

LEA ARP ESSER Plan



**Lexington City Schools
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Section 1: Introduction

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Fund is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' **academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs**. Lexington City Schools has been awarded **\$441,286.17** in ESSER III funds. This plan describes how the awarded funds will be used. Questions about this plan should be directed to Rebecca Walters, Division Superintendent rwalters@lexedu.org.

Division Response to COVID-19: Lexington City Schools started the 2020-2021 school year in a primarily virtual setting for all students K-8. Students transitioned to in-person learning 4 days/week in late October through mid-November. Local health officials recommended the district revert to virtual instruction for all students during the weeks between the Thanksgiving holiday break and the weeks following Winter Break. LCS returned to primarily in-person instruction February 1, 2021 with 80% of students in K-8 attending school in-person. Starting the final quarter of the school year on April 12, 2021, 90% of K-8 students returned to in-person learning. Lexington City Schools will open for in-person instruction 5 days/week for all students K-8.

Lexington City Schools has taken and will continue to take actions to ensure the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and division staff during and following the return to full in-person instruction. A description of actions already taken and additional actions planned is below.

Lexington City Schools' health and safety policies and procedures continue to align closely with guidance from the CDC, VDH, VDOE, and the Central Shenandoah Health District.

Key mitigation strategies include:

- Promoting hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- Use of cloth face coverings
- Monitoring student and staff illness and absenteeism
- Limiting non-essential visitors at school
- Encouraging students and staff to stay home when sick
- Encouraging physical distancing

In addition, Lexington City Schools adopted policies on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC. We will continue to monitor local data and follow CDC, VDH, and local guidance to guide decisions moving forward.

- Universal and correct wearing of masks (2020-2021 school year) ; New policy for 2021-2022 school year is being finalized prior to August 17th, 2021.
- Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts/podding) - During the 2020-2021 school year, students were cohorted into groups by classroom in K-8. Students remained in cohorts when feasibly possible during the school day, recess, and during lunch. Students will not be cohorted in the middle school during the 2021-2022 school year; however, physical distancing will continue to be encouraged to the greatest extent possible.
- Handwashing and respiratory etiquette - Lexington City Schools has added signage and hand sanitizing stations throughout the schools. Students and staff are encouraged to wash hands often and breaks are provided throughout the school day to support handwashing.
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation - In consultation with our HVAC contractor, Lexington City Schools has increased fresh air supply to the greatest extent possible in all HVAC units divisionwide. The HVAC systems in both schools are fairly new, robust systems using the latest technology to support air quality. Lexington City Schools contracts with the HVAC provider to maintain systems on a consistent and as-needed basis. Lexington City Schools implemented procedures to clean high-touch areas regularly throughout the school day in all settings (restrooms, buses, classrooms, hallways). The school division purchased and implemented the use of electrostatic foggers, air purifiers, gloves and cleaning PPE, disinfectant wipes, hand sanitizer, etc.
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments - Lexington City Schools' nurses completed a course on contact tracing through Johns Hopkins University and collaborated with our local health department for contact tracing. School nurses led efforts with school and district staff to complete thorough contact tracing when necessary. Lexington City Schools continues to follow the guidelines for isolation and quarantine consistent with VDH and Central Shenandoah Health District.
- Diagnostic and screening testing - Lexington City Schools does not offer site-based diagnostic and screening testing. Testing is widely available in the local community.

- Efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities - Lexington City Schools partnered with VDH, Central Shenandoah Health District, Rockbridge County Public Schools, Buena Vista Public Schools, and the area's emergency management systems to conduct vaccination clinics offered to all school district employees in January/February 2021. 90% of district employees elected to be vaccinated. Lexington City Schools shares local vaccination clinic information with school families via email and social media.
- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies - Lexington City Schools staff work collaboratively with any families and health care providers of children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies.
- Coordination with state and local health officials - Lexington City Schools administration participates in weekly/monthly conference calls with the VDOE where information is shared directly from state and local health officials. Lexington City Schools administration participates in scheduled conference calls with officials from the Central Shenandoah Health District.

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. Lexington City Schools will use approximately \$61,962.17 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds to implement prevention and mitigation strategies as described below.

Lexington City Schools intends to use ESSER III funds to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that include:

- Retain a part-time custodian to support cleaning and disinfection of classrooms and school facilities (\$15,000)
- Replace bathroom dispensers to support hand washing (\$1,839.50)
- Purchase stand-alone HEPA filtration units and replacement filters for all learning environments (\$41,000)
- Update bathroom fixtures in primary classrooms to support physical distancing during restroom use at the primary grades (\$4,122.67)
- Purchase disposable meals containers and utensils to support social distancing during mealtimes at school (\$2,600)

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 after school programs, or extended school year programs. Lexington City Schools will use approximately \$203,600 (approximately 46%) of its ARP Act ESSER III funds to address unfinished learning as described below.

