



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 2022-2023 school year as it becomes available.

Template: LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

LEA Name: Burch Charter School of Excellence

Date (07/5/2023):

Date Revised (07/5/2023):

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. (1000 character limit per section)

A. Universal and correct wearing of masks

The Burch Charter School of Excellence will continue to follow the applicable Federal, state and local governmental, educational and health department guidance with regard to the wearing of masks. Currently there is no executive order in effect which makes the wearing of masks in schools mandatory. Should mandatory face coverings, district wide or for a particular group, be required, the school community will be notified as soon as practicable. Exceptions to the mandatory requirement as allowed in applicable guidance, will be permitted. These exceptions, if any, will be communicated to the school community.

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

Burch Charter School of Excellence will continue to follow the applicable Federal, state and local governmental and health department guidance with regard to physical distancing. At this time there is no requirement to utilize cohorts or other strategies to maintain physical distance between individuals.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Burch Charter School will prepare and maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol) or other approved sanitizers, when and where appropriate.

- Children ages five and younger will be supervised when using hand sanitizer.

- Schools will continue to use diagrams to depict hand washing practices and students will be reminded of those practices.
- The district will teach and reinforce covering coughs and sneezes to help keep individuals from getting and spreading infectious diseases.
- The implementation of the curriculum for physical education and fine, visual and performing arts classes will continue to be revised to comply with applicable health department guidance, if necessary.

Handwashing

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) outlines the following guidance, "[When and How to Wash Hand.](#)"

- Before, during, and after food
- Before and after eating food
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching garbage
- When hands are visibly soiled

Posters for [handwashing](#) will also be displayed around each building.

Respiratory Etiquette

Students will be encouraged to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue if not wearing a mask. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash and hand hygiene as outlined above should be performed immediately.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Burch Charter School of Excellence will continue to follow the applicable Federal, state and local governmental and health department guidance with regard to maintaining healthy facilities, including guidance regarding ventilation.

- The district is prepared with supplies for the 2023-2024 school year including supplies necessary to sanitize appropriately.
- The district will continue to clean and maintain schools and district buildings to provide a safe learning environment for staff and students.

Daily Bathroom Cleaning Procedure

- Check Bathrooms routinely throughout the day
- Sign checklist after each inspection
- Each Checklist must include signature, date, and time inspected
- Inspect sinks & toilets
- Ensure soap and paper towels are readily available
- Wipe down handles, faucets, and high contact surfaces
- Clean Toilets and sink areas

Daily Classroom Procedure

- Alcohol wipes available in classrooms for surface wipe down for students & staff
- Hand Sanitizer available in each classroom for student & staff use

Nightly Procedure Classrooms

- Garbage in classrooms disposed of properly
- Floor surfaces swept, cleaned, and mopped accordingly
- Surfaces inspected for cleanliness
- All surfaces sprayed with electrostatic sprayer Nightly

Nightly Bathroom Procedure

- Check and inspect bathrooms
- Sign checklist after cleaning is completed
- Each Checklist must include signature, date, and time inspected
- Wipe down all surfaces, Doorknobs, Door handles, Toilet Handles, Faucets, Sink tops, Toilet surfaces, Divider walls, Bathroom walls, and all high contact surfaces
- Make sure to mop floors
- All surfaces sprayed with the electrostatic sprayer when complete

Common Areas (Hallways, Stairwells, Vestibules, Gyms, Locker rooms, Auditorium)

- Wipe down all touch surfaces
- Railings

- Doorknobs
- Push Bars
- Sanitizing stations
- Lockers
- Thermometers
- When complete, spray the area with the electrostatic sprayer.

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

In collaboration, the district will follow any applicable Federal, state and local governmental and health department guidance with regard to contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine.

Principals will routinely remind their student families to keep children who are feeling ill at home. Additionally, absence reporting procedures are reviewed by the building principal typically at the beginning of the school year.

Students and staff who are ill and seen by the school nurse may be sent home per the guidelines for illness located on the district website. Certain communicable illnesses may require a note from a health care provider for the student or staff member to return to the school building following an illness. Typically, exposure to an illness will not prevent a person who has no symptoms from entering a district school or office building.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing

Burch Charter School of Excellence will:

- continue to follow the applicable Federal, state and local governmental and health department guidance with regard to diagnostic and screening testing
- make symptomatic staff and the families of symptomatic students aware of any recommendations for individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 or any other communicable disease
- continue to provide information about diagnostic testing sites to symptomatic staff and the families of symptomatic students.

Should screening testing, district wide or for a particular group, be required, the school community will be notified as soon as practicable.

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

The district will promote equitable access to vaccination and inform the school community of the importance of staying up to date on routine vaccinations to prevent illness from many different infections by: providing information about vaccination opportunities from trusted partners.

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

The district will continue to follow the applicable Federal, state and local governmental and health department guidance with regard to appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies.

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 District will provide full day, in-person instruction to all students for the 2023-2024 school year. All schools will return to the board approved times and schedules and services will be provided with the integration of the health and safety protocols outlined in Section 1: Maintaining Health and Safety. The District is committed to implementing multiple strategies for ensuring continuity of services.

