



## 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: Classical Academy Charter School of Clifton

Date: 06/17/2021

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

- i. CACS will follow NJDOH requirements for wearing masks. CACS will evaluate guidance documents as updates are made to adjust to local practices and procedures.
- ii. CACS will utilize CDC resources on proper mask wearing and staff will assist in training and reinforcement of proper mask wearing, if necessary.
- iii. PPE will be provided to staff and students when necessary. Staff and students are encouraged to bring their own PPE. In addition, any visitor to the school building, will be provided a mask if they are not in possession of PPE.

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

- i. **Classrooms** - Physical distancing will be in accordance with guidelines at the time. Furniture will be adjusted accordingly to accommodate for distancing.

- ii. **Cafeteria (Lunch)** - Physical distancing will be in accordance with guidelines at the time. Furniture will be adjusted accordingly to accommodate for distancing. In certain circumstances, distancing will be accomplished by adding additional lunch periods and/or utilizing additional large space areas with proper air flow, high air exchange rates, and enhanced HEPA filtration units.
- iii. **Transportation** - Physical distancing will be encouraged where possible. Windows will be opened to improve ventilation. Contracted bus companies will follow NJDOH protocols (monitored by the school and ESC Transportation).
- iv. The CACS District will evaluate guidance documents as updates are made to adjust local policies and practices.

#### C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

- i. Staff will be trained on proper handwashing practices and PPE as prescribed by the CDC and other infection control precautions.
- ii. CDC resources and guidance documents that promote proper handwashing etiquette will be hung throughout school buildings.
- iii. Hand sanitizers will be available in building hallways, classrooms, and lunch areas.

#### D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

- i. Facilities Cleaning Practices
  - a. **CDC Definitions**
    - i. Cleaning refers to the removal of dirt and impurities, including germs, from surfaces. Cleaning alone does not kill germs. But by removing the germs, it decreases their number and therefore any risk of spreading infection.
    - ii. Disinfecting works by using chemicals, for example EPA-registered disinfectants, to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs. But killing germs remaining on a surface after cleaning further reduces any risk of spreading infection.
  - b. **Classrooms** - Classrooms will be cleaned daily in accordance with internal checklists. High contact areas such as, but not limited to, door handles and push plates, light switches, desk and chairs, shelving, handrails, buttons, telephones, etc. will be wiped down with approved disinfectant throughout the day.
  - c. **Nurses Office** – Nurses office will be cleaned daily in accordance with deep cleaning procedures.
  - d. **Cafeteria** - Cafeteria will be cleaned daily in accordance with deep cleaning procedures. Every cafeteria will be thoroughly disinfected between group use utilizing district approved disinfectant. High touch points such as, but not limited to, lunch tables and chairs, door handles and push plates, light switches, food distribution areas, register areas, etc. will be disinfected after every group use. Additional air exchange units will be placed in the cafeteria to increase circulation.

- e. **Bathrooms** - Bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected during the operating day and again after school closes for the day.
- f. **High-traffic areas** - Main office, lobby, vestibules, common area high touch points will be disinfected throughout the day. Water fountains are shut down.
- g. **Deep Cleaning Practices** - Deep cleaning will occur once a week and will include utilizing a district approved disinfectant in electrostatic sprayers or misters. All classrooms, hallways, restrooms, cafeteria, nurses office, etc. will be sprayed and disinfected. Additional outside air will be introduced where possible by opening doors, and windows. High contact areas such as, but not limited to, door handles and push plates, light switches, desk and chairs, shelving, handrails, buttons, telephones, etc. will be wiped down with approved disinfectant.
- h. **Monitoring and Quality Control** - Janitor will complete an inspection sheet daily which will cover all necessary cleaning areas.
- i. **Disinfectants** - Primary and secondary disinfectants have been identified to ensure adequate inventory levels can be maintained. All disinfectants used against SARS-COV-2, will be maintained by the Lead Person.
- j. **Sanitizers** – Sanitizer locations have been identified to ensure adequate inventory levels can be maintained. All sanitizers contain a minimum of at least 60% alcohol. Sanitizer stations will be located in high traffic areas such as hallway corridors, entrances and exits, and the cafeteria. Hand sanitizer will be available in each classroom for staff and students to utilize.
- k. School personnel and vendors charged with cleaning schools will be required to utilize approved materials and processes designated by the NJDOH.
- l. A binder with all materials, checklists and processes has been developed and in the main office.
- m. A daily schedule of cleaning, methodologies, cleaning checklists, product lists and related documentation will be maintained by the Lead Person.
- n. All classrooms, cafeteria, gymnasium, etc. will be cleaned daily utilizing FDA and EPA approved products and high touch areas (door handles, handrails, light switches, keyboards, bathrooms, playground equipment, etc.) will be cleaned regularly throughout the day.

