



# ARP ESSER Health and Safety Plan Guidance & Template

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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: Sharpsville Area School District

**Initial Effective Date:** June 22, 2021

**Date of Last Review:** February 7, 2024

**Date of Last Revision:** February 20, 2024

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 Sharpsville Area School District continues to provide in-person instruction for the 2023-2024 school year and will comply with guidelines provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the CDC guideline to the greatest extent possible to provide a safe learning environment for all involved.

2. The Sharpsville Area School District continues to fund positions in the district 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 Sharpsville Area School District established a Summer Academy to provide additional education due to the change of daily educational time during the 2020-2021 school year and will continue through the 2023-2024 year. The Sharpsville Area School District continues to fund positions in the district to address students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs.

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.

a. Universal and correct wearing of masks;

As per the Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruling that voided the school mask mandate, beginning Monday, December 13, 2021, masks will be optional for students and staff. Please note that this order does not affect the CDC order of February 1, 2021, mandating masks on school buses.

While this ruling means that the Department of Health’s statewide mask mandate has been rescinded, it does not prohibit the Governor or Department of Health from attempting to reissue a mask mandate through other processes in the future.

The District will follow the CDC guidelines for recommended isolation and quarantine periods whenever feasible.

Subject to change to accommodate changes from Department of Health, and/or CDC.

b. Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding);

All schools will align distancing protocols with the recommendations for physical distancing as per the orders issued by the Secretary of PA Department of Health, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and/or apply, to the extent feasible, guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities in the 2021-2022 school year.

Subject to change to accommodate changes from Department of Health, and/or CDC.

c. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette;

COVID-19 may survive on certain surfaces for some time, which means it is possible to be infected after touching a contaminated surface and then touching the mouth, eyes, or nose. Frequent handwashing, along with cleaning, sanitizing, disinfecting, and ventilating learning spaces and any other areas used by students (i.e., restrooms, hallways, and transportation), decreases transmission.

- When handwashing, individuals should use soap and water to wash all surfaces of their hands for at least 20 seconds, wait for visible lather, rinse thoroughly, and dry with a disposable towel.
- Teach and reinforce washing hands and covering coughs and sneezes among students and staff.
- Make hand sanitizer available in common areas, hallways or in classrooms, or in all three, where sinks for handwashing are not available.
- Work with local health departments and health care systems to disseminate hygiene and disinfection strategies for infection prevention at home.

- Have adequate supplies and carefully monitor inventory to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol, paper towels, tissues, and no-touch trash cans.

Subject to change to accommodate changes from Department of Health, and/or CDC.

d. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation:

Cleaning and promoting hand hygiene are important everyday actions our district can take to slow the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases and protect our students and staff.

Cleaning with products containing soap or detergent reduces germs on surfaces and objects by removing contaminants and may also weaken or damage some of the virus particles, which decreases risk of infection from surfaces. Cleaning high touch surfaces and shared objects once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove virus that may be on surfaces unless someone with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 has been in your school. Disinfecting removes any remaining germs on surfaces, which further reduces any risk of spreading infection.

Clean more frequently or clean AND disinfect surfaces and objects if certain conditions apply

- High transmission of COVID-19 in our community
- Infrequent hand hygiene
- The space is occupied by people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19

If someone in our school is sick or someone who has COVID-19 has been in our school in the last 24 hours, clean and disinfect your facility.

Always read and follow the directions on how to use and store cleaning and disinfecting products. Disinfection products should not be used by children or near children. Ventilate the space when using these products to prevent children from inhaling toxic vapor.

ARP ESSER Requirement

Strategies, Policies, and Procedures

Always follow standard practices and appropriate regulations specific to our school for minimum standards for cleaning and disinfection.

Subject to change to accommodate changes from Department of Health, and/or CDC.

e. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State and local health departments;

Sharpville Area School District will follow all orders and PDE's guidance on the following protocols for contact tracing.

Having provided in-person instruction since the 2020-2021 school year, the District has established effective and efficient protocols, procedures, and designated responsible employees for contact tracing and isolation/quarantine monitoring per State and CDC guidance.

f. Diagnostic and screening testing;

All students and parents/guardians are required to perform a symptom screening prior to arriving at school or at the bus stop each day. The District encourages parents/guardians to keep sick children at home.

All district staff will perform a symptom screen on themselves prior to leaving for work and will stay home if ill. Students and staff will consistently be made aware of the signs and symptoms of COVID-19.

Students and staff will go to the nurse immediately if feeling symptomatic.

The District will share resources with the school community to help families understand when to keep children home.

Subject to change to accommodate changes from Department of Health, and/or CDC.

g. Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities;

The District will coordinate with our Local Health Department

The health department's immunization program can help coordinate vaccination clinics, provide speakers for presentations, and offer other types of expertise.

The District will help to publicize vaccination opportunities within the local community.

Subject to change to accommodate changes from Department of Health, and/or CDC.

h. Appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and

The Sharpsville Area School District will work individually with each student and parent as well as any staff members with higher risks for severe illness to develop planning for attendance and preventative measures while in attendance at school.

Subject to change to accommodate changes from Department of Health, and/or CDC.

i. Coordination with state and local health officials.

Local DOH staff will notify the district upon learning that someone who tested positive for COVID-19 was present at the school while infectious. DOH will assist the district with risk assessment, isolation and quarantine recommendations, and other infection control recommendations.

DOH staff will assist the district with contact tracing and may request information regarding potential close school contacts from school nurses/health staff.

Subject to change to accommodate changes from Department of Health, and/or CDC.



# Health and Safety Plan Governing Body Affirmation Statement

The Board of Directors/Trustees for Sharpsville Area School District reviewed and approved the Health and Safety Plan on February 20, 2024

The plan was approved by a vote of:

9 Yes  
0 No

Affirmed on: February 20, 2024

By:

  
(Signature\* of Board President)

Darla Grandy

(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.

