

10358 - ESSER III 3/20-9/24 84.425U - 2021

Status Report Details

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9830-ESSER III - Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund III

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Organization Information

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Organization Type*:	Public LEA
Tax Id:	
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SAM.gov Entity ID:	HUAJBTN12X22
SAM.gov Name:	Tioga School District15
SAM.gov Entity ID Expiration Date:	04/19/2022

ESSER III Application - Stakeholder Consultation

Stakeholder Consultation

Students*:

In May, the Tioga PSD #15 School District posted information concerning ESSER funding twice on the Tioga App that feeds to Facebook and Twitter in addition to being on the district's homepage. In the post, the district stated that ESSER funding was available, community input was needed, and the use of funds would be addressed at the June 17, 2021 school board meeting. Ten days before the June meeting, a short survey was created and posted on the Tioga App. Students, parents, teachers, and community members had the option of completing the survey.

In October 2020, a district-created student survey was given to students asking for needs, and the one outstanding response was the need for distance learning-related help specifically, assistance in Chromebook help and programs. In the annual technology survey that was administered to students in March 2021, again, effective technology use was the overriding concern of students. District administrators determined the need exists to hire an assistant technology director to assist students and teachers, with technical issues and innovative programs and ideas that would lead to effective instruction. With two individuals assisting students, students will not wait as long for help, and technology personnel can also be available at the elementary which is located at a different campus than the high school; elementary students and teachers can also get help in a timelier fashion. By hiring a second technology person, the district is meeting the most frequently stated need reported by students.

The superintendent visited with both principals concerning needs in the buildings, and discussion focused on helping our students based on what we have heard and seen during and since the shutdown in March 2020, and the effect it had on the 2020-2021 school year. How can we assist our students to catch up and/or get back on track?

Tribes (if applicable)-MUST write

NA if not applicable*:

NA

Civil rights organizations

(including disability rights

organizations)*:

The district prints in the handbooks the names of the Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, and ADA policies and practices. Concerning Title IX, the superintendent (Title IX Coordinator), the high school principal (Decision-maker), the elementary principal (Investigator), and the athletic director (Informal Resolution Facilitator) participated in the training. Each individual understands his or her roles and the importance of equal opportunity. The newly hired counselor has purchased tools to help students through problems, many of which are tied to protected civil rights issues.

The district has approved, updated school board policies that have been provided by North Dakota School Boards Association personnel. These policies address non-discrimination and anti-harassment and refers to federal laws dealing with discrimination for protected classes. 504 policies have also been adopted and also address a dispute resolution process. Several policies address accessibility, both physical barriers and accessibility to the district website. The district is strongly committed to educating all students.

Administrators have worked with the special education staff to meet the needs of our students who struggle the most. Prior to the 2020-2021 school year, the district has employed four special education teachers. With a resignation and after advertising with no applicants, the district proceeded with two special education teachers at the high school and only one at the elementary.

Late in the 2020-2021 school year, the elementary received a request for a student teacher to practice in Tioga during the 2021-2022 school year in special education and also general education, preschool, and preschool special education. The district also has a special education paraprofessional taking college classes to become licensed in special education. The administration has decided the current need is so large, and the school board has agreed to hire the student teacher for special education plus the paraprofessional taking classes. This is a strong financial commitment, and the ESSER III funds would help sustain this position during the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years. The district has a tentative plan to sustain those funds in the future; most likely, a current special education teacher, will be retiring soon. This provides time to finalize funding details after 2024.

Superintendents*:

School administration met with various factions of the school system. Areas that need student growth was the overwhelming need stated by the superintendent, especially the lowest achieving students and some that are average students. The Cognia Strategy Map, developed over several years along with accompanying information, was also utilized as a tool to determine the needs of the district. Test score achievement is one of the biggest needs in the district, especially for the average and lowest achieving students. Student success was stated as the overall goal many times by the superintendent.

Throughout the course of the grants, priorities may change, and some other options may be substituted for what the district has determined for funding. No matter what may change, the needs of the students will always be the top priority.

As stated above, much dialogue has occurred in the State of North Dakota about the ESSER funding. The school superintendent continues to learn and listen to others concerning the wise use of these funds.

**Teachers, principals, school
leaders, other educators, school
staff, and their unions*:**

The building principals, technology coordinator, and superintendent, along with the Tioga School Board, were instrumental in the construction of the plan. Teachers were informed of the potential funding before the end of the school year; the ESSER funding was also discussed at the May 11, 2021, monthly school board meeting where three members of ND United were present.

Teacher input was sought in the spring of 2021 when other federal funding was made available. Teachers were also informed at that time how the earlier funding would be spent. No suggestions or comments were made as to how the funds would be spent.

In the annual technology survey that was given to staff in March 2021, effective use of technology was stated as a high need the teaching staff. The majority of teachers responded that they know basic technology skills, but many requested more professional development and training be provided to improve their effectiveness and confidence in using technology. This information was made available to the district Technology Committee, composed of teachers and a school board member, where it was decided a need existed for additional assistance and training. The superintendent was told that once a decision was made concerning the hiring of a second technology person, the elementary teachers were "so excited" since the coordinator is housed at the high school and their perception is that they will need to wait for help. Teachers were also supportive of the hiring of an additional special education instructor.

