

Section: Narratives - Assessing Impacts and Needs

LEA ARP ESSER APPLICATION

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) recognizes the extraordinary efforts made by Local Education Agencies (LEAs), schools, and educators to support students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The application below requests information from LEAs about: (1) Needs and impacts resulting from the pandemic, (2) Stakeholder engagement in the development of local plans to respond to these needs and impacts, (3) Specific elements in the LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds; and (4) Plans for monitoring and measuring progress. As submitted and accepted by PDE in final form, this application shall become part of the Grant Agreement for ARP ESSER funds as Appendix B. As used in this application, "the LEA" refers to the Grantee defined in the Grant Agreement.

ARP ESSER includes a significant focus on vulnerable student populations. Given these requirements, as well as PDE's own equity commitments, the LEA application includes specific fields requesting information on programs to serve student groups that have experienced disproportionate impacts from the pandemic. Student groups are inclusive of the following:

- Students from low-income families;
- Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity);
- Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender);
- English learners;
- Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]);
- Students experiencing homelessness;
- Children and youth in foster care;
- Migrant students; and
- Other groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic that have been identified by the LEA (e.g., youth involved in the criminal justice system, students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures, and LGBTQ+ students).

Section I: Assessing Impacts and Needs

In this first section, LEAs are asked to describe the impact of the pandemic on their students, examine disproportionate impacts on specific student groups, and highlight the LEA's promising practices in supporting student needs since March 2020.

Indicators of Impact

1. Understanding the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Describe how the LEA has identified or will identify the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning and well-being. Specifically, what methods (i.e., collecting and analyzing data and information from focus groups, surveys, and local assessment results) were used or will be used to identify and measure impacts in four key areas: (1) Academic impact of lost instructional time, (2) Chronic absenteeism, (3) Student engagement, and (4) Social-

emotional well-being?

	Methods Used to Understand Each Type of Impact
Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time	Assessing the academic impact of lost instructional time has been an ongoing process. Through the analysis of multiple sources, the district has made attempts to gather both quantitative and qualitative measures of loss. Specific methods for academic loss have included the development of comparison tools that reflect academic outcomes of students throughout COVID-19 relative to themselves as learners in prior years, as well as to their predecessors.
Chronic Absenteeism	Chronic Absenteeism is an ongoing area of concern. In an attempt to understand the impact that absenteeism has had on our students, we have added additional staff and programs to support students and families. The district hired an Attendance Officer to gather data, both current and longitudinal, on our attendance rates, by whole population, certain demographic subgroups and age groups. Increased outreach to parents and families has also occurred as a means to understanding the impact of COVID on students.
Student Engagement	Outreach by teachers, administrators, counselors and support staff is one focused method by which the district has sought to assess student engagement. Specific expectations have been established for teachers to dialogue with their students and determine barriers or challenges that are present.
Social-emotional Well-being	The district, and individual schools, have made many attempts to understand and support the impact of COVID-19 on the social-emotional well being of our students. School counselors have developed and distributed surveys to establish needs and priorities from which they are developing focus and support groups. In addition, the district initiated the PA Youth Survey to all students in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12 as a means to assess emotional wellness, the strength of the school culture and the support programs. Outreach to and collaboration with our community agencies, has also provided additional information on needs and struggles of our students as seen through the lens of outside or complementary support
Other Indicators	Increased communication with families through a multi-modal approach is another method the district has used to gather information on the impact of COVID-19. Quarterly parent coffee talks provide a forum for discussion and sharing of information by parents. In addition, monthly student groups are also convened to share the student perspective on the impact and resulting needs.

Documenting Disproportionate Impacts

2. Identify **at least three student** groups in the LEA that faced particularly significant impacts from the pandemic. For each, provide specific strategies that were used or will be used to identify and measure impacts.

Student Group	Provide specific strategies that were used or will be used to identify and measure impacts
Students from low-income families	<p>Our district has experienced a changing demographic over the past decade. The lack of industry and employability has created an increase in rates of unemployment within the area. In addition, the disparity within the district among families has grown. The district has increased its outreach to families when we know jobs have been lost, and for whom needs have increased. We have gathered information regarding food insecurity and provided regular meals to families in need. The schools have outfitted spaces within them that provide school supplies and materials and made their availability known to students.</p>
Students experiencing homelessness	<p>The district has experienced an increase in the number of students whose families are experiencing homelessness. The district liaison has worked with building principals and guidance counselors to identify the signs and signals that potentially indicate homelessness. A district wide professional development session was provided for all staff on the signs as well. In addition, changes have been made to our district registration process to allow for parents to self-identify as homeless so that the supports provided through McKinney Vento can be accessed immediately. Finally, increased communication with area shelters and temporary housing sites, has helped the identification process. All of these measures will enable us to more closely monitor these student and support as needed.</p>
Children and youth in foster care	<p>The district has experienced an increase in the number of students whose families are struggling with a myriad of issues. The foster care liaison has worked with school personnel to create an increased awareness of the foster care process. A district wide professional development session was provided for all staff at the start of the school year. In addition, changes have been made to our district registration process to allow for greater transparency around foster care placements. Finally, increased communication with county agencies and participation in Best Interest</p>

Student Group	Provide specific strategies that were used or will be used to identify and measure impacts
	Determination meetings has helped the district to be better informed about the needs of our students in foster care. All of these measures will enable us to more closely monitor these student and support as needed.
Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA])	Our students with disabilities have presented with some significant challenges throughout COVID-19. The district has used a number of strategies to support these learners including, the distribution of 1:1 technology. The use of personal devices has helped to support the learning of these students with the addition of engaging learning apps and programs. Additional strategies put in place include the establishment of after-school and summer- school programming into which students who are experiencing challenges are placed. Finally, the expansion of our parameters for supports resulting from regression on limited recoupment, had allowed for the inclusion of many more students with disabilities to receive additional supports whether they be academic, social, emotional or behavioral.

