

ESSER III –  
PROPOSED EXPENDITURES  
INCLUDING 20% TO ADDRESS  
LEARNING LOSS AND SOCIAL-  
EMOTIONAL LEARNING

GOVERNING BOARD INFORMATIONAL PRESENTATION

JULY 12, 2021

# OVERVIEW

1. ESSER III Allocation and Set-asides
2. Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan
3. Proposed ESSER III Expenditures
  - a. Operations
  - b. Safety and Security
  - c. Curriculum and Instruction

# **ESSER III ALLOCATION AND SET-ASIDES**

## ESSER III ALLOCATION AND SET-ASIDES

NUSD's ESSER III allocation is \$17,374,993.51. These funds can be spent through September 30, 2024, are highly flexible, and are designed to help address local recovery efforts relative to responding to COVID-19.

ESSER III differs from the first two ESSER awards. For this grant there is a:

- New 20% required set aside to address learning loss using evidence-based academic, social and emotional learning. The NUSD set-aside, based upon the above allocation, is \$3,474,998.70.
- ESSER III LEA plan and a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction plan that will provide opportunities for input and feedback from stakeholders as part of the ongoing revisions/updates of the plans.

## **20% SET-ASIDE TO ADDRESS LEARNING LOSS**

20% of an LEA's total ESSER III award (per ARP Act Sec. 2001(e)(1)) must be reserved to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.

All activities and interventions funded through this required set aside must be evidence-based, respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable student populations, including each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, gender, and migrant status, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care.

## 20% SET-ASIDE TO ADDRESS LEARNING LOSS

According to ESSER III federal guidance from the United States Department of Education (USDOE), expanded learning opportunities (ELOs) offered as part of ESSER III funding to address learning loss may include:

- Summer learning or summer enrichment programs (which NUSD has already begun to implement)
- Extended day or comprehensive afterschool programs (that NUSD offers and plans to expand)
- Extended school year programs (which NUSD provides for identified special needs students)
- Other intervention strategies which could be during the regular school day (NUSD also offers in-school interventions which could be expanded)

# **SAFE RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION PLAN**

# SAFE RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION PLAN REQUIREMENTS

All LEAs receiving ESSER III funds must develop and make publicly available on their website, a plan for the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services.

The previous ESSER Reopening of Schools plan will be revised to address the new requirements to be in place for the first day of the 2021-2022 school year.

LEAs will seek public input and take such input into account in the development and revision of the plan as it is updated.

The plan must be updated at least every 6 months, or more often depending on updates in CDC guidance – through September 30, 2023.

# SAFE RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION PLAN REQUIREMENTS

The Plan must include how the district will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies/procedures, and a description of any such policies/procedures, on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC. Specifically the plan will address:

- Universal and correct wearing of masks (NUSD strongly suggests continued use which is compatible with the passage of A.R.S. 15-342.05)
- Modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing (e.g., use of cohorts, etc.)
- Handwashing and hygiene protocols
- Cleaning, disinfecting, and maintaining healthy facilities plans (which will continue using a weekly Wednesday early release schedule for deep cleaning of facilities and professional development for staff)
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine will continue (in collaboration with the State and local, health department officials and through referrals as part of the collaboration with Mariposa Health Center)

# SAFE RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Plan continued:

- Efforts to support the provision of vaccinations to school community members through local health officials
- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies
- Continued coordination with State and local health officials and partnership of medical officials who are part of the district's advisory team
- Availability of NUSD Online as an option for K-12 families who want a completely online instructional model for the 21-22 school year as we return to in-person instruction at the brick-and-mortar schools this fall

# **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES**

## PROPOSED EXPENDITURES

As expenditures that meet the ESSER III requirements were identified, including the set-asides, they were classified as falling into one of three categories:

- Operations
- Safety and Security
- Curriculum and Instruction

## PROPOSED EXPENDITURES - OPERATIONS

Operational expenses to support local recovery needs and efforts in response to COVID-19 comprise the smallest amount of the ESSER III allocation.

**The expenditures falling into the operations category total approximately \$1,797,000.**

These expenditures include about \$800,000 for summer school utilities and \$100,000 related to summer school transportation for this summer as well as summer 2022 through summer 2024, which will constitute part of the 20% set-aside for learning loss.

Additionally, \$897,000 has been earmarked for technology-related purchases under this category, including a multiple-year purchase for anti-virus software programs, and systems for online payment, student registration, and document signature that were funded from prior ESSER grants.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – SAFETY AND SECURITY**

The CDC recommends key prevention strategies for safely reopening schools that includes use of PPE, handwashing, proper ventilation/purification, and cleaning/disinfection to maintain healthy facilities.

