

**Stewartstown School District  
ESSER II and III Funds  
Recommended Allocations**

**Public Hearing  
Stewartstown School Board**

September 8, 2021

## Background

Governor Chris Sununu declared a state of emergency on March 13, 2020 and ordered all K-12 schools to be closed for in person learning as of March 15, 2020. That closure required us to immediately pivot and provide education in ways unimaginable just a few days earlier.

The Stewartstown School District responded quickly, developed systems for delivering education remotely and schedules for food delivery. As schools worked to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year, challenges and additional costs associated emerged. In response, the federal government allocated funds through the ESSER I - CARES/SPSRF, ESSER II -CRRSA, and ESSER III-ARP. The two largest allocations, ESSER II (CRRSA) and ESSER III the American Rescue Plan. These funds are to be used to address needs specifically resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and meet specific requirements. These allocations will provide the Stewartstown School District with resources needed as it responds to challenges resulting from the pandemic over the next three years. This document is intended as an overview of the Stewartstown School District's proposed expenditures of ESSER II and ESSER III funds.

### *Definitions*

- **CARES Act:** Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act; federal relief measure signed into law March 20, 2020. Funds must be allocated by September 30, 2022.
- **CRRSA Act:** Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act; federal relief measure signed into law on December 27, 2020. Funds must be allocated by September 30, 2023.
- **ARP:** American Rescue Plan; federal relief measure signed into law March 11, 2021. Funds must be allocated by September 30, 2024.
- **ESSER:** Elementary and Secondary Schools Educational Relief, which could refer to any one of the three funds allocated to by the CARES Act (ESSER I), CRRSA Act (ESSER II) and ARP (ESSER III or ARP ESSER)
- **SPSRF 1:** Supplemental Public School Response Funds; Designated to provide relief and support for unanticipated costs associated with the safe opening and operation of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **SPRF 2:** Application for COVID-19 expenses in excess of \$200 per pupil that had not been reimbursed by other available sources.
- **LEA:** Local Education Agency; specific to New Hampshire, this is the school district
- **SEA:** State Education Agency, specific to New Hampshire this is the State Department of Education

## ESSER Allocations

- **CARES Act (ESSER I):** \$80,603.79
- **SPSRF 1:** \$19,200.00
- **SPSRF 2:** \$5,645.00
- **CRRSA Act (ESSER II):** \$154,474.08
- **ARP (ESSER III):** \$228,967.27 \* *Anticipated*
- **Total Allocation:** **\$488,890.14**

### ***What can these funds be used for?***

Approved uses of funds vary between ESSER II and ESSER III (see Appendix 1 ESSER comparison). In general, though, ESSER funds can be used for:

- Educational technology purchases including internet connectivity, hardware, devices, software, etc.
- Supplies and services to enable remote learning
- Mental health services and supports
- Diagnostic assessment tools to gauge students' knowledge and skills as well as potential gaps in learning
- Professional development opportunities for district staff to increase capacity around high quality instruction, assessment, and learning environments
- Supplies and services to sanitize district facilities and provide access to personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Planning and coordinating systems for addressing long-term closures including how to provide meals, technology for online learning, carrying out legal requirements, and providing educational services
- Procedures to coordinate systems to improve district preparedness and response to COVID-19
- After/before school enrichment programming beyond what is currently provided
- Access to tutoring and programming outside of school days and hours
- Addressing loss of opportunities to learn
- School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards and support student health needs
- Inspecting, testing, maintaining, repairing, replacing, and upgrading projects to improve indoor air quality in school facilities including HVAC systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement

### ***What CAN'T these funds be used for?***

- Building new school facilities (must be COVID Related)
- Substantially reducing local support for public K-12 education
- Expenses that are not specific to preventing, preparing, or responding to the impact of COVID-19

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Over the past 18+ months, we have navigated the unique challenges of providing education during a pandemic. We will continue to respond in a flexible manner that is aligned to our strategic plan. We have learned much from this experience and as a result education will never look quite the same as it did in March of 2020. While the availability of vaccines provided hope, we anticipate that COVID and its variants will impact schooling - which tells us this pandemic is not yet over. We know that the academic and social emotional impacts of this pandemic will continue. Therefore, this plan has been developed to leverage the available resources to address identified needs now and respond to those that are discovered in the future. The design incorporated input from a diverse group of stakeholders and each priority and action step is aligned with the goals of our strategic plan. This plan should, and will, change as we respond to the new conditions and needs of our students.