A survey was sent out to all patrons in June, and input was asked at two different times. Teachers had the opportunity to respond to all notices, and since it was an anonymous survey, it is unknown how many teachers responded.

During the 2020-2021 school year, custodians worked tirelessly in cleaning and disinfecting the buildings. As a result, the district had fewer flu and cold illnesses than in recent years. Custodians have conceded that deeper cleaning and disinfecting not only helped off-set illness, but it is evident the buildings were cleaner at the close of the school year and took less time to clean. The district also used paper products in the lunchroom, and because of the large amount of garbage, food service personnel requested to use trays that are disinfected in a commercial dishwasher. The decision has been made to use individually wrapped plastic silverware for another year since these items are inserted directly into the mouth. ESSER funding may be used to help with these expenses. Again, the school board, administrators, and teachers all support this use of funding.

Stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students*:

The district has discussed the needs of special education students with WILMAC, the district's special education unit, and also, how needs of students pursuing to stay in the K-12 school until they are 21 can be met. Several students in Tioga are reaching the age where their post-secondary future is or will be discussed through transition services. One of the special education teachers hired with ESSER funds can assist in creating an education plan for those students. The district was awarded a vocational rehabilitation grant this past year for a PAES Lab which is ready to be used in one week for these students. Although ESSER funds did not cover the PAES Lab expense, an additional special education teacher can create a more effective and meaningful education for those students.

The second teacher hired with ESSER funds is to help students that are considered more of an average student than Title I and special education students. She is also endorsed to help English Learners. When the EL instructor moved in 2020, the district used personnel from GNREA to help fill the gap. A licensed substitute teacher worked under the GNREA person, but especially for the very young students, a licensed EL instructor will improve instruction. Again, our students will be more proficient in the English language, and subsequently, more proficient in ELA and math.

Tioga has very few children that are considered homeless, and only one in foster care, no migratory students, or incarcerated students at this time. Those students needing additional assistance are always taken care of when there is a need.

ESSER III Approved Applications

District confirms the approved ESSER III application will be posted to their website for public access.*: Yes

ESSER III Application

Prevention & Mitigation Strategies

Return to In-Person Instruction Plan*:

https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/1338075/Tioga_Pirates_Fall_2020_Restart_Plan.pdf
LEA Website Link (copy from browser-must include http)

District confirms the plan will be updated at least every six months through September 2024 and will seek ongoing public input on the plan.*: Yes

Describe how ARP ESSER III funds will be used by the district to implement prevention and mitigation strategies.*:

ESSER III funds will be used to support methods to keep our students safe and healthy, including an increased use of disinfectant and a continuation use of plastic silverware in the lunchroom. The district has replaced all its HVAC systems in both Tioga High School and Central Elementary in the last six years; the latest replacement was in April 2020 at the 1958 high school building. The district is committed to replacing filters more frequently and continue increased disinfecting. All cleaning strategies will be frequently evaluated for effectiveness and changes will be made as needed.

Social distancing will be strongly encouraged in the classrooms. In the Restart to Learning plan, masks are optional, but once the school starts seeing cases, they will be recommended.

Isolation and quarantine guidelines set by NDDOH and Upper Missouri Health will be reviewed and followed. Isolated and quarantined students will be allowed to log-on to distance learn through Google Classroom in order to provide students with instruction and classroom interaction.

The district forwarded the amended Return to Learning Plan to the committee members and asked for feedback. Mitigation strategies were discussed.

October 2021 was the month where COVID-19 numbers were the highest at Tioga Schools; fewer than 5% of students and an even smaller percentage of staff tested positive for COVID-19. Most quarantine situations were a result of family and social activities and not school related. If the district were to see more cases of COVID-19, the mitigation strategies would be evaluated and changed as needed.

Learning Loss

Describe how the district will use the mandatory 20% set-aside to address the academic impact of learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.*:

At this point, the district plans to spend over 60% on student learning loss. The district funded extra special education services during June and July 2021 and purchased supplies and improved curriculum that will be utilized during the upcoming school year. Tioga is hosting a special education student teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, and if she is competent, caring, and if it appears she will be a success at Tioga, the district plans to hire her for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school year. The district would use ESSER funding to employ her at our district. Tioga also has a special education aide that is a student at Minot State taking special education courses through a program Minot started offering last year for schools to grow their own special education teachers. The district plans hire her once she becomes licensed since the district anticipates a special education teacher retiring in the next few years. The sustainability issue is minimal at this point, but the need of another special education teacher is so obvious at Tioga. Tioga has many students coming in from other areas of the country, and a great number of these students have been bounced around enough that it has hurt their educational growth; the special education student case load has rapidly increased and continues to trend in that direction.

