

# **Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan**

## **Addendum Guidance**

**2023**

LEAs are required to update the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan every six months through **Sept. 30, 2023**. Each time, local education agencies (LEAs) must seek public input on the plan and any revisions and must take such input into account. The purpose of the plan is to keep stakeholders informed.

Every LEA should complete the addendum and upload it to ePlan in the LEA document library and post it to the LEA's website (**March 1 and Sept. 15**). 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.

Please consider the following when completing the addendum:

- Ensure the LEA used multiple models of engagement offered to stakeholders. Examples may include surveys, in-person or virtual committee meetings, town hall meetings, or other inclusive engagement opportunities.
- LEAs should engage all applicable groups noted in meaningful consultation during the crafting of the plan and when making any significant revisions or updates to the plan.
- The number of stakeholders engaged should represent the composition of students. For example, if students with disabilities make up 15 percent of students, then 10-20 percent of respondents should represent this subgroup.
- Ensure the stakeholder engagement happened prior to the development/revision of the plan.
- The LEA must engage the health department in the development and revision of the plan. This is different from providing the health department with COVID-19 numbers.
- Plans must explicitly address every bullet point in Question 3 regarding district policies and strategies.
- Plans require local board approval and public posting.
- LEAs must update the *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan* at least every six months through Sept. 30, 2023, seek public input on the plan and any revisions, and take such input into account. All revisions must include an explanation and rationale of why the revisions were made.
- All revisions must include an explanation and rationale, with meaningful public consultation and in an understandable format. The American Rescue Plan (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 parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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

The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief 3.0 (ESSER 3.0) Fund under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, was enacted on March 11, 2021. Funding provided to states and local educational agencies (LEAs) helps safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the nation's students.

In the fall of 2021, LEAs developed and made publicly available a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan. All plans were developed with meaningful public consultation with stakeholder groups. LEAs are required to update the plan every six months through Sept. 30, 2023, and must seek public input on the plan and any revisions and must take such input into account. LEAs also must review and update their plans and ensure they align with any significant changes to 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.

The following information is intended to update stakeholders and address the requirement.

LEA Name:

Date: 9/7/23

**1. Describe how the LEA has continued to engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders in the development of the revised plan.**

Community forums, surveys and focus groups are held to provide community members and other stakeholders an opportunity to ask questions, and give meaningful input.

**2. Describe how the LEA engaged the health department in the development of the revised plan.**

The district consults with the Washington County and Regional Health Departments on a regular basis concerning health and safety decisions regarding our students/faculty/staff. Washington County Schools participates in regular meetings with local stakeholders, as well as, the Washington County and Regional Health Departments regarding COVID-19 and its impact to the district.

**3. Provide the extent to which the LEA has updated adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the following health and safety strategies.**

