



# LEAP ACADEMY University CHARTER SCHOOL, INC.

## SAFE REOPENING PLAN

Revised June 5, 2024





**LEAP Academy** opening school on August 22, 2022 for the 2022-2023 school year. All students returned to 100% in-person instruction. This plan covers the Ten Critical areas established by the NJ Department of Education The Road Back – Restart and Recovery, as well as areas that the LEAP Board of Trustees and School Administration feel imperative to address. The school reopening plan and policies are designed to support the overall health and well-being of all staff, children, their families, and their communities. They have been developed with close communication with the state and local health authorities.

**LEAP Adopts 10 Critical Areas of Operations from NJ DOE Road Back Plan:**

1. General Health and Safety Guidelines
2. Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms
3. Transportation
4. Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas
5. Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms
6. Contact Tracing
7. Facilities Cleaning Practices
8. Meals
9. Recess/Physical Education
10. Field Trips, Extra-curricular Activities, and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours

**LEAP Academy will address the 10 Critical Areas of Operation from the NJ DOE Road Back Plan as follows;**

**1. General Health and Safety Guidelines**

LEAP Academy has established and maintains communication with local and state authorities to determine current mitigation levels in our community. We are in communication with local, county, and state authorities regarding the current phase and its possible impact on in-person instruction and practices.

LEAP will be following CDC's Guidance for Schools and Childcare Programs, Stay home when appropriate, Hand Hygiene and respiratory etiquette, Face coverings optional, Signs and messages.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for individuals that the CDC identifies as having a higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, including students with disabilities and serious underlying medical conditions, which may include:

Medically fragile students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

Students with complex disabilities with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs)

Students who require accommodations under a Plan in accordance with the Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504 Plan).

**2. Critical Area of Operation #2: Classrooms, Testing, and Therapy Rooms**

LEAP Academy will practice social distancing where possible, when social distancing is not possible we require students and staff to wear face coverings.

**Face Covering:** Face coverings are optional at LEAP Academy

**Hand Sanitizer** is available at every entrance, exits, classroom, office, lunch rooms and hallway throughout the District. These dispensers will dispense Symmetry Foaming Hand Sanitizer which is 70% alcohol as recommended by the CDC.

For **classrooms with sinks installed**, there will be soap, paper towels and hand sanitizer available. Students will be instructed in the proper way to wash their hands as well as signage will be posted throughout the District.

**Hand Washing and Sanitizing.** Students will wash their hands several times throughout the day. These times include but are not limited to before and after meals (breakfast & lunch), after using the restroom, after returning from recess. Hand sanitizer will be available in all classrooms, hallways and throughout the buildings for use at any time.

**Adequate ventilation** is available in each LEAP Academy building. All HVAC systems have damper systems that allow for 10% fresh air to be circulated through the buildings. Air filters have been and will continue to change on a monthly basis to increase the filtration in the buildings. The Maintenance department and COO will be overseen these areas to ensure enforcement and accountability.

### **3. LEAP Critical Area of Operation #3: Transportation**

Each bus is equipped with hand sanitizer. Windows will be open when the weather permits, signage will be placed on all buses reinforcing social distancing and hygiene. Buses will be cleaned and disinfected.

### **4. Critical Area of Operation #4: Student Flow, Entry, Exit, and Common Areas**

Each building in the District will have a **dedicated entry**.

**Hallways/Stairways:** The hallways and stairwells will be marked with directional signage. Stairwells will be designated for up and down, hallways will have social distancing signage. The rails will be disinfected regularly by the maintenance department.

**Visitors:** Visitors will have **limited** access to inside the buildings at LEAP Academy school district. All visitors will need to schedule an appointment prior to entering the building if necessary.

### **5. Critical Area of Operation #5: Screening, PPE, and Response to Students and Staff Presenting Symptoms**

Students that present symptoms in school will be sent to the nurses' office until a parent/guardian comes to pick them up. The parent will have the option to take the child to the LEAP Health Center to be evaluated and/or tested. Staff will leave the building and they can go to their private doctor or utilize the LEAP Health Center to be tested.

### **6. Critical Area of Operation #6: Contact Tracing**

All positive cases of COVID-19 in Camden County will be electronically reported through the state portal to the Camden County Health Department. Notification of a positive case to the Camden County Department of Health by LEAP administrators will be through our local health department representative, the COVID hotline 1800-999-9045 or [schools.covid@camdencounty.com](mailto:schools.covid@camdencounty.com)

### **7. Critical Area of Operation #7: Facilities Cleaning Practices**

Facilities cleaning procedures have been increased to combat the possibility of contamination. Custodian staff are assigned specific task throughout the day to clean and sanitize the buildings.

Hand sanitizer is located and available for use in every classroom, office, hallway, entrance and exit. They will be monitor daily for replacement ensuring that we always have them refilled. Custodian staff will regularly clean high touch areas. Offices will be equipped with cleaning and disinfectant products so that the staff will be able to wipe things down as necessary between the custodian staff cleaning.

Bathrooms will be cleaned several times daily on a rotating schedule, as well as at the end of the day.