- o. Staff and Students are encouraged to partner with school cleaning personnel and utilize school provided and personal FDA and EPA approved products to clean individual desks and chairs.
- p. CACS will use traditional cleaning methods along with pump sprayers and misters to sanitize the school.
- q. Due to Covid-19 additional cleaning periods, materials and equipment will be utilized to sanitize high traffic, high touch and areas identified due to a potential contact or positive case as per the guidelines from the NJDOH, CDC, and/or Passaic County Department of Health.

ii. HVAC

- a. CACS school building does not have a central HVAC system.
- b. Air Exchange – Windows, air conditioners units, classroom fans, and HEPA air filters will be utilized. Larger rooms requiring additional HEPA filters will be in use to ensure cleanliness of the air.
- c. Routine Maintenance – HEPA filters will be replaced and maintained on regular intervals.
- d. Resources
  - i. [CDC - COVID-19 Resources](#)
  - ii. [CDC - Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#)
  - iii. [ASHRAE - Epidemic Task Force for Schools and Universities](#)
  - iv. [OSHA - COVID-19 Resources](#)
  - v. [EPA - COVID-19 Resources](#)

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

- i. Upon notification that a student, staff member, or parent has tested positive for COVID-19, the school will coordinate with the Clifton health department to determine close contacts to whom they may have spread the virus. Quarantined persons will be based on NJDOH and CDC guidelines at the time.
- ii. Lead Person will assist the local health department in conducting contact tracing activities, including ongoing communication with the identified individual and/or their contacts.
- iii. Lead Person will ensure adequate information and training is provided to the staff as necessary to enable staff to carry out responsibilities assigned to them.
- iv. Lead Person shall be responsible for providing notifications and carrying out other components that could help ensure notifications are carried out in a prompt and responsible manner.
- v. CACS will allow staff, students, and families to self-report symptoms and/or suspected exposure.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

- i. CACS shall screen students and employees upon arrival to a school building or work location for COVID-19 symptoms and a history of exposure.
  - a. School staff will visually check students and employees for symptoms upon arrival and/or confirm with families that students

are free of COVID-19 symptoms.

- b. Health checks will be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations.
- c. Results will be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are observed.
- d. The screening protocol will take into account students and employees with disabilities and accommodations that may be needed in the screening process for those students and employees.
- e. Students and employees with symptoms related to COVID-19 will be safely and respectfully isolated from others.
- f. If the school becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in the school tests positive for COVID-19, Lead Person and/or the School Nurse, will immediately notify local health officials, staff, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality.

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

- i. Staff Vaccinations – current instructional staff members have been vaccinated during the 2020-2021 school year.

