



## Lee County School District

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### **ESSER PLAN OVERVIEW**

#### ***OVERALL GOALS***

The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) program, established in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, 2020, and further funded under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021, and ARP ESSER, allowed the school district to be appropriated emergency relief funds to address the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had, and continues to have, on our two schools in the district.

The Lee County School District has surveyed its parents, staff, and students, as well as met with stakeholders face to face to collaborate and ensure not only a safe opening and closing of schools, but also, maximizing in-person instructional time and addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students, staff, and families.

General Ideas/Areas mentioned where funding may be used are listed below:

- Coordinating preparedness and response efforts with local agencies, such as the Lee County Cooperative Clinic, local Dept. of Health, and district maintenance/custodial staff to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.
- Providing principals and other school leaders with the resources necessary to address the needs of their individual schools; such as training current staff and hiring new staff to improve gaps in learning loss.
- Promoting activities to address the specific needs of the district's high-poverty students, students with disabilities, English language learners, high minority, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care who reside in Lee County.
- Training and professional development for the district's staff on technology, curriculum, the PLC processes, as well as training on sanitizing and minimizing the spread of COVID-19.
- Purchasing classroom materials and supplies to support learning loss.

- Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities.
- Purchasing various educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity) for students and teachers to improve teaching and learning, especially during school closures
- Providing mental health services and supports for students and staff; i.e., hiring behavioral health personnel (social workers, case managers, and behavioral specialists)
- Planning, coordinating, and providing child nutritional supports for students in case of temporary and long-term closures of school
- Providing supplemental before and after-school programs, summer enrichment programs, weekend enrichment programs, and online learning during the school year and summer months
- Making school facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of Lee County Schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support the health needs of the districts' students
- Improving areas regarding pick up and drop off as to limit congregating settings
- Inspecting, testing, and Upgrading HVAC units to improve the indoor air quality in all school facilities, including, mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems
- Conducting additional filtering, purification, and other air cleaning, fans, control systems as necessary
- Upgrading windows and doors for best indoor air quality
- Creating outdoor classroom spaces so that students and staff can have more time breathing in open air
- Purchasing new buses equipped with wifi, as well as air conditioning, as to provide optimal social distancing as to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and where kids can also use various technology on the buses as learning time
- Providing additional compensation for staff who perform additional duties related to COVID-19, i.e., cleaning and disinfecting between classes.

## **ESSER I Budget**

Amount Allocated for Lee County School District

**\$742,215.13**

The Lee County School District chose to utilize ESSER I funds to address the impact of COVID-19, and support long-term improvements in infrastructure and operations. Our district planned and did implement activities to promote the following:

1. Food Security
2. Direct Student Support/Continuous Learning Opportunities
3. Technology
4. Systematic Procedures

### Food Security

The district made available food from our Child Nutrition Program, for all students including students who were virtual only students. The plan is to improve the program by actually making deliveries to various checkpoints in the county to our students when closures take place.

### Direct Student Support/Continuous Learning Opportunities

The district purchased digital learning and management platforms, as well as provided additional professional development and time for staff to prepare for instruction. The district was also able to provide additional compensation for staff for additional duties related to COVID so that the school would be able to stay open. Staff provided additional interventions during regular and off hours as students needed it.

### Technology

The district purchased *Chromebooks* for (1) to (1) for all students. The district purchased wifi “hot spots” and wifi for buses that were driven by employees and parked in various areas of the community daily. Students took laptops home for virtual learning, as needed, and when there were school closures.

### Systematic Procedures

The district hired a professional cleaning service that was able to clean and sanitize all buildings before the opening of school for overall safety. Furthermore, the district purchased equipment to maintain sanitization of all school areas, including buses for

optimal safety. The district purchased large amounts of PPE and provided students and teachers with additional PPE for each classroom and office.

The district was further able to maintain a continuity of services to pay salaries of teachers who had to quarantine due to exposure or who were on leave because of having COVID themselves or a family member.

Training and professional development each week was provided and additional time and support was provided to students that needed additional interventions and support each Friday of the school week.

**ESSER II BUDGET**  
**AMOUNT ALLOCATED TO LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**\$3,116,817.55**

Since the Lee County School District is using ESSER I funds to provide support in at least four (4) areas listed under the ESSER I portion of the plans. After appropriation of

additional funds in those areas; with this additional funding source, the district plans to focus on Facilities needs and make upgrades to heating and air conditioning units in order to improve air quality, and thus make improvements that would “prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus.” Limiting the spread of COVID, through HVAC upgrades in ventilation and filtration is the major focus, and Federal/State guidelines state that the ESSER II funds can be used for **the reasonable costs of equipment repair and/or replacement.**

Additionally, providing testing, maintenance, repair, and replacement include mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, filtering, purification, and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement will be a part of the facilities upgrades which will also reduce the risk of transmission and exposure to COVID and to support student health needs.

