

**Questions Related to the FY 2023 Budget
March 17, 2022 Special School Committee Meeting**

1) Does the general fund Proposed Budget of \$232.4 million include the planned expenditure of \$5.6 million ESSER (Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief) funding?

No, the general fund budget is separate from the grant fund budget. ESSER funds are federal grant funds and supplement the funding available in CPS general fund budget. The Superintendent's FY23 Proposed Budget includes both a general fund budget proposal of \$232.4 million plus the ESSER grant budget proposal of \$5.6 million.

2) Of the projected remaining \$8.4 million in ESSER funds (as of June 30, 2022), why is CPS planning to spend \$5.6 million in FY23 and only \$2.8 million in FY24 and the first quarter of FY25?

The federal ESSER grant funds are intended to support recovery from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and may be spent on health and safety measures and on strategies to address student needs in the areas of academics and social emotional learning. Our spending plan provides greater spending in the current and upcoming year with an expectation that over time these needs will decline. In total, the district received \$12.6 million in ESSER funds between April 2020 and March 2021. All of the funds must be spent by Sept. 30, 2024.

3) How will new position of Chief of Academics and Schools contribute to better alignment?

Please see attached memo.

4) How are the roles of the SEL Director and MTSS Director related?

The Director for Social and Emotional Learning will partner with the District MTSS Director and school leaders to identify Tier I instruction and tiered interventions within the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support framework around Social Emotional Learning. The Director of MTSS will identify and implement district-wide universal screening for academics, social-emotional learning, and behavior.

5) What is the difference between the role of the CRLS Peer Mediation Specialist and the district's Conflict Mediator?

The Peer Specialist will report to the district's Conflict Mediator. The position's focus area will be CRLS.

6) Will CPS continue to fund the elementary recovery and thrive interventionists, hired in the current year with federal ESSER grant funding, in FY23?

Yes, these interventionist positions will be funded for an additional year (SY22-23). Although initially designated as one-year recovery positions, high absentee rates of staff and students related to COVID-19 disrupted the consistency of intervention services. As a result, we have determined that an additional year of these positions will be beneficial. ESSER funding will be used to fund these positions in FY23.

7) Why is the district planning to fund additional custodians funded through ESSER?

Eight additional custodian positions were hired in the current school year to respond to greater cleaning needs at schools related to breakfast and lunch being served in areas outside of the cafeteria, including classrooms and out of doors. These custodians will continue in the upcoming year, with the expectation that they will be phased out as schools resume the use of the cafeterias as the primary space for meals.

8) Is the COVID-19 Program Manager a permanent position?

This position will be hired on a temporary basis to coordinate the district's COVID-19 health and safety strategies, including the testing program, data collection and reporting, monitoring local, state and national health guidance, and preparing communications for students, families and staff. The position will be phased out as the need for this work declines.

9) Currently the Early College program manager is funded through ESSER. What is the long term plan for that position?

For next year, the Early College Coordinator will continue to work on developing additional higher education partnerships and structuring a program that is closely aligned with DESE recommendations that include ensuring that the program starts in Upper School. As the program grows, we will determine what staffing is necessary to support the success of the program. The staffing may change over time.

10) While we are in the midst of the RSTA review, what funds are being allocated to internships for high school scholars?

- CPS is currently engaged in two efforts related to our college- and career-readiness pathways: a review of the RSTA program and a design process to understand how we might improve work-based learning experiences across CRSL and HSEP. Work-based learning is a term that covers a range of learning experiences, including but not limited to internships. There will be a detailed presentation on April 5 that describes learning thus far from both of these efforts.
- It is our expectation that we will identify a range of opportunities to improve our college- and career-readiness pathways, including improvements to internships and work-based learning. We also expect that some of the recommendations that emerge from this process will be for improvements that can be made in the short-term, next school year. We also expect some recommendations may be more significant and could have larger implications that will take some time to plan and implement, perhaps as part of subsequent District Plan initiatives.
- We have included funding to support both short- and long-term needs. While the budget book only includes descriptions for FY23, the presentation provided on [March 17](#), including a slide with a summary of ESSER's multi-year plan. This includes \$200,000 over two years: "RSTA improvements, including work-based learning coordination."