Reflecting on Local Strategies

3. Provide the LEA's assessment of the top two or three strategies that have been most effective in supporting the needs of students, in particular specific student groups most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Include at least one strategy addressing **academic needs** and at least one strategy addressing **social-emotional needs**.

	Strategy Description
Strategy #1	Targeted instructional support including after-school tutoring and comprehensive summer programming for students grades K-12

i. Impacts that Strategy #1 best addresses: (select all that apply)

- ☒ Academic impact of lost instructional time
- ☐ Chronic absenteeism
- ☒ Student engagement
- ☒ Social-emotional well-being

☐ **Other impact**

ii. If Other is selected above, please provide the description here:

iii. **Student group(s) that Strategy #1 most effectively supports:** (select all that apply)

- ☒ **Students from low-income families**
- ☒ **Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity)**
- ☐ **Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender)**
- ☐ **English learners**
- ☒ **Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA))**
- ☒ **Students experiencing homelessness**
- ☐ **Children and youth in foster care**
- ☐ **Migrant students**
- ☐ **Other student groups: (provide description below)**

iv. If Other is selected above, please provide the description here.

Reflecting on Local Strategies: Strategy #2

	Strategy Description
Strategy #2	Increased identification and ongoing monitoring of students in special programs who are experiencing new and/or prolonged homelessness, as well as those who have recently been placed in foster care.

i. **Impacts that Strategy #2 best addresses:** (select all that apply)

- ☒ **Academic impact of lost instructional time**
- ☒ **Chronic absenteeism**
- ☒ **Student engagement**
- ☒ **Social-emotional well-being**

☐ Other impact

ii. If Other is selected above, please provide the description here:

iii. Student group(s) that Strategy #2 most effectively supports: (select all that apply)

- ☒ Students from low-income families
- ☐ Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity)
- ☐ Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender)
- ☐ English learners
- ☐ Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA))
- ☒ Students experiencing homelessness
- ☒ Children and youth in foster care
- ☐ Migrant students
- ☐ Other student groups: (provide description below)

iv. If Other is selected above, please provide the description here.

Reflecting on Local Strategies: Strategy #3

	Strategy Description
Strategy #3	

i. Impacts that Strategy #3 best addresses: (select all that apply)

- ☐ Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time
- ☐ Chronic absenteeism
- ☐ Student engagement
- ☐ Social-emotional well-being
- ☐ Other impact

ii. If Other is selected above, please provide the description here:

iii. Student group(s) that Strategy #3 most effectively supports: (select all that apply)

- ☐ Students from low-income families
- ☐ Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity)
- ☐ Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender)
- ☐ English learners
- ☐ Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA))
- ☐ Students experiencing homelessness
- ☐ Children and youth in foster care
- ☐ Migrant students
- ☐ Other student groups: (provide description below)

iv. If Other is selected above, please provide the description here:

Section: Narratives - Engaging Stakeholders in Plan Development

Section II: Engaging Stakeholders in Plan Development

In this second section, LEAs are asked to provide information on how stakeholders will be engaged in planning for the use of ARP ESSER funds, how stakeholder input will be utilized, and how the LEA will make its LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds transparent to the public—all critical components in developing, implementing, and adjusting plans based on the differential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

Describe how the LEA, in planning for the use of ARP ESSER funds, has engaged or will engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders. **(3,000 characters max)**

(Stakeholders include students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); teachers; principals; school leaders; other educators; school staff; and unions. In addition, to the extent that the following groups are present in or served by the LEA, stakeholders also include community partners, civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migrant students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students; and tribes.)

Highlands School District has established district goals that frame the direction of our efforts and initiatives. These goals were developed in partnership with the school administration and the Board of School Directors. They serve as the backdrop of all district communication and community outreach. Periodic reviews and updates to goal progress and accomplishments are conducted in both small and large group settings. The district employees several mechanisms by which to engage a broad range of stakeholder, both internal and external. Internally, the district has both building level, and district-level networks for collaboration. We meet monthly with our teacher association leadership to share ideas, strategies and plans for addressing student success. Parent and faculty coffees provide quarterly opportunities for both input and feedback and are conducted both virtually and in-person, during the day and in the evening, as a way to provide maximum access. External partnerships are a priority and an area of expansion for the district. Recently established partnerships include the Black Alumni Association, the Community Development Council and the Consortium for Public Education. Each of these stakeholder groups represents a key portion of the population, whose voice and input frame our programs and resources. Long-standing relationships with the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, the Department of Health and Human Services and local institutions of higher education further support our goals of full and adequate representation of our students and the community,