USDOE, in ESSER III guidance, indicates that these strategies work best in combination and school districts should do what they can to address other infrastructure issues, such as ensuring that preexisting ventilation and plumbing needs do not inhibit healthy learning environments as students return to school buildings full-time. Therefore, expenditures for improvements in ventilation systems, air purification systems/devices, and touchless plumbing are recommended.

## PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – SAFETY AND SECURITY

**Approximately \$3,640,000 is allocated for expenditures in the safety and security category over the grant period (which end in fall of 2024).**

A majority of these expenditures, or approximately \$2,737,000, is allocated for PPE, air purification equipment, and disinfecting products to be utilized through September 30, 2024 in school facilities. Another \$20,000 are designated for costs related to disinfecting summer school buses over the grant window and approximately \$18,000 for the cleaning and disinfecting of music instruments.

\$695,000 are allocated to purchase and install touchless faucets and automatic toilet flush devices across the district, minimizing contact in what are otherwise very high-touch areas.

About \$14,000 has been allocated for online professional development related to COVID -19 safety training for all staff through the online SafeSchools portal.

The remaining \$156,000 of funds this category are for the purchase of four vans to use for the transportation of small groups to allow for social distancing during school trips or activities.

## PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

This is the largest category of ESSER III expenditures allocated to support district recovery needs and efforts in response to COVID-19. **In total, approximately \$10,680,000 is designated for costs related to curriculum and instruction.**

This category includes a majority of the expenditures which comprise the required set-aside to address learning loss and social-emotional learning other than those already discussed that fall into the operational category.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

All activities and interventions funded through the new 20% reservation for addressing learning loss will be evidence-based, respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the impact of COVID-19 for all students.

The USDOE indicates to address academic and social-emotional learning, expanded learning opportunities (or ELOs) will be provided. These ELOs should be structured, engaging learning environments that support and complement what students are learning in class. ELOs can occur outside of the traditional school day through before- and after-school, summer, and extended-day, -week, -year programs. These programs offer more personalized learning opportunities for students and can include learning opportunities during the school day. The district offers such ELOs and will continue implement them, expanding as necessary to meet student needs.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

Additionally, although not required as part of ESSER III, to effectively implement the expanded learning opportunities as part of the set-aside, please note all NUSD schools will be conducting ongoing data and student progress monitoring meetings throughout the school year to monitor student attendance and grades as well as formative benchmark assessment and classroom data.

By viewing this data at not only the school and grade level, but drilling down to the classroom and student levels, these data meetings will strengthen each school's ability to provide specific and timely interventions, including during school interventions, before- or after-school tutoring, and summer school. All of the ELOs implemented will be data-driven and structured to align with student needs as identified through benchmark results.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

As part of the plan to address learning loss through the set-asides, the district will use certified educators as tutors and funds will be utilized for addenda to hire and retain qualified educators to provide expanded learning opportunities in the form of tutoring.

The research indicates that tutoring can be an effective intervention for a wide range of students if provided as “high dosage tutoring.” This means tutoring that is provided consistently by well-trained tutors or educators at least three days per week for at least 30 minutes at a time in small groups of students. In NUSD, tutoring will continue to take place before or after school 3 times week for 45 minutes a day.

To this end, \$209,000 been identified for expenditures related to the expansion of tutoring programs at the high school level from ESSER funding to supplement existing tutoring addenda paid from other grants.

Additionally, \$693,000 has been allocated for instructional materials purchased for tutoring and other ELO interventions.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

As discussed, summer learning programs are another type of allowable ELO that can offer another opportunity to accelerate learning, especially for those students most impacted by disruptions to learning during the school year.

USDOE ESSER III guidance indicates that schools and districts should design programs that are voluntary, are at no cost to parents, have a high academic focus, last about 4-5 weeks, include a focus on language arts and mathematics (at the K-8 level), are taught by a certified teacher, and include enrichment and social-emotional learning activities.

As part of this category and the required set-aside, \$2,180,000 for K-12 summer school teachers for this year and through the summer of 2024 has been allocated to meet student needs. \$198,100 has been included for support staff that provide assistance during summer school.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

As part of “other” expanded learning opportunities eligible for the set-aside, orientation programs for both incoming kindergarten and incoming sixth grade students, have been demonstrated to increase academic success.

For incoming kinder students, an opportunity to be involved in summer orientation programs that focus on early language skills, literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills have been demonstrated to help students thrive in school.

Similarly, orientation programs offered for incoming sixth graders help make the transition from elementary school to the middle school a smooth one. Students learn study skills, make friends, meet teachers, and learn how to be successful in middle school.

