

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

Addendum Guidance

2022-2023

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 (Feb. 15 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 a 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: Stewart County Schools

Date: July 22, 2022

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

Several methods were used in order to attain input from the LEA's stakeholders. The LEA will continue to receive feedback at board meetings from concerned citizens/stakeholders. Before every meeting there is a sign up sheet to speak at the meeting. In addition, phone calls, emails, social media sites all afford stakeholders with opportunities to provide feedback. The school nurses interact daily with stakeholders in regards to the school safety plan. Feedback from parents of students with IEPs and/or health concerns are also instrumental. The school system's Coordinated School Health Supervisor participates in a monthly round table community health council meeting where questions are taken from individuals in the community. The LEA developed a presentation that provided an overview of available ESSER funds and general guidelines on how the LEA planned to allocate ESSER funds. The original presentation was published on social media, the system website, and hard copies were available at each school during registrations, open houses, etc. A feedback form accompanied the presentation. This form allowed stakeholders to have input in how ESSER funds were allocated and make further recommendations on how funds could be used. The form provided each stakeholder an opportunity to represent various student subgroups. Additionally, work sessions were held with school/district administrators, teachers, and school leaders to further adjust the plan and meet the needs of our students. Teachers and school-level Administrators feedback was extremely valuable in the development of the plan. Additionally, the school reopening committee that was formed in May 2020 resumed meeting in the summer of 2021 and the Administrative Council in 2022 continued to review data. The committee is composed school leaders, a parent, a teacher, and several health officials including the Director of the local Health Department. The Administrative Council is composed of Supervisors and school level Administrators. The Department of Health works collaboratively with the LEA providing guidance on

mitigation strategies, real-time data concerning community spread, and how the two departments could cooperatively work in keeping schools safe for students and staff.

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

Coordinated School Health continues to be the main contact regarding anything related to COVID-19. The LEA and the local health department have maintained close communication with each other to provide information and share resources on COVID-19 transmission, prevention, and control measures. In fact the Coordinated School Health Supervisor and Coordinated School Health RN, along with the Director of the local Health Department, physician offices, police, county mayor, social workers and others from the community meet monthly as the county health council and discuss best practices, updates, and concerns.

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.

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| <i>Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies</i> |
| Even though the Stewart County School System does not have a mask mandate, a student’s documented medical condition or disability, as reflected in an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Educational Plan pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, will always be considered. Additional precautions to limit possible COVID-19 exposure to medically fragile students will be emphasized by requiring each school’s nurse to serve these students in their classrooms rather than requiring them to leave their class and travel to the clinic for their medical needs. |
| <i>Physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)</i> |
| Social distancing is encouraged indoors with a minimum 3 feet target where possible. Where feasible, we maintain cohorts or groups of students with dedicated staff who remain together throughout the day, including at recess, lunch times, and while participating in extracurricular activities. Teachers are encouraged to take classes outside as much as possible. |
| <i>Hand washing and respiratory etiquette</i> |
| Students have a hand washing routine and buildings have hand sanitizing stations throughout all buildings. Employees model and encourage covering your cough and sneeze and disposing of tissues in the nearest waste receptacle or into your elbow when tissue is unavailable. Signs are posted. |
| <i>Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities including improving ventilation</i> |
| Sanitization of high-touch areas will be ongoing. Efforts have taken place over the last year to improve the air quality within schools by increasing outdoor air ventilation and changing filters in all buildings more frequently. Individuals engaged in high-intensity aerobic or anaerobic activity during a physical education class will be in a well-ventilated location and encouraged to maintain a physical distance of three to six feet from all other individuals. |
| <i>Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine</i> |
| The LEA continues to follow the State Department of Education and State Department of Health’s guidance. Currently, due to the recent state legislation, the district no longer participates in contact tracing. The regional health department is currently the determining entity for conduction contact tracing and if it is deemed necessary, it is/will be conducted by the regional health department. |
| <i>Diagnostic and screening testing</i> |
| Self-screening, handwashing, covering sneezes, and staying home when sick for all students, employees, and visitors are encouraged. Extra precautions from nursing staff will be implemented for students or staff exhibiting symptoms characteristics of Covid-19. Visitors will be limited and self-symptom screening will occur prior to building entry. |
| <i>Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible</i> |
| The LEA has collaborated with the local health department to administer vaccines to staff members who voluntarily wanted the vaccine. The Health Department continues to provide vaccines which allows time for employees and students to take advantage of walk in appointments. |
| <i>Universal and correct wearing of masks</i> |
| Face coverings for all students and staff are encouraged but not required. Posters from the Department of Health showing the proper way to wear a face covering are posted in multiple places in each school building. |

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.

The LEA had no school closings during the 2021-22 school year due to COVID-19. In-person learning is available and on-going at all schools. As a result of our technology plan, the Stewart County School System (SCSS) is a one-to-one device school district. Students have Chromebooks and each teacher has been equipped with a Chromebook which will allow seemingly education to continue to be delivered remotely if ever needed. In addition, the SCSS has purchased Promethean boards for each instruction room. The after school tutoring and summer school will assist in academic needs. Intervention Assistants have been hired to assist with student learning. The SCSS will continue to support students with social emotional, and mental health needs through a variety of means that will include, but may not be limited to: SAP (Student Assistance Program), School Counselors, Mental Health Case Workers, and a Mental Health Cooperative Therapist. A School Family Liaison was hired. Coordinated School Health staff includes a counselor and a nurse as well as a Family Resource Director that is available to support students and staff members. A SWOT analysis meeting with all the mental health providers was held to create the job description of the School Family Liaison. At the beginning of the pandemic, the Stewart County School System was able to establish remote meal sites for student breakfast and lunch distribution. Those sites (or others) could be used again, should the need arise.