<i>Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies</i>
<i>Chief Students Support Officer, IEP/504 case managers, school nurses, principals, teachers, social workers and counselors will work with families to develop student specific education plan for students with complex needs.</i>
<i>Physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)</i>
<i>Classroom configurations will promote learning and maximize distance where feasible. - Desks are encouraged to be arranged in a way that all students face one direction. - Students will be taken outside when feasible. - Building faculty meetings, full administrative meetings and professional development activities will occur in person, meeting coordinators will choose large space/rooms as meeting site to maximize distance where feasible. - Cohorts will be encouraged. - Encourage children not to share personal items.</i>
<i>Hand washing and respiratory etiquette</i>
<i>General hand hygiene will be practiced throughout the day to minimize spread through the use of common items. - Elementary students will participate in hand washing classes. - Proper hand washing technique signs will be posted in bathrooms and near sinks. - Alcohol-based hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes will be available. - Wash hands often with soap, warm water, and disposable paper towels. - Wear appropriate gloves and mask when it is reasonably anticipated that there may be hand contact with droplets and when handling or touching contaminated items or surfaces. - Wash hands immediately or as soon as feasible after removing gloves. - Cover mouth with tissue or elbow when coughing or sneezing. - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. - Stay home when you are sick. All employees and students will self-screen prior to coming to school. Symptoms to look for: new cough, difficulty breathing, loss of taste/smell, fever &gt; 100.4 °F, chills, congestion/runny nose, nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, muscle pain and fatigue.</i>
<i>Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities including improving ventilation</i>
<i>All high-touch surfaces will be cleaned/disinfected by custodial staff on a regular daily schedule (door handles, light switches, etc.) following EPA/CDC manufacturer guidelines.- Desks will be cleaned on a frequent basis.- Students and faculty/staff should sanitize hands on a frequent basis. Hand sanitizer will be made available in classrooms and common areas.- Physical education equipment will be cleaned on a regular basis.- Water bottle refill stations are in use. Hands-free allowing for decrease in opportunity to spread virus and/or bacteria. - Ventilate all classrooms and common areas when available/possible using windows. Doors and windows will be open to the extent feasible while maintaining perimeter security. If the air conditioner is running, doors and windows will remain closed. Exterior doors will remain locked. Systems will be set to provide frequent air exchange.</i>
<i>Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine</i>
<i>Students and employees are encouraged to report symptoms and positive cases to their building nurse or the coordinated school health office, similar to reporting for other communicable diseases. - Per the newly enacted law, the Tennessee Commissioner of Health has the sole authority to determine quarantine guidelines. For Washington County, the Northeast Regional Health Department will be responsible for all contract tracing associated with COVID-19 cases, including any communication to any citizen of exposure to a positive COVID-19 case. Washington County Schools will continue to follow all allowable measures to prevent the spread of any communicable disease which may endanger the health of either an individual or others in the regular school setting. If/when an individual student or employee has a communicable disease that may endanger the health of either him/her or other individuals in a school setting; the individual will be excluded from the school until the individual is fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication and symptom improvement. - Will consult with the Washington County and Regional Health Department on a regular basis regarding health and safety decisions regarding our students/faculty/staff. - District will participate in regular meetings with the Washington County and Regional Health Department regarding COVID-19 and impact to the district.</i>
<i>Diagnostic and screening testing</i>

*Educate all stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, parents/guardians, etc.) on the signs and symptoms of COVID19 and encourage screening at home prior to coming to school and/or reporting to work. - The school nurse will evaluate any individual who presents with symptoms and provide guidance. - If appropriate, the school nurse will test students/faculty/staff for COVID-19 through telehealth partnership with the local health system or refer to the local health department medical facility.*

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

*Educate all stakeholders (students, faculty, staff, parents/guardians, etc.) on the signs and symptoms of COVID19 and benefits of vaccination. Encourage vaccination/booster if age appropriate. - Provide students, families, faculty and staff with local resources regarding facilities offering vaccinations.*

*Universal and correct wearing of masks*

*With the signing of the Tennessee Senate Bill 9014 into law by Governor Bill Lee on Friday, November 12, 2021, Washington County Schools will no longer have a face covering (mask) requirement for any student, employee, or visitor in any school building or bus. Face coverings are optional. Individual employees and students may continue to wear and are encouraged to wear face coverings for personal protection.*

- 4. Provide a current description as to how the LEA is ensuring continuity of services including but not limited to services that address students' academic needs and students' and staff's social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services.**

Instruction for the 2023-2024 school year will begin on Wednesday, August 2, 2023 with a regular Monday through Friday schedule. The following options were made available to families: - In-person (face to face) instruction - Virtual Academy (6th-12th) Student's medical issues which require a temporary leave from school will be addresses on a case by case basis to determine appropriate instructional alternatives to continue the student's education in consideration of information provided by the student's healthcare provider, parents/guardians, principal, teacher and counselor, as well as, IEP, if applicable. To address the mental health concerns for our students/faculty and staff, the following measures will be in place for the 2022-2023 school year: - School counselors will provide mental health support for students and connect families with resources and services. - Second Step, SEL curriculum, will be implemented in all K-8 schools. - Behavioral Health Therapists and/or Student Assistant Counselors will be available in every school offering assistance, services and resources to students, families, faculty and staff. - Social workers will be available to provide all schools with assistance, services and needed resources for students/families in need. - School nurses are available in every school and will address health and wellness in a holistic manner providing needed support, resources and referrals. - Professional development options will continue to support mental health/stress reduction. Calming corners and calming boxes will be available in each school to support mental health and stress reduction. - Virtual calming rooms will be available to all stakeholders via the district website. Washington County Schools (WCS) is working diligently to ensure a safe environment, while continually providing education to our students. Our top priority is protecting students, families, and staff. WCS will continue following guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Tennessee Department of Health (TDOH).