

**American Rescue Plan Act
Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund (ESSER)
Palmer ISD ESSER Plan**

Palmer ISD ESSER Use of Funds Plan

The Palmer ISD will ensure that its ARP Funds meet all the required elements and are spent in an allowable manner.

1. ARP ESSER funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent CDC guidance on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in person learning.

Palmer ISD will use ESSER III funds to pay teacher salaries to keep them on staff for the next year. \$205,085.97 of activity 12b ESSER funds were used in December of 2021, \$252,817.46 of activity 12b ESSER funds were used in April of 2022, 204,786.42 of activity 12b ESSER funds were used in June of 2022, 175,379.50 of activity 12b ESSER funds were used in August of 2022, and 108,757.53 of activity 12b ESSER funds were used in December of 2022 supplementing teacher salary budgets because of loss of revenue due to COVID-19. Retaining staff also allows us to do a better job of mitigating the issues related to COVID-19 by having smaller classes to prevent overcrowding.

We will continue to use hand sanitizing stations and electrostatic sprayers to help mitigate and prevent COVID 19.

2. The District will address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after school programs, or extended school year.

We are adding a Reading Interventionist to the elementary campus to address the impact of learning loss due to COVID-19. \$15,943.58 of activity 13b ESSER funds were used in December of 2021, \$19,669.16 of activity 13b ESSER funds were used in April of 2022, \$15, 942.79 of activity 13b ESSER funds were used in June of 2022, 10,543.57 of activity 13b ESSER funds were used in August of 2022, 16,334.59 of activity 13b ESSER funds were used in December of 2022, 16,354.65 of activity 13b ESSER funds were used in March of 2023, and 16,354.89 of activity 13b ESSER funds were used in May of 2023. The interventionist will be compensated from ESSER III funds until 2024.

3. The District will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act.

Palmer ISD will utilize ESSER funds to support the academic needs of students, as well as the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students. ARP ESSER funds will be utilized to fund the Mentors Care Program for the next two years to provide additional mental health and social-emotional support. \$10,500.00 of activity 10 ESSER funds were used in December of 2021, \$14,000.00 of activity 10 ESSER funds were used in April of 2022, 10,500.00 of activity 10 ESSER funds were used in June of 2022, 15,000.00 of activity 10 ESSER funds were used in December of 2022, and 15,000.00 of activity 10 ESSER funds were used in March of 2023, and 7,500.00 of activity 10 ESSER funds were used in May of 2023. The Mentors Care Program identifies high school students in need of support and focuses on parent engagement, attendance, and academic support.

4. The District will ensure that any implemented interventions, including those implemented under ARP section 2002(e)(1) 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, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students by using the following programs:

Sandy Hook Promise trains students and adults to know the signs of gun violence so that no parent experiences the tragic, preventable loss of their child, as well as working with the SAVE Club organization to provide a self-mental health component for each student to better understand their own mental health. Facets of the Sandy Hook Promise used in Palmer ISD:

- A. ***Start with Hello***: This activity brings attention to the growing epidemic of social isolation and empowers young people to create a culture of inclusion and connectedness within their school, youth organization, and community.
- B. ***Say Something*** program teaches middle and high school students to recognize the warning signs of someone at-risk of hurting themselves or others and how to say something to a trusted adult to get help. The students are taught to recognize warning signs, to take it seriously, and act immediately and tell a trusted adult or use an anonymous reporting system.

CharacterStrong is a character education and social-emotional learning (SEL) curriculum whose goals are to help students and staff grow in self-awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making, as well as developing a student's character in terms of selflessness, kindness, honesty and other important character assets.

Hope Squad is a peer-to-peer suicide prevention program. Hope Squad members are nominated by their classmates as trustworthy peers and trained by advisors. The program reduces youth suicide through education, training, and peer intervention.

PAL Peer Assistance and Leadership program is a program that enables young people to

use their potential to make a difference in their lives, schools and communities. The PAL Program is a “peer helping” program, combining “peer assistance” and “peer leadership” strategies to engage students that might be struggling with their social relationships at school. Students are able to have an older “mentor/coach” student that works with them throughout the year to offer support and friendship.

Palmer Elementary School will also be utilizing Character Traits which is a monthly topic. PAL students will address the character traits every morning over the public address system. Studies will be extended with additional activities in SEL lessons in classes by the counselor. PES also participates in “Start with Hello Week” through the Sandy Hook Promise Club which brings attention to the growing epidemic of social isolation and empowers young people to create a culture of inclusion and connectedness with their school, youth organization, and community.

Palmer Middle School utilizes the PAL program, Sandy Hook Promise and the SAVE Club. The school also utilizes the **Sandy Hook Promise Club** as a resource for character development. The PAL Students are also members of the SAVE Club, which is Students Against Violence Everywhere, which is the student leadership initiative of Sandy Hook Promise.