\$43,700 of the ESSER set-aside funds will be allocated to provide summer orientation programs for incoming kindergarten and sixth grade students.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

Research also recommends that districts scale up existing tutoring programs by engaging with community partners that already have existing programs that have benefitted students and work with them to support afterschool, weekend, and summer enrichment opportunities for students enrolled in these programs.

Although not an expenditure ESSER funding, the district has submitted a microgrant to support a partnership and data-sharing with the Boys and Girls Club (BGC), where a number of our students are enrolled and attending during the school year for tutoring and homework support as well as during the summer.

Through this partnership, the district will share training in effective reading and math instructional strategies with BGC staff and work collaboratively to monitor student progress for district students enrolled in their programs. Additionally, schools will share information regarding homework with BGC staff to support their efforts to assist our students and families in this expanded learning opportunity. The goal is to eventually enable this agency to expand by providing services at school sites through other grant funding.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

The district has entered into partnerships with the Santa Cruz County Superintendent's office and the Arizona's Children Association. The County Superintendent's Office will provide a variety of social-emotional learning activities at each school and provide staff training in this area. The district will also continue the agreement with the Arizona's Children Association to provide counseling services for students and families at no charge to the district. Additionally, leveraging other grant funds, two additional elementary counselors have been added for the upcoming school year.

Expenditures to meet students' social and emotional learning (SEL) needs have been included in the ESSER III grant as part of the required 20% set-aside. This includes \$324,000 for a site SEL coordinator through FY 24 for each school and funding to employ a 1.0 FTE psychologist. \$30,000 in SEL materials and professional development will also be provided through the ESSER III funds.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

Moving from curriculum & instruction expenditures that fall under the 20% set-asides to discussing other curriculum & instruction expenditures that will be included in the ESSER III funding, research identifies the importance of helping parents and caregivers understand students' progress by sharing information on student opportunities to learn, academic progress, and performance on state and local assessments.

One approach to providing information to parents and caregivers is by hosting parent meetings/trainings that provide instructional information, including training on how to access and understand instructional assessment data, to support parents and caregivers as true educational partners.

\$58,000 for FY22 through FY24 for the coordination and implementation of parent education programs, including funds allocated for childcare for these events has been allocated.

## PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

Numerous research studies shows that high-quality curricula materials that are aligned to current state standards can reduce variability in the quality of instruction across classrooms, improve use of evidence-based pedagogical techniques, and help boost student achievement.

Limited capital funding available from the state for more than fifteen years has significantly impeded the district's ability to move forward with a textbook adoption cycle for core content areas. However, to address this critical need, \$5,245,000 textbooks and supplementary instructional materials has been allocated using ESSER III funds for this purchase.

Research also indicates that, as we begin to enter the post-pandemic era, differentiated instruction may be the single most important instructional strategy that can be provided. Online instructional programs are an effective way to supplement core instruction and provide differentiation to meet individual students needs, providing both remediation and acceleration. Therefore, \$514,200 has been included in the grant for the purchase of instructional software.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

The importance of thoughtful processes for implementation of new curricula, online programs, and other instructional materials--especially instructional materials that were intentionally designed to facilitate shifts in teacher practice—is critical for successful use.

Preparing teachers and staff by providing them with the knowledge and skills to ensure that the adoption of high-quality instructional materials translates into improvements in student achievement is key. Case studies demonstrate that when provided with the appropriate supports, teachers and staff can develop the content and pedagogical knowledge that they need to help their students successfully tackle the challenging material found in high-quality curricula.

To support the purchase and implementation of online instructional programs such as Edgenuity, high-quality K-12 textbook adoptions for the core content areas, and the effective implementation of scientifically-based intervention materials, \$45,000 in ESSER III funds have been allocated for professional development for teachers and staff. In addition to this, additional district funds have been utilized to engage in curriculum work with teachers already this summer.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES – CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION**

Before COVID-19, schools across the country were at different stages in learning how to leverage technology to support teaching and learning. However, COVID-19 required a sudden and complete shift to hybrid and remote learning, which NUSD successfully navigated this past year. Moving into the 21-22 school year, technology will continue to play an important role in instructional design and learning for students.

As previously shared, the district is completing the purchase of additional laptop computers for students, providing a computer cart for each classroom in the district schools. The district is now able to provide a one-to-one ratio of computers for students. Laptop computers for teachers will also be purchased. To support this technology expenditure for these items, \$1,140,000 is included in grant for instructional technology needs.

## **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES**

This completes the explanation of proposed ESSER III expenditures for the operations, safety and security, and curriculum & instruction categories.

A summary of these ESSER III expenditures will be included in the ESSER plan information provided to stakeholders and the explanation of the Safe Return to In-Person Instructional plan for NUSD that is shared publicly. All of this plan information, as well as any subsequent updates to these plans, will be posted on the NUSD website.

THANK YOU

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