

Antwerp Local Schools Local Use of Funds Plan

- 1. How will ARP ESSER funds 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?**

The key to our successful operation of in-person learning while implementing preventative and mitigation strategies surrounding COVID-19, is a facility and space issue. What we learned during the 2020-2021 school year is that we confine our students into small rooms and spaces out of necessity and practicality. Our school building was constructed in 2003 and within the past three years, we replaced the HVAC and BAS system with a state-of-the-art system. Our school district population has evolved to the point that every classroom is occupied and some rooms and gymnasiums have dividers in order to provide additional space. Many of our classrooms are too small to meet or exceed the CDC recommendations regarding social distancing. One area in particular is our early childhood Pre-School program. We were forced to limit by 50%, the number of children that could attend our program this past school year. In prior years, we had 64 preschoolers attend on a daily basis. During the 2020-2021 school year, we limited the number to 32 students in order to maintain proper social distancing space. We desire to have as many pre-school age children attend our school as possible. We realize the educational, social, emotional, and physical gains that can be achieved if pre-school age children are in attendance part of a day with our highly qualified staff. Similarly, we need additional facility space for several other educational programs that we intend to provide for our student body during the school day and, specifically, our afterschool/summer intervention and enrichment programs to address the educational, social, emotional, and physical wellbeing of our students who have been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are confident that the proposed multi-use center and outdoor educational venue of a fitness trail, will provided the necessary space that meet air quality and environmental standards to mitigate the risk of COVID-

19 and meet social distancing standards among students and staff while continuing with the routines of a normal school day.

2. How will the LEA use the funds it reserves under section 2001(3)(1) of the ARP Act to 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 afterschool programs, or extended school year?

We intend to use the funds to provide a robust and comprehensive after school and summer program for our students who, through rigorous assessment measures, are determined to struggle academically, socially, physically, and emotionally to keep up with their peers and grade level expectations. We anticipate that many of our students who participated in our hybrid and online schooling during the pandemic, will need academic, physical, emotional, and social intervention offered in our afterschool/summer Intervention and enrichment program scheduled to begin with the 2021-2022 school year. We intend to run the program throughout the duration of the timeframe for the funds to be expedited. Funding will go to pay staff for their time spent preparing and working with our students, transportation of students, new equipment, and venues for the comprehensive afterschool/summer intervention and enrichment program (ASIEP) and expansion of our early childhood education program.

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

The vast majority of our funding will be tied in one way or another to two programs: Afterschool/summer intervention and enrichment and early childhood education expansion programs. In order to be consistent with this section of the Act, and remain focused on-air quality and environmental standards to mitigate the risk of COVID-19, our district intends to provide the facility, space, and equipment that is necessary to carry out our mission. The facilities and space afforded to us will allow our district to remain open and at the same time, effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators and other staff. Two specific

facilities/venues and spaces are connected to the funds. We intend to utilize the funds in order to construct a multi-use center for our early childhood and afterschool/summer programs to carry out activities that will provide interventions and enhance efforts to advance the physical, social, and emotional well being of the population of students we have identified as in need. We also intend to purchase new equipment and educational materials for use by our early childhood and after school/summer students. Lastly, we intend to use the funds to construct and equip an outdoor fitness trail that will span the perimeter of our 40-acre school campus and enhance our efforts to intervene and address the physical, social, and emotional well-being of our students and staff.

- 4. How will the LEA ensure that the interventions it implements, including but not limited to the interventions implemented under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instruction 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.**

Our district has spent a considerable amount of time and resources examining and contemplating the best means to assess the impact the pandemic has had on our early childhood population and K – 12 students from an academic (particularly core subject areas of math and ELA), social, emotional, physical, and mental health standpoint. More often than not, the children impacted the most are those from low-income families, children with disabilities, and our students in foster care...who in our particular case, tend to be students of color. We have also spent a considerable amount of time and resources determining the interventions we need to implement to address the weaknesses indicated through the assessment process. As a means of assuring the interventions are addressing student needs, we will utilize interventions that have been identified as “best practices”. Additionally, we will complete short cycle assessments for the purpose of determining if adequate growth is

occurring. If adequate growth is not occurring, we will try additional intervention “best practices” while continually completing short cycle assessments and data reviews.

5. Briefly describe how the LEA determined its most important educational needs as a result of COVID-19.

At the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, our teachers completed our annual beginning of the year assessments. The majority of the students assessed, scored below or well below the standard benchmarks. Our staff has worked diligently to address the weaknesses that we attributed to the disruption COVID-19 caused with the closure of in-person school during the three-month period prior to summer break of 2020. Unfortunately, academic gains are just part of the problems we have encountered. Issues dealing with social and emotional situations are on the rise as well as a lack of desire to participate in physical activity. In addition to these issues, we also have approximately 10% of our student population who completed their education on-line through our virtual academy program. The majority of these students have struggled to complete their work or have done so with less than desirable grades. A large percent of these students is also referenced as members of low-income families and students with disabilities. Preliminary Ohio State testing results of all our students (in person and online) for the 2020-2021 school year indicated that virtually every tested grade level and core subject area (Math, ELA) saw a noticeable drop (year to year/same group comparison) in the percentage of students receiving a proficient score. The situations mentioned reinforce our determination that the most important educational needs of our student population are in-line with our action plan.