### **PRIORITIES (Aligned with SAU 7 Strategic Plan)**

1. Increase student growth and achievement by providing high quality learning experiences through which students develop mindsets, character, communication, and thinking skills necessary for them to achieve regardless of the pathway chosen while addressing losses in opportunities to learn
2. Recruit, recognize and retain high quality personnel dedicated to meeting the needs of each and every student
3. Provide access to reliable technology to minimize interruptions to learning and expand learning opportunities available to students
4. Engage with our community to partner in supporting our students and remove barriers
5. Provide and maintain safe and healthy facilities for all students and staff

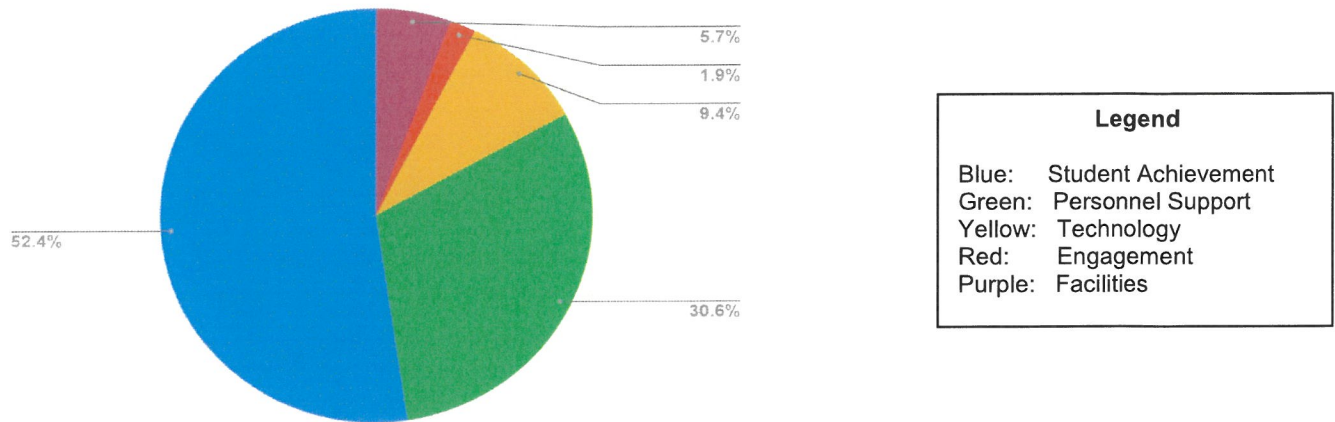
### ***PROPOSED ESSER II AND ESSER III ALLOCATIONS***

Below is a graph to show the percentage of funds anticipated to support each of our five priorities. This document overviews plans at the current time. It is important to note that the



plan will continue to be revised as conditions and the needs of our students change.

