

## LEA ARP ESSER Plan



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### **Section 1: Introduction**

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Fund is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' **academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs**. New Kent County Public Schools (NKCPs) has been awarded \$1,844,821.39 in ESSER III funds. This plan describes how the awarded funds will be used. Questions about this plan should be directed to Jonathan Hochman at 804-966-9650 or [jhochman@nkcp.k12.va.us](mailto:jhochman@nkcp.k12.va.us).

NKCPs has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and division staff during and following the return to full in-person instruction. NKCPs has implemented practices on each of the following safety recommendations established by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):

- Mask Wearing
- Modifying Facilities to Allow for Physical Distancing
- Frequent Hand Washing and Use of Hand Sanitizer
- Frequent Cleaning of Surfaces
- Health Screening
- Exposure and Plans for how to Communicate an Outbreak of Positive Cases Detected at the School
- Coordination with State and Local Health Officials
- Accommodations for Children with Disabilities with Respect to Health and Safety Policies

## **Section 2: Prevention and Mitigation Strategies**

ARP Act ESSER III funds may be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) guidance](#) on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning. NKCPS will use approximately \$860,569.58 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds to implement prevention and mitigation strategies as described below.

NKCPS will continue to partner with the local health department to ensure that the appropriate level of mitigation strategies are being implemented at all school facilities. Personal protective equipment and classroom cleaning materials will continue to be supplied by the division.

To support social distancing strategies, additional furniture will be purchased to create extended learning spaces that will provide additional focused learning opportunities and adequate social distancing. Additional athletic and playground equipment will also be purchased to support increased social distancing during outdoor instruction and athletic activities.

The ongoing impact of the pandemic has accelerated the desire to improve the air quality in NKCPS facilities. Replacing HVAC units throughout the school division to improve air quality and ventilation will protect the health and well-being of students and staff.

Additional capital improvement projects will be recommended to enhance indoor and outdoor social distancing between students and staff. These recommendations may include but are not limited to modifications to front office spaces, opportunities for outdoor instruction and further building modifications. It is the intent of NKCPS that all building improvements will support the current needs due to the pandemic and the continued growth of our community.

To mitigate the number of staff necessary for teacher coverage, NKCPS will hire six year round, school based substitute teachers. Each elementary school will be assigned two substitutes and the middle and high schools will each be assigned one substitute. Having these staff members already placed within the school buildings will decrease the number of outside staff coming in and out of the school facilities, decreasing potential exposures.

## **Section 3: Addressing Unfinished Learning**

Section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act requires each LEA to use twenty percent of its formula funds to address the academic impact of lost instructional time (learning loss) through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs. NKCPS will use approximately \$719,251.81 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds to address unfinished learning as described below.

Two full-time, 11 month instructional coaches were secured with ESSER II funding. These positions were created to support the division specifically at the elementary school level to support learning loss to students during the pandemic. ESSER III funding will continue to support these positions for the 2023-2024 school year.

It is a goal of NKCPS to integrate innovative learning practices that focus on real world instructional experiences. The creation of the Summer of MORE (Meaningful Opportunities of Real World Engagement) program, supported by ESSER I funding, was a great success and provided social and emotional support for students as well as support the correction of learning loss due to the pandemic. We will be bringing these learning experiences into our schools during the regular school year. Teachers will have the opportunity to request funding for supplies that support these learning experiences that address social, emotional and instructional support opportunities. There will be initial planning to create a campaign that offers these funding opportunities to the staff in the upcoming 2021-2022 school year.

#### **Section 4: Other Uses of Funds**

Section 2001(e) of the ARP Act permits school divisions to use the ARP Act ESSER III funding not reserved to address unfinished learning to address the impacts of COVID-19 in a variety of ways. NKCPS will use approximately \$265,000 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds in accordance with Section 2001(e) of the ARP Act as described below.

NKCPS will fund a support position to assist in the oversight of the ESSER planning and implementation. It is the goal of NKCPS that all ESSER fund initiatives will be impactful to the division beyond the pandemic. Careful planning and funding of these initiatives will be imperative to meet spending deadlines all while ensuring that funds are spent in an appropriate manner. NKCPS will need to review spending plans throughout the ESSER funds periods of performance and make adjustments as necessary. Consideration will need to be made as the pandemic evolves and changes in state and federal requirements are updated.

Teacher recruitment and retention is challenging and NKCPS will need to continue to support our teachers and staff during this difficult time to be sure they feel supported and empowered. NKCPS will offer initiatives and incentives for further education and endorsements, through programs offered in connection with NKCPS, local colleges and universities, and the Virginia Department of Education. These programs will provide for Dual Enrollment and additional teaching endorsements to help make our staff more rounded and able to support student needs as they continue to change throughout their time with NKCPS. Career Switcher programs such as an Emerging Teachers Program or an Apprentice Program will be explored to offer some of these opportunities to staff during the ESSER performance period and beyond. Funding of these programs would begin utilizing ESSER funding and ultimately be included in the NKCPS Operating Budget.

#### **Section 5: Addressing Students' Academic, Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs**

Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an integral part of education and human development. NKCPS will continue our mission to support the SEL needs of our students and staff. Our SEL team (counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers) will provide tiers of social-emotional support for students. Our school team will take four primary approaches to implementing SEL supports: (1) direct instruction on social and emotional skills, (2) integration of SEL with academic content, (3) development of a positive learning environment, and (4) general teaching practices that support student development and application of social and emotional skills. In addition, students who need extra support will receive small group and individual support from our SEL team.

## **Section 6: Consultation with Stakeholders and Opportunity for Public Comment**

In developing the ARP ESSER Plan, NKCPS conducted consultation in the following ways:

- Presented to New Kent County and NKCPS leaders in April 2021. This presentation included the discussion of all ESSER funding, how NKCPS planned to utilize this funding and provided the opportunity for recommendations on funding plans, including ESSER III.
- District administrators requested input on spending recommendations from the following groups/committees: Superintendent's Parent Advisory Committee, Gifted Advisory Committee, Indian Education Advisory Committee, Superintendent's Teacher Advisory Committee and all staff during the Superintendent's Monday Message.
- Provided all stakeholders the opportunity to provide input by emailing suggestions to [NKCPSfeedback@nkcps.k12.va.us](mailto:NKCPSfeedback@nkcps.k12.va.us).

## **Section 7: Making the Plan Available to the Public**

NKCPS has taken the following steps to make this plan available to the public:

- The plan is posted at <http://newkentschools.org>;
- The plan is available in Spanish and can be translated to other languages upon request. Contact Ross Miller, Executive Director of Innovation & Development, at [rmiller@nkcps.k12.va.us](mailto:rmiller@nkcps.k12.va.us) or 804-966-9650;
- The plan may be orally translated for parents. Contact Ross Miller, Executive Director of Innovation & Development, at [rmiller@nkcps.k12.va.us](mailto:rmiller@nkcps.k12.va.us) or 804-966-9650 to request translation; and
- Upon request, a parent who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA may be provided with the plan in an alternative format accessible by contacting Ross Miller, Executive Director of Innovation & Development, at [rmiller@nkcps.k12.va.us](mailto:rmiller@nkcps.k12.va.us) or 804-966-9650