

## LEA ARP ESSER Plan: "A Plan for the LEA's Use of ARP ESSER funds"

The American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief ("ARP ESSER") Fund, authorized under the American Rescue Plan ("ARP") Act of 2021, provides nearly \$122 billion to States to support the Nation's schools in safely reopening and sustaining safe operations of schools while meeting the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students resulting from the coronavirus disease 2019 ("COVID-19") pandemic.

This template is intended to collect all federally-required information from an LEA in a convenient format and to assist LEAs in meeting the federal requirement that, within 90 days of receiving ARP ESSER LEA allocation (90% of New Hampshire's total allocation), an LEA shall publish an LEA ARP ESSER Plan, which is often called a "school district use of funds plan."

For further context, please reference ARPA (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/1319/text>) or the Interim Final Requirements of ARP ESSER in which the U.S. Department of Education established these requirements (<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2021-04-22/pdf/2021-08359.pdf>).

### **I. General Information**

1. LEA Name: North Country Charter Academy
2. Date of Publication: August 23, 2021
3. Contact Name and Title: Lisa Lavoie, Superintendent
4. Email and Telephone: [llavoie@nccharteracademy.org](mailto:llavoie@nccharteracademy.org) (603) 444-1535

### **II. Transparency and Accessibility**

1. This plan for the LEA's Use of ARP ESSER funds was published and made publicly available online at the following specific web address:

Description: [www.northcountrycharteracademy.cim](http://www.northcountrycharteracademy.cim)

2. The plan is in an understandable and uniform format (please check one):

Yes:  X                      Somewhat:                      No:

Description: The plan is written in plain English. The numerical expenses are broken down by line item on an easy to read spread sheet.

3. The plan, to the extent practicable, is written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable to provide written translations to a parent with limited English proficiency, orally translated (please check one):

Yes: X                      Somewhat:                      No:

Description: Current enrollment is 100% English speaking. Orally or written translations will be provided when needed.

4. The plan, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, is provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent (please check one):

Yes: X                      Somewhat:                      No:

Description: Upon request the disability needs will be met.

**III. Stakeholder Engagement**

1. How the LEA will provide the public the opportunity to provide input in the development of the LEA's plan for the use of ARP ESSER funds and take such input into account:

Description: At this time a draft budget has been generated and will be presented to the public and Board of Trustees. The public session and board of trustees meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2021.

2. How the LEA engaged in meaningful consultation with specific stakeholders, including, but not limited to:

a. Students (please check one):

Yes:                      Somewhat: X                      No:

Description: Annually, all students will be surveyed prior to the first day of school during their intake interview.

b. Families (please check one):

Yes:                      Somewhat: X                      No:

Description: Annually, all parents/guardians will be surveyed prior to the first day of school during their intake interview.

c. School and district administrators, including special education administrators (please check one):

Yes: X                      Somewhat:                      No:

Description: During school year 2020-2021 staff discussed ESSER funds at staff meetings & professional development days in April, May and June. This will be done annually and topic is included on the agenda during 2021-2022 welcome back meetings and trainings.

d. Teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions (please check one):

Yes:                       Somewhat:                      No:

Description: During school year 2020-2021 staff discussed ESSER funds at staff meetings & professional development days in April, May and June. This will be done annually and topic is included on the agenda during 2021-2022 welcome back meetings and trainings.

e. Tribes, if applicable (please check one): Not applicable

Yes:                      Somewhat:                      No:

Description: N/A

f. Civil rights organizations, including disability rights organizations (please check one):

Yes:                      Somewhat:                      No:

Description: This does not seem like an applicable stakeholder group for our school community.

g. Stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students (please check one):

Yes:                       Somewhat:                      No:

Description: This plan is shared and discussed with the charter schools founding school district administrators including Superintendents, Guidance Counselors, Special Education Directors and Title I Homeless & Foster Child Liaisons

h. Community-based organizations, including partnerships to promote access to before and after-school programming (please check one):

Yes:                      Somewhat:                      No:

Description: North Country Charter Academy does not offer before or afterschool programming.

i. Early childhood education providers and families, including partnerships to ensure access to and continuity of care for families with children of different ages, particularly as they transition to school (please check one):

Yes:

Somewhat:

No: X

Description: Our student base is 7-12 and early childhood education care programs are not needed.

#### **IV. Supporting the Continuous and Safe Operation of In-Person Learning**

1. The extent to which and how LEA ARP ESSER 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: (Note federal regulation on this plan requires such reporting, but does not require adoption of CDC safety recommendations. The NH DOE recognizes schools will implement localized safety measures based on the guidance provided by the CDC, NH Public Health, and local public health officials.)

