



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 Through an Integrated System of Support](#)
- [PA Department of Health - COVID-19 in Pennsylvania](#)

Health and Safety Plan Summary: **Freedom Area School District**

Initial Effective Date: (July 28, 2021)

Date of Last Review: (October 7, 2021) (January 6, 2022) (September 1, 2022)

Date of Last Revision: (October 7, 2021) (January 6, 2022) (September 1, 2022)

1. 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?

The Freedom Area School District (FASD) will continue to review the guidance from the Pennsylvania Department of Health (PA DOH) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and revise the Health and Safety Plan according to the recommendations of the two entities. FASD current protocols align with the PA DOH and the CDC guidance. The Superintendent currently participates in regular county-wide meetings, facilitated by the Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit to stay abreast of current guidelines, collaborate with colleagues, and consider best practices. In addition, the FASD has partnered with local health care professionals and has relied on their expertise to help navigate the pandemic. Additionally, the FASD nurses have participated in regular, county-wide meetings that have provided valuable resources for all of the school district. The Health and Safety Plan is viewed as a dynamic document and will be updated as new guidelines, regulations, and mandates warrant.

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?

The FASD will continue to educate students regardless of level of community transmission. Recommendations by the PDE and PA DOH for instructional models when levels of transmission increases will be considered along with the desire to educate students in person, if safe to do so. District staff will work with families to meet the educational programming needs pertinent to their child(ren) with options for in-person learning, and online learning.

In the event the district would need to transition to a complete virtual environment, students will utilize the district-provided technology device. In addition to curricular resources, staff utilize age-appropriate resources such as Edgenuity, and APEX. Staff and students managed the virtual environment well in the 2020-2021 school year and we expect to continue the growth with virtual platforms to enhance learning while in-school and be the platform for learning if a transition to a virtual learning environment is warranted.

Connections between staff and students will continue via video in a virtual

environment. Office hours and help sessions for students experiencing academic, behavioral or social/emotional needs would be available. Any student receiving special services in school would be provided in a virtual environment, following current PA DOH and the CED current guidelines.

We have and will continue to work with families when connectivity is an issue. Hot spots have been provided to families for temporary or more permanent internet service. This support will continue to be provided. We will continue to ensure that the Wi-Fi signal from our buildings continues to travel outside and is accessible from the parking lots and other areas around the school buildings.

To assist students and staff with social/emotional and mental health needs, the FASD school guidance counselors and school nurses provide assistance. Partnerships with FASD's health care provider, Blue Cross Blue Shield also disseminates information to staff on a regular basis in an effort to provide valuable resources which address mental health concerns. All related services, such as OT, PT and Family Behavioral Services continued to be provided virtually.

Food services, including breakfast and lunch will continue regardless of the instructional model. The FASD transportation provider is prepared to provide any transportation necessary, regardless of the instructional model and they work with district staff to ensure they understand the needs of the FASD and any out of district placements to which they are transporting students.

- 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal and correct wearing of masks; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FASD will consider all current guidelines, orders, etc. from the PA DOH, PDE, Governor's Office, and the CDC. This information will be shared with the community and staff. FASD will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider guidance from the CDC, PA Dept. of Health and the PA Department of Education for mask mandates for in person instruction, extra-curricular activities and transportation. As of April 14, 2023, masks are only required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For 10 days if a person who has been vaccinated and exposed to COVID-19 but continues to attend school or work. On days 6 – 10 following an exposure to someone who has tested positive or On days 6 – 10 if an individual tested positive but is returning to school/work. Post mask orders at entrances,

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train staff on appropriate wearing of masks at the beginning of the school year. • Train students regarding appropriate use of masks. • Post signage throughout the building to remind staff and students of the mandate and appropriate wearing of masks.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FASD will consider all current guidelines, orders, etc. from the PA DOH, PDE, Governor's Office, and the CDC. This information will be shared with the community and staff. • To the greatest extent possible, FASD will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement social distancing based on PA DOH, PDE, and CDC recommendations. • Move larger classes to larger classrooms. • Remove miscellaneous and unused furniture to establish maximum social distancing. • Hold classes outdoors when possible. • Maintain social distancing patterns within classrooms and throughout the common areas, i.e., hallways, stairwells, etc. • Post signage to show traffic flow, repurpose stair wells to be up/down stairs. • Require staff and students to practice social distancing by staying at least 3 feet from other people in both indoor and outdoor spaces. • Allow elementary students to have recess and, if applicable, students will be separated in grade-level cohorts so they can continue to have recess.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handwashing and respiratory etiquette; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FASD will consider all current guidelines, orders, etc. from the PA DOH, PDE, Governor's Office, and the CDC. This information will be shared with the community and staff. • FASD will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train all staff on healthy hygiene practices so they can teach the students and safely perform all aspects of their job classification. • Ensure handwashing strategies include washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing their nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizer which contains at least 60% alcohol will be provided. • Check soap dispensers and hand sanitizers throughout the day to ensure that they are functional and have adequate supplies.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the school nurses review PA DOH and CDC resources are available online to share information and educational aspects of handwashing and respirator etiquette. Items will be shared via social media and on the district website to educate and encourage proper hygiene among students, staff, and the community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FASD will consider all current guidelines, orders, etc. from the PA DOH, PDE, Governor’s Office, and the CDC. This information will be shared with the community and staff. • FASD will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create schedules so that all Facilities Personnel are instructed on their areas of cleaning and their areas of responsibility have been reviewed. • Daily disinfecting protocols will be followed by custodians and Facilities Staff to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restroom handles, • Door handles, • Sinks • Stair railings, • Water bottle refilling handles, • Office counters • Make appropriate cleaning supplies (disinfecting spray and paper towels) in all work spaces for use by staff. • Make hand sanitizing stations available throughout all buildings. • Limit sharing of high touch objects that are difficult to regularly clean such as, electronic devices, pens, pencils, books, games, art supplies, lab equipment, to the greatest extent possible. • When a student or staff member is sent home with any COVID symptoms, the nurse will notify the principal and Facilities Staff and applicable areas will be cleaned and disinfected. • A district data sheet noting students who have tested positive or are on “attendance restriction” will be maintained by district staff. • There will be a designated “well” and “sick” area within each Nurse’s office. Upon a student or staff member leaving a “sick” are, the Nurse will allow for ventilation and appropriate time between students or staff before the area will be cleaned. <p>VIRTUAL SCHOOL/REMOTE LEARNING School or District-wide Virtual Learning</p>