11) What are our expected outcomes from the summer program?

- Comprehensive full day summer experiences with a focus on building community, affirming relationships, and self-awareness in students through our partnership with DHSP.
- Accelerated learning opportunities and enrichment experiences through CPS programming.
- Mitigate unfinished learning over the summer through tiered instructional programming through CPS.

12) Is there funding to implement outdoor WIFI?

Funding for this project was identified in the current year budget and this project is underway. The process of installing and activating outdoor wifi access points at all schools is 90% complete, with a projected full completion date of April.

13) Has there been any discussion about a BRYT program for younger (i.e. upper school) grades?

There have been conversations around what would be needed to move supports to the upper school. There is also data collected around the need at the upper schools. Part of the overall implementation of BRYT at the HS level included comprehensive strategy planning in the first year. This budget does not reflect any implementation beyond data collection and vision setting.

14) How will we address advanced learning needs once we assess them?

This process is a part of a Multi Tiered System of support. Building upon district policy, re-design of division structure and support from experts in the field; we will design a service delivery model that addresses a continuum of supports based on best practices and student needs. This could include Tier 1 supports in the classroom; Tier 2 supports that address more intense interventions and enrichment; and Tier 3 supports that could take place in a separate environment and include more explicit/direct instructional opportunities that align to assessment data. This continuum of support is one that will be codified in partnership with leaders, educators, families and students most directly impacted by this change.

15) How is CPS addressing internet needs of students?

CPS is addressing the internet needs of students with two programs:

- Free [Comcast Internet Essentials Plus](#) for eligible families. CPS has partnered with Comcast to offer a free Internet Essentials Plus connection to every eligible CPS family. This program was developed and implemented in the fall with promotion via the CPS communications department as well as targeted outreach directly to 3,000 CPS families believed to be eligible. This program is currently 100% funded through the [Federal Emergency Connectivity Fund](#) (ECF).
- In addition, CPS continues to offer Verizon Hotspots to students in need of a home internet connection. These may be students whose family may not be eligible for, or prefer not to sign up for, the Internet Essentials program. These Hotspots are also currently 100% funded by the Emergency Connectivity Fund.

16) Is there funding for SEL professional development?

The ESSER budget includes \$500,000 in FY23 to support professional learning, which supplements available existing PD budgets in district curriculum departments and schools. In addition, there is existing professional learning time built into educators' salaries (the three days before the beginning of the school year, early release days, and 35 hours outside of the school day). As CPS develops a coordinated professional development plan for FY23, we will determine the most effective way to utilize professional development time to build capacity around SEL and other key learning needs.

17) Did the Office of Equity, Inclusion and Belonging budget increase? Will staffing remain the same?

The OEIB department currently has 9.5 staff members and this staffing level will be continued in FY23. The department's non-personnel budget was increased by \$175,000 for FY23.

18) Is there sufficient support in the district's budget, including the OEIB budget, for intensive LGBTQIA+ training and support? How will the NOVO grant be used to develop educator capacity in (LGBTQIA+ training)?

Yes. The district is approaching this training and support in a multi-pronged fashion:

- District-wide training in each building in accordance with mandates and coordinated with state-level agency DESE's Safe Schools Initiative, which is a free resource.
- Coordinated professional learning for building leaders, School Committee, cabinet level administrators.
- Defined timeline and processes for support and coordination across schools and departments, essentially creating a district-wide structure for LGBTQ+ affirming practices across curriculum, clubs, professional learning, caregiver resources, district instruction at Tiers 1 and 2, and referral process.
- Focus groups for multiple stakeholder groups: youth, caregivers, educators.
- Continuing to offer the Intersectionality and Gender choice course.
- Establishing Safe Space Advocates in all schools.
- Funding LGBTQ+ affirming book selection in each school library.
- Providing support for school administrators to launch Rainbow /Gay Straight Alliance in every school.

The NOVO grant will be used to train and support a dedicated person in each school who will provide direct services to students and serve as the on-site resource for colleagues.

19) How will the OEIB budget support family engagement in FY23? Is there an allocation for CFCC?

