

AUGUST 2021

# Hot Springs School District

*American Rescue Plan Spending Plan*



## 1- Creating a Safe and Healthy Learning Environment

### Practice #1

#### • 2 Student Support Intervention

- In an effort to address the social and emotional capacity of students at the secondary level, two Student Support Interventionists will work with school campuses under the supervision of the building Principal and district administrators, to enforce and implement the district rules and policies of the student code of conduct to effect positive student behavior in the school. This process involves identifying students with attendance issues, social and emotional problems, disciplinary problems, and any other issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Student Support Interventionist will address those issues with parents to instill a climate in the school that is conducive to student learning emphasizing mutual respect and safety.
- Job Description

### Description

- Covid/Necessary/Reasonable/Allowable: The Student Support personnel positions were developed to assist building administrators in providing all students access to a safe and inclusive environment during COVID-19 and its variants. They support the continued work of the secondary campuses, HSJA & HSWCHS, by continuing the work of their High-Reliability School Level 1 status of a safe, supportive, and collaborative school environment.
  - The position is necessary to recover absent students and re-engage them in school. As a member of the school's Response to Intervention team, the Student Support Interventionist will support students, families, and teachers around social/emotional and behavioral needs, in line with the school philosophy and culture of Capturing Kids' Hearts through the building of relationships and through the use of restorative practices. The position was necessary to support classroom and state assessment data that shows a drop in grade level tested skills for students of color and students with disabilities and English Language Learners. This is an allowable expense under the program code 170, 180, and 182 that supports the addition of positions that address the needs of specific demographics of students, learning loss, and social-emotional needs as well as physical needs (homeless).

### Projected Amount

- ~\$126,000 per year (this includes salary + benefits) - total of \$504,000 for 4 year term

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# 1- Creating a Safe and Healthy Learning Environment (continued)

## Practice #2

### • 3 Mental Health Professionals

- School-based mental health is an incredible need. The social-emotional well-being of students and staff is crucial to academic success. Employing mental health professionals eliminates the billing process and red tape that stops so many families in need of receiving these services.

## Description

- The Arkansas Youth Risk Behavior Assessment recognized that 36% of Arkansas students felt sad and in need of mental health services and the number has probably increased due to COVID-19 and the pivot to virtual at-home learning. The HSSD will employ onsite therapists to meet the social and emotional needs of students in the district needing mental health services and support. The employment of onsite therapists will ensure any student in the district in need of mental health services receives it by eliminating the billing process and red tape that may be a hindrance to some families. The addition of district mental health counselors is a reasonable service as the former partnerships with outside therapeutic companies have expressed concerns over the difficulty of employing therapists. The program code of 183 and the need for mental health services makes this an allowable expense.

## Projected Amount

- 1 Director at \$98,979.18, 2 Therapists at \$73,227.56 (each)
- Total for 4 years plus ~27% benefits = \$1,247,000

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## Practice #3

### • Personal Protective Equipment, Curriculum Materials & Supplies, Additional Resources

- In response to the needs of our buildings, staff, and students, we will provide additional resources to protect all and have the necessary tools for student academic success in mitigating the spread of the Delta variant of COVID.

## Description

- As COVID-19 and Delta variant cases in Garland County continue to increase, protective equipment for staff and students in each school is necessary for protection and prevention. The protective equipment expense was allowable for ESSER I, ESSER II, and now can be purchased with ARP ESSER funds supported with the program code 189. All PPE expenses will be individually documented and available upon request as required by state and federal mandates. In addition, the purchase of curriculum materials and additional resources provides administrators and other school leaders the necessary supplies needed to address the needs of students in their individual schools. The codes 181 and 182 support the purchase of curriculum and additional resources to address students and special populations.

## Projected Amount

- \$2,311,821.40



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# 2- Address Lost Instructional Time or Loss of Learning

ARP ESSER total allocation \$21,470,653.40 , Minimum 20% set-aside\$4,200,000

## Practice #1

- **Director of ESSER Student Support & Continuous Learning**
  - The Director will work under the direction of the Superintendent to support students and ensure learning loss is addressed from the COVID-19 pandemic for all students K-12. The position entails coordination with the Assistant Superintendent(s) Curriculum and Instruction and Federal Programs and Superintendent to review, document, and provide justification for all ESSER fund spending allocations, instructional support, and social-emotional support to meet the needs of all students.