Palmer High School utilizes The Hope Club and facets of the Sandy Hook Promise Club in conjunction with the Mentors Care Program.

5. The District made its plan available to the public and provided an opportunity for feedback that was collected and incorporated into the plan.

The District published its initial draft plan on the district website, www.palmer-isd.org on July 19, 2021. As part of a regularly scheduled board meeting on August 22, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. the updated ESSER III plan was discussed. Feedback from the Board of Trustees and public were included in the plan. The plan was then revised and made public on August 25, 2022. As part of the regularly scheduled board meeting on February 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. the updated ESSER III plan was discussed. Feedback from the Board of Trustees and public were included in the plan. The plan was then revised and made public on February 16, 2023. As part of the regularly scheduled board meeting on August 23, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. the updated ESSER III plan was discussed. Feedback from the Board of Trustees and public were included in the plan. The plan was then revised and made public on August 24, 2023.

6. The District engaged in timely and meaningful consultation with students, families, school and district administrators (including special education administrators), teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff and their unions, tribes, civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are

incarcerated, and other underserved students.

The district took the following action steps to engage in timely and meaningful consultation on the plan: the district surveyed all stakeholders including teachers, staff, parents, and community members representing interests of children with disabilities, English learners; the district's team developed strategies to meet the learning needs of students, including traditionally underserved students; the district reviewed all survey feedback and included feedback in the development of the plan; the district established a diverse ESSER Task Force with representatives focused on underserved populations listed above to review the draft plans of the district for use of ESSER funds and to serve as an advisory board meeting semi-annually to monitor and adjust the plans over the next three years.

In addition, the Palmer ISD provides the following assurances:

The District engaged in meaningful consultation with the following groups:

a. Students, families, school and district administrators (including special education administrators), teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions.

The District has created its plan in an understandable and uniform format.

The District's plan is, to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand, or if not practicable, orally translated.

The District will, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provide the plan in an alternative format accessible to that parent.

The District provided the public an opportunity to provide input on its plan and took such input into account.

The District has made its plan publicly available on its website.

LEA Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

The Palmer ISD has amended its plan for ensuring safe in-person instruction and continuity of services.

1. The District has a plan that is already compliant and will review it every six months.

Palmer ISD has a plan for safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of service posted in English at [Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan 2023-2024](#) and in Spanish at [Regreso Seguro a la Instruccion en Persona y Plan de Continuidad de Servicios 2023-2024](#) . The updated guidance titled Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services 2022-2023 includes guidance for the 2022-23 school year. The District will review and revise guidance periodically, at least every six months.

2. The LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and LEA staff, and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the CDC's safety recommendations, including: universal and correct wearing of masks; modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing; handwashing and respiratory etiquette; cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation; contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments; diagnostic and screening testing; efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities; appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and coordination with State and local health officials.

Palmer ISD has a compliant plan for safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of service posted in English and Spanish at <https://www.palmer-isd.org/>, titled Back to School 2021-2022. The updated guidance titled Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan 2022-2023. It includes updated guidance for the 2022-2023 school year. The guidance includes the district's procedures and protocols for wearing masks, physical distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, and cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities. The District will review and revise guidance periodically, at least every six months.

3. The LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

The District discussed the continuity of services in the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan 2022-2023. The District will utilize distributed technology and learning platforms to ensure continuity of learning in the case of quarantine and/or future school closures. In the event of future school closure, the

District will utilize the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan 2022-2023 with regard to providing services for students with disabilities and English learners. The Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan 2022-2023 can be accessed in English at [Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan 2023-2024](#) and in Spanish at [Regreso Seguro a la Instrucción en Persona y Plan de Continuidad de Servicios 2023-2024](#).

4. The District sought public comments in the development of its plan and took those comments into account in the development of its plan.

The District included surveys of parents, students, community, and staff in the development of the continuity of learning plans. The District had multiple public meetings regarding the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 Return to Learn Guidance. The 2022-2023 guidance was reviewed in a public meeting and followed by a public hearing at the August 22, 2022 regular school board meeting and again on February 13, 2023.

In addition, the Palmer ISD provides the following assurances:

The District made its plan publicly available no later than 30 days after receiving its ARP ESSER allocation.

- The link to the plan is here: <https://www.palmer-isd.org>

The District sought public comment in the development of its plan and took those public comments into account in the development of its plan.

The District will periodically review and revise its plan, at least every six months.

The District will seek public comment in determining whether to revise its plan and, if it determines revisions are necessary, on the revisions it makes to the plan.

If the District revises its plan, it will ensure its revised plan addresses each of the aspects of safety currently recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), or if the CDC has revised its guidance, the updated safety recommendations at the time the LEA is revising its plan.

The District has created its plan in an understandable and uniform format.

The District's plan is, to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand, or if not practicable, orally translated.

The District will, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provide the plan in an alternative format accessible to that parent.