

**Evart Public Schools**  
**ARP ESSER III Plan of Use**  
**2022-2024**

***Describe the extent and how the funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent CDC guidance on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning.***

Using the knowledge we gained in the 2020-21 school year when we were able to keep our students face to face the entire school year, we will use the funds to continue to provide and improve on the things we found to be effective in safely opening and keeping them open for in person learning. First we will focus on getting all our students to and from school and then our focus will be on transporting our high school students to the career center. Our district is 225 square miles servicing 874 students. This means that many students have at least an hour bus ride. As much as possible we need to be able to spread students out to reduce the number of students who would be affected by a student testing positive for COVID. More runs will be added resulting in the purchase of additional busses. We will use three busses instead of two to transport our students to the career center. Students will be assigned seats on the bus and families will be seated together.

Additional teachers will be added at every level to reduce class size allowing more social distancing. Students have assigned seats in the regular classroom, in special classes and at lunch. This will greatly help to minimize the number of students who have to quarantine for being a close contact. No large group assemblies will be allowed. Within classes the same students sit by each other when at their desks, working in small groups, and/or on the carpet.

A full time medical assistant and a half time registered nurse will assist in monitoring that the COVID protocols that are in place are being followed. Students who are close contacts to someone who has been diagnosed with COVID will immediately be quarantined. If the student is in school, parents will be contacted to take the student home. Students who are not feeling well in school and have any COVID symptom are send home and may not return for ten days unless they have an alternate diagnosis or a negative COVID test. The spread of COVID in our schools has been very limited by following these measures.

An additional custodian has been added during the day to increase cleaning and disinfecting especially at the elementary level. All supplies necessary in creating a healthy environment will be readily available. To create a healthier environment improving ventilation is a priority use of funds. These purchases would include but not be limited to air purifiers for every classroom, unit ventilators at the elementary school, new windows and doors, screens, and fans.

Frequent communication is sent to district families strongly recommending that all students wear masks not only on the bus but in the classroom. Masks are given to anyone who would like one. The district encourages all staff and students to be vaccinated. At this time, there is community as well as legislative resistance in imposing any mandate regarding wearing masks.

***Describe how the LEA will use the funds it reserves to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after school programs, or extended school year.***

The academic impact caused by the pandemic must be addressed not only by providing additional programs after school and during the summer but during the regular scheduled school day as well. We do not have the authority to require students to attend school outside of the normal school hours or calendar. Although great programs are provided not all students choose or are able to participate in these programs. Parents have the responsibility to ensure that their children are in school during the regular school year. There are consequences that can be imposed

on parents if their students are truant. This is not true when looking at programs outside of the regular school day or school year.

A summer school experience will be available for students in grades K-8 taught by Evert Public School teachers in both the summer of 2022 and 2023. Any student not at grade level will be asked to attend as well as students in grades 5-8 who failed a class. Because many of our families would not be able to transport their students to summer school, door to door transportation is provided. Giving up summer vacation to go to school is not what many students want to do. In order to motivate and entice students each week a special field trip is planned. Students who have attended Monday through Wednesday will be rewarded with a very special experience on Thursday. With 72% of our students from low income families many students have not had the opportunity to visit a zoo, museum, Mackinac Island, a water park, etc. There are many ways to incorporate these special activities into reinforcing academic skills.

At the high school level the online learning lab is open for students to use for credit recovery. It is staffed by a certified teacher and flexible daily hours are available. This program is available for eight weeks.

A after school program staffed by Evert certified teachers is available Monday through Thursday at both the High School and Middle School. Students needing immediate help with assignments or those who are catching up are encourage to take advantage of this program.

