

# SAU 20

## ESSER II and III Funds

### Recommended Allocations August 20, 2021

#### **Background**

Governor Chris Sununu declared a state of emergency on March 13, 2020 and ordered all K-12 schools to be closed for in person learning as of March 15, 2020. That closure required us to immediately pivot and provide education in ways unimaginable just a few days earlier.

SAU 20 responded quickly and within a week had devices in students' hands, schedules for food delivery established, and developed systems for delivering education remotely. As schools worked to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year, challenges and additional costs associated emerged. In response, the federal government allocated funds through the ESSERI - CARES/SPSRF, ESSERII -CRRSA, and ESSERIII-ARP. The two largest allocations, ESSERII (CRRSA) and ESSERIII the American Rescue Plan. These funds are to be used to address needs specifically resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and meet specific requirements. These allocations will provide SAU 20 schools with resources needed as it responds to challenges resulting from the pandemic over the next three years.

This document is intended as an overview of SAU 20s proposed expenditures of ESSERII and ESSERIII funds.

### *Definitions*

- **CARES Act:** Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act; federal relief measure signed into law March 20, 2020. Funds must be allocated by September 20, 2022.
- **CRRSA Act:** Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act; federal relief measure signed into law on December 27, 2020. Funds must be allocated by September 30, 2023.
- **ARP:** American Rescue Plan; federal relief measure signed into law March 11, 2021. Funds must be allocated by September 30, 2024.
- **ESSER:** Elementary and Secondary Schools Educational Relief, which could refer to any one of the three funds allocated to by the CARES Act (ESSER I), CRRSA Act (ESSER II) and ARP (ESSER III or ARP ESSER)
- **SPSRF 1:** Supplemental Public School Response Funds; Designated to provide relief and support for unanticipated costs associated with the safe opening and operation of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **SPRF 2:** Application for COVID-19 expenses in excess of \$200 per pupil that had not been reimbursed by other available sources.
- **LEA:** Local Education Agency; specific to New Hampshire, this is the school district

- **SEA:** State Education Agency, specific to New Hampshire this is the state Department of Education

## ESSER Allocations

- CARES Act (ESSER I): **\$80,305.87**
- CRRSA Act (ESSER II): **\$229,737.14**
- ARP (ESSER III): **340,531.61**\* *Anticipated*

### *What can these funds be used for?*

Approved uses of funds vary between ESSER II and ESSER III (see Appendix 1 ESSER comparison). In general, though, ESSER funds can be used for:

- Educational technology purchases including Internet connectivity, hardware, devices, software, etc.
  - Supplies and services to enable remote learning
  - Mental health services and supports
  - Diagnostic assessment tools to gauge students' knowledge and skills as well as potential gaps in learning
  - Professional development opportunities for district staff to increase capacity around high quality instruction, assessment, and learning environments
  - Supplies and services to sanitize district facilities and provide access to personal protective equipment (PPE)
  - Planning and coordinating systems for addressing long-term closures including how to provide meals, technology for online learning, carrying out legal requirements, and providing educational services
  - Procedures to coordinate systems to improve district preparedness and response to COVID-19
  - After/before school enrichment programming beyond what is currently provided
  - Access to tutoring and programming outside of school days and hours
- Addressing loss of opportunities to learn
- School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards and support student health needs
  - Inspecting, testing, maintaining, repairing, replacing, and upgrading projects to

improve indoor air quality in school facilities including HVAC systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement

*What CAN'T these funds be used for?*

- Building new school facilities
- Substantially reducing local support for public K-12 education
- Expenses that are not specific to preventing, preparing, or responding to the impact of COVID-19

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Over the past 18+ months, we have navigated the unique challenges of providing education during a pandemic. We continue to respond in a flexible manner that is aligned to our strategic plan. We have learned much from this experience and as a result education will never look quite the same as it did in March of 2020. While the availability of vaccines provided hope, we continue to experience a summer surge of cases which tells us this pandemic is not yet over. We know that the academic and social emotional impacts of this pandemic will continue into the future. Therefore, this plan has been developed to leverage the available resources to address identified needs now and respond to those that are discovered in the future. This plan should, and will, change as we respond to the new conditions and needs of our students.