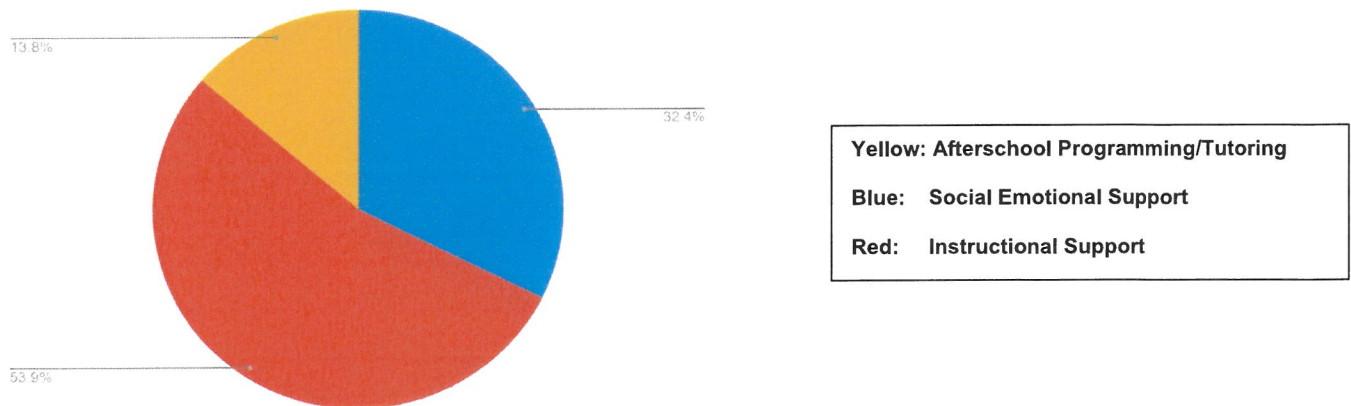
Percentage of ESSER II and ESSER III Funds Allocated by Priority Area:



### STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT

Being able to document both growth and achievement over time is critical to the success of our students. We know that the pandemic has increased gaps in learning and has negatively impacted many students’ opportunities to learn. Therefore, funds are allocated in this plan to support personalized learning experiences, expand access to learning experiences outside of the traditional school day and year, and increase academic offerings for students. This will also allow us to return safely to face-to-face instruction by minimizing potential exposures through cohorting as needed.

#### SNAPSHOT OF STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT BUDGET



**After School Programming and Tutoring** - We are aware that the pandemic has led to a loss of opportunities for many students to learn which resulted in gaps in achievement. We also know that as COVID-19 continues to be a threat to our public health, students will likely be exposed to COVID-19 and may need to be temporarily excluded from school. Access to tutoring will allow for individualized support to address gaps in learning resulting from disruptions caused by COVID-19 and provide continuity of education.

**Social Emotional Support** – Additional counseling will be available for students through a social emotional learning interventionist. We will also update our student assistance program to align with New Hampshire expectations. Additionally, activities to foster and develop social emotional learning have been planned including student theatre program which supports these aims.

**Instructional Support and Academic Interventionist** - We have added a full-time interventionist position which is partially supported by ESSER funds. The interventionists will work with identified students to determine individualized learning pathways based upon students' strengths, needs, and goals. In addition, we anticipate instructional coaches will increase student achievement as they provide feedback to teachers on improved instruction. Our afterschool program will incorporate academic support. Due to the need to improve mathematics, research based instructional materials were purchased for our elementary teachers.

