

**ARP ESSER Plan  
Nelson County Schools  
Revised, November 2022  
kdearpesser@education.ky.gov**

**PREVENTION & MITIGATION STRATEGIES**

Nelson County Schools will follow Covid-19 pandemic-related prevention and mitigation strategies outlined in accordance with guidance from the CDC, KDE, and local/state/federal mandates. District administration (including the Director of Community Health and School Nursing Coordinator) review pandemic-related guidance on a daily basis and immediately deploys related procedures. Established communication protocols include active communication systems via email, social media, website, text, voice, and email notifications for school administration, staff, students, families, and community members to receive notification in under an hour. Each school has a full-time nurse, and the district employees two, full-time APRNs who provide services to schools and ensure compliance and alignment to related guidance. Students, staff, and stakeholders who enter the building are screened following established protocols required by the CDC and state and local officials. Any individual who presents symptoms of contagious illness follows quarantine protocols aligned to the CDC and local health department guidance.

Nelson County Schools has conducted a multi-faceted review of local needs. ARP ESSER funds will support prevention and mitigation strategies for facility improvement to reduce the risk of virus transmission and exposure by providing for adequate social distancing. The strategies will include acquisition of seating that permits students to safely maintain minimally required social distancing (of 3 feet or more) for students during in-person instruction in the local school. ESSER and GEER funds released in FY2021 were used to provide measures for masking, sanitizing, and ensuring safety of the physical school environment for a safe return to in person instruction.

The district uses three communication systems to address Safe Return to Schools:

- [NC Healthy at School Website](#)
- [District News & Announcements home](#)

**ACADEMIC IMPACT ON LOST INSTRUCTIONAL TIME**

*(Please refer to end notes for research studies/research base supporting use of the selected activity.)*

The district will use a nationally norm-referenced assessment (i-Ready<sup>1</sup>) to measure student learning loss in the subjects of reading and mathematics for elementary and middle school students. The ACT<sup>2</sup> will be administered each fall to measure learning loss among high school students in reference to deficits in meeting identified college admission benchmarks. Additional screenings will include the use of local common assessments and classroom

screenings (including anecdotal and standards-based measures) to monitor student progress and growth between the periods of norm-referenced assessment. Each school has developed a local protocol to support student learning through identified interventions to address academic learning loss and the impact of lost instructional time.

Extended school year (summer learning programs) will be offered for a period of four weeks annually to all students in the district through the summers of 2021, 2022, and 2023. These are held at the local school and targeted students identified as needing additional academic, social emotional, and mental health supports.

To provide direct supports to students and families who have chosen to remain in a virtual environment, the district will use ARP ESSER funding to support a .5FTE instructional coach<sup>3</sup> to support implementation of evidence-based instructional practices through virtual learning/NTI using a continuous improvement plan.

Each school in the district has been allocated a \$50/student ADA amount to address the individual learning loss needs for the student population in each school. Schools inclusive of a K-2 population received an additional 1.0FTE per equitable ADA allocation to provide a K-2 literacy interventionist. A 1.0 FTE instructional assistant was provided to each K-2 school to address GAP population needs and to support interventions and remediation under the guidance of each school's Reading Recovery<sup>4</sup> Interventionist.

Screening measures are in place to identify social emotional and mental health needs, including training of school staff in Youth Mental Health and First-Aid Screening<sup>5</sup> and Trauma-Informed<sup>6</sup> care. The local school FRYSC programs conduct individual needs assessments through surveys, home visits, and individual family (and student meetings) to identify the need for social emotional and mental health services. Families, students, teachers, and community members can generate referrals through an anonymous, online referral process. The district has formed a collaboration with Astra Mental Health to provide direct support to students and families in need of mental health services.

To facilitate and ensure equitable identification, access, and services (including for underserved and underrepresented populations), the district will employ a Director of Student Performance to facilitate and guide school protocols and implementation of measures to gather, analyze, and synthesize student academic, social, and emotional data outcomes for student, family, and communities<sup>7</sup>. This individual will lead and supervise planning, prioritization, communication, and evaluation of equitable models of resource distribution and develop systems for analysis and communication of student learning loss, progress, and growth for schools, families, and community.

