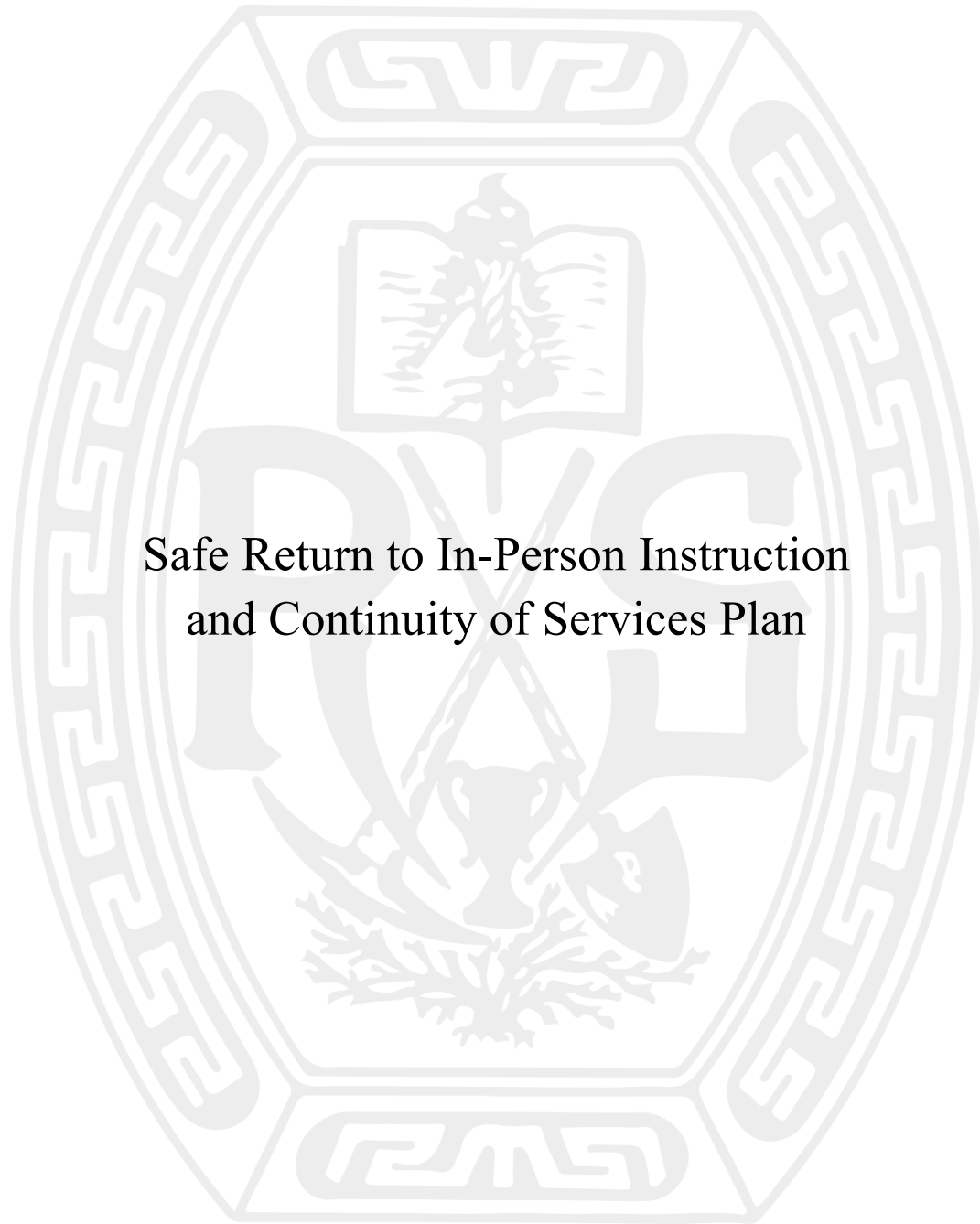


# Sweetwater County School District Number One



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

Vision Statement: As an innovative District, united with our community, we empower and inspire all students to academic excellence in pursuit of their interests and passions.