LEAP Academy will utilize fogger disinfectant machines to disinfect the building every day at the end of the day, these machines will use PEROXY HDOX which is on the CDC and EPA list of approved products to combat COVID19.

### **8. Critical Area of Operation #8: Meals**

Kindergarten breakfast and lunch will be served daily in the classrooms. 1<sup>st</sup> grade will be served breakfast in the classroom. 2<sup>nd</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade will have breakfast in the cafeteria. 1<sup>st</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade will have lunch in the cafeteria. Students will not be able to utilize family style, buffet style or self-serve.

### **9. Critical Area of Operation #9: Recess/Physical Education**

LEAP has returned to full use of the playground. Equipment is disinfected daily.

### **10. Critical Area of Operation #10: Field Trips, Extra-curricular Activities, and Use of Facilities Outside of School Hours**

Field trips have resumed, following State and Department of Health guidance. Extra-curricular activities and sports have resumed.

## **Wellness Team:**

### **Family Support: Social Emotional Support Plan**

#### **Identify and address the needs of staff**

There is no question that educators have been greatly impacted by this pandemic. It's important to address the needs of educators so that they may be prepared to address the needs of students. Studies have shown that focusing on the social-emotional development of adults can lead to positive outcomes for students. The same skills that can help students succeed in school and life can benefit teachers and school leaders who incorporate SEL practices into their own lives.

Adults who recognize, understand, label, and regulate their own emotions are less likely to report burnout, demonstrate higher levels of patience and empathy, encourage healthy communication, and create safe student learning environments. This will be an essential skill for adults, especially as schools begin to reopen.

Teachers who possess social and emotional competencies are more likely to stay in the classroom longer. Teachers with high levels of social competence are better able to protect themselves from burnout by developing and managing nurturing relationships with their students, managing behavior in their classrooms, serving as behavioral role models for children, and regulating their own emotions.



**The LEAP social emotional learning plan includes and prioritizes a fully staffed school-based mental health team.**

It is imperative to have a comprehensive plan for deploying and utilizing school-based mental health professionals. School-based mental health professionals include school psychologists and school social workers. At the most basic level, we must ensure that they have an adequate amount of school-based mental health professionals to meet the existing and emerging mental health needs of students.

At LEAP our school-based mental health professionals are key to a social emotional learning plan because they specialize in working with young people and their families to make sure they know how to manage their emotions, develop coping skills, and know how to navigate difficult as well as stressful times. The School Psychologist will directly support the well-being of children and are experts at screening, evaluating, and identifying children who have academic and behavioral difficulties. This unique skill set will prove to be crucial as schools begin to reopen by helping to identify students who might be in need of additional support.

At Leap we have a comprehensive SEL team to address the social and emotional needs of our students and families.

**Our LEAP plan addresses the social emotional needs of students and families since we have a comprehensive methodology and approach to addressing health and wellness. We use a holistic model to meeting the needs of all our children. Responsive classroom is utilized in the classrooms to support our students emotional and academic growth. At the core of our mission, this includes helping students (and staff) to identify, understand, and manage their emotions following healthy pathways using our programs.**

Now more than ever, we must prioritize SEL. As LEAP reopens, it is imperative that we teach students how to effectively identify, understand and manage their own emotions. The focus must be in helping students correctly label their own emotions, recognize the impact of their thoughts and feelings, and to understand how their emotions affect their behavior as well as their physical health. The focus should include teaching students how to have concern for others, to make responsible decisions, how to properly develop healthy relationships, and effectively manage challenging situations. The focus will be on teaching students how to set and work towards achieving positive goals, to manage time and stress, and to show empathy for others during these difficult times.

**LEAP social emotional learning plan prioritizes relationships and human connections.**

At LEAP Academy one of the most basic values is that our children must feel loved, valued, and be connected with others. The only way that we will make it through this difficult time is if we do it together. Therefore, our district and school leaders prioritize relationships and healthy human connections since this is something that is embedded in our school culture and philosophy. This means that we must spend even more time ensuring our students have the skills and ability to manage relationships with peers (and adults) and to maintain those relationships over time.

As part of our comprehensive SEL plan our team is developing ways for students to learn to communicate effectively, engage productively and collaborate successfully with others, and be able to offer and seek help. The focus of this is on establishing and maintaining healthy relationships. This includes teaching students how to communicate clearly, resist inappropriate social pressure, resolve conflict peacefully, share their thoughts and feelings with one another appropriately, and even how to ask for help when needed. Some simple strategies for teaching relationship skills to students might include:

- Using collaborative groupings to reinforce the importance of working together to solve problems and achieve goals.
- Model and reinforce effective communication and relationship building.
- Teach students when and how to ask for help. We help students learn how to identify resources and supports (academic, social emotional, community, financial, etc.).
- Establish a conflict resolution process that is used school-wide any time there is a conflict.
- Give students authentic feedback for resolving conflicts peacefully.
- Work with your school-based mental health professionals for additional strategies to help students build and develop relationship skills

### **Health Center:**

The LEAP Health Center provides pediatric acute and chronic care to Leap Students and the surrounding community. The LEAP Health Center provides and will continue with accurate and ongoing updates to patients/parents regarding measures being taken to help keep patients, students and staff safe. The health center publishes guidelines and specific messages on how to decrease the risk of exposure while at work/school, including the use of face coverings, frequent handwashing, use of hand sanitizer, and social distancing. The center educates families on their role and responsibilities: children stay home when sick; plan for when need to pick up from school as soon as possible to avoid other students from further exposure; quarantine/ isolation recommendations and home care guidelines.

