

**BOARD MEMO**

Date: December 14, 2023

For ACTION

For INFORMATION

**FROM:** Dominic B. Turner, Chief Financial Officer  
Robert Easley, Director of Budget and Financial Systems

**THROUGH:** Melanie Kay-Wyatt, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

**TO:** The Honorable Michelle Rief, Chair, and  
Members of the Alexandria City School Board

**TOPIC:** Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds Update

**ACPS 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL:**

Goal 4: Strategic Resource Allocation

**SY 2023-2024 PRIORITY AREA:**

N/A

**FY 2024 BUDGET PRIORITY:**

Increase Support for Social and Emotional Learning  
Technology Upgrades

**SUMMARY:**

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) Fund is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. ACPS has been awarded \$34.8 million in ESSER III funds. This plan and subsequent amendments and updates describe how the awarded funds will be used.

ESSER III requires that at minimum, twenty percent (20%) of divisions' formula funds be reserved to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions and to ensure that those interventions respond to students' social, emotional and academic needs. This support addresses the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student groups (each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, gender, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care). Another requirement for utilizing the ARP funding is that each school division must make publicly available updates on its plan.

**DETAILS:**

Our ESSER III funds are and will be used to drive the goals outlined in ACPS 2025: Equity for All. We will ensure that students are engaged in classroom and out of school time program

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instruction, have access to the educational resources needed to enhance their learning, and participate while in safe, friendly, and welcoming environments. We are committing funds to division-wide priorities and programs that will eliminate opportunity and achievement gaps as well as ensure that all students graduate ready for college, military service, careers and life.

We developed our ESSER III plan to align with the following four Focus Areas: (1) Social, Emotional and Academic Learning, (2) Technology Infrastructure, (3) COVID-19 Prevention and Mitigation Projects, and our (4) Human Capital Needs. These teams organized needs from the community, prioritized requests across departments, and created plans for various initiatives.

### **BACKGROUND:**

ACPS has been fortunate to have received several federally funded programs, through Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds, that have been authorized to support public and non-public schools during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. The overarching purpose of these programs is to address the impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools within ACPS. The CARES Act (ESSER I), signed into law in March 2020, provided approximately \$3.7 million to ACPS. The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act (ESSER II), authorized in December 2020, provided approximately \$15.5 million to ACPS. Additionally, the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act (ESSER III) authorized in March 2021, included approximately an additional \$34.8 million in funding to ACPS.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

The Superintendent recommends that the School Board review the ESSER III Funds Update information.

### **IMPACT:**

ESSER III funding ensures that students have access to resources needed to enhance their learning, eliminate achievement gaps, and ensure that students are ready for their chosen post high school path.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Presentation: ESSER III Funds Update

### **REFERENCES:** None

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