5. Use of Stakeholder Input

Describe how the LEA has taken or will take stakeholder and public input into account in the development of the LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds. **(3,000 characters max)**

Stakeholder involvement is a high priority in the Highlands School District and is represented in many ways. Both internal and external stakeholder groups convene regularly as a means to provide both input and feedback to the district. In the late spring of 2020, the Task Force for

Reopening was established. This group of 45+ is comprised of faculty and staff, administration, Board Directors and community members and was developed to ensure that all representative groups within the district, had a voice in the decisions that were being made throughout the Pandemic. While established for this purpose, the input from stakeholder groups was not unique to this one. Highlands also meets monthly with teacher and administrative representatives to discuss needs and plan for how to support those. In addition to anecdotal input, quarterly surveys have been administered for the past 18 months. The data from these surveys has, and will continue to be used to develop plans for the use of ARP ESSER funds. Outcomes from this data lead to the establishment of an elementary virtual program in which students, grades K-6 are able to participate virtually in the full academic program. Input from external partners like the Allegheny Intermediate Unit and the Office of Health and Human Services has led to changes in our processes and protocols around the enrollment and immediate support for students in foster care and for those experiencing homelessness. Additional guidance has led to the inclusion of PBIS at the secondary levels as a means to increase attendance and engagement.

6. Public Access to LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds

Describe the process for development, approval, and making public the LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds. The LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds must be made publicly available on the LEA website and submitted to PDE within 90 days of LEA receipt of ARP ESSER funding, must be written in a language that parents/caregivers can understand, and must be provided in alternate format upon request by a parent/caregiver who is an individual with a disability. **(3,000 characters max)**

The process for development of the Highlands Plan for the use of ARP ESSER Funds has included several layers. The initial planning included the district administration and the Board of School Directors. This team met to discuss the immediate challenges associated with providing access to learning for all 2400 students in the district and resulted in the development of a 1:1 device deployment process. The implementation of this process included input from the technology department, the business office and the faculty and staff. This plan was shared publicly with all faculty and parents and was included on the district website for review. The Task Force for Reopening Schools was concurrently working to develop plans for use of ARP ESSER funds to support the health and safety of students. The outcomes of this group were framed in the initial and revised versions of the district Health and Safety Plan which is reviewed in public School Board meetings and posted in a timely fashion on the district website. Public comment is supported monthly at the School Board meeting and the members of the Task Force are provided as well. Plan funds are also earmarked for both after-school and summer programming to include tutoring and remediation. These plans are shared with the Board and approved along with staff stipends and transportation. Communication of these opportunities is provided regularly to parents via phone message and on the district website. Additional expenditures are planned for in the way of instructional materials and resources including online tools, interventions and texts. Each expenditure is published as part of the Board Agenda and voted on for approval in the monthly voting meeting.

Section: Narratives - Using ARP ESSER Funds to Plan for Safe, In-Person Instruction

Section III: Using ARP ESSER Funds to Plan for Safe, In-Person Instruction

In this third section, LEAs are asked to reflect on both the impacts and needs described in Section I and stakeholder engagement described in Section II to provide a description of the LEA plan for the use of ARP ESSER funds, beginning with the minimum 20 percent reservation, to address the impact of lost instructional time as required by section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act.

Instructions: For both (a) the 20 percent reservation to address the impact of lost instructional time and (b) remaining funds, describe the LEA's principles for emphasizing educational equity in expending ARP ESSER funds, including but not limited to:

- Responding to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, and addressing opportunity gaps that existed before—and were exacerbated by—the pandemic.
- Allocating funding to individual schools and for LEA-wide activities based on student need.
- Implementing an equitable and inclusive return to in-person instruction. An inclusive return to in-person instruction includes, but is not limited to, establishing policies and practices that avoid the over-use of exclusionary discipline measures (including in- and out-of-school suspensions) and creating a positive and supportive learning environment for all students.
- Taking steps to permit students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers (including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age) that impede equal access to, or participation in, the ARP ESSER-supported program, in compliance with the requirements of section 427 of GEPA (20 U.S.C. 1228a).
- Attending to sustainability of plans supported by non-recurring ARP ESSER funds beyond the ARP ESSER funding period.

7. Plan for 20 percent Reservation to Address the Impact of Lost Instructional Time (Learning Loss)

How will the LEA use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs? **(3,000 characters max)**

The response must include:

- a. A description of the evidence-based interventions (e.g., providing intensive or high-dosage tutoring, accelerating learning) the LEA has selected, and how the LEA will evaluate the impact of those interventions on an ongoing basis to determine effectiveness.
- b. How the evidence-based interventions will specifically address the needs of student groups most disproportionately impacted.
- c. The extent to which the LEA will use funds it reserves to identify, engage, and support (1) students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and (2) students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.

