

American Rescue Plan

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?

According to the CDC, COVID-19 cases are on the rise across the country at an increasing rate. The American Academy of Pediatrics (2020) states "... that children learn best when physically present in the classroom. But children get much more than academics at school. They also learn social and emotional skills at school, get healthy meals and exercise, mental health support and other services that cannot be easily replicated online." The goal of Defiance City Schools is to have everyone in school all day, every day and will seize every means possible to insure this. Therefore, DCS will utilize ARP ESSER funds to off-set the costs of recommended COVID-19 supplies as well as UV Air Handlers. Indoor air quality is vitally important to the health and safety of our students, staff and community. UV Air Handlers decrease the risk of virus, bacteria and mold spreading.

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 after school programs, or extended school year?

DCS closed March of 2020, resulting in ten weeks of lost face-to-face instruction. Based on last year's state testing results and other data sources, even though we spent the 2020-2021 face-to-face, this loss of instructional time and other COVID-related events had a profound academic and social emotional impact with the majority of our students. Our priorities will be on the Orton-Gillingham approach in kindergarten through grade three, early education for young five year olds, afterschool programming for kindergarten through grade five and alternative education opportunities for middle school and high school. ARP ESSER funds will be used to purchase materials and for the operational costs associated with each priority.

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

Beyond learning loss and evidence-based interventions, mental health and social emotional learning of our students is a focus. During June 24-30, 2020, the CDC reported (in part) that younger adults and racial/ethnic minorities experienced disproportionately worse mental health outcomes, increased substance use, and elevated suicidal ideation. Therefore, we will hire additional social workers across the district to support existing staff to address the social emotional and mental health needs of our students. Additionally, ARP ESSER funds will be expended on NOVANET(online courseware), an all day preschool special needs program, technology for students and staff (i.e.chromebooks, smartbooks and teacher laptops), administrative support staff and for learning recovery, pandemic response and supplemental stipends.

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

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low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students.

The Ohio Improvement Process (OIP) is a focused, intentional plan-do-study-act process that has been implemented across our school district for several years. Data is gathered by our teachers from a variety of sources (i.e. classroom observations, diagnostic assessment, state testing, etc.) and analyzed during weekly Teacher-Based Teams (TBTs) through a 5-step process. This analysis is shared with our Building Leadership Teams and District Leadership Team with all subgroup data as a part of the discussion. A whole child framework, including intellectual and social development needs, provides the foundation for all decisions and interventions at each level (TBT, BLT, and DLT). Our Board of Education Strategic Planning committee goals also align to this process. Furthermore, DCS received support throughout the entire process from State Support Team Region 1 personnel.

5. Briefly describe how the LEA determined its most important educational needs as a result of COVID-19.

The One Needs Assessment process permits our DLT to make recommendations and set priorities. In May 2021, our District Leadership Team (DLT) conducted a root cause analysis regarding instruction, mathematics, and behavior. Moreover, it is clear from recent state testing results that COVID and COVID-related events impacted our students significantly. On-going reflection and dissection of data creates a fluid document that allows our district to adapt to these unprecedented and uncertain times in order to meet the educational needs of each student.

6. Briefly describe the LEA's proposed timeline for providing services and assistance to students and staff with these funds.

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

While the goal of DCS is to provide face to face instruction for students, a shift to remote learning may be needed. ARP ESSER funds will be used to purchase additional technology such as chromebooks, laptops, and smartbooks. Devices purchased with these funds will work to ensure students in DCS have the tools to access their full academic coursework.

8. 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.

Diagnostic assessments will continue to occur three times per year kindergarten through twelve grade. Kindergarten through fifth grade will utilize the diagnostic tool, i-Ready and sixth grade through twelve grade will utilize NWEA-MAP to evaluate student growth and/or needs. This information is shared with the parents. Students strengths and needs will be discussed through the 5-step Ohio Improvement Process with interventions and progress monitoring conducted as needed. DCS is in the process of revising our Multi-tiered System of Support so that it better reflects our intention to meet the needs of each student.