

Northwestern Local Schools Safe Return to In-person Instruction, Continuity of Services, and Local Uses of (ARP ESSER) Funds

Mitigation Strategies

The district ensures a safe return to in-person instruction for the 2021-2022 school year. Strategies for mask wearing, physical distancing, handwashing, facility cleaning, and contact tracing are available in the “**Northwestern Local Schools 2021-2022 COVID-19 Protocols.**” The document outlines what Northwestern Local Schools will need to do to keep students and staff healthy.

Should health conditions shift the Superintendent and District School Board will review conditions with local health officials and provide necessary revisions. Below are highlights from “**Northwestern Local Schools 2021-2022 COVID-19 Protocols.**”

Health & Safety

The recommendations from the CDC, the Ohio Department of Health, and the Clark County Combined Health District on how to stop the spread of COVID - 19 have not changed. The following were reported as confirmed ways to limit the transmission of the virus:

- Physical or social distancing
- Face mask
- Eye protection
- Good hand hygiene

Assess for Symptoms: it is recommended that students (and their caregivers), staff, and volunteers conduct daily health checks prior to going to school which should include taking their temperature and assessing their symptoms.

Students in Classrooms: Masks are recommended for students and staff who have not been vaccinated but not required. Desks will be distanced whenever possible.

Students on Buses: Students will not be required to wear masks on buses. Pre-pandemic seating protocols will be in place.

Hallways and Cafeterias: Efforts will be made, but not guaranteed to provide social distanced seating.

There will be some situations in the hallways, in the cafeterias, or in other areas where social distancing will be difficult. To mitigate the risk exposure for the students and the staff, physical barriers may be used to separate students. Additional lunch periods will be added and class changes may be staggered to reduce the number of students in specific areas. Some students may be assigned to eat in a designated classroom.

Continuity of Services Plan

The district continuity of services plan is designed to ensure that students' learning progresses amidst obstacles that may have resulted because of the COVID 19 pandemic. This includes services that address students' academic needs, social, emotional, mental health and food service needs. To ensure all students can regain ground, Northwestern will begin the 2021-2022 school year with a deep understanding of our student's current areas of academic performance. The district will continue to instruct with a robust core curriculum, provide and monitor data-driven interventions, strengthen attendance, and provide social-emotional support.

The district will ensure and promote continuity of food service programs with appropriate staffing.

Northwestern Local Schools “**How to Close the Pandemic Learning Gap Plan**” (see www.nwlschools.org) will continue to provide ongoing direction for teaching and learning.

Highlights from the “**How to Close the Pandemic Learning Gap Plan**” include:

As Northwestern students return to all-in programming in August of 2021, teachers will formally and informally assess students to identify individual student goals and needs in literacy and math. Additionally, Northwestern faculty, instructional coaches, and leaders will administer and analyze data from multiple sources throughout the school year to ensure timely identification and response to observed gap areas. Assessments to support this work may include, but are not limited to:

1. K-3 Third Grade Reading Guarantee diagnostic assessment (I Ready)
2. IReady grades 4-9
3. PSAT to students in grades 9-11
4. ACT
5. IXL for Jr Sr High School
6. Teacher formative assessments
7. State Assessments/End of Course Exams, including OELPS/OELPA
8. AP tests
9. Cognitive Abilities Test in grades 1 and 4
10. Panorama SEL survey for grades 3-12
11. Attendance

Data will be analyzed collaboratively to identify students with learning needs or gaps. Additionally, teachers will identify students from daily observations of engagement and performance.

Northwestern Local Schools will use a wide range of resources to provide the interventions needed by students. The district's commitment to technology and blending learning allow intervention through in-person and online opportunities.

In-school, before school, after school tutoring; and HS credit recovery (online and in person) will be a major focus. At the same time, the Continuity of Services Plan recognizes all students (including the most vulnerable student populations) potentially require attention to ensure academic and social/emotional growth.

Northwestern Local Schools Local Uses of ARP ESSER Funds

Northwestern Local Schools submitted a detailed ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) budget application and plan to the Comprehensive Continuous Improvement Plan (CCIP) system on Aug. 20, 2021. This detailed budget application is necessary for the state to approve how the district budgets and plans align to allowable activities. The ARP ESSER detailed budgets and plan will be reviewed and revised as money allocations change, and as student needs change. The following questions (and answers) guide learning recovery implementation strategies and action steps.

