

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

In March 2021 President Biden signed the Federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act, Public Law 117-2, into law. The ARP Act provides an additional \$122 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) to states and school districts to help safely reopen, sustain the safe operation of schools, and address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nation's students. As with the previous ESSER funds available under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA), the purpose of the additional funding is to support local educational agencies (LEAs) in preparing for and responding to the impacts of COVID-19 on educators, students, and families.

Section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP Act requires each LEA that receives ARP ESSER funds to develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website, no later than 30 days after receiving ARP ESSER funds, a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for all schools (Safe Return Plan). A Safe Return Plan is required of all fund recipients, including those that have already returned to in-person instruction. Section 2001(i)(2) of the ARP Act further requires that the LEA seek public comment on the Safe Return Plan and take those comments into account in the finalization of the Safe Return Plan. Under the interim final requirements published in Volume 86, No. 76 of the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), an LEA must periodically, but no less frequently than every six months through September 30, 2023, review and, as appropriate, revise its Safe Return Plan.

HEALTH & SAFETY

How our schools/district work to support the health and safety of staff, students, parents, and the community to help sustain an in-person learning environment so students can return to the classroom.

Face Masks: The District will continue to follow the State of Ohio and Franklin County Public Health guidelines which recommend but not require students and staff to wear face masks. The District will continue to have masks available for use in schools or school-related events for anyone wanting one. Signage will remain in place that explains and demonstrates how to appropriately wear face masks for maximum protection. Masks will be available at all buildings and on all buses.

Social Distancing: The requirement to maintain six-foot social distancing has been rescinded by local public health authorities. The District will, to the best of its abilities, maximize available space to increase the distance between students and staff. School buses will resume normal seating practices as allowable by Ohio law.

Handwashing and Respiratory Etiquette: The District will continue to promote handwashing and respiratory etiquette through in-class instruction, announcements, and signage. Schools are updating HVAC systems to include filtration to ensure clean air is in our schools.

Cleaning and Maintaining Healthy Facilities: Daytime custodial crews will clean general-population areas on a regular schedule throughout the day, focusing on high-touch areas. Classrooms and office areas will be thoroughly cleaned nightly, focusing on disinfecting high-touch surfaces. Classrooms will be stocked with disinfectant supplies so that student desks can be cleaned as is appropriate. Custodial staff will conduct regular walk-throughs with their principal to identify areas that require additional cleaning.

The District has also changed the air filters in each building for the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year.

Contract Tracing, Quarantine, and Notifications: All staff has been trained on the reporting procedures with respect to having direct contact and/or a confirmed case of COVID-19 within their immediate contacts. Reports are directed to the school's principal. In accordance with state and local laws and regulations, the District will notify Franklin County Public Health, staff, and families immediately of any case of COVID-19 while maintaining confidentiality in accordance with HIPAA privacy laws.

The District has a system in place to conduct contact tracing. Nurses and principals will consistently monitor students or staff – classroom or bus. The District will notify families of students or staff members who have been exposed to someone with a confirmed case of COVID-19 (or who has been confirmed as having COVID-19, themselves) so that contact tracing can begin.

The District will follow the recommended guidance from Franklin County Public Health and Ohio Department of Health as they are updated.

Diagnostic Screening: The District maintains a supply of COVID testing kits that can be administered by the school's nurse. The written permission of the parent is required for any student under the age of 18.

Vaccination Efforts: The District worked with the local Educational Service Center in the winter of 2021 to offer vaccines to all staff. We have partnered with Nationwide Children's Hospital and Walgreens to offer separate vaccination opportunities, with the most recent being for anyone 12 or older. The District will continue to look for opportunities to offer COVID vaccines prior to the start of the school year and beyond.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities: The district has and will continue to provide any and all accommodations necessary and required for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety requirements. The district shall not discriminate against any person on the basis of any disability. Accommodations have and will include remote learning opportunities with students with compromised health issues, teletherapy, and devices and equipment to support learning as decided by the student's IEP team.

Budget: ESSER II and III funds

FACILITIES & OPERATIONS

How our schools/district will work to support the health and safety of staff, students, parents, and community to help sustain an in-person learning environment so students can return to the classroom.

Safety Equipment:

- Purchasing custodial cleaning equipment and supplies
- Upgraded air filters

Technology: The District has increased its inventory of devices to ensure that all staff and students have the equipment necessary to accommodate all students, ensure single-touch access to a single device, and provide touch tablets for our preschool students. The District also invested in hot spots and internet support for families who may need access to digital learning platforms to encourage and support the school/home connection.

Food Services: Free lunches and breakfasts have been and will continue to be provided to students. Per federal guidelines, all students eat at no cost. Breakfast and lunch are made available to all students. The District is planning for all in-person learning at this time.

Transportation: Supplies have been purchased to ensure masking on buses for students and families who choose to mask. Cleaning supplies have been placed on each bus for cleaning that is to take place after the completion of each route.

ADDRESSING ACADEMIC NEEDS

How our schools/district will identify which students have been most impacted by the pandemic in terms of their learning progress (with a focus on the most vulnerable student populations including but not limited to disengaged students).

Summer of 2021: The District has implemented a new program, Ranger Bridge. This program consists of two summer learning sessions that help students get from where they are to where they need to be for the next school year. These sessions are held from June 7th to June 18th and July 26th to August 6th.

The District also partnered with OhioGuidestone to provide students with crafts, games and activities to help learn about emotion regulation and coping skills. The First through Fifth grade used Pixar's movie "Inside Out" to learn all about the feelings we all have. Sixth through Eighth grade students will be learning through the movie "Disney's Soul".

2021-2022 School Year: The District will continue partnerships with OhioGuidestone to offer several community-based services including mental health.

APPROACHES TO ACADEMIC GAP FILLING

What approaches our schools/districts will use to fill the learning needs identified above. What steps will be taken to remove/overcome barriers that may be associated with the "Gap Filling Approaches."

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APPROACHES TO ADDRESS SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS

The steps our schools/districts will take to remove/overcome barriers that may be associated with students' social/emotional needs.

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TIMELINE FOR REVIEW

The plan will be reviewed, at a minimum, every six months by the District Leadership Team and/or Administrative Cabinet Team. We anticipate an ongoing review of our continuity of service plan.

PUBLIC INPUT

Extended Learning Plan: Linked at the district website per Gov. Mike DeWine.

<https://www.hamilton-local.k12.oh.us/restart.aspx>

Board of Education Meeting Presentation: To be reviewed at the August 2, 2021 Board meeting.

FOR QUESTIONS OR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Feel free to contact the District's Office of Public Relations, at 614-491-8044, or email us at

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