

Croton -Harmon Union Free School District



American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Elementary & Secondary Emergency Relief (ESSER)

Plan for Safe Return to In -Person Instruction 2021-2022

Carrie E. Tompkins Elementary School (CET)
Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School (PVC)
Croton-Harmon High School (CHHS)

June 28, 2021
Updated:

Introduction

The Croton-Harmon Union Free School District's Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction is the focus of this document. It represents the planning for each school in our district: Carrie E. Tompkins Elementary School (CET), Pierre Van Cortlandt Middle School (PVC) and Croton-Harmon High School (CHHS)

Our planning framework was built on the following objectives:

- Keeping health and safety at the forefront of planning
- Maintaining continuity of instruction
- Ensuring access and equity for all students
- Communicating with stakeholders, such as staff, families, and partners

In May 2020, the District formed the Croton-Harmon Union Free School District School Re-Entry Task Force. This Task Force is composed of many stakeholders including, but not limited to, students, parents, teachers, union leaders, clerical staff, and buildings and grounds staff. Our planning includes consultations with the Westchester County Executive's Office to provide pandemic updates and pertinent information, the Westchester Department of Health as well as, BOCES Regional Safety, CHUFSD Health & Safety Committee members, and Altaris Security. Our plan has been reviewed and discussed with Dr. Eric Mier, our district's medical director. Our plan has been informed by documents from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), local Department of Health, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), Elementary & Secondary Emergency Relief interim final regulations (ESSER) and the New York State Education Department. The Task Force's goal continues to examine the school re-entry process and make recommendations on how to best support students as they return to school.

In developing our initial recommendations and [plan](#), we recognize the reality that it may need to change as more guidance documents from the New York State Education Department (NYSED), New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) evolve. Our plan has evolved as the pandemic has evolved. This plan has built in flexibility to adjust to changes through this pandemic. In April 2021, we successfully transitioned students back to school utilizing our Full Time In-Person Learning Model and plan [addendum](#) to guide us, while still having a remote option available. As we plan for the 2021-2022 school year we continue to plan for a Safe Return to In-Person Instruction for all students as per the agencies specified above.

An important part to our planning is the reflection on how the pandemic has impacted students. We continue to assess students' social emotional status as well as academic status. The pandemic has impacted students and families differently and our Safe Return to School Plan addresses these pieces.

Review of Guidance

Review of the current information regarding COVID -19, spread of the virus, and mitigation measures continues to be a focus of the CHUFSD. We consult numerous resources, such as: New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) to name a few.

Stakeholder Engagement - Our Process

Stakeholder feedback is central to our work in CHUFSD. Throughout the 2020 -2021 school year, we launched numerous surveys to collect the thinking of our community, which includes, but not limited to, students, parents, students, faculty, and staff. After receiving notification of the Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief funds, specifically, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Allocation (CRSSA), we immediately launched a ThoughtExchange to gain feedback from our stakeholders. Here is a summary of stakeholder engagement:

April 8, 2021	Superintendent & Asst. Superintendents presented ESSER information to the Board of Education at public meeting
April 20, 2021	Superintendent & Asst. Superintendents presented ESSER information to the Board of Education at public meeting
April 14, 2021	Administrative Council Review of ESSER Funds (Summer Programs)
May 18, 2021	Administrative Council Review of ESSER Funds
May 19, 2021	Administrative Council Review of ESSER Funds
May 19, 2021	Superintendent & Asst. Superintendents presented ESSER information and reporting timelines to the Board of Education at public meeting
May 20, 2021	Launch the ThoughtExchange for Stakeholder Feedback
June 3, 2021	Board of Education Presentation/Discussion & Review of Stakeholder Feedback
June 7, 2021	CHUFSD Reentry Task Force Discussion/Feedback & Review of Stakeholder Feedback
June 10, 2021	Opportunity for Public Comment - Board of Education Meeting
June 17, 2021	Board of Education Meeting - Brief Review of Areas of Spending
July 1, 2021	Post the Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Learning on the CHUFSD Website

Here is a summary of our community feedback through ThoughtExchange:



OVERVIEW

Exchange participation link: my.thoughtexchange.com/#213354023

5 Participant groups

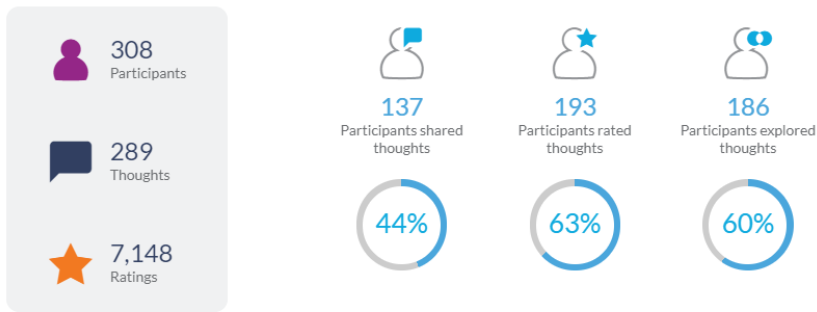
308 Participants

289 Thoughts

7,148 Ratings

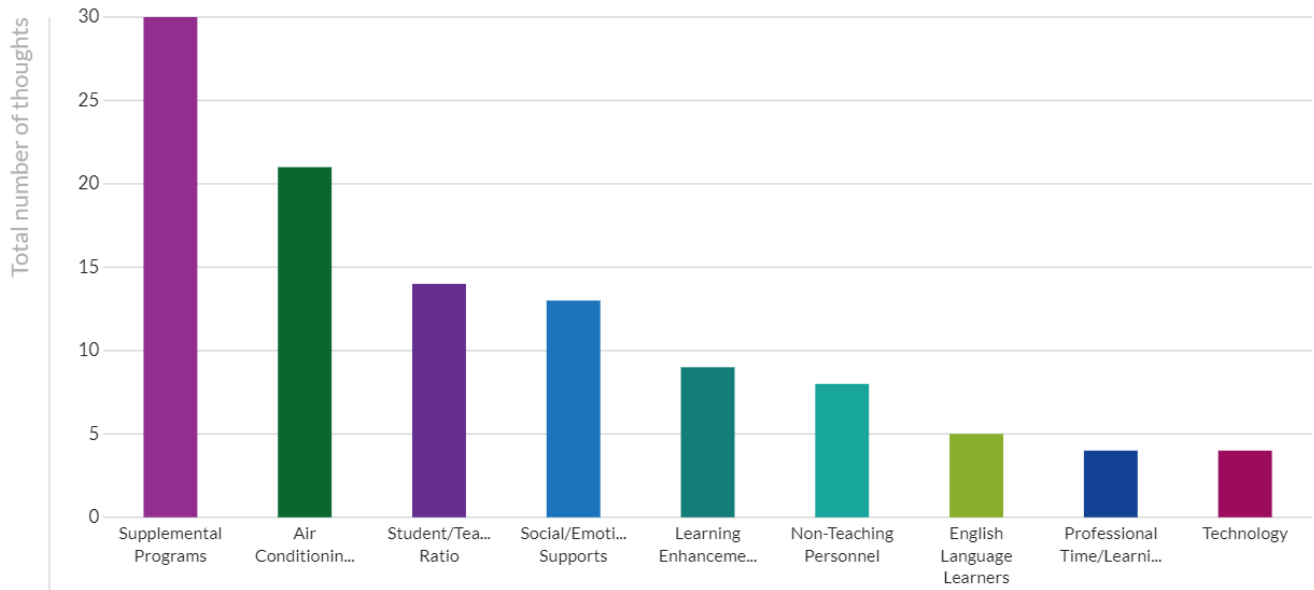
Participant group:

What ideas do you have on how we should consider utilizing ESSER funds to support and accelerate student learning and engagement?



RESULTS Theming Report

Edit # ↩ ☆



Top 4 highly - rated thoughts from Parents:

Croton-Harmon Union Free School District | Parent/Guardian



Search

What ideas do you have on how we should consider utilizing ESSER funds to support and accelerate student learning and engagement?

1 of 4 >

STEM materials that don't involve technology Hands on learning is important, not just watching videos of science experiments and open discussions



4.1 (39) Ranked #1 of 179



Increase the number of teachers so we can decrease the number of students in a class. 26 students in a class is way too high. By adding more teachers and reducing class size each child is given an optimal learning experience.



4.1 (29) Ranked #2 of 179



Focus funding on face to face programs, social interaction, and creative learning enhancements The kids have been overloaded with technology this year so more emphasis on technology/remote instruction is NOT needed



4.0 (53) Ranked #3 of 179



Engaging, in-person activities will help with children's and young adults' social and emotional well being. The district should make ever effort to provide enriching communal activities for students: sports, performances, volunteering, reading groups, etc.



3.9 (51) Ranked #4 of 179



Top 4 highly - rated thoughts from Students:

Croton-Harmon Union Free School District | Student

Search

What ideas do you have on how we should consider utilizing ESSER funds to support and accelerate student learning and engagement?

Air Conditioning! School is so hot at the end of the year and it can be very hard to learn due to the temperature.

4.1 ★★★★★ (21)

Ranked #1 of 28



Air conditioning It is uncomfortable to learn in a not climate controlled room.

4.1 ★★★★★ (20)

Ranked #2 of 28



I would like to use the spending on air conditioning for the schools it's important because student deserve to not potential suffer from heat stroke during class

4.0 ★★★★★ (21)

Ranked #3 of 28



Air conditioning Conditioning is important that way students are in a comfortable environment that they can work in

4.0 ★★★★★ (20)

Ranked #4 of 28



Top 4 highly - rated thoughts from Faculty & Staff:

Croton-Harmon Union Free School District | Teacher/Staff



Search

What ideas do you have on how we should consider utilizing ESSER funds to support and accelerate student learning and engagement?

1 of 2 >

More Special Education Teachers Our special education department is spread too thin. There are some teachers who are covering 2-3 grade levels and some class sizes are way to large.



