

ESSER III Use of Funds Plan

I. General Information

Somersworth School District
Lori Lane, Superintendent of Schools
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II. Transparency and Accessibility

The Somersworth School District held a public board workshop to discuss the potential uses of the ESSER III funds on June 19, 2021. The power point and meeting minutes from that meeting were available upon request and were also included with the August 10, 2021 school board meeting back-up documents.

As with any school information that is accessible by the public, translation services are available to assist parents and community members with limited English proficiency and/or disabilities. Somersworth is a diverse community so translation of documents into a native language is a common occurrence.

III. Stakeholder Engagement

Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, the Somersworth School Board regularly provided the community with opportunities to provide input on their children's education during the COVID-19 pandemic.

1. All school board meetings were held in person from August 2020 to the present. Parents, community members and students attended meetings to voice comments and concerns regarding the school district's choice on its education delivery model, social/emotional concerns, mental health of students and staff, academic engagement and participation in extra-curricular activities. The full Board felt strongly that it was important to hold in-person meetings to better allow the public the opportunity to provide the Board with direct feedback.
2. Board members are elected officials. The Somersworth School Board members are elected to represent either a Ward in the City or to represent the City as a whole. Board members availed themselves either in person, through social media or other means of communication to receive feedback on all decisions that the school board was making regarding present and future concerns about the children of Somersworth.
3. School District officials received feedback from its partners and various community agencies on a variety of concerns regarding children, COVID-19 response, etc. Some of those agencies include:
 - a. Somersworth Ready Together (a coalition focused on early childhood education)
 - b. Local medical professionals

- c. Community Partners, a local agency that provides a wide range of developmental services
- d. Avis Goodwin Community Health, a local agency that provides physical and behavioral health services in Somersworth
- e. Strafford County Public Health Network
- f. City of Somersworth officials (i.e., Mayor, City Manager, Police, Fire)

4. The SAU and building administrative teams collected and reviewed both anecdotal and other data points (i.e., student attendance, curriculum gap analysis, standardized test scores) to create recommendations for the School Board on possible ESSER III expenditures.

5. Members of the School Board and SAU administration met regularly with representatives of the District's three collective bargaining units to identify issues of concern and worked collaboratively to create solutions.

The SAU administration used all of this input to create the ESSER III Use of Funds Plan.

IV. Supporting the Continuous and Safe Operation of In-Person Learning

ESSER III funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning by:

1. Continue efforts to improve indoor air quality. The School District will work with its energy contractor to use ESSER III funds to execute any additional HVAC upgrades and appropriate window replacements and/or roof replacements that will improve air quality. Those project could include ASHRE approved upgrades to the current HVAC systems, installation of operable windows, and roof replacements to minimize the amount of water leaking into the buildings causing mold and mildew. High indoor air quality has been identified by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) as a "gold standard" to helping combat exposure to COVID-19.
2. Purchase necessary PPE to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Surgical masks have been identified as a "gold standard" when mask requirements are implemented.

V. Addressing the Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time (20% of an LEA's Allocation)

1. How the LEA will identify individual student learning loss:

a. Teachers, service providers, program directors and administrators identified individual students who were at high risk for learning loss by reviewing data points as poor attendance, poor participation, failure rates as well as anecdotal information about each student to determine if additional services were needed.

b. SAU administration reviewed information provided by referring agencies for children ages 3 and below who did not or struggled to access early intervention services remotely to determine what would be needed for services as these children entered the public school system.

c. Building administrators will identify additional strategies to support the re-development of each school's climate and culture in order to re-engage students in learning and strategies to support positive behavioral health.

2. How the LEA will use its funds to address learning loss for the 2021-2022 school year:

- a. Individual and small group after school tutoring for elementary, middle and high school students.
- b. Provide opportunities for professional development for staff on data analysis, academic skills development, and learning strategies.
- c. Purchase academic support programs and software designed to develop academic skills to combat learning loss.
- d. Provide high school students the opportunity to take evening courses in order to recover credit or to advance their learning.
- e. Provide middle and high school students with Career & Technical Education enrichment program offered afterschool and/or in the evening.
- f. Provide expanded summer programming in grades PreK-12, including social emotional learning (SEL), academic learning support, and credit recovery.
- g. Provide additional evaluation services to both screen incoming Kindergarten students on developmental milestones, but also to meet increased number for referrals for special education services.
- h. Add a second preschool program to meet increased need for early intervention services. Expenses will include staffing and equipment.

3. How the LEA will measure and produce evidence of the effectiveness of evidence-based learning loss interventions:

- a. Data points will be monitored throughout the school year including attendance rates, discipline data, standardized test scores and other standardized measures (i.e., benchmarking) to determine academic growth and student engagement in school.
- b. Anecdotal evidence will be collected from teachers, students and parents on students' feelings about school, their learning, their level of engagement, and their social/emotional health.
- c. All data collected will be reviewed by administration, school leadership teams and the district's leadership team to determine successes and future needs.

VI. Addressing Learner and Community Needs (80 percent of an LEA's allocation)

1. How the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds:

In addition to all of the items stated in Section V 2, the School District will look to use the remaining ARP ESSER funds for the following activities:

- a. Indoor air quality improvement projects as listed in Section IV.
- b. Purchase additional PPE as listed in Section IV.

- c. Address student mental and physical health concerns by creating and implementing a plan to locate a school-based health clinic focused on both physical and behavioral health at one of the District's schools. This is a collaboration with Goodwin Community Health Services of Somersworth, NH.
- d. Implement Teen Mental Health First Aid training for students as well as similar mental health and wellness efforts in the schools.
- e. Provide each school with additional resources for school community day (i.e., student engagement) presentations and school field trips, as appropriate.
- f. Provide opportunities for professional development for staff on supporting student and staff on mental health concerns.

2. How the LEA will address the NH DOE's top priority needs:

- a. Providing individualized instruction – this priority need has been addressed in Section V 2.
- b. Addressing teacher fatigue – this priority need will be met with professional development as described in Section VI 1.
- c. Improving family engagement – this priority need will be coordinated with the family engagement requirements for federally funded Title I programs.

3. How the LEA will use ARP ESSER funds to address additional needs:

- a. Career and Technical Education. For SY21, the estimated amount to be used for Career and Technical Education is \$3,400.00. As described in Section V 2, these funds will be used to provide middle and high school students with evening courses in CTE in order to earn high school credit.
- b. Access to outside public school coursework. At this time, there is no plan to use ARP ESSER funds for these courses.

VII. Addressing the Unique Needs of All Learners

The Somersworth School District will ensure that the interventions it implements 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 of disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students.

VIII. Authorization

LEA Superintendent's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Doni Gagne
September 9, 2021