



EVERGREEN PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT 124

2929 W. 87th Street • Evergreen Park, Illinois 60805-2328
Phone: (708) 423-0950 • Fax: (708) 423-4292 • Web: www.d124.org

Inspire, Empower, Achieve ... Every Student, Every Day

EVERGREEN PARK ELEMENTARY SD 124 ESSER III USE OF FUNDS PLAN

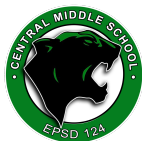
Per ISBE guidance, each school district which receives ARP ESSER III funds must develop a plan for the use of the funding. Throughout the course of this school year, stakeholder feedback was taken into consideration through a variety of venues. This includes public comment at Board of Education Meetings and a committee of teachers that provided feedback on the district's reopening plan. Feedback was also shared directly with senior leadership at union meetings to ensure the safe return to in-person learning during a pandemic. It was identified that there was significant support that was needed with students to address academic learning gaps. The use of paraprofessionals providing one-to-one and small group instruction, supported with this long-term need.

Evergreen Park SD 124 was given \$2,211,218 in American Rescue Plan Funds. The breakdown of what these funds are intended for are as follows: \$81,717 toward learning loss, \$16,343 toward Summer Enrichment, \$16,343 toward after-school programs, and \$2,096,815 that is not restricted to one specific topic.

There were four topics districts were asked to address in regard to the ESSER III grant:

- 1. Funds used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies which are consistent with CDC guidance**
- 2. Use of funds to address the academic impact of lost instructional time**
- 3. Use of remaining funds**
- 4. Addressing students' academic, social, emotional and mental health needs**

Evergreen Park School District 124 invested all of our ESSER I funds in masks, rubber gloves, disinfectants, air purifiers, and other supplies in order to remain in compliance with the CDC guidelines. Purchasing of these supplies created the opportunity for our school district to be able to quickly return to in-person learning. In fact, our district was able to offer sustained and continuous in-person learning for the entire 2020-2021 school year due to incorporating various prevention and mitigation strategies.



Central Middle School

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Northeast School

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Northwest School

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Southeast School

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Southwest School

9900 S. Central Park Ave.
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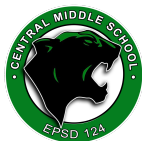
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Making up for our students' lost instructional time was a key topic when looking into how to efficiently spend our ESSER III funds. After further consideration, the district decided that the use of paraprofessionals would help with this issue. We needed the paraprofessionals for instructional support, whether that meant working with students one-on-one or providing instructional and academic support to students with small group instruction. Another topic districts were supposed to focus on was addressing students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. Paraprofessionals not only helped students with their instructional support, they also helped students with behavioral, mental/emotional, physical, and medical support. Due to the mental and emotional strain throughout the last couple of years of Covid, this was a very much needed area to address for the mental stability of our student body. Finally, the districts were asked to explain how we are planning on using the remaining funds. After some discussion, it was decided that Evergreen Park SD 124 was going to use these funds to cover a portion of salaries for extended day workers along with continuing to pay for paraprofessional salaries.

Using this grant money to pay for paraprofessionals will also help create a healthier fund balance for the school district. At this moment, Evergreen Park SD 124 has only 3 months in reserves. The state recommendation along with the board policy states that we should have a minimum of 6 months or as noted in policy 4:20, 50 percent of the annual expenditures in the overall budget.

This is especially important with a new contract coming up at the end of the school year. The contract creates uncertainty about what the district's finances will be in future years to come. Based on our current projections, backlogging ESSER III would change our projected fund balance for everything minus our Working Cash Bond from 3.59 months of reserves to 4.44 months of reserves. Backlogging to cover past expenditures not only creates a higher fund balance, but it also creates an opportunity to spend that money with no restrictions.



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