6. Briefly describe the LEA's proposed timeline for providing services and assistance to students and staff with these funds.

Our afterschool/summer intervention and enrichment program will begin during the 2nd week of September 2021 and continue for the remainder of the 1st semester then restart for three months in the 2nd semester and continue into the "summer month" of June. We will offer the same programming during the same time period of the 2022-2023, and 2023-2024 school year.

Our expansion of the early childhood education program will begin with the 2nd semester of the 2021-2022 school year and continue with services for the duration of the funding time frame (September, 2024) with the district funding the program beyond the ARP Act funding deadline.

The multi-use center and fitness trail may also be utilized throughout each school day by our physical education, music, and arts program as a means of utilizing space that has the appropriate air quality and environmental standards to mitigate the risk of COVID-19.

7. Briefly describe the extent to which the LEA intends to use ARP ESSER funds to promote remote learning.

Our district believes the best educational setting for students is in the classroom with a highly qualified, professional educator. However, we realize that there are situations that may dictate the necessity for children to receive an education for a period of time via remote learning as was the case with the pandemic and therefore, the district will utilize part of the funds to acquire and maintain devices and equipment that students will use in their remote setting during the typical school day hours or in our proposed afterschool/summer time frame. Furthermore, we intend to use the funds to purchase equipment in order that students in our middle school and high school will have the opportunity to take courses via online or through distance learning from teachers in other school districts or reversing the process, our teachers can teach students in other school districts in a similar manner.

8. Describe the LEA’s plan for addressing learning loss by: administering and using high-quality assessments to assess students’ academic progress and meet students’ academic needs,

As mentioned in prior paragraphs, we will utilize a series of assessments to determine the students who are in the greatest need of intervention and enrichment. Our academic assessment tools include Brigance Early Childhood Screening, DIBELS, IREADY, STAR, and IXL. Based on the data derived from these assessments, our teachers will conduct RTI meetings and plan a course of action to strengthen the weaknesses indicated in the data. In almost all cases, differentiated instruction will be instituted for use during the school day. The RTI team will also develop a list of evidence-based activities that the classroom teacher and the afterschool/summer teacher can deploy to address weaknesses. Parents will play a key role toward the success of the endeavor. The teachers who work with the child will provide information regarding the progress being made and the ways parents can assist with effectively supporting their child’s academic growth along with positive reinforcement of social, emotional, and physical growth. As for those students who are completing their education in a distance learning environment, we have a distance learning coach employed by the district who has the responsibility to monitor student progress and communicate with the student and parents. We plan to implement a process that will have the students complete the same short cycle assessments their peers are completing and offer the students to join in with a small group afterschool/summer intervention and enrichment program in which the child views and participate in via distance learning.

4. ARP ESSER Activities Details of N-O

Describe the use of funds for developing strategies and implementing health protocols including, effectively maintaining the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff.

A portion of the funds will go toward the development of new venues (multi-use center and fitness trail) for students to receive educational interventions and participate in enrichment activities that promote academic, physical, social, and emotion growth. Our strategy is two-fold. First of all, we need additional space for our staff to properly educate students with respect to the health and safety protocols regarding social distancing. Secondly, we desire for our students and staff to carry out educational interventions and enrichment activities in a clean environment from a surface and air quality standard that is focused on air quality and environmental standards to mitigate the risk of COVID-19.

Describe how ARP ESSER Funds have been/will be used for other activities for maintaining the operations and continuity of services in the LEA and continuing to employ existing staff of the LEA.

Part of our ESSER II funds have been utilized to employ a distance learning coach. This individual will continue to work with our students who desire to complete their education from a remote setting. The coach communicates with the students on a daily basis and also shares the progress students are making or not making, with administration and staff. The coach will also assist with the development of strategies, interventions, and enrichment activities that students may participate in during our afterschool/summer program. Our local ESC will partner with us and will utilize their ARP ESSER funds to provide a director to oversee our afterschool/summer program and a Teacher Assistant who will provide intervention services to our identified students during the school day and in the afterschool/summer program.

The funds will also be utilized to assist with the development and implementation of the expansion of our early childhood program. ARP ESSER funds along with other funding sources will assist in acquiring the staffing necessary for the increase in students and services provided. Similarly, our ARP ESSER funds will go toward the acquisition of additional spacing to house the increase in student numbers while providing air quality and environmental standards to mitigate the risk of COVID-19.

