



Hawthorne Public Schools 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.

Hawthorne Public Schools Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

LEA Name: Hawthorne Public School District

Date: 06/08/2021

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

The district will comply with recommendations from the New Jersey Department of Health and New Jersey Department of Education when recommending mask wearing in school during the school day. Information regarding the use of masks in school will be provided to families prior to the start of the school year.

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

For the 2021-2022 School Year, the Hawthorne Public School will continue with combined cohorts (full student population) in all school buildings. Students will be separated in classroom spaces based on the New Jersey Department of Health guidelines and the COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix. Additionally, social/physical distancing practices will be considered areas around building entry and exit, hallway and common space use, and other gathering spaces, based on the COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

The Hawthorne Public Schools will continue to teach and reinforce hand hygiene to students at all levels. In accordance with the New Jersey Department of Health K-12 guidelines (March 2021). The district will supply hand sanitizer in classrooms and hallway spaces, monitor younger students washing hands before and after eating (lunch and snack), and reinforce proper respiratory etiquette. Signs will remain in common areas reminding students and staff of such practices including, but not limited to handwashing, covering cough and sneezing, and disposing properly of tissues and other personal hygiene trash.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

The district will continue to utilize the sprayers and EPA approved disinfectants to clean common spaces daily, including but not limited to: student desks and chairs, teacher desks, common tables, handrails and door knobs, bathrooms (throughout the day). We will continue to only use the “bottle filler” water fountains and keep others covered and closed.

The district will continue to provide PPE as necessary to staff and students.

All classrooms, offices, and common spaces have been equipped with air purifiers. These stand-alone units each have Merv filters, 2 UV lights, and a HEPA filter installed. Additionally, the district is undergoing windows projects in all buildings to update and replace current windows. This project will begin this summer.

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

Contact tracing will continue to take place by our school nurses and administrative teams. The district will utilize the local health nurse to collaborate on needed scenarios. Additionally, all quarantine and isolation guidelines will be in accordance with the New Jersey Department of Education K-12 school guidance at the time of school reopening.

The district will continue to monitor the guidance provided by the New Jersey Department of Health and New Jersey Department of Education and make necessary adjustments to these practices.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

The district will comply with recommendations from the New Jersey Department of Health and New Jersey Department of Education when recommending diagnostic testing to district families. Parents/Caregivers will be responsible for screening their children for COVID-19 symptoms on a daily basis using the District's screening protocol, which was shared previously and will continue to be shared with all families.

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

We have set up several opportunities for our teachers, students, and staff members to facilitate their vaccination process. This includes but is not limited to partnering with Atlantic Health System to prioritize our staff when they become eligible, providing release time for staff members to obtain their vaccination. We offered our senior students priority through the Atlantic Health System to obtain the vaccines. We are currently coordinating with the local pharmacy to partner in administering the vaccine to eligible 12-16-year-old students.

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

The special education programs in the district will continue to follow all NJDOH and NJ DOE guidance to include: mask wearing, hygiene, and social distancing based on the COVID-19 Regional Risk Matrix.

- In the Special Class Programs such as the LLD Severe, LLD Moderate, Emotional Regulation Impairment, and Preschool Disabilities the staff will continue to do the following:
 - Staff will continue to wear gloves and face coverings for toilet training
 - During crisis intervention, staff will continue to use blocking procedures and verbal de-escalation techniques
 - 18 - 21 transition program staff and students will continue to practice safe hygiene while preparing meals and while out in the community for CBI and SLE.

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 Hawthorne Public Schools will continue to ensure a continuity of services as we welcome back ALL students and staff in September of 2021.

- Academic needs continue to be analyzed and plans drafted for the start of the school year. Such plans include:
 - Increased staff:
 - BSI support staff
 - multisensory reading instructors
 - academic coordinator to provide supports around data driven instruction
 - ESL support

- curriculum revisions and pacing guides to help close learning gaps without a loss to current grade level goals.
- Before and after school programs to support struggling learners and reinforce skills
- Summer school (credit recovery) and skill enhancement for K-12 students.
- Student and staff social, emotional, and mental health is also at the forefront of the district's initiatives.
 - The district partnered with Fiedeldey Consulting to focus on SEL for the 2021-2022 school year. Specifically, the pre-K-5 staffs' work will be around ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences). This partnership will provide us to establish protocols for an in-house crisis team, co-planning on a universal screener, ACEs training for parents and families, and finally ACEs for elementary staff. The 6-12 staffs' work will be centered around the Universal Mental Health Comprehensive Screener. Again, a school wide crisis team will be developed, families and community members will be provided professional development. Fiedeldey Consulting will provide a team of experts to administer the Universal Mental Health Screener and collect data in Realtime. From there the district will support the necessary targeted interventions.
 - The district added two full-time crisis counselors, one for Lincoln Middle School and one for Hawthorne High School through a partnership with West Bergen Mental Health.
- The district will be offering food services during the full academic day at all buildings in September 2021.
 - Elementary: Jefferson, Roosevelt, and Washington schools will employ three lunch periods each day. During each lunch two grade levels will be serviced. One will have the first half for recess while the other has lunch. The groups will switch for the second half of the period. At Jefferson and Roosevelt, students will eat supervised in the classrooms. The district will hire non-instruction school support aides for supervision purposes. At Washington School, the students will continue to eat under the current NJDOH recommendations at lunch tables in the gymnasium. The school will decrease the number of students at each table to ensure some physical distancing.
 - Lincoln Middle School will offer three lunch periods by grade level. Students will continue to eat under the current NJDOH recommendations at lunch tables in the cafeteria. The lunch period will be split, one will have the first half for recess while the other has lunch. The groups will switch for the second half of the period. The middle school was able to decrease the number of students seated at lunch tables by 50% to increase physical distancing. On inclement weather days, students will be monitored appropriately in larger spaces and classrooms (i.e. media center, music rooms, gymnasium).
 - Hawthorne High School has shifted their overall schedule to adopt a single unit lunch period. This will allow for students to be housed in various locations across the building while eating lunch. Senior students will be offered off campus privileges. All other students will be eating under the NJDOH recommendations at but not limited to the following locations: Main Cafeteria, Room 123 (New Cafeteria), Gymnasium, and Media Center. When weather permits, students will be encouraged to eat in the courtyard and on the bleachers on the field. The school will work with Pomptonian- the food services company to add satellite food stations to the different locations to streamline food distribution.

***At all locations lunches will continue to be preordered and in a more grab and go style as we begin the year with lunches.

The district will continue to monitor the guidance provided by the NJDOH and NJDOE and make necessary adjustments to these practices.

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).

A presentation of this plan was made publicly at the district's June 8, 2021 Board of Education Meeting. The meeting was held in person at Hawthorne High School as well as live streamed through the district YouTube page. The presentation can be found on the Hawthorne Public Schools YouTube. The plan was also posted on the district website on June 8, 2021. The district sought public comment via questions at the board meeting or through submission of questions and feedback through the following email address: HawthorneBOE@hawthorne.k12.nj.us The time period for public comment lasted from June 8, 2021 to June 15, 2021.

Overview of public comments: TBD

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 plan which was posted on the website has the ability to be translated to multiple languages including but not limited to: Spanish, Cantonese, French, German, Korean, Russian. Additionally, the overview from the presentation was also posted on the website and has the ability to be translated.