**Roanoke City Public Schools**

 **ARP ESSER III Plan**

Roanoke City Public 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**. Roanoke City Public Schools has been awarded $51,744,235.88 in ESSER III funds. This plan describes how the awarded funds will be used. Questions about this plan should be directed to the office of the Chief Academic Officer at (540) 853.6113.

**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](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html) on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning. Since March 2020, when the pandemic begin, Roanoke City initially used ESSER I (CARES Act) funds to implement prevention and mitigation strategies. Roanoke City is currently and will continue to use ESSER II funds (received in April 2021) to provide the school division with the necessary items to continue with prevention and mitigation strategies to keep our staff and students safe as schools reopen. ESSER III funds will specifically be used to address the CDC guidance on improving ventilation and adjusting physical space to modify layouts and increase distancing between students in classrooms. The HVAC upgrades at 14 school locations and two construction projects to increase instructional space, which are being funded by ESSER III funds, will allow Roanoke City to improve ventilation and increase distance between students per CDC guidance.

**Section 3: Addressing Unfinished Learning**

Section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act requires each LEA to use twenty percent of its formula funds to address the academic impact of lost instructional time (learning loss) through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs. Roanoke City Public Schools will use approximately $23,000,000 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds to address unfinished learning as described below.

Roanoke City has used ESSER II funds to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment and afterschool programs. Roanoke City will continue learning loss efforts using ESSER III funds by providing additional teaching, technology, counseling, student support, and behavior analyst positions throughout the school division to provide extra support for students in Roanoke City. A multi-tiered system of support will be used to provide data to instructional staff on students learning loss by tracking interventions, behaviors, academics, and attendance. The school division will provide professional development to staff which will focus on learning loss, culturally responsive teaching, trauma informed care, and behavior interventions. Instructional resources such as classroom libraries and instructional technology will also be provided as part of the divisions learning loss plan.

**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. Roanoke City Public Schools will use approximately $28,000,000 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds in accordance with Section 2001(e) of the ARP Act as described below.

Roanoke City will fund two construction projects. A building addition at Breckinridge Middle School will expand instructional space, and repurposing the Ruffner building to expand CTE courses for William Fleming students. In addition to the construction projects, funds will also be used to provide HVAC replacements and improvements at 14 school sites throughout the division.

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

Roanoke City will implement interventions to address the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Additional counseling, student support, and behavior analyst positions will be funded to address student needs. Roanoke City is committed to meeting the social-emotional needs and the inequities that exist with all of our students, particularly our students most impacted by COVID-19. In order to achieve this commitment, the school division will provide staff ongoing professional learning opportunities in the areas of social-emotional learning, equity, literacy, and culturally responsive education. To meet these goals, Roanoke City will host two prominent researchers and authors in the field of social-emotional learning, equity, culturally responsive education, and literacy. These professional learning opportunities will allow district and building level leadership, teachers, and staff to learn more deeply on how to meet the SEL needs of our community, how to address the inequities that were exacerbated by COVID-19 and how to increase literacy and achievement across all of our schools that were greatly impacted by COVID-19.

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

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

* Input for items and services funded with ESSER III funds was received from school and district administrators, including Chief Academic Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, School Principals, Instructional Directors and Coordinators, Director of School Plants/Facilities, Special Education Director, English Learners Coordinator, Director of Organizational Diversity and Equity, and Director of School Counseling.
* The public had opportunity to provide input as follows. On May 4, 2021, RCPS posted a survey on several social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and the RCPS web page to ask for input on the use of American Rescue Plan Act funds and priorities for the school division going forward.  The public was notified during a press conference on May 3, 2021 that the survey would be coming out the following day.  The survey was emailed to all staff on May 5, 2021, and the community was reminded about the survey during a School Board meeting (streamed live on Facebook) on May 11, 2021.  Survey results helped guide the school division’s ESSER III funding plan for safely expanding in-person instruction and addressing Learning Loss for students.

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

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

* The plan is posted at [Re-opening schools - Roanoke City Public Schools (rcps.info)](https://www.rcps.info/news/what_s_new/re-opening_schools)
* If you need the plan written in or translated into a different language, please contact Supervisor of English Learners, Corey Allder at (540) 853.2877 or callder@rcps.info.
* 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 by contacting Hayley Poland, Assistant Superintendent for Equity and Student Services at (540) 853.2468 or hpoland@rcps.info.