pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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 information related to 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: RINGGOLD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Initial Effective Date: July 1, 2021

Date of Last Review: January 15, 2025

Date of Last Revision: January 17, 2024

Previously Approved: July 17, 2023

How will the LEA, to the greatest extent practicable, support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning? Ringgold School District will monitor the latest recommendations from PDE, PADOH, and CDC and update their Health and Safety Plans as needed. Plans will be presented to the governing Board for approval when changes are necessary. Facilities and practices will be adapted to the extent possible to ensure that appropriate prevention and mitigation processes are followed.

1. 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? Educational models will be adapted to the needs of the students as appropriate including virtual if needed. Social, emotional, mental health and other needs will be monitored and provided by school health providers, social workers and other mental behavior specialists when needed. Food service will be provided using various models as appropriate to the situation, including the availability of free meals if needed for students throughout the entire year.

2. 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
• Universal and correct wearing of masks;	• The District supports the choice of parents in making decisions on mask wearing for their child and the District will support parents who elect to have their child wear a mask. The District will not require universal masking for students.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	• The District reserves the right to transition to remote learning when any of the following metrics occur: a) Staff absences exceed a rate at which appropriate classroom instruction can be provided even after exhausting coverage and substitute efforts. b) Bus driver absences create a situation that prevents the transportation of students to school.
• Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);	• The latest CDC guidance has removed the recommendation for "podding" and cohorting.
• Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;	• The District will continue to provide instructional literature regarding handwashing and respiratory etiquette available in the school nurse offices. • Nurses will provide age appropriate instruction on handwashing and respiratory etiquette when necessary and appropriate. • Hand sanitation stations have been placed in various locations throughout the buildings and appropriate use will be encouraged.
• Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation;	• The District will continue to implement a thorough cleaning schedule in bathrooms, classrooms, locker rooms, cafeterias, and other high traffic spaces. • In instances of known cases, the District will increase cleaning and E-misting efforts as appropriate in identified areas. • The District will ensure that ventilation systems are serviced and will attempt to increase total airflow supply to occupied spaces to the greatest extent possible. • The District will improve the level of air filtration to the greatest extent

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	possible without significantly decreasing air flow.
• Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State and local health departments;	• For students who test positive for COVID-19 the District recommends that students and families follow the CDC guidance. • Universal case investigation and contact tracing are no longer recommended by the CDC in school settings. The CDC now recommends case investigation and contact tracing only in health care settings and certain high-risk congregate settings. Schools are not considered high-risk congregate settings by the CDC.
• Diagnostic and screening testing;	• Students/staff suspected of possible COVID-19 infection will be directed towards medical care for testing.
• Efforts to provide information related to vaccinations to school communities;	• Work with community health centers and hospitals to provide brochures and other information as to when and where staff and students can receive vaccinations at their sites.
• Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and	• Ringgold School District will continue to provide any necessary accommodations to students with disabilities as they pertain to the health and safety plan.
• Coordination with state and local health officials.	• Ringgold will work together with the PDE, PADOH, community health agencies and County Emergency Management Agencies to coordinate resources in accordance with their health and safety plan.

Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for **Ringgold School District** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on **January 15, 2025**.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

9 **Yes**

0 **No**

Affirmed on: **January 15, 2025**

By:

Maureen Ott

(*Signature* of Board President*)

Maureen Ott

(*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.