

**BEMIDJI AREA SCHOOLS  
BEMIDJI, MINNESOTA**

**DATE:           JANUARY 24, 2022**

**TO:             BOARD OF EDUCATION, ISD #31**

**FROM:          KRISI L. FENNER, CPA, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS SERVICES**

**SUBJECT:       FEDERAL FUNDING RELATED TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**COMMENTS:**

Attached please find a spreadsheet summary of the federal relief funding that has been allocated to our district as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The award amounts, spending periods, and Bemidji Schools uses or potential uses are noted on the spreadsheet.

**THE THREE FEDERAL ACTS**

The first act passed by congress in March of 2020 is known as the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Securities Act. (CARES) From this came the CRF, ESSER I, and GEER I funding streams. These federal awards have been fully spent on the allowable uses noted on the spreadsheet and have been closed out.

The second act of federal relief, known as the Coronavirus Relief and Recovery Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) was passed in December of 2020. From this came the ESSER II funding. A large portion of this funding was used in the 20-21 school year on the various uses noted on the spreadsheet- the largest use being to maintain continuity of services and retain staff in the face of lost enrollment driven revenue. We are projecting to use the remaining ESSER II funds in the current year for the same purposes.

The third and most recent act of federal relief, known as the American Recovery Plan Act (ARP) was passed in March of 2021. From this came ESSER III as well as multiple smaller streams of one-time funding.

**USES AND PLANNED USES**

Each of the pandemic relief funds have come with directives, restrictions, and spending windows. The CRF funds had its own set of guidelines while the ESSER I, II, and III have had the same allowable uses but progressive focuses.

**CRF (\$1.4M) and ESSER I (\$1.1M) funding focused on providing relief.** Uses of these funds included purchasing PPE and cleaning supplies, addressing air quality, upgrading to touchless fountains/faucets, purchasing technology and other supplies, and funding staffing costs related to distance learning.

**ESSER II** (\$5.1M) focused on **recovery** by addressing revenue shortfalls created by the pandemic included enrollment driven state funding, Compensatory Revenue, registration and participation fees, and food service revenue. This funding has filled the gap between that lost revenue and the further reductions needed to offset it. This funding buys us the time needed address our systemic budgetary imbalance through budget reductions.

**ESSER III** (\$11.6M) is focused on continued **recovery** and **reform**. 20% of this funding is required to be set aside for learning recovery and the remaining 80% to address other needs including but not limited to long-standing health needs, strengthening connections to school, addressing the needs of our students, and making long-term changes to curriculum and instruction based on lessons learned during the pandemic.

A steering committee led by Superintendent Lutz and consisting of staff, administration, parents, and community leaders has been tasked with identifying the needs of our district and directing use of the funding to meet those needs. Initial priorities identified have included addressing class sizes at the elementary level, providing additional support for the mental health needs of students, addressing the needs of homebased and homebound students, and addressing learning loss through the expansion of summer school and after school learning opportunities. Priorities also include the continued support of enrollment revenue shortfalls by keeping existing staff employed and maintaining continuity of operations. This funding is available to be spent over a three-year period and the uses will continue to expand as needs are identified and addressed.

As a final point- while the district will use these federal relief dollars to continue to address pandemic related needs, they are not the answer to our budgetary imbalance. This funding will not replace state education funding or the support of our local community. We must continue to strive to balance our budget or we will find ourselves on the edge of a fiscal cliff once the federal relief funding is gone.

**Beltrami County  
Coronavirus Relief  
Funds (CRF)**

	<b>Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF)</b> 7/1/20 - 12/31/20 1,426,027.56	<b>ESSEER I</b> 3/15/20 - 9/30/22 1,185,543.26	<b>GEER I</b> 3/15/20 - 9/30/22 131,827.02	<b>ESSEER II</b> 7/1/20 - 9/30/23 5,178,196.55
Time Period	7/1/20 - 12/31/20	3/15/20 - 9/30/22	3/15/20 - 9/30/22	7/1/20 - 9/30/23
Award Amount	1,426,027.56	1,185,543.26	131,827.02	5,178,196.55
<b>Uses:</b>				
Distance Learning Staff - Wages and Benefits	X	X		X
Health Staff - Wages and Benefits				X
Short Call Substitutes - Wages and Benefits	X	X		X
Contracted Substitutes	X	X		X
Travel				
Supplies and Materials - Non-instructional	X	X		
Supplies and Materials - Instructional	X	X		
Instructional Technology Devices and Supplies	X	X		
Capitalized Instructional Technology Equipment/Software	X	X	X	
Other Equipment Purchased	X	X	X	
Dues & Subscriptions	X	X		X
Administration and oversight of COVID-19 related protocols				X
Maintaining Continuity of Services and Retention of Staff				X