Lexington City Schools intends to use ESSER III funds to address academic impact of lost instructional time (unfinished learning) through the following strategies:

- Offer expanded summer school programs K-8 to address academic, social, and emotional student needs in Summer 2022 and Summer 2023 (\$44,000)
- Retain an additional full-time Reading Specialist for K-5 for 2022 and 2023 (\$150,000)
- Support summer curriculum and pacing guide development for teachers for 2022 and 2023 (\$6,000)
- Purchase summer school instructional materials for Summer 2022 and 2023 (\$3,600)

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. Lexington City Schools will use approximately \$175,724 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds in accordance with Section 2001(e) of the ARP Act as described below.

Lexington City Schools intends to use ESSER III funding to address the impacts of COVID-19 with the following strategies:

- Purchase replacement technology equipment to support learning needs at school and at home (\$60,000)
- Fund purchased services for ITRT summer support for technology training, equipment management, and curriculum support (\$3,200)
- Support expanded outdoor learning experiences by purchasing and installing permanent outdoor shade structures, picnic tables, and concrete pads onsite at both schools (\$102,524)
- Purchase additional two-way radios for staff communication during arrival/dismissal and outdoor learning times to support safety while physically distanced (\$5,000)

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

Academic, Social, Emotional, and Mental Health - Lexington City Schools provided a robust in-person and virtual learning program during the 2020-2021 school year, including daily synchronous instruction with teachers four days/week with asynchronous learning experiences on Fridays. Lexington City Schools will provide in-person learning, 5 days/week for all students K-8 starting in August for the 2021-2022 school year. Lexington City Schools carefully monitors academic performance for all K-8 students via quarterly data meetings, regular grade level meetings, IEP team meetings, etc... A third elementary reading specialist has been hired for the

2021-2022 school year and will be able to provide additional academic support where needed. Students receive progress and report cards with narrative descriptions of progress and areas for improvement. Lexington City Schools expanded summer school offerings to include additional students in need of summer intervention PreK-8 and will continue this through 2023. Lexington City Schools offered specialized virtual support to ELL students and families throughout the school year and will continue to work with these families during the 2021-2022 school year.

Lexington City Schools' school counselors will continue to work collaboratively with student families and school staff to support the academic, social, emotional, mental health and wellness of all K-8 students. School counselors partner with teachers, parents/guardians, administration, and support staff to monitor student wellness and offer support and resources when needed. K-5 classrooms implement a daily Morning Meeting routine where students and teachers discuss and engage in conversation and activities to support whole child wellness. The middle school offered a flexible lunch and recess time each day to support social and emotional student wellness and will implement a Trojan Advisory Group program using the *Responsive Classroom* curriculum in August 2021. The Lexington City Schools School Health Advisory Board (SHAB) has met to discuss and plan for support for student and staff wellness for the coming school year, to include opportunities to support social, physical, and emotional wellness. A division SEL committee will be looking at the newly adopted Virginia Standards of Learning for Social Emotional Learning and will develop a plan for division goals, strategies, and supports K-8.

Lexington City Schools intends to use ESSER III funding to address the impacts of COVID-19 with the following strategies:

- Support social emotional learning needs K-8 through providing training opportunities, acquiring instructional materials, and offering specialized programs (\$2,400)

Section 6: Consultation with Stakeholders and Opportunity for Public Comment

In developing the ARP ESSER Plan, Lexington City Schools conducted consultation in the following ways:

- With stakeholders, including: students, families, school and district administrators (including special education administrators), teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions - Lexington City Schools invited parent and stakeholder representatives to participate in targeted focus groups in the development of a Return-to-Learn plan in Summer 2020. The school district presented updated return-to-learn information at School Board meetings throughout the year, and shared information and updates to staff and families via email and the district website. Principals shared regular announcements and information via school newsletters, and the Superintendent presented return-to-learn plans and information to the Lexington City Council on multiple occasions during the year. The district surveyed families at several points during the year regarding their plans for student learning. Lexington City administrators and School Board members considered all input offered from stakeholders via letter, email, public comment, and face-to-face meetings.

Lexington City Schools considered input offered from stakeholders throughout the school year and shared its plan for the safe return of in-person instruction and continuity of services via email with all school families, staff, and district administrators in May 2021. The posting of the plan on the district website offered contact information for public input. The Superintendent presented the plan to the School Board with opportunity for public comment specific to the plan.

- With Tribes (if applicable); civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students - Lexington City Schools shared its plan for the safe return of in-person instruction and continuity of services via email with all school families, staff, and district administrators in May 2021 and posted the plan to the district website. Stakeholders included all teachers, staff, and parents of LCS students, including students with disabilities, English Learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and other underserved students. The posting of the plan offered contact information for public input. The Superintendent presented the plan to the School Board with opportunity for public comment specific to the plan ; and
- By providing the public the opportunity to provide input Lexington City Schools offered contact information for any stakeholders to offer input into the development of the district plan, provided a public comment period during the School Board meeting where the plan was initially presented, and considered any input offered from teachers, administrators, staff, and parents related to division needs during the school year and taking such input into account.

Section 7: Making the Plan Available to the Public

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

- The plan is posted at <http://lexingtonva.gov/community/schools/> ;
- The plan may be made available in multiple languages upon request or identification of need. Contact Jason White with Student Services at 540-463-7146;
- The plan may be orally translated for parents. Contact Jason White with Student Services at 540-453-7146 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 Jason White with Student Services at 540-453-7146.

Updated 8/18/2021

7/28/2021