### **MEANINGFUL CONSULTATION**

The district engaged in meaningful conversation through a series of intentional conversations with community stakeholders to design the plan for use of funds.

*Educators, School Staff, and Unions:* From April – May 2021, a team of district administrators (including the superintendent, federal programs coordinator, director of leadership and learning, representatives from HR, student health, etc...) visited each school site for a two-hour period during afterschool and conducted a needs assessment and information session with all school staff. The team met with participants in small groups and led conversations on district-wide needs assessment, collection of data, and the design process. School staff (including certified/classified and instructional/support staff) contributed to the conversation around participant-selected topics with the opportunity to attend two or more presentation sessions. Conversation facilitators took notes, and participants were encouraged to contribute additional feedback (following the conversation) through written surveys and email. Facilitators (including the superintendent and district administration) remained after the scheduled discussion time to provide opportunities for 1:1 conversation, listen to feedback, and respond to questions. Local union groups were provided an opportunity to address topics and concerns through individual conversation, with representation from local teacher union groups, including identified building and district representatives. The local Legacy Leader group (an organized group of retired teachers) facilitated discussion between local school teachers and the district and acted as a liaison to contribute feedback on ESSER ARP initiatives. This feedback and information were summarized into a shared collaborative document and used to identify priorities and needs for development of this plan. The results of the feedback process were implemented through the provision of additional literacy support (literacy specialists), the instructional coach, and the Director of Student Performance roles.

*School Administration and Principals:* All school administration were included in the staff conversations. Through January – February 2021, the district CFO, Director of Community Engagement, and Student Services representatives met individually with the principal (and other school administrators) from each building to conduct an individual needs assessment (as an outgrowth of the CSIP process) and to create a budget unique to the needs of each school. Individual principals worked with local staff and SBDM councils to create an individual school budget and to provide feedback on pandemic-related needs. Each school presented a written plan for use of funds and identified specific pandemic-related needs and protocols. This feedback resulted in the additional \$50 ADA allocation to provide resources for local schools to address learning loss and local need.

*Students and Families:* Students were engaged in the consultation process through two primary measures: 1) Family Table Conversations; and 2) Discussions with targeted collaborative and/or student leadership groups. The district uses a structure for conducting and documenting information from conversations by creating a conversation protocol to identify needs. Family Table Conversations included 1:1 discussion with student and families to capture current needs and concerns, to gather feedback on ideas to address these needs and concerns, and to collect their input on development of a plan to address the academic, social-emotional, and mental health needs. This feedback and information were summarized into a shared collaborative document and used to identify priorities and needs and resulted in the deployment of a comprehensive four-week extended summer learning program in each school.

A series of in-person family and community forums were conducted in April-May, 2021 with attendance of 100+ persons at each event. These were held at the local school (with a total of seven events in each of the communities and school areas within the district). A general informational session was held; the larger group broke out into small conversations of 8-10 to specifically identify local needs, gather feedback on the plan, and to create opportunity for discussion and concerns. The facilitators were trained at the district level and included district staff and school administration who collected the feedback using a provided discussion format. The results of this feedback were unified into a district-level discussion in which common priorities were identified, ranked, and linked to possible resources. The feedback from these sessions was used to inform the creation of additional mechanisms for data collection from and comprehensive communication strategies with families and community members across expanded platforms and formats.

*Civil Rights representation* – In order to identify needs and collect feedback on plan development, Nelson County Schools engaged in 1:1 Family Table discussions with families of students who fall within groups qualifying for civil rights representation. These discussions were conducted at the local school level and included family members, the student(s) enrolled in the public school, the classroom teacher, and a school administrator who guided the group through meaningful consultation and a discussion protocol to identify needs and to provide families an opportunity to provide feedback and input regarding concerns unique to their representative groups. The local EL/Title III coordinator was included as a team member in planning and design for equitable access. This feedback contributed to identification of the need for the role of the Director of Student Performance (page 2) to assess and evaluate the performance needs and growth of these student groups.

