

Killingly Public Schools

79 Westfield Avenue
www.killinglyschools.org

Continuity of Education District Plan

December 2021



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American Rescue Plan – ESSER

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

Killingly Public Schools has been awarded \$ \$3,254,018 in ARP ESSER funds. This plan describes how the awarded funds will be used.

Questions about this plan should be directed to Superintendent of Schools Mr. Robert Angeli, 860 779-6600.

Consultation with stakeholders and the opportunity for Public Comment

In developing the ARP ESSER Plan, Killingly Public Schools conducted consultation in the following ways:

- With stakeholders, including students, families, school and district administrators.
- Through conversations with community leaders.
- By providing ongoing opportunities for public comment through the Killingly BOE's dedicated public comment schedule.
- By providing the public the opportunity to provide input through surveys and committee meetings and taking such input into account.

Making the Plan Available to the Public

Killingly Public Schools has taken the following steps to make this plan available to the public:

- The plan is posted at www.killinglyschools.org
- The plan may be orally translated for parents. Contact central office at 860 779-6600 to request translation; and
- A parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA may be view the plan online as all material provided is ADA compliant.

Prevention and Mitigation Strategies

The Killingly Public Schools Continuity Plan will expand on the prevention and mitigation strategies implemented by Killingly schools in the fall of 2021.

Our ARP ESSER funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) guidance](#) on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning. Killingly Public Schools will use a portion of its ARP ESSER funds to implement prevention and mitigation strategies as described below.

- PPE needs: masks, sanitizer, approved disinfecting materials and supplies, etc.
- Improvements/Renovations in HVAC operations in our schools. These upgrades may include system advancements to provide a higher quality air concentration in each of our buildings that students/staff frequent.
- Alterations to learning space for meeting physical distancing guidelines. Including but not limited to: increased seating, barriers/dividers, signage, etc.

Acceleration of Learning

Section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act requires each LEA to use twenty percent of its formula funds to address the academic impact of lost instructional time (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.

Killingly Public Schools will use at least \$650,804 of its ARP ESSER funds to address unfinished learning as described below.

- Summer Enrichment & Recovery: Killingly schools will partner with local agencies to extend offerings during the summer months for students and families.
- School-Based Monitoring Teams: Killingly schools will accelerate student success through the use of school-based monitoring teams which will track student data and adjust to student needs.
- Implementation of additional in school interventions provided by tutors, interventionists, and coaches.
- Targeted instructional materials which focus on progression through specific prioritized learning standards for all students.

Addressing Students Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health Needs

As noted in the enclosed document, supporting social and emotional learning (SEL) is an integral part of our plan to ensure success for all students in Killingly. Our program focuses on the implementation of a plan which ensures all young people and adults acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions.

Programs supported through ARP ESSER funds include: RULER, Responsive Classroom, Second Step and PYRAMID.

State of Connecticut Guidelines and Expectations

from ADAPT, ADVANCE, ACHIEVE: Connecticut's Plan to Learn and Grow Together





Due to positive containment efforts in Connecticut, reopening schools in person can be successfully achieved based upon current data. Connecticut has determined it is appropriate to plan a consistent approach to the operating model (schedule), but be prepared to modify plans as necessary. Maximizing in-person instructional time after the current period of disruption is critical. However, given the uncertainty planning for reopening months from now, schools must be prepared to modify their reopening model to support a partial reopening if the public health data changes.

Schools should plan to have all students, in all districts, return to schoolhouses for full-time instruction at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, so long as public health data continues to support this model. This model will be supported with more intensive mitigation strategies and specific monitoring, containment and class cancellation plans.

As Connecticut schools plan to reopen, the guidance and considerations outlined in this document are grounded in six guiding principles:

1. Safeguarding the health & safety of students and staff;
2. Allowing **all** students the opportunity to return into the classrooms **full time** starting in the fall;
3. Monitoring the school populations and, when necessary, potentially cancelling classes in the future to appropriately contain COVID-19 spread;
4. Emphasizing equity, access, and support to the students and communities who are emerging from this historic disruption;
5. Fostering strong two-way communication with partners such as families, educators and staff; and
6. Factoring into decisions about reopening the challenges to the physical safety and social-emotional well-being of our students when they are not in school.

