



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) (April 13, 2023) (February 8, 2024)

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.

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
<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"> • On days 6 – 10 if an individual tested positive but is returning to school/work. • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FASD will consider all current guidelines, orders, etc. from the PA DOH, PDE, Governor’s Office, and the

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
<p>distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);</p>	<p>CDC. This information will be shared with the community and staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<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"> • 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
<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"> • 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. • 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 most recent PA DOH guidance on home isolation or quarantine and returning to school will be referred to and followed considered. • 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.

ARP ESSER Requirement	Strategies, Policies, and Procedures
with respect to health and safety policies; and	<p>instruction, unless a situation warrants a school closure for all students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 **February 8, 2024**.

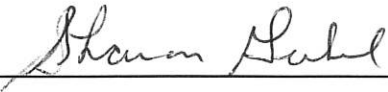
The plan was approved by a vote of:

9 Yes

0 No

Affirmed on: **February 8, 2024**

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.

Feb. 8, 2024