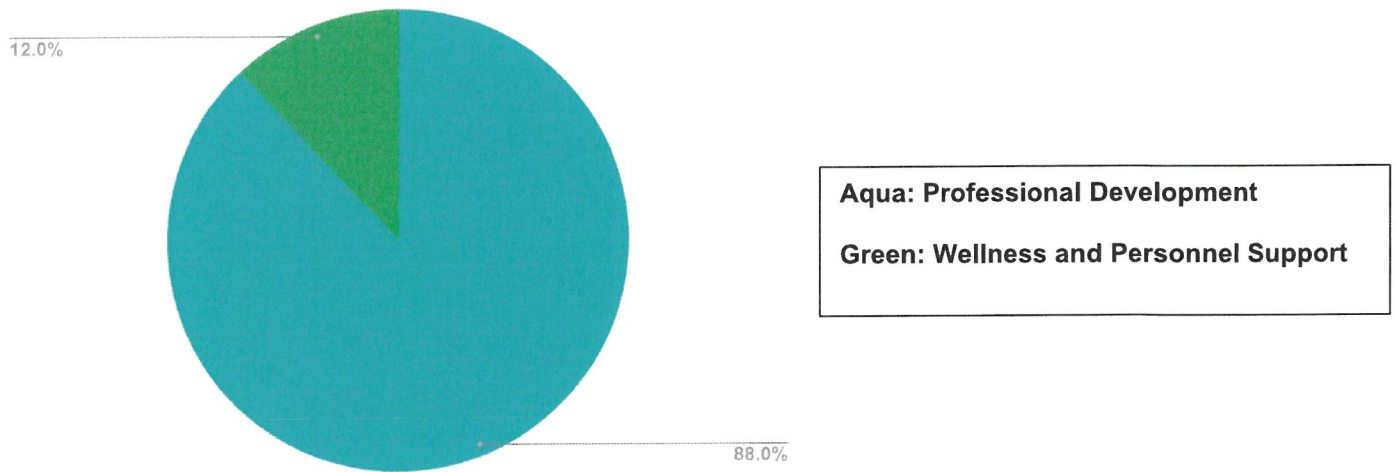
## **PERSONNEL SUPPORT**

The Stewartstown School District is committed to recruiting, retaining, and recognizing the highest quality personnel possible. Research suggests that access to high quality teachers is the most important factor in ensuring student success. All staff who will be paid through these grant funds are intended to have a positive impact on student achievement.

Budget items include funds to support:

- Professional development for teachers and leaders will continue our transformation to a competency-based system of education through which we will meet the needs of individual students by building upon strengths and using data to determine next potential steps in learning
- Instructional coaching to provide job-embedded professional learning opportunities
- Permanent substitutes and continuity of education in the case of staff absences
- Staff wellness to address educator fatigue

*SNAPSHOT OF PERSONNEL BUDGET*



**Personnel Support Expenditures Planned:**

**Professional Development**

**Instructional Coaching and Training-** Providing job embedded support for educators as they enhance their instructional and assessment skills is critical as we work to address lost opportunities to learn resulting from the pandemic. We will support educators as they engage in reflective practice and use collaborative approaches to analyze student work and to identify next steps in teaching and learning.

**Training** – These funds will provide teachers and leaders with access to experts in instruction, assessment, social emotional development, and competency-based learning from whom our staff can learn when engaging in job-embedded, on-going professional development. Specifically, a new teacher mentor program, ongoing curriculum and instruction support and training and a social emotional learning training.

**Wellness and Personnel Support**

**Staff Wellness** - Staff wellness is critical for meeting the diverse and growing needs of our students. The New Hampshire Department of Education identified this as one of the priorities for these funds. We will augment our wellness program for staff to engage in a variety of wellness

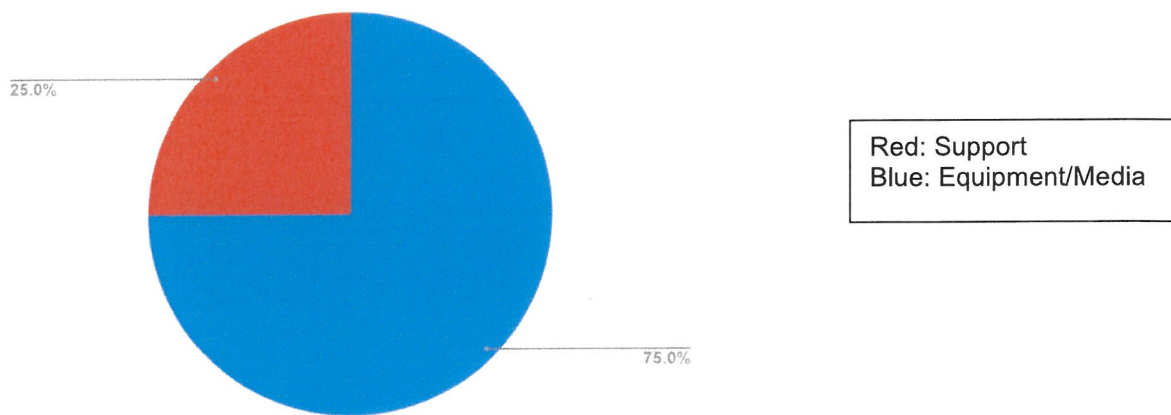
activities aligned with their interests and needs.