Summer Opportunities for Accelerated Learning

An array of in-person and virtual summer opportunities are being offered to students in grades 1-12 to include ESY, with a specific lens and focus on addressing student learning loss and social emotional learning. Academic program offerings were designed to provide additional support across the content areas. They vary by grade level and interest and provide student support to specifically identified students based on performance data. Detailed information can be accessed by clicking on the brochure link here: [Summer Opportunities 2023](#).

Social Emotional Learning and School Climate and Culture

Social Emotional Learning curriculum, activities and/or lessons will continue to be integrated into the 2023-2024 instructional plan, K-12. The School Counseling Department, in partnerships with various providers, continues to develop and implement social emotional support by way of professional development, support groups, integration of SEL components into lesson planning, and providing a plethora of resources to students, staff and families around social emotional learning and trauma.

District Goals:

- A district goal has been identified and Board approved around SEL in order to ensure:
 - a. SEL activities are incorporated daily into all lessons
 - b. resources are shared with faculty

c. support is provided to instructional staff in this regard

Director of School Counseling will:

- Continue to provide resources to school faculty and leadership in order to accomplish the SEL district goal.

Supervisors / School Leaders will:

- Monitor teacher lesson plans to ensure SEL is integrated into instructional plan
- Provide feedback to teachers for supporting students

Provide professional development and resources to teachers to support SEL integrationStudents will continue to:

- Develop self-awareness and self-management skills to achieve school and life success.
- Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships.
- Demonstrate decision-making skills and responsible behaviors in personal, school and community contexts.

Teachers will:

- Include SEL instructional strategies on their lesson plans
- Use resources provided to integrate SEL strategies specific to content and grade level into their instructional plan

Wraparound Services

AM breakfast programs, after school tutorials, and in collaboration with community partners, aftercare programs will continue to be provided to eligible students. In partnership with Rutgers University Behavioral Health Care School Community Programs, the district will continue to provide supportive services through a bilingual parent coordinator for ELLs and their families as appropriate.

Behavioral Supports

The District employs two Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs). These staff members split time between the schools in the district and provide support to the Autism classes in the district, as well behavioral consultation support to students in accordance with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The district BCBAs will consult with classroom teachers to provide positive behavior support to students experiencing behavioral difficulties.

Through the work of the I&RS Committee, students will receive additional support and tiered intervention by the classroom teacher, intervention specialists, the school counseling department and a collaborative approach to intervention with parents / guardians.

Assessing Student Learning

The Office of Curriculum & Instruction, worked extensively with teachers in each content area and across all grade levels to (1) analyze the impact of curriculum compacting to identify content areas of focus, mastery, requiring explicit teaching (reteaching) and/or additional review; and (2) student performance on district wide assessments, benchmark assessments, student grades, classroom performance, anecdotal notes and conferencing, and other formative data to measure student progress toward meeting state standards and identify priority areas of focus as well as student strengths specific to the content area standards.

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

Multi-Tiered Systems of Support are currently being utilized as a systematic approach to prevention, intervention, and enrichment in grades PreK- through twelve for academics and behavior. Students, grades K-8, receive academic support via a tiered intervention model by dedicated teachers via pull-out or push-in models. Intervention Scope and Sequence created using the Priority Standards for 2020-21 and aligning them to the i-Ready Lessons as well as the ELA and Math Curriculum.

Assessment & Intervention (New Staff)

Students requiring greater levels of support and tiered intervention have been identified by multiple assessment measures and scheduled for academic support. Assessment measures include, but are not limited to:

- i-Ready Diagnostic Status in Reading & Math, i-Ready Diagnostic Results in Reading & Math, Tools for Scaffolding Instruction, Instructional Groupings, Diagnostic Growth, Personalized Instruction By Summary, Lesson, and Interactive Practice, Prerequisite Skills, Instructional Schedules, Running Records, Fountaus and Pinnell, Number Worlds, RazKids Benchmarks, End of Unit Assessments, District Benchmark Assessments.

District Assessments

The district will continue to implement a rigorous approach to assessing student learning in the Fall by way of district benchmark assessments. Assessment data will be used to address learning gaps, small group instruction, tiered intervention and support programs. The district testing calendar can be accessed here: [2022-2023 District Assessment Calendar](#).

Food Services

With the absence of social distancing in the cafeteria, the following items will be implemented:

- Handwashing will be required of students and staff upon entry to the cafeteria.
- Hand sanitizer is provided upon entering the cafeteria.

Kitchen protocol:

- Proper handwashing and hand sanitizing by all kitchen staff throughout the day.
- Proper sanitizing of all surfaces each morning before starting prep.
- Gloves are worn and changed throughout the day by all kitchen staff.
- Food storage at proper temperatures.

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)

- BCSE administration provided parents, staff, and the school community with surveys on the development of the plan. The surveys were dispersed to the school community.
- Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan 2023-2024 was shared with the Board on July 10, 2023.

American Recovery Plan ESSER III Grant (ARP ESSER) (1000 character limit)

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.

- The District's Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan 2022-2023 was written in practicable language and translated into Spanish and Haitian Creole for parents with limited English Proficiency.
- Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan 2022-2023 were posted on the district's website in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole and can be accessed by clicking on the links.