Student achievement and growth gaps were used to identify students for whom participation in tutoring and instructional support would be most beneficial. This data, along with teacher recommendation and student interest lead to more targeted identification. Curriculum-based resources are primarily used when initially working with students as a means to create the greatest connectivity and progress. A wide array of resources are used in the support of student learning and growth during our after-school programming. In addition to initial assessments to establish learning goals, teachers engage in periodic progress monitoring to measure student accomplishments. Goal setting is done to varying degrees with different groups of students and those in upper elementary and middle school are engaged in the establishment of individual goals and progress targets. The Classroom Diagnostic Tools are in use in all classrooms grades 3 - 8. This resource is completely aligned to the level of rigor and expectations established by the PA Core standards and is used as a periodic assessment measure. STAR 320 is another evidence-based resource that is incorporated into the measurement of student learning. Teachers have been trained in the establishment of growth reports that isolate both students and skills for targeted attention. Student feedback and project-based learning outcomes are also used to measure the impact. A review of district assessment data and disaggregated subgroups will be used to identify and target this group of students. Participants will be engaged in input for future program planning.

8. Plan for Remaining Funds *(funds not described under the question above)*

How will the LEA spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds including for each of the four fields below, as applicable? **(3,000 characters max)**

- a. Continuity of Services: How will the LEA use ARP ESSER funds to sustain services to address students' academic needs; students' and staff social, emotional, and mental health needs; and student nutrition and food services?
- b. Access to Instruction: How will the LEA use ARP ESSER funds to support the goals of increasing opportunity to learn and equity in instructional delivery? Consider regular attendance/chronic absenteeism data from the 2020-21 school year, including data disaggregated by student groups, in developing the response.
- c. Mitigation Strategies: How will the LEA use ARP ESSER funds to support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the reopening and operation of school facilities and transportation services to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff? Consider the LEA's Health and Safety Plan in developing the response.
- d. Facilities Improvements: How will the LEA use ARP ESSER funds to repair and improve school facilities to reduce risk of virus transmission, address environmental health hazards, and/or improve ventilation? Consider the LEA's Health and Safety Plan in developing the response.

To ensure continuity of services, the Highlands School District has increased its capacity in the area of student services. The district has secured a Director and Administrative Assistant to oversee the department and secured two psychologists to support students and staff social, emotional and mental health. The district has also committed to staffing, through an agency, each of our schools with nursing staff to handle all of our health and wellness issues and to provide increased communication with families around prevention and mitigation measures. Highlands has issued technology to all students and staff in grades K-12 to advance equity and support schools and the community in removing barriers while increasing opportunities for teaching and learning to occur. A refresh cycle has been created in order to sustain the district's 1:1 technology over time.

The district has also created a district Attendance Officer position to ensure adequate supports, tracking and response measures are in place to address attendance issues, chronic absenteeism and truancy. Increased outreach to parents and families has also occurred as part of this process through the use of our EdInsight portal. Continuity of instruction is a critical priority in the district in response the learning gaps we are seeing. The district has secured building substitutes at each level to ensure that adequate coverage is in place and that student learning is not impacted. Interventions are increasingly needed to support the challenges our students experienced as a result of COVID-19 and the learning loss. MTSS Facilitators are provided in all grade levels K-8 across the district, to provide targeted instruction to students and to enhance the teaching and learning provided by classroom teachers. They also provide additional support to district and building level administrators in data and curricular analysis. The district purchased air purifiers to be used in many high traffic areas, classrooms and offices to improve indoor air quality in school facilities while upgrades to the HVAC systems have also been made. Additional supplies were purchased to sanitize and clean all school facilities including appropriate disinfectants, sanitizers, soaps, wipes, applicators and dispensers. Items such as masks and gloves have also been purchased and made available to support in-person teaching and learning throughout the pandemic.

9. For LEAs with one or more Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) or Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) school only

Please verify consultation of the [Evidence Resource Center](#) in developing the LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds and provide a justification for any intervention that is not supported by tier 1, 2, 3, or 4 evidence. If the LEA does not include a school with a CSI or ATSI designation, indicate "Not Applicable."
(3,000 characters max)

Highlands Senior High School is implementing evidence-based interventions which align with ESSR requirements. These interventions are included in the ERC and demonstrate rationale and evidence to positively impact the school's identified goals: a) increase attendance, b) align assessment, curriculum and instruction to PA standards, and c) utilize personalized counseling services to ensure that all special education students have post-secondary transition activities aligned to IEP goals/interests. a) A review of the Evidence Resource Center includes Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as a strategy within the Tier 1 level, showing strong evidence to positively impact attendance. An overview of PBIS according to the ERC: "Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a three-tiered framework for improving and integrating all of the data, systems, and practices affecting student outcomes every day. The way schools operate are their foundational systems. In PBIS, these systems support accurate, durable implementation of practices and the effective use of data to achieve better outcomes" (PBIS, n.d. "What is PBIS?", para. 3)."b) The Evidence Resource Center describes "the alignment of curriculum, assessment and instruction to the PA Standards" as an essential practice that is critical to improving teaching and learning. This practice enables school leadership to streamline and focus the work of teachers, and to ensure that all students have access to a high-quality curriculum and instructional strategies focused on grade-level standards.c) Comprehensive School Counseling Programs are included within the Evidence Resource Center as a Tier 4 Strategy. Studies indicate that personalized counseling services increased students' feelings of safety, school connectedness, and the student belief that the school was providing effective educational and career planning services (Lapan et al., 2014).The ASCA National Model suggests

the development of school counseling programs that...include a developmentally appropriate curriculum focused on the mindsets and behaviors all students need for postsecondary readiness and success; close achievement and opportunity gaps; and result in improved student achievement, attendance, and discipline.

