

American Rescue Plan/ESSER III - LEA Plan of Use Narrative

Agency: Warren Consolidated Schools

2020 - 2021

Recipient Code: 50230

- The LEA Plan of Use Narrative is currently in progress and not ready for submission. The LEA agrees to amend their application at the time the Plan of Use Narrative is complete.

Please describe the extent to which and how the funds will 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:

The Coronavirus pandemic presented new challenges related to mitigating virus transmission within our facilities. Maintaining safe facilities, stocked with necessary sanitization and protective equipment in the age of Coronavirus continues to be a top priority. In alignment with CDC guidance, WCS is practicing a layered approach to prevention and mitigation strategies, many of which will be ESSER funded.

The use of personal protective equipment (PPE), especially universal masking, will be a key component to successfully opening schools and reducing virus transmission, as identified by the CDC. Staff, students and visitors will be provided a mask, should they be without. We can continue signage supporting and teaching handwashing, respiratory etiquette, and staying home when sick as well. Finally, ventilation systems will be upgraded using ESSER funding. Each of these layers of protection has been outlined by the CDC.

The Coronavirus pandemic presented personnel and staffing challenges that also directly connect to prevention and mitigation strategies. Labor shortages continue while needs rise. We will continue to have dedicated staff cleaning, contact tracing, monitoring quarantine and isolation orders and will need to stabilize our workforce, particularly in light of CDC guidance to stay home when sick. This further reduces available staffing daily. Finally, ESSER funding can be used to ease class sizes, adding distance in needed areas.

Please describe how the LEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act (see below) 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:

The Coronavirus pandemic caused disruption to regular systems of instruction and assessment, as well as activities designed to provide multiple tiers of support for students. It slowed the pace of instruction and support for teachers and students. It created "learning gaps" within the normal continuum of learning. Our focus will be on accelerating learning over the next several years, again, with a layered approach.

Making sure teachers have the support to address a variety of needs in the classroom will be foundational. Professional learning around evidence-based practices, and support of that learning by Instructional Specialists can accelerate learning. Professional learning, tools and supplies to implement these practices can be supported with ESSER funding. Additional interventionists, summer programs, before/after school programs and additional PreK opportunities can also be funded, and accelerate learning.

The Coronavirus pandemic presented social and emotional challenges for our children. These challenges can continue to impede learning progress if they are left unchecked. To meet challenges presented by Coronavirus, counselors; SEL committee, recommendations and resources; Trauma Informed and Resilient Schools; Equity Coalition, audits and planning; as well as Restorative Practices work can also be funded and support the acceleration of student learning.

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Please describe how the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act.

The Coronavirus pandemic accelerated the need for standardized platforms, hardware and other technology in unprecedented ways. Without the ability to approach school in a 100% brick-and-mortar fashion, technology became, and continues to be, the conduit for continuing learning activities outside of “the norm.” To meet technology challenges and new opportunities presented by Coronavirus, WCS will continue supporting the following through ESSER funding: student laptops; hotspots; bandwidth upgrades; firewall/VPN upgrades; Cybersecurity/antivirus upgrades; fiber optic upgrades; and staff laptops.

The Coronavirus pandemic presented major budget and financial challenges. School finance continues to be fluid. Student enrollments, state aid calculations, and additional pandemic costs continue to be areas requiring responsive budget planning and solutions. To meet challenges presented by Coronavirus, ESSER funding can be used to address these challenges by allowing responsible budgeting for instructional opportunities beyond core curriculum to be supported with ESSER funds. Maintaining operation and continuity, as well as also contributing to staffing stability, media centers and specials will be funded. In order to maintain enrollment, WCS will offer both an in-person and a virtual option for students. The virtual option will be funded by ESSER, cost neutral to WCS and retain students until they are ready to return to our in-person instructional experience.

Please describe how the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements, including but not limited to the interventions implemented under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act (see below) 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.

Several of these programs are already included and evaluated as part of our District Improvement Plan (DIP) both in whole group and sub-group analysis. Our MTSS processes and practices allow for continuous review of student progress, and instructional challenges. Under this umbrella, student needs are reviewed and addressed on an on-going basis. Additional ESSER III funded programs within these areas, if not part of the DIP already, will be subsumed under that improvement process and evaluated accordingly along whole-group and sub-group analysis. Additionally, as many of these items impact the district as a whole, our overall data for 2019-2020, 2020-2021 (where available), 2021-2022 and beyond (in aggregate and disaggregate) will be compared and looked at in terms of increasing and decreasing trends as applicable/desirable. This work will be the responsibility of the district improvement team and other relevant stakeholders.