ESSER Funding

The Cartwright Elementary School District has received three different allocations through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund. The allocations are as follows:

ESSER I (available for obligation through September 30, 2022) – $7.99 million

ESSER II (available for obligation through September 30, 2023) - $32.93 million

ESSER III (available for obligation through September 30, 2024) - $74.54 million

These highly flexible funds are designed to help address local relief, prevention, and recovery efforts relative to responding to COVID-19.

Although each of the three funding sources have the same allowable costs, ESSER III has additional requirements including a set aside of no less than 20% to accelerate and enrich learning and increase learning opportunities, especially for vulnerable student populations, who were disproportionately affected from the COVID-19 pandemic (ELs, students w/ special needs, low income families, etc.). In addition, the legislation requires Districts post on their website a safe return to in-person instruction plan, engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders in development of the plan, and publicly share how the 20% set-aside has been allocated to address learning loss through evidence-based interventions.

Responding to academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students

There are several ways the LEA will ensure that interventions address the academic impact of lost instructional time and respond to academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students. All schools within our District are Title I schools and therefore serve the students that were disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

To meet the academic needs of our students, the Cartwright School District will:

-Implement summer learning programs - This includes providing extra duty for certified and classified staff to teach using evidence based practices, extra duty for staff to be trained on evidence based practices and resources, and extra duty for staff to coordinate and plan for the summer school program

-Implement comprehensive after school programs - This includes extra duty for certified staff to provide evidence based instruction to students after school during the school year

-Implement extended learning opportunities - The Cartwright School District will provide modems to all households and outsource internet services to Phoenix Union High School District to ensure all students have access to internet at home. This will allow students to utilize evidence based online programs such as Lexia, Freckle, Successmaker, Achieve 3000, etc. after school, on weekends, or during the summer

-Employ additional instructional assts. to work with students in 1st-2nd grade to pull small groups, model instruction for students, and provide support so students can access the curriculum being taught by the teacher.

-Employ Acceleration Teacher Specialists who will provide small group intervention to students and assist schools in providing a MTSS structure for their students so all students can be provided the supports they need to learn at high levels

-Purchase supplemental evidence based online programs such as Lexia and Classkick to provide students with opportunities for blended learning and additional learning outside of the school day

-Increase technology in the classrooms to increase engagement, allow teachers to utilize blended learning opportunities, and allow for critical thinking of students

-Purchase supplies/materials so students have access to resources necessary to achieve at high levels

-Employ a Director of Educational Technology and Distance Learning to ensure students that want to continue in Distance Learning have access to evidence based instruction

-Employ an Acceleration Specialist Director to oversee and provide leadership to the Acceleration Specialists and assist schools in creating their MTSS structure to support students

-Provide PD to teachers/staff on evidence based practices including feedback, goal setting, teacher clarity, and collective teacher efficacy

-Purchase headphones for students to utilize evidence based online programs and blended learning

-Outfit classrooms with 75" Interactive TVs or projectors to ensure increased engagement, especially with subgroups disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students

-Provide students with modems to use in their house for internet services to provide evidence based learning opportunities after school weekends, and during summer to provide additional instructional time to subgroups disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic

-Provide transportation for students (especially those that may not have the opportunity to attend field trips including low-income families, homeless students, or children in foster care) to attend educational field trips and get real-world hands on experiences with the topics they are learning

The LEA will also provide support and interventions for students regarding social emotional learning including:

-Employ Response to Intervention - Behavior specialists who will work to create a MTSS structure in the area of behavior and social emotional learning. These individuals will work with the school counselors to provide small group and individualize plans for students to ensure they receive the behavior and social skill instruction they need to be successful in the classroom. These individuals will utilize evidence based materials such as Second Step and Boystown practices. RTI-Bs will also provide professional development to all staff regarding behavior management, behavior intervention, and social emotional learning

-Purchase GoZen! SEL curriculum for counselors to use with students to strengthen social emotional learning.

-Employ a Social Emotional Learning Specialist to work with schools on helping students and families find resources and small group instruction to deal with emotional trauma and mental health.

How funding will be utilized to implement prevention and mitigation strategies to safely open and operate schools for in-person learning

Protocols have been established based on CDC and ADE guidelines, along with any federal, state, and local orders. These practices are put in place for the safety of all. For instance, students are required to wear masks that are cloth or surgical style while in the classroom. These facemasks will be provided to students if students do not bring their own. Other personal protective equipment such as faceshields, hand sanitizer, soap, etc. will be provided to students in order to allow the following of CDC guidelines regarding the washing of hands and be provided to staff to screen students upon entering the buildings.

Physical distancing is also recommended as a mitigation strategy for schools. Consequently, money has been allocated to purchase additional school buses to allow for fewer students per bus, as well as additional furniture while in the classroom. Outdoor learning spaces will also be created through the leveling of fields, installation of shade structures, and resurfacing outdoor basketball courts to help with physical distancing and providing educational activities outside, where the threat of transmission is lessened. Additional staff, including playground monitors will be hired to help monitor students to ensure the monitoring of safety protocols.

Of course, the CDC also recommends cleaning and sanitizing areas often. Therefore, cleaning and sanitizing supplies will be purchased, as well as additional staff members hired to ensure continuous cleaning in common areas and high touch areas such as restrooms, outdoor equipment, and desks.

Moreover, the CDC recommends testing often to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. As a result, the District will utilize funding to support the hiring of COVID-19 testing nurses to ensure staff and students can be tested quickly and efficiently if needed.

The District will also purchase materials and technology so that all students can have their own and avoid touching other students' school supplies or technology. In addition, bottle filling stations will be installed so that students have access to drinking water without using a water fountain.

Other building improvements, such as HVAC upgrades and maintenance contracts will help ensure better filtration and air quality to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

There may be situations where students have the Coronavirus or have been exposed to the virus and have to quarantine. In these situations, the LEA has created a plan to ensure students can still receive instruction through virtual learning either through packets w/ office hours, simultaneous teaching, or asynchronous teaching. ESSER funds will pay for extra duty for teachers to provide these additional academic services to students.

Storage containers will help store furniture that may be needed to assist with social distancing, additional seating, etc.

Copiers will be purchased for schools and District office departments to assist in communicating with parents, students, and families, regarding COVID-19 protocols, additional learning opportunities, or to copy evidence based instructional materials to increase student achievement.

In addition, ESSER III funding will be utilized to ensure instructional staff can continue to be paid throughout the pandemic, despite enrollment loss, to help ensure continuity of school District operations.

Finally, chromebooks and chromebook carts will be purchased for students to ensure each student has a one to one device to mitigate the spread of infectious disease including COVID-19 and support accelerated learning for students. Document cameras will also support evidenced based instruction to accelerate learning during in-person instruction. Because of the additional need for technology, lithium batteries and sensor/humidity kits will be purchased to support the computer network equipment.