



## 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

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LEA Name: Boonton Town (27-0450)

Date: (06/14/2021)

Date Revised: (06/09/2021)

### 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

***The district's plan for mask wearing will reflect and incorporate the current guidance demonstrated by the Governor's Executive Orders for both staff and students. As this guidance has changed more frequently in the past several months, we will continue to monitor the Governor's press conferences, announcements and various other media outlets in addition to the Executive Orders.***

***We have provided guidance on correct usage of face masks in our weekly school community eBlast (also known as the BPSD Weekly Update), complete with images to ensure that regardless of a person's native language, a clearly understood picture(s) is made available to all. We continue to have a substantial stock of both "one time use" blue rectangular surgical masks as well as several thousand fabric washable face coverings for any individual who chooses to use one.***

***Anticipating some who will choose to continue using a face covering in school, we will either identify or develop sensitivity train to minimize and discrimination towards those who may want to continue using one while indoors.***

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

***The district will follow the most current NJ Department of Health physical distancing guidelines for K-12 schools. We previously marked our hallway floors with indicators for 6' distancing; if need be we will add additional marking to denote smaller distances should they become the recommended spacing (e.g.: 3' of space).***

***The same will apply to the use of cohorts - if the most current NJDOH and/or NJDOE guidelines recommend reverting back to any type of class-size reduction strategy to mitigate infections, we are ready to do so both administratively and instructionally.***

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

***Frequent and proper handwashing has been emphasized throughout the pandemic. All lavatories have working faucets, antibacterial soap and either paper towels or hand dryers. Most are currently still touch operated; if CDC/NJ DOH guidelines encourage the retrofitting of K-12 schools to no-touch operated faucets, we will research their use further. Unfortunately most no-touch lavatory devices require batteries and electro-mechanical internals to operate and they are more prone to failure and requiring maintenance.***

***We will continue to have hand sanitizer stations positioned throughout the buildings and also continue to have thermometers and pulse oximeters available to monitor individuals.***

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

***Our Facilities Manager will continue to follow best practices and proper sanitizing protocols in the maintenance and cleaning of the schools. This includes use of sanitizing solutions, antibacterial soaps, and electrostatic sprayers on high use touch surfaces.***

***We have addressed maintenance and in some cases, repaired and/or replaced existing ventilation equipment throughout our schools. This has primarily been the rebuilding of classroom unit ventilators as well as some larger rooftop exhaust fans.***

***Until such time as there are sufficient resources (e.g.: funding) to install updated mechanical ventilation and air-conditioning in our buildings, we will continue to keep the existing systems introducing as much outside/fresh air as possible.***

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

***The district will follow the latest CDC / NJ DOH guideline pertaining to contact tracing, isolation and quarantine protocols. As these have also changed quite a bit throughout the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, we will continuously monitor and keep abreast of ANY chances the federal and state health authorities recommend.***

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

***The district will utilize the most current recommended diagnostic / screening tests which the [CDC outlines for K-12 schools](#) . If the need/opportunity arises to secure these services in-district, we will employ them.***

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

***We will make the most current vaccination information available to all staff and students (the latter dependent on the age level(s) which the FDA approves their use for). Until such time as we can legally gather vaccination information of staff and students, we will continue to disseminate any/all opportunities for vaccination to all and not assume anyone has already been vaccinated.***

***If large scale vaccinations were to ever be necessary again (i.e.: booster shots for previously vaccinated persons are deemed necessary), the district will make every effort to accommodate staff and students to receive such additional inoculations. Atlantic Health System was very instrumental in assisting our staff to get vaccinated when the Morris County Megasite was vaccinating by appointment-only this past spring. If they again extend additional vaccination services we will utilize said services.***

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

***As we have done throughout the pandemic, our Special Education department, and in particular Child Study Teams will confer with teaching and support staff (i.e. paraprofessionals) to identify physical or mental health concerns which our special needs students may have that pose an increased risk during a period of a health emergency. Based on our experience this past year, certain aspects of PPE for both staff and students in our Special Education program were different from those of the general education program. Health & safety procedures (for the most part) did not differ substantially for Special Education students; however when/if any concerns or suggestions were raised, we incorporated reasonable accommodations for our special needs students (particularly those in our multiple disabilities classrooms).***

## 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)

***Boonton Public Schools will address students' academic needs through a data-based approach that allows staff to identify areas necessary to accelerate learning, in line with the Restart and Recovery Plan submitted in the Fall of 2020. Intensive Professional Development will be offered in order to continue building fluency in differentiated instruction in order to meet each learner where they are and facilitate individual growth. Additional work will be done with identifying and prioritizing Power Standards and adjusting curriculum maps in order to best meet the needs of all learners. Through these approaches, the Boonton Public Schools will ensure the continuity of academic services to students.***

***In addition, we plan for a comprehensive student and staff wellness program to address social and emotional needs. This will be planned and facilitated by our District Wellness Committee, with an initial focus on staff wellness as a means of facilitating student wellness. This approach is also aligned with the initial Restart and Recovery Plan submitted in the Fall of 2020. Through the implementation of our new RISE Program, as well as through the use of Wrap Around Services (provided by ESS) and additional social workers in each building, we support the social, emotional, and mental health needs of our students.***

***Food Services will continue offering meals to all students. As outlined in the Restart and Recovery Plan (Fall 2020), student lunch distribution will occur in each building. Community awareness is facilitated through the weekly update sent to all parents, students, and interested community members.***

### 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 American Rescue Plan document for our LEA was published ahead of our June 14, 2021 Board of Education meeting (including all the areas to be addressed in Section 1, Health & Safety) and public comment was solicited. Anyone who had any comments or questions was encouraged at said public meeting to let the Superintendent of schools know and he would both consider as well as respond to any/all inquiries made. Many of the stated procedures and protocols in this document are a culmination of the past year and a half of comments and constructive criticisms received from the school community and district staff.***

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)

***We will make the document available on both our website ([www.boontonschools.org](http://www.boontonschools.org)) as well as a Google Doc in order to make it easily translatable into any language. Any parent who needs additional assistance either reading or comprehending what is contained within this document will be directed to contact the Office of the Superintendent at 973.335.9700 x8000 or email the Superintendent directly <[robert.presuto@boontonschools.org](mailto:robert.presuto@boontonschools.org)> . We will also provide the document in printed form in the stated language (again, through the Translate function in Google Docs).***