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**American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act  
Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund III Plan**

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**Section 1: Introduction**

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Funds is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. Augusta County Public Schools has been awarded \$9,960,309 in ESSER III funds. This plan describes how the awarded funds will be used. Questions about this plan should be directed to Dr. Eric W. Bond, Division Superintendent.

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 it has been the main goal of Augusta County Public Schools (ACPS) to maintain the health and safety of all our students and staff, while providing educational opportunities that enrich our students' academic needs. ACPS has maintained an open relationship with State and local health officials including frequent meetings, case management, and contact tracing. To maintain a safe and healthy learning environment ACPS has required the universal and correct wearing of face masks by students and staff, enforcing physical distancing requirements, and enforcing proper hygiene practices. Our facilities have seen increased cleaning and sanitization efforts, including, but not limited to, the use of air purifiers, updated HVAC equipment, and increased filter replacement to maximize our exchange of fresh air being provided within our facilities. From an academic standpoint, ACPS has continued to reach students by offering virtual, hybrid, and in-person learning opportunities since September 1, 2020. ACPS has also provided students with the appropriate technology, for example chromebooks and hot spots, so students can access those virtual learning environments. Teachers, administrators, school counselors, social workers, and health staff maintain relationships with students from low-income families, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students to provide

appropriate services and/or appropriate accommodations to assist those populations of students in their academic needs. ACPS will continue to meet with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) through the summer months and weekly starting on July 12, 2021 regarding any CDC guidelines as well as VDH guidelines regarding mitigation strategies.

## **Section 2: Prevention and Mitigation Strategies**

ARP Act ESSER III funds may be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning. Augusta County Public Schools will use approximately \$3,792,049 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds to implement prevention and mitigation strategies as described below.

- HVAC replacement and upgrades - \$1,500,000
  - Continue to upgrade and improve ventilation systems to increase air flow and improve quality.
- Transit vans - \$192,049
  - Assist in transportation needs to provide social distancing for homeless, IEP and disability needs.
- Building Upgrades/Expansion - \$2,100,000
  - Address spacing and social distancing concerns at our regional facilities; Valley Career & Technical Center and Shenandoah Valley Governor's School.

## **Section 3: Addressing Unfinished Learning**

Section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act requires each LEA to use twenty percent of its formula funds to address the academic impact of lost instructional time (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. Augusta County Public Schools will use approximately \$2,131,500 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds to address unfinished learning as described below.

- Provide a Summer Academy in June 2021, June 2022 and June 2023 - \$1,450,000
- Provide additional teachers to lower pupil/teacher ratios - \$425,000
- Provide reading programs to address learning loss gaps - \$6,500
- Provide After-School Remediation - \$250,000

## **Section 4: Other Uses of Funds**

Section 2001(e) of the ARP Act permits school divisions to use the ARP Act ESSER III funding not reserved to address unfinished learning to address the impacts of COVID-19 in a variety of ways. Augusta County Public Schools will use approximately \$4,036,760 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds in accordance with Section 2001(e) of the ARP Act as described below.

- Provide contracted services for therapeutic day treatment to address social, emotional needs of students- \$350,000
- Provide Instructional Coaches to build upon and develop evidence-based practices to improve learning, address learning loss gaps, and assist with students with disabilities learning needs - \$440,000
- Provide additional Social Workers and a Psychologist to assist students with social, emotional, and mental health support, as well as, assisting students from underrepresented subgroups (low-income, homeless, disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities) - \$350,000
- Provide technology positions to assist with virtual learning needs, maintaining equipment, supporting teachers electronic platforms - \$180,000
- Provide technology for virtual learning and 1:1 learning opportunities - \$750,000
- Provide completion of contract payment for teachers and staff from March 2020 through June 2020 to avoid unnecessary layoffs or furloughs - \$1,966,760

## **Section 5: Addressing Students' Academic, Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs**

Augusta County Public Schools will address 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.

Students in grades K-5 will be monitored academically through PALs and quarterly formal Running Records to measure Guided Reading Level to ensure maximal growth. In math, progress will be monitored through the use of Early Numeracy screeners and teacher checkpoints for our early learners, formative and summative assessments for our older learners as well as Virginia Growth Assessments. Data from screeners and other assessments will be used to target instruction to the specific needs of students. Finally, the Response to Intervention process will ensure that the instructional needs of all students will be met. Social and emotional learning will be addressed using Responsive Classroom strategies. Additional student services support personnel have been put in place for the 2021-2022 school year to support teachers in their work with students and to support individual students as needed.

Students in grades 6-8 will be monitored academically through the administration of quarterly reading inventories to ensure maximal growth. In math, progress will be monitored through the use of quick checks. Information gleaned through formative and summative assessments, pre- and post- assessments, as well as Virginia Growth Assessments in reading and math will be used to target instruction to the specific needs of students. The Response to Intervention process will continue to ensure that the instructional needs of all students will be met. Social and emotional learning will be addressed using Responsive Classroom strategies. Additional student services support personnel have been put in place for the 2021-2022 school year to support teachers in their work with students and to support individual students as needed.

Students in grades 9 - 12 will be monitored academically through the use of formative and summative assessments, pre- and post- assessments, and the use of Infinite Campus' Academic Planner to observe progress toward graduation. Students who were not successful in earning a verified credit in past SOL courses will be provided with targeted and sustained remediation. Social/emotional, as well as career related learning will be addressed through the use of school counselors and career coaches. Additional student services support personnel have been put in place for the 2021-2022 school year to support teachers in their work with students and to support individual students as needed.

## **Section 6: Consultation with Stakeholders and Opportunity for Public Comment**

In developing the ARP ESSER Plan, Augusta County Public Schools conducted consultation in the following ways:

- A task force was created to include input from stakeholders including community members with differing backgrounds related to public education. The task force consists of teachers, community members, school administrators, school counselors and social workers, parents, health care providers, and a member from the Virginia Department of Health that serves as consultant on the latest CDC health guidance. The task force met periodically through the 2020-2021 school year to address the changing health guidance and the educational needs of the school system. Their guidance was significant in offering a hybrid approach through the school year, as well as implementing the 4-day a week return to in-person education as of April 15, 2021. The task force plans to meet in May and June for the upcoming 2021-2022 school year.
- Community members, parents, school counselors, and social workers all provided value input representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness or in foster care, migratory students, and other underserved students.
- The public has been provided the opportunity to provide input during the regularly scheduled public School Board meetings. This funding plan was made available and presented during the June 3, 2021 regular meeting of the Augusta County School Board. The public continues to have opportunities to make comments at each regularly scheduled meeting held the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm. Below is a tentative schedule of those meeting dates:
  - August 5, 2021
  - September 2, 2021
  - October 7, 2021
  - November 4, 2021
  - December 2, 2021

## **Section 7: Making the Plan Available to the Public**

Augusta County Public Schools has taken the following steps to make this plan available to the public:

- The plan is posted at [www.augusta.k12.va.us/covid19](http://www.augusta.k12.va.us/covid19);
- The plan is available in multiple languages, including Spanish, Russian, French, and Chinese;
- The plan may be orally translated for parents. Contact ACPS Student Services at (540) 245-5275, to request translation; and
- Upon request, a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA may be provided with the plan in an alternative format accessible by contacting ACPS Student Services at (540) 245-5275.