10. 20% Reservation Calculation

Please enter your ARP ESSER total allocation amount and then click Save.

**Please ensure that your 20% (or greater) budgeted amount for Learning Loss is itemized in your Budget.*

	ARP ESSER Allocation	Reservation Requirement	Reservation Amount (calculated on save)
20 Percent Reservation	6,138,158	20%	1,227,632

Section: Narratives - Monitoring and Measuring Progress

Section IV: Monitoring and Measuring Progress

In this fourth section, LEAs are asked to describe efforts to build local capacity to ensure high-quality data collection and reporting to safeguard funds for their intended purposes.

11. Capacity for Data Collection and Reporting

LEAs must continuously monitor progress and adjust strategies as needed. Describe the LEA's capacity and strategy to collect and analyze data (disaggregated by student group, where applicable), for each of the following measures:

	Data Collection and Analysis Plan (including plan to disaggregate data)
Student learning, including academic impact of lost instructional time during the COVID-19 pandemic	The district collects and array of data to measure student learning at the local, state and national levels. This data is collected and reported for all students and for the various district subgroups for which we have reportable data. This data includes both academic and non-academic measures including state and local assessments, behavior incidents, attendance, and participation in instruction virtually. All data sets will be analyzed against logitudinal data and will be viewed in terms of both achievement outcomes and growth measures. The data will be shared with faculty and staff and reported publicly to the Board and the Community.
Opportunity to learn measures (see help text)	Increased technolgy and professional learning for staff were a major focus of the districts efforts. 1:1 technology for all staff was provided along with classroom tools to allow for easy access and outreach to families. Professional learning opportunites have been provided for employees at all levels of the organization after which targeted data is collected. Through our compliance tool COMPLY, participants are required to provide specific feedback on the training and or learning on which they participated, the results of which are analyzed to determine next steps or revisions to the content and/or format. Parent and student surveys have been and will continue to be provided. These surveys are used to gather both need and satisfaction data from students and parents on a number of topics including technology use, ease, and access.
Jobs created and retained (by number of FTEs and position type) (see help text)	A number of positions have been adjusted, added or increased as a result of COVID-19. The addition of an Attendance Officer and School Psychologist have been created to support the increased need for monitoring attendance, and for providing additional psychological testing services. Postions in the special education department (teachers) have been retained, at previous levels to ensure that adequate servicing can be provided even if needs change or increase. Additional positions have been altered to work differently in the support of students. MTSS Facilitators are now working across the curriculum and across all classrooms to provide multi-disciplinary support and to reach all students who have experienced gaps in achievement and/or growth.

	Data Collection and Analysis Plan (including plan to disaggregate data)
Participation in programs funded by ARP ESSER resources (e.g., summer and afterschool programs)	<p>Participation in programs is a critical success indicator. Baseline data was collected in the first year of implementation for our afterschool and summer programs. This data was shared with faculty and staff so that students would continue to be supported and monitored as a result of participation.</p> <p>Subsequent programming will use the same methodology but also include opportunities for additional or repeat student participation. The content and scope of the programming will also be monitored as it relates to the degree of success exhibited by those who participate.</p>

Section: Narratives - ARP ESSER Assurances

ARP ESSER Fund Assurances

Please complete each of the following assurances prior to plan submission:



The LEA will implement appropriate fiscal monitoring of and internal controls for the ARP ESSER funds (e.g., by updating the LEA's plan for monitoring funds and internal controls under the CARES and CRRSA Acts; addressing potential sources of waste, fraud, and abuse; conducting random audits; or other tools).



The LEA will complete quarterly Federal Financial Accountability Transparency Act (FFATA) reports and comply with all PDE reporting requirements, including on matters such as:

- How the LEA is developing strategies and implementing public health protocols including, to the greatest extent practicable, policies and plans in line with the CDC guidance related to mitigating COVID-19 in schools;
- Overall plans and policies related to LEA support for return to in-person instruction and maximizing in-person instruction time, including how funds will support a return to and maximize in-person instruction time, and advance equity and inclusivity in participation in in-person instruction;
- Data on each LEA's and school's mode of instruction (fully in-person, hybrid, and fully remote) and conditions;
- LEA uses of funds to meet students' social, emotional, and academic needs, including through summer enrichment programming and other evidence-based interventions, and how they advance equity for underserved students;
- LEA uses of funds to sustain and support access to LEA-supported early childhood education programs;
- Impacts and outcomes (disaggregated by student subgroup) through use of ARP ESSER funding (e.g., quantitative and qualitative results of ARP ESSER funding, including on personnel, student learning, and budgeting at the school and district level);
- Student data (disaggregated by student subgroup) related to how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected instruction and learning;
- Requirements under the FFATA; and
- Additional reporting requirements as may be necessary to ensure accountability and transparency of ARP ESSER fund use.



