

# **Lockport School District 91 Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Pursuant to the Federal American Rescue Plan Act, Section 2001(i)**

## **Introduction and 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 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.

Pursuant to those requirements, this plan is being made available.

### **1. Maintaining Health and Safety**

For each mitigation strategy listed below (A–H), please describe 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 policies, on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.

A. Universal and correct wearing of masks: Lockport School District 91 has reviewed all aspects of "Revised Public Health Guidance for Schools: Part 5 - Supporting the Full Return to In-Person Learning for All Students August 2021," which was authored by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and the Illinois Department of Health (IDPH). In addition, D91 is in compliance with the indoor mask mandate issued by the Governor's office. Our team will continue to monitor relevant health and safety guidelines, while also gaining feedback from a number of stakeholders through community meetings. Additionally, we will continue to update the Safe Return Plan to ensure the plan aligns with future recommendations.

B. Physical distancing: Physical distancing recommendations of 3 feet or greater are in place. As a result, all classrooms and learning spaces have been set up using three feet of physical distance between learners. In addition, the common eating spaces are spaced at 6 feet due to the unmasked nature of the activity. Visual guides are also in place to reinforce social distancing and traffic flow. Physical barriers may also be requested and additional entry/exit points have been established to balance distancing and security protocols.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette: The district promotes behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19, such as encouraging the practice of hand hygiene. Signage is posted throughout D91's facilities and hand sanitizing stations, which contain at least 60% alcohol, are placed in each classroom in addition to common areas throughout each building. Students and staff members practice appropriate hand hygiene at regular intervals, including before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose/coughing/sneezing.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation: All classrooms and high traffic areas are currently equipped with hand sanitizer dispensers. Throughout the buildings, copy machines and school-based printers have sanitizer and cleaner to wipe the machines after usage. Throughout the day, bathrooms are wiped and sprayed using disinfectant spray. All rooms, districtwide, undergo a thorough surface wipe-down and are fogged daily using the disinfectant. In addition, all air units have been upgraded with enhanced filters. Each room also contains a fan to encourage air movement.

E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the state and local health departments: Lockport School District 91 collaborates with the local health department in regards to necessary reporting, contact tracing, and quarantine guidelines. Individuals displaying symptoms consistent with COVID-19 are safely and respectfully isolated from others. Re-admittance policies are consistent with Illinois Department of Public Health guidance, along with the exclusion criteria they have provided.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing: As recommended by the Illinois Department of Public Health, at all levels of community transmission, Lockport School District 91 works with the local health department to identify rapid viral testing options in the community for the testing of symptomatic and asymptomatic individuals who were exposed to someone with COVID-19. Additionally, the district does administer BINAX tests to students and staff who are opted in and expects to initiate a partnership with SHIELD Illinois on September 22, 2021.

G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible: In February 2021, all educators in D91 were provided an opportunity to receive vaccines through a partnership with Silver Cross Hospital. Numerous subsequent opportunities have been communicated as well. In addition, information on vaccines is regularly disseminated via ParentSquare to our entire school community.

H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies: Screening protocols for individuals presenting symptoms take into account students and employees with disabilities and accommodations that may be needed in the screening process for those students and employees. All students, including children with documented disabilities or medical issues, will be afforded the same opportunity to have a clear desk barrier and/or face shield. Requests for additional accommodations will be reviewed in coordination with our school nurses and administrative team.

## **2. Ensuring Continuity of Services**

A. Describe how the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff's social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services:

In order to support the social emotional state of our educators, the district will: Our district-wide 2021-2022 Professional Development Plan focuses on the development and implementation of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) support within and outside of the classroom in order to support the well-being of all students. Related training will be provided to district staff. The district is in the process of hiring an additional social worker to work in the 4-8 grade building. Under the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National School Lunch Program Seamless Summer Option (SSO), free school meals will continue throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

## **3. Public Comment**

A. Describe how the LEA sought public comment on its plan, and how it took those public comments into account in the development of its plan. Note, the ARP requires that LEAs seek public comment for each 60-day revision to the plan.

The Safe Return Committee met to review the Safe Return Plan in August. At the September 14, 2021 Board of Education meeting, the plan will be presented and public comment will be sought for stakeholders to address any concerns regarding the Safe Return Plan.

B. Describe how the LEA ensured that the plan is in an understandable and uniform format; is to the extent practicable written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, will be orally translated for such a parent; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA, will be provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent; the administrative team has regularly shared information with the school community in and will continue to do so. The ParentSquare system allows families to customize their language. Information regarding reopening is published on the district website at [www.d91.net](http://www.d91.net). For those members of the public whose first language is not English, the website has the ability to translate text and documents into multiple languages. Upon request and if necessary, an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) will be provided information in an alternative format that is accessible for that parent or guardian. Our district website is ADA compliant.