

LEA ARP ESSER Plan: “A Plan for the LEA's Use of ARP ESSER funds”

The American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (“ARP ESSER”) Fund, authorized under the American Rescue Plan (“ARP”) Act of 2021, provides nearly \$122 billion to States to support the Nation’s schools in safely reopening and sustaining safe operations of schools while meeting the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students resulting from the coronavirus disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) pandemic.

This template is intended to collect all federally-required information from an LEA in a convenient format and to assist LEAs in meeting the federal requirement that, within 90 days of receiving ARP ESSER LEA allocation (90% of New Hampshire’s total allocation), an LEA shall publish an LEA ARP ESSER Plan, which is often called a “school district use of funds plan.”

For further context, please reference ARPA (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1319/text>) or the Interim Final Requirements of ARP ESSER in which the U.S. Department of Education established these requirements (<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-04-22/pdf/2021-08359.pdf>).

I. General Information

1. LEA Name: Christopher Smith

2. Date of Publication: 8/23/2021
3. Contact name and title: Christopher Smith: Dean of School
4. Email and Telephone: chrissmith@birchesacademy.org 603-458-6399

II. Transparency and Accessibility

1. This plan for the LEA's Use of ARP ESSER funds was published and made publicly available online at the following specific web address:
 - a. Description: <https://www.birchesacademy.org/>
2. The plan is in an understandable and uniform format **YES**
 - a. Description: We used the template provided by the state.
3. The plan, to the extent practicable, is written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, orally translated. **YES**

- a. Description: We are in communication with our families and when they require additional clarification or translation we provide them with such.
- 4. The plan, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, is provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent **YES**
 - a. Description: Depending upon the necessary accommodation we would either provide the information, or engage a service to do so.

III. Stakeholder Engagement

- 1. How the LEA will provide the public the opportunity to provide input in the development of the LEA's plan for the use of ARP ESSER funds and take such input into account:
 - a. Description: We sent several surveys to our families. We asked if they felt safe, we asked them what their concerns were. We asked them about what types of support they required including food, services, socioemotional concerns and access to technology. Parents and other stakeholder groups were also invited to participate in our reopening committee which identified several areas that needed to be addressed.
- 2. How the LEA engaged in meaningful consultation with specific stakeholders, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Description: We sent several surveys to our families, we held informal talks with families and administration, we had zoom Q& A sessions, we invited students to share their input in small group discussions, and we took into account the information generated by stakeholders in our reopening committee. As a small Public Charter School we do not currently work with any civil rights organizations, disability rights groups or tribes. We do not work with any community-based programs to offer before or after school programs, but rather we offer our own. We do not work with early childhood education providers.

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

- 1. The extent to which and how LEA 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:(Note federal regulation on this plan requires such reporting, but does not require adoption of CDC safety recommendations. The NH DOE recognizes schools will implement localized safety measures based on the guidance provided by the CDC, NH Public Health, and local public health officials.)
 - a. Description: We have added a nurse to our staff and will be using funding to acquire additional PPE, wipes, hand sanitizer, air purifiers, HVAC adjustments, and social distancing measures. We are acquiring computers and IPADS to facilitate a one-to-one program. Additional furniture may be needed to aid in social distancing.

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

1. How the LEA will identify individual student learning loss, including among students most likely to have experienced the impact of lost instructional time on student learning, such as:
 - a. Students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures:
 - As a small Public Charter School, most of our students participated in remote instruction when it was offered. We were able to offer technology to families who did not have access to it on their own and help parents by supplying them with community numbers to help them gain access to internet services when applicable. We will be hosting a homework club and we are looking to add a peer tutoring club as well.
 - We will be administering the NH SAS as well as other assessments in order to generate data points which we can compare to historical data to determine the degree of data loss. This information will also allow us to identify areas of greatest learning loss so that we can target our interventions.
 - b. Students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and
 - We maintain ongoing communication with families who struggled with attendance last year. We are creating individual plans to address their needs.
 - c. Students most at-risk of dropping out of school.
 - N/A as we are a stand alone K-8 Public Charter school.
2. How the LEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 20 percent of the LEA's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) to address the academic impact of lost instructional time for such students through the implementation of evidence-based interventions as defined by ESSA (<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/essa>), such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after-school programs, or extended school year:

Description during SY21-22: We will be offering after-school programming. We may be hiring an additional interventionist or additional staff who will be assigned to a student group based on a needs assessment. We will be instituting a summer reading enrichment program.

Description during SY22-23: We will be offering after-school programming. We may be hiring an additional interventionist or additional staff who will be assigned to a student group based on a needs assessment. We will be instituting a summer reading enrichment program.

Description during SY23-24: We will be offering after-school programming. We may be hiring an additional interventionist or additional staff

who will be assigned to a student group based on a needs assessment. We will be instituting a summer reading enrichment program.