**Other considerations for addressing the learning loss students have experienced include:**

- Creating smaller class sizes so that teachers can reach and help those students who are struggling. This is being done by adding six teachers impacting all levels.
- In addition to the NWEA Map Assessment which is given in the fall, winter and spring to all students in grades K-8, Aimsweb will be implemented in 2022 to provide more frequent progress monitoring for students in grades kindergarten through ninth grade who are not yet on grade level. It will also be used extensively for all special education students through high school.
- To further meet the needs of those who have not recovered from learning loss, additional support will be provided by employing additional educational assistants to work closely with students either in small groups or with individuals under the supervision of the classroom teacher.
- Educational assistants will also be employed to support students who are receiving special education services. They will work with the special education teacher to provide more individualized support for students with disabilities.
- In order for students to be able to focus on instruction and learning their social, emotional and especially their mental health needs must be met. The addition of a middle school counselor and an elementary behavioral specialist in 2022 helped to address the needs of individual students to allow them to access the learning opportunities that are available to them. To continue to meet the ongoing needs of our students, a behavior specialist has been added at both the elementary and middle school as well as an additional social worker at the middle school.
- Every student has access to a chromebook each day. During intervention times, programs will be available for students to use for reinforcement and remediation specific to the needs of the student.
- When virtual learning is the only feasible option for a student, the district will provide a chromebook for the student to use as well as providing an activated hot spot if internet service is not currently available in the home.
- In order to prevent additional learning loss in the event of a total shut-down, all students will take their chromebook home. If internet access is not available in the home a hot spot will be provided. Instruction will be synchronous for all students.

***Please describe how the LEA will spend its remaining ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act.***

The development of the plan on how to use ESSER III funds was made by seeking input from many stakeholders. This input resulted in determining how the ESSER III funds should be spent. The District Advisory Needs Committee then used this information to prioritize where the funds would actually be allocated. Specific items were then included in the final budget. Much time and effort was put into the development of the plan.

- The Evart Public School Administrative Team had put together a list of building improvements that were needed. The original list was modified many times.
- When the guidance for the ESSER III application came out, the district formed a District Needs Advisory Committee. Members of this committee included Elementary, Middle and High School Principals, Financial Director, Transportation/Maintenance Director, Food Service Director, Special Education Supervisor, Athletic Director, Technology Director, President of the Transportation Union, President of the Teacher's Association, President of the Support Staff Union, and School Nurse.
- The Superintendent sought input from high school students by meeting with students in the Senior Seminar Class as well as the Career Class.
- A final list of district needs was developed and then sent to each member of the committee to prioritize. Every member of the committee ranked each item on the list and the results were tabulated by the Superintendent.
- From this list a survey was generated asking stakeholders in the district to complete. The survey was posted on the district website, building and district facebook pages, and a link sent to high school students and all district staff.
- 347 surveys were completed. 343 assigned themselves to a group. 39.7% were in the parent/guardian group; 28.3% were students; 16% were community members; 9.3% were teachers; and 6.7% were school staff members
- The survey asked as a stakeholder, do you represent the interests of the children/students with different needs. The percentages of stakeholders responding representing these students are: Homeless – 10.9%; Foster Care- 12.4%; Special Education – 22.2%; 504 Plan – 12.7%; Free/Reduced 27.8%. Stakeholders could indicate involvement in more than one category.
- Respondents were asked to Strongly Agree; Agree; No Opinion; Disagree or Strongly Disagree to each item.
- The results of this survey helped to guide the priorities in budgeting the ESSER III funds.

Each item from the survey was considered. They are listed by priority based on the survey results with budget considerations presented.

- **EPS should continue to update technology- connectivity, hardware, software, etc.**
  - 89.4% of respondents agreed with 2.9% disagreeing
    - Budget Considerations
      - Purchase of new chromebooks, licenses and cases
      - Maintain hot spot service on 229 devices
        - Update PA systems
- **EPS should continue the improvement of current facilities for the safety of all staff and students (improve indoor air quality, including ventilators, fans, window/door replacement).**
  - 89.3% of respondents agreed with 2.1% disagreeing
  - Budget Considerations
    - Unit ventilators
    - Door Replacement
    - Middle School Windows
    - Non-slip flooring Middle School
    - Elementary Student Bathroom Upgrade
    - Fence and Safety Cap a Middle School Playground
- **EPS should maintain quality transportation to support student access to school.**
  - 88.8% of respondents agreed with 1.2% disagreeing
  - Budget Considerations
    - Purchase of one bus

