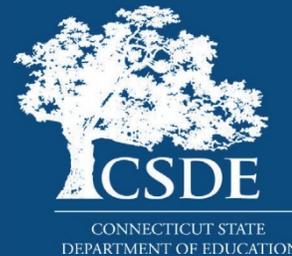


# Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan Template

## CSDE ARP ESSER



### Introduction

Our Connecticut school communities — with students at the center — continue to be bold and innovative as they respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The United States Department of Education (USED) has recognized the importance of supporting these efforts, particularly with the infusion of resources to support education in Connecticut. The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ARP ESSER) has granted the State of Connecticut an additional \$1,105,919,874, providing the opportunity to develop bold, high-impact plans to address the substantial disruptions to student learning, interpersonal interactions, and social-emotional well-being. While earlier sources of federal relief funding during the pandemic supported our ability to first survive, and then thrive, ARP ESSER is Connecticut's opportunity to transform our schools.

The federal government requires that each Local Education Agency (LEA) create a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan (the Plan). This plan must be publicly available online by June 23, 2021 and submitted to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) as a part of the ARP ESSER application due mid-August 2021. To aid in the planning process, CSDE is providing this template to guide LEAs planning as well as serve as an opportunity to share the Plan with the public.

Due to the expansive efforts of the CSDE and the educational community, as of the week of May 3–7, no district in the state of Connecticut was fully remote. This was achieved through extensive planning by each LEA; therefore, this template should be seen as a means to support LEAs' efforts to date and can be used to expand upon or revisit previous Reopening School Plans.

There are five areas that LEAs must consider when developing the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan:

- I. Health and Safety Strategies
- II. Continuity of Services
- III. Public Comment
- IV. Periodic Review Process
- V. Understandable and Uniform Format

The CSDE has maintained consistently that in-person learning is the preferred opportunity for students and that schools should work to safely open their buildings for the 2020–21 school year. We are proud to have led the nation in safe return to in-person instruction — as of April 30 nearly 82.7% of Connecticut school districts were offering a predominately fully in-person learning. Thank you for your work and helping us continue to be an example of how we can best serve our children safely in school buildings.

### I. Health and Safety Strategies

Describe how the LEA plan includes (or will be modified to include) the extent to which the LEA has adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the strategies listed in the table on page 2:

Waterford Country School closely follows all state Executive Orders, DPH and CSDE regulations and guidance regarding the health and safety of our school and agency community. The administration attends meetings regularly to ensure we are responding appropriately to any changes in this guidance. The following table provides an explication of the ways in which current guidance is being implemented. This plan will be revised as strategies are reevaluated and families/staff will be apprised of changes to the plan. The most up-to-date plan will be posted on the website.

Waterford Country School returns to five days a week full in-person learning. We plan to operate with full in-person learning for the 2021-2022 school year.

We continue to encourage parents to keep their child home when they are sick. Temperatures will be taken upon arrival to school and at midday. This information will be recorded. A temperature of 100 degrees or above is considered a fever. People exhibiting temperature 100 degrees or above need to be fever free for 24 hour before returning to work/school.

Please complete the table below with the LEA's mitigation strategy for each category. In developing the LEA's response, please review and consider the [CDC guidance](#) and the [Connecticut DPH and CSDE guidance](#) for each category.

	Mitigation strategy	LEA response
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Universal and correct wearing of masks	<p>The Waterford Country School will follow the guidance, recommendation, and requirements of the CDC, CT DPH, CSDE, Governor's Executive Orders, our local Health district and our district medical advisor in regards to mask-wearing in schools. Exceptions based on documented medical information will be considered in accordance with the State of CT guidelines.</p> <p>We are still under an executive order from the Governor requiring masks for both vaccinated and unvaccinated students and staff in the school. The statement below is a direct quote from the executive order:</p> <p>"Everyone must wear masks regardless of vaccination status while inside certain settings, such as healthcare facilities, facilities housing vulnerable populations, public and private transit, correctional facilities, schools and childcare, pursuant to an order from the commissioner of the Department of Public Health."</p> <p>The CDC, CT DPH, and the American Academy of Pediatricians (AAP) all recommend/ strongly encourage universal masking in schools.</p> <p>During outdoor mask breaks and outdoor activities, masks are not required as long as 6ft distancing is maintained.</p> <p>Federal Order (CDC) requires mask use on public transportation, including school buses.</p> <p>Families are asked to provide masks for their students; the school will provide disposable masks when needed.</p>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)</p>	<p>Waterford Country School will continue to employ physical distancing to the greatest extent possible and where feasible. Decisions will be based on the guidance, recommendation, and requirements of the CDC, CT DPH, CSDE, Governor's Executive Orders, and our local health organization. Extraneous furniture will also continue to be removed from classrooms to maximize the effective use of space. Per CT DPH, we will strive for 3 to 6 foot physical distancing in classroom between student desks where feasible. Alternative spaces may be used for instruction to maximize locations.</p> <p>Additional strategies in our cafeteria will be used to reduce density including additional lunch waves and alternative locations.</p> <p>Floor markings and signage will be used throughout buildings as guidance for physical distancing.</p> <p>Waterford Country School will be maintaining cohorts. Students will follow the same cohorts outlined for the 2020-2021 school year.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Handwashing and respiratory etiquette</p>	<p>Our staff and students will continue effective mitigation strategies relative to hand-washing and respiratory etiquette. The school will maintain hand-washing stations and sanitizer stations for the 2021-2022 school year. Hand-washing before and after meals and after outdoor activities will be emphasized.</p> <p>Lessons and review of hand-washing and respiratory etiquette will be consistently reinforced throughout the school year and through signage.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation</p>	<p>Cleaning practices will remain in alignment with the guidance, recommendation, and requirements of the CDC, CT DPH, CSDE, Governor's Executive Orders, and our local health organizations. Ventilation will meet or exceed building standards set by the CSDE and industry best practice. Buildings will be cleaned on a daily basis. Restrooms will be cleaned and disinfected daily.</p> <p>Per CT DPH and CDC, contaminated surfaces are not a significant risk of transmission of COVID-19, and routine daily cleaning is all that is needed in school buildings. Waterford Country School will continue to meet or exceed all guidance in this area.</p> <p>Temperature taking will still occur upon arrival of students to school and midday. This information will be recorded.</p> <p>School ventilation will maximize the use of outdoor air as directed by the DPH guidance.</p>