The LEA will cooperate with any examination of records with respect to such funds by making records available for inspection, production, and examination, and authorized individuals

available for interview and examination, upon the request of: (a) the United States Department of Education and/or its Inspector General; (b) any other federal agency, commission, or department in the lawful exercise of its jurisdiction and authority; (c) the Pennsylvania Department of Education; and/or (d) the Pennsylvania Auditor General, Pennsylvania Inspector General, or any other state agency.



Records pertaining to ARP ESSER Funds, including financial records related to the use of grant funds, will be tracked and retained separately from those records related to the LEA's use of other Federal funds, including ESSER I and ESSER II Funds.



The LEA will maintain inventory records, purchase orders and receipts for equipment (over \$5,000) purchased, all computing devices, and special purpose equipment (\$300 - \$4,999), and will conduct a physical inventory every two years. Please note: inventory of equipment purchased with federal funds must be broken out by funding source.



Any LEA receiving funding under this program will have on file with the SEA a set of assurances that meets the requirements of section 442 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232e).



The LEA will conduct its operations so that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under the ARP ESSER program or activity based on race; color; national origin, which includes a person's limited English proficiency or English learner status and a person's actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics; sex; age; or disability. These non-discrimination obligations arise under Federal civil rights laws, including but not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. In addition, the LEA must comply with all regulations, guidelines, and standards issued by the United States Department of Education under any of these statutes.



The LEA will comply with all ARP Act and other ARP ESSER requirements, including but not limited to complying with the maintenance of equity provisions in section 2004(c) of the ARP Act. Under Maintenance of Equity, per-pupil funding from state and local sources and staffing levels for *high poverty schools* may not be decreased by an amount that exceeds LEA-wide reductions in per-pupil funding and staffing levels for *all schools* served by the LEA¹. High poverty schools are the

25 percent of schools serving the highest percent of economically disadvantaged students in the LEA as measured by information LEAs submitted in PIMS that includes individual student data and identifying if the student meets economically disadvantaged criteria. This data is used to calculate school poverty percentages . Note: An LEA is exempt from the Maintenance of Equity requirement if the LEA has a total enrollment of fewer than 1,000 students, operates a single school, serves all students in each grade span in a single school, or demonstrates an exceptional or uncontrollable circumstance, as determined by the United States Secretary of Education.

¹Calculations for Maintenance of Equity: Per Pupil Funding from combined State and local funding = Total LEA funding from combined State and local funding for all schools served by the LEA in the given fiscal year, divided by the number of children enrolled in all schools served by the LEA in the given fiscal year. Full time equivalent staff = Total full-time equivalent staff in all schools served by the LEA in the given fiscal year, divided by the number of children enrolled in all schools served by the LEA in the given fiscal year. These calculations should be completed for all schools in the LEA as well as for high poverty schools in the LEA for FY 2021-22 and 2022-23. Reductions must not be greater for high poverty schools than for all schools in the LEA.



The LEA will implement evidence-based interventions, as required by section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act.



The LEA will address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on underserved students (i.e., students from low-income families, students from underserved racial or ethnic groups and gender groups, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migrant students, and other groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic that have been identified by the LEA) as required by section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act.



The LEA will develop and make publicly available a Plan for the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services, hereinafter referred to as the LEA Health and Safety Plan, that complies with section 2001(i) of the ARP Act. The plan will be submitted to PDE, in a manner and form determined by PDE, no later than July 30, 2021.



The LEA's Health and Safety Plan will include (1) how the LEA will, to the greatest extent practicable, support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the

health and safety of students, educators, and other staff; (2) how the LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services; (3) how the LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policy on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC: (a) universal and correct wearing of masks; (b) modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding); (c) handwashing and respiratory etiquette; (d) cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation; (e) contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State and local health departments; (f) diagnostic and screening testing; (g) efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities; (h) appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and (i) coordination with state and local health officials.



The LEA will review its Health and Safety Plan at least every six months during the duration of the ARP ESSER grant period and make revisions as appropriate. When determining whether revisions are necessary, the LEA will take into consideration significant changes to CDC guidance on reopening schools and will seek public input and take public input into account.



The LEA's Health and Safety Plan will be made publicly available on the LEA website and must be written in a language that parents/caregivers can understand or be orally translated for parent/caregivers and must be provided in alternate format upon request by a parent/caregiver who is an individual with a disability.



The LEA will provide to PDE: (1) the URL(s) where the public can readily find data on school operating status; and (2) the URL(s) for the LEA websites where the public can find the LEA's Health and Safety plan as required under section 2001(i) of the ARP Act; and the LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds.

Section: Narratives - LEA Health and Safety Plan Upload

LEA HEALTH AND SAFETY PLAN

Please upload your LEA Health and Safety Plan below, and check the assurance indicating that you have completed your upload. Please name the file using your LEA name followed by Health and Safety Plan. example: "**LEA Name-Health and Safety Plan**"

☒ **CHECK HERE** - to assure that you have successfully uploaded your LEA Health and Safety Plan.

