ESSER III Formula Grant Local Educational Agency (LEA) Plan



Wisconsin Rapids Public School District January 2022

Background:

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act was passed in March 2021. The ARP act authorized the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) fund grant program. ESSER III supplements ESSER I created by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in March 2020, and ESSER II created by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRSSA) Act passed in December 2020. ESSER III provides additional non-recurring funding to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.

An ESSER III Planning Committee has been meeting since October, 2021 to develop a plan for use of the anticipated funding. Committee members include:

Craig Broeren - Superintendent Jennifer Wilhorn - Asst. Dir. of Curriculum

Roxanne Filtz - Director of Curriculum Elizabeth Van Berkel - Asst. Pupil Services Director

Steven Hepp - Pupil Services Director Tina Miller - Principal/Howe Elementary

William Oswald - Asst. Principal - WRAMS

Katherine Saylor - Elementary Reading Interventionist

Lynnette Mitchell - Math Interventionist - WRAMS

Paula Reaves - Social Studies teacher - LHS

Chris Klopotek - School Psychologist

Katherine Saylor - Elementary Reading Interventionist

Lynnette Mitchell - Math Interventionist - WRAMS

Sara Boyce - Cross-categorical teacher - LHS

Tessa Gruszynski - School Social Worker

Sunshine Broeren - Occupational Therapist/ Social-Emotional Learning Coordinator
Maurine Hodgson - Executive Assistant - Superintendent and Board of Education

WRPS is expected to receive **\$7,081,249.00 \$7,082,465.00** in ESSER III funding. Funds may be used to support the District's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and must be utilized between March 2020 and September 30, 2024. Funds are intended to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools as well as address the pandemic's impact on WRPS students.

School districts and charter schools must use a *minimum of 20%* to implement Evidence-Based Intervention Strategies (EBIS) to address lost learning opportunities. For WRPS, this 20% equates to \$1,413,717 \$1,416,493. Districts must ensure that interventions respond to students' social, emotional, and academic needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student subgroups.

Underrepresented subgroups specifically mentioned in United States Department of Education guidance as likely to have been disproportionately affected by COVID-19 include: each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care.

The use of ESSER III Funds can fall into a variety of categories which could include: Preparedness and Response, Addressing Longterm School Closure, Outreach and Services for Special Populations, Mental Health Services and Supports, and Education Technology. This is not an exhaustive list, but gives some insight into areas where dollars can be spent.

While there are specific requirements to be met in order to receive ESSER III funding, this grant provides a unique opportunity for school districts to capitalize on implementing activities that assess and address lost learning opportunities caused by the pandemic and support student mental and emotional health and well being. The ESSER III plan being recommended specifically allocates \$4,996,138 toward EBIS with the remaining \$2,085,111 earmarked to address other needs brought on by the pandemic. The plan is divided into different categories, and each category includes a narrative explaining the positive impact this funding will have to support student success.

