

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 and or PA DOH:

- 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 1-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: Pocono Mountain School District

Initial Effective Date: July 21, 2021

Date of Last Review: May 18, 2022

Date of Last Revision: August 17, 2022

The health and safety of the Pocono Mountain School District (PMSD) staff, students, families, and community, remains the top priority for the organization. PMSD leadership continues to take the necessary steps to protect the health and safety of our region in the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The primary goal is to work collaboratively with health professionals, the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH), and local health networks to adhere to protocols that are expected of all staff, students, and families. Standards and expectations are based on the latest mandates and recommendations by the Department of Health, the Department of Education, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and local health experts. As conditions related to COVID-19 change, PMSD protocols are subject to change and will be revised accordingly. Additionally, as per PDE, LEAs are to review their plans at least every six months or whenever there are significant changes to the CDC recommendations for K-12 schools.

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?

All PMSD activities and decisions will be informed by the PA DOH, PDE, and our partner health network. Depending upon the public health conditions in Monroe County, additional actions, orders, or guidance may be provided by the PDE and/or the PA DOH. PMSD will practice and support prevention and mitigation efforts in response to the changing conditions. PMSD is prepared to practice prevention and mitigation strategies along a continuum of most to least restrictive strategies in response to the changing conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to practicing standard preventative measures such as handwashing, cleaning practices, and the option of PPE, PMSD will continue to practice standard mitigation efforts to include reducing close contact when feasible and practicable.

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?

Students and families will have access to a variety of supports: school counselors, school psychologists, social workers, school-based Mental Health Programs, behavioral specialists, and partnerships with local health networks.

Students experiencing homelessness tend to be chronically absent from school, less engaged, and experience decreased social-emotional well-being due to housing instability. When COVID-19 closed schools in spring 2020, the immediate elimination of social connections, services, meal programs, extracurricular activities, and in-person engagement exponentially impacted students experiencing homelessness, who were already vulnerable academically, socially, and emotionally.

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.

PMSD recognizes that sustaining safe school operations to maximize in-person instruction is essential for student learning and student well-being, as well as essential to address the educational inequities that may have been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
<p>a. Universal and correct wearing of masks;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On December 10, 2021, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court rescinded the Acting Secretary of Health's school masking order. Please note that this decision does not impact the federal directive requiring all passengers and drivers to wear a mask on school buses, including on buses operated by public and private school systems. From this day forward, Pocono Mountain School District will not be mandating mask wearing. On February 25, 2022, the CDC announced effective immediately, masks are no longer required on buses or vans operated by public or private school systems, including early care and educational/child care programs. If the guidelines change the district will adhere to the masking on transportation. All employees shall remain socially distant to the maximum extent feasible. All students shall remain socially distant to the maximum extent feasible. Provide standard PPE for all staff and students as needed. On August 11, 2022, the CDC posted updated guidance specific to Isolation and Precaution for People with COVID-19 https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fyour-health%2Fquarantine-isolation.html
<p>b. Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When feasible and practicable, opportunities for close contact will be reduced. All employees shall remain socially distanced to the maximum extent feasible. All students shall remain socially distanced to the maximum extent feasible throughout the school day. Teachers will continue utilizing seating charts. Provide standard PPE for all staff and students as needed.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As circumstances within the pandemic change, physical/social distancing procedures may be modified.
c. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and staff will be instructed in and adhere to current PA DOH and PDE guidelines for handwashing and respiratory etiquette. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer). Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or cough or sneeze into your elbow. Used tissues should be thrown in the trash can and hands should be washed immediately with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Again, hand sanitizer may be used if soap and water are not available. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be placed throughout the school for student/staff use.
d. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation ;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue daily deep cleaning and sanitation procedures in buildings along with high touch points and bathrooms in accordance with facility usage. Cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting will be performed in accordance with current CDC, and DOH guidelines. EPA approved products will be used in accordance with labeling requirements. Buildings will maintain proper temperature and ventilation during occupancy. Air filters are replaced on an appropriate replacement schedule. Flush buildings for at least two hours prior to daily occupancy. Maintain continuous monitoring of HVAC systems and building conditions.
e. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine , in collaboration with the State and local health departments;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As COVID-19 has evolved, school mitigation strategies have had to adjust to address new challenges. Our medical partners have communicated that the quick spread of the Omicron variant, its rapid clinical course (infection period) and the reduced timelines for quarantine have made school contact tracing ineffective and impractical. Consequently, as of February 3, 2022 PMSD will no longer engage in routine contact tracing. <p>Response to a Positive COVID Case:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All confirmed positive cases should be referred to the Certified School Nurse, Human Resources, and/or Administration. Students and staff who are symptomatic and undergoing COVID testing and/or identified as a positive COVID case must be isolated according to CDC guidelines, PA DOH guidelines, and/or medical recommendations. Staff and students who test positive for COVID, show symptoms, will need to quarantine according to CDC guidelines, PA DOH guidelines, and/or medical recommendations.

f. Diagnostic and screening testing;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMSD staff and students will follow current diagnostic testing and screening procedures required by the PA DOH or PDE. Daily symptom screening will be done by all parents/guardians at home each morning before the start of the school day. No children with symptoms will be sent on a bus or brought to school. All faculty, students, and staff experiencing known COVID related symptoms will not be permitted on the district transportation and school campus.
g. Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities ;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMSD has partnered and will continue to work with public and private community health partners to provide access to care for staff, students, and families.
h. Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMSD will adhere to all modifications and accommodations for students with disabilities.
i. Coordination with state and local health officials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PMSD will maintain a Pandemic Team, that will continue to coordinate with state and local health officials on an as needed basis regarding all COVID-19 matters. PMSD will continue to partner with public health partners to monitor and mitigate local outbreaks to prevent the spread of COVID-19. PMSD will provide positive case information to the PA Dept of Health on a weekly basis as required.
j. Athletics/Extracurricular Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students, coaches and staff will continue to follow state guidance regarding face masks on district transportation. Regular cleaning of hands and shared equipment will continue. Participants should self-screen before arriving to campus and anyone not feeling well should stay home and call their healthcare provider.

2022-2023 PMSD COVID Guidelines

Staying Home When Sick and Getting Tested

- Students, teachers, and staff who have symptoms of COVID-19, should stay home and speak to a healthcare provider regarding testing for COVID-19. Staying home when sick with COVID-19 is essential to keeping COVID-19 infections out of schools and preventing the spread to others.

Staff members who test positive for COVID-19:

- Immediately notify the Human Resources department.
- Isolate at home for at least 5 days from date of symptoms or date of positive test result (if asymptomatic) and can return to work on day 6 provided they continue to mask for days 6-10.
- If you test positive but do not have symptoms, you are still required to quarantine for at least 5 days and can return to work on day 6 provided they continue to mask for days 6-10.

Students who test positive for COVID-19:

- Parents please immediately contact the school nurse or administrator to alert the district of your child's Positive status.
- Students will be required to isolate at home for at least 5 days and can return to school on day 6 provided they continue to mask for days 6-10.
- If a child tests positive but does not have symptoms, he/she is still required to quarantine for 5 days and can return to school on day 6 provided they continue to mask for days 6-10.

Quarantine Procedures

- Individuals who have COVID-19 symptoms and are awaiting test results should quarantine until results are received.
- Individuals who test positive for COVID-19 should stay home from school and isolate according to PA Department of Health guidelines.

Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for the Pocono Mountain School District reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on August 17, 2022.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

8 Yes 0 No

Affirmed on: August 17, 2022

By: 
(Signature* of Board President)

Marion Pyzik
(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.