

Introduction

The American Rescue Plan (ARP), Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER III) was signed into law in March of 2022 by President Joe Biden which included \$122 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds for school districts across the country, the single largest investment in federal elementary and secondary education in the nation's history. Proviso Township High Schools District 209 will be a recipient of ESSER III funding.

Proviso Township High School District 209 (PTHS District 209) has launched a comprehensive stakeholder engagement process to help determine how to use the additional federal dollars to address COVID-19 recovery, including unfinished learning and COVID-19 prevention and mitigation practices. The district received a total allocation of \$13,274,527, that must be expended by September 30, 2024. Out of the total allocation of \$13,274,527, at least \$3,039,721 must be allocated toward remediating and accelerating students' learning based on the potential learning loss caused by the extended COVID-19 pandemic.

Reducing Health Hazards with Facility Improvements

ARP ESSER III guidelines allow school districts to identify and address significant health hazards that may exist in their schools. Capital Improvements in PTHS District 209 will take place to improve the learning environment and make our schools safer for students and staff. This includes increasing air quality, circulation, humidity, and temperature controls in classrooms and other high-touch areas. Additionally, improvement of air movement and temperature controls provides better ventilation, occupant comfort, efficiency, and enhanced air quality and filtration.

Addressing Student Learning Loss – Summer Enrichment & After School Programs

A significant amount of the ARP ESSER III allocation will be earmarked to address learning loss and accelerating students through those losses. The focus of the district's Summer Flight Enrichment and After School Programs is for the following:

- A smooth return of students to school with teachers and peers.
- An in-person learning environment so that students can engage in direct, personalized learning experiences.
- A focus on students' academic skill gaps in reading and mathematics.

Research shows that when students are in classrooms, their teachers can better connect with each individual student and provide them with an instructional program that targets essential skills in mathematics and reading. Prior to the opening of Summer Flight and after school programs, the staff will determine the priority skills and standards to be addressed. In-person classes will be small and focused on small group instruction and individual student academic needs.

Expanded Mental-Health and Social Emotional Supports

As PTHS District 209 returns to in-person learning, our primary goal is to focus not only on the learning gaps that students have experienced during the pandemic, but also to re-establish school as a space that is both physically, socially, and emotionally safe. We recognize that living through a global pandemic has taken an emotional toll on our students and our staff. Schools play a vital role in helping students process their experiences and deal with issues that the pandemic may have caused or brought to the forefront. As we return to full-time in-person instruction, we will:

- Implement evidence-based Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programs.
- Provide social/emotional/behavioral support to students by way of counselors and social workers.
- Provide professional development for teachers in the area of Social Emotional Learning.

ESSER III Proposed Activities

Required State Set Aside	
ACTIVITY	PROPOSED BUDGET
State Reservation - Learning Loss	\$343,585
State Reservation - Summer Enrichment	\$68,717
State Reservation -After School Programs	\$68,717
Total	\$481,019

Required 20% Learning Loss Federal Set Aside	
ACTIVITY	PROPOSED BUDGET
Academic and Social-Emotional Supports	\$1,857,602
Technology Upgrade	\$701,100
Total	\$2,558,702

Remaining Discretionary 80%	
ACTIVITY	TENTATIVE BUDGET
Capital Improvements	\$10,234,806
Total	\$10,234,806

Allowable Use of Funds

1. Providing any activity authorized by the ESEA; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA); Adult Education and Family Literacy Act; Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins V); and subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
2. Coordinating preparedness and response efforts of LEAs with state, local, tribal, and territorial public health departments and other relevant agencies to improve coordinated responses among such entities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.
3. Providing principals and other school leaders with the resources necessary to address the needs of their individual schools.
4. Conducting activities to address the unique needs of low-income children or students; students with disabilities; English Learners; racial and ethnic minorities; students experiencing homelessness; and children and youth in foster care. This includes how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.
5. Developing and implementing procedures and systems to improve the preparedness and response efforts of LEAs
6. Training and professional development for staff of an LEA pertaining to sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.
7. Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of an LEA, including buildings operated by such LEA
8. Planning for, coordinating, and implementing activities during long-term closures, including providing meals to eligible students, providing technology for online learning to all students, providing guidance for carrying out requirements under IDEA, and ensuring other education services can continue to be provided consistent with all federal, state, and local requirements.
9. Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity) for students who are served by an LEA that aids in regular and substantive educational interaction between students, including low-income students and students with disabilities, and their classroom instructors. Such items may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.
10. Providing mental health services and supports.
11. Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and enrichment and supplemental after-school programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, students with disabilities, English Learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care.
12. Addressing the academic impact of lost instructional time among an LEA's students, including low-income students, students with disabilities, English Learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care. Such activities include:

- Administering and using high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable to accurately assess students' academic progress and assist educators in meeting students' academic needs, including through differentiating instruction.
 - Implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students.
 - Providing information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support students, including in a distance learning environment.
 - Tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education.
13. Repairing and improving school facilities to enable their operation to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs.
 14. Inspecting, testing, maintaining, repairing, replacing, and upgrading facilities by completing projects, including mechanical and nonmechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems; filtering, purification, and other air cleaning; fans and control systems; and window and door repair and replacement, to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities.
 15. Developing strategies and implementing public health protocols, including, to the greatest extent practicable, policies in line with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff.
 16. Conducting other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation of and continuity of services in the LEA and to continue to employ existing staff of the LEA.