Section: Budget - Instruction Expenditures

BUDGET OVERVIEW

Budget

\$6,138,158.00

Allocation

\$6,138,158.00

Budget Over(Under) Allocation

\$0.00

INSTRUCTION EXPENDITURES

Function	Object	Amount	Description
1100 - REGULAR PROGRAMS – ELEMENTARY / SECONDARY	300 - Purchased Professional and Technical Services	\$90,000.00	Highlands School District contracts with Kelly Services to provide substitute teachers, nurses and paraprofessionals to work with our students in the event of an absence of a member of the staff. We rely on Kelly Services to ensure that personnel supports are provided to our students.
1000 - Instruction	100 - Salaries	\$633,580.00	Grant funds will be used to support the salaries for employment of MTSS Facilitators. These professionals provide instructional support and intervention to our students who demonstrate an at-risk level of academic need.
			Grant funds will be used to support the benefits for

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Function	Object	Amount	Description
1000 - Instruction	200 - Benefits	\$243,030.00	employment of MTSS Facilitators. These professionals provide instructional support and intervention to our students who demonstrate an at-risk level of academic need.
		\$966,610.00	

Section: Budget - Support and Non-Instructional Expenditures

BUDGET OVERVIEW

Budget

\$6,138,158.00

Allocation

\$6,138,158.00

Budget Over(Under) Allocation

\$0.00

NON-INSTRUCTIONAL EXPENDITURES

Function	Object	Amount	Description
2100 - SUPPORT SERVICES – STUDENTS	100 - Salaries	\$662,610.00	Highlands School District will use grant funds to support the salaries for employment of our Student Services Department, which is comprised of a director, administrative assistant and two psychologists. This department is responsible for the social and emotional needs of our students, connecting them to the necessary supports for addressing mental health needs. They are also responsible for our students who demonstrate an at-risk level of academic need.
			Highlands School District will use grant funds to support the benefits for employment of our Student Services Department, which is comprised of a director,

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Function	Object	Amount	Description
2100 - SUPPORT SERVICES – STUDENTS	200 - Benefits	\$224,389.00	administrative assistant and two psychologists. This department is responsible for the social and emotional needs of our students, connecting them to the necessary supports for addressing mental health needs. They are also responsible for our students who demonstrate an at-risk level of academic need.
4000 - FACILITIES ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENT SERVICES	700 - Property	\$730,538.00	Air handler in auditorium and central fan at the High School to ensure clean, purified air throughout the building and improve efficiency and air quality
2600 - Operation and Maintenance	700 - Property	\$48,703.00	Water heater and hot water recirculation piping to restrooms to circulate hot water to all restrooms throughout the building as a health and safety mitigation strategy
4000 - FACILITIES ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENT SERVICES	700 - Property	\$27,830.00	Replace existing auditorium return air duct work at the Elementary School to restrict the flow of air escaping outside the building
			Replace existing library,

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Function	Object	Amount	Description
4000 - FACILITIES ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENT SERVICES	700 - Property	\$342,309.00	gynasium and office air handlers to ensure clean, purified air throughout the Early Childhood Center and improve efficiency and air quality
2600 - Operation and Maintenance	700 - Property	\$72,000.00	Replace existing water fountains with bottler filler only stations to reduce the transmission potential of germs and/or disease
2800 - Central Support Services	600 - Supplies	\$60,000.00	The Highlands School District has included the EdInsight Student Performance Suite as its platform to help monitor and support students achieving thier potential. The implementation of this resource allows for enhanced and immediate communication with families in an engaging and non-threatening manner. By establishing this seamless communication portal, parent partnerships can be readily established by removing many of the barriers associated with those who are resistant to communication with school personnel. School attendance, behavior, progress and supports are all intergrated into the portal and help to

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Function	Object	Amount	Description
			foster the needed collaboration with families that school success requires.
2700 - Student Transportation	500 - Other Purchased Services	\$1,206,299.00	<p>COVID 19 has had a significant impact on the students and families within our district especially within our vulnerable student populations. Students from low income families have disproportionately impacted many of who have experienced intermittent or long-term housing instability. Our numbers of students in foster care and temporary placements has increased as has our number of students experiencing homelessness. Mnny of these students require specifically arranged transportation from shelters, group homes or housing situations in other districts. Hlghlands School District will use grant funds to support student transportation and partnership agreements with other districts for the transportation of non-resident or out of district placements. Providing this transportation will ensure that those students who have</p>

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Function	Object	Amount	Description
			been disproportionately impacted by COVID 19 have equal access to their school of origin of the school that is their best interest to attend.
2100 - SUPPORT SERVICES – STUDENTS	100 - Salaries	\$130,681.00	Highlands School District will use grant funds to support the salary for employment of our Attendance Officer. This position supports the goals we have around student attendance and the prevention of chronic absenteeism and truancy. Our Attendance Officer will work with teachers, administration and families to provide support in addressing the challenges and barriers to attendance so that our students have the best chance of success and are prepared for post-secondary opportunities.
2000 - SUPPORT SERVICES	200 - Benefits	\$39,335.00	Highlands School District will use grant funds to support the benefits for employment of our Attendance Officer. This position supports the goals we have around student attendance and the prevention of chronic absenteeism and truancy. Our Attendance Officer will

