will be discussed at a Board of Education meeting on June 14, 2021 which was advertised to the general public. On June 14, 2021, the public may make comments and ask questions about the plan during the public comment portions. All comments and recommendations will be considered when finalizing this plan which will be approved by the Board of Education at the June 28, 2021 Board meeting.

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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)

This document will be published in English and Spanish, it will be made available to everyone on a public website and will be sent to the public via social media, email and newsletter. The special services department will provide an oral translation for any members of the public who require it. This document will be translated into any language that is requested by any member of the public.

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Appendix A: Facility Sanitizing Plan & HVAC

Plan & Procedures for Cleaning and Disinfecting Schools – COVID-19

The purpose of this plan is to implement measures to assist all Board of Education facilities employees with the proper cleaning and disinfecting practices during COVID-19.

This manual is designed to achieve three (3) goals:

Follow the law and board policy #1648 Restart and Recovery Plan (M),

Promote efficiency using protocol/procedures for facilities cleaning practices and;

Promote and maintain a safe and healthy environment for staff, students, and community members.

- Cleaning and Disinfecting Protocols
- Perform thorough cleaning in high traffic areas on a daily basis:
- Entrance and exits; classrooms; copier machine rooms; teacher's lounge; restrooms; locker rooms; etc.
- Frequently disinfect commonly used surfaces and personal work areas:
- Tables, doorknobs, light switches, desks, keyboards, computers, sinks, faucets, etc.
- Clean and sanitize shared equipment (computers, phones, etc.) between use utilizing one or more of the following methods: Electrostatic Applicator Machine that sprays a mist of disinfectant, wipes, or spray cleaner.
- Frequently clean touchable surfaces:
 - Light switches, doorknobs, countertops, sinks, faucets, toilets, etc.
 - Provide sanitation products in the common area, including hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes and ensure availability at all times in each school building.
 - Ensure that sanitary & cleaning supply inventory is stocked at all times.
 - Record cleaning frequency (log sheet) for high traffic areas (bathrooms, offices, classrooms, door knobs, etc.).
 - Areas that have been unoccupied for 7 days or more will only need routine cleaning.
 - Inspections will be conducted daily by head-custodians or facility manager to ensure that each designated area is being cleaned and maintained per these procedures.

Employee Training and other Protocols:

- The District has provided training to the custodial & maintenance staff on how to clean and disinfect properly to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Other Measures:

- All custodial staff have been provided with cloth and disposable face coverings.
- Hand sanitizer dispensers are installed throughout each school building.

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- Electrostatic Applicator Machines that spray a mist of disinfectant (BruTabs) on all surfaces were purchased and are in use.
- Disinfecting wipes are being placed near shared office machines to wipe the machine down prior to or after usage.
- Air purifier machines were purchased and installed for nurses' offices, classrooms, and rooms without windows.
- Signage has been posted regarding safety behavior and physical-distancing protocols at each school building.
- Mandatory staff self-screening at home, including temperature and or symptom checks using CDC guidelines.
- The District promotes the importance of hand washing and physical distancing.
- All students and staff have their own devices to eliminate sharing; the district also uses an ultraviolet cleaner for devices when they are returned.
- HVAC - The district continues to complete routine maintenance on the roof top and room units. Filters are changed four times per year, Reiner Group changes the rooftop unit filters and the maintenance/custodial staff change the room unit filters. The district has repaired or replaced all rooftop exhaust fans (district-wide). Merv 13 filters are installed (in the units that accept that size) by Reiner Group before the opening of the schools.

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Appendix B: Contact Tracing

- Upon notification that a resident has tested positive for COVID-19, the local health department will call the school district to determine close contacts to whom they may have spread the virus, where close contact is defined as being within six feet for a period of at least ten minutes.
- The school district shall assist the local health department in conducting contact tracing activities, including ongoing communication with the identified individual and/or their contacts.
- Denville Department of Health will guide the district on contact tracing.
- Several Denville Township Schools staff members were trained in contact tracing using this online class from Johns Hopkins University. [JHU online class](#)

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Appendix C: Continuity of Services

Tiered System of Supports (I and RS, RTI)

- All action plans continue: Goals adjusted, as needed/remote learning interventions added, as needed.
- All intervention personnel will provide in-person services to children.
- Virtual tutoring with our certified teaching staff will continue for students needing additional support beyond services offered during the school day.

Social and Behavioral Supports:

- St. Clare's mental health program to continue for 2021-22 with additional hours added
- Counselors and crisis teams are set and ready to help students and staff.
- Referrals to St. Clare's CER will continue for students in crisis.
- Counselors will meet with students in-person. Schedules will be reviewed and approved by building principals.
- A Behaviorist is available for students with behaviors impeding their learning.

Home Instruction:

- If the need arises to quarantine a full class in 2021-22, the class can be moved to fully remote instruction with their teacher.
- In the event that a student(s) need to quarantine, the student will be educated through the provision of Home Instruction. This will be accomplished through virtual means during the quarantine period.
- The teacher shall provide instruction for the number of days and length of time sufficient to continue the student's academic progress and dependent on the student's ability to participate.

Lunch Service:

- For students who qualify for free or reduced lunch, the district will continue to contract with the Morris Hills Regional District to provide a pre-packaged lunch.
- The district will follow all NJDOE and USDA regulations regarding school lunches.