**Permanent Substitute** - Individuals hired as substitute teachers who are guaranteed to work all 180 days of the school year; These individuals increase consistency of learning for students as they are knowledgeable of the school, routines, and students in the building while covering for staff absences. Funds will be devoted to this purpose to ensure continuity of instruction when teachers are absent.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

The importance of having access to reliable, current technology was magnified as we work to provide uninterrupted access to education regardless of the setting. COVID-19 required us to be able to pivot without warning from face-to-face to remote delivery of instruction. As a result, we have allocated funds to continue to upgrade both our devices and infrastructure. Ensuring reliable, dynamic technology access for all students continues to be critical as we work to meet the demands of providing education during a pandemic.

#### *SNAPSHOT OF TECHNOLOGY BUDGET*



### **Replacement Devices and Infrastructure Upgrades**

As students and staff increase their use of technology devices there is a need to accelerate our obsolescence cycle and replace devices more frequently. Funds here will allow for the purchase of additional student and staff devices to allow remote and in class on-going access to education across a variety of settings. These funds will be used to support school-based infrastructure needs



as well as mobile access for students. Specifically, we will purchase additional interactive media boards for teachers.

**Media**

We will upgrade our projection system for the multipurpose room to ensure that we have the necessary equipment to facilitate after-school activities, as well as academic, informational, and community events, while following and maintaining health and safety guidelines.

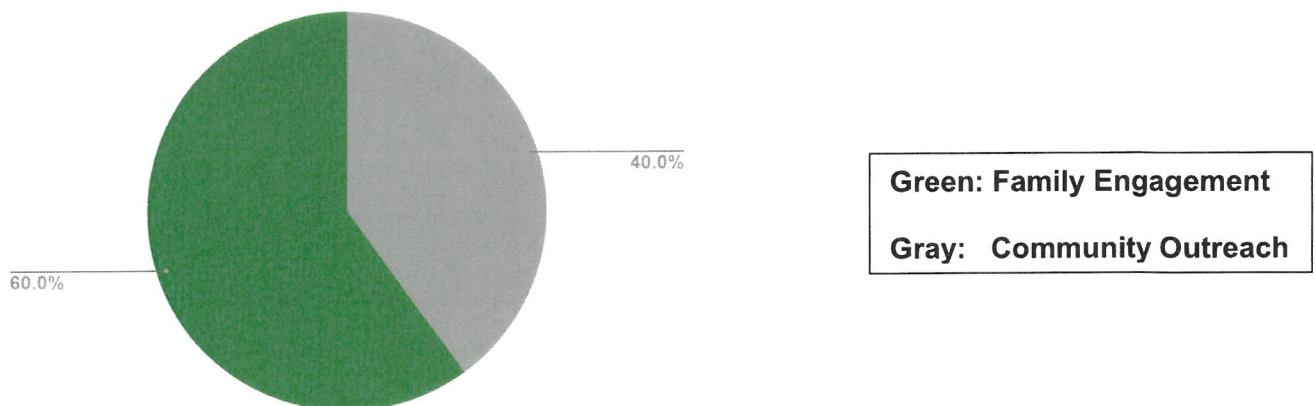
**Support**

We have updated our staff technology helpdesk this summer and are also curating professional development videos on our website to support our teachers learning new software and hardware as well as integrating instructional technology tools into the teaching and learning environment.

**COMMUNITY FOCUSED ENGAGEMENT**

In Stewartstown School we recognize and value the importance of working with our community. Our students truly are OUR students. Efforts to engage collaboratively can be seen in the various ways in which local businesses and community members continually step up to support our students. Our community continues to be an integral part of our school environment. Funds in this area are intended to further strengthen connections between our schools and the wider community while also removing barriers to accessing resources.