Personnel

Objective Decrease overall class sizes (teacher:student) so that more targeted instruction can occur within the classroom setting. In addition, hire support staff to help with learning needs as well as explore the possibility of bringing a data manager into the district.	Evidence Based Intervention Strategy (if applicable)	Dollar Amount	Evidence of Success
Tasks/Action Steps			
Hire 9 classroom teachers at the elementary level funded by ESSER for 3 years	Organizing Instruction and Study to Improve Student Learning Transition Improvement Expanded and Enriched Learning Time and Opportunities	\$600,000 for SY 2021-22 \$620,000 for SY 2022-2023 \$645,000 for SY 2023-2024 Total = \$1,865,000	An improvement in student scores on classroom assessments, District screeners and state tests. Anecdotal evidence from students and teachers Improvements in school attendance numbers
Hire 1 Reading Interventionist and 1 Math Interventionist funded by ESSER for 3 years Hire 1 Math Interventionist for 1 year at WRAMS 2021-2022	Administering and Using High-Quality Assessments MLSS in Reading/Math/PBIS Supported by Wisconsin Rtl Center Assisting Elementary Students Struggling with Mathematics Foundational Skills to Support K-3 Reading	\$234,000 for SY 2021-2022 \$120,000 for SY 2022-2023 \$125,000 for SY 2023-2024 Total = \$479,000	A decrease in the number of students referred for Tier 3 intervention An increase in district screener scores The individual progress of students receiving intervention services
Hire an ELL teacher at the elementary level funded by ESSER for 3 years	MLSS in Reading/Math/PBIS Supported by Wisconsin Rtl Center Evidence-Based Strategies for Social and Emotional Learning and Mental Health	\$62,138.00 for SY 2021-2022 \$65,000.00 for SY 2022-2023 \$68,000 for SY 2023-2024 Total = \$195,138.00	An increase in ACCESS scores. Anecdotal evidence from students and teachers An increase in the scores of regular education classroom assessments
Hire 7 special education aides (some full time and some part time) funded by ESSER for 3 years	Compensatory Education, Additional Services, or COVID-Impact Services for Students with IEPs High-Leverage Practices in Special Education	\$132,000 for SY 2021-2022 \$136,000 for SY 2022-2023 \$139,000 for SY 2023-2024 Total = \$407,000	A decrease in behavioral incidents causing removal from classroom An increase in overall classroom academic success Anecdotal evidence outlining engagement of students

Hire an extra health aide funded by ESSER for 3 years	N/A	\$20,000 for SY 2021-2022 \$23,000 for SY 2022-2023 \$26,000 for SY 2023-2024 Total = \$69,000	A decrease in behavioral
Hire 5 Student Engagement Facilitators for 2 years	 Evidence-Based Strategies for Social and Emotional Learning and Mental Health Preventing Dropout in Secondary Schools Assisting Elementary Students Struggling with Mathematics Transition Improvement 	\$650,000 for SY 2022-2023 \$670,000 for SY 2023-2024 Total = \$1,320,000	A decrease in behavioral incidents causing removal from classroom An increase in overall classroom academic success Anecdotal evidence outlining engagement of students Overall building moral will show improvement
Develop a data manager position and consider hiring for the position	N/A	TBD	
2021-2022 School Y	ear Total Hires (General E	ducation)	\$919,236.00
2021-2022 School Y	ear Total Hires (General E	ducation)	\$165,770.00
Total for Personnel 2021-2022		\$1,085,006.00	
	Total Budgeted through 9/2024	EBIS	Non-EBIS
	\$4,335,138	\$4,266,138	\$69,000

Rationale:

When our district was looking at ways to make the biggest impact for students with our ESSER Grant dollars we first looked to personnel. It was decided early on to decrease class sizes for 2-3 years and used dollars from ESSER I and ESSER II to help support that move. We currently have the above personnel slated to be paid from ESSER III funds, with the hope that we can keep these people on through the 2023-2024 school year. The 9 elementary classroom teachers were specifically put in place to help alleviate class size numbers so there could be more targeted instruction and individualized support for our youngest students. The interventionist time was increased because District screener data indicated an uptick in the number of students falling into the Tier 2 level, and Tier 3 numbers were also increasing. Our belief is that if we provide the support at the youngest grades, we can make the most impact on future student success. This is the same rationale used for hiring another ELL position at the elementary level. The middle school math interventionist position was added as a one year position to help bring kids back up to grade level.

When students returned from off campus learning, we recognized very quickly that our youngest students were having great difficulty adjusting to the "school" routine. We are seeing behaviors at our very youngest grades that are causing disruptions to the learning process. In order to address many of these issues, the District has hired 7 special education/instructional aides, in a mixture of full time and part time positions. We have a larger number of students

who need one-on-one support this year. Our goal is to intervene as quickly as we can so that we can help students adapt to the learning environment and provide support to teachers seeking ways to engage students in the learning process. That leads us to the rationale for hiring our Student Engagement Facilitators. We currently have 5 Instructional Coaches district wide. We have revised the role of these positions to include more student engagement collaboration between this position and the classroom teachers. This revised position will also serve as a family liaison when needed and will work to help target social and emotional learning and make those practices integrate seamlessly within our curriculum. The 5 new positions are in addition to the 5 Instructional Coaching positions already in existence. Our goal is to provide one Student Engagement Facilitator position at each building with a goal for this individual to fully immerse themselves in the school's culture and build strong student, staff, and family relationships. This person will work collaboratively with the building administration, school counselors, school psychs and other support personnel in the building. The recommendation is to fund this position for two years using ESSER III funds.

