

Meridian CUSD #101 Board of Education worked with stakeholders to determine how to best utilize funds received as a result of the American Rescue Plan. Through various modes of gathering data, the district determined the most appropriate use for these funds. The following is a summary of the decisions the board of education made regarding how to apply the funds. This plan as well as the return to school plan will be reviewed at a minimum of every six months as required by Section 2001 of ARP.

Last review of our plans:

Return to In-Person Instruction: May 8, 2023

ARP Funds Use Plan: April 28, 2023

Any further public input for this plan may be addressed to District Superintendent, Jonathan Green at jgreen@meridian101.com

After receiving input from school staff (admin, teachers, support staff), students, and community members, the board determined the use of funds all fell into three categories:

1. Learning Loss (LL)
2. Safety (S)
3. Student Learning (SL)

Summary of Available Funds and Allocation Requirements:

Funds Available: \$2,727,532



Amount Required to be utilized for learning loss: \$539,421



Amount Required to be utilized for After School Programming: \$4,622



Amount Required to be utilized for Summer Enrichment Programming: \$4,622



Amount Required to be utilized for SEA Reserve Learning Loss: \$23,108

Amount Remaining: \$2,155,759

Summary and Explanation of Use of Funds

1. ARP-ESSER III funds will be utilized to implement **prevention and mitigation strategies** that are, to the greatest extent practicable, in line with the most recent CDC

guidance, in order to continuously and safely operate schools for in-person learning. Funds use that fall into this category include:

1. Restroom upgrades for high school
 2. Increase in custodial staff to increase sanitation of surfaces
 3. Additional teachers aid to increase supervision allowing for greater spacing of students at lunch and recess by increasing the number of lunch periods/recess periods and therefore reducing the number of students present in one space during those times.
 4. Cafeteria upgrades of equipment deemed unsafe to provide students healthy, safe meals.
 5. Upgrade PE outdoor area to better support the social distancing as required by the CDC.
2. The district will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act (totaling 39 percent of the LEA's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) to **address the academic impact of lost instructional time** through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as:
 1. Increasing summer learning opportunities/summer enrichment opportunities
 2. After hours programming
 3. Online resources
 4. Purchasing updated ELA curriculum for all learners in K-8
 5. Employing an additional teacher's aid to provide classroom support to students experiencing learning loss.
 6. Employing a full-time substitute teacher
3. The district will spend the **remaining ARP ESSER funds** consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act by focusing on student groups most impacted by the pandemic, and meet social emotional needs of students through:
 1. Installation of Smart Boards
 2. Upgrade Wireless Network infrastructure to better support the 1 to 1 device purchased through ESSER II and other grants and therefore improving student learning and utilization of various online interventions.
4. The district 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, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness and children and youth in foster care by:
 1. Providing equitable access to online resources through upgraded wireless infrastructure.
 2. Upgraded ELA curriculum aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards
 3. Providing priority access to after school programs
 4. Providing priority access to summer school programming.
5. The district will **continue to engage in meaningful consultation** with stakeholders. Meaningful consultation has and will continue to occur with students, families, school administrators, teachers and principals through:
 1. Scheduled meetings
 2. Surveys (where appropriate)
 3. Direct response to district superintendent by community, staff and students.
6. The district provided the public the opportunity to provide input in the development of the district plan for the use of ARP ESSER funds through scheduled meetings and surveys and take such input into account in the development of the plan.