### **Message from the Wyoming Department of Education to districts:**

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, enacted on March 11, 2021. ARP ESSER Funding provides a total of nearly \$122 billion to states and local educational agencies (LEAs) to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the nation's students. In addition to ARP ESSER Funding, ARP includes \$3 billion for special education, \$850 million for the Outlying Areas, \$2.75 billion to support non-public schools, and additional funding for homeless children and youth, Tribal educational agencies, Native Hawaiians, and Alaska Natives.

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) must develop and make publicly available a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan that meets the following requirements within 30 days of receiving ARP ESSER allocation. If an LEA developed a plan before ARP was enacted that does not address the requirements, the LEA must revise its plan no later than six months after it last reviewed its plan. All plans must be developed with meaningful public consultation with stakeholder groups (i.e., families, students, teachers, principals, school and district administrators, school leaders, other educators, school staff, advocacy organizations representing student groups). The consultation process must include an opportunity for input and meaning consideration of that input. ARP ESSER plans need to be published in an understandable and uniform format; to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable, orally translated; and upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent.

Note: LEAs need to update the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through the life of the grant. Additionally, LEAs must seek public input on any of these revisions and must take that input into account. All revisions must include a rationale of why the revisions were made.

#### **Part One: Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan**

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

#### **Mitigation Strategies**

**Universal wearing of masks**

In the July 21, 2021 Board of Education meeting, the Trustees took action allowing the option for masks or other face coverings to be left to the discretion of families and employees. The District continues to monitor the community and school transmission of COVID related illnesses and will continue to do so throughout the school year. The District is working to ensure that all stakeholders are safe while promoting safe procedures within the District.

Sweetwater County School District Number One follows health orders directed by the state of Wyoming and since there are none, we have none, that all information we have be available to parents so they can make the best decision they can for their families.

### **Physical distancing (e.g. including use of cohorts/podding)**

All staff keep updated seating charts or cohort groups to be used in combination with isolation and quarantines. School nurses have provided links from the National Association of Nurses in both English and Spanish for parents to decide if they should send their kids to school ([Can I Send my Student to School? - COVID-19 Reference](#)) which are included in the weekly/bi-weekly COVID-19 updates sent via ParentSquare.

The following questions can be used as a guide. Does your student have any of the following symptoms:

- A cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- A fever of 100.4 degrees F or higher or a sense of having a fever
- A sore throat
- Chills
- New loss of taste or smell
- Headache
- Muscle or body aches
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
- Congestion/running nose - not related to seasonal allergies
- Unusual fatigue

### **Handwashing and respiratory etiquette**

Another great way to protect yourself is to wash your hands often. Supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the District promotes hand washing practices included in the following information:

- [Wash your hands](#) often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- It's especially important to wash:
  - Before eating or preparing food
  - Before touching your face
  - After using the restroom
  - After leaving a public place

- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After handling your mask
- After changing a diaper
- After caring for someone sick
- After touching animals or pets
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Hand sanitizer is available at multiple locations within the District schools and offices.

### **Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation**

Enhanced sanitation occurs within the District facilities including extra custodial staff supported through grant funds. Cleaning crews are trained by a facilities supervisor in cleaning and sanitation protocols while using products to eliminate the COVID-19 virus. Age-appropriate signage is displayed throughout the District relating to COVID-19 symptoms, testing and contact tracing protocols, hand washing, and vaccine information and serve as reminders for all stakeholders.

Although there are no restrictions in place and masks are optional, Sweetwater Number One continues to promote and model good hand washing, utilize upgraded ventilation systems, UV-C lighting, ionizers, and negative air pressure systems that were installed during the 2020-2021 school year. The District has an adequate amount of supplies, equipment, and materials needed to keep schools open for in-person instruction (i.e. Transportation, Nutrition Services, Technology, Facilities, Warehouse, Special Services, and Curriculum).

### **Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine**

As mentioned above, all staff keep updated seating charts or cohort groups to be used in case of contract tracing, isolation, and quarantine. The District nursing staff follows the Wyoming Department of Health guidelines for isolation and quarantine in K-12 schools. Contract tracing for the county is conducted at the state level, school district contact tracing is conducted at the local level. Stay at home orders are issued by the state health office or local county health office and stay out of school orders are issued by school nurses.

