



## ATLANTIC COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL

### 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

As announced in the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE)'s [April 28, 2021 broadcast](#), 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. Additional information on ARP ESSER may be found in the NJDOE's [funding comparison fact sheet](#).

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, **LEAs must submit to the NJDOE and post on their website their Safe Return Plans by June 24, 2021.** The NJDOE intends to make LEA ARP ESSER Fund applications available in EWEG on May 24, 2021 and LEAs will submit their Safe Return Plans to the NJDOE via EWEG. To assist LEAs with the development of their Safe Return Plans, the NJDOE is providing the following template.

This template incorporates the federally-required components of the Safe Return Plan. The questions in the template below will be included in the LEA ARP ESSER Fund application in EWEG. LEAs will submit responses to the questions within the LEA ARP ESSER Fund application in EWEG by June 24, 2021. The NJDOE hopes that this template will allow LEAs to effectively plan for that submission and to easily post the information to their websites as required by the ARP Act.

Note that on May 17, 2021, Governor Murphy [announced](#) that upon the conclusion of the 2020-2021 school year, portions of Executive Order 175 allowing remote learning will be rescinded, meaning that schools will be required to provide full-day, in-person instruction, as they were prior to the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. The NJDOE and New Jersey Department of Health will share additional information regarding State requirements or guidance for health and safety protocols for the 2021-2022 school year as it becomes available.

## **ATLANTIC COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL**

### **Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services for September 1, 2021 and beyond**

---

**LEA Name: ATLANTIC COMMUNITY CHARTER SCHOOL**

**Date: 06/01/2021**

**Date Revised (08/11/2022):**

#### **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 and supporting behaviors/responsibilities:** Based upon the directives/executive orders of the New Jersey Governor, recommendations of the NJDOE and NJDOH, and recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), ACCS will continue to maintain communication with local and state authorities to determine current mitigation levels in our community to assess the need to wear masks. Please understand that this is a fluid situation and expectations are certain to change throughout the 2021-2022 SY. ACCS will protect and support staff and students by:
- i. Promoting behaviors that reduce the spread of COVID-19.
    - 1. Parents/guardians and staff will be expected to check for symptoms of illness such as, but not limited to: fever, coughing, and overall wellness (see CDC list of all symptoms of COVID - 19) prior to arriving at school.
      - a. If a student or staff member feels sick, do not have them report to school.
        - i. If the sick student has a sibling, do not have them report to school.
      - b. If a student or staff member has a fever, do not have them report to school.

- i. The student or staff member is not permitted to attend school. The parent/guardian must keep the student home, including all siblings if applicable.
  - ii. If a student or staff member has a fever, they will need to be evaluated by their personal physician who will recommend treatment and testing if necessary.
  - iii. The physician must give clearance as to when the student or staff member can return to school.
  - iv. The clearance must be in writing.
- ii. Promote staff and students to stay home when appropriate.
- iii. Promote universal and correct wearing of masks/respiratory etiquette.**
  - 1. Staff will have instruction during professional development on August 26, 2021 on the universal and correct wearing of masks/respiratory etiquette. The school nurse, Mary Seddon, will provide the professional development.
  - 2. Staff will turn key the training on the universal and correct wearing of masks/respiratory etiquette to students on the first day of school, September 1, 2021, and systematically reinforce the expectations with students as needed throughout the 21-22 school year.
- iv. Create reasonable accommodations for individuals who formally share documentation that the CDC identifies them as having a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 and are unable to wear mask coverings. The CDC identifies the following illnesses to be severe:
  - 1. Adults (aged 65 years and older)
  - 2. Individuals with disabilities or serious underlying medical conditions, which may include:
    - a. Chronic lung disease or asthma (moderate to severe)
    - b. Serious heart conditions
    - c. Immunocompromised
    - d. Severe obesity (body mass index, or BMI, of 40 or higher)
    - e. Diabetes
    - f. Chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
    - g. Liver disease
    - h. Medically fragile students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
    - i. Students with complex disabilities with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
    - j. Students who require accommodations under a Plan in accordance with the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 Plan)

**B. Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding):**

- i. Social distancing practices will be maintained to the maximum extent possible.
- ii. While in school, students will remain with their classroom cohort throughout the school day, including lunch.

1. Please understand that this is a fluid situation and expectations are certain to change throughout the 2021-2022 SY.
- iii. ACCS will continue to abide by Individualized Education Plans and 504 Plans.