Finally, we are exploring the possibility of bringing a data manager into the district to aid with extraction and analysis of data to inform instruction and make data driven decisions that positively impact student outcomes. The data manager could be an educator, someone outside of education, or a university intern who is working on their PhD. We are only in the planning phase of this position right now.

Purchased Services - Professional Development, Computer Programs, Outside Support, Etc.

Objective Provide a variety of services to classroom teachers, building administrators and support staff to address the all around well being of students and mitigate any learning losses experienced as a result of the pandemic.	Evidence Based Intervention Strategy (if applicable)	Dollar Amount	Evidence of Success
Tasks/Action Steps			
Purchase Software as a Service in multiple discipline areas - in particular ELA and Mathematics Instruction	Administering and Using High-Quality Assessments Integrated Student Supports Standards-Aligned Instructional Materials and Professional Learning MLSS in Reading/Math/PBIS Supported by Wisconsin Rtl Center Improving Mathematical Problem Solving in Grades 4-8 Assisting Elementary Students Struggling with Mathematics Effective Fractions Instruction for K-8 Foundational Skills to Support K-3 Reading	\$200,000 over the course of the 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. UPDATE Total spent as of 5/24/22 \$55,296.14	Improvement of classroom formative/summative test scores Overall improvement of final grades in secondary classes Increase in the progress monitoring data scores for our intervention students Increased scores on District screeners for math and ELA at all levels \$16,350.00 CatchOn \$7,560.00 Study in Phonics \$3,466 2 year Renewal (Signal Vine/LHS) RaiderAide \$2,999.97 Choral Tracks \$21,155.17 Reflex-Adaptive /

Implement Professional Development for teachers, administrators and support staff. This includes workshops, webinars, classes and covers the cost of substitute teachers when classroom teachers need to attend these opportunities. In addition, these dollars will pay the DEU stipends earned by the District facilitators of such classes. This would also include providing the opportunity for teachers to observe and debrief with other professionals who effectively use instructional materials	Standards-Aligned Instructional Materials and Professional Learning	\$200,000 over the course of the 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. UPDATE Total Spent as of 5/24/22 \$1,990.00	Individualized Math Online \$3,765.00 Assessment Scoring Total as of 5/24/22 \$55,296.14 Improved engagement strategies used at the classroom and building levels as evidenced by student attendance and performance. Increased number of professional staff actively attending a variety of Professional Development activities Anecdotal evidence of reduced frustration over curriculum implementation Overall improvement of student scores on a variety of assessments \$1,990.00 PD Course Registration - ADD+VANTAGEMR 1 Course
Provide outside therapy services for students as needed.	Evidence-Based Strategies for Social and Emotional Learning and Mental Health Integrated Student Supports Active Family and Community Engagement	\$80,000 for SY 2022-2023 and 2023-2024	Increase the number of students who receive therapy services after families have requested therapy, reaching a 100% threshold of requested services being delivered A decrease in suicidal thoughts or feelings of depression or anxiety among our students as evidenced by our SOS Screener
Implement a Morning Program in all elementary buildings in collaboration with Boys & Girls Club.	☐ Integrated Student Supports ☐ Active Family and Community Engagement	\$150,000 \$320,000 total for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years to pay for staffing of the program throughout the District UPDATE The revised amount will be roughly \$320,000 for two years.	Decreased number of truancies occurring in the morning because students can get to school earlier. Anecdotal data collected through conversations/surveys with parents, requesting feedback about the program's success. Improved student engagement in schools resulting in higher scores overall. Participation rates
Continued renewal of the District EduClimber subscription to maintain student information in an easily navigable format to retrieve and study	N/A	\$85,000 for a three year renewal that will provide access until the 2026-2027 school year	All professional staff throughout the district are actively using this tool successfully.

