

ARP ESSER Health and Safety Plan

Guidance & Template

Section 2001(i)(1) of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires each local education agency (LEA) that receives funding under the ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund to develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website a *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan*, hereinafter referred to as a *Health and Safety Plan*.

Based on ARP requirements, 90 percent of ARP ESSER funds will be distributed to school districts and charter schools based on their relative share of Title I-A funding in FY 2020-2021. **Given Federally required timelines, LEAs eligible to apply for and receive this portion of the ARP ESSER funding must submit a Health and Safety Plan that meets ARP Act requirements to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) by Friday, July 30, 2021, regardless of when the LEA submits its ARP ESSER application.**

Each LEA must create a Health and Safety Plan that addresses how it will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff, and which will serve as local guidelines for all instructional and non-instructional school activities during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. The Health and Safety Plan should be tailored to the unique needs of each LEA and its schools and must take into account public comment related to the development of, and subsequent revisions to, the Health and Safety Plan.

The ARP Act and U.S. Department of Education rules require Health and Safety plans include the following components:

1. How the LEA will, to the greatest extent practicable, implement prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning;
2. How the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services;
3. 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 policy 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 State and local health departments;
- f. [Diagnostic](#) and screening testing;
- g. Efforts to provide COVID-19 [vaccinations to school communities](#);
- h. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and
- i. Coordination with state and local health officials.

The LEA's Health and Safety Plan must be approved by its governing body and posted on the LEA's publicly available website by July 30, 2021.* The ARP Act requires LEAs to post their Health and Safety Plans online in a language that parents/caregivers can understand, or, if it is not practicable to provide written translations to an individual with limited English proficiency, be orally translated. The plan also must be provided in an alternative format accessible, upon request, by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Each LEA will upload in the eGrants system its updated Health and Safety Plan and webpage URL where the plan is located on the LEA's publicly available website.

The ARP Act requires LEAs to review their Health and Safety Plans at least every six months during the period of the LEA's ARP ESSER grant. LEAs also must review and update their plans whenever there are significant changes to the CDC recommendations for K-12 schools. Like the development of the plan, all revisions must be informed by community input and reviewed and approved by the governing body prior to posting on the LEA's publicly available website.

LEAs may use the template to revise their current Health and Safety Plans to meet ARP requirements and ensure all stakeholders are fully informed of the LEA's plan to safely resume instructional and non-instructional school activities, including in-person learning, for the current school year. An LEA may use a different plan template or format provided it includes all the elements required by the ARP Act, as listed above.

* The July 30 deadline applies only to school districts and charter schools that received federal Title I-A funds in FY 2020-2021 and intend to apply for and receive ARP ESSER funding.

Additional Resources

LEAs are advised to review the following resources when developing their Health and Safety Plans:

- [CDC K-12 School Operational Strategy](#)
- [PDE Resources for School Communities During COVID-19](#)
- [PDE Roadmap for Education Leaders](#)
- [PDE Accelerated Learning Thorough an Integrated System of Support](#)
- [PA Department of Health - COVID-19 in Pennsylvania](#)

Health and Safety Plan Summary:

Forest Hills School District

Initial Effective Date: August 1, 2021

Date of Last Review: August 12, 2021

Amended September 3, 2021 to reflect Governor's Order Effective September 7, 2021

Date of Last Revision:

1. How will the LEA, to the greatest extent practicable, support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date mandates from the CDC or local health officials for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning?

The primary goal of the Forest Hills School District is to provide all Rangers daily in-person instruction in a safe manner. To help us reach this goal of safely providing all Rangers instruction, we will be asking for your continued support and diligence to these recommendations. Please be patient with the School District and understand that changes to this Health and Safety Plan can occur as changes occur to the required mandates and the local health situation.

The Superintendent, Safety Coordinator, District COVID Coordinator, and staff will remain abreast of up-to-date changes through the CDC, PA Department of Health, and Pennsylvania Department of Education. The District will work in collaboration with these agencies as well as the Intermediate Unit and the school physician, to update the plan as necessary and to follow guidelines as mandated. Additionally, the staff will also monitor community transmission rates and adapt the Health and Safety Plan as needed.

The District will implement and maintain a multi-layer protection strategy to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. The primary components of this plan include masking, a continued vaccination program, maintaining three (3) feet of social distancing to the greatest extent possible, universal mask wearing for transportation, sustained sanitation and disinfecting practices, consistent ventilation monitoring, enforced contact tracing and quarantine protocols, and constant hand washing and hygiene instructions and reminders for all stakeholders. Families will be encouraged to refrain from visiting the school or attending classes when ill, experiencing flu-like symptoms, or are in COVID-related testing or quarantine protocols. These symptoms as outlined by the Department of Education include but are not limited to: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. Daily temperature checks will occur for all visitors, staff, and students.