4.3 (24 👤)
Ranked #1 of 55



Small class sizes and smaller learning communities. Student to teacher ratios should be considered. How can "at school" relationships be stronger? Interpersonal relationships are more essential than ever after the separation and isolation. Mental health matters. More adults with our students.



4.2 (26 👤)
Ranked #2 of 55



Hire more teachers. This allows more individual attention and stronger academic outcomes.



4.2 (19 👤)
Ranked #3 of 55



Helping students struggling academically



4.2 (18 👤)
Ranked #4 of 55



Funding

First, let's take a moment to review all of the acronyms that are used to discuss federal funding. The chart below describes the terms and specifies the amount of dollars the district will receive.



Acronyms

ESSER	Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief
ESSER I	CARES Act & GEER (2020) (Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act) (\$114K) (Government Emergency Education Act) (\$19K)
ESSER II	CRRSA Act (Corona Response & Relief Supplemental Allocation) (\$250K) <i>Spans 2021-2023</i>
ESSER III	ARP (American Rescue Plan) (\$563K) <i>Spans 2021-2024</i>

* Note - Districts shall reserve not less than 20 percent of ESSER funds to address learning loss

As discussed, the Croton -Harmon School District will receive federal funds that address the pandemic. There are three parts to the ESSER funds: ESSER I, ESSER II and ESSER III. ESSER I, or also known as, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020 provided funds to address the district's immediate needs of the pandemic. These funds were used to offset the cost for personal protective equipment (PPE), etc. The focus of this document is to concentrate on the funding from ESSER II and ESSER III. Our district will receive funds under ESSER II (CRSSA 2021) and ESSER III(ARPA 2021*). These multiyear funds can be used for various needs, such as addressing what the United States Department of Education refers to as "learning loss," which are learning needs associated with the pandemic, school facility repairs, addressing indoor air quality, developing systems and implementing procedures to improve the preparedness and response efforts of districts, and much more. For Croton -Harmon, CRSSA funds are approximately \$250,000 and can be used between 2021-2023; whereas the ARP funds, equaling approximately \$563,000 can be used between 2021 -2024. What is very important to note is that these funds are provided to supplement, not supplant staff or programs. It is important for programs to continue beyond funding and do not end when the funds are no longer available.

*Note: by federal law, all districts are required to use not less than 20% of their ARPA ESSER III allocation to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence -based interventions such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after school programs or extended year programs, and ensure that such interventions respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs.

The Plan for Funding

A key component of our planning is to address student needs identified as a result of the pandemic. In the Croton-Harmon School District, based on our community feedback and administrative recommendations, we have identified a few areas we believe where additional funding can continue to support students and our district. Based on our stakeholder feedback, we would like to focus on additional student support in terms of summer programs, social/emotional wellness, AIS and additional ventilation. We will also pilot an instructional coaching model as well as academic/social-emotional support tools for CET. Below is a summary of the proposed spending from September 2021 through June 2024:

Acceleration of Learning (Impact on Learning)	Safely Returning Students to School	Evidence based strategies for Social- Emotional Support	Maximize In-Person Instructional Time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summer Learning Programs/Materials and Supplies ● After school academic support-- Homework club ● AIS/RtI-K-6 Reading Support ● Professional Development in Tier I interventions/ strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HVAC (Air handling and filtration) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student Assistance Services increased ● Pilot: Research and Explore Ron Clark Academy/ philosophy for CET (or another aligned resource that addresses academic/ social emotional needs at CET) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pilot: Instructional Coaching in year 1 or 2 at CHHS ● Equity Professional Development ● Data Analyst/ Visualization Training

The Plan for Full Time In - Person Learning for September 2021

As we have done since April 2021, we will continue to monitor health and safety as we begin the 2021-2022 year starting in September. We will:

- **Continue to Monitor Health and Safety Practices as per NYSDOH Guidelines**
- **Follow All Mitigation Measures as per NYSDOH Guidelines**
 - Continue to follow our replacement schedule for MERV-13 filters
- **Mental Health**
 - Our goal is to reconnect our students with their teachers, school community, and peers. We will continue our practices to check-in on students regarding their mental wellbeing and offer support, as appropriate, should any need be identified.

- **Monitoring the COVID Virus In Schools and Community as per NYSDOH Guidelines**
 - We will continue to monitor the positivity rate for our schools and area ([New York State Percentage Positivity Results by County Dashboard](#)).
 - Principals will continue to include building specific information in their weekly letters to families.

Communication About Return to School in September

The Croton -Harmon School District is planning for a full return to school for all students in September. We will only offer a remote option if the NYS Education Department or NYS Department of Health requires that it be offered.

As we reflect on our safe return to school in April, we can see that the procedures and protocols that were in place aligned with mandates and enabled us to continue to offer our full time in - person learning model for students in grades Kindergarten through 12. We also resumed all sports, including the ones that were considered high-risk.

As we approach September, principals will once again offer times for families to hear about the safe return to school. Dr. O'Connell, our superintendent, will continue to provide updates at Board of Education meetings.

Should you have any specific questions, please do not hesitate to contact your building principal.