

2021-24 American Rescue Plan

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund

Local Educational Agency ARP ESSER Plan,

Application and Assurances

**Hamilton County School District: 24**

**Purpose**

Florida must subgrant not less than 90 percent of its total ARP ESSER allocation to local educational agencies (LEAs) (including charter schools that are LEAs) to help meet a wide range of needs arising from the coronavirus pandemic, including reopening schools safely, sustaining their safe operation, and addressing students’ social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs resulting from the pandemic. The State must allocate these funds to LEAs on the basis of their respective shares of funds received under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) in fiscal year (FY) 2020.

The purpose of this document is to guide districts to plan for the continued implementation of reopening and recovery through the utilization of the 2021-24 ARP ESSER and to assure federal requirements are met. Florida utilized the 2020-21 District Reopening Plan and the Spring 2021 Education Plan to respond to and mitigate the impact of the emergency and to promote the health, safety, and welfare of persons connected with Florida’s educational system.

The Department recognizes that the safe return to in-person instruction must be accompanied by a focus on meeting students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, and by addressing the opportunity gaps that existed before – and were exacerbated by – the pandemic. In this document, districts will describe how they will support the development of high-quality plans for the use of ARP ESSER funds to achieve these objectives for the following student groups: students from low-income families, from each racial or ethnic background, by gender, English Language Learners, students with disabilities, experiencing homelessness, in foster care, migratory students and other student groups.

**Directions**

Districts shall submit its ARP ESSER application to the Office of Grants Management via ShareFile **on or before November 12, 2021**. ShareFile access has been established for the ARP ESSER Lump Sum program for each LEA. The complete application shall include:

* LEA ARP ESSER Plan, Application and Assurances utilizing this template;
* DOE 100A Project Application Form; and
* DOE 101 Budget Narrative Form.

Each LEA developed and made publicly available on the LEA’s website a plan for the safe return of in-person learning in the Fall of 2020. This was before the enactment of the ARP Act. This plan must be updated to address the requirements of the U.S. Department of Education’s Interim Final Rule, 88 FR 21195. The requirements of the Interim Final Rule are summarized in Appendix A. Each LEA shall seek public comment on the updated plan and take such comments into account prior to the submission of the final plan to the Department. Updated plans must comply with state law, including any applicable executive order, any agency emergency action, or any agency regulation or rule. No later than 60 days from receipt of its DOE 200, Project Award Notice, each LEA shall email its updated final plan to [recoveryplan@fldoe.org](mailto:recoveryplan@fldoe.org). The subject line of the email must include district name and Plan for the Safe Return of In-person Instruction. Upon the Department’s approval, the LEA shall post this plan on the LEA’s website within 90 days of the award.

**Part I: Implementation Plan**

**The LEA will submit an implementation plan, outlining planned activities for each of the following uses of funds under section 2001(e) of the ARP Act. The description must be adequate to ascertain that the proposed use of funds is necessary to prevent, prepare for, or respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including its impact on the social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs of students.**

**Activities should be numbered consecutively. If the LEA does not plan any activities for one or more authorized uses, please indicate that there are no planned activities. School district LEAs shall include the activities identified for charter schools within the LEA, aggregated at the district/LEA level.**

**Activity 1**: **Addressing Learning Loss (at least 20% of total allocation).** Of the total amount allocated to an LEA, the LEA must reserve at least 20 percent of funds to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that those interventions respond to students’ social, emotional, and academic needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student subgroups (each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, gender, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care).

To address learning loss, the district plans to:

1. Provide extended learning tutors for afterschool and summer programs. In order to assist with student participation in these programs, transportation will be provided.
2. Utilize instructional staff in Grades K-12 to provide differentiated support for students to assist in closing the achievement gap.
3. Provide 4 intervention teachers to address the literacy needs identified through ongoing progress monitoring.
4. Continue supports provided through ESSER by funding a professional development coordinator to provide oversight of curriculum, implementation of ESSER assurances, lead reviews and analysis of ongoing progress monitoring data, and plan appropriate professional development to address the needs of individual schools.
5. Provide a Middle Grades Dean to ensure that students receive focused instruction, positive behavior interventions, and social emotional supports on campus. This position will provide job-embedded ongoing support for middle grades teams.

