

American Rescue Plan Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) 2021-2022 School District Plan

This document is to serve as the Rhodes School District 84.5 plan for the safe reopening of schools in the 2021-2022 school year. Likewise, the purpose is to outline how funds from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief may be used by the district. This plan focuses on four areas to ensure the safety of our students and staff as well as addresses learning loss that may have occurred during the COVID-19 global pandemic. The four areas of focus are Academic Supports, Social/Emotional Programs, Health/Safety Resources, and Capital Improvements.

Academic Supports: Research is clear, there is no substitute for a high-quality, in-person teaching experience to ensure student academic success. The global pandemic interrupted our instructional model and forced schools to provide instruction in a variety of ways (e.g. remote, hybrid, asynchronous, etc.). As we return to full-time in-person instruction we will:

- Add an additional section of Dual Language (5th grade) and maintain a Dual Language section added in SY 2020/21 (4th grade).
- Add a curriculum director position to address learning loss experienced by students and focus on curriculum gaps and weaknesses.
- Maintain the following interventionist positions: reading specialists, reading intervention director, math interventionist, and math intervention director.
- Implement activities and services related to summer learning and/or extended school year.
- Address the needs of children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth.
- Purchase educational technology.

Notes: Our plan recognizes that no less than 20% of all ESSER III funds must be used to address learning loss. The cost interventions listed above comprise more than 20% of the funds granted. Likewise, we believe these supports are sustainable beyond the issuance of these funds and will continue to support students for years to come.

Social/Emotional Supports: We recognize that living through a global pandemic has taken an emotional toll on our students. It is clear that schools will play a vital role in helping students process their lived experiences and deal with any trauma the pandemic may have caused. As we return to full-time in-person instruction we will:

- Provide social worker support to students who experienced trauma.
- Hire additional social worker.

Health and Safety Resources: Health and safety of our students and staff is always our top priority. The COVID-19 Global Pandemic has taught us important lessons on how to ensure the safety of our students and staff safety. These include, but are not limited to cleaning protocols, hand sanitizing, physical distancing, and virus suppression. While the vaccine provides some sense of protection, we will continue to require additional safety measures for the 2021-2022 school year. As we return to full-time in-person instruction we will:

- Purchase EPA/OSHA approved cleansers for frequently touched surfaces.
- Purchase supplies to sanitize and clean facilities.

Capital Improvements: The ESSER III funds provide districts with the opportunity to address structural issues that may need to be addressed within their schools. These capital improvements may help bridge the digital divide, improve the learning environment or make schools safer for students and staff. As we return to full-time in-person instruction we will:

- Renovate and/or add locations for small to medium spaces to provide classrooms for small group interventions for academic and Social Emotional needs of students.
- Add more classroom spaces to create smaller class sections and spread out students more within classrooms throughout the building.