Description during SY21-22:

With the ESSER III funds, plans are to purchase a bus camera which will ensure that all students are complying with federal busing regulations related to mask mandates. We will also use the funds to support and assist with additional technology costs incurred due to the fact that each student has their own designated work station in the classroom and a Chromebook to support remote learning if needed. Teachers and staff also have their work computer stations and laptop in the event of remote learning.

#### **V. Addressing the Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time (20 percent of an LEA's Allocation)**

1. How the LEA will identify individual student learning loss, including among students most likely to have experienced the impact of lost instructional time on student learning, such as:

a. Students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures;

b. Students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and

c. Students most at-risk of dropping out of school.

Description during SY21-22: In order to assess student learning, NCCA students in the categories listed above were given a pre- and post-test in skills relating to math, reading and language, using the research-based tool from North West Evaluation Association (NWEA).

By the end of the 2020-2021 school year, several observations became quite clear.. Because students moved to remote learning mid-year in the 2019-2020 school year, NCCA students were unable to take the NWEA, resulting in a lack of data on student progress. But the results from the following year (2020-

2021) illustrated the effects of remote learning versus in-person learning. Never before had we seen students fall backwards to such a great extent than in our most recent NWEA test results. While most students made some gains in one or more subjects, just over 95% of tested students scored at or below one or more of their pre-test scores at the end of the testing cycle. Additionally, fewer students reached college level scores than in the past.

Because past data shows that this is not a trend, we can assume that the lack of face-to-face instruction as well as a lack of connections made in the classroom was factors in the results of our assessments.

2. How the LEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 20 percent of the LEA's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) to address the academic impact of lost instructional time for such students through the implementation of evidence-based interventions as defined by ESSA (<https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/essa>), such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year:

Description during SY21-22: We plan to allocate 50% of funding for learning loss to focus on academic achievement and enrichment experiences. We plan to offer additional personalized courses to meet individual needs and interest, expand extended learning opportunities, offer experiential learning classes/activities, continue and expand our STEM program, and offer special educational field trips to increase motivation and exposure to real world learning. We will also invest in additional instructional assessments from our current educational online coursework partnership.

Description during SY22-23: We plan to allocate 50% of funding for learning loss to focus on academic achievement and enrichment experiences. We plan to offer additional personalized courses to meet individual needs and interest, expand extended learning opportunities, offer experiential learning classes/activities, continue and expand our STEM program, and offer special educational field trips to increase motivation and exposure to real world learning. We will also invest in additional instructional assessments from our current educational online coursework partnership.

Description during SY23-24: We plan to allocate 50% of funding for learning loss to focus on academic achievement and enrichment experiences. We plan to offer additional personalized courses to meet individual needs and interest, expand extended learning opportunities, offer experiential learning classes/activities, continue and expand our STEM program, and offer special educational field trips to increase motivation and exposure to real world learning. We will also invest in additional instructional assessments from our current educational online coursework partnership. Our current educational online coursework provider is up for renewal, funds will be used to continue this partnership for the next five years.

3. How the LEA will use the funds it reserves to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through:

a. Individualized tutoring, including providing stipends to teachers for intensive, supplemental tutoring (please check one):

Yes: X                      Somewhat:                      No:

Description: We plan to provide each staff member a professional development stipend annually to provide teachers and staff the funds to update, modify, and supplement daily academic instruction. This will also be focused on increasing rigor, relevancy and relationships within all our practices.

b. Teacher-directed professional development, in which teachers choose the professional development opportunities best suited to their career pathway and current learner needs (please check one):

Yes: X                      Somewhat:                      No:

Description: Funds will be set aside to allow teachers to participate in professional development of their choosing while aligning with the goals and mission of the charter school and the purpose of this grant.

4. How the LEA will produce evidence of the effectiveness of evidence-based learning loss interventions employed:

Description: We will produce evidence of the effectiveness of evidence-based learning loss by continuing with our current pre and post assessment, NorthWest Evaluation Association (NWEA) and the purchase of an additional supplemental assessment from our current educational provider.

#### **VI. Addressing Learner and Community Needs (80 percent of an LEA's Allocation)**

1. After accounting for the funds reserved under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act, how the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act (See Appendix A.):

Description during SY21-22: We have reserved 50% of our monies to Personnel, Community, Technology and Facilities. 35% is intended to reduce educator fatigue, show staff appreciation and strengthen our school community by engaging in teambuilding activities. 4% is allocated towards sharing our school and students achievement with their family, friends and community members. 5% will be reserved for additional technology expenses associated with additional equipment, supplies and support needed. 6% will be used for our facilities to uplift and increase safety to our current classrooms and offices.