### **Diagnostic and screening testing**

Parents are asked to screen their children daily for symptoms of COVID-19 before sending their children to school. Students and staff are encouraged to stay home if they are sick or awaiting results from a COVID-19 test. Cue testing is a fast, easy to use, point of care testing device that provides accurate results in a timely manner.

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

The District continues to partner extensively with our local county health department to provide multiple opportunities for vaccinations to educators, staff, students, parents, and guardians. District communication via ParentSquare provides information on vaccine clinics offered through the county health office as well as in-District vaccination sites at schools. Clinics are walk-in with no appointment necessary.

The Board of Education approved a \$500 one-time COVID-19 Health and Safety Incentive to help protect against COVID-19 exposure and illness among our students, staff, and the community at their October 11, 2021 meeting. The Health and Safety Incentive is available to all full or part-time employees of Sweetwater County School District Number One, long-term substitutes serving in permanent full-time classroom teaching positions, part-time substitutes who have subbed in a classroom for a minimum of four full school days in the 2021- 2022 school year, and contracted staffing from Elwood Staffing, Soliant Health, eLuma, and Linguabilities (collectively the “Eligible Individuals). The COVID-19 Health and Safety Incentive is available to those Eligible Individuals who have already been vaccinated, or to those Eligible Individuals who voluntarily complete their COVID-19 vaccination dosage during the eligibility period of the Health and Safety Incentive, as defined within the Incentive. For those Eligible Individuals who do not wish to be vaccinated, they may still receive a Health and Safety Incentive by obtaining bi-monthly COVID-19 testing within the Incentive terms. Funding for the COVID-19 Health and Safety Incentive will come from Federal COVID-19 ESSER II grant relief funds and has been approved by the Wyoming Department of Education.

### **Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies**

District Nurses serve all District staff and students including children with disabilities with health and safety policies. Health care plans support the families with medically fragile students and accommodations are available through the Individuals with Disabilities and Education Act (IDEA) and Individual Education Plan (IEP) process. Specially designed instruction and related services are followed as indicated on the student’s IEP.

### **2. Describe how the LEA will ensure continuity of services including but not limited to services to address the students’ academic needs, and students’ and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services.**

Teachers provide high quality standards-based instruction for all students with the expectation that all essential standards are taught. All District students are provided with a laptop computer or i-Pad and charger. Staff record instructional lessons using the Swivl Cameras funded through Covid Relief Grant Funds to assist all students with absenteeism, student quarantines, illness, positive cases, or homebound situations. Direct instruction portions of lessons must be recorded at all levels

using the Swivl Robots. The recordings will be made available to students to review the day they are absent through Canvas (secondary) or Google (elementary).

Google Meet may be used to provide IEP services for students receiving speech, OT, PT, APE, resource room, counseling, or social work that are unable to attend school. A special services staff member could do a Google meet after school to see about accommodations or any support the identified student may need in order to access the general education curriculum or assignments. Co-teaching classroom instruction is recorded by the general education teacher.

If a student is quarantined or isolated, they will be able to participate in class asynchronously through temporary virtual learning days. This is a short-term solution that provides instruction for students while the family or staff is affected by COVID in some way. Students needing internet assistance for temporary virtual learning days can contact the District for support options.

Another option to ensure continuity of services is the Sweetwater #1 Virtual School which is for students and families choosing to participate in online education similar to other state-wide virtual programs. The Sweetwater #1 Virtual School supports students and families in meeting their educational needs, both academic and social/emotional, and is delivered in an alternate format.

The District mental health team which includes school counselors, social workers, and school psychologists works with staff, students, and parents to address mental health needs that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Students are experiencing mental health concerns such as anxiety, depression, and grief which are keeping them physically out of the learning environment and/or reducing their ability to focus on the learning process. When approached during the 2020-21 school year to be part of the Project AWARE Grant with the Wyoming Department of Education and the Wyoming Department of Health, Sweetwater School District was grateful for the opportunities as we were seeing escalated mental health needs in our students. Through this Grant a dedicated counselor will provide therapeutic counseling in a tele-health format to students during the school day.

