

LEA Plan on the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

This document is intended to meet the federal statutory requirement that, within 30 days of receiving ARP ESSER LEA allocation (anticipated May 24th), an LEA shall publish an LEA Plan on the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services, which is often called a “school district reopening plan.”

Note, if an LEA developed a plan before *The American Rescue Plan Act* (ARPA) was enacted on 03/11/2021 that complied with the federal statutory requirements for public posting and comments but does not meet all of the requirements below, then the LEA must revise its plan no later than six months after receiving ARP ESSER funds

For further context, please reference ARPA (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1319/text>) or the Interim Final Requirements of ARP ESSER (<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-04-22/pdf/2021-08359.pdf>).

I. General Information

1. LEA Name: Portsmouth School Department
2. Date of Publication: June 14, 2021

II. Transparency and Accessibility

1. This plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services was published and made publicly available online here:
Description: <https://www.cityofportsmouth.com/school>
2. Before making the plan publicly available, the LEA sought public comment on the plan and took such comments into account in the development of the plan (please check one).
Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐
Description: Our Reopening Advisory Committee included parent representatives and held public meetings with regular updates to the School Board and community.
3. The plan is in an understandable and uniform format (please check one):
Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐
Description: _____
4. The plan, to the extent practicable, is written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable, orally translated (please check one):
Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐
Description: _____
5. The plan, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, is provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent (please check one):
Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐
Description: _____

III. Health and Safety

1. How the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and LEA staff:

Description during SY20-21: Our school nurses developed COVID protocols based on CDC and DHHS Guidance. Staff were trained and protocols were communicated widely to parents. We also developed MOUs with each of our bargaining units.

Description during SY21-22: We will continue to follow DHHS and CDC guidance in health and safety protocols.

2. The LEA's adoption of the following CDC health and safety strategies are described below:
(Note federal regulation on this plan requires such reporting, but does not require adoption of CDC safety recommendations. The NH DOE recognizes schools will implement localized safety measures based on the guidance provided by the CDC, NH Public Health, and local public health officials.)

- a. Universal and correct wearing of masks:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐

Description of both SYs: We will continue to follow DHHS and CDC guidance in health and safety protocols.

- b. Physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding and modifying facilities):

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: ☐ Somewhat: ☒ No: ☐

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: ☐ Somewhat: ☒ No: ☐

Description of both SYs: We will continue to follow DHHS and CDC guidance in health and safety protocols.

- c. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐

Description of both SYs: We will continue to follow DHHS and CDC guidance in health and safety protocols, as well as best health practices.

- d. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐

Description of both SYs: We will continue to follow DHHS and CDC guidance in health and safety protocols.

- e. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, and/or Tribal health departments:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐

Description of both SYs: We will continue to follow DHHS and CDC guidance in health and safety protocols.

- f. Diagnostic and screening testing:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: ☐ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☒

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: ☐ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☒

Description of both SYs: Students and staff were referred to outside providers.

- g. Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐

During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: ☐ Somewhat: ☒ No: ☐
 Description of both SYs: We worked closely with our Portsmouth Fire Department to set up staff and student clinics.

- h. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies:

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐
 During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐
 Description of both SYs: We will continue to follow DHHS and CDC guidance in health and safety protocols.

- i. Coordination with state and local health officials (please check one):

During SY20-21 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐
 During SY21-22 (check one): Yes: ☒ Somewhat: ☐ No: ☐
 Description of both SYs: We will continue to follow DHHS guidance in health and safety protocols.
We have worked closely with local health officials.

IV. Continuity of Services

1. The LEA has provided continuity of services in addressing student academic needs:

Description during SY20-21: We have used in-person, hybrid and remote schedules throughout the school year. In all models, teachers have provided direct instruction to students and have compacted the curriculum where necessary due to time constraints.

Description during SY21-22: We plan for five full days of instruction at all levels. We have also used assessments to identify learning loss and plan for interventions.

2. The LEA has provided continuity of services in addressing student social, emotional, mental, and other health needs, which may include student health and food services:

Description during SY20-21: We organized food distribution for any student who did not have access to meals. We created multiple task forces and advisory groups with participation from various stakeholders including parents, students, staff and administration, as well as community mental health providers. This resulted in multiple wellness initiatives.

