

Caroline County Public Schools,



**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 Caroline County 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. Questions about this plan should be directed to Andrea Ross- Director of Federal Programs and Jeff Wick- Safety and Compliance Coordinator.

Caroline County Public Schools welcomed all students back to school for full in-person learning on August 15, 2022. However, students at the secondary level had the opportunity to enroll in virtual learning provided by Virtual Virginia. Schools continue to practice mitigation strategies, including hand washing, provision of hand-sanitizing dispensers, water bottle filling stations, isolation for positive students and quarantine for close contacts according to CDC and VDH guidelines, disinfection of classrooms with the Clorox360 machine when occupied by a positive person within 24 hours, and asking individuals to stay home when sick. Mask-wearing is optional and permitted for those who choose to wear one.

**Section 2: Maintaining Health and Safety**

Caroline County Public Schools will continue to monitor transmission levels to make appropriate decisions for its schools.

In addition, Caroline County Public Schools has adopted policies on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.

- **Wearing of masks-** With the change in CDC policy and state law, mask-wearing is voluntary for students. Since Caroline County is at a low transmission level, masks are not required by staff in schools or on school transportation..
- **Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing** (e.g., use of cohorts/podding)- Based on executive order 79, physical distancing is no longer required.
- **Handwashing and respiratory etiquette-** Handwashing/hand sanitizing will be encouraged throughout the day and before and after meals. All classrooms have hand sanitizer dispensers, so staff and students will be encouraged to use this regularly throughout the school day.
- **Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities-** if offered by the Virginia Department of Health, CCPS will hold vaccination clinics for students.
- **Coordination with state and local health officials** - When there is a confirmed positive case, the Coordinator of Safety and Compliance provides a line list to the Virginia Department of Health. If an outbreak occurs in a school, the Coordinator will contact the VDH for guidance regarding contact tracing and/or implementing other measures.
- **Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities-** Cleaning continues on a daily basis for occupied areas.
- **Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments-** Contact tracing only occurs if an

outbreak has been identified. An outbreak occurs when 10% of a classroom or group has tested positive. Positive persons are required to isolate for 5 days from the date of the positive test or onset of symptoms. If close contacts are identified as the result of an outbreak, they will quarantine for 5 days, get a Covid test on the 5th day, and return on the 6th day if the test results are negative. In lieu of testing, close contacts can choose to complete a 10-day quarantine period and return on the 11th day if they have not developed symptoms. The Coordinator of Safety and Compliance provides a line list of positive students and close contacts to the Virginia Department of Health. The VDH also provides assistance with cases that involve unusual circumstances.

- **Diagnostic and screening testing-** Parents and staff are asked to monitor their students and themselves for symptoms and to stay home if any are presented. Symptomatic students are sent to the school nurse for evaluation.
- **Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies-** Students will continue to receive the services as stipulated in their IEP or 504 Plan. CCPS is required to provide the least restrictive environment for each student.
- **Other-** The CCPS Covid-19 Data Dashboard was removed from the website effective May 11 with the resolution signed by President Biden ending the national emergency.

### **Section 3: Continuity of Services**

Caroline County Public Schools has continued to take the necessary actions to ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs, while providing students' and staff social, emotional, and mental health supports.

#### **Academic:**

CCPS has been able to maintain face to face instruction at all sites. CCPS has also successfully implemented partnership with Virtual Virginia for qualified students who desire to remain a virtual learner and that meet the requirements of an effective virtual learner based on Virtual Virginia Standards. Interventions to address student learning loss and individual student needs have been ongoing across the Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 of the Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS). Interventions and supports are monitored through School Support Team meetings conducted by the instructional leadership team from the School Board Office. Additional reading and math services along with after school tutoring is offered to address learning loss for identified students. Fall, winter, and spring assessment data are being analyzed to provide targeted remediation and enrichment to all learners prior to year end testing. Student profiles are also being evaluated to ensure students in need receive remediation through the CCPS Summer Academy, transitional programs, and other academic supports provided by CCPS. In addition, CCPS has contracted with FEV tutoring services and selected students have access to a tutor during the school day, evenings and weekends. The division will continue to follow research best practices and Virginia Department of Education guidelines to make the necessary instructional adjustments to bridge previous skills/content to grade level standards. Additional staff have been hired to reduce class sizes and address student deficits and accelerate learning.

**Social:** CCPS is using Virginia Tiered Systems of Support (VTSS) strategies to provide tiered interventions for students' social-emotional needs. Face to face student clubs have resumed in all locations.

**Emotional:** CCPS is using VTSS strategies to support tiered interventions for students' emotional needs. Therapeutic Day Treatment (TDT) services have been reinstated and are currently available through New Legacy Family Services for identified students.

**Mental Health:** CCPS schools have a full time School Social Worker assigned to support mental health needs of students and support families with resources. Additionally, Family Engagement Staff are located at each school. CARE teams formed at each school, continue to work collaboratively with School Social

Workers, School Counselors, School Psychologists and instructional staff together to support the ongoing needs of students.

CCPS has continued to keep the social emotional needs of all students a focus throughout the second semester. CARE team members attended virtually the National Creating Trauma Sensitive Schools conference to continue to acquire best practice and additional support to enhance SEL and trauma sensitive resources. Care Team members have been meeting collaboratively to share resources and to ensure all students within the division have the support needed to be successful in school and in life. CCPS continues implementation of Panorama, a universal screener for SEL. Students K-12 were surveyed to assess individual areas of need to allow CARE team members to build programming, establish data driven support groups, and to establish professional development for teachers and staff in the areas of self-management, self-efficacy, learning strategies, and emotion regulation. The implementation of Panorama allows CCPS to have a research based program that provides individual, school, and division student data to drive decisions, programs, and services.

#### **Section 4: Opportunity for Public Comment**

On May 19, 2023, the LEA Plan for Safe Return was posted on the CCPS website for public comment. All comments were submitted electronically to Andrea Ross, Director of Federal Programs by Thursday, May 25, 2023.

#### **Section 5: Periodic Review and Revision of Plan**

During the period of the ARP ESSER award (until September 2023), Caroline County 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 Caroline County 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**

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

- The plan is available in Spanish as this is our highest multilingual population in Caroline County at this time.
- The plan may be orally translated for parents. Contact Arleen Calhoun-Hicks, ELL teacher, to request translation; and
- 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 Paulette Heron, Director of Special Education, at [pheron@ccps.us](mailto:pheron@ccps.us).
- Enhancement and revisions of the Return to Learn Plan is also shared at the monthly CCPS school board meeting.