



BURLINGTON AREA
SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

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Introduction

On March 11, 2021, the American Rescue Plans (ARP) Act was signed into law. In it, the U.S. Department of Education is providing an additional \$121.9 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER III Fund). This legislation will award grants to state educational agencies (SEAs) for providing local educational agencies (LEAs) with emergency relief funds to address the impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools across the nation.

Wisconsin will receive \$1,540,784,854 in ESSER III funds from the Act, with 90 percent being awarded to school districts with amounts determined in proportion to the amount of Title I, Part A funds they received in Summer 2020 from funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The remaining funds will be used for state-level activities to address issues caused by COVID-19. As of July 2023, this translates into \$3,447,651 for the Burlington Area School District.

This plan describes how the Burlington Area School District will provide a safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for all schools.

Maintaining Health and Safety

Overview

The Burlington Area School District plan must include how we will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school staff, and the extent to which we have adopted policies or practices and a description of any such policies or practices on each of the CDC's safety recommendations including the universal and correct wearing of masks; modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding); hand washing and respiratory etiquette; cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation; contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the state, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments; diagnostic and screening testing; efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible; appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies or practices; and coordination with state and local health officials.

The Burlington Area School District's Priorities:

- Reducing risk for students and staff.
- Attending to and caring for the social-emotional and mental health needs of students and staff.
- Keeping learning coherent, focused on the highest priorities for each grade level.
- Meeting the needs of every student regardless of the student's color, language, ability, household income, and all other realities.

The Burlington Area School District's compassion for its students and staff help us to create a positive learning community for Burlington students. We will continue our commitment to work closely with the local health department as we make plans recognizing that this is a fluid situation with new developments and information daily, which require comprehensive solutions.

Description on maintaining the safety of staff and students

The Burlington Area School District began the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years with a five-day per week, face-to-face instructional model and adheres to the following health protocols. Accordingly, the District will:

- Publish the [COVID-19 symptoms checklist](#) and encourage students and staff members to utilize the checklist before entering a school facility.
- Encourage staff members and students to stay home if they are showing COVID-19 symptoms or if they have tested positive for COVID-19.
- Encourage hand washing and hand sanitizing and provide sanitizing stations

throughout the buildings.

- Encourage correct wearing of masks
- Practice virtual learning expectations so, if necessary, students more easily can shift to virtual learning for a period of time.

Description to continue to provide services regardless of the mode of instruction (for example, health and food services if we must pivot to virtual or hybrid instruction)

The Burlington Area School District offers in-person learning five days a week according to the Board-adopted academic year calendars (2021-2022, 2022-2023, and 2023-2024). The school district also provides families experiencing unique circumstances the option to enroll their students in Wisconsin Connect Charter School based on their learning needs. In the event of school closure due to the pandemic, the district has ensured all students have a Chromebook to continue virtual learning along, and will assist families with obtaining hotspots as needed.

Regardless of the mode of instruction, the Burlington Area School District provided meals under the Seamless Summer Option for the 2021-2022 school year. Under that program, meals were provided for summer school attendees as well as all eligible youth during the school year. For summer 2022 and 2023, meals were provided during the summer school period at no charge to children in the community through age 18 under the Summer Food Service Program. During the 2022-2023 school year, meals will be provided under the National School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program. Income-eligible families may apply to receive free meals. If school is closed due to a pandemic, the district will assess its ability to distribute meals utilizing the same process it used during the spring and summer of 2020.

The Burlington Area School District employs one full-time school nurse who will continue to offer health services and to assist with the well being of students.

The district maintains special education and counseling services to students, regardless of the instructional model. If the district would need to pivot to virtual instruction, these services can continue in a method that best accommodates the student's needs.

Mitigation Measures

Universal and correct wearing of masks

The Burlington Area School District school board voted to make face coverings optional for staff, students, and guests to start the 2021-2022 school year. This will continue in the 2023-2024 school year. The focus is on layered mitigation strategies. All students are encouraged to have a mask. "Masks encouraged" signage is at all building entrances. The

school board can revisit its mask protocol if Racine County case rate climbs, districtwide COVID cases spike, or a change in other circumstances.

Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (for example, the use of cohorts and podding)

Mitigation measures such as signage, floor decals, and water bottle filling stations, and the promotion of social distancing have been implemented at each facility. Individual schools determine the cafeteria service that best suits the needs of their students. Cafeterias and/or other spaces may be used as settings for student meals.

Hybrid schedules and student cohort models will be revisited if public health conditions warrant the use of these instructional models.

All buildings are operating under capacity. The Burlington Area School District uses a grade configuration that spreads 4K-5 students out across five schools. A new middle school for grades 6-8 has capacity. Burlington High School operates at approximately 65% of its building capacity.

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette

Handwashing and respiratory etiquette is taught to students with high emphasis in the primary grade levels. Signage is posted throughout buildings as reminders of handwashing and respiratory etiquette.

In addition, hand sanitizing stations/liquids are available in all classrooms.

Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation

Enhanced sanitation procedures have been implemented and continue at all schools focusing on high-touch surfaces. The District uses cleaning solutions that are rated to kill the SARS virus.

Classrooms have univents to draw fresh air in. Univents use a filtration system with Merv-13 filters (cleaned annually). All BASD buildings have air handling units with filtration systems with a Merv-13 rating (changed quarterly). BASD air handling, univents, and air conditioning units start two hours before staff and students arrive and run two hours after staff and students leave to increase circulation and air exchanges in buildings. The new Karcher Middle School is the only school fully air conditioned. Other buildings have limited air conditioning and classrooms can keep windows open.

Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments

The Burlington Area School District will continue to provide current health information to staff, students, and families about the signs and symptoms of COVID-19, when they should stay home, and when they can return to school.

Diagnostic and screening testing

The Burlington Area School District recommends students and staff get tested for COVID by their medical provider or a local pharmacy. The Burlington Area School District distributed free COVID test kits in winter of the 2022-2023 school year.

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

All eligible staff employed in 2020-2021 were provided the opportunity to be vaccinated on district designated dates or at their convenience. As of October 18, 2021, 84.7% of staff have submitted proof of vaccination. Students ages 12 and older were provided access to an on-site vaccination clinic in June 2021. As of October 18, 2021, 10% of eligible students have submitted proof of vaccination. According to the Racine County Public Health, as of August 16, 2022, 26.4% of children age 5-11, 44.9% of children age 12-15, and 49.4% of children age 16-17 are fully vaccinated. Staff and students have access to vaccinations by working with local healthcare partners and Racine County Public Health. (Eligible staff were offered an opportunity to receive the seasonal flu vaccine in September 2022.)

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

When circumstances require specific policies or procedures designed to protect the health and safety of students, 504 and IEP teams determine if modifications and/or reasonable accommodations are needed for individual students with disability-related issues.

Coordination with state and local health officials

The CDC recommends all decisions about implementing school-based strategies should be made locally, collaborating with local health officials who can help determine the level of transmission in the community. Though the district spans across Racine, Kenosha and Walworth counties, the Burlington Area School District continues to work closely with the Racine County Public Health to implement mitigation strategies for the safety of students and staff.

Continuity of Services

Overview

The Burlington Area School District will 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, which may include student health and food services.

District response on continuity of services

The District provides continuity of services as follows:

Student Academic Needs

The Burlington Area School District implemented a summer school program to assist all K-12 students with an emphasis on academic recovery. Beginning in 2022-2023, the District added instructional coaches to assist with learning recovery in math and English as well as a Bilingual Family Engagement Coordinator to assist Spanish-speaking families; we anticipate being able to continue these positions for the 2023-2024 school year as well.

Student Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs

Additional extended care for our youngest learners, as well as family engagement services have been added to further support pupil services staff in addressing our students' social and emotional learning needs.

Other Student Needs (which includes student health and food services)

Food services provided meals under the Seamless Summer Option for the 2021-2022 school year for all children ages 18 and under. For summer 2022 and 2023, meals were provided during the summer school period at no charge to children in the community through age 18 under the Summer Food Service Program. During the school year, income-eligible families may apply to receive free meals.

Staff Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs

The staff's social, emotional, and mental health needs can be addressed through the Employee Assistance Program provided through the District insurance program. The district's Bwell program offers wellness opportunities, support and related resources.

Other Staff Needs

The District will follow national, state, and local governing agencies' laws and directives concerning staff employment and benefits.

Periodic Review

Overview

The Burlington Area School District is required to review and, as appropriate, revise our Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan at least every six months through September 30, 2023, including seeking public input and taking such input into account in determining whether to revise the plan and, if revisions are determined necessary, on the revisions it makes to its plan.

District response on ensuring periodic updates to its plan

The Burlington Area School District will periodically review and, as needed, revise the plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. The plan will be reviewed at least every six months, and the school system will seek and take into account public input during the review process. Plan revisions will address updated CDC, Wisconsin Department of Health Services and Racine County Public Health guidance.

Public Input

Overview

The ARP Act requires that school districts make their Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan available to the public online and that the plans be in an understandable and uniform format; to the extent practicable, are 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.

District response on public input in the development of its plan

The Burlington Area School District has taken the following steps to make its plan available to the public:

- Information is posted and located on our [BASD Health Information](#) page.
- The plan is available in 13 languages through the use of our web provider powered by Google Translate. Documents provided by the Department of Health Services are in English and Spanish.
- The original plan was sent to parents, students, and employees via our messaging systems. Subsequent updates were shared in parent newsletters and via a web

announcement.

- The Return to School Fall 2021 plan as well as a link to the BASD Health Information web page was shared on the district's Facebook page.
- The original plan was shared at the Burlington Area School District Board of Education on August 17, 2021. An opportunity for public comment for that plan, as well as for the required subsequent updates, is available at the monthly school board meetings.
- 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 our district office.