Description during SY21-22: Our Wellness Committee will continue to meet to gather input from various stakeholders. We will be partnering with community organizations for additional mental health and wellness support throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

3. The LEA has provided continuity of services in addressing staff social, emotional, mental, and other health needs:

Description during SY20-21: Our Wellness Committee created a separate subcommittee for staff wellness. There were multiple initiatives focusing on staff wellness, as well as assistance offered through HR and the Employee Assistance Program.

Description during SY21-22: Our Wellness Committee and subcommittee for staff wellness will continue to meet. We will continue initiatives focusing on staff wellness, as well as offer assistance through HR and the Employee Assistance Program.

V. Plan Review

1. The LEA will meet the federal regulatory requirement to review and, as appropriate, revise its Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through September 30, 2023 (the award period including the Tydings period). (Note an LEA that developed a plan before ARPA was enacted on 03/11/2021 that complied with the federal statutory requirements for public posting and comments but does not meet all of the requirements above must revise its plan no later than six months after the LEA receives LEA ESSER funds.)

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

Description: Our planning has included multiple opportunities for stakeholder input.

2. In doing so, the LEA will meet the federal statutory requirement to seek public input and take such input into account in determining whether to revise the plan and, if revisions are determined necessary, on the revisions it makes to its plan.

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

Description: All task force meetings have been public with frequent reports to the public with an invitation for input.

3. In doing so, the LEA will also meet the federal regulatory requirement to address CDC safety recommendations and, if the CDC has updated its safety recommendations at the time the LEA is revising its plan, each of the updated CDC safety recommendations.
(Note federal regulation on this plan requires such reporting, but does not require adoption of CDC safety recommendations. The NH DOE recognizes schools will implement localized safety measures based on the guidance provided by the CDC, NH Public Health, and local public health officials.)

Yes: ☒ No: ☐

Description: We will continue to follow CDC and DHHS guidelines.

VI. Authorization

LEA Superintendent's Signature:



Date:

6/16/21

VIII. Appendices

Appendix A. ARPA Statutory Excerpt

“(i) Safe return to in-person instruction.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—A local educational agency receiving funds under this section shall develop and make publicly available on the local educational agency’s website, not later than 30 days after receiving the allocation of funds described in paragraph (d)(1), a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services.

(2) COMMENT PERIOD.—Before making the plan described in paragraph (1) publicly available, the local educational agency shall seek public comment on the plan and take such comments into account in the development of the plan.

(3) PREVIOUS PLANS.—If a local educational agency has developed a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction before the date of enactment of this Act that meets the requirements described in paragraphs (1) and (2), such plan shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements under this subsection.”

Appendix B. Interim Final Requirements of ARP ESSER Excerpt

“(3) *LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services.*

(a) An LEA must describe in its plan under section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services—

(i) how it 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.

(B) Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (*e.g.*, use of cohorts/ podding).

(C) Handwashing and respiratory etiquette.

(D) Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation.

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

(F) Diagnostic and screening testing.

(G) Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities.

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

(I) Coordination with State and local health officials.

(ii) how it will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students’ academic needs and students’ and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

(b) (i) During the period of the ARP ESSER award established in section 2001(a) of the ARP Act, an LEA must regularly, but no less frequently than every six months (taking into consideration the timing of significant changes to CDC guidance on reopening schools), review and, as appropriate, revise its plan for the safe return to in person instruction and continuity of services.

(ii) In determining whether revisions are necessary, and in making any revisions, the LEA must seek public input and take such input into account.

(iii) If at the time the LEA revises its plan the CDC has updated its guidance on reopening schools, the revised plan must address the extent to which the LEA has adopted policies, and describe any such policies, for each of the updated safety recommendations.

(c) If an LEA developed a plan prior to enactment of the ARP Act that meets the statutory requirements of section 2001(i)(1) and (2) of the ARP Act but does not address all the requirements in paragraph (a), the LEA must, pursuant to paragraph (b), revise and post its plan no later than six months after receiving its ARP ESSER funds to meet the requirements in paragraph (a).

(d) An LEA’s plan under section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services must be—

(i) In an understandable and uniform format;

(ii) To the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, be orally translated for such parent; and

(iii) Upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent.”