**Governor's Discretionary ARP  
Funds - Summer Academic and  
Mental Health Support**

	<b>ARP - Homeless I</b> 5/18/21 - 9/30/21 88,383.44	<b>Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund - Extended Learning Summer</b> 6/4/21 - 9/30/22 122,184.00	<b>ESSEER III - 80%</b> 7/1/20 - 9/30/24 9,303,595.11	<b>ESSEER III - 20% Learning Recovery Activities</b> 7/1/20 - 9/30/24 2,325,898.78
Time Period	5/18/21 - 9/30/21	6/4/21 - 9/30/22	7/1/20 - 9/30/24	7/1/20 - 9/30/24
Award Amount	88,383.44	122,184.00	9,303,595.11	2,325,898.78

**Potential Uses:**

Additional Staff for Summer School		X		X
Increased Transportation for Summer School		X		X
Longer day or Increased Number of Days for Summer School		X		X
Expand Mental Health and Well-Being Supports during Summer Learning Programs	X			X
Partner with Community Business and Organizations to Develop a Summer Mentor or Tutoring Model that Covers Enrichment Programming and Other Costs to Increase Student Participation	X			X
Bring School-Based Summer Programs into the Community, Providing Opportunities for Enrichment, Social and Emotional Skill Building, Mental Health Supports and Tutoring Services	X			X
Provide Students with Summer Field Trips for Hands-On Learning Opportunities	X			X
Additional Staff for Social-Emotional Support			X	X
Supplies and Materials to Ensure Students have the Resources Needed to Attend Summer Programming and for Mental Health and Well Being			X	X
Supplies and Materials for Instruction during Mentoring and Tutoring			X	X
Technology for Staying Connected to Mental Health Supports Over the Summer			X	X
Same as ESSEER and ESSEER II, Including Hiring Staff and Avoiding Layoffs			X	X
Additional Programming including extended day, comprehensive after school programs or extended school year programs			X	X
More uses to be identified by ARP Steering Committee			X	X

**ARP IDEA Part B  
Section 619  
Preschool Incentive,  
Ages 3-5**  
7/1/21 - 6/30/22  
22,961.55

**ARP Individuals with  
Disabilities  
Education Act (IDEA)  
Part B Section 611**  
7/1/21 - 6/30/22  
273,250.89

**Pandemic Enrollment Loss**  
TBD  
304,425.00

**COVID-19 Testing  
Program Grant**  
7/1/21 - 6/30/22  
272,189.08

**Summer School Age Child Care  
Funds for Certified Centers**  
6/1/21 - 8/31/21  
135,900.00

Time Period Award Amount	Summer School Age Child Care Funds for Certified Centers	COVID-19 Testing Program Grant	Pandemic Enrollment Loss	ARP Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B Section 611	ARP IDEA Part B Section 619 Preschool Incentive, Ages 3-5

**Uses/Potential Uses:**

To Support New, Expanded, or Enhanced Early Learning Services	
Evidence-Based Practices Addressing Learning Loss	
Academic or Student Mental Health Needs	
Professional Development and Training for Staff to Implement Strategies	
Additional Time for Nursing Staff for Testing Program - Wages and Benefits	
Supplies for COVID-19 Testing Program	
Computer Software and Technology Devices for Reporting Related to Testing Program	
Equipment Necessary to Run the Testing Program	
Operating Expenses for Summer Child Care Program - Wages, Benefits, Contracted Substitutes, Supplies and Food	
All Allowable Purposes under Part B of IDEA; Recommended to Focus on School Re-entry, Disruption in the Education of Children with Disabilities, Mental Health Services	

**ARP - Homeless II**  
7/1/21 - 9/30/24  
53,028.89

**Potential Uses:**

Any expense necessary to support the identification, enrollment, participation, and success of children and youth experiencing homelessness and to provide them with wrap-around services in light of COVID-19 pandemic including academic, social, emotional and mental health needs.	
Focus on identifying students in order to connect students experiencing homelessness and their families to enrichment programs and to engage students and their families in preparation for school	
Contracts to community-based organizations that are well-positioned to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness in historically underserved populations and connect them to educationally-related support and wrap-around services.	