

## ARP Use of Funds Plan - Pompton Lakes

- 1. 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 district will allocate the ARP ESSER funds to implement the following prevention and mitigation strategies to continuously and safely operate schools for in-person learning: purchase masks to comply with the Governor's Executive Order regarding the wearing of masks protocol in school buildings. The district plans to replace/repair non-functioning or poorly functioning windows in school buildings, add air conditioning in all buildings, and replace a non-functioning heating system to improve ventilation to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 as mitigation strategies for safely operating our schools for in-person learning. Additional teaching staff will be hired to decrease class sizes as a physical distancing mitigation strategy, especially in the elementary and high school buildings where the district is experiencing increasing enrollment. The strategies described here are supported by the latest CDC and NJ Department of Health guidance ([cdc.org](https://www.cdc.org) and <https://www.nj.gov/health/>). Such measures were shared publicly at the board of education meeting in July and subsequently in September and October 2021, respectively. Public comment was also received in person and via email at [pl.boemembers@plps.org](mailto:pl.boemembers@plps.org).

- 2. How the LEA will 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 afterschool programs or extended school year.**

With some of the ARP ESSER funds, the Pompton Lakes School District implemented a summer program in July 2021 to address the academic impact of lost instructional time due to COVID-19. The program offered small group instruction and high-dosage tutoring, which are evidence-based intervention strategies to mitigate learning loss and accelerate learning (Hancock et al., 2020; Orlov et al., 2021). The district plans to implement the summer program again in Summer 2022. The district also hired a Learning Acceleration Coordinator and will use ARP ESSER funds to add the following roles to this position: accelerated learning coaching and educator support. These new roles will ensure our teachers are receiving appropriate professional development to scale up learning for all students to address and mitigate learning loss and be prepared to teach during challenging times created by the COVID-19 pandemic (Darling-Hammond et al.,

2020; Flores, 2020). The district will use ARP ESSER funds to implement an extended school day program for students identified as at-risk by local benchmark and Start Strong assessments. Funds will also be used to scale up learning in STEM for all students by offering extended day enrichment programs in Robotics, coding, and/or Augmented Reality (AR) for K-12 students. During the COVID-19 pandemic, students in STEM courses were challenged and faced unique obstacles for engaging appropriately with the content; however, leveraging technology and adopting certain pedagogical practices in the STEM classroom can enhance instruction and student outcomes (Amunga, 2020; Carmona Reyes et al., 2021). Purchasing necessary STEM supplies will also supplement learning. Students, such as English Language Learners, who may have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic will be served with the addition of an ESL teacher at the elementary school and a full-time ESL teacher at the high school (Uro et al, 2020). A parent/student survey was administered in June 2021 to gauge the impact of the COVID-19 hybrid learning model on ELLs. Results were used to inform the mitigation strategies being selected for the ARP ESSER grant. ARP ESSER funding is being used to fund these necessary positions.

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

Section 2001(e) of ARP specifically authorizes an LEA to use ARP ESSER funds to develop strategies and implement public health protocols including, to the greatest extent practicable, policies in line with guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students which includes providing mental health services and supports (<https://www.nj.gov/education/esser/arp/>). The district plans to use its remaining ARP ESSER funds to increase mental health support staffing and offer professional development to staff for self-care. We currently have a part time Mental Health Counselor for the district. For the 2021-2022 school year, she is spending the majority of her time at the high school and Lincoln School. We are looking to increase the hours of our part time Mental Health Counselor based on risk assessments and Intervention and Referral Services completed. The Mental Health Counselor creates and provides treatment plans for at risk students, sees students weekly and involves parents/guardians in the therapy process as needed and also provides professional development to staff in self-care techniques. The mental health counselor will be using the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports to identify students who require mental health supports especially as they re-enter in-person learning (NJASP Guidance, 2020). Such support will focus on students' social and emotional learning and mental and behavioral health aspects of

school re-entry. Mental health staffing will also utilize the New Jersey School Climate Survey (NJSCS) to identify specific areas of needs for students.

- 4. 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 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. Under this requirement, an LEA must engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders and give the public and opportunity to provide input in the development of its plan. Specifically, an LEA must engage in meaningful consultation with students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); and teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions.**

The district's Learning Acceleration coordinator consults regularly with school administrators, district leaders, specialists, department chairpersons, ESL coordinator, Director and Supervisor of Special Services, Title VI & IX coordinator, Homeless Liaison, ESL Parent Advisory Committee, I & RS teams and the teaching staff including the president of the local teachers' union to implement and maintain district-wide student data protocols and databases (PowerSchool & LinkIt) that track student learning based on local and standardized assessments and identifies areas for intervention. Trends will be identified and shared with appropriate district staff, school board members, caregivers, and students; any changes to the ARP ESSER plan will be informed by this data. This ongoing data assessment will continue to inform and assess mitigation measures presented in the current ARP ESSER grant.

Mental health supports using the NJTSS model will continue to be monitored by the Director of School Counseling, the At-Risk Counselors, the I & RS teams at each school, the Director and Supervisor of Special Services, and the Substance Abuse Counselor in consultation with appropriate district and school leaders and staff. Caregiver- and student-input from surveys and consultations will be considered. Staff members who participate in professional development on self-care will complete a district post-activity survey.

The district presented the Safe Return Plan and sought public comment at the Board of Education meeting on June 8, 2021. Community input such as improving ventilation (e.g. adding air conditioning to selected classrooms) and masking. Due to the Executive Order

on masking, the district has subsequently changed its mask policy to align with the order. Ongoing public comments will continue to be accepted at subsequent board of education meetings and via email ([pl.boemembers@plps.org](mailto:pl.boemembers@plps.org)).

- 5. Additionally, an LEA must engage in meaningful consultation with each of the following, to the extent present in or served by the LEA: Tribes; civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.**

The district also engaged in meaningful consultation with stakeholders representing civil rights organizations, the interests of children with disabilities, English language learners (e.g. ESL parent/student surveys), children experiencing homelessness, and other underserved children (e.g. Title I Parent Night & subsequent program survey for caregivers) regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student academics and socio-emotional learning. The ARP ESSER grant contains the suggestions made during these consultations and from survey data.