Main Operational Considerations when required

	<p>Cohorting: When required, emphasize grouping students by the same class/group of students and teacher (into a cohort) so each team functions independently as much as possible. Consider this methodology by grade levels. Placing students in cohorts is strongly encouraged for grades K-8, and encouraged where feasible for grades 9-12.</p>		<p>Transportation: When required, local Educational Agencies (LEAs) should plan for buses to operate close to capacity with heightened health and safety protocols, including requiring all students and operators to wear face coverings. Plans must be developed to activate increased social distancing protocols based upon community spread.</p>
	<p>Social Distancing and Facilities: When required, building space and reconfigure available classroom space, such as gymnasiums and auditoriums, to maximize social distancing, consistent with public health guidelines in place at that time.</p>		<p>Face Coverings: When required, all staff and students will be expected to wear a protective face covering or face mask that completely covers the nose and mouth when inside the school building, except for certain exceptions including when teachers are providing instruction.</p>

The Role of Social Emotional Learning in our Planning (SEL)

Killingly Public Schools believes that the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and well-being of our students, staff and families is at the heart of building a high-quality education for all. Killingly Public Schools strive to co-create a supportive learning environment where all students and adults can enhance their social and emotional competencies, feel a sense of belonging, and heal and thrive in a meaningful way. Building positive relationships helps to establish and empower a supportive community of learners. We strive to enhance equity experiences and outcomes for all students and adults across race, gender identity, disability, language and socio-economic backgrounds.

Use of ARP ESSER to Support Access to Technology in Reopening

Killingly Public Schools recognizes the role that technology plays in providing access to learning for all students. In developing our plan, Killingly Schools anchored our practice in the following beliefs:

- ❑ Every Student needs to have access to learning. To achieve this, our infrastructure needs to support both access (wireless hot spots) and engagement (age-appropriate technology) to support the district's pedagogical vision.
- ❑ Our school leaders need to support best practice by supporting innovative and impactful professional learning for technology integration that models digital learning best practices.
- ❑ We must ensure a robust infrastructure which supports Data and Privacy: Protecting data and IT systems (especially as it relates to student and employee personally identifiable information) while leveraging the power of data to improve teaching, learning and operations.

While digital equity has always been an important issue, the COVID-19 school closures and distance learning this spring threw the inequities many students experience into stark relief. Given that new reality, the KPS technology will focus specifically on digital equity explicitly in the following contexts:


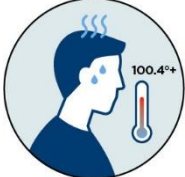




- ❑ Equitable access to a device that enables powerful learning at school and at home
- ❑ Equitable access to robust, reliable internet at school and at home
- ❑ Equitable access to high-quality teaching and learning that meaningfully integrates technology

Communications Plan


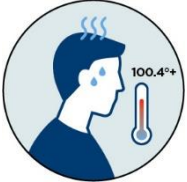



Killingly Public Schools had established the following protocols for ongoing communication of policies and procedures.

- ❑ Communication of policies, protocols, and relevant information will be shared utilizing multiple means, including the School Messenger Notification System (phone, text and email), district website (<https://www.killinglyschools.org/>), and social media.
- ❑ Communications will be made available in the preferred language of families.
- ❑ Any time critical information needs to be made available to the community regarding policies or changes to the health data, this information will be disseminated utilizing the methods detailed above.
- ❑ Should the determination be made to close schools, this information will be sent via the Superintendent of Schools to the community through the use of School Messenger (voice/email), social media, and district website.

Student Expectations

	<p>Stay home if feeling ill. Students must stay home if they are feeling sick and have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Unvaccinated students who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19 should also stay home. Students should remain home until permitted to return by CSDE and SDE guidelines.</p>
	<p>Morning health check by parents recommended. In order to prevent transmission among the school population, parents are instructed to screen students before leaving for school. Check to ensure temperature is below 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit and observe for symptoms associated with COVID 19 outlined by public health officials.</p>
	<p>Frequent hand washing or hand sanitizing expected. Students must engage in frequent hand washing or sanitizing upon arrival, before and after meals, after bathroom use, and after coughing or sneezing.</p>
	<p>Face coverings or masks when required. Students must wear face coverings or masks that completely cover the nose and mouth while inside the school and on the bus, with exceptions only for those students for whom it is not safe to do so due to medical conditions. "Mask Breaks" will be provided during the day. Parents will be responsible for providing students with face coverings or masks. Schools will have backup disposable masks available for students who forget them. Student face shields are permitted, but the face shields must be worn in addition to a mask, and do not serve as a substitute.</p>
	<p>Social distancing when required. Students must maintain social distancing to the greatest extent possible. Students are expected to practice social distancing when entering and exiting the building, in classrooms, and moving throughout the school.</p>
	<p>Students may not change buses unless required. To the extent that it is possible, students will be expected to ride the same bus to school in the morning and the same bus to home in the afternoon every day. Face coverings or masks should be in place prior to entering the bus.</p>