- **EPS should continue to employ additional support staff, including educational assistants, custodians, and medical personnel.**
  - 87.3% of respondents agreed with 6.9% disagreeing
  - Budget Considerations
    - Medical Assistant
    - Day Custodian
    - Full Time Nurse
    - Special Education Educational Assistant
- **EPS should provide social-emotional learning and support opportunities such as counseling, mental health and wellness resources for students, including additional counselors, social workers and behavior specialists.**
  - 82.4% of respondents agree with 6.9% disagreeing
  - Budget Consideration
    - Middle School Counselor
    - Middle School Social Worker
    - High School Social Worker
    - Elementary and Middle School Behavioral Specialists
- **EPS should prioritize school facility repairs and improvements to reduce risk of health exposures and increase safety, such as improvements to classrooms, restrooms, medical rooms and grounds.**
  - 82.1% of respondents agreed and 2.3% disagreed
  - Budget Considerations
    - Middle School Medical Room Sink
    - Wall Mats in MS Gym
    - Ceiling Fan in High School Gym
    - Window Coverings
    - Window Screens
    - COVID Supplies

***Describe how the district will ensure that the interventions it implements to address the impact of lost instructional time, will respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-10 pandemic including students from low income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students.***

With 72% of our students from low income families and having an above average number of students with disabilities, many interventions were already in place prior to the pandemic to meet the needs of our students. Funding was always a concern. Now with the ESSER III funds our interventions and programs currently in place can be enhanced and new programs as well as additional personnel be employed to ensure the needs of all students are being met.

Before we can help students recover the learning that was lost during the pandemic, we must ensure that their basic needs are met. This includes ensuring that they have both a nutritious breakfast and lunch. Evart Public Schools participates in the Universal Lunch Program where every student is offered a free breakfast and lunch prior to the 2023-24 school year when it became a legislative mandate.

Next, we must take care of the social, emotional, and mental health needs of our students. Adding additional counselors, social workers, and behavioral interventionists will help us to reach each student.

Finally we must address the academic learning loss and help students achieved at their highest level. To do this students must receive more individual attention from the classroom teacher, additional opportunities to work in

small intervention groups, as well as be provided with additional learning time outside of the regular school day or traditional school year. Adding additional teachers both with ESSER funds and general funds, providing additional educational assistants in regular and special education classes, providing tutoring help after school, and implementing a comprehensive summer school program for students in grades K-8 as well as a summer credit recovery program at the high school will help our students regain some of what was lost.

Additional explanation and clarification are provided below.

- Research supports students who eat a healthy breakfast and lunch and do not suffer from being hungry, will be more successful in school. Participation in the Universal Breakfast and Lunch Program provides the opportunity for all students to eat free. There is no difference if you are from a low-income family or one that would not qualify for the free meals.
- Our family fun nights at the elementary level always consist of dinner. This encourages everyone to attend and helps families who may be struggling financially.
- Providing additional counseling opportunities through Spectrum Health at our school is beneficial for all students but is more likely to be used by students who are homeless, in foster care, or who do not have the means or transportation to get to appointments that are not in Evert.
- The hiring of additional teachers to ensure that class sizes are small will help all students to receive additional teacher support. Students who have been more impacted by the pandemic will most likely benefit more from this additional support.
- We have two full-day programs available for students from low income families. Two full day head start programs for 3-4 year olds are housed in our elementary school. In addition we have one section of the state supported pre-school program for students who do not qualify based on income for Head Start but are also from low income families. We do provide bus transportation for these students.
- For our youngest students who have a disability we have two half-day sections of the Early Childhood Special Education Program. We provide specialized bus transportation for these young students increasing the willingness of parents to have their very young children in school.
- Knowing that our special education students were greatly impacted by the pandemic, we have added a half-time program for our more severe cognitive impaired students in grades 5-8. We have also added program aides at the Middle and Elementary levels.
- Realizing the mental stress our students have suffered due to the pandemic, we have added a behavior interventionist at the elementary level and middle school level, as well as a school counselor at the middle school.
- Teachers have received extensive professional development on trauma informed practices to deal with students who need additional support as a result of trauma.