*SNAPSHOT OF COMMUNITY FOCUSED ENGAGEMENT BUDGET*



**Family Engagement School Showcases** - These funds will be used to engage families in the school community. They will be used to support opportunities for families to participate in events such as open house, family math nights, shared reading experiences, student showcases, and field

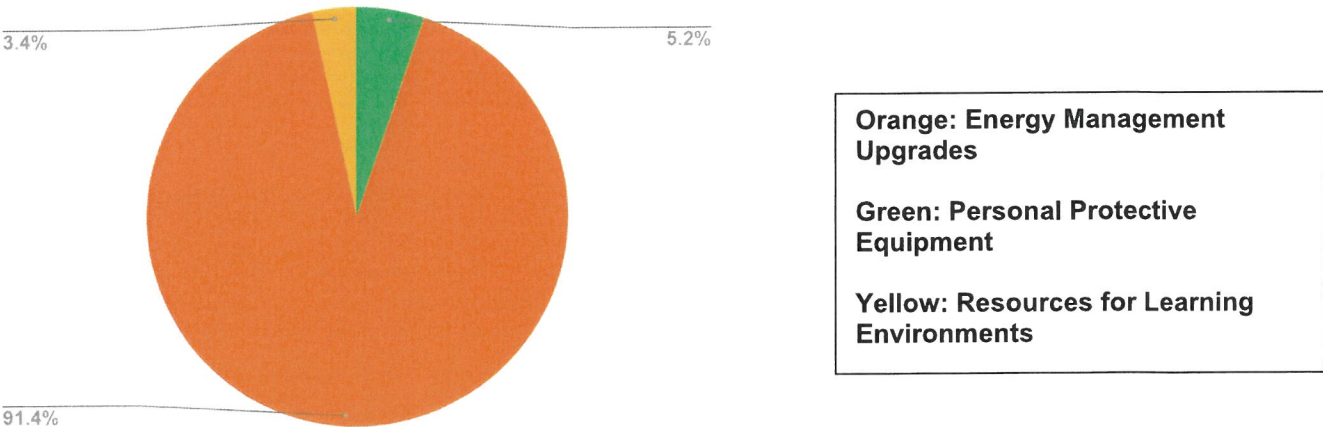
trips. These funds will also allow us to further partner with members of the community and take advantage of local resources.

**Community Outreach** – These funds will be used to support outreach to parents and community partners to improve regular communication and community connections.

**FACILITIES**

In providing instruction during the 2020-2021 school year, the School District worked closely with local health care providers to incorporate recommendations from the NH Department of Public Health (NHDPH), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to ensure students were able to access face to face learning with minimal interruptions. Changes to facilities included, marking the building to create visual cues to support physical distancing, and the installation of plexiglass in high traffic areas. As we continued to navigate providing education during the pandemic, we became aware of necessary facility upgrades such as HVAC upgrades that will improve air flow and circulation. We also recognize the need for increased cleaning and sanitation supplies as well as access to personal protective equipment (PPE). This creates an increased burden on the local budget to provide these products and ensure high quality cleaning takes place. To that end, funds are allocated to support both facilities improvements and access to materials needed.

*SNAPSHOT OF FACILITY BUDGET*



**Energy Management Upgrades** - Upgrading the HVAC system and energy management will improve airflow and allow our maintenance staff to monitor the air flow within the buildings and respond to issues should they appear.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Sanitation Materials** - COVID-19 continues to be a threat to the health of our school community. Therefore, there is a need for increased access to PPE and cleaning materials. Funds are allocated to ease the burden on the local budget to provide these increased, necessary supplies.

**Resources for Flexible Learning Environments** - Each individual building needs access to funds to provide furniture other resources to support flexibility in learning environments.

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Links to emergency funding for schools documents from NH DOE site [NH DOE Emergency Funding For Schools](#)

U.S. Department of Education American Rescue Plan Fact Sheet  
[https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/03/FINAL\\_ARP-ESSER-FACT-SHEET.pdf](https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/03/FINAL_ARP-ESSER-FACT-SHEET.pdf)

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