Description during SY22-23: We have reserved 50% of our monies to Personnel, Community, Technology and Facilities. 35% is intended to reduce educator fatigue, show staff appreciation and strengthen our school community by engaging in teambuilding activities. 4% is allocated towards sharing our school and students achievement with their family, friends and community members. 5% will be reserved for additional technology expenses associated with additional equipment, supplies and support needed. 6% will be used for our facilities to uplift and increase safety to our current classrooms and offices.

Description during SY23-24: We have reserved 50% of our monies to Personnel, Community, Technology and Facilities. 35% is intended to reduce educator fatigue, show staff appreciation and strengthen our school community by engaging in teambuilding activities. 4% is allocated towards sharing our school and

students achievement with their family, friends and community members. It is also planned to host an educational roundtable with local business members , educators, community members and current and prospective students. 5% will be reserved for additional technology expenses associated with additional equipment, supplies and support needed. 6% will be used for our facilities to uplift and increase safety to our current classrooms and offices.

2. The LEA’s use of funds to address the top priority needs identified in the New Hampshire Department of Education’s robust, statewide consultation with stakeholders:

a. Providing individualized instruction:

During SY21-22 (check one):	Yes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat:	<input type="checkbox"/>	No:
During SY22-23 (check one):	Yes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat:	<input type="checkbox"/>	No:
During SY23-24 (check one):	Yes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat:	<input type="checkbox"/>	No:

Description of all SYs: North Country Charter Academy has a teacher student ratio of 1:7. The foundation of the charter school was built upon individualized and personalized instruction. We plan to continue this.

b. Addressing educator fatigue, including providing performance-based bonuses to teachers:

During SY21-22 (check one):	Yes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat:	<input type="checkbox"/>	No:
During SY22-23 (check one):	Yes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat:	<input type="checkbox"/>	No:
During SY23-24 (check one):	Yes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat:	<input type="checkbox"/>	No:

Description of all SYs: North Country Charter Academy currently does not have a teacher’s lounge, fitness room or simply a place to eat lunch together. Currently every teacher and staff eats at their workstation. It is our plan to use these funds to ensure our educators and staff has a reprieve to have a mental or physical break before, during or after school. This will include wellness workshops, local gym memberships or facility space rental in our current building where we can address fatigue by allowing staff and teachers to release steam, exercising with purchased equipment, meditating or participating in yoga.

c. Improving family engagement:

During SY21-22 (check one):	Yes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat:	<input type="checkbox"/>	No:
During SY22-23 (check one):	Yes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat:	<input type="checkbox"/>	No:
During SY23-24 (check one):	Yes:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Somewhat:	<input type="checkbox"/>	No:

Description of all SYs: We are going to host a showcase event annually for our students and family with serving of a meal. The focus will be on the student achievement as well as building school community.

3. The LEA's use of funds to address the following additional needs identified in the New Hampshire Department of

Education's robust, statewide consultation with stakeholders:

a. What amount and percentage of the LEA's total allocation will be administered under school leader discretion?

Amount: At this we have allocated and set aside all the funds that were granted under ESSER III. No discretionary funds have been set aside.

Percentage: 0%

Allocation methodology including the extent to which it reflected student need for, at minimum, Special Education, Free and Reduced-Price Lunch, and English Language Learners:

Not Applicable

b. What amount and percentage of the LEA's total allocation will be used to support Career and Technical Education:

Amount: 0

Percentage: 0%

Description, including funds used to support learner obtainment of industry-recognized credentials:

Zero funds have been allocated. Enrollment at the Career and Technical Centers are an integral part of enrolling at the charter school. This is a current practice that is organized by the founding principles of our charter.

c. The extent to which funds will be used to provide access to course access opportunities, including advanced, elective, and remedial courses provided outside of the residential public school that a learner could not otherwise access:

During SYs 21-24 (check one): Yes:  Somewhat:  No:

Description of all SYs: Funds were set aside for individual courses and extended learning opportunities for students that express an interest in this educational offering outside of our core curriculum.

## **VII. Addressing the Unique Needs of All Learners**

1. How the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements will respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 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.

Description: North Country Charter Academy has operated for the past 18 years as a school that is tailored toward enrolling at-risk students to include those demographics listed above to provide them with an alternative option to obtaining their high school diploma. We will continue to track and monitor our assessment evaluations to ensure effective individual instruction and enrichment experiences are supporting our students' academic, social emotional and mental health needs of all our students.

**VIII. Authorization**

LEA Superintendent's Signature:

Lisa Lavore

Date:

August 23, 2021