

Silver Creek Central School District
American Rescue Plan – Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Program (ARP-ESSER)
Funding Plan

The 2021-22 enacted state budget includes language requiring local education agencies, such as school districts, that receive funding from the Federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund allocated by the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP-ESSER) to post on its website a plan of how these funds will be spent.

New York has been allocated nearly \$9 billion in ARP-ESSER funds, with a minimum of \$8.09 billion (90 percent) going to local education agencies, including public schools. Silver Creek CSD has been allocated \$2,919,994.

Of this total, \$943,994 is earmarked specifically to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. Another \$200,000 is required to be spent on summer and after school programming for students. The remainder of the funds are intended to respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. Additionally, these funds are to support Silver Creek’s plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services.

Districts are required to prioritize spending on non-recurring expenses in the following areas;

- Safely returning students to in-person instruction;
- Maximizing in-person instructional time;
- Operating schools and meeting the needs of students within the school community;
- Purchasing educational technology;
- Addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on students, including the impacts of interrupted instruction and learning loss and the impacts on low-income students, children with disabilities, English language learners, and students experiencing homelessness;
- Implementing evidence-based strategies to meet students’ social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs;
- Offering evidence-based summer, afterschool, and other extended learning and enrichment programs; and
- Supporting early childhood education.

In addition, district must identify programs and services that will continue beyond the availability of these federal funds and how local funds will be used moving forward in order to minimize disruption to core academic and other school programs.

Before posting this plan, districts are required to seek public comment from parents, teachers and other stakeholders and take such comments into account in the development of the plan. In May Silver Creek CSD launched an online survey to families as well as faculty and staff. Additionally, the district has met with the SCTA and the Seneca Nation Education Department to gather input on needed resources to address post-pandemic schooling. The administrative team has met to review and discuss the input from stakeholders to develop a plan for the use of these funds as well as a plan beyond the availability of these additional federal funds.

Safely returning students to in-person instruction:

Silver Creek CSD continues to be guided by NYS Department of Health guidelines.

The district plans to fully open for in-person schooling for the fall of 2021. In the event that there is a pandemic emergency, the district will be prepared to go full remote for a temporary solution should students not be allowed in school.

Silver Creek is equipped with ventilation and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) that extends any prior requirement by NYSED. Should there be an unanticipated requirement, we will amend our grant and use these funds to purchase required PPE.

Maximizing in-person instruction using research-based interventions:

Silver Creek CSD is planning to maximize in-person instruction to support students' academic needs as we move to post-pandemic schooling. The district will work diligently to recover lost instructional time from our initial closure in March of 2020 through the 2020-21 school year.

- The district's strategic plan calls on leaders and teachers to prioritize standards for all courses and to use assessment in a more targeted way to support student gaps.
- The federal stimulus grants will be used, in part, to reduce class size in many classes district wide. Reduction in class size allows teachers to have more individualized time with students to work on needed skills. Class size reduction will be most prevalent at the elementary school in order to provide support for our youngest learners. Small classroom communities will allow teachers to strengthen relationships and increase reciprocal communication with students and families in an effort to meet all student needs.
- In our High School we will be adding teachers in the areas of Math and ELA which will afford us the opportunity to not only reduce class sizes but to also provide additional supports outside the normal classroom setting.
- Professional development will be offered in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment as well as in the use of instructional technology. Grant monies will be used to support professional development as well as to purchase instructional resources for teachers.
- Another way in which we are working to maximize instructional time is through the addition of a Physical Education teacher to the district. This will allow daily physical education for all elementary students. Research has shown the positive effects daily physical activity has on a student's ability to learn most effectively.

Meeting the needs of students within the community:

The district continues to foster partnerships with community organizations to build programming for students and families.

- The federal grant monies will be used to establish a mini-grant program for community partners to apply for and use to support student success
- Through the hiring of an additional HS Social Studies teacher we will grow our existing Internship Program and work to expand service project opportunities for students. This work will allow us to begin offering a new Civic Readiness Seal that New York State recently created as a graduation pathway for students.

Addressing the social, emotional, and mental health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on all students:

The social, emotional, and mental health impact of pandemic schooling is a vital consideration as we move post-pandemic.

- Silver Creek CSD will use these grant funds to hire an additional social worker. This new social worker will partner with our current social workers, and the entire counseling department, to provide resources to students and families.
- The district will work to establish a “School Connectedness Coordinator”. This person will work to monitor and support student connectedness to the school community and coordinate the district’s social emotional programming including character education programs.

Offering evidence-based summer, afterschool, and other extended learning and enrichment programs:

Silver Creek will be looking to expand our wrap around programming for students as well as our summer programming in order to extend opportunities for students to close gaps and enrich students’ educational experience.

- The district will use the federal grant monies to establish a district wide KNIGHTU program. KNIGHTU will continue in the elementary school and will expand to the Middle School and High School. This program will provide extended learning opportunities for students at each building.
- Each building will also continue tutoring programs that were built in the 2020-21 school year. These programs include virtual components that extend the school day to accommodate student and family schedules.
- The federal grant monies will be used to expand and enrich summer programming as we move forward.

Supporting early childhood education:

The district recognizes the impact pandemic schooling has had on our youngest learners. Therefore, we are dedicating a portion of the federal grant monies to the hiring of an additional Special Education teacher to support students in our early grades. Many students lacked needed services as preschool students due to the pandemic. We plan to work to close gaps for these students through the use of a Special Educator. Additionally, we will increase our Occupational Therapist services for students at our earliest grades.

July 1st 2021