**Activity 2** (**A**) **Any activity authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.**

1. To address the unique needs associated with a middle/high school combination school, additional teachers including a Critical Thinking, ELA, Math, and Music instructor will be implemented to meet the needs of the school to serve students at various grade levels.
2. Supplemental programs/materials/supplies will be purchased to support the academic needs of students to assist in demonstrating standards-mastery.
3. In order to implement new ELA BEST standards effectively, the LEA will utilize support provided from the district-wide reading coach. Emphasis will be placed on instruction in foundational skills and benchmark stacking to address grade level standards. Walk-throughs will be conducted by the reading coach to ensure rigorous instruction and to gather data for targeted feedback and determination of professional development needs.

**Activity 2** (B) **Any activity authorized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.**

1. A Pre-K ESE instructor and paraprofessional will be partially funded from this project to better support students with special needs in an inclusionary environment on our elementary campus.

**Activity 2** (C) **Any activity authorized by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.**

1. As a result of this project, the LEA will provide a teacher on special assignment to coordinate all CTE, K-12 virtual, and **Adult Education** programs. In order to ensure student progression, this position will provide ongoing progress monitoring and continuous communication with parents, students, and guidance personnel to confirm successful completion of the Adult Education program.

**Activity 2** (D) **Any activity authorized by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.**

1. As a result of this project, the LEA will provide a teacher on special assignment to coordinate all **CTE, K-12 virtual**, and Adult Education programs. In order to ensure student progression, this position will provide ongoing progress monitoring and continuous communication with parents, students, and guidance personnel to confirm successful completion of CTE and online programs.

**Activity 2** (E) **Coordination of preparedness and response efforts of local educational agencies with State, local, Tribal, and territorial public health departments, and other relevant agencies, to improve coordinated responses among such entities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.**

* No Planned Activities

**Activity 2** (F) **Activities to address the unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.**

1. The Hamilton County School District has a large population of English Language Learners in need of additional support for academic achievement. This grant would allow for employment of an instructional position for each school site to serve identified students as well as provide additional support to classroom teachers in designing instruction for ELL learners.
2. In order to provide increased differentiated instruction within classrooms at each school site, the LEA will employ additional paraprofessionals to address learning loss created by this unprecedented pandemic. Paraprofessionals will be trained to assist teachers with small group instruction and implementation of standards-based learning and evidence-based intervention programs based on assignments.
3. District textbook materials and supplies will be purchased to support the academic needs of students.
4. Provide professional development to instructional personnel, support staff, and school leaders to meet the identified needs of students and increasing student achievement school-wide.
5. The Hamilton County School District will establish a child care program to be located on the elementary campus to assist with the recruitment and retention of highly qualified staff to address the unique needs of low socio-economic students and families within the district.

**Activity 2** (G) **Developing and implementing procedures and systems to improve the preparedness and response efforts of local educational agencies.**

1. In order to continue supports provided through ESSER, a district-wide teaching and learning director will provide oversight of curriculum deployment, implementation of ESSER assurances, lead reviews and analysis of ongoing progress monitoring data, and coordinate activities with the professional development office to address the needs of individual schools.
2. Staff will ensure proper development and implementation of our instructional continuity goals through participation in professional learning communities.
3. The district will develop teacher leaders through participation in the NEFEC Aspiring Leaders program to build capacity at the school level aimed at improving the preparedness and response efforts of the LEA.
4. Implementation of the Skyward Student Management Suite will be used to accommodate online registration opportunities which will simplify the enrollment process and ensure access to enrollment and educational services during school closures.
5. To assist school leaders in recruiting highly qualified/effective staff, the district will utilize marketing services for vacancies through Frontline Proactive Recruiting & Minority Success.

**Activity 2** (H) **Training and professional development for staff of the local educational agency on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.**

* No Planned Activities

**Activity 2** (I) **Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of a local educational agency, including buildings operated by such agency.**

1. The LEA will provide necessary PPE and sanitation supplies to be used throughout the district to ensure a clean and safe learning environment for all stakeholders.

**Activity 2** **(J**) **Planning for, coordinating, and implementing activities during long-term closures, including providing meals to eligible students, providing technology for online learning to all students, providing guidance for carrying out requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and ensuring other educational services can continue to be provided consistent with all Federal, State,**

**and local requirements.**

1. Digital imaging of school, fiscal, and personnel records will be implemented to ensure digital access to information during long-term closures so that educational services can continue.