- Job Description

## Description

- This position provides an added measure of security and assistance to the HSSD Superintendents in addressing learning loss from COVID-19 and ensuring all students Pre-K-12 are provided with strong evidence-based instructional support, in addition to, social-emotional support. Working with the school-based mental health staff to assist students in need of the service is an added support. The position also works to ensure all funds spent under ESSER I, ESSER II, and ARP ESSER are documented providing thorough written justification of how purchases prevent, prepare for, or respond to COVID-19, why it is a necessary and reasonable expense supported with data and/or needs assessments, and documents how the purchase meets qualifications found under the ESSER funding codes and program descriptions. Program codes 170, 182, and 183 support the position to assist the district in providing the needed wraparound services students may need.

## Projected Amount

- \$99,218.27 plus ~27% benefits per year - total of ~\$504,000 for 4 years
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## Practice #2

- **6 Certified Learning Loss Intervention/Prevention Teachers**
  - In an effort to plan and implement direct student support and continuous learning opportunities that help prepare students for grade-level learning, HSSD has designated 6 positions, one for each campus. This position will allow school teams to focus on learning loss and prevention for mathematics and literacy instruction K-12. This teacher will use evidence/researched-based strategies to strengthen skills students are not proficient with due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. School leaders will present data quarterly to the superintendent and assistant superintendent in data meetings.

- Job Description

## Description

- The positions were added to address learning loss in literacy and math because of the lost instructional time due to COVID-19, unengaged virtual students, and school closures. The interventionist will work to accelerate grade-level learning by addressing gaps in skills of grade-level content using evidence-based accelerated learning strategies. The interventionist will meet weekly with the district Director of ESSER Student Support and Continuous Learning (who reports directly to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction) to disaggregate initial screening data and develop small group and personalized learning plans for each student served. State assessment data supports the need for Learning Loss Interventionists in each school to support classroom teachers by providing grade-level prerequisite skills of unfinished learning or skills not mastered by students.
- For in-school acceleration of learning to address lost instructional time, interventionists will focus on strong instructional strategies as they coordinate with teachers during team meeting times (literacy and math) to provide the needed support for unfinished learnings within the context of grade-level work and pre-requisite skills. This is a reasonable expense that provides additional support to classroom teachers and students. The acceleration of learning takes place with strong individual instruction or strong small groups instruction focused on grade-level prerequisite skills. The decision was made to provide face-to-face small group instruction by qualified classroom teachers. High-quality tutors are an approved strategy to intervene in a learning loss. Program code 170 supports the expense and the predicted effect size according to Hattie's research is .60-.88; 1.29.

## Projected Amount

- \$386,665 per year - total of \$1,546,660 for 4 years

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# 2- Address Lost Instructional Time or Loss of Learning (continued)

## Practice #3

- **Before School, After School, Enrichment and Summer School opportunities for students**
  - The guidance requires a set aside of 20% for learning loss/recovery. These funds will respond to students' needs in the areas of social, emotional, and mental health. Our ARP Spending Plan will be uploaded to the district website with an option for public comment. Public comment will be reviewed monthly and this plan will be updated every 6 months as mandated or more frequently, if needed.

## Description

- Hot Springs School District Pre-K(4)-12 will address the learning loss of grade level essential skills students may have experienced due to the loss of instructional time during COVID-19. In an effort to plan and implement direct student support and continuous learning opportunities, after school and summer tutors made up of district personnel and community organizations will be trained in evidence based best practices that support student accelerated growth. In addition to addressing learning loss in Pre-K(4)-12 the after school and summer programs will also provide students opportunities to participate in enrichment activities offered on each campus and in the community. Weekly meetings will be scheduled with the district Director of ESSER Student Support and Continuous Learning with guidance and feedback from the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction and the school and community tutors to review student data and evaluate the effectiveness of the programs offered and make changes as needed. All district schools will offer after school tutoring and enrichment programs. State assessments and district discipline data support the need for before school, after school, and summer tutoring and enrichment to address gaps in essential standards and to address social and life skills. The program codes 170 and 184 meet the requirements for extended learning to address learning loss and supplemental activities.