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

- i. Classical Academy Charter School special education department, Lead Person, school nurse, staff, and parents have engaged in a process to meet the health and safety needs of students with IEPs, 504 plans, nursing services plans and specific requests due to Covid-19.
- ii. The School Social Worker/Child Study Team will meet routinely with parents and SpEAC to review concerns related to COVID-19 and special education.
- iii. The School Social Worker will identify students prone to anxiety and/or school refusal and develop plans for September reentry, including visitations and meetings prior to the first day of school.
- iv. CACS will employ a minimum of one part time mental health professional to work with students and families who have emergent needs related to COVID-19.
- v. Students who need assistance with masking and/or physical redirection or prompting will be supported by the Child Study Team, School Social Worker, and other resources as warranted.
- vi. Safe Return Plans from private and other Local Education Agencies that serve our students will be collected and reviewed.

## 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)

- i. **Professional Development** - CACS has scheduled several days of professional development opportunities that focus on the health and wellness of our staff and identification of support for our students (i.e. Wellness Seminar and SEL).
- ii. **SEL and Mental Health** – CACS will provide programs to parents focusing on Raising Healthy Children. In addition, the district will do the following:
  - a. Each building's I&RS Team will meet routinely to review students/ families to identify areas of need and/or support
  - b. Dedicated, part-time mental health professional to work with students and families who have emergent needs.
  - c. School Social Worker will review student progress and attendance.
  - d. School Social Worker will deliver curricular lessons to the classroom.
  - e. Coordination by building administration of School Counseling staff, CST to discuss student trending needs.
  - f. Forms will be available for students, parents, staff to complete if a student needs assistance.
  - g. Students who have emergent needs will be addressed by the School Social Worker and Lead Person, with referrals for outside services, if necessary.
  - h. Include students who were full-remote during the 2020-2021 school year in the opening/welcome activities for students transitioning into CACS.
- iii. **Food Services** - The District will be operating full day schedules during the 2021 - 2022 school year which will include lunch. Classical Academy Charter School participates in the National School Lunch Program and will apply for a waiver for the 2021 - 2022 school year which will allow for all students to receive meals free of charge. In the event a school closure is necessary, Classical Academy will have access to meals similar to the 2020 - 2021 school year.
- iv. **Remote Accessibility and Technology** - Teachers have access to a 1-to-1 laptop that they can use in school and at home. Students in grades 6-8 have access to a 1-to-1 Chromebook device in school and that they can take home. If a family has a need for internet accessibility, CACS will provide a device when available, free of charge. In the unlikely event that a school is closed temporarily:

- a. students will be able to continue their academic work using those school-provided devices and services at home, such as Google Classroom, Gmail, and the basic versions of Google Meet, or other video conferencing platform.
- b. Other staff members who are not typically provided a 1-to-1 device may request one from their school's technician for temporary at-home use.
- c. Technical support will be provided by phone, email, and video conference. In-person replacements and support are anticipated to continue as previously completed.

### 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)

- i. **June 7, 2021** - Administration presented a brief overview of its reopening plan for September 2021 to the community at a Classical Academy Parent University meeting. This meeting was posted on the CACS website and was made available to the public for comment. The presentation was provided and time for comments and feedback were allotted to the public.
- ii. **June 8, 2021, June 10, 2021** – Reopening plan presented during the regularly scheduled Board of Trustees committee meeting. A Classical Academy Parent University Meeting was scheduled June 7, 2021 for presentation and feedback which was used to finalize the plan and template.
- iii. **June 17, 2021** – Lead Person will submit the plan to the Board of Trustees for approval to submit the plan to the NJDOE. Public comment on the plan will be taken again at that time.
- iv. **July 2021** – Lead Person will continue to monitor changing guidance and update the community accordingly.
- v. **August 19, 2021** – Lead Person will present to the Board of Education any changes necessary to the plan based on changing guidance throughout July and August 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)

- i. **Translation** - Translators have been identified throughout the CACS District to assist with translating the document with parents that have limited English proficiency.



- ii. **Accessibility** - This document will be added to the Classical Academy Charter School website after being run through an accessibility check that will make it ADAcompliant. The CACS website includes information for website accessibility including contact information for those experiencing problems.