**Activity 2(K) Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity) for students who are served by the local educational agency that aids in regular and substantive educational interaction between students and their classroom instructors, including low-income students and children with disabilities, which may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.**

1. Due to the increased use of digital programs resulting from the pandemic, the Hamilton County School District will implement the Go Guardian Suite which provides content filtering, video conferencing, mental health tools, and classroom management software designed to promote student engagement and higher student achievement. The OnCourse lesson planner will be utilized district-wide to ensure that appropriate planning for standards-based instruction is taking place across all grade levels. A Graphing Calculator Software program will support standards-based instruction in math. Cloud 9 World is an integrated social emotional and literacy based solution which will provide students with interactive online resources to build, apply and expand their social-emotional skills. Teachers will utilize these resources as a part of the district’s character education program. Learning Without Tears will support handwriting.
2. Headphones will be purchased to support participation in blended-learning and testing environments.
3. The district will contract with an IT Network Support provider to assist with improving and maintaining network efficiency and connectivity.
4. The LEA will purchase a Polycom system to support participation of students in dual enrollment programs.

**Activity 2(L) Providing mental health services and supports, including through the implementation of evidence-based full-service community schools.**

1. Cloud 9 World is an integrated social emotional and literacy based solution which will provide students with printed materials to build, apply and expand their social-emotional skills. Teachers will utilize these resources as a part of the district’s character education program.
2. In order to continue supports provided through ESSER, the LEA will employ a Social Emotional Counselor on the high school campus to assist with implementation of mental health services, substance abuse awareness, and child trafficking prevention. In order to ensure a safe and healthy environment, the Hamilton County School District will continue to implement and train teachers and support staff in utilizing a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) aimed at delivering evidence-based academic/behavior interventions, and mental health services. These services include assessments, diagnosis, intervention, treatment, and recovery support to students with one or more mental health or co-occurring substance abuse diagnoses as well as to students with high risk of such diagnoses. The School Social Worker position will play a vital role in the facilitation of our MTSS process and implementation of social emotional curriculum while providing mental health counseling services; thus, decreasing high student to counselor ratios and providing a full-service community school.

**Activity 2(M) Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care.**

1. The district will implement a $7 per hour incentive pay program as a tool to recruit staff to provide summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs.

**Activity 2(N) Addressing learning loss among students, including low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care, of the local educational agency, including by—**

**(i) administering and using high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable, to accurately assess students’ academic progress and assist educators in meeting students’ academic needs, including through differentiating instruction;**

**(ii) implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students;**

**(iii) providing information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support students, including in a distance learning environment; and**

**(iv) tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education.**

1. To address learning loss among students, the district will utilize Top Score, a supplemental writing program to be implemented in Grades 2-6, to assist teachers in providing direct explicit instruction in writing. In addition, other consumable materials will be purchased to meet students’ academic needs.
2. The district truancy officer is essential to ensuring that students within the county are located and properly assisted. The district will continue to carry out the processes in place to track and monitor student attendance and enrollment. School and district-based teams will work collaboratively to monitor enrollment and attendance. Based on need, the truancy officer works with the homeless liaison/parent specialist to address issues which may be hindering attendance. The LEA will take a proactive approach to identify at-risk students through the use of early warning indicators.
3. A Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Specialist will be partially funded as a result of this project to review data, identify at-risk students, and to collaborate with classroom instructors to design classroom and individualized interventions intended to increase academic progress. This position will be critical in assisting staff with progress monitoring and collecting data on the effectiveness of interventions used.
4. In order to continue supports provided through the Data Informed Supports Project, the LEA will contract with up to two data informed support specialists to work in conjunction with our Teaching and Learning team to arrange, analyze, and present data to key stakeholders in order to assist the district in making data-improved decisions and closing the achievement gap during these unprecedented times. Data collected will be used to drive school improvement, provide timely reporting, and impact professional development opportunities aimed at offering effective instructional techniques to all students.

**Activity 2(O) School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs.**

* No Planned Activities

**Activity 2(P) Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including mechanical and nonmechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement.**

* No Planned Activities

**Activity 2(Q) Developing strategies and implementing public health protocols including, to the greatest extent possible and not inconsistent with state law, policies in line with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff.**

1. Fund 3 custodial positions to ensure that school facilities are properly sanitized and maintained in order to protect the health and safety of all stakeholders.

**Activity 2(R) Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation of and continuity of services in local educational agencies and continuing to employ existing staff of the local educational agency.**

1. The LEA plans to provide staff with a $1000 incentive following the Governor’s model to institute a COVID Disaster Relief program.
2. The district plans to reimburse COVID Leave compensation for expenditures incurred during Spring 2021.