Hiring an additional teacher to assist with students in ELA, specifically reading, that are not eligible for Title I and special education for 2023-2024 school year is another use of ESSER III funds. ESSER II funds will be utilized in hiring this person for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years in the same capacity. This person is also endorsed as an English Learner teacher and has had successful prior experience. By providing more special education experiences with smaller groups of students with broader needs and helping students that are not serviced by special education and Title I, the district is striving to help those students in the middle achieve at a higher rate. The goal is to catch students before their discrepancy level is so large that students feel they have little hope of success.

The district has researched the learning loss of students from 2019 to the present. Students have fallen behind, especially the younger ones in reading. In September, the AIMSWEB scores of those students were low, and while progress was seen during the year, many students are below grade level.

The new counselor at Tioga has purchased a social emotional learning program to work with students struggling with social-emotional issues. The district is budgeting funds for three years to provide services for those students. The counselor, who was a teacher in the building, sees a potentially high need for curriculum, and the district supports her in this endeavor.

Needs of Students Disproportionately Impacted

Describe how the district will respond to the needs of students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Address each stakeholder group.*:

Much of the Tioga School focus of the ESSER III funds is to help students that are academically struggling which was intensified during the COVID-19 shutdown and subsequent COVID-19-related absences during the 2020-2021 school year. During the last sixteen months, it has become apparent that the district needs to step-up our programs to improve instruction for our lower achieving students. With the decision to hire two instructors-one for special education and the other as a student intervention-the district strives to reach students before their achievement is so low to qualify for special education or they fall so far behind they do not have any hope of being successful. By targeting the Super Senior students, those that remain in K-12 education until age 21, the district will provide the means for those students to live independently, and opportunity to find employment, and a chance at living a successful adult life. The need in the next several years for supports provided to these students is real and is a concern in Tioga. It is imperative that we do not overlook these students.

The other instructor will help the students that are not eligible for special education and most likely, not eligible for Title I. The goal is to reach students before they fall so far behind that special education is their only choice.

The district's free and reduced percentage is extremely low. Fewer than 20% of the students qualify for those services. While the regulations have been eased for the summer program and for free and reduced meals, the district has taken the opportunity to provide free meals during the summer for the last two years and offer free meals during the school year. This has helped many of our families.

The district is using ESSER funding to expand EL services to students needing assistance. The focus will be helping the very young elementary students that hear or speak no or little English in the home. A new EL teacher with prior experience has been hired.

Estimated Use of Funds Plan

Allowable Use of Funds

Allowable Use of Funds	Estimated Expenditure Amount	Estimated Amount to address Learning Loss under this Use of Funds (20% of Budget Total MUST be spent on Learning Loss)
ESSA (New fed law replacing NCLB)	\$50,279.00	\$50,279.00
Purchase cleaning supplies	\$10,028.00	\$0.00
IDEA (Special Education)	\$181,011.00	\$181,011.00
Professional development	\$4,320.00	\$0.00
Supplemental learning	\$56,063.00	\$6,051.00
School facility repairs and improvements	\$16,372.00	\$0.00
Mental health supports	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00
High quality instructional materials and curricula	\$10,031.00	\$10,031.00
Educational Technology	\$18,414.00	\$1,109.00
Ensure preparedness and coordination	\$136,316.00	\$0.00
	\$485,834.00	\$251,481.00

Compliance with General Education Provisions Act Section 427

Compliance with General Education Provisions Act Section 427 (GEPA)

What barriers exist in your community that may prevent students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries from access or participation in the funded projects or activities listed in the application?*

Many students that attend school in Tioga live out-of-town and reside in extremely rural areas. It is important that students have access to devices and to internet services. Some students during the shutdown and during isolation or quarantine, did not have an internet plan that was sufficient to effectively run PowerPoints, videos, or other strategies for appropriate instruction.

Because of time limitations, teachers have little opportunity to research different methods and strategies available for on-line learning and technology use in the classroom. Every student in the district has access to a device, and with only one knowledgeable person to assist students, students often times need to wait for help. Instruction also slows down teaching during the wait time.

The district had employed a 1.5 FTE Title I teachers and 4.0 special education teachers. In 2020-2021, the district was unable to hire a fourth teacher and was forced to ?make do? with three teachers. With the ever-growing numbers of special education students, some students receive some of their education through paraprofessionals, supervised by special education teachers. Special education students? achievement in the district trends lower than regular education students.

What steps are being taken to address or overcome these barriers?*

With the hiring of an additional technology person, students will receive assistance in troubleshooting and fixing their Chromebooks in a shorter period of time. Teachers will be provided with professional development and individual, customized assistance in learning effective programs for students. The expectation is this assistance will result in a ?technology explosion? and will result in the district?s strength being the effective utilization of technology.

In February 2021, the district purchased a jet pack for students to use during isolation or quarantine situations using broadband funds when videos would not operate, or programs would not open. The district is prepared to do so again, even though no money is stipulated in the ESSER III budget. It will be added if our students need better access to internet.

The district is hiring an extra .5 FTE in 2021-2022 in intervention and has now hired the fourth special education teacher. The district plan is to hire one additional special education teacher for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school year. Another employee is currently taking classes in special education, and she may replace a special education teacher nearing retirement. The district plan is to employ five, perhaps six, special education teachers due to student need during the 2023-2024 school year.