1. How will ARP ESSER funds be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent CDC guidance on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning?

Northwestern Local Schools is focused on creating a safe and healthy Learning Environments by purchasing personal protective equipment (PPE), cleaning and sanitizing materials, and similar supplies necessary to maintain school operations with ARP ESSER funds. The Superintendent and District School board uses the guidance from the Ohio Department of Health as well as Clark County Health Department to set student and staff protocols. Additionally, these protocols will be reviewed regularly as necessary and made public via the school district website, and text messaging. The Maintenance Director will ensure PPE, cleaning supplies, and equipment (purchased with ESSER funds) are used with fidelity.

2. How will the LEA use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year?

Research indicates, in this order, 1) during the school day, 2) before/after school targeted instruction, and 3) summer learning have the most educational gap closing impact. Northwestern is using these guidelines to inform instructional planning for the next few years. First, five additional certified teachers were hired as reading and math interventionists. This enables the district to provide during the school day learning recovery instruction using pull-out, virtual learning, and co-teaching methods. Second, before school reading tutoring opportunities are scheduled to begin in January 2021. Finally, summer learning for students in grades K-8 is scheduled for June 2021. Additionally, a credit recovery program is now in place for Northwestern High School students.

Instructional materials and professional development purchased for teachers will focus on assessments that are valid and reliable, to accurately assess students' academic progress and assist educators in meeting students' academic needs, including through differentiating instruction.

The district continues to implement evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students including a K-HS strengths-based social and emotional learning curriculum.

3. How will the LEA spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act?

A Learning Recovery Program Director oversees the Learning Recovery Plan implementation. 2. Learning Recovery teachers will be hired to provide the gap closing interventions and credit recovery. 3. Online instructional resources will be purchased to support the district's blended learning efforts and remote learning as needed. 4. The elementary school will purchase and provide ongoing (multi-year) and systemic research-based literacy professional development. 5. The Elementary school will begin a systemic revision of their ELA program to ensure it aligns with the ODE literacy plan 6. A grade 6 to 7 student transition plan is being developed. This will include goals and strategies that lead to PBIS/SEL transition activities and programming provided late summer and early fall.

4. How will the LEA ensure that the interventions it implements, including but not limited to the interventions implemented under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, will respond to the academic, social, emotional and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care and migratory students?

One of the major goals is to improve both the elementary and JH/SH multi systems of support (MTSS). This includes a comprehensive, written MTSS plan that includes:

Establishing standard "cut scores" across academics and behavior, clearly outlining MTSS meeting schedules and cycles, and facilitating continuous learning around MTSS. Additionally, the district and school building instructional leadership teams will regularly assess student learning data. Membership of these teams includes: The Curriculum Director, Special Education and Student Services Director, Lead Psychologist, Building Administrators, Lead Teachers, and the Learning Recovery Plan Director.

Recently a new partnership was established with Clark, Madison, and Greene County Mental Health Board. With them alongside a new Panorama partnership, the district will gather and evaluate, SEL survey data from students throughout the school year.

5. Briefly describe the extent to which the LEA intends to use ARP ESSER funds to promote remote learning.

Funds will be used to purchase student and teacher chrome books as needed to maintain the district's 1:1 computer program. Additionally, funds will be used to provide ongoing professional learning as needed for staff. Workshops, and peer-to-peer teacher learning opportunities that focus on google classrooms will continue for the next several years.

6. Describe the LEA's plan for addressing learning loss by: administering and using high-quality assessments to assess students' academic progress and meet students' academic needs, including through differentiating instruction; implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students; providing information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support students, including in a distance learning environment; and/or tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education.

- a. Creating and using high-quality assessments to assess students' academic progress and meet students' academic needs, including differentiating instruction will be a priority for K-12 during professional meetings. HQSD means, utilization, and interpretation activities will be emphasized.
- b. Implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students. The full implementation of evidence-based interventions includes personnel, materials, equipment, and professional development. The MTSS team and processes will guide this
- c. Providing information and assistance to parents, families, and caregivers on how they can effectively support students, including in a blended and distance learning environment is a district strategy for gap closing paying special attention to underrepresented student groups.

Northwestern will periodically review the district Continuity of Services and Local Uses of Funds Plans.