Adult Expectations

	<p>Stay home if feeling ill.</p> <p>Teachers, staff, and volunteers must stay home if they are feeling sick, have any symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Unvaccinated teachers, staff, and volunteers who have had close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19, should stay home.</p>
	<p>Morning self-screening required.</p> <p>In order to prevent transmission among the school population, teachers, staff, and volunteers are instructed to self-screen before leaving for school. Check to ensure temperature is below 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit and observe for symptoms associated with COVID 19 outlined by public health officials.</p>
	<p>Frequent hand washing or hand sanitizing expected.</p> <p>Teachers, staff, and volunteers and staff must engage in frequent hand washing or sanitizing upon arrival, before and after meals, after bathroom use, and after coughing or sneezing.</p>
	<p>Social distancing when required.</p> <p>Teachers, staff, and volunteers must maintain social distancing to the greatest extent possible.</p>
	<p>Face coverings or masks when required.</p> <p>Teachers, staff, and volunteers must wear face coverings or masks that completely cover the nose and mouth while inside the school, with exceptions only for those for whom it is not safe to do so due to medical conditions. "Mask Breaks" will be provided during the day. Teachers will be allowed to remove masks during direct instruction with permission and greater social distancing. Schools will have backup disposable masks available for teachers, staff, and volunteers. Use of face shields are permitted, but the face shields must be worn in addition to a mask, and do not serve as a substitute.</p>

Signs and Messages

All schools in district will post signs within visible locations to help mitigate spread of the virus. Signs will be accessible for individuals with disabilities and in languages appropriate for the school population.

- ❑ Signs will be provided by the district to all school buildings to be displayed in specific locations, as follows:
 - ❑ Handwashing procedures displayed in all public restrooms.
 - ❑ Pictorial signs depicting the proper application of facial coverings.
 - ❑ Upon entry, all buildings will display protocols for use of facial coverings, social distancing compliance, application of hand sanitizers, and hand washing reminders.
 - ❑ Signs visible in high traffic areas illustrating the signs/symptoms of COVID-19 and instructions for when to stay at home.
- ❑ Signs will be formatted in languages appropriate for the school populations.
- ❑ KPS will work, utilizing in-house video resources, on the development of educational videos.

Ventilation

In collaboration with the state plan, to ensure effective ventilation of operating spaces within our buildings, KPS will ensure all ventilation systems are functional and current on inspections and maintenance.

Guiding Document:

- ❑ All ventilation systems will be operated at full capacity one week prior to the reopening of school.
- ❑ Killingly Public Schools will operate utilizing [Guidance for School Systems for the Operation of Central and non-Central Ventilation Systems during the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

Training for Staff Related to Health and Safety Protocols

Identify the training for staff related to health and safety protocols prior to the first day of classes.

- ❑ Training sessions were developed to facilitate training with staff, including substitutes, and students on protocols around social distancing, and effective hygiene practices.

Bathroom Protocols

Killingly Public Schools has developed the following protocols for student bathroom use to ensure cleanliness while maximizing social distancing during the school day.

Cleaning and Disinfection

- ❑ Twice daily, the cleaning and disinfection of restrooms must occur when the building is occupied. These cleaning times will be logged and visible to bathroom visitors.
- ❑ Cleaning and disinfection of restroom surfaces will also occur after conclusion of the school day.
- ❑ All cleaning products utilized on surfaces will follow [Connecticut School Green Cleaning Law](#).
- ❑ Cleaning products will be utilized in well ventilated areas and will follow the manufacturer's stated instructions for use (contact time, surface application).

Class Groups and Cohort Teams

When necessary, Killingly Public Schools will utilize following strategies for establishing cohorts within our school population to assist with contact tracing mechanisms. Cohorts are not to be based on any specific demographic or disability category.

- ❑ Killingly Public Schools will implement the key strategy of establishing stable cohorts within the school population, when feasible.
 - Placing students in cohorts is ***strongly encouraged*** for grades K–6, and ***encouraged where feasible*** for grades 7–12.
- ❑ Ensure cohorts are not based upon any specific demographic or disability criteria.
- ❑ Educate students, families, and staff on the value of cohorts. Ensure they understand that other health and safety guidelines remain important to minimize the risk of infection.
- ❑ As part of their practice, schools will restrict the mixing of cohorts. This includes but is not limited to: eating times, open periods, and study halls.
- ❑ Assign classroom groups with teams of teachers and support personnel, and as much as possible restrict mixing between teams. This includes; support services, interventionists and paraprofessionals where possible.
- ❑ Killingly Schools shall name cohorts and notify families of the cohorts so that they can use that information when scheduling any activities, carpools, or other engagement outside the schoolhouse.
- ❑ When possible, have teachers of specific academic content areas rotate, instead of student groups.