In addition to the Project AWARE Grant, suicide awareness training is provided to all District staff annually. Beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, counselors provide age appropriate lessons to all students K-12. Students are given the opportunity to take a Signs of Suicide screener starting in sixth grade. Counselors and social workers monitor responses and follow up with students and their families needing to speak to someone. Social, emotional, and mental assistance is more important than ever with individuals dealing with the ramifications of a world-wide pandemic. Some staff are experiencing increased/elevated mental health concerns that make them less able to respond to students and support them. We recognize the continuing need for mental health services within our community to better serve the needs of our students and staff. We continue to actively pursue additional support and build stronger partnerships with our community.

Absenteeism of District staff and availability of substitutes is monitored on a daily basis for organization effectiveness and to determine daily need areas. School nurses are available to assist staff, students, and families and are always available to answer questions from families.

Breakfast, second chance breakfast, and lunch are available at no cost for all District students attending in-person. Students participating in a temporary virtual day due to a positive case, quarantine, or isolation or those students attending the Sweetwater #1 Virtual School are also able to receive breakfast and lunch daily from the Nutrition Services Department at Rock Springs High School.

The District Schools, Facilities, IT, Nutrition Services, and Transportation Departments will continue with in-person instruction but are also ready to transition to online learning if needed during the Pandemic.

**3. The State requires a description of the process by which the LEA will collaborate with local health officials to monitor student health metrics throughout the school year. Provide that description below.**

Sweetwater #1 has collaborated with the Sweetwater County Department of Health on a regular basis since the Pandemic started in March 2020. Meetings are held frequently to communicate accurate information as conditions in our community continue to change. Weekly/bi-weekly and now monthly meetings occur with representatives from a neighboring school district, private school, community college, hospital, school nurses, and county health. Student health metrics from the District and other school entities drive the purpose of these meetings to share nursing strategies within the schools, plan for vaccination sites and opportunities within the schools, vaccination clinics within the community, and provide a platform to gather consistent information.

The District shares the number of positive COVID cases and the data for stay-at-home orders (similar to quarantines) weekly/bi-weekly through the ParentSquare and social media platforms. Percentages of the student and staff populations for positive cases and quarantines are included. This reaches District families, community members, and all media outlets. Mitigation strategies are referenced in the news releases including a link to the CDC guidance for K-12 schools.

## **Part Two: Consultation with Stakeholders**

**1. Describe how the LEA will, in planning for the use of ARP ESSER funds, engaged in meaningful consultation with stakeholders, including, but not limited to: students, families, school and district administrators (including special education administrators), teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions, tribes, civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations), and stakeholders representing the**

**interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.**

The District assembled a Re-entry (Smart Start) Task Force in the summer 2020 to support an effective school reopening process during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This Task Force was not a decision-making entity, but rather an advisory committee to provide recommendations to the District. This Task Force was brought back together and has been expanded to add other stakeholders to assist with the development of the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan. The full District process to obtain the American Rescue Plan (ARP) ESSER Grant Funds includes:

<b>American Rescue Plan (ARP) Grant Process</b>			
<b>The Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
10/24/2021	email	Board of Education	Draft timeline and process
10/25/2021	email	District Leadership Team (Administrators, Directors, Coordinators)	Draft timeline and process
11/3/2021	6:00 - 8:00 p.m. CAB Board Room	District Re-entry and Smart Start Task Force re-assembled and expanded, Zach	Provide input on The Safe Return Plan
11/4/2021	Board Agenda	Kelly McGovern	Supplemental info for November Board Meeting
11/4/2021	ParentSquare, District Website, School Websites, Facebook	Kelly McGovern	Community information on the Safe Return Plan and opportunity for oral or written public comment at the November 8, 2021 Board of Education Meeting
11/8/2021	Board Agenda - Action Item	Kelly McGovern	Safe Return Plan presented during the November School Board Meeting with approval of the Plan at the Board's discretion.



