

Safe Return Plan 2023-2024

LEA Name: Waterford Township School District

Initial Date: June 22, 2021

Date Revised: June 21, 2024

Amendment #6

1. Maintaining Health and Safety

For each mitigation strategy listed below (A–F), 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.

A. Universal and correct wearing of masks:

Staff will continue to follow district directives and protocols for themselves and their students, which are driven by NJDOH, NJDOE, Camden County DOE, Camden County DOH, and CDC guidance.

NJDOH recommends that schools/ECE require masks in the following circumstances:

- **During periods of elevated community transmission** masks may be required.
- **During an active outbreak** – during an outbreak or a general increase in cases, schools/ECE should consult with their LHD as to whether short-term universal masking or masking in affected classrooms should be required to control the outbreak/increase in cases.
- **After returning from isolation** – students and staff who return to school are recommended to wear a mask.
- **After a COVID-19 exposure** - exposed individuals are recommended to wear a mask.
- **When illness occurs in school/ECE** – students or staff who become ill with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 while in school or care should wear a mask until they leave the premises.

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

The district will make a reasonable effort to comply with Federal, State, and local guidance for physical distancing measures when applicable.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette:

Students will continue to wash hands before and after lunch, physical education classes, and recess. Hand sanitizer will be provided and available for students and staff in each classroom, cafeteria, front office, and in the hallways. Staff will continue to reinforce respiratory etiquette behaviors, including but not limited to: frequent hand-washing, for at least 20 seconds; use of hand sanitizer, when it is not possible to wash hands; staying home when sick; knowing how COVID-19 and other airborne illnesses spread; and covering the mouth and nose with a tissue or elbow when coughing/sneezing.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation:

The district contracted with TTI to provide cleaning protocols for custodians prior to opening in 2020-2021. The Supervisor of Facilities and Maintenance will update the Cleaning/Disinfectant Manual. All custodial staff will be trained on the procedures and expectations prior to the start of the school year. High-touch surface areas will be cleaned throughout the day through scheduled cleaning. Bathrooms

will be cleaned after each scheduled hygiene class has used them. A schedule of these times will be provided to each building custodian. The use of water fountains will be prohibited unless filling a water bottle.

Hand sanitizer will be provided to each classroom. The custodian will routinely check hand sanitizer stations for refill. All staff members will be provided hand sanitizer and wipes at the start of the school year. Refills will be available upon request.

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

The **superintendent** and/or designee(s) will work closely with the Camden County Health Department to support any efforts towards identifying students/staff necessary to facilitate contact tracing for confirmed COVID-19 cases that impact the district/school community. Follow CDC/DOH guidelines as applicable for isolation and quarantine requirements.

Parents should not send students to school/ECE when sick. For school/ECE settings, NJDOH recommends that students with the following symptoms be promptly isolated from others and excluded from school/ECE:

- **At least two of the following symptoms:** fever (measure or subjective), chills, rigors (shivers), myalgia (muscle aches), headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, congestion or runny nose; OR
- **At least one of the following symptoms:** new or worsening cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, new olfactory disorder, new taste disorder.
- For students with chronic illness, only new symptoms, or symptoms worse than baseline should be used to fulfill symptom-based exclusion criteria.

COVID-19 exclusion (isolation) criteria for persons who have COVID-19 compatible symptoms or who test positive for COVID-19:

Individuals regardless of vaccination status who test positive, individuals with confirmed COVID-19 within the past 90 days who have COVID-19 symptoms and who test positive, and individuals with COVID-19 symptoms who have not been tested and do not have an alternative diagnosis from their healthcare provider should:

- Stay home for at least 24 hours after the onset of symptoms or if asymptomatic after the positive test (day of symptoms is day 0; if asymptomatic, day the test was performed is day 0).
- Recommended to wear a mask when around others at home and in public (indoors and outdoors) for an additional 5 days. For these additional 5 days, schools/ECE should have a plan to ensure adequate distance during those activities (i.e., eating) when mask wearing is not possible. Time without a mask being worn should be kept to a minimum possible.

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

The district will continue to monitor the needs of children with disabilities adhering to the Special Education Code. Implementation of services will return to as they were prior to the pandemic. An array of services from special education self-contained to pull-out resource/support, and an inclusion setting will be provided in an effort to provide the least restrictive environment for the students.

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)

Academic Needs:

A variety of academic support will be provided to continue to close the learning gap for students during the 2023-2024 school year and beyond. Students have been identified for Response to Intervention (RtI) intense intervention and small group instruction in ELA and Mathematics. The district will offer a summer program and high impact after school tutoring for students exhibiting a loss of learning.

Social/Emotional & Mental Health:

A Social & Emotional Learning Enrichment has been added to the enrichment schedule to provide additional support to our students. Although wellness check-ins will be infused into the schedule to continue to engage students in discussion about healthy hygiene and habits, the additional enrichment class will provide further social/emotional support for the students.

3. Public Comment

A. 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. Note, the ARP requires that LEAs seek public comment for each 60-day revision to the plan. (1000-character limit)

Waterford Township will continue to provide the school community with frequent communication via Zoom, Google surveys, and written communication in an effort to engage the stakeholders. The district prides itself on being responsive to the stakeholders and community at large. The district has gone to great lengths to accommodate families and staff during this challenging time, however it is the district's desire to remain focused on educating students as the pandemic has created incredible challenges for our students academically, socially, and emotionally.

B. 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. (1000-character limit)

The plan will be posted on the district website in written and presentation form. An explanation of the plan will be delivered to the community at a board of education meeting in which all stakeholders will be invited to participate. Public comment and questions will be addressed at this time as well.

C. Briefly describe any guidance professional learning and technical assistance opportunities the LEA will make available to its schools. (0 of 1000 maximum characters used)

The district will utilize its in-service days in August, December and/or February to provide any additional/necessary PD and technical assistance opportunities, as well as time during grade level and building meetings.