Visitor Protocol

- ❑ Killingly Public Schools will continue to implement universal visitor protocol for the district. This protocol can be found in our [district guidelines](#).

Recess and Playgrounds

- ❑ When required, elementary cohorts will be provided a designated recess area and equipment.
- ❑ Students shall be permitted to remove masks during recess in accordance with state guidelines.
- ❑ Hand sanitizing will be required by all students to and from recess.

Student Nutrition

- ❑ For the 2021-22 school year, all students are eligible to receive one free breakfast and one free lunch each day.
- ❑ Schools will continue to follow the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and After School Snack program guidelines. Schools will make use of the unitized meal option and limit the offer vs serve option.
- ❑ Eligibility for free and reduced lunch will continue to be collected.
- ❑ Schools will continue to use a POS system to ensure accurate collection and tracking of meals served.
- ❑ All returning food service department team members will be attending an opening in-service to review all NSLP, SBP and ASP serving requirements.
- ❑ All special dietary needs will be handled on a case-to-case basis with the food service departments cafeteria manager and the school nurse.
- ❑ All returning food service department team members will be attending a training on updated food handling protocols and cross contact mitigation.
- ❑ All food service department team members will be attending an in-service on district PPE requirements and the expanded daily self-reporting wellness policy by the FSMC.
- ❑ The district will heavily encourage all families to use the online payment option to reduce the use of personal checks and currency at the registers.
- ❑ In all schools, the School Breakfast Program (SBP) will distribute complete unitized meals that meet all the SBP requirements in take-out containers. The food service department will establish mobile food kiosks with paper class rosters or tablet registers (when available) at select entry locations throughout the school. As students enter the building, they will have the option to purchase their breakfast meals and take them back to the homeroom/classroom. Hand sanitizing and trash removal will be handled in the classroom.

Reporting Illnesses

The following protocols have been established to support the reporting of illness in the district.

- ❑ Students and staff will be advised to remain home from school or work if they present symptoms (fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea or sore throat) pertinent to COVID-19.
- ❑ The school nurse in each building will be the contact person for reporting staff and student illness.
- ❑ The district will maintain all information about the employee or student illness as part of medical records.

Immunizations and Health Assessments

- ❑ Immunizations- The district head nurse will continue to update staff with changes to immunizations and CSDE guidance in accordance with guidelines from the Department of Public Health issued on [June 17, 2020](#) emphasizing the importance of protecting students by staying up to date on immunizations.
- ❑ Health Assessments- The district head nurse will continue to update staff with changes to health assessments and CSDE guidance in accordance with guidelines from the Department of Public Health issued on [June 26, 2020](#) emphasizing the requirements for health assessments prior to students entering school.
- ❑ Testing can be found: at the NDDH website:
<https://www.nddh.org/services/emergency-preparedness/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/>

Face Coverings

The district will implement mask use in accordance with the guidelines established by the State of Connecticut for the use of face coverings for all staff, students and visitors when inside the school building. Policy exemptions will be stated for those who are incapable of wearing a covering due to an underlying health issue.

Structured Mask Breaks

- ❑ Students will have a minimum of two structured mask breaks per day, in addition to lunch and recess.
- ❑ Should a mask break be permitted inside, students must be at least 3-feet apart, in all directions.

Academic Planning

The Importance of Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

The Killingly Public Schools Reopening Task Force has established the following expectations for Social Emotional Learning.

District Level Expectations

- Create a SEL Resource Informational page on the district website.
- Work with SEL school-based committees to ensure the inclusion of Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) to benefit the entire school community.
- Re-examine Strategic School Plans regarding existing SEL programs in each school.
- Provide communication and resources to all stakeholders that SEL is foundational to the well-being of all students, staff and families.
- Share resources including, PBIS, Restorative Practices, Ruler, etc.
- Ensure that each school provides Social Emotional support for all staff.
- Provide support for staff in regard to their physical/emotional wellness via survey check-ins, informal conversations, email, etc.
- Provide Professional Development/time for trauma sensitive school training.