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	<p>Freedom Area School District will offer Virtual School as an attendance option when the district must temporarily close a school due to an outbreak of COVID-19.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The implementation of a virtual learning option will be revisited if the number of positive cases in the school reaches a “substantial spread”.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State and local health departments; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FASD will consider all current guidelines, orders, etc. from the PA DOH, PDE, Governor’s Office, and the CDC. This information will be shared with the community and staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a student, staff, or visitor exhibits signs or symptoms of COVID-19, they will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notification will be made to the School Nurse prior to sending/coming to the health office Be masked immediately Be placed in the isolation area Be assessed after PPE is applied by the School Nurse The parent/guardian will be called. The student will be escorted to the car once the parent/guardian arrives. Parents/guardians will be advised to follow up with their PCP. A virtual visit may be set up while at the school or at home if the parent/guardian chooses. Parents will receive instructions on how this is conducted. In addition to the above, the following procedures will be followed when an individual presents with COVID-19 symptoms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The area used by the individual who is symptomatic will be closed off and will not be used again until it is cleaned and disinfected. The most recent PA DOH guidance on home isolation or quarantine and returning to school will be referred to and followed considered. The School Nurse will follow the screening tool which identifies the conditions related to a student’s or staff member’s return to school or work. The School Nurse and/or building principal will conduct contact tracing. Students or staff members who have been exposed to a person testing positive will be required to wear a mask for 10 days. Students or staff experiencing symptoms should stay home. If symptoms continue they should follow up with a physician to determine if a COVID 19 test is necessary.

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	<p>The following guidance will be followed in determining staff or students who must isolate at home and/or wear masks:</p> <p><u>Staff/students who test positive for COVID:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regardless of vaccination status, anyone who tests positive must be isolated at home for at least 5 calendar days. • Individual may return to school/work after 5 days if he/she has no symptoms or if symptoms have improved. • If returning to school, masks must be worn from day 6 to day 10. <p><u>Staff/students do not need to isolate after exposure to COVID unless the individual becomes symptomatic.</u></p> <p><u>These individuals must wear a mask in school for 10 days.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The School Nurse or Superintendent will contact Rapid Response, PA DOH or CDC, as guided by current protocols. They will collaborate with state health departments when investigating cases and exposures to COVID-19. • The Superintendent will coordinate with the PA Department of Education to ensure compliance with applicable laws related to privacy and the collection/sharing of this information as they undertake these activities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Attendance Policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The FASD Board Policy, #204 Attendance will be followed except for the temporary modifications listed below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A doctor's note will not be required of a student for the first or second time a student is absent due to COVID. Parents must notify the attendance secretary of a positive COVID test. (At home tests will be accepted.) • A doctor's note will be required if a student is absent for three or more rounds of COVID. • If a doctor's note is not submitted to the attendance secretary, the absence will be marked as "unexcused."
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diagnostic and screening testing; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FASD will ask that all parents, guardians and staff complete the symptom screening at home each morning before coming to school/work. • Children with symptoms should not report to school or be placed on a bus.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If symptomatic, district staff should remain home. If unsure, district staff should contact the School Nurse or Superintendent. • Students and staff will consistently be made aware of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. • Students and staff will go to the School Nurse immediately if feeling symptomatic and will be placed in an isolation area. • The District will share resources with the school community to help families understand when to keep children home.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If requested, FASD will inform parents and community members of local sites to receive a vaccination.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students in the life skills, autism support and English Learner classes will continue to receive face-to-face instruction, unless a situation warrants a school closure for all students. • Parents may choose to transition their child(ren) to a virtual environment. • Support services may be held in person or virtually. • Students with complex needs will be addressed individually.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination with state and local health officials. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FASD will continue to collaborate with local healthcare systems as well as adhere to any regulations mandated by the PA DOH, PDE and CDC as changes in protocols occur.

Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for **Freedom Area School District** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

8 Yes

0 No

Affirmed on: 4/13/2023

By:



(Signature* of Board President)

Sharon Geibel

(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.