11/9/2021	District Website	Stephanie Tolman and Kelly McGovern	Safe Return Plan uploaded to the District website and link submitted to WDE
11/19/2021	link	WDE	Due date for The Safe Return to In-person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

<b>The ARP ESSER Implementation (spending) Plan</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Participants</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
10/31/2021	email	Board of Education	Draft timeline and process
11/1/2021	email	District Leadership Team (Administrators, Directors, Coordinators)	Draft timeline and process
11/4/2021	email	Kelly McGovern / Tonette West	Advertise for Public Forums to be held on 11/15/21
11/4/2021	email	Parent Involvement for Student Achievement (PISA) Task Force re-assembled and expanded and Zach Gunyan	Welcome email inviting them to the November 10, 2021 meeting
11/5/2021	9:00 - 11:00 a.m.	Linda Carter, Jodie Garner, Scot Duncan, Nicole Bolton, and Kelly McGovern	Review ESSER I, II, and Federal CARES Grant purchases and budgets
11/5/2021	1:30 - 2:30 p.m.	Stephanie Tolman, Jodie Garner, Nicole Bolton, Scot Duncan, Kayci Arnoldi, Linda Carter, and Kelly McGovern	Create online form for ARP input and submissions

11/8/2021	7:00 - 7:30 a.m. virtual meeting	Districts Leadership Team (Administrators, Directors, Coordinators)	Review online form for ARP input and submissions
11/9/2021	8:00 - 10:00 a.m.	Zach Gunyan, Nicole Bolton, Scot Duncan, Stephanie Tolman, and Kelly McGovern	Record District message on ARP ESSER Grant Process
11/9/2021	District-wide email	Nicole Bolton, Stephanie Tolman, Jodie Garner, Scot Duncan, Kayci Arnoldi, and Kelly McGovern	YouTube link for recording of ARP ESSER Grant Process, allowable use of funds, and link to submit ideas and requests
11/10/2021	6:00 - 8:00 p.m. CAB Board Room	Parent Involvement for Student Achievement (PISA) Task Force re-assembled and expanded and Zach Gunyan	Provide input on ARP ESSER Implementation (spending) Plan
11/9/2021 - 11/30/2021	Window closes 11/30/21 at 4:30 p.m.	All District Staff and Community Stakeholders	Window to submit ARP ESSER ideas
11/11/2021	ParentSquare, District Website, School Websites, and Facebook	Kelly McGovern	Communication on Forums held at the beginning of next week and opportunity for community input on the ARP ESSER Implementation (spending) Plan
<b>11/15/2021</b>	<b>7:15 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Board of Trustees, Zach Gunyan, and Administrators</b>	<b>Public Forums to gather community input on the use of ARP ESSER Funds</b>
12/6/2021	Board Agenda	Kelly McGovern	Info for December Board Meeting
12/8/2021	ParentSquare and Facebook	Kelly	Communication on Board Meeting and ARP ESSER Implementation (spending) Plan

12/13/2021	Board Agenda - Action Item	Linda Carter, Scot Duncan, Kelly McGovern, and others as needed	ARP ESSER Implementation (spending) Plan presented during the December School Board Meeting with approval of the Plan at the Board's discretion.
12/14/2021	District Website	Stephanie Tolman and Kelly McGovern	ARP ESSER Implementation (spending) Plan uploaded to the District website and link submitted to WDE
1/18/2022	link	WDE	Due date for The ARP ESSER Implementation (spending) Plan

**2. Provide an overview of how the public stakeholder input was considered in the development of the LEA's Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan?**

Stakeholder input is gathered through the District Communication Plan. This Plan is a two-way process that bridges initial planning, immediate steps to provide engagement with the school community, Board of Education approval, and implementation. Regular communication with the community builds trust and transparency. The communication plan is the vehicle to share and receive information with the community.

**To facilitate transparency, the department (i.e. Wyoming Department of Education) will post the link to each school district's plan on its website. It will be the responsibility of the district to ensure its link remains valid.**