

LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

LEA Name: Dumont Public Schools

Revised Date: (06/11/2021):

Date(s) Reviewed/Updated: (01/12/22)

Note: This plan is based on current COVID-19 Public Health Recommendations for Local Health Departments for K-12 Schools Updated March 23, 2021 and CDC guidelines and District Policy 1648: Restart and Recovery Plan, and is subject to change based on new guidelines or mandates that may be implemented by the Governor's office, CDC, NJDOH and the NJDOE.

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

Face coverings will be required for all staff, students and visitors. Face masks must be worn at all times in classrooms, hallways, offices and inside and outside areas. In an elementary classroom setting where social distancing can take place (e.g., desks are 6 feet apart) and/or physical barriers are in place, face coverings may be removed while students are at their desks for the purpose of eating their snacks, but not when moving around the room or hallways. This will only be at the direction of the teacher.

Face coverings are always required for visitors and students and staff unless it will inhibit the individual's health. Accommodations for students who are unable to wear a face covering will be addressed according to that student's particular need and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

The district will provide face masks and shields and other appropriate PPE to staff. Face masks and other appropriate PPE for students will also be provided as needed.

Staff and students will be given the opportunity to utilize their own PPE. The district is recommending that students bring at least 2 face coverings on a daily basis to school.

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

Currently the district is not utilizing cohorts. The use of Cohorts may be reimplemented if another state of emergency related to the pandemic is declared by the State of New Jersey.

Social Distancing in Instructional and Non-Instructional Rooms

The district will make every effort to ensure that social distancing can occur to the greatest extent possible in instructional and non-instructional spaces. When the number of students does not allow for social distancing in an assigned space, an attempt will be made to identify an alternate space for use that can support social distancing to the greatest extent possible.

All classrooms will be set up with students forward facing in socially- distanced rows. If a classroom has tables, students will be spaced accordingly. Tables will be replaced by individual desks when possible. Desk barriers will be available upon request in the lower elementary grades and may be used in select upper grades in rooms where creating social distance may be challenging.

Hallways will have arrows identifying travel lanes for forward movement in one direction on the right side, and another on the left.

Restrooms will be monitored when possible by school staff to ensure that bathroom capacity does not exceed 50%. Students and staff will be reminded that social distancing and the wearing of facial coverings extends to bathroom facilities as well.

Outdoor entrances will support social distancing through the use of dashes or dots spaced 6 feet apart. Staff will supervise arrival and dismissal of students to ensure compliance.

Signage will be evident throughout each of the buildings to remind students and staffs of the importance and rules related to social distancing.

Social Distancing on School Buses

Due to the reality that social distancing will not be able to be maintained on most routes, students and drivers will be required to wear masks at all times. Windows will also be opened on buses to increase airflow. The district will provide bus drivers with additional PPE as needed. Parents of children who are transported on District buses, will be given an opportunity to opt out of District transportation services.

C. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

The district will continue to ensure that each classroom is equipped with hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes and/or spray. Students at the elementary level will be encouraged to wash to sanitize their hands upon arrival to school, before and after snack time, before and after lunch, and after recess. All district students will be encouraged to wash or sanitize their hands for at least twenty seconds at regular intervals during the school day and always before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose, coughing, and/or sneezing. If washing with soap and water is not possible, washing with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) should be used.

The district will display signs throughout each of the buildings to promote general health and hygiene practices, that includes handwashing, as part of our return to school.

The school district will prepare and maintain hand sanitizing stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol). Such stations should be:

- (a) In each classroom (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer)
- (b) At entrances and exits of buildings.
- (c) Near lunchrooms and toilets.

D. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Training will be provided to all Building and Grounds Personnel in the proper protocols for disinfecting, cleaning and sanitizing a school building.

Training will also be provided to school district bus drivers who will be cleaning and sanitizes buses in between routes. Each building will be maintained on a consistent cleaning and disinfecting cycle, with an emphasis on thorough and frequent disinfecting of all common touchpoints throughout the school day. Cleaning checklists will be maintained. Custodial staff may be reassigned to meet a building's cleaning needs. The need to secure additional staff will be evaluated periodically by the Pandemic teams in each building.

Buildings will be disinfected through the use of spraying/misting equipment. Disinfectant wipes and cleaners and sanitizing gel will be made available to teachers and students in each classroom.