**Activity 2 (S) Administration. LEAs may take reasonable and necessary administrative costs, to include direct and indirect costs. Indirect costs may be taken up to the negotiated, unrestricted indirect cost rate. However, to ensure that the total administrative costs are reasonable, the total direct and indirect costs may not exceed five percent (5%) of the LEA’s total award.**

1. The LEA has allocated the 5% indirect cost rate as allowed through this project. The current district approved rate is 5.78%.

**Part II: Ensuring Effectiveness of Interventions**

**Please describe how the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements, including but not limited to the interventions 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 and youth in foster care, and migratory students.** **In your response, please include a description of interventions and strategies that are aligned to the LEA’s data (disaggregated by subgroup), and describe how the LEA will measure the effectiveness of the selected interventions.**

Overall, Hamilton County School District has been academically challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. The district experienced a loss of three months of instruction during 2019-20 and experienced many disruptions to education during the 2020-21 school year due to mandated quarantines. Although the district worked diligently to make education accessible to students within the district while quarantined, poor internet access throughout the county limited the capability of reaching all learners. Even with the provision of district issued computers and mobile hot spots for students, many students did not have strong enough signals to access the internet and the instruction the district was providing. As a result, student performance was negatively impacted.

In reviewing the data, it became evident that Tier 1 instruction had to be a priority for all students in 2021-22 based on the numbers of students that were not proficient. The district has prioritized a focus on professional learning that promotes evidence-based practices in initial instruction which is rigorous and standards-based. District administrators, contracted consultants, Just Read Florida Regional Literacy Facilitator, and NEFEC Consortia personnel are being utilized to support the school-based personnel with the provision and monitoring of rigorous instruction.

School level data indicates that at Hamilton County Elementary School, there were four subgroups that did not meet proficiency targets (Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Black/African-American and Economically Disadvantaged). At Hamilton County High School, there were six subgroups that did not meet proficiency targets (Students with Disabilities, English Language Learners, Black/African-American, Hispanic, Multi-racial, and Economically Disadvantaged). Interventions for the subgroups are being provided as indicated in the district approved reading plan for literacy. Direct explicit instruction strategies are being utilized in math, science, and social studies and supplemental programs are being utilized for interventions for each subject area. Extended day learning/tutoring are being provided for students in need of additional support.

District and school-based administrators are monitoring the effectiveness of Tier 1 instruction as well as interventions through quarterly data review. The district uses iReady for K-8 to monitor ELA and Math instruction. Performance Matters is used largely at the 9-12 level for each course to monitor progress on standards-mastery. The data for all programs is downloaded into Performance Matters for review. The one major change for 21-22 is the addition of reviewing not only grade level/subject area data but also subgroup data to monitor the impact of instruction and interventions.

In order to meet the social/emotional and mental health needs of students, the Hamilton County School District will maintain records of all mental health referrals and outcomes and will ensure that an analysis of the number of students who received mental health services will be tracked. Early warning system data of impacted students to include attendance, grades, standardized test scores, as well as discipline history will also be analyzed. Tiered interventions for students in need of social/emotional and mental health supports are provided and monitored as outlined in the district approved mental health plan.

The Hamilton County School District will assist homeless children and families through promotion of academic stability, meeting personal and health needs, and increasing community awareness. In order to reach these goals, the district will implement a continuous cycle of implementing an effective identification process of homeless children and youth; continue enrollment procedures that expedite access to educational opportunities and remove traditional barriers; provide tutoring and supplemental assistance and materials for students and families; facilitate staff development on issues affecting the homeless; provide transportation services to increase attendance and school stability; improve networking between schools, outside agencies, and support services; and promote community awareness of the homeless situation in Hamilton County.

**Part III LEA Plan for Safe Return of In-Person Instruction**

Each LEA developed and made publicly available on the LEA’s website a plan for the safe return of in-person learning in the Fall of 2020. This was before the enactment of the ARP Act. This plan must be updated to address the requirements of the U.S. Department of Education’s Interim Final Rule, 88 FR 21195. The Interim Final Rule “does not mandate that an LEA adopt the CDC guidance, but only requires that the LEA describe in its plan the extent to which it has adopted the key prevention and mitigation strategies identified in the guidance.” 88 FR at 21200. Any updated LEA plan must be consistent with state law, including any applicable executive order, any agency emergency order, or any agency regulation or rule. Note specifically that LEA policies must comply with section 381.00316, Florida Statutes, and that any policies implemented after August 9, 2021 must comply with Florida Department of Health Rule 64DER21 -12, F.A.C., and any policies implemented after September 22, 2021 must comply with Florida Department of Health Rule 64DER21-15, F.A.C.

Each LEA must seek public comment on the plan and take such comments into account prior to submission of the final plan to the Department within 60 days of the award. Upon the Department’s approval, the LEA shall post this updated plan on the LEA’s website within 90 days of the award.

By checking this box, the LEA acknowledges the requirement that each LEA shall update its Plan for Safe Return of In-Person Instruction to reflect the requirements stated above, shall seek public comment on the updated plan and take such comments into account prior to the submission of the final plan to the Department within 60 days of the award. Upon the Department’s approval, the LEA shall post this updated plan on the LEA’s website within 90 days of the award.

**Part IV: Assurances**

**The district must agree to ALL of the assurances by checking the corresponding boxes.**

**Assurance 1: LEA Periodic Plan Update with Public Comment.**  As required in the U.S. Department of Education’s Interim Final Rule, 88 FR 21195, the LEA must regularly, but no less frequently than every six months, review and as appropriate, revise its plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. In determining whether revisions are necessary, and in making any revisions, the LEA must seek public input and take such input into account. If at the time the LEA revises its plan the CDC has updated its guidance on reopening schools, the revised plan must address the extent to which the LEA has adopted policies, and describe any policies, for each of the updated safety recommendations. Significantly, the Interim Final Rule “does not mandate that an LEA adopt the CDC guidance, but only requires that the LEA describe in its plan the extent to which it has adopted the key prevention and mitigation strategies identified in the guidance.” 88 FR at 21200. Any updated LEA plan must be consistent with state law, including any applicable executive order, any agency emergency order, or any agency regulation or rule. Specifically, LEA policies must comply with section 381.00316, Florida Statutes, and any policies implemented after August 9, 2021 must comply with Florida Department of Health Rule 64DER21 -12, F.A.C., and any policies implemented after September 22, 2021 must comply with Florida Department of Health Rule 64DER21-15, F.A.C.

**Assurance 2: Continue progress monitoring and interventions.** The district agrees to provide robust progress monitoring and requisite interventions must be extended to all students with tiered support for students who are performing below grade level and are not making adequate progress. Students who are receiving instruction through innovative teaching methods must transition to another teaching method if they fail to make adequate progress. The district agrees to provide monthly progress monitoring reports to parent/guardians for students identified as performing below grade level and/or demonstrating decline on the district’s progress monitoring system.

**Assurance 3: Allowable Uses of Funds.** The LEA will use funds for activities allowable under section 2001(e) of the CRRSA Act.

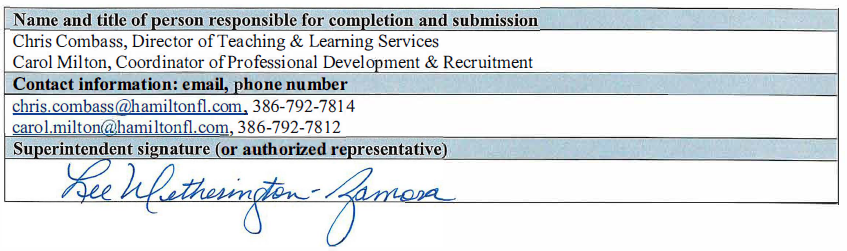
**Assurance 4: Maintenance of Equity.** The LEA will comply with all requirements relating to Maintenance of Equity, in accordance with section 2004(c) of the ARP Act.

**Assurance 5: Reporting.** The LEA will comply with all reporting requirements, and submit required reports to the Florida Department of Education at such time and in such manner and containing such information as the department may subsequently require.

**Assurance 6: Audits, Inspections or Examinations.** The LEA will cooperate with any examination of records with respect to such funds by making records available for inspection, production, and examination, and authorized individuals available for interview and examination, upon the request of (i) the Florida Department of Education, the Florida Auditor General; (ii) the Department and/or its Inspector General; or (iii) any other federal or state agency, commission, or department in the lawful exercise of its jurisdiction and authority.

**Acknowledgement**

Local Educational Agency Chief Executive Officer or Authorized Representative

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