The current masking status for the Forest Hills School District is 'optional'. According to established Federal mandates, masks are required on all District transportation. Please be advised, changes to this status may occur due to the local transmissibility rates, newly established mandates, and in response to the impact of COVID in our schools. Our primary goal is to safely deliver daily face-to-face instruction for all students

The Forest Hills School District will open for in-person instruction on August 23, 2021, with in-service dates with the first date with students on August 25, 2021. Our plan includes remaining in this mode of instruction for the 2021-2022 school year as we are able to safely do so keeping the health and safety of our students and staff a priority. Changes to this plan will occur utilizing the District's communication outlets.

2. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services?

During the 2020-2021 school year, Forest Hills School District was able to provide 1:1 access to technology through use of Chromebooks. In addition, the Canvas Learning Platform was provided as a means to provide synchronous and asynchronous learning. Internet accessibility and community partnerships were developed to support this initiative. Our intent is to continue use of Chromebooks and Canvas to provide instruction to students both synchronously and asynchronously as needs arise. Student health needs, including physical, emotional and mental health well-being, will be met through use of the school counselors, school nurses, school social worker and local agencies that are contracted to work with students in the buildings. Also, continued professional development will be provided for our teachers and staff to ensure their well-being as well as that of the students. The food service department will continue to provide weekend meals on a weekly basis and, in the event of full virtual learning, provide on and off-site food distribution for families. The District has been committed to providing students and families with the essential elements enhancing SEL needs and the student's experience.

3. Use the table below to explain 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 policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.

ARP ESSER Requirement**Strategies, Policies, and Procedures**

- a. Universal and correct wearing of masks;

The Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) announced that the state mandated face covering order expired on June 28th. Those individuals who are not vaccinated, under the age of 12 or are at a high risk are not required, but should continue to wear masks per CDC guidance.

Under a Federal Order issued in January 2021, the CDC requires face coverings, regardless of vaccination status, when on public transportation - this includes on school buses operated by public and private school systems. However, a driver does not need to wear a face covering if they are the only person on the bus.

Masking is currently listed as optional for students and staff.

Masking will be required on school transportation. School will start with masks being optional for students. However, masking requirements may change as the transmissibility rates change.

The nursing staff will train students, staff, and visitors on how to properly wear a protective face covering.

As per the Governor's Order on August 31, 2021:

**Accordingly, on this day, August 31, 2021, in order to prevent and control the spread of disease, I hereby order:
Section 1. Definitions For purposes of this Order, the listed terms have the**

following meanings: “Alternative to a face covering” may include a plastic face shield that covers the nose and mouth, extends below the chin and to the ears, and leaves no exposed gap between the forehead and the shield’s headpiece. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has advised there is currently not enough evidence to determine how much protection a face shield provides to individuals around the person wearing the face shield because of gaps where respiratory droplets may escape. The CDC does state, however, that face shields may still be an option in situations where wearing a cloth face covering is not otherwise feasible. “Department” means the Department of Health of the Commonwealth.

“Face covering” means covering of the nose and mouth with material that is secured to the head with ties, straps, or loops over the ears or is wrapped around the lower face. A “face covering” can be made of a variety of synthetic or natural fabrics, including cotton, silk, or linen. A “face covering” may be factory-made, sewn by hand, or be improvised from household items, including, but not limited to, scarfs, bandanas, t-shirts, sweatshirts, or towels. While procedural and surgical masks intended for health care providers and first responders, such as N95 respirators, meet those requirements, these specialized masks should be reserved for appropriate occupational and health care personnel.

"School Entity" means any of the following: (1) A public PreK-12 school. (2) A brick and mortar or cyber charter

school. (3) A private or parochial school. (4) A career and technical center (CTC). 4 (5) An intermediate unit (IU). (6) A PA Pre-K Counts program, Head Start Program, Preschool Early Intervention program, or Family Center. (7) A private academic nursery school and locally-funded prekindergarten activities. (8) A child care provider licensed by the Department of Human Services of the Commonwealth.

Section 2: General Masking Requirement

Each teacher, child/student, staff, or visitor working, attending, or visiting a School Entity shall wear a face covering indoors, regardless of vaccination status, except as set forth in Section 3.

Section 3: Exceptions to Covering Requirement

The following are exceptions to the face covering requirements in Section 2. All alternatives to a face covering, including the use of a face shield, should be exhausted before an individual is excepted from this Order.

A. If wearing a face covering while working would create an unsafe condition in which to operate equipment or execute a task as determined by local, state, or federal regulators or workplace safety guidelines.

B. If wearing a face covering would either cause a medical condition, or exacerbate an existing one, including respiratory issues that impede breathing, a mental health condition or a disability.

C. When necessary to confirm the individual's identity.

D. When working alone and isolated from interaction with other people with little or no expectation of in-person interaction.

E. If an individual is communicating or seeking to communicate with someone who is hearing-impaired or has another disability, where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication.