## Projected Amount

- \$4,200,000
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## 2A: Process for Monitoring Implementation

Hot Springs School District will provide services and support to address learning loss, social and emotional health, and enrichment activities and opportunities to stimulate growth and critical thinking. Additional staff was added to ensure the needs of students are met educationally and mentally. District school-based mental health counselors will be used to meet all students in the district's emotional needs. Student Support Interventionists at the secondary level will be used to reengage absent students, mentor students in need, and intervene on disciplinary concerns to ensure all students maximize time in classrooms. Each school has received a Learning Loss Interventionist that will utilize initial screening data and essential standards to address learning gaps on grade level skills. The Learning Loss Interventionist will receive support and discuss data with classroom teachers during team meetings that include the English Language Learner staff on each campus and the special education designees. The additional staff is an added means of intervention to address all students including those that are disproportionately impacted by COVID. All additional staff will have access to the SmartData Dashboard to look at real-time data.

## 2B: Process for Evaluation Implementation

The Assistant Superintendent and the Director of ESSER Student Support and Continuous will meet monthly to review data of the weekly Learning Loss Interventionist meetings. The review of data, prerequisite skills needed, common formative assessment data, and instructional strategies utilized will be reviewed for each campus. Each team will use the data collected to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions provided and make evidence-based adjustments, as needed. The Student Support Interventionists (secondary 7-12) will attend the RtI meetings with updated data and will have input on a developed action plan for each student identified. The Student Support Interventionists will create a monthly report for the administration that will be shared with the Superintendents during the monthly campus visits.

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# 3- Support Educator and Staff Stability and Well-Being

## Practice #1

- **Additional Compensation - HSSD Recruitment and Retention Plan**

- Due to the pandemic, staffing has been a major issue. With seven school districts in Garland County, we have lost many staff members and the applicant pool has been smaller this year than in the past. It is critical to have highly qualified professionals in our schools working with our students. This plan will provide additional compensation to recruit and retain the best of the best.
- HSSD Plan

## Description

- Teacher attendance and retention has been an area of concern due to COVID-19 teacher quarantines and absences. A shortage of qualified substitutes to fill the positions during the pandemic was also a hindrance to continued student learning. The district is also losing many teachers to surrounding districts with varied salary scales. The recruitment plan is needed to provide compensation for district employees, certified and classified, that is competitive with surrounding districts in an effort to retain quality staff members. This is also a necessary and reasonable expense because statistics support the negative effect on student achievement related to high staff turnover, specifically in English and math. Turnover disrupts school stability, staff collaboration, and contributes to a loss of institutional knowledge. The program codes 160 and 170 support the use of ARP funds to include a plan for teacher retention.

## Projected Amount

- Approximately \$2,700,000 - total of \$10,800,000 if provided annually based on evaluation for 4 years

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## Practice #2

- **Student and staff vaccination incentives**

- To encourage minimizing the spread of COVID-19, incentivizing vaccination is our best possibility. Secretary Cardona encouraged creativity.

## Description

- In an effort to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 and its variants, and increase the number of vaccinated staff and appropriately aged students, the HSSD will offer a vaccine incentive for staff and students. This is a necessary expense as HSSD staff missed a total of 706 days due to Covid. Staff members out of the classroom has a negative effect on student learning, especially in literacy and math. The expenditure is a reasonable expense set to prevent disruptions to the school year by a pivot to virtual learning for a school or the district. The CDC states vaccinations can provide protection from the variants and the possible spread to others. The program codes 160 related to additional pay and 187 planning improved responses to COVID-19 and its variants are approved codes for the expense.

## Projected Amount

- Approximately \$93,000 for staff and \$362,000 for students - total of \$455,000
- \$200/staff member
- \$100 Amazon Gift Card/student