All indoor facilities will have adequate ventilation, including operational heating and ventilation systems where appropriate. Recirculated air must have a fresh air component, windows will be opened, if practical, if air conditioning is not provided, and filter(s) for A/C units must be maintained and changed according to manufacturer recommendations.

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

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, where close contact is defined as being within three to six feet for a period of at least 15 minutes. Trained professionals from the community then get in touch with those close contacts, while continuing to maintain confidentiality, to recommend next steps, such as self-quarantining, and to provide critical education and support in risk mitigation strategies.

The district will utilize sign in/attendance sheets as a form of contact tracing. Additional tracking sheets may be utilized in bathrooms. Accurate attendance will be extremely important for contact tracing purposes and should be used in every class (especially in middle/high school if students are moving around).

Bathroom attendance will also be monitored in an effort to contact trace.

District buses will also utilize an attendance tracking system to monitor student and staff contact.

Students and staff with symptoms related to COVID-19 must be safely and respectfully isolated from others. If a school district becomes aware that an individual who has spent time in a district facility tests positive for COVID-19, district officials must immediately notify local health officials, any staff that the individual has been in contact with, and families of a confirmed case while maintaining confidentiality

If students or staff arrive at school and are potentially feeling ill with COVID-19 symptoms, they will be immediately relocated to an isolation area so as not to “contaminate” the population.

An “isolation room” will be designated in each school for staff and students who are potentially ill with COVID-19 symptoms.

Isolation rooms will be equipped with seating that is at least 6 ft apart, barriers that can be placed between student stations, visible 6 ft social distancing markings, PPE (i.e. gowns, face masks, face shields and gloves); and hand sanitizer.

The nurse will evaluate the student and/or staff member and will determine if he or she should be sent home and/or referred for further medical evaluation.

Reporting of a case of COVID-19:

Protocols involving school-level data regarding health and safety measures regarding the presence of COVID19 and reporting that data to the district will be followed.

The district will follow these procedures:

- The building nurse will notify the Health Department if someone has COVID-19.
- The building nurse will notify the Administration.
- The building nurse will report to the County Health Office.
- Contact tracing by school nurse (and other designated staff) in conjunction with the Bergen County Health Department (BCHD) will occur.
- In addition to consulting with the health department (local/county), the District may consult with board attorney when making decisions regarding a COVID-19 patient.

F. Diagnostic and screening testing:

All students and staff will be required to complete a daily health pre-screening before arriving to school. Staff and students must answer health related questions, including any recent experience with COVID-19 related symptoms, recent travel, and potential exposure to a COVID-19 infected person.

Health checks by the school nurse will be conducted safely and respectfully, and in accordance with any applicable privacy laws and regulations. The results of these screenings will be documented when signs/symptoms of COVID-19 are observed.

Visitors and volunteers to the buildings will be required to complete the health screening form for COVID-19 symptoms and will have their temperatures checked upon arrival before they are given admittance to the building.

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

The District, in partnership with local hospitals and/or medical facilities, has provided various opportunities for staff to secure vaccinations. The district has also distributed flyers related to vaccination opportunities to the entire school community.

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

The district will adhere to the guidelines set forth by the NJDOE as it pertains to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities or who may have serious underlying medical conditions. Accommodation for students who are unable to wear a face covering will be addressed according to that student's need and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

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).

In addition to taking the steps listed in the Health and Safety Guidelines section to protect students' and educators' physical health, leaders must also consider the impact of social isolation on both educators and students. The district is committed to meeting the academic as well as the social-emotional needs of all its students.

a. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and School Culture and Climate

In the area of SEL, the District will provide:

- Tailored SEL Guidance Classroom Lessons (elementary, middle, and high school),
- The Office of Curriculum and Instruction and the Office of Special Services, including school-based counseling services, will collaborate to provide Tier 1 and Tier 2 programs for students regarding psychoeducation and coping strategies for anxiety around COVID-19.

- Each school building's Pandemic Committee will convey information regarding restart and reopening and ongoing concerns with COVID-19 to the District Administration gathered from parents, students and staff. Each Pandemic Team will have a liaison (with a designated email) in order to efficiently aggregate and disseminate feedback to appropriate administrators.