*Representation from disadvantaged groups:* Feedback and information was collected from these stakeholders using a combination of 1:1 conversation, need surveys, community brew (in-person small group discussions on relative topics), and collaboration with local community groups who serve these targeted populations. Representation from school food service and special education (director and teachers) have participated in all conversations. The district's FRYSC coordinators play an important role in identifying and addressing the needs of disadvantaged families and serve as a liaison between the school district and locals who represent disadvantaged populations, such as food banks. Astra Health provides mental health services to students, and CASA serves as an advocate for families of disabled and disadvantaged youth. Feedback from these conversations resulted in participation in the district participating in the expanded Summer Food Service Program (through the Seamless Summer Option) with the weekly meal pick up provision serving an average of 11,500 meals weekly, and the schools continued to provide weekly meal pick up during shut-down periods. Each student in the district was provided a Chromebook device, and internet access (via mobile hotspots and community hubs) were issued to create equitable access for all.

Holistically, feedback from each of these consultations was tracked and summarized to identify key funding needs and priorities at the local school and district levels. Each school

administrator participated in an individual discussion with district administration to identify needs, provide feedback on the identified priorities, and contribute to the plan design. A draft was created to align the spending funds to the priorities, and the final plan included a comprehensive budget alignment unifying available resources (including ARP ESSER funds) to address and remedy the identified needs.

### **HOW REMAINING FUNDS WILL BE SPENT**

*Software:* The district will purchase and provide software-based platforms to facilitate learning, remediation, intervention, and virtual instruction. Software platforms include, but are not limited to, PLATO<sup>8</sup>, Follett, etc... to provide students virtual access to instruction and resources to support instruction.

*Indirect Costs:* The district will use the indirect cost rate to cover expenses related to ARP ESSER, including the additional cost of program administration, purchasing, accounting, Human Relations, program implementation, etc.... The maximum indirect cost rate will be applied.

- <sup>1</sup> i-Ready's Impact on Students' Reading and Mathematics Achievement, retrieved from <https://www.curriculumassociates.com/research-and-efficacy/i-ready-evidence-impact>
- <sup>2</sup> Allen, J. & Radunzel, J. (2017). What are the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks? Issue Brief retrieved from <https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/pdfs/R1670-college-readiness-benchmarks-2017-11.pdf>
- <sup>3</sup> Knight, D. S., & Skrtic, T. M. (2021). Cost-effectiveness of Instructional Coaching: Implementing a Design-based, Continuous Improvement Model to Advance Teacher Professional Development. *Journal of School Leadership*, 31(4), 318-342.
- <sup>4</sup> Reading Recovery: IES What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Snapshot retrieved from <https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/pdfs/R1670-college-readiness-benchmarks-2017-11.pdf>
- <sup>5</sup> Haggerty, D., Carlson, J.S., McNall, M. *et al.* Exploring Youth Mental Health First Aider Training Outcomes by Workforce Affiliation: A Survey of Project AWARE Participants. *School Mental Health* 11, 345–356 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-018-9300-5>
- <sup>6</sup> Jesse Diggins (2021). Reductions in Behavioural and Emotional Difficulties from a Specialist, Trauma-Informed School. *The Educational and Developmental Psychologist*, DOI: [10.1080/20590776.2021.1923131](https://doi.org/10.1080/20590776.2021.1923131)
- <sup>7</sup> Matthew K. Burns, Meredith R. Naughton, June L. Preast, Ze Wang, Robert L. Gordon, Vicki Robb & Michelle L. Smith (2018). Factors of Professional Learning Community Implementation and Effect on Student Achievement, *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 28:4, 394-412, DOI: [10.1080/10474412.2017.1385396](https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2017.1385396)
- <sup>8</sup> McLeod, J. (2017). Research Base and Instructional Design of Edmentum Digital Curriculum retrieved from [https://www.edmentum.com/sites/edmentum.com/files/resource/media/Instructional%20Design%20White%20Paper%20FINAL\\_1.pdf](https://www.edmentum.com/sites/edmentum.com/files/resource/media/Instructional%20Design%20White%20Paper%20FINAL_1.pdf)