Total Budgeted through 9/2024	EBIS	Non-EBIS
\$715,000	\$630,000	\$85,000

Rationale:

Purchased Services can come in different forms within a school district. These can be services that are used to help promote professional development for our teachers and our administrators. We are currently concentrating on the successful implementation of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) within all of our buildings. Professional Development to help with this implementation is being financed through the ESSER dollars. Our staff is also working to develop their knowledge of addressing Social and Emotional Learning needs of our students. This is an area that we hope to expand knowledge and expertise in and having ESSER III funds available to continue learning from experts in the field is pivotal. As students are transitioning back to the structure of a school day, we've identified a need to enhance our student behavioral intervention strategies. Finally, engagement strategies are at the forefront of our District's work when we consider ways in which we can help our students succeed. Professional Development dollars will be spent to help teachers learn more about engagement strategies that can work within individual classrooms or on a building wide basis.

In order to continue making a positive impact for children, we have purchased outside services to help address the mental, social and emotional needs of our students. Programs like Gaggle Therapy allow us to address the needs of more and more of our students over time. These services will continue to be financed through the ESSER III program.

We are exploring the possibility of setting up a wrap-around program in the mornings for each of our elementary schools by partnering with the Boys & Girls Club. This program would be managed by the Boys & Girls Club, but it would be located within our school buildings. Establishing such a program will help eliminate the barrier of parents not having a place to take their children before school. If we can get our students in our buildings in the morning, we will have more opportunities to address their educational needs. ESSER dollars will be used to pay for staff members to operate the morning program within our schools. Currently, there is a large waiting list for our neighborhood Boys and Girls Club for the morning session. Establishing a morning program at each school will distribute equitable services and fill an identified need for families.

Finally, all of the work that we address in our Professional Learning Communities is based on data. We will continue to use the eduClimber platform as our data housing software. By using eduClimber all of our staff can easily access any data information that is needed to help make high impact decisions for our students. eduClimber was originally purchased for three years through ESSER II dollars and we will renew it, in part, through ESSER III dollars.

Non-Capital Objects

Objective	Evidence Based Intervention Strategy (if applicable)	Dollar Amount	Evidence of Success
Tasks/Action Steps			
Provide cameras for each of our buses to help ensure the safety of all of our students.	N/A	\$71,000	
Continue to provide the technology resources needed to support student learning as well as the ability for students to learn off campus if needed.	N/A	\$200,000 <u>UPDATE</u> Total Spent as of 5/24/22	\$91,006.84 Lu Projectors \$142.73 Stylus Pens for iPad Air

Such resources include: Chromebooks, laptops, technology devices, internet access for families, smart projectors		\$101,532.39	\$4,315.15 7 iPad Air 64 GB \$1,156.67 Internet Access: Broadband to Home \$4,649.00 Zoom Webinar Licenses \$262.00 C-Pen Reader (Pocket-sized Device that reads text out aloud.) \$101,532.39
General supplies not used for EBIS (e.g., cleaning, non-instructional supplies)	N/A	\$50,000 <u>UPDATE</u> Total Spent as of 5/24/22 \$52,519.56	\$5,400.00 for Box Fans for classrooms \$1490.97 Air Purifiers \$1304 Washer/Dryer \$30,585 Variety of Masks \$10,100 Face Guards \$35.97 Mesh Washing Bags \$693.14 Phones for Sick Rooms \$718.84 Classroom Rug \$2,191.64 Water Cooler Bottle Fillers - Remodeling Materials 52,519.56
Provide a \$50.00 per student allocation to each building for the purpose of purchasing specific items that each building needs to address learning gaps for students. Approximately 4,830 students districtwide.	N/A	\$242,000	Buildings have immediate access to a variety of resources to meet student needs. Increase in student engagement due to high interest materials. Increase in overall academic progress due to materials meeting student needs.
Classroom libraries and other books that provide differentiated instruction and address educational delivery that promotes Evidence Based Intervention Strategies	Standards-Aligned Instructional Materials Foundational Skills to Support K-3 Reading Assisting Elementary Students Struggling with Mathematics Improving Mathematical Problem Solving in Grades 4-8	\$50,000 <u>UPDATE</u> Total Spent as of 5/24/22 \$53,638.34	Increase in student engagement due to high interest reading materials. Increase in overall academic progress in the area of reading due to materials meeting student needs. \$3,855.72 Units of Study in Phonics \$154.96 Resource Books for Elementary School Counselors

