

# ESSER III

October 2021 - September 2024

\$170,448

School Committee 9/23/2021

# The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, enacted on March 11, 2021

- The ARP Act provides additional funding for school districts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Education portion of ARP is known as the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III or ARP ESSER) Fund.
- The purpose of the ESSER III fund is to support the safe reopening and sustaining safe operations of schools while meeting students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Requirements

ESSER III contains new requirements for how funds must be spent and what reports/plans must be made available, including:

- District Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction
- District Plan on Use of ESSER III Funds
- Consultation with district stakeholders to determine LEA priorities
- At least 20% of the award must be spent on mitigating lost instructional time
- A new "Maintenance of Equity" provision

## → District Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction

- Lincoln Board of Health mask mandate for all persons over 2 years old while inside a building.
- Lincoln Board of Health mandated vaccination and participation in the district COVID testing program for all employees.
- COVID Problem Solving Team (CPST) developed a district mask protocol.
- CPST developed protocols for cleaning and disinfection of the schools and for close contacts who test positive for COVID.
- Weekly COVID testing program began on September 8 for employees and students. The testing program is completely funded by the state.

## → District Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction

- Daily COVID Symptom Checklist provided to all employees and families to check for symptoms before coming to school.
- HVAC systems set at optimal levels to allow for greater fresh air intake in the buildings.
- Air purifiers provided for all classrooms and offices.
- Vaccination clinics held on Lincoln campus on August 31 and September 21. Flu shot clinic held on October 20 for all employees and on October 23 for anyone.

## → District Plan on Use of ESSER III Funds

1. Educational technology (internet connectivity, hardware, devices, software, tech support services, etc.).
  - a. Software expansion experienced during the pandemic (\$12,000)
2. Activities to address the unique needs of: low-income children or students, students with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and students in foster care.
  - a. Diversity and Equity Training (\$90,000)
  - b. SEL interventions and School Culture (\$50,000)
  - c. Curriculum Expansion (\$18,328)

Total: \$170,448

## → District Plan on Use of ESSER III Funds

3. Diagnostic intake assessments to gauge students' knowledge and skills (i.e. early literacy screening, etc.).
  - a. Software and Curriculum Expansion
  - b. Enhancement of current assessments gauging student knowledge and skills including revised suite of assessments and revised process in math and literacy K-5
4. Assessing and addressing learning loss, especially those groups listed in Category, above (Reminder: 20% or \$34,066), including:
  - a. administering and using high-quality assessments, and
  - b. implementing evidence-based activities to meet student needs,
  - c. Requirement being met by portions of the plan identified
    - i. Diversity & Equity Training - \$10,000
    - ii. SEL interventions and School Culture - \$10,000
    - iii. Software Expansion - \$12,000
    - iv. Curriculum Expansion - \$2,066

## → Consultation with District Stakeholders

The district must engage with various constituent groups regarding the expenditure of these funds. These groups include but are not limited to

School District stakeholders representing the interests of:

Students, Families, School and district administrators, Teachers, principals, other educators and school staff.

Community organizations or stakeholders representing the interests of:

Children w/ disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, and justice-involved youth.

## ➔ Mitigating Lost Instructional Time - 20% or \$34,066

- Diversity & Equity Training - \$10,000 of \$90,000 commitment
- SEL interventions and School Culture - \$10,000 of \$50,000 commitment
  - Mental Health Team Consultation from McLean School Consultation group (clinical support interventions responses for students, progress meetings to administration, provision of a comprehensive mental health tool kit for staff and students) \$8,462
  - Building classroom community and SEL-Retraining of Primary Level, Responsive Classroom (\$21,000/30 faculty members/4 days and Developmental Designs for Middle School (799 per person)
- Software Expansion - \$12,000 of full commitment
  - This may be a future budget expenditure to support the increase in the number of licenses for applications (i.e. DreamBox)
- Curriculum Expansion - \$2,066

## → A new "Maintenance of Equity" provision

Lincoln must agree in FY22 and FY23 that we will not reduce:

- The per pupil allocation of state and local funds to your high-poverty schools by more than the total reduction of these funds to all schools divided by the total number of students enrolled in all of your schools (if any) divided by the total number of students enrolled in all of your schools for that fiscal year, and
- the per pupil, full-time equivalent staff in any high poverty school by an amount that exceeds the total reduction in full-time equivalent staff in all of your schools (if any) divided by the number of students enrolled in all of your schools for that fiscal year.

## → Other Requirements

Districts must agree to the following in FY22 and FY23:

- Within 30 days of receiving ESSER III funds, Return to In-Person Instruction Plan publicly available on its website.
  - Note: The District Reopening Plan submitted to DESE for SY2020-2021, likely satisfies this requirement for the initial plan if it was published on the district's website and included public input.
- Plan review every 6 months and revise as necessary (including consulting any changes to CDC guidance) until the end of the grant award.

# Next Steps

1. Communication with stakeholders on the status of student knowledge and skills as it relates to grade level outcomes.
  - a. Hearing on ESSER III Grant preliminary spending plan, September 23
  - b. Central Administration Education and Training on Requirements: July through September 2021
  - c. Administrative Council: September 28, going forward as needed
  - d. Building Based Faculty and Staff working groups: Weeks of September 13- October 4 and ongoing as needed
  - e. Parent Communities: September 23, survey and collect other feedback using established methods in the district.
2. Completion and submittal of ESSER III grant application on or before Oct. 4
3. Implementation of tools, programs, and activities.
4. Assessment of outcomes