**C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette:**

- a. Staff will have instruction during professional development on August 26, 2021 on hand washing and respiratory etiquette. The school nurse, Mary Seddon, will provide the professional development.
- b. Staff will turn key the training on hand washing and respiratory etiquette to students on the first day of school, September 1, 2021, and systematically reinforce the expectations with students as needed throughout the 21-22 school year.
- c. Hand sanitizing stations will be located in all classrooms and school offices.
  - i. The hand sanitizing product being used meets the minimum 60% alcohol threshold recommended by the CDC.
  - ii. Staff will supervise the use of hand sanitizers by children.

**D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation:**

- a. Facilities Cleaning Practices will follow the ACCS COVID-19 Cleaning and Sanitizing Manual
- b. To maintain the school building, the custodian will work a modified schedule adhering to guidelines set forth by government and health officials. In addition to cleaning and disinfecting, routine and proactive maintenance projects will be undertaken to ensure the school building is properly sanitized and in good working order for staff and students to return.
- c. Specialized Flu/Virus Cleaning Routines
  - i. ACCS will conduct cleaning of the school according to the ACCS COVID-19 Cleaning and Sanitizing Manual.
  - ii. The ACCS facility will have all touchpoints (\*listed below) disinfected at least once each week in addition to daily cleaning of door handles, push bars, etc. The special weekly disinfecting process will continue during the flu and virus season.
  - iii. Additional cleaning personnel will be deployed as needed to provide supplemental support for the school and facility that need additional hands to fully cover the special disinfecting routines.
- d. Daily Cleaning Routines
  - i. In addition to the special work outlined above, custodial staff will perform their regular daily cleaning, including wiping down tables, chairs and other surfaces, emptying trash, cleaning restrooms, vacuuming, and cleaning floors.
- e. Specialized Cleaning Products:
  - i. Very powerful cleaning agents, specially mixed at a level designed to kill viruses, is being applied by trained staff to disinfect all touchpoints\* and surfaces in our school.
  - ii. For the safety of students and staff, this chemical is being applied when classrooms and other spaces are not occupied.
  - iii. To be effective, the product must dry intact without being disturbed. Once it is dry it is not toxic to people.
  - iv. Common household disinfectants are not to be used at school, by anyone, because:
    1. They contain chemicals (including bleach) which are banned from use in school.
    2. They undermine the effectiveness of the industrial-strength disinfectant being applied by our custodial staff.

- f. Approved School Cleaning Products:
  - i. A pre-mixed, less toxic version of the same disinfectant can be used by custodians, teachers, nurses, and other staff as necessary to clean up common school issues (such as vomit, blood, and other bodily fluids).
  - ii. Child-friendly wipes that will kill germs but are appropriate for use in school may also be ordered from Supply Works. Approved wipes will be posted on the Maintenance & Operations web page shortly.
- g. Hand Sanitizers:
  - i. Hand sanitizing stations are located in all classrooms and school offices.
  - ii. The hand sanitizing product being used meets the minimum 60% alcohol threshold recommended by the CDC.
  - iii. Staff should always supervise the use of hand sanitizers by children.
- h. \*Touchpoints:
  - i. Door handles & push bars & push plates everywhere
  - ii. Light switches
  - iii. Classroom door windows
  - iv. Classroom sinks and faucet handles, counters
  - v. Classroom tables/chairs
  - vi. Water fountains
  - vii. Restroom doors, handles and push plates
  - viii. ADA Bars
  - ix. Toilet and urinal handles
  - x. Sanitary napkin dispensers
  - xi. Sink and faucet handles
  - xii. Toilet paper, soap, and paper towel dispensers and handles
- i. Cleaning and disinfecting after notification of a confirmed COVID-19 case:
  - i. As long as routine cleaning and disinfecting have been done regularly (at least daily), additional cleaning measures are not necessary unless the COVID-19 positive person is in school on the day officials are notified of the positive test. Depending on when the person with COVID-19 was last on site, it may be difficult to know what areas they were in and what objects or surfaces they may have touched after they became sick.
  - ii. If routine cleaning and disinfection have not been performed at least daily, or if the COVID-19 positive person is in school the day school officials are notified, close off areas used by the person who tested positive for COVID-19 (e.g. offices, bathrooms, classrooms, and common areas), open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area and wait 24 hours after the COVID-19 positive person was last in school before cleaning and disinfection.

1. Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas used by the ill person such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment (like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls), focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
2. Once area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
- iii. If an individual becomes ill with COVID symptoms and meets COVID-19 exclusion criteria while in school:
  1. Immediately close off areas used by the person who is sick with COVID-19 symptoms (e.g. offices, bathrooms, classrooms, and common areas)
  2. Open outside doors and windows to increase air circulation in the area and wait 24 hours before cleaning and disinfection.
  3. Cleaning staff should clean and disinfect all areas used by the ill person such as offices, classrooms, bathrooms, common areas, and shared electronic equipment (like tablets, touch screens, keyboards, remote controls), focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces.
  4. Once area has been appropriately disinfected, it can be opened for use.
- j. Contracted transportation providers shall be required to clean and sanitize seats, rails and highly touched surfaces before each run.
  - i. The district shall collaborate with the contracted service provider to develop these procedures and ensure that they are consistently followed.
  - ii. The contracted service provider shall collaborate with the district in establishing cleaning/sanitation protocols that are consistent with social distancing practices.
  - iii. The contracted service provider shall ensure that employees are fully trained in the implementation of the established protocols:
- k. All personnel responsible for cleaning school buses shall document the cleaning/sanitizing measures taken.
  - i. Personnel are required to:
    1. Demonstrate an understanding of the established protocols that must be taken to properly clean and sanitize the bus
    2. Provide a certification that, before the route commenced, the required process was completed as required.
      - a. These procedures will include a minimum of two stages: cleaning, which removes dirt and germs from surfaces; and disinfecting, which kills germs on surfaces that remain after cleaning.
      - b. The procedures will identify sanitizing agents that may be used and will be limited to products included on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's list of products that have been shown to be effective against COVID-19.
- l. ACCS has appropriate ventilating throughout the school.

**E. Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments:**

- a. Contact tracing is the process used to identify those who come into contact with people who have tested positive for many contagious diseases, including COVID-19. It is a long-standing practice in New Jersey and around the world and is an integral function of local health departments in keeping communities safe from the spread of disease.
- b. Upon notification that a resident has tested positive for COVID-19, a local health department will call to determine close contacts to whom they may have spread the virus.
- c. Trained professionals from the community then get in touch with those close contacts to recommend next steps, such as self-quarantining, and to provide critical education and support in risk mitigation strategies. Increasing the number and capacity of contact tracers has been a top priority of the Governor as these practices can help slow the spread of COVID-19.
- d. ACCS will abide by NJDOH guidelines where each school district shall immediately report by telephone to the health officer of the jurisdiction in which the school is located any communicable diseases identified as reportable pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:57-1, whether confirmed or presumed.
- e. The ACCS school nurse, will work in concert with the Lead Person, or her designee to communicate to the appropriate authorities.
- f. ACCS will adhere to all applicable federal and state requirements regarding privacy of educational records. The following on “How to report” can be found at: <https://nj.gov/health/cd/reporting/>
- g. The New Jersey Department of Health and local public health departments depend on reports of diseases and conditions of public health concern to protect the health of all New Jersey residents.
- h. How to report:
  - i. Cases should be reported to the local health department where the patient resides. If patient residence is unknown, the report should be made to the local health department where the provider or laboratory is located. Contact information for all local health departments in New Jersey is available at: [localhealth.nj.gov](http://localhealth.nj.gov). Contact information for local health departments after business hours or on weekends can be found at: [https://nj.gov/health/lh/documents/lhd\\_after\\_hours\\_emerg\\_contact\\_numbers.pdf](https://nj.gov/health/lh/documents/lhd_after_hours_emerg_contact_numbers.pdf).
  - ii. The Atlantic County Division of Public Health, Stillwater Building, Patricia Diamond, Public Health Officer, 201 South Shore Road, Northfield, NJ,08225. Phone: (609) 645-5935 Fax: (609) 645-5931
- i. If local health department personnel are unavailable, healthcare providers should report the case to the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), Communicable Disease Service (CDS) at 609-826-5964. If the individual does not live in New Jersey, report the case to the New Jersey Department of Health at: 609-826-5964. In cases of immediately reportable diseases and other emergencies and if the local health department cannot be reached, the New Jersey Department of Health maintains an emergency after-hours phone number: 609-392-2020.
- j. While schools must report single cases to their local health department, the local health department will work with ACCS to determine if there is an outbreak. An outbreak in school settings is defined as two or more laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 cases among students or

staff with onsets within a 14-day period, who are epidemiologically linked, do not share a household, and were not identified as close contacts of each other in another setting during standard case investigation or contact tracing.

**F. Screening testing:**

- a. ACCS will continue to utilize all communication mechanisms to inform our school community about opportunities for students and families to get vaccinated within our sending areas.
- b. ACCS will continue to utilize all communication mechanisms to inform our school community about any changes in expectations related to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- c. Unvaccinated staff are tested weekly as required by the NJDOE.