			\$22,647.56 Decodable Books \$7,210.94 Decodable Books \$1,539.83 Steps to Literacy \$1,242.84 Children's Books - leveled Readers \$1,994.33 Differentiated Classroom Books \$416.24 Classroom books \$1,210.00 Replacement Take-Home Books for Elementary students \$661.92 Basic Music Theory and History Workbooks \$11,420.00 TCRWP Level A-F Shelf Grade K Books \$1,284.00 SE Student Bridges Math Materials/Kit to use to meet the needs of our struggling learners. \$53,638.34
Continue to establish an Early Learning Center to meet the needs of our 3 year old Early Childhood Learners as well as some of our 4K students. EBIS expenses could include classroom materials, professional development, outside support services, among others. Non-EBIS expenses would include any building materials needed as well as infrastructure that could be funded from ESSER III but not qualify for EBIS designation.	Council for Exceptional Children's Division for Early Childhood Recommended Practices	\$50,000 UPDATE Total Spent as of 5/24/22 \$848.68	Teachers have access to training opportunities to meet the unique needs of our youngest learners. Adequate amount of learning materials for families to support at home learning. \$848.68 4K Teachers will use these supplies to support learning activities at home
	Total Budgeted through 9/2024	EBIS	Non-EBIS
	\$663,000	\$100,000	\$563,000

Rationale:

Most non-capital items will not fit into the category of Evidence-Based Intervention Strategies. However, these purchases are crucial to helping WRPS remain safely open for students and staff and provide continuity of services. We will continue to purchase items needed to keep our buildings clean and sanitized. Items that are above and beyond our normal expenditures for these supplies will come from ESSER III funding.

We are purchasing cameras for each of our school buses to provide another safety tool while transporting our children to and from school as well as to sporting events. These cameras will allow the bus driver to concentrate on

the road, knowing that all actions are being recorded when the driver cannot keep a steady eye on what is happening on the bus. Even though we do not own our buses, because we are purchasing the cameras through District funds, the cameras will remain our property.

We will continue to purchase classroom resources such as books, manipulatives, and other resources that are designed to promote learning for our students. Because we are sending materials home to students who find themselves in an off-campus situation, we need to replenish some of our materials. ESSER III dollars are an opportunity to not only replenish our supply, but also allow us to purchase additional differentiated materials for our students who are learning at different paces.

Each building will be provided a \$50.00 per student stipend which the building principal has autonomy over to use as they determine would be best based upon the lost learning opportunities that are unique to that building. The money will need to be spent on items that will promote learning and growth, and each principal will be required to report back as to how the money was spent.

Finally, we have created an Early Learning Center which addresses the specific needs of our youngest learners. A portion of the ESSER III allocation will be used to provide EBIS materials to Pitsch Early Learning Center.

Capital Objects

Objective	Evidence Based Intervention Strategy (if applicable)	Dollar Amount	Evidence of Success
Tasks/Action Steps			
Provide each elementary school, including Pitsch Early Learning Center,! with a vehicle to use for transporting children to and from school when transportation is a barrier for kids to be in school	Active Family and Community Engagement	\$ 224,000	Attendance record indicating barrier to attendance has been removed

Rationale:

A major barrier to student success is simply getting students into school buildings in the mornings. School staff believe that if there was a way to "just get them here" they would have the time needed with students to help them be successful. Our secondary schools have a school van on site which has proven to be helpful when a need for student transport has arisen. Having a vehicle designated at each building for the purpose of transporting students who miss the bus in the morning or a family situation prevents parents from getting the child to school helps to break down the barrier of attendance for our students.