Testing and vaccines for COVID 19 is available for all students, staff and parents daily, since our health wellness clinic is operating inside our schools.

### **Vaccinations:**

LEAP Academy has been promoting a vaccination campaign called “LEAP Free of Covid-19”. The purpose of the campaign is to get as many of LEAP’s students, staff and families vaccinated as possible.

We are currently offering vaccinations for everyone ages 5 and above. We have been hosting vaccination clinics on a monthly basis.



We are conducting informational sessions with our families to educate them about the vaccine. LEAP is offering additional vaccine clinics and our goal is to have 100% of our students ages 5 and up, families and staff fully vaccinated.

## **LEAP Special Education/ESL**

- LEAP Students with disabilities will receive services in accordance with the applicable Individualized Education Plan, Section 504 Plan, or ESL accommodations based on methods and locations agreed upon and documented by the applicable team to meet the student's needs and goals. The LEAP supervising teacher or building administrator shall coordinate with parents and the special education staff or cooperative to ensure all applicable statutes are followed in accordance with U.S. Department of Education guidelines.
- The LEAP focus of ESL instruction is the integration of academic content and English language skills, with the goal of enabling ELLs to achieve proficiency in the four domains of listening, speaking, reading and writing, along with grade-level academic competency. To achieve this goal, our ESL teachers are highly qualified and knowledgeable of the varied cultures represented by their students. Our ESL teachers regularly receive trainings from the program supervisor and academic leaders throughout the year. All ESL teachers are members of NJTESOL and participate in the annual convention as a team.
- At LEAP Data-driven instruction is at the heart of instruction. Students in the ESL program are continually assessed for their English language proficiency using benchmark tests, portfolio assessments, progress reviews as indicated in the ESL curriculum.
- Based on the data collected from aforementioned documents, ELLs may change levels and/or schedules within the school year in order to meet their instructional needs. Beginning level students are placed in high intensity program and receive additional language supports throughout the day while learning content from Sheltered Instruction certified general education teachers. Higher level students receive ESL services and are placed in cohorts with experienced Sheltered Instruction certified teachers. All pull out ESL classes have less than 10 students to ensure students are provided high quality differentiated instruction they deserve.
- Our ESL teachers are responsible for documenting the progress of ELLs in both ESL and regular classes through frequent contact with the classroom teacher and use of the ESL Progress Reports.
- All general education teachers are trained on crucial concepts: differentiated instruction, providing modifications and accommodations to ELLs. Teachers utilize ELL's ILPs (Individualized Learning Plans) and Can-do descriptors to determine modifications needed to make content accessible for ELLs. "Modification Folders" in Office 365 to document have been created for teachers to house the artifacts of differentiated instruction and assessments.
- Databases used for SpEd and ESL instruction:  
Let's Go Learn ELA and Math, Hibstervention and Sunday Essentials

**LEAP Facilities:** The District has implemented guidelines for deep cleaning, disinfecting, and improved ventilation across all buildings in accordance with best practices from New Jersey Department of Health, Department of Education, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We will continue to monitor and implement any new best practices.

- Each school building is equipped with EPA registered COVID-19 virucide and disinfecting equipment/supplies to support increased cleaning protocols. We are using HYDRO PROXY as approved by the CDC and EPA to combat COVID 19.
- Custodial staff have been trained in daily cleaning practices, specialized/responsive cleaning, enhanced disinfecting techniques and how to respond to emergency situations as they arise.
- All schools are equipped with electrostatic sprayers to support custodial staff in increased disinfection of spaces after students and staff leave the building each day.
- Hand Sanitizer Stations with at least a 70% alcohol-based sanitizer are mounted and maintained outside of entrances/exits, entryways of cafeterias and bathrooms, at the ends of hallways and inside of Health Suites.
- Custodial staff ensure that all handwashing sinks are operational and have clean running water, soap and paper towels. If a sink becomes inoperable, immediate steps are taken to repair it and hand sanitizer will be provided in its place until the repair occurs.
- To increase ventilation, we increased the frequency in which we replace air filters.
- Lunch rooms will be cleaned and disinfected before breakfast and lunch and between each grouping of students.

**LEAP Transportation:** LEAP Academy has acquired 7 new buses bringing our fleet to 14 buses to ensure that all our children are safe from the minute they leave home to school and back home. We have adopted a 360 approach to ensure that our children and families are safe.

**LEAP Security TEAM:** LEAP Security is used to monitor and limiting traffic entry into the district. The security team is responsible for the security of all our buildings and school community.