3. How the LEA will use the funds it reserves to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through:
 - a. Individualized tutoring, including providing stipends to teachers for intensive, supplemental tutoring (please check one): YES

Description: We will be instituting grade-band homework clubs after school. Teachers will identify students who are at risk as a result of learning loss and then work together to determine how best to address the student's loss. If the student requires on-to-one tutoring, we will offer it either before or after school.

- b. Teacher-directed professional development, in which teachers choose the professional development opportunities best suited to their career pathway and current learner needs (please check one): YES

Description: We employ a train-the-trainer model when possible and the teachers choose the area that they wish to become expert in. Teachers are encouraged to become experts in their field of interest so as to add their expertise to the pool of available help at the school. Additionally, we are working to create a school wiki that will allow teachers to access the available resources.

How the LEA will produce evidence of the effectiveness of evidence-based learning loss interventions employed:

Description: We will be adding additional instances of NH SAS testing so that we can compare student achievement at more intervals. This will allow us to track the efficacy of the various programs as well as to institute additional interventions where appropriate. In addition we will be adding supplemental assessment programs to allow us to track student progress.

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

1. After accounting for the funds reserved under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act, how the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act (See Appendix A.):

Description during SY21-22: We will be purchasing technology, allowable staff development costs, increased facility costs related to a covid-safe facility i.e.

HEPA air filters and PPE, hiring a school nurse, improvements in RTI program and additional staffing related to student learning loss.

Description during SY22-23: We will be purchasing technology, allowable staff development costs, increased facility costs related to a covid-safe facility i.e. HEPA air filters and PPE, hiring a school nurse, improvements in RTI program and additional staffing related to student learning loss.

Description during SY23-24: We will be purchasing technology, allowable staff development costs, increased facility costs related to a covid-safe facility i.e. HEPA air filters and PPE, hiring a school nurse, improvements in RTI program and additional staffing related to student learning loss.

- 2 The LEA's use of funds to address the top priority needs identified in the New Hampshire Department of Education's robust, statewide consultation with stakeholders:

- a. Providing individualized instruction:

During SY21-22 (check one):	Yes
During SY22-23 (check one):	Yes
During SY23-24 (check one):	Yes:

Description of SYs: We will be hiring additional staff to help bolster our RTI program which addresses individual learning struggles. We are also shifting our writing program in the elementary grades to one that puts emphasis on the individual learner rather than employing a catch-all philosophy.

Addressing educator fatigue, including providing performance-based bonuses to teachers:

During SY21-22 (check one):	Yes
During SY22-23 (check one):	Yes
During SY23-24 (check one):	Yes

Description of all SYs: We are trying to hire additional staff to help with planning time and the implementation of programs. We are offering enrichment and mental health activities to help mitigate educator fatigue.

c Improving family engagement:

During SY21-22 (check one):	Yes
During SY22-23 (check one):	Yes
During SY23-24 (check one):	Yes

Description of all SYs: We are hosting a back to school barbecue and will add additional sessions of "Tea with Mr. Smith" and other community talks.

3. The LEA's use of funds to address the following additional needs identified in the New Hampshire Department of Education's robust, statewide consultation with stakeholders:

a What amount and percentage of the LEA's total allocation will be administered under school leader discretion: Percentage: 100%

Allocation methodology including the extent to which it reflected student need for, at minimum, Special Education, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, and English Language Learners:

As a small Public Charter School, school leaders are responsible for 100% of the allocation. Special Education falls under the purview of the sending district, but we work closely with them to provide resources and space where necessary. Other identified subgroups, as identified, are addressed on a needs basis, but our small size allows us to address learning loss on an individual basis regardless of classification.

b What amount and percentage of the LEA's total allocation will be used to support Career and Technical Education: Amount:

Percentage: not applicable

Description, including funds used to support learner obtainment of industry-recognized credentials":

not applicable

c The extent to which funds will be used to provide access to course access opportunities, including advanced, elective, and remedial courses provided outside of the residential public school that a learner could not otherwise access:

During SYs 21-24 (check one): Somewhat

Description of all SYs: It may be necessary to engage online opportunities for some of our more advanced students as we may not

offer classes sufficient to their advanced performance. Remedial students will continue to be serviced by our enhanced RTI model which will be bolstered by the addition of staff and materials acquired to address learning loss.

VII. Addressing the Unique Needs of All Learners

1. How the LEA 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 with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students.

Description: As a small Public Charter School, our close-knit community allows us to meet in grade-level teams composed of individuals who all have working knowledge of each of our students. We will be adding additional assessment systems as well as utilizing more of the functionality of the state assessment system. We will be utilizing our “house” system to deliver social emotional programming to our community in a multi-age environment. At monthly staff meetings we will be assessing the efficacy of the programming with staff to see if any adjustments in programming need to be made.

VIII. Authorization

LEA Superintendent’s Signature:

Date:

Chris Smith

8/23/21
