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Applicant: 03 4600 Rutherford Bergen County

Application: 2021-2022 ARP Safe Return Plan - 00 -

Project Period: 9/1/2021 - 8/31/2022

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Date Generated: 5/30/2024 1:00:05 PM

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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.

Support for Schools: Describe how the LEA will support its schools in safely returning to in-person instruction and sustaining safe operation. This description must include:

For each mitigation strategy listed below, 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.

LEA Response Table

1) Universal and correct wearing of masks

([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

Face coverings are currently optional in the school buildings, grounds and activities. Students and staff may choose to wear face coverings at their discretion. Parents and staff may make masking decisions based on their specific situation, for example, if a student or staff member or their family members are immunocompromised or at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19. The district supports mask use by students and staff who choose to mask at any time.

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

([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

"Use precautions to prevent spread, including staying home and away from others (including people you live with who are not sick) if you have respiratory symptoms." (How to Protect Yourself and Others CDC website updated April 4, 2024). Staying home when sick can lower the risk of spreading infectious diseases to other

people. People who are at risk for getting very sick with COVID-19 who test positive should consult with a healthcare provider right away for possible treatment, even if their symptoms are mild. The district is cognizant of considerations for high-risk activities during high COVID-19 hospital admission levels. Within and outside of classrooms, schools maintain physical distancing to the greatest extent practicable in any situation.

3) Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

The district promotes behaviors that mitigate the spread of COVID-19 such as encouraging staff and students to stay home when appropriate and encouraging the practice of hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette. Hand washing and hand sanitizing are permitted and encouraged throughout the school day. Each school maintains hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Such stations are located in each classroom; at entrances and exits of buildings; near lunchrooms and toilets; children five and younger are supervised when using hand sanitizer. School officials developed a school-wide plan where students are required to wash hands at least 20 seconds at regular intervals during the school day and always before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose, coughing and/or sneezing.

4) Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

The district adheres to Rutherford Maintenance Department cleaning procedures. In addition, the department follows the cleaning schedule developed by the district's custodial and maintenance consultant, Evocate School Supply Solutions. The district maintains an adequate supply of cleaning supplies, including hand sanitizer, gloves, and face coverings to allow for a two-month supply. The staff disinfects during the school day for touchpoints, including but not limited to, phones, door handles, light switches, handrails, etc. New ventilation systems are being installed in multiple buildings throughout the district.

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

([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

Schools have transformed from a case-investigation model to a routine disease control model. This model focuses more on responding to clusters of cases, outbreaks, and evidence of ongoing transmission in

schools and less on individual case investigation and contact tracing. The district still files a weekly CDRSS from, as required for the New Jersey Communicable Disease Reporting and Surveillance System. Procedures for symptomatic staff and students include student and staff with symptoms are safely and respectfully isolated from others. Students remain in isolation with continued supervision and care until picked up by an authorized adult. The district follows current Communicable Disease Service Guidelines for illness reporting. An adequate amount of PPE is available, accessible and provided for use.

6) Diagnostic and screening testing

([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

The New Jersey Department of Health recommends that schools work with their Local Health Department to identify rapid viral testing options in their community where they can refer ill or exposed students and staff. The CDC no longer recommends routine screening testing in schools. According to the CDC website page Testing What You Need to Know updated on May 2, 2024 "COVID-19 testing can help you know if you have COVID-19 so you can decide what to do next, like getting treatment to reduce your risk of severe illness and taking steps to lower your chances of spreading the virus to others." Repeated testing may be necessary.

7) Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible

([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

According to the CDC webpage Stay Up to Date with Covid-19 Vaccines, last updated May 2, 2024 "People who are up to date have lower risk of severe illness, hospitalization and death from COVID-19 than people who are unvaccinated or who have not completed the doses recommended for them by CDC. Additional updated COVID-19 vaccine doses can help restore protection that has decreased since previous vaccination. CDC will continue to provide updates as we learn more. The district distributes all health notices, including notices of locations offering vaccines or boosters. Most pharmacies now offer the vaccines.

8) Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies

([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

Reasonable accommodations were provided for individuals that the CDC identified as having a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 such as medically fragile students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), students with complex disabilities with IEPs, or students who require accommodations under a plan

in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 Plan). Accommodations were also made for those younger students or individuals with disabilities in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations. "Schools with students at risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 should make reasonable modifications, when necessary, to ensure that all students, including those with disabilities, are able to access in-person learning" (August 31, 2023 memo).

Safe Return Plan Updated

Safe Return Plan text and assurances must be agreed to every six months.

Date Plan Updated

Describe how the LEA 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. ([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

The district has identified certain needs that were funded by the CRRSA-ESSER II grant and continue to be funded under the ARP-ESSER III grant to provide a continuation of services for students and staff impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The district has increased its use of interactive technology, particularly for students with disabilities and for students entering kindergarten and grade 1. Therapeutic care was provided for identified students who have experienced isolation, trauma, depression and anxiety. The therapeutic care included individual and family counseling to support students' academic success and mental health needs. Summer programs in English language arts and math occurred during summer 2023 and will again occur in summer 2024 for students entering high school.