**G. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible:**

- a. ACCS will continue to utilize all communication mechanisms to inform our school community about opportunities for staff and their families to get vaccinated within our sending areas.
- b. A vaccination clinic took place at the school on February 2nd and February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022
- c. All vaccinated staff have shown proof of vaccination to the Human Resource Department.

**H. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies:**

- a. Students will report to school every day. The delivery of special education will be ensured as staff will be working with their students every day. The delivery of related services will be scheduled around a student's regular school.
- b. It is a parent/guardian's responsibility to examine their student(s) prior to leaving their residence to attend school.
  - i. Parents/guardians will be expected to check for symptoms of illness such as, but not limited to: fever, coughing, and overall wellness (see CDC list of all symptoms of COVID - 19).
  - ii. If a student feels sick do not send them to school. If the student has any sibling, do not send them to school.
  - iii. If a student has a fever do not send them to school. The student is not permitted to attend school and the parent/guardian must keep them home.
    - 1. If a student has a fever, they will need to be evaluated by their personal physician who will recommend treatment and testing if necessary.
    - 2. The physician must give clearance as to when the child can return to school.
    - 3. The clearance must be in writing.
- c. Appropriate accommodations will be afforded to Individuals with disabilities or serious underlying medical conditions, which may include:
  - i. Chronic lung disease or asthma (moderate to severe)
  - ii. Serious heart conditions
  - iii. Immunocompromised
  - iv. Severe obesity (body mass index, or BMI, of 40 or higher)

- v. Diabetes
- vi. Chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- vii. Liver disease
- viii. Medically fragile students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
- ix. Students with complex disabilities with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)
- x. Students who require accommodations under a Plan in accordance with the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 Plan)

## 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. (1000 character limit).

The Atlantic Community Charter School's Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service for the 2021-2022 school year will be driven by our comprehensive School Improvement Plan (SIP) and centered around retuning our students and staff safely back to a normal, full-time, full capacity, pre-COVID-19 educational experience with increased safety precautions, increased learning opportunities for students and staff, and increased social and emotional supports for students and staff. Our Need's Analysis identified challenges in Math and ELA, teacher development/instruction, and student attendance/climate. Primary school related factors/root causes have been identified and for each challenge we have tailored goals, objectives, measures and targets, with strategies and actions to improve in these areas. Each action is held accountable by a timeline and responsible party.

### 3. Public Comment

A. Describe how the LEA sought public comment on its plan, and how it took those public comment 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. (1000 character limit)

1. The ACCS Safe Reopening Plan was publicized to seek public comment on June 1, 2021 on the Atlantic Community Charter School Website at: <https://www.atlanticcommunitycharter.com/> The school community is instructed to provide feedback by emailing: [ecetrullo@atlanticcommunitycharter.com](mailto:ecetrullo@atlanticcommunitycharter.com). The ACCS Safe Reopening Plan was publicized to seek public comment on June 1, 2021 utilizing all ACCS social media formats (Facebook, Classroom DOJO, Twitter). The ACCS Safe Reopening Plan was publicized to seek public comment on June 1, 2021 utilizing our Robo call system. ACCS Safe Reopening Plan was publicized to seek public comment on June 3, 2021 at the monthly ACCS Parent Teacher Organization Meeting. ACCS Safe Reopening Plan was publicized to seek public comment on June 24, 2021 at 4 pm during the public comment portion of the Board of Trustees meeting. The ACCS Safe Reopening Plan Update will be publicized at the August 11, 2022 at the public comment portion of the Board of Trustees meeting. All comments can now be directed to the Lead/CSA, Dr. Shelly Ward Richards, Ed.D. at [srichards@atlanticcommunitycharter.com](mailto:srichards@atlanticcommunitycharter.com)

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. (1000 character limit)

ACCS created the plan in similar fashion to the Restart and Recovery Plan initiated a year ago. A version was shared with the school community seeking input. Administrators, teachers, CST members, support staff, parents, the school nurse, the school medical inspector, and Board of Trustees edited the original version to create an evolving document. The plan will be presented to the school community on several public occasions as well as reviewed on an as needed basis.

It was also shared with the Atlantic County Department of Education and the Atlantic County Department of Health. Monthly meeting discussing the evolution of the plan takes place in county superintendent association meetings.

Written translations of the document will be provided upon request and/or the version will be orally translated upon request. It will also be posted on our website in both English and Spanish.