School Level Expectations

- Ensure a SEL highly functioning team exists in each building.
- Spend extended time at the start of school to assess the needs of staff and students.
- Provide time for non-academic check-ins for students to practice and reflect upon social and emotional competencies throughout the day.
- Provide PD at the start of the year.
- Provide time to ensure that SEL goals and lessons are created to meet the needs of students' frustration, worry, needs and wants.
- Plan for SEL that is integrated into academic content and instruction.

Blended Learning

When appropriate, blended learning is learning that combines online digital tools, resources and media with technology and classroom methods, with some element of student control over time, place, path or pace. Blended Learning can take place on site, on campus, in a single classroom or in other settings. A Blended Learning environment provides a mix of face-to-face synchronous learning opportunities and asynchronous online learning opportunities. The blended learning environment is designed to provide teachers with the resources necessary to both innovate and differentiate instruction according to the needs and strengths of each student.

Killingly Public Schools provides our students with a positive blended learning experience by:

- Providing appropriate technology to support blended learning.
- Providing staff with appropriate support and professional development to negotiate the blended learning environment.
- Understanding that age-appropriate engagement is the key to blended learning.

Additional resources on blended learning are available for families in the [KPS Blended Learning Document](#)

Special Education

- The district will comply with all federal and state mandates and statutes.
- The district will survey the special education case managers to determine if students with disabilities are unable to access the reopening plan.
- Staff will facilitate individualized and alternative means of re-entry based upon individualized student needs, present level of functioning, developmental levels, and student/parent input.
- Students unable to wear protective personal equipment will be identified with alternative protocols put into place such as the use of alternative face coverings.
- The district will identify high-risk students that may require remote instruction and/ or blended learning due to underlying health conditions or family members at risk.
- Programming decisions will not be based on a student's disability category but the student's developmental level and skills will be considered when required to follow district protocols.
- Special education programs may be allowed some flexibility with guidelines as long as the programs follow standards and public health strategies (hygiene, social distancing, and cleaning/sanitizing.)
- Communication will occur with families of students with a high level of need to develop transition plans to assist them in their return to the school building. The use of social stories, visual cues, and other developmentally appropriate strategies can be used to reinforce these new concepts and protocols.
- For students who need physical assistance with feeding, toileting or activities of daily living, protocols will be established and staff training will occur around safety and PPE.

- ❑ PPE practices will be developed for interacting with students who exhibit significant behaviors that require hands on de-escalation.
- ❑ All established processes for identification, parental notifications, assessment requirements, and provision of services will be followed.

English Learners

- ❑ All language instruction education programs for English Learners will resume as well as supports to allow them to access academic content.
- ❑ Communication with parents and guardians that have limited proficiency in English will occur in the language they understand through translation and/or interpretation services.
- ❑ Students who are dually identified as ELs and students with a disability will continue to receive support for their EL needs as well as supports for their disabilities.
- ❑ All established processes for identification, parental notifications, assessment requirements, and provision of services will be followed.
- ❑ Communication will be ongoing with families of ELs regarding remote learning and returning to their school building in their native language.

Reopening our schools- Sources Cited

Please note that sections of our document have been developed using resources from the following sources:

- **“Adapt, Advance, Achieve” Connecticut’s Plan to Learn and Grow Together** - Connecticut State Department of Education
- **Allegany Public Schools Reopening Plan:** [APR ESSER](#)
- **Reopen Connecticut**” - Rules for operating Summer School during COVID 19 - State of Connecticut
- **“Preparing for a Safe Return to Classroom Learning”** - State of Connecticut
- **“Stronger Together”** - A Guidebook for the Safe Reopening of California’s Public Schools - California Department of Education
- **“Back to School RI”** - Reopening RI: Health and Safety Guidance - State of Rhode Island
- **“Guidance on Required Safety Supplies for Reopening Schools”** - Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- **“Initial Fall School Reopening Guidance”** - Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
- **“Preliminary Guidance for Phased Reopening of Pre-K to 12 Schools”** - State of Pennsylvania Department of Education
- **K-12 Schools and Childcare Programs** - FAQs for Administrators, Teachers, and Parents - [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)
- **Recommendations for Protections and Procedures Regrading Education and Connecticut’s Public Schools** – Connecticut Education Association, CEA
- **School Reopening Plan-** East Hampton Public Schools
- **School Reopening Plan-** Stafford Public Schools
- **Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports:** <https://www.pbis.org/>
- **Restorative Practices:** <https://www.iirp.edu/>
- Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence: **RULER** <https://ycei.org/ruler>