Mitigation strategy	LEA response
<p data-bbox="142 432 188 478"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p data-bbox="235 411 792 499">Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments</p>	<p data-bbox="829 249 1484 422">Comprehensive contact tracing will continue in the 2021-2022 school year. Our administrators and school nurse are trained and well-versed in our protocols which align to the guidance, recommendation, and requirements of the CDC, CT DPH, CSDE, Governor's Executive Orders, our local health district, and our district medical advisor.</p> <p data-bbox="829 459 1500 632">Per CT DPH, students seated 3 feet or more from another student diagnosed with COVID-19 does not need to quarantine, as long as they remain asymptomatic and masks were in use in the classroom. This 3-foot exception applies to classroom settings only and students only. All other contact tracing guidelines from last year remain in place.</p> <p data-bbox="829 669 1479 779">Fully vaccinated students/staff do not have to quarantine provided they remain asymptomatic after close contact with a known COVID-19 case. Individuals will be asked to provide documentation for proof of vaccination.</p> <p data-bbox="829 816 1455 873">We continue to encourage parents to keep their child home when they are sick</p>

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Diagnostic screening and testing</p>	<p>Unvaccinated people who have been in close contact to COVID-19, within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes, must quarantine for 10 days after date of exposure per Ledge Light guidance.</p> <p>People with COVID-19 like symptoms should stay out sick and must be fever-free (100 degrees or higher) for 24 hours. Any person who is actively ill can be tested right away. People in close contact should ideally wait until 3-5 days after exposure to be tested – but testing after a close contact does not remove the quarantine requirement. Only fully vaccinated people can avoid the 10 day quarantine requirement for close contact.</p> <p>Waterford Country School will be participating in Operation Expanded Testing, a program supported and funded through the U.S. Department of Health and Human services to provide COVID -19 PCR testing to schools at no cost to the school or families. This testing is scheduled weekly.</p>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies</p>	<p>Our reopening plan applies to all students in the Waterford Country School. We will adhere to any guidance, recommendation, and requirements of the CDC, CT DPH, CSDE, Governor's Executive Orders, our local health district, and our district medical advisor as it pertains to appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities. We will follow all state and federal laws, including but not limited to IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act.</p>

LEA must implement, to the greatest extent practicable, each element of the most up-to-date guidance listed in the table.

## II. Continuity of Services

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

The goal of Waterford Country School for the 2021-2022 school year is safe, successful in-person learning for all. We will follow the guidance, recommendation, and requirements of the CDC, CT DPH, CSDE, Governor's Executive Orders and our local health organization when making decisions on continuity of services in the 2021-2022 school year. We will continue many of our services and practices from the previous school year to support the social, emotional, mental, physical, and academic needs of our students.

Visitor access to the school buildings will remain limited until further notice. Only essential visits to the schools will be allowed at this time.

### III. Public Comment

Public comment is a key element of stakeholder engagement, and at times a stand-alone element which may include dedicating time to open forums at board of education meetings, conducting surveys, or soliciting written input from external residents not involved in the decision-making process. Describe how the LEA plans to provide the public the opportunity to provide input and for public comment in the development of the plan, a summary of the input (including any letters of support), and how the LEA took such input into account:

The Safe Return In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Service Plan for 2021-2022 is in strict alignment with our Reopening Plan for the 2020-2021 school year. This plan is not new content but a continuation of our existing plan.

This specific plan will be posted on our website and families will be notified via mass notification system.

## IV. Periodic Review Process

LEAs are required to periodically review and, as appropriate, revise their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through September 30, 2023. Each review must include seeking public comment on the plan and developing the plan after taking into account the public comment.

Below are the dates that LEAs must submit a refreshed or updated plan to CSDE via eGMS.

Review/revisit Dates:

- June 23, 2021
- December 23, 2021
- June 23, 2022
- December 23, 2022
- June 23, 2023

## V. Understandable and Uniform Format

Federal regulations require that this plan be in an understandable and uniform format, to the extent practicable; is written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable, orally translated; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent. Describe the unique needs of the LEA's audience and confirm to the LEA's approach to ensuring the document is accessible:

This plan will be provided to parents on the school website and through a school wide mailing.