The overall goal is to increase caregiver participation and uplifting caregiver voice, especially in site-based decision-making. This will happen through:

- School Council Recruitment & Training
- The Village (formerly known as Caregiver University)
- Family Liaison Professional Development and Workshop Facilitation
- Supporting the work of Caregiver & Caregiver Affinity Groups
- Family Engagement Programming
- Community Engagement Team (CET) Outreach Workers
- Supporting Families Experiencing Homelessness
- Community Partners

We are working with CFCC to determine the appropriate level of funding versus in-district support for their work.

20) Is a 3.9% increase to the general fund budget reasonable given a current inflation rate of 7%?

Salary and benefit costs comprise 83% of the CPS general fund budget, and these costs are the largest drivers of the budget. Benefit costs (health/dental/pension) are projected to increase by 4%, while salary costs are projected to increase by 4.6%. Other significant costs include student transportation (5% of the budget), facilities maintenance and energy (3% of budget), and out-of-district tuition (3%) of budget. In the case of transportation and energy, existing multi-year contracts fix pricing for the upcoming year. In the case of out-of-district tuition, a decline in the number of students enrolled out of district, as well as available funding in grant accounts has enabled us to reduce the general fund budget for this line item.

21) Why is the general fund budget for professional development increasing 22%?

The FY23 Budget includes an increase of \$85,000 for the expansion of the paraprofessional M.Ed. program partnership with Lesley University; \$100,000 to support professional development directed by the superintendent's office, and a \$46,500 increase for professional development contracts and workshop stipends for the Office of Equity, Inclusion & Belonging. In addition, the formula for allocating PD funds to schools increased from \$25 per student to \$35 per student, resulting in an overall increase for school-based PD of \$60,000. These larger investments make up almost 90% of the overall increase of \$327,935. The remainder of the increases consists primarily of small adjustments to departments as well as the normal alignment of budgets for several schools and departments.

22) Will this budget bring us to higher reading levels for 3rd graders and math for 8th graders for our African-American scholars?

The addition of the Chief of Academics and Schools will bring the instructional vision and framework along with alignment and focus of the curriculum areas that we believe will yield improved reading and math outcomes for students.

23) Are more funds being allocated to post secondary planning and guidance counselors?

There are resources that are allocated to address college and career readiness. We are not proposing to add any guidance counselors in the FY23 budget. As we complete the time on learning analysis for grades 9-12 and the enrollment analysis, we will be better positioned to determine the need for additional guidance support.

24) Will the updated roll out of the iReady tool have an increased budget implication?

Yes. The updated rollout of iReady includes continuing the existing diagnostic assessment tools in math and ELA in grades 3 - 8 and the expansion to include the personalized learning tools. The new costs for the personalized learning tools will be funded through federal IDEA funds that are required to be used to strengthen our multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) as part of our plan to implement Comprehensive Coordinated Early Intervening Services. We are finalizing the costs of this expanded package with the vendor, but the current estimate is an increase of approximately \$25,000 each for math and ELA (total of \$50K).

25) Please provide a listing of all the positions that will be funded from ESSER funds. Include positions carried over from FY23 and new positions added for FY23. Which of these positions will be made permanent or let go after funding ends?

The chart below lists positions funded using ESSER funding in the current year (FY22) and proposed for next year (FY23). The district will determine which of these positions will continue after the ESSER funding ends based on student and/or programmatic needs and availability of funding from other sources.

ESSER FUNDED POSITIONS FY22 & FY23			
Position	FTE	FY22	FY23
Elementary interventionists (“recover & thrive”)	12.0	Yes	Yes
Elementary paraprofessionals	12.0	yes	yes
Early college program manager	1.0	yes	yes
CRLS SEL social worker	1.0	yes	yes
Director SEL	1.0	yes	yes
Elementary health teachers	3.0	yes	General Fund
Special educators for CRLS AP/honors course support	3.0	yes	yes
Custodians	8.0	no	yes
Swimming recovery teacher	1.0	no	yes
Summer/weekend/vacation program manager	1.0	no	yes

26) What themes and key takeaways came out of community budget meetings and the survey sent to families, caregivers and staff?

See attached slides