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. ([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

The Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services was initially approved by the Rutherford Board of Education on June 2, 2021; updates were approved on January 3, 2022, June 6, 2022, December 5, 2022, June 5, 2023 and December 4, 2023. The current update was approved as an amendment on June 3, 2024. These approvals occurred at public meetings of this governing body. There were opportunities for public discussion at these meetings and at subsequent Board of Education meetings. The reopening committee will continue to review this template and the ARP Mandatory Subgrant Award for revisions as required. Public comment will be solicited as required by the subgrant award. Updated plans are posted on the district website.

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. ([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

The School Reopening Plan is published on the district website at www.rutherfordschools.org and the amended Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service will be posted there as well. For those members of the public whose first language is not English, the website has the ability to translate text into eleven different languages. The text of the Reopening Plan is understandable and follows a clear format, making it easy for people to access the area they wish. Upon request and if necessary, an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act will be provided information in an alternative format that is accessible for that parent or guardian.

Briefly describe any guidance, professional learning, and technical assistance opportunities the LEA will make available to its schools. ([count] of 1000 maximum characters used)

Professional learning and technical assistance will continue to be provided for two online support programs that reinforce most content areas. This support increases students' success in a variety of content areas after the disruption of learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The lower elementary schools and the upper elementary school are implementing a new reading program and that program's professional development has begun and will continue throughout the 2023-2024 school year. The district continues to support social-emotional learning training for staff to promote SEL for students to better deal with the emotional fallout of the trauma of COVID-19.

Provide current link to the district's website where the plan is posted.

www.rutherfordschools.org

By checking this box and saving the page, the applicant hereby certifies that they will assure that the information contained in the Safe Return to School plans will be updated within this system every 6 months during this grant project period.

Assurances Fully Agreed to By:

Charles Ryan

Assurances

American Rescue Plan of 2021

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ARP- ESSER)

- By checking this box and saving the page, the applicant hereby certifies that he/she has read, understood and will comply with the assurances listed below that will apply to any subsequent application amendments of all federal programs in which the LEA participates.

The Local Educational Agency (LEA) hereby assures the New Jersey Department of Education that:

1. The LEA, as a recipient of funds under the ARP understands the general assurances agreed to in the GMS system also apply to the ARP funds.
2. The LEA, as a recipient of federal funds under the ARP will determine the most important educational needs as a result of COVID-19, propose a timeline for providing services and assistance to students and staff, determine the extent to which the LEA intends to use funds awarded under the ARP to promote the authorized purposes and uses, and determine how the LEA intends to assess and address student learning loss resulting from the disruption in educational services. This information should be documented by the LEA and be available upon request by the NJDOE;
3. The LEA will ensure that funds awarded under the ARP are used for activities allowable under section 2001. All activities and expenditures must be reasonable, necessary, allocable under section 2001 and meet the purpose of the ARP, to prepare for, prevent and respond to COVID-19. Further, the LEA, as a recipient of funds under section 2001 of the ARP, will reserve not less than twenty percent (20%) of such funds to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that such interventions respond to the students academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus on the student subgroups described in section 1111(b)(2)(B)(xi) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 USC 6311(b)(2)(B)(xi), students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care;
4. The LEA, as a recipient of funds under section 2001 of the ARP agrees to develop and comply with the

requirements for a safe return to in-person instruction as required in section 2001(e) of the ARP;

5. The LEA will use such fiscal control and fund accounting procedures as will ensure proper disbursement of, and accounting for, Federal funds paid to the LEA under the ARP. LEA will utilize Grants Management System (EWEG) to budget and report financial expenditures relating to ESSER funds provided under the ARP. Further, upon request by NJDOE, the LEA will provide documentation to support claims for expenditures, including expenditure ledgers, invoices, receipts and documentation to support purchases and proof of services received;
6. The LEA will adopt and use proper methods of administering funds received under the ARP Act, including:
 - A. The enforcement of any obligations imposed by law on agencies, institutions, organizations, and other recipients responsible for carrying out each federal award; and
 - B. The correction of deficiencies in operations that are identified through audits, monitoring, or evaluation.
7. The LEA will ensure that any and all internet connectivity purchases are in compliance with the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA);
8. The LEA, as a recipient of funds under the ARP will comply with the provisions of all applicable acts, regulations and assurances, including the New Jersey School Code, the New Jersey Administrative Code, orders and guidance from the New Jersey State Department of Education, NJDOE State Board of Education, and the following provisions of Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99; the OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485; and the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

Assurances Fully Agreed to By:

Assurances Fully Agreed To:

Submit

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Application History (Read Only)

Status Change	UserId	Action Date
Final Application Approved	KEVINC	05-30-2024
Submitted to NJDOE	CRYAN034600	05-28-2024

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The application has been approved. No more updates will be saved for the application.

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Requested by CRYAN034600 on 5/30/2024

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