

DRAFT

Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Plan

Pursuant to the Federal American Rescue Plan Act



West Long Branch School District

June 2021

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 Name: West Long Branch School District

Date: 06/24/2021

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 (1000 character limit)

If the NJDOE mandates the wearing of face masks, the district will follow adopted [Policy 5141.3](#), which includes the provision that students are required to wear face coverings, unless doing so would inhibit the student’s health. Exceptions are outlined in the policy, and include that masks are not required in any outdoor settings.

The district will update masking policies in alignment with NJDOE requirements and allowances that are in effect at the time of the plan’s implementation.

The school nurse will be consulted in the event of any questions in this regard, and individual accommodations will be addressed in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding) (1000 character limit)

As we transition back to full time/full day in-person instruction at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, the district will allow for physical distancing in instructional and non-instructional areas of the building to the greatest extent possible. Measures taken to maximise physical distancing may include: separating student desks into rows, repurposing spaces to align with population needs, balancing class numbers, removing excess furnishings as needed, and other measures. Course rosters and student schedules will be created based predominantly on academic student needs, though efforts will be made to limit excessive cohort mixing whenever it is reasonably possible to do so. The district will ensure that static seating charts are created, maintained, and adhered to for each class and for lunch periods in order to facilitate quick and effective contact tracing should the need arise.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette (1000 character limit)

Students and staff members will wash hands for at least 20 seconds at regular intervals, including before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing.

The West Long Branch School District will designate times when necessary on the schedule for students to wash hands with soap and water, including, at a minimum:

- at the start of the day when children enter the classroom
- before snacks and meals
- after using the toilet
- after sneezing, wiping, and blowing noses
- after snacks and meals, particularly if hands are sticky, greasy or soiled
- when students come in from outdoor play or recess

Students and staff will use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) if washing with soap and water is not possible.

Students will be encouraged and reminded to practice proper hygiene and respiratory etiquette while in school.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation (1000 character limit)

WLB will continue to adhere to existing required facility cleaning practices and procedures, and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise. Surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, restrooms, drinking fountains, school buses, and other items and areas will be cleaned and sanitized regularly, using all cleaning products according to the directions on the label.

WLB will ensure that indoor facilities have adequate ventilation, including operational heating, and ventilation systems where appropriate. All recirculated air has the maximum percentage of fresh air recommended by the manufacturer. All areas are air conditioned. If air conditioning is not provided/available, windows will be opened and/or a class may be relocated while repairs are made. Filter(s) for A/C units are and will be maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations.

E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments (1000 character limit)

WLB will implement [Policies 5141.2](#) and [5141.3](#) regarding contact tracing, isolation and quarantine. All procedures will adhere to applicable federal and state law and regulations regarding privacy and the confidentiality of records.

The NJDOH and CDC continue 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. The creation and maintenance of static seating charts for all classes will enable accurate and expeditious contact tracing.

Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 will be safely and respectfully isolated from others. All spaces used for isolation will ensure that individuals are a minimum of 6 feet apart or a safe distance deemed appropriate by the CDC and/or state health officials.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing (1000 character limit)

Diagnostic Testing

The school nurse will assist parents/caregivers seeking testing from an outside source by providing them the information to contact a testing site to schedule an appointment.

Screening

The district will adhere to existing [Policy 5141.3](#) for safely and respectfully screening students and staff for symptoms of COVID-19.

WLB shall develop a school entry plan that includes staff assigned to do the screening and designated entrances for students. Staff must visually check students for symptoms upon arrival and/or confirm with families that students are free of COVID-19 symptoms. Health checks must be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. Results must be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are observed. Screening procedures shall take into account students with disabilities and accommodations that may be needed in the screening process for those students.

G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible (1000 character limit)

The West Long Branch School District will continue to facilitate connections between educators, staff, and students (if eligible and upon parent request), to community-based health resources which can provide access to vaccinations as desired and needed. The district will provide information about events and community-based resources which might accelerate or facilitate easier access to vaccinations for those who want them. Such community-based resources may include, but are not limited to:

- The Visiting Nurse's Association of Central Jersey
- The VNACJ Community Health Center
- The Monmouth County Health Department
- NJ VAXRIDE initiative: <https://www.njtransit.com/vaxride>

H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies (1000 character limit)

In our effort to ensure the general well-being, health and safety of all students, the following protocols will be implemented.

- A. Maintain clear lines of communication between families and school staff, especially Nurses, Counselors and Leadership Team members.
- B. Seek information from families regarding their child's specific medical needs and corresponding accommodations.

- C. Encourage all families to keep their children home when appropriate; promote the practice of hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette; provide supports as needed in modifying of
- D. Reasonable accommodations will be provided based on a child's IEP, 504 Plan or individual medical needs in order to maximize student learning in a safe manner.
- E. Encourage frequent communication between building based medical professionals and high risk students.
- F. Continue to monitor progress in each student's goals and objectives in the 21-22 academic year and we continue to make any accommodations needed to ensure their health and safety.

2. Ensuring Continuity of Services (1000 character limit)

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 West Long Branch School District is committed to the academic success of all students and to the social-emotional well being of all our students and staff. The district will support these critical areas by:

- Implementing a tiered system of support for academic needs, including academic differentiation in the classroom and additional small-group and/or individual support as needed provided by appropriate certificated staff.
- Implementing a social-emotional learning approach, supplemented by interventions as needed by appropriate certificated staff (school counselors, school psychologist, school social worker, etc.)
- Allocating grant funding to support the social-emotional climate of the school through professional development for staff members.
- School health services will be provided by the school nurse inclusive of medical screenings and access to the nurse for day-to-day health concerns.
- All students will continue to have access to free lunch daily through June 2022

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 West Long Branch School District sought public comment on the plan by providing a copy of the draft plan to the public via posting on the district website and district social media platforms. Hard copies are also available for public review at the main office of each school building. A Google Form survey was shared with staff and the community to elicit feedback on the plan, and this feedback will be considered when finalizing the initial submission of the plan document to the NJDOE by June 24, 2021.

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)

Upon completion of the draft Safe Return Plan, the document will be translated into the three dominant spoken and read languages in the school district (English, Portuguese, Spanish). A digital version of the plan document will be available on the district website, accompanied by a link to web-based translation services, and such document shall also be screen reader-friendly. Upon request by any individual needing an accommodation or alternative format of the plan, the district will provide the plan in a form accessible to that individual. The form of such access shall vary depending on the need of the individual.