In February, 2021, an engineering group, and the district’s architect partner, performed an assessment of all the district’s campus facilities where the district’s students attend. The facilities are:

- Whitten Elementary- Preschool
- Whitten Elementary-ALE Program (7-12)
- Anna Strong Learning Academy (K-6)
- Lee High School (7-12)

After analyzing the existing mechanical systems, we have developed a list of HVAC improvements. These upgrades provide recommended zoning improvements to the facilities, eliminate simultaneous heating and cooling, improve indoor quality for the building, meet the required filtration and air flow patterns per new State guidelines, provide individual air systems for each classroom, and reduce energy consumption and operating cost. Several recommendations were made and an estimate of costs along with overall upgrades in order of recommendation for implementation.

Since ALE will be relocated to the Lee High School campus, only repairs will be made to the existing systems since some support services are housed and students are in that building on a very limited basis in some testing situations only.

**ESSER III**

**“American Rescue Plan Act of 2021”**

**(ARP ESSER) Fund**

**AMOUNT ALLOCATION FOR LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**\$7,007,635.31**

After meaningful consultation with various community stakeholders, including students, families, teachers, and school administrators, the district plans to use ARP ESSER Funds for the safe return to in-person instruction and provide supports, both reasonable and necessary, to combat student learning loss; and will reserve no less than 20% of the total ARP ESSER allocation to address this dire situation. The district will further ensure that it will implement various interventions and supports to respond to our students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact the COVID-19 has had on our student subgroups. With the use of these funds, the district will be able to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.

The CARES Act/ ESSER provides emergency relief funds and notes that allowable uses are "preventing, preparing for and responding to COVID-19." The government goes into greater details, ESSER funds, along with ESSER II and ESSER III "uses include: **hiring new staff and avoiding layoffs and developing strategies and implementing public health protocols.**

The district plans to use these funds to create quality spaces indoors that will prevent/slow down the spread of the virus and be more conducive to student learning, as well as allow social distancing; assist with better communication about the virus as well as provide daily updates in school and in the community and how we can be protected; create effective outdoor spaces that will be used as outdoor classroom as well as gathering spaces with appropriate social distancing; improve wellness for students, so they will have a lesser chance to be infected with COVID, support mental health needs from the effects of isolation and trauma related to the pandemic by hiring staff such as social workers in each school.

### Instruction

Keeping students safe is very important, since students cannot learn if they are afraid of any outside or inside hazards. After students are safe, learning can take place.

The Lee County School District has already been placed in Level 5 of school improvement, and test scores reflect that students were already struggling academically "pre-COVID", therefore the district focus using ESSER III would be also to improve teaching and learning by hiring additional instructional staff, interventionist, and academic coaches in order to improve instruction.

The district plans to purchase evidenced-based core reading and math curriculum and the related professional development to address student learning. The curriculum purchases will allow for both in-person and online instruction.

The district will hire academic consultants as well as employ personnel with expertise in various content-specific areas such as reading and math to provide interventions for students as well as provide coaching for new teachers that have emerged because some veteran teachers have retired since the COVID pandemic.

The District plans to hire consultants/staff to address the social and emotional learning for students and purchase materials to utilize with such programs and provide teachers and students with training on how to handle social emotional issues and concerns.

Provide the resources and training “grow our own staff” that will be able to provide a consistent and effective instructional program in order to close the learning gap.

#### Transportation

The Lee County School District is a county-wide school district, which encompasses about 624 square miles. Most of the buses that are on the daily routes Our transportation department is stretched thin and will need additional support to cover a county-wide population. New buses will need to be purchased, several are old and do not have technology-equipped or technology-connected buses with student wifi access. Furthermore, the district plans to purchase new buses that will allow for improved air flow and ventilation. The district will also want to ensure that these buses are equipped with student ID tracking systems and cameras for contact tracing.

#### Facilities

The major goal for LCSD in terms of facilities, is to improve air quality, improve lighting, entry and exit areas; indoor spaces for social distancing and create safe public spaces for all students, staff and visitors. In addition, the district plans to create more outdoor learning spaces that would allow for students and staff to limit the adverse effects of prolonged masks wearing, as well as provide more opportunities for exercise which will also help in reducing other health problems such as obesity.

**ARP IDEA PART B, SECTION 619  
AMOUNT ALLOCATED TO LEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
\$5,913.68**

The Lee County School District plans to use the ARP IDEA Part B, Section 619 to provide additional learning opportunities to our students in the least restrictive environment for children with disabilities ages 3 through 21 receiving special education services.

We would like to renovate the Center-Based Instructional Classroom to be better equipped to teach students life skills. This renovation would require the purchase of appliances for the area so that students would have instruction in a familiar space.