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Function	Object	Amount	Description
			work with teachers, administration and families to provided support in addressing the challenges and barriers to attendance so that our students have the best chance of success and are prepared for post-secondary opportunities.
2100 - SUPPORT SERVICES – STUDENTS	100 - Salaries	\$261,362.00	Highlands School District will use grant funds to support the salaries for employment of our Deans of Students. These positions support the goals we have around student student engagement and success. As part of our PBIS team, the deans work alongside the MTSS Facilitators, the Attendance Officer and the administration to support students, especially in the areas of behavior and social/emotional well-being. These supports allow our students to have additional services and interventions to complement and strengthen their overall experience and promote their well-being and success.
			Highlands School District will use grant funds to support the

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Function	Object	Amount	Description
2100 - SUPPORT SERVICES – STUDENTS	200 - Benefits	\$136,178.00	benefits for employment of our Deans of Students. These positions support the goals we have around student student engagement and success. As part of our PBIS team, the deans work alongside the MTSS Facilitators, the Attendance Officer and the administration to support students, especially in the areas of behavior and social/emotional well-being. These supports allow our students to have additional services and interventions to complement and strengthen their overall experience and promote their well-being and success.
			Highlands School District will use grant funds to support the salaries for employment of our School Counselors. These positions have been incorporated across all buildings to ensure equitable support for students of all ages. In the role of counselor, our team can support the goals we have around social/emotional learning. As part of our individual building SAP teams, the counselors work alongside the

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Function	Object	Amount	Description
2100 - SUPPORT SERVICES – STUDENTS	100 - Salaries	\$812,980.00	<p>teaching staff, the Attendance Officer and the administration to support student needs in this area. The counselors provide support individually and to groups of student and also facilitate the implementation of our Second Step instructional program. The use of this evidence-based intervention will help to address the needs of all students, including those with mental health needs and those most disproportionately impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. These counselors will target specifically, those students who are demonstrating the most-significant needs in transitioning back to in-person learning, some of whom have been engaged in virtual instruction for more than two school years and are struggling to reacclimate to being in school.</p>
			<p>Highlands School District will use grant funds to support the benefits for employment of our School Counselors. These positions have been incorporated across all buildings to ensure equitable</p>

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Function	Object	Amount	Description
2100 - SUPPORT SERVICES – STUDENTS	200 - Benefits	\$416,334.00	<p>support for students of all ages. In the role of counselor, our team can support the goals we have around social/emotional learning. As part of our individual building SAP teams, the counselors work alongside the teaching staff, the Attendance Officer and the administration to support student needs in this area. The counselors provide support individually and to groups of student and also facilitate the implementation of our Second Step instructional program. The use of this evidence-based intervention will help to address the needs of all students, including those with mental health needs and those most disproportionately impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. These counselors will target specifically, those students who are demonstrating the most-significant needs in transitioning back to in-person learning, some of whom have been engaged in virtual instruction for more than two school years and are struggling to reacclimate to being in school.</p>

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		\$5,171,548.00	
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Section: Budget - Budget Summary

BUDGET SUMMARY

	100 Salaries	200 Benefits	300 Purchased Professional and Technical Services	400 Purchased Property Services	500 Other Purchased Services	600 Supplies 800 Dues and Fees	700 Property	Totals
1000 Instruction	\$633,580.00	\$243,030.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$876,610.00
1100 REGULAR PROGRAMS – ELEMENTARY / SECONDARY	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$90,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$90,000.00
1200 SPECIAL PROGRAMS – ELEMENTARY / SECONDARY	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
1300 CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
1400 Other Instructional Programs – Elementary / Secondary	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
1600 * ADULT EDUCATION PROGRAMS	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
1700 Higher Education Programs	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
1800 Pre-K	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2000 SUPPORT SERVICES	\$0.00	\$39,335.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$39,335.00
2100 SUPPORT SERVICES – STUDENTS	\$1,867,633.00	\$776,901.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,644,534.00
2200 Staff Support Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

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	100 Salaries	200 Benefits	300 Purchased Professional and Technical Services	400 Purchased Property Services	500 Other Purchased Services	600 Supplies 800 Dues and Fees	700 Property	Totals
2300 SUPPORT SERVICES – ADMINISTRATION	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2400 Health Support Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2500 Business Support Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
2600 Operation and Maintenance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$120,703.00	\$120,703.00
2700 Student Transportation	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,206,299.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,206,299.00
2800 Central Support Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$60,000.00	\$0.00	\$60,000.00
3000 OPERATION OF NON-INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3100 Food Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3200 Student Activities	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3300 Community Services	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
4000 FACILITIES ACQUISITION, CONSTRUCTION AND IMPROVEMENT SERVICES	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,100,677.00	\$1,100,677.00
	\$2,501,213.00	\$1,059,266.00	\$90,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,206,299.00	\$60,000.00	\$1,221,380.00	\$6,138,158.00
				Approved Indirect Cost/Operational Rate: 0.0000				\$0.00

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	100 Salaries	200 Benefits	300 Purchased Professional and Technical Services	400 Purchased Property Services	500 Other Purchased Services	600 Supplies 800 Dues and Fees	700 Property	Totals
							Final	\$6,138,158.00

