

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

Winchester Public Schools
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Section 1: Introduction

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Fund is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' **academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs**. This plan describes how Winchester Public Schools will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and division staff during and following the return to full in-person instruction. Winchester Public Schools has developed landing pages for COVID Related items our ESSER III plans on our website at "[Covid-19 Protocols 2022-23](#)" and "[Pandemic Funding](#)". Specific questions about this plan should be directed to Garland Miller Jr. at ESSER@wps.k12.va.us.

Section 2: Maintaining Health and Safety

The Winchester Public Schools has implemented a tiered approach for all students especially those disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. At the secondary level, Tier one supports personalized learning opportunities and the provision of digital learning platforms to supplement direct instruction. Tier two supports include the provision of academic coaches and Twilight School for students needing an adult to provide encouragement and academic guidance, as well as additional time to complete unfinished learning. An example of a Tier three support would be referral to the Student Success Team for intensive social-emotional and academic support. Additionally, the Winchester Public Schools have administered a variety of K-12 diagnostic screeners to determine students in need of tier two and tier three support.

Winchester Public Schools will develop an Multi-tiered System of Supports (MTSS) for students in K-12. With the guidance from our instructional leaders and various stakeholders we will address learning loss with two MTSS coaches (1 utilizing ESSER III funds) assigned to grades K-6 and 7-12. They will lead interventionists at each school in developing processes to address students' learning gaps caused by COVID-19 closures. Interventionists will work with specific data to guide their work with students to address learning gaps. Progress monitoring will be used to measure student progress. MTSS coaches will assist classroom teachers in developing tier one and two strategies to address learning loss within their classrooms.

In order to address the multi-dimensional challenges facing our students and their families, Winchester Public Schools will implement strategies across the spectrum of universal (Tier 1) to targeted interventions (Tier 3).

Universal Interventions (Tier 1):

- Full implementation of a Social Emotional (SEL) Curricula in grades K-12 to better comprehend their emotions, to feel those emotions fully, and demonstrate empathy for others.
 - Move this World SEL will be implemented in grades K-12.
 - Newsela SEL will be implemented in grades 9-12.

Early Interventions (Tier 2):

- Expand our Family Liaison Team by three.
 - In addition to current Spanish speaking liaisons, three staff will be added to encourage family/parental engagement in the school and provide ongoing, educational programs to immediate family members, parents/legal guardians of students. Particular attention will be focused on families particularly vulnerable to the effects of the pandemic.

- Provide a multi-day professional development experience for school-based mental health professionals.
 - Participants include school psychologists, school counselors and school social workers.
 - Topics to include: Dual Capacity Framework for Family Empowerment, Trauma informed classrooms, and creating equity within schools.

Targeted Interventions (Tier 3):

- Ease access to mental health services.
 - Provide therapeutic mentoring services for students experiencing challenges both in the school setting and community. Access to services is a challenge due to medicaid restrictions.
- Ease access to mental health assessments.
 - Provide mental health assessments for students experiencing significant difficulties as indicated by threat assessments or other standard tools. Access to services is a challenge due to medicaid and private insurance restrictions.

Section 2: Maintaining Health and Safety

Winchester Public Schools has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and division staff during and following the return to full in-person instruction. A description of actions already taken and additional actions planned is below.

In addition, Winchester Public Schools has adopted policies on each of the following safety recommendations established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette
 - Students are required to sanitize their hands upon entering the building from recess and prior to eating breakfast and lunch.
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation
 - Strategies implemented at onset of pandemic will continue as stipulated by most recent CDC guidelines. [Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools](#)
- Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities
 - Winchester Public Schools has provided two in-school vaccinations clinics in partnership with our local department of health. With the availability of vaccinations for younger students, discussions are currently underway for our schools to be a site for vaccinations.
- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies
 - Winchester Public Schools has utilized the Individual Educational Plan team to provide necessary accommodations for students challenged with wearing a mask.
- Coordination with state and local health officials
 - Winchester Public Schools provides up-to-date information to the local Department of Health on all positive COVID cases among staff and students.
 - When questions arise related to mitigation strategies or quarantine measures, Winchester Public Schools communicates with the K-12 liaison dedicated to our region from the local Department of Health.

Section 3: Continuity of Services

Winchester Public Schools has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students’ academic needs and students’ and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs.

To address continuity of services in academics, the Winchester Public Schools will use funding to continue with the implementation of the extended school year programs and the implementation of MTSS. We will assess student progress regularly to measure our student needs and provide interventions as necessary.

Section 4: Opportunity for Public Comment

In developing the ARP ESSER Plan, Winchester Public Schools sought public input and took such input into account as described below.

Our proposed COVID-19 Recovery Plan 2021 was presented to our School Board on July 12, 2021. This presentation can be accessed on our website, under the School Board tab, Meetings, then July 12, 2021. Address in this presentation was our proposed plan to Open Schools, Address Learning Recovery, Personal Protective Equipment and Cleaning Enhancements and Air Quality. The Financial Scope of these Federal Programs were outlined. Public Input was announced at this meeting and collected over the next month using a form on our website. Responses were vetted and integrated into our current submitted plan.

Section 5: Periodic Review and Revision of Plan

During the period of the ARP ESSER award (until September 2023), Winchester Public Schools will periodically review and, as needed, revise its plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. The plan will be reviewed at least every six months, and Winchester Public Schools will seek and take into account public input during the review process. Plan revisions will address updated CDC guidance on safely reopening schools, if any are issued.

Section 6: Making the Plan Available to the Public

Winchester Public Schools has taken the following steps to make this plan available to the public:

- The plan is posted at <https://www.wps.k12.va.us/domain/4720>
- The plan may be orally translated or in another language for parents. Contact Kimberley Peterson at petersonk@wps.k12.va.us to request translation.
- Upon request, a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA may be provided with the plan in an alternative format accessible by contacting Winchester Public Schools Attn: Hayley Mullins at mullinsh@wps.k12.va.us