F. When the individual is under two (2) years of age.

G. When an individual is: (1) Engaged in an activity that cannot be performed while wearing a mask, such as eating and drinking, or playing an instrument that would be obstructed by the face covering; or (2) Participating in high intensity aerobic or anerobic activities, including during a physical education class in a well-ventilated location and able to maintain a physical distance of six feet from all other individuals.

H. When a child/student is participating in a sports practice activity or event, whether indoors or outdoors.

Section 4. School Entity Obligations

A School Entity must:

1. Require and enforce the requirement that all teachers, children/students, staff, and visitors (subject to the exceptions in Section 3) wear a face covering indoors, regardless of whether this Order is reflected in a school entity's Health and Safety Plan.

2. Post prominent signs in conspicuous locations for teachers, children/students, staff, and visitors stating that face coverings are required by the Order of the Secretary of Health.

3. Provide reasonable accommodations for individuals who state they have a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability that makes it unreasonable for the person to maintain a face covering.

4. A School Entity should not:

a. Enforce face covering requirements when there is an exception under Section 3 or if it is unsafe to do so.

b. Restrain, use force, or physically remove, teachers, children/students, staff, or visitors who refuse to comply with this Order when it would not otherwise be legal to do so.

c. Violate other laws, including state and federal antidiscrimination laws.

Section 5. Federal Requirements Relating to Transportation This Order shall not impact the obligation of any School Entity to comply with requirements issued by the CDC, including requirements for masking on public transportation conveyances, such as school district transportation.

Section 6. Effective Date and Duration This Order shall take effect at **12:01 a.m. on September 7, 2021**, and shall remain in effect until otherwise terminated.

<p>b. Modifying facilities to allow for <u>physical distancing</u> (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);</p>	<p>We will encourage social distancing to the extent possible maintaining three (3) feet. This will be updated as mandates change. Appropriate accommodations will be made to assist with increasing social distancing as mandates are updated and additional requirements are suggested.</p>
<p>c. <u>Handwashing and respiratory etiquette</u>;</p>	<p>Hand sanitizing stations are placed throughout the buildings. The school nurses will continue to train all students and staff on proper hand washing and respiratory etiquette at the beginning of the school year. The District will continue to emphasize hand washing and proper coughing/sneezing etiquette to our students and staff. Signage will be provided throughout the buildings as reminders. Supportive information will be placed on the District website and social media outlets.</p>
<p>d. <u>Cleaning</u> and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving <u>ventilation</u>;</p>	<p>Classrooms will be thoroughly cleaned, sanitized, and disinfected nightly. The District works with service providers to ensure adequate ventilation and air handling volume. Additional disinfection and sanitation procedures will occur during the school day in communal gathering spaces.</p>
<p>e. <u>Contact tracing</u> in combination with <u>isolation</u> and <u>quarantine</u>, in collaboration with the State and local health departments;</p>	<p>Contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine mandates as per the PA Department of Health and epidemiologist will be followed and enforced.</p>

<p>f. <u>Diagnostic</u> and screening testing;</p>	<p>Screenings will continue to occur through the school nurses. Individuals exhibiting symptoms of COVID as provided by the PA Department of Health will be referred for testing or to visit their Primary Care Professional prior to entry back into the buildings. Further guidance from the Department of Health will be discussed as appropriate. The nursing staff will inform staff as to how to identify students exhibiting COVID symptoms. Temperature checks will be performed upon entrance to the building and the cafeteria.</p>
<p>g. Efforts to provide <u>vaccinations to school communities</u>;</p>	<p>The Forest Hills School District has provided 3 clinics for vaccinations on site. We will cooperate with local health agencies regarding booster shots if necessary. Additional vaccination clinics will be provided in partnership with the local health agencies. These voluntary clinics will be open to the general public as advisable.</p>
<p>h. Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and</p>	<p>Forest Hills School District will follow IEP, 504, and medical doctor's orders to accommodate for any special circumstances. Any student needing additional accommodations will be discussed as a team with accommodations made as necessary on a case-by-case basis. The District may provide targeted support utilizing staff throughout the school year. Additionally, a partnership with the local libraries has occurred to provide additional services and online tutorials.</p>

<p>i. Coordination with state and local health officials.</p>	<p>The Forest Hills School District will continue in consultation with the CDC, PA Department of Health, PA Department of Education, Epidemiologist, our school physician, and the IU for assistance when needed.</p>
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Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for FOREST HILLS SCHOOL DISTRICT reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on **JULY 8, 2021**.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

Yes

_____ **No**

Affirmed on: **July 8, 2021**

By:

(Signature of Board President)*

(Print Name of Board President)

*Electronic signatures on this document are acceptable using one of the two methods detailed below.

Option A: The use of actual signatures is encouraged whenever possible. This method requires that the document be printed, signed, scanned, and then submitted.

Option B: If printing and scanning are not possible, add an electronic signature using the resident Microsoft Office product signature option, which is free to everyone, no installation or purchase needed.