

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

**Public Hearing
PSD School Board**

August 23, 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 Pittsburg School District responded quickly, developed systems for delivering education remotely and schedules for food delivery. As schools worked to reopen for the 2020-2021 schoolyear, 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 Pittsburg 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 Pittsburg 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):** \$28,961.80
- **SPSRF 1:** \$9,800.00
- **SPSRF 2:** \$13,524.00
- **CRRSA Act (ESSER II):** \$128,454.45
- **ARP (ESSER III):** \$ 190,403.69* *Anticipated*

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
- 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 into the future. 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

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

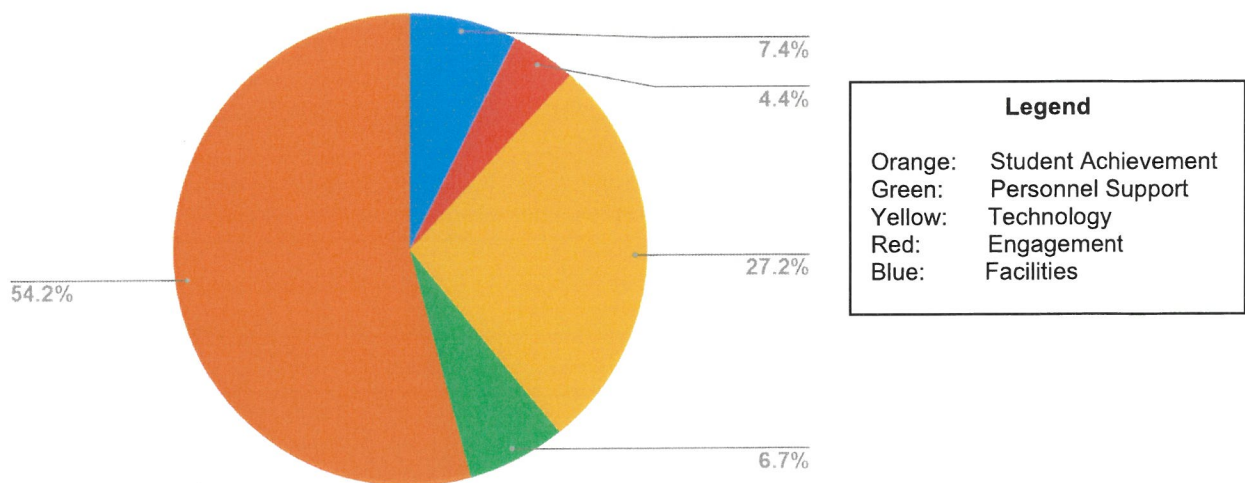
Proposed ESSER II and ESSER III Allocations

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:ESSER II - \$128,454.45

ESSER III - \$190,403.69 (Anticipated)



We propose utilizing these funds over a three-year period. Under that proposal, the largest portion would be used during the 2021-2022 school year, with reduced amounts in subsequent years