Rationale:

When public input was gathered through our community survey and discussion was held at the School Board level, the idea of purchasing vehicles for each school building was not a popular idea. Therefore WRPS began looking into other ways to remove transportation as a barrier for some of our families. The District has done a thorough review of its bus routes and through an adjustment to current routes, has developed a plan with our bus companies to transport students within a .5 mile radius from their school building versus the former 2.0 mile radius. This will help to remove the transportation barrier for some of our families who may otherwise struggle with getting children to school.

This budget item has been removed from the plan.

Current Totals

Total Amount Budgeted	EBIS	Non-EBIS	Percentage EBIS
\$5,713,138	\$5,220,138	\$717,000	
Total Amount Allocated		Total Amount Spent as of 5/24/2022	
\$7,081,249		\$1,370,142.51	

**\$1,144,111 left to budget (the set-aside for WRAMS programs (described below) and a data manager position are not yet budgeted)

UPDATE

Miscellaneous Items Purchased through ESSER III:

\$2,122.32 All-Terrain Scooters (2 sets of 6), Dodgeballs (Various Sizes), Vinyl Floor Tape, Soccer Balls, Footballs, Bean Bag Sets-Extra Equip for Add'l Smaller Class Sections/Promote Social Distancing/Separation/Sanitation

\$599.98 Welch Allyn Sure Temp Plus 690 (Model 01690-200) w/Oral Probe Thermometers

\$277.91 Suretemp 690 Oral/Rectal Thermometer

\$178.02 Countertop Ice Machines for the Nurses Offices

\$497.45 Instrument Bell Covers

\$159.92 French Horn Bell Covers w/Hand Access

\$1,425.00 Wind Instruments Masks x 150

Various Health and Safety Remodeling Projects

\$1,222.15

\$1,316.54

\$540.75

\$2,212.00

\$160.00 Cab Vouchers - LHS Student Services/Health Office to provide student transportation home, if sick or testing positive for COVID 19 after arriving at school.

\$5,395.50 LLI Gold Kit will be used to serve students who need intensive support to achieve grade level competency.

\$5,395.50 LLI RED (Gr 3) Complete Sys,

Total Miscellaneous = \$21,503.04

Other projects currently being discussed: We will budget \$250,000 - \$350,000 for this implementation once it is finalized

Targeted support for Wisconsin Rapids Middle School. In particular, there is a need to improve the transition between 6th and 7th grade and to build a more engaging culture for students and families. Possible action steps being discussed currently include:

- 1) Implementation of a "LEAP" or "LIFT" program similar to the high school level program to provide targeted intervention and support for at risk students
- 2) Consider how team taught core classes might contribute to student success through immediate targeted intervention
- 3) Support for families and promote family engagement make connections and build relationships
- 4) Consider how scheduling at the building level may be done differently to maximize time with students to best meet their needs, and give some thought to whether there could be some relaxed and fun, project-based activities built into a prescribed period of time where students and staff members connect and strengthen their ties.
- 5) Consider what after school programming might be beneficial for and appealing to students, and ways to eliminate any barriers to their participation. Could a program be developed for truant students that would wipe out attendance violations if certain benchmarks are met?
- 6) Improve summer enrichment and offerings at the middle school level rather than have it be primarily remedial. Consider how the Student Engagement Facilitator's contracted time might include summer school for continued support and connection/engagement with students and families
- 7) Consider how students with great stress/anxiety levels currently enrolled virtually might be worked back into the building.

Stakeholder Input

As part of developing and implementing this plan, the District will solicit feedback from students, staff members, parents and area citizenry. After reading through the plan, local stakeholders will be able to provide feedback through a survey link posted on the WRPS webpage. The window of time for feedback to be gathered is February 7-28, 2022.

Below is what the survey will look like on the webpage.
Name:
Email Address:
What is your relationship to Wisconsin Rapids Public Schools?
☐ Parent/Guardian ☐ Student ☐ Staff Member ☐ Community Member ☐ Other (please specify) Question, Comments or Concerns?
Question, comments of concerns: