



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: Uncommon Schools Camden Prep (District: 1801)

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 06/07/2021

Date Revised (mm/dd/yyyy): 12/12/2022, 06/30/2023, 12/04/23, 4/1/2024, 6/12/2024

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.

#1 . Universal and Correct Use of Masks	
Non-Negotiables	Flexible Implementation
<p>All students can continue to wear masks if they choose</p> <p>*Limited exceptions/situations are defined as moments where it is impossible for a person to complete a function with a mask on. For example, eating breakfast and lunch or if a student is being assessed for a facial injury (nosebleed, scratch, etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy adults and students can choose to remain mask free at their discretion.
Rationale	
<p>The CDC notes people can wear masks in public settings, at events and gatherings, and anywhere they will be around other people during periods of increased infections or when you are sick. For further information on mask choice, fit and storage guidance, see the CDC’s Guide to Masks.</p>	

For reference, the CDC does not recommend the use of face shields. For limited activities, such as temperature checks or nurse visits, schools may choose to provide face shields for staff personnel, but the overall effectiveness of face shield is unknown and should always be used in tandem with masks.

#2. Physical Distancing

Non-Negotiables

1. All group gatherings must follow state guidelines for indoor and outdoor settings in addition to NJ Health & Safety guidelines related to masks and physical distancing.
2. All extracurricular activities (e.g. athletics) must adhere to NJ Health & Safety guidelines, as well as state/local guidance for the specific activity.

Flexible Implementation

- Eliminate or decrease nonessential in-person interactions among staff during meetings, lunches, and other adult-to-adult situations.

Rationale

The CDC recommends if illnesses are spreading in the community, additional actions can be taken by schools to prevent infections from spreading.

Further recommendations are outlined in the CDC's [Considerations for Schools](#).

#3 . Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Non-Negotiables

2. All students required to sanitize/wash hands frequently throughout the day, at a minimum at arrival, meal times, bathrooms and dismissal
3. Display clear and prominent hygiene signage (hand wash signs, hygiene station, etc.)
4. Hand sanitizer and hygiene stations are available and frequently re-stocked for all students and staff in all classrooms, offices and common spaces

Flexible Implementation

- Sanitizing protocols are implemented after each time a space is used (including classrooms and common spaces)

Rationale

The CDC states that the virus is spread from person-to-person via respiratory droplets and via surfaces, albeit less frequently. As a result, some of the best ways to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus through frequent and thorough hand-washing, cleaning and disinfecting, and avoiding close contact with others.

#4. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities

Non-Negotiables

Facilities

- Improve ventilation to the extent possible to increase circulation of outdoor air ([21-22 Ventilation Resources](#))
- Ensure all HVAC systems are maintained and operating at manufacturer's specifications
- Adjust physical layouts in classrooms and other settings to maximize physical space

Cleaning

- Regularly clean frequently touched surfaces, such as door handles, sink handles, and toilets
- Limit the sharing of resources for staff and students, whenever possible, or provide sanitization supplies and instructions when equipment is shared

Flexible Implementation

Facilities

- Prohibit use of spaces without adequate ventilation, either via HVAC or windows/doors
- Ensure that windows and doors (except external doors) are open whenever possible and use fans to circulate outside air into the building
- Confirm all HVAC units are properly maintained, and filters are cleaned/changed according to manufacturer's specifications
- Limit communal use of shared spaces, such as cafeterias and shared work rooms; otherwise, stagger use and clean between use.

Rationale

The CDC states that making changes to physical spaces can promote a healthy environment and facilities, as well as routine and consistent cleaning of high-touch surfaces. For further information on ventilation standards, see the [CDC's Ventilation in Schools](#) guidance or [21-22 Ventilation Resources](#):

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)

Camden Prep will ensure the continuity of high-quality student learning by being responsive to students' and staff's needs including health and safety, mental health, and access to food and technology. All schools will use a social and emotional learning (SEL) curriculum. Camden Prep has developed lessons for each grade span that explore physical, social, and emotional wellness. The objective is to provide students with safe spaces to explore their emotions during these challenging times and take care of their whole selves.

In our effort to continue to expand efforts to support students in need of additional mental health, behavioral and emotional support, our schools will also implement:

1. Summer School - Schools are offering a no-cost, five-week summer school experience with an emphasis on academic development in literacy and math to help close COVID-related student learning gaps. Participating students will also engage in enrichment activities during the program.
2. Social and Emotional Supports - Camden Prep has a team of full-time, school-based social workers as well as psychologists and counselors to support the social-emotional well-being of our students and their families. Social Worker Supervisors will also conduct professional development for all school-based social workers and counselors on trauma, social emotional learning, wellness, grief, loss, and anxiety.
3. Streamlined Systems for Wellness Service Referral/Documentation - A "Student Wellness Referral and Tracker" tool will be utilized to identify any and all supports that students may need and submit a referral directly to social workers and/or counselors who can determine the appropriate next steps.

School staff have access to a variety of mental health resources. One no-cost resource is the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). This program is designed to provide staff and family members with confidential assistance to support a variety of needs and concerns, including: emotional health and well-being, substance abuse, marriage and relationship problems, parenting advice, stress and anxiety management, grief and loss, and financial and legal advice. Our Human Resources Department also shares monthly email newsletters with resources for staff including links to physical and mental health programs available. Schools also include a "Wellness Corner" in weekly communications to families and staff with student and teacher-facing wellness resources and activities.

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)

At Camden Prep, we believe that seeking input from diverse stakeholders is essential as we develop plans that are responsive to the needs of students, families, and educators. In early June, we surveyed school community stakeholders through a robust series of questions to solicit their input into how they believe we can enhance our schools with these funds. Once we receive input, organizational and school leaders will review the findings and determine the best way to use these funds to support our students and larger school community.

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)

Our plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services and accompanying public comment are translated into the most common non-English speaking languages of our families, namely Spanish. Copies of the plan are available in print form or with oral translation upon request.

Plan for Use ARP-ESSER Funds

LEA Name: Uncommon Schools Camden Prep (District: 1801)

Date (mm/dd/yyyy): 06/07/2021

Date Revised (mm/dd/yyyy): 06/12/2024, 04/01/2024, 12/04/23, 06/01/2023, 12/12/2022

Camden Prep renaissance school plans to use ESSER funding to work in new and innovative ways to support core instructional and operational priorities, namely addressing learning loss and safely returning to in-person instruction for school years 2020-21 – 2024-25. Funds will support one-time investments in expanded summer school programming that will focus on closing COVID-related learning gaps in literacy and math, rewriting curriculum to implement evidence-based strategies for social emotional learning and academic achievement, and providing additional professional development for all staff around these initiatives. There will also be continued investment into educational technology, remaining committed to providing 1:1 Chromebooks for students with access to related online learning platforms while ensuring continuity of services to students in school or at home as required. Funds will also be used to provide PPE for all staff and students, perform surveillance testing, and test and upgrade our facilities' ventilation as necessary.

Please see the completed [ARP ESSER Application and Current Amendment](#) for additional details on the current Use of Funds plan.