## **PRIORITIES**

1. Increase student growth and achievement by providing high quality learning experiences through which students develop mindsets, character, communication, and thinking skills necessary for them to achieve regardless of the pathway chosen while addressing losses in opportunities to learn
2. Support teacher effectiveness through high quality professional development tailored to individual goals and needs
3. Provide access to reliable technology to minimize interruptions to learning and expand learning opportunities available to students
4. Engage with our community to partner in supporting our students and remove barriers to learning
5. Provide and maintain safe and healthy facilities for all students and staff

Percentage of ESSERII and ESSERIII Funds Allocated by Priority Area

ESSER II - **\$45,947.73**

ESSER III - **\$68,106.32** (Anticipated)

## STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT

Being able to document both growth and achievement over time is critical to the success of our students. We know that the pandemic has increased gaps in learning and has negatively impacted many students' opportunities to learn. Therefore, funds are allocated in this plan to support personalized learning experiences, expand access to learning experiences outside of the traditional school day and year, and increase enrichment offerings for students.

We propose utilizing these funds over a two-year period. Under that proposal, the largest portion would be used during the 2021-2022 school year, with reduced amounts in subsequent years

- 2021-2022 School Year - **\$163,455.17**
- 2022-2023 School Year - **\$20,704.36**

### SNAPSHOT OF STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT BUDGET

Total Amount Allocated to this Priority:

**Summer/Vacation Week Enrichment Programming** - We know that students continue to learn outside of school days and hours. These funds are designed to provide students in kindergarten through grade 8 with access to enrichment/learning activities during vacation periods and the summer months.

## PERSONNEL SUPPORT

The GRS Cooperative school district is committed to recruiting, retaining, and recognizing the highest quality personnel possible. The portion of the plan will provide funds to support high quality, job-embedded professional development that is aligned

to school and teacher goals and needs. These funds will provide access to experts in instruction, assessment, social emotional development and competency-based learning from whom our staff can learn. Educators will work collaboratively with administrators to set individual goals and then access professional learning supports that will allow them to increase personalized learning, address social emotional needs of students, and integrate technology effectively into instruction.

We propose utilizing these funds over a three-year period.

- 2021-2022 School Year -
- 2022-2023 School Year -
- 2023-2024 School Year -

Total Amount Allocated to this Priority:

## TECHNOLOGY

The importance of having access to reliable, current technology was magnified as we worked to provide uninterrupted access to education regardless of the setting. COVID-19 required us to be able to pivot without warning from face-to-face to remote delivery of instruction. As a result, we have allocated funds to continue to upgrade both our devices and infrastructure. Building upon the success of upgrading devices and infrastructure that has started, funds allocated here will allow for the purchase of additional student and staff devices to ensure remote and on-going access to education across a variety of settings. As devices need to be upgraded, so does the infrastructure so that it can handle increased demands. These funds will be used to support school-based infrastructure needs as well as mobile access for students. We propose utilizing these funds over a three-year period. Under that proposal, the largest portion would be used during the 2021-2022 school year, with reduced amounts in subsequent years

- 2021-2022 School Year - \$65,382.10 (40% of year one? Remaining after 20%)
- 2022-2023 School Year -
- 2023-2024 School Year -

## SNAPSHOT OF TECHNOLOGY BUDGET

Total Amount Allocated to this Goal:

# COMMUNITY FOCUSED ENGAGEMENT

In the Androscoggin Valley we recognize and value the importance of working with our community. Our students truly are our students. Efforts to engage collaboratively can be seen in the various ways in which local businesses and community members continually step up to support our students. From providing internship and work-based learning opportunities to Funds in this area are intended to further strengthen connections between our schools and the wider community while also removing barriers to accessing resources. They will be used to support opportunities for families to participate in events such as family math nights, shared reading experiences, student showcases, and field trips.

We propose utilizing these funds over a three-year period.

- 2021-2022 School Year - **\$29,421.92**
- 2022-2023 School Year - **\$29,421.92**

Total Amount Allocated to this Priority: **\$58,843.84**

# FACILITIES

In providing instruction during the 2020-2021 school year, the **Gorham Randolph Shelburne Cooperative** School District worked closely with local health care providers to incorporate recommendations from the NH Department of Public Health (NHDPH) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to ensure students were able to access face to face learning with minimal interruptions. Changes to facilities included the installation of hand sanitizing station, marking the building to create visual cues to support physical distancing, and the installation of plexiglass in high traffic areas. As we continued to navigate providing education during the pandemic, we became aware of the need to provide flexibility in our learning environments and maximize the use of outdoor spaces.

Total Amount Allocated to this Priority: - **\$29,421.92**

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Links to documents from NH DOE site

[NH DOE Emergency Funding For Schools](#)

US Department of Education Fact Sheet - American Rescue Plan of 2021

[https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/03/FINAL\\_ARP-ESSER-FACT-SHEET.pdf](https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/03/FINAL_ARP-ESSER-FACT-SHEET.pdf)

If you have feedback or comments regarding this plan, please contact: David Backler, Superintendent of Schools, SAU 20