Resources for the District:

Guidance Counseling Resource:

<https://sites.google.com/dumontnj.org/counselingresource/home>

CASEL Updated Resource:

https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/CASEL_Leveraging-SEL-as-You-Prepare-to-Reopen-and-Renew.pdf

b. Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)

In the area of MTSS, the District will:

- Conduct team building interaction meetings/ activities in each school building.
- Identify students for our Tier 2 (Basic Skills Intervention) with existing screening procedures.
- Create a parent feedback survey to help link concerns at home with the right support provided by educational specialists and administrators.

Resources for the District:

Educator Self-Care Assessment

<https://gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Educator-Resilience-Trauma-Informed-Self-Care-Self-Assessment.pdf>

NJ Tiered System of Supports

<https://www.nj.gov/education/njtss/overview/>

National Association of School Psychologists (School Adjustment Risk Matrix) [https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/covid-19-resource-center/return-to-school/returning-to-school-following-covid-19-related-school-closures-the-covid-19-school-adjustment-risk-matrix-\(c-sarm\)](https://www.nasponline.org/resources-and-publications/resources-and-podcasts/covid-19-resource-center/return-to-school/returning-to-school-following-covid-19-related-school-closures-the-covid-19-school-adjustment-risk-matrix-(c-sarm))

c. Wraparound Supports

In the area of Wraparound Supports, the District will continue to:

- Provide Trauma Informed training (refresher workshops for all staff, access to Safe Schools trainings, specific trainings from our Mental Health Agency partnership with Care Plus NJ, as well as free county sponsored trainings).
- Provide counseling and parent support via our higher education affiliation agreements with school psychology and school social worker training programs.
- Link existing courses in school psychology to our internal procedures of when teachers request consultation via the Intervention and Referral Services committees in each of our schools.
- Collaborate and meet with our county's Care Management Organization (Bergen's Promise) to supplement support for our families outside of the school buildings.
- Engage in our multi-year grant with the NJDOE NJTSS-ER and meet quarterly with respect to tiered systems of support.

Resources for the District:

National Child Traumatic Stress Network Resource

https://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/resources/fact-sheet/trauma_informed_school_strategies_during_covid-19.pdf

Building Trauma -Sensitive Schools Resource

<https://safesupportivelearning.ed.gov/building-trauma-sensitive-schools>

Bergen County COVID-19 Health and Community Health Resources

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Dfu6iplG9dM0aJTY9OICc9tPMx_vE3G0/view

d. Food Service and Distribution

In the area of Food Service and Distribution, the District will continue to:

- Collaborate with the District's contracted Food Services vendor. The District will continue to provide food service and seamless feeding of students according to guidelines set forth to ensure safety and nourishment.

e. Quality Child Care

In the area of Quality Child Care, the District will continue to:

- Collaborate with YWCA for before/ after school care and share the District's Safe Return to In-Person Instruction plan.

Procedures to Foster and Maintain a Safe and Supportive School Climate

Procedures to foster and maintain a safe and supportive climate must be implemented and communicated.

- The Guidance Department and Special Ed Department will collaborate to develop programs for students targeting the fear of COVID19 and the stigma associated with it.
- The Pandemic Committee will meet regularly to convey information regarding COVID19 to the District Administration gathered from parents, students and staff.
- The Pandemic Team liaison will communicate the feedback sent to the schools by parents and other stakeholders regarding COVID. The Pandemic Team Liaison will monitor this feedback and forward to appropriate administrators.

Provide Necessary Communications to the School Community and to District

To provide necessary and frequent information to the school community, the District will use multiple platforms.

- Website for FAQ and other information
- School Messenger - phone or email
- Printed mailings
- Surveys will be conducted often to gather information from staff, parents and students

Create Pathways for Community, Family and Student Voices

- Information will be disseminated in multiple languages.
- The District will conduct surveys to gather information from staff, parents and students.
- Pandemic Teams will meet regularly.

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).

The LEA utilized its Restart Committee to put together this plan. The District's Restart Committee is comprised of various stakeholders, including staff, parents, students, and BOE members that provided input as the plan was being developed. The LEA presented the plan to the Board of Education at a public meeting on June 10 to seek additional public input.

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)

This plan has been created in a portable PDF format and will be posted on the school district website. The LEA will provide information to parents about the plan, including the availability of translating the plan according to parental need if necessary through a communication that will be sent home.