LEA ARP ESSER Plan

**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. Richmond City Public Schools has been awarded $122,811,024.85 in ESSER III funds. This plan describes how the awarded funds will be used. Questions about this plan should be directed to Sabrina Beamon, Grant Manager – sbeamon@rvaschools.net.

**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. Richmond City Public Schools will use approximately $15,000,000 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds over three years to implement prevention and mitigation strategies as described below.

* Hiring of nurses, contact tracing specialists, and other support personnel.
* HVAC upgrades, maintenance and installation.
* Purchase of educational software programs, instructional materials, and sanitation equipment.
* Expansion of funding for substitute teachers.

**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. Richmond City Public Schools will use approximately $68,000,000 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds over three years to address unfinished learning via its Extended Day and Literacy Programs as described below.

* $48 million will be spent to help fund remediation and enrichment opportunities via the Extended Day program. Funds will cover the stipends of reading interventionists, literacy teachers, instructional assistants, operations associates, data specialists, bilingual associates for family literacy support, communications specialists, a driver for the Lit Limo, and a “Literacy Czar.” Operation support for the Extended Day program also includes funding for community partners to provide enrichment activities, meals, and transportation.
* $10 million will be used to train staff in effective teaching skills and to build capability to address diverse and exceptional student needs. Funds will assist 40 teachers to earn their Reading Specialist endorsement, 130 teachers to become Literacy Equity Leads, 150 teachers to earn LTRS certification, and 300 teachers to earn a CORE Literacy “badge.” Funds will also provide stipends to plan, execute, and attend a Literacy Institute, a data platform to facilitate teacher professional development, and instructional coaching partnerships.
* $7 million will be spent to fund resources that will provide instructional and learning opportunities for students. These resources include early literacy instruction technology for preschool students, early reader screening tools, classroom libraries, K-5 instructional software, instructional materials for “reading labs” and creative literacy units, and funds for school reading rewards.

**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. Richmond City Public Schools will use approximately $20,000,000 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds in accordance with Section 2001(e) of the ARP Act. Other Uses of ARP funding include:

* Grant Manager and Office Associate
* Family Liaisons
* Communication Associate for Design Literacy/Academics
* Communication Specialist AV/Digital/Video Production
* Home Visiting Coordinator
* Nursing services
* Printing
* Cell phones
* Professional development for teachers
* Tuition reimbursement
* Teacher certifications
* Instructional Supplies

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

Richmond City Public Schools will ensure the interventions implemented 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. Richmond City Public Schools will hire effective staff to provide services to those students most impacted by COVID-19. Through the use of researched based instructional tools, students will have access to instruction and services that will provide students with immediate support and practice opportunities.

Support for students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs will be addressed by:

* Student Support Specialists
* Psychologists
* Counselors
* Social Workers
* Mindfulness Trainers
* Bilingual Associate for Literacy Outreach
* Dropout Recovery Specialists
* Early Childhood Associate Director
* Social Emotional Learning Specialists
* Social Emotional Learning Partnerships
* Supplies for Home Visiting
* Wrap around services for Exceptional Education
* Supports for Exceptional Education
* Software for Preschool
* Stipends for ConGanas and ESL interpreters
* English Learner Curriculum implementation Support
* Instructional Supplies: English Learner Labs

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

In developing the ARP ESSER Plan, Richmond City Public Schools conducted consultation in the by providing the public the opportunity to provide input. The input received was considered as the plan was developed.

* With stakeholders, including students, families, school and district administrators (including special education administrators), teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions, RPS provided opportunities for the community to have input into the ARP spending plan. The public was given the opportunity to address the ARP planning process and expectations at the superintendent’s monthly Advisory Board Meetings, faith-based group round table discussions, and scheduled bi-monthly School Board meetings. In particular, public input was sought after the superintendent’s April 2 School Board presentation of RPS’ Opening with Love and Literacy Plans. The current drafts of these plans respond to the needs assessment conduct by the Division as well as the concerns raised by public comments. Advisory Council meetings are on-going and ARP planning and funding will continue to be monitored and evaluated with public input.

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

Richmond City Public Schools has taken the following steps to make this plan available to the public:

* The plan is posted at [https://www.rvaschools.net/operating-office/grants-management/arp-esser];
* The plan is available in English and in Spanish.
* The plan may be orally translated for parents. Contact Dr. Jannette Duhart- jduhart@rvaschools.net 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 Ms. Renesha Parks- rparks1@rvaschools.net