

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: **UPPER MERION AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Initial Effective Date: JULY 1, 2021

Date of Last Review: APRIL 25, 2023

Date of Last Revision: APRIL 25, 2023

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 Upper Merion Area School District will continue in our efforts to constantly monitor the COVID-19 cases in a similar manner as was done during the Pandemic. Moreover, we will also continue to stay in direct contact with the Montgomery County Department of Health and we will follow any mandates as determined by the Governor, the State Department of Health, the CDC and the County Department of Health. This school district stands ready and able to adjust and adapt as needed should there be an unexpected or expected spike in COVID-19 cases.

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 Upper Merion Area School District was able to establish quick, direct contact with all of those individuals that we serve when the Pandemic started. Additionally, the District was able to provide direct services to all of our students within approximately three (3) weeks of the start of our shutdown. Furthermore, the instructional programming that we put in place is easily and quickly adaptable should it become necessary to shut down again for either a short term or a long term depending upon the circumstances. See [Addendum](#) for the plan for education programming for students in quarantine.

We have and will continue to spend a great deal of time assessing and addressing the social and emotional well being of not only our students but also our staff. We will be implementing different programs during the start of the 2022/2023 academic year in order to accommodate this most important need. These programs include a continued District-wide multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) framework. All schools at each level will use PBIS strategies such as check in-checkout and calm cat while integrating diversity, equity, and inclusion. In addition, the following programs and community resources will address the social and emotional needs of our students: Carson Valley SAP Services, Second Step, Life Skills, Friends for Life, Signs of Suicide, LINK Crew, Lakeside Education Network - Counseling Services, Springfield Psychological - Individual/Group Therapy and the UPenn Consortium - Training/Consultation/Resources

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.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
<p>a. Universal and correct wearing of masks;</p>	<p>All students and staff will utilize masks on a voluntary basis for the opening of the 2022/2023 school year or if any mandates are put in place by the CDC, State Department of Health or County Department of Health, UMASD will follow those mandates accordingly. UMASD may also impose a District mandate regarding the mandatory use of masks by any and all individuals who enter our buildings as is currently in place.</p> <p>UMASD will maintain a masking optional plan until or unless we reach more than 5% positive cases in any school building and at such time the District will move back to a mandatory masking policy.</p> <p>The specific reasons for this decision are due in part to the following “current indicators”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *The prevailing variant, while more transmissible, is less virulent. *All K-12 students and district staff have had the opportunity to become vaccinated. *The vaccination rate in Montgomery County is at least at or above 94%. *UMASD case counts have dropped below 2-3%. *Hospitalization rates in Montgomery County have dropped to manageable levels.
<p>b. Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);</p>	<p>If necessary due to an increase in numbers of COVID-19 cases going forward the District will adapt and adjust accordingly including but not limited to a return to social distancing within our buildings or a complete move to our virtual education model. The district will also leave</p>

	<p>the markings on the floor of each of our hallways in place along with “reminder signs” in order for those that we serve to follow good social distancing practices.</p>
<p>c. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;</p>	<p>All of our handwashing stations that are currently in each of our buildings will remain in place as well as the signage associated with good handwashing and respiratory etiquette.</p>
<p>d. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation;</p>	<p>The Upper Merion Area School District will continue to diligently clean our facilities at the close of each school day and during the day. We will also be inspecting and replacing all of our air filters associated with our HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) systems on a regular basis to assure clean air is being moved into and out of our facilities on a regular basis.</p>
<p>e. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State and local health departments;</p>	<p>The Upper Merion Area School District will maintain a high standard of health and safety practices as set forth by the State and local health departments should it become necessary.</p>
<p>f. Diagnostic and screening testing;</p>	<p>The Upper Merion Area School District will only perform diagnostic testing should that become a mandate. However, we will continue to screen any visitors that enter our buildings as per associated mandates.</p>
<p>g. Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities;</p>	<p>The Upper Merion Area School District has already partnered with Giant Food Markets to offer and continue to offer vaccinations at our Middle School. We are committed also to forwarding other such offerings to those that we serve going forward and as those opportunities are presented.</p>

<p>h. Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and</p>	<p>The Upper Merion Area School District will continue to provide any necessary accommodations for our students with disabilities as they pertain to the health and safety of ALL of our students.</p>
<p>i. Coordination with state and local health officials.</p>	<p>The Upper Merion Area School District has established relationships with State and Local health officials and we are committed to coordinating any efforts related to COVID-19 with those groups.</p>

Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for **Upper Merion Area School District** reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on May 1, **2023**.

The plan was approved by a vote of:

 Yes

 No

Affirmed on: May 1, **2023**

By:

(Signature of Board President)*

MRS. ALICE BUDNO HOPE

(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.

ADDENDUM

UMASD Plan for Educational Programming for Students in Quarantine

In the event that a student is required to quarantine due to COVID exposure or positive COVID test result, the District has developed the following plan to provide the student with access to instruction.

Goal: Provide for a student in COVID quarantine through assigned work via Schoology.

1. The quarantining student and/or parent will initiate the process by emailing the teacher no later than the beginning of the school day. (Please note that the health status of a student should not be shared with the teacher due to HIPAA regulations.)
2. Teacher(s) will provide content-related work:
 - a. **Schoology:** Teachers provide instructional materials and assignments on Schoology
 - i. If teachers are utilizing the discussion board on Schoology, the student in quarantine may participate.
3. They will answer questions raised by quarantined students that are sent to them by email.
4. Any and all communication from the quarantining student should be directed to the teacher's email and assignments submitted via Schoology.
5. Teachers will be flexible with regard to completed work.
6. If a student is sick, they should rest and get healthy. When healthy, they can choose to participate in this program. Parent/Guardian/Caretaker determines if their child opts into this mode of instruction.