

Safe Reopening Plan

Stanhope School District



2021-2022 School Year

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: Stanhope School District

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 06/17/2021

Date Revised (mm/dd/yyyy): 01/12/2022

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 Stanhope School District will support and impose the following expectations, until the universal wearing of face masks and coverings are no longer required through an executive order, State or Department of Education directive:

- If/when the Executive Order to require masks in schools is lifted, the school and district will use the COVID-19 Activity Level Report (CALI Score) to determine when masks should be required and when they can be optional. Masks may be required when the CALI score is 'Very High', then allow for the optional use of masks otherwise. These expectations will apply to everyone, including teachers, staff, students and visitors, and regardless of vaccination status.
- The Board promotes behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19 by requiring the use of face coverings.
- Face coverings will be required for students, staff, and visitors while on campus unless it will inhibit the individual's health.
- If the school district is providing transportation services on a school bus, a face covering must be worn by all students who are able to do so upon entering the bus.
- Accommodations for students who are unable to wear a face covering will be addressed according to that student's particular need and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Face coverings shall be worn while in the line to enter or exit the building.
- School staff and visitors are required to wear face coverings unless doing so would inhibit the individual's health or the individual is under two years of age.
- Exceptions to requirements for face coverings shall be as follows:
 - Doing so would inhibit the individual's health.
 - The individual is in extreme heat outdoors.
 - The individual is in water.

- The student is under the age of two and could risk suffocation.
- If a visitor refuses to wear a face covering for non-medical reasons and if such covering cannot be provided to the individual at the point of entry, the visitor's entry to the school/district facility may be denied.

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

The Stanhope School District will support and impose the following expectations, until the practice of physical distancing is no longer required through an executive order, State or Department of Education directive:

- Schools in the district will allow for social distancing within the classroom to the maximum extent practicable. This will be achieved by ensuring students are seated at least three feet apart. If a school in the district is not able to maintain this physical distance, additional modifications should be considered including using physical barriers between desks, turning desks to face the same direction (rather than facing each other), and/or having students sit on only one side of the table, spaced apart.
- All instructional and non-instructional rooms in schools and district facilities must comply with social distancing standards to the maximum extent practicable.
- Use of shared objects should be limited when possible or cleaned between use.
- Each school in the district will provide physical guides, such as tape on floors or sidewalks and signs on walls, to help ensure that staff and students remain at least three feet apart in lines and at other times (e.g. guides for creating "one-way routes" in hallways).
- Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others. School officials will follow current Communicable Disease Service guidance for illness reporting.
- Methods to assist in contact tracing including records of groups/cohorts, assigned staff, and daily attendance.
- Dismissal times will be staggered to allow for social distancing.
- The school district will designate specific areas for each class during recess to avoid cohorts mixing.
- The Board's Plan should adhere to all applicable social distancing requirements and hygiene protocols during any extra-curricular activities.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

The Stanhope School District will support and impose the following expectations, until no longer required through an executive order, State or Department of Education directive. The practice of proper hygiene will always be enforced for students and staff.

- The Board promotes behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19 by requiring the use of face coverings.
- School officials should develop a school-wide plan where students are required to wash hands for at least twenty seconds at regular intervals during the school day and always before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose, coughing, and/or sneezing.
 - If washing with soap and water is not possible, washing with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) should be used.
- Require that individuals wash their hands after removing their gloves or after directly handling used food service items.
- A requirement that all individuals always wash hands immediately after outdoor playtime.

- The Board's Plan should adhere to all applicable social distancing requirements and hygiene protocols during any extra-curricular activities.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

The Stanhope School District will support and impose the following cleaning and disinfection expectations, until no longer required through an executive order, State or Department of Education directive:

- Every school bus, either district-owned or contracted, should be cleaned and disinfected before and after each bus route.
- School officials must continue to adhere to existing required facilities cleaning practices and procedures, and any new specific requirements of the local health department as they arise.
- The Board's Plan and Policy will establish cleaning/disinfecting schedules, targeted areas to be cleaned, and methods and materials to be used including:
 - A schedule for increased routine cleaning and disinfection.
 - Routinely cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched. This may include cleaning objects/surfaces not ordinarily cleaned daily (e.g. doorknobs, light switches, classroom sink handles, countertops).
 - Use of all cleaning products according to the directions on the label. For disinfection, most common EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. A list of products that are EPA-approved for use against the virus that causes COVID-19 is available on the EPA's website.
 - Follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products (e.g. concentration, application method, and contact time, etc.).
 - Sanitize bathrooms daily, or between use as much as possible, using protocols outlined by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- Clean and sanitize tables/surfaces between each meal service, pursuant to the protocols outlined by the EPA.
- Stagger the use of playground equipment and establish a frequent disinfecting protocol for all playground equipment used by students.
- Locker rooms may be closed to mitigate risk and prohibit students and staff from confined spaces with limited ventilation and/or areas with large amounts of high contact surfaces.
- The school district will mitigate risk, limit and/or eliminate direct contact with equipment (lessons with no equipment), and will not allow sharing of equipment. If equipment must be shared, the equipment will be cleaned and disinfected between each use.

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

The Stanhope School District will support and impose the following practices and expectations for contact tracing of exposed individuals and isolation and quarantine expectations of close contacts and symptomatic individuals, until no longer required through an executive order, State or Department of Education directive:

- The NJDOE Guidance does not include any “anticipated minimum standards” for contact tracing. However, all school and district administrators, school safety specialists, counselors, and any other staff deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or designee should be provided information regarding the role of contact tracing conducted by State, county, and local officials.
- School officials should engage the expertise of their school nurses on the importance of contact tracing.
- School officials engaging in contact tracing procedures will do so in consultation with the Sussex County Department of Health.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

The Stanhope School District will support and impose the following expectations, until the practice of diagnostic and screening is no longer required through an executive order, State or Department of Education directive:

- The school district will adopt Board Policy 1648 regarding the screening procedures for students and employees upon arrival at school or work location for symptoms and history of exposure. These screening procedures must include the following:
 - Staff must visually check students for symptoms upon arrival (which may include temperature checks) 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.
 - Any screening policy/protocol must 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

The Stanhope School District worked in consultation and partnership with the Sussex County Department of Education and the Sussex County Department of Health to identify students and staff wishing to be vaccinated, and assisting them in scheduling appointments to do so. This initiative was and is supported by Atlantic Health.

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

The Stanhope School District will support and impose the following accommodations for children with disabilities, until COVID-19 related accommodations are no longer required through an executive order, State or Department of Education directive. The health and wellness of all students, most notably those with disabilities, will always be paramount within the Stanhope School District.

- Reasonable accommodations will be provided for individuals that the CDC identifies as having a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, including individuals with disabilities or serious underlying medical conditions.

- Enforcing the use of face coverings may be impractical for young children or individuals with disabilities.
- Accommodations for students who are unable to wear a face covering should be addressed according to that student's particular need and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- Any screening policy/protocol must take into account students with disabilities and accommodations that may be needed in the screening process for those students.
- The Restart Committee should reflect the diversity of the school community, including those representing students with disabilities, whose families speak languages other than English at home, and who reflect diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic demographics.

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 Stanhope School District will continue to support the academic needs of students, as well as the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students and staff through the following services and supports. The services and supports offered to students and staff are not limited to those listed below.

- Offering of Summer Learning Acceleration Programs, including:
 - Intensive Orton Gillingham Summer Camp (K-2)
 - The Reading Room (3-5)
 - Math Moves (3-5)
 - Summer to Excel, ELA and Math (6-8)
- Additional after school tutoring programs for students identified as needing intervention
- Staff Training on Social/Emotional Support for Students
- Staff Wellness Programs after and during the school day
- Student activities and programs promoting social/emotional well-being and mindfulness
- Trainings and activities promoting Restorative Practice

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)

The contents of the Safe Reopening Plan will be presented at a public Board of Education meeting on Wednesday, June 16 at the Valley Road School. Following the presentation, the public will have the opportunity to comment on the plan. Any Board and public comment will be considered before the plan is finalized and posted to the District's website. The plan will be reapproved on Wednesday, January 12, 2022 with the opportunity for the public to make comments.

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 Stanhope School District's Safe Return Plan will be presented at a public Board of Education meeting and clearly posted on the District's website. A translated document in a language other than English will be available upon request, and Spanish speaking staff can also be made available to answer any questions that parents may have. District and building administrators will be available to any parent, student, or community member wishing to discuss the plan or ask questions, and alternate formats will also be made available upon request.