7. The district will use ARP-ESSER III funds to identify, re-engage, and support students most likely to have experienced the impact of lost instructional time on student learning by:
 1. Providing equitable access to online benchmarking, progress monitoring and intervention programs by improving access to online resources through upgraded wireless infrastructure.
 2. Employment of additional teacher's aid
 3. Providing access to after school programming
 4. Providing access to summer school programming
8. The district will allocate funding both to schools and for districtwide activities based on student need through use of:
 1. Utilization of data collected through online benchmarking, progress monitoring and intervention programs by improving access to online resources through upgraded wireless infrastructure.
9. The district will implement an equitable and inclusive return to in-person instruction. An inclusive return to in-person instruction includes, but is not limited to, establishing policies and practices that avoid the over-use of exclusionary discipline measures (including in- and out- of-school suspensions) and creating a positive and supportive learning environment for all students by:
 1. Deploying various social/emotional intervention strategies through online programming by improving access to online resources through upgraded wireless infrastructure.
10. The district has described its overall plans and policies related to district support for return to in-person instruction and maximizing in-person instruction time, including how funds will support a return to and maximize in-person instruction time, and advance equity and inclusivity in participation in in-person instruction.
 1. The district staff, students, parents, administration and board fully support a full return to full time in-person instruction. The contents of this plan show this to be of the greatest priority. The district will utilize all mitigation strategies necessary to improve our opportunity to remain in person full time.
 2. The board of education's policies and procedures outlining these strategies can be found in the district's comprehensive return to learn plan located on the district website.
11. The district will use its ARP-ESSER III funds to meet students' **social, emotional**, and academic needs, including through summer enrichment programming and other evidence-based interventions, and advance equity for underserved students by:
 1. Providing priority access to after school programs
 2. Providing priority access to summer school programming.
12. The district will use its ARP-ESSER III funds to sustain and support access to early childhood education programs by:
 1. Improving online access to students in Pre-K through upgraded wireless network infrastructure.
 2. Providing PD for teachers to better assist students.

Summary of Cost for All Proposed Usage of ARP-ESSER III Funds

Providing extra learning opportunities to combat learning loss received significant support from school staff and the administration. The district will provide after school tutoring with funding from this grant for FY23 and FY24 at a cost of \$9,500. The district is currently funding after school programming through another grant. The district will also provide summer school programming in June 2023 at a cost of \$26,500.

The district will utilize approximately \$33,000 to upgrade our K-8 ELA curriculum to one that is aligned with the Illinois Learning Standards. The curriculum committee will be responsible for choosing that curriculum during FY23.

Since the district is now 1 to 1, it has been determined we need to upgrade the district's wireless infrastructure. The board allocated \$46,881 of ARA funds toward these upgrades. The district will utilize E-Rate and district funds as needed to complete the upgrades.

The board feels it is in the district's best interests financially to cover the cost of some staff positions to be retained through FY2024 with the hope that the district will be more capable of sustaining the cost of these positions with district funds in FY25. Those positions include:

2 Teachers Aide Position-\$20,983 (FY23 Only)

5 Subs to assist when teachers are out with illness or PD-\$63,104

Additionally, the board determined a need to add a new position to be covered by this grant. The substitute teacher will help by having someone familiar with our day-to-day operations rather than having someone from the outside. The district to this point has employed subs on FILL IN THE BLANK % of school days. The possibility of the addition of a social worker received significant support from all interest groups. The Social Worker will provide individual and group counseling and also aid with high school college and career outcomes.

There was a significant amount of support to replace some of the outdoor PE area that has been deemed unsafe by the district's risk assessor. Getting students back on the outdoor PE area is a priority of all groups at a cost of \$55,000

Summary of Proposed Funding Usage

Target for Improvement	Funding Amount	% of ARP III Funds
(LL) After School Program FY23 & FY24	\$4,622	.17
(LL) Summer Enrichment FY24	\$4,622	.17
(LL) Curriculum Upgrade FY23	\$78,120	5.6
(LL) Online resources & Tech Services	\$66,255	4.6
(LL) Restroom & Cafeteria Upgrades	\$456,240	20.39
(S) PE Upgrades & Sanitation supplies	\$65,240	3.13

(S) Classroom upgrades	\$1,423,26	52.10
(S) Professional Development& Learning Partner	\$126,100	8.29
(SL) Teacher materials & clerical services	\$67,957	4.32
(SL) Transportation Costs	\$30,491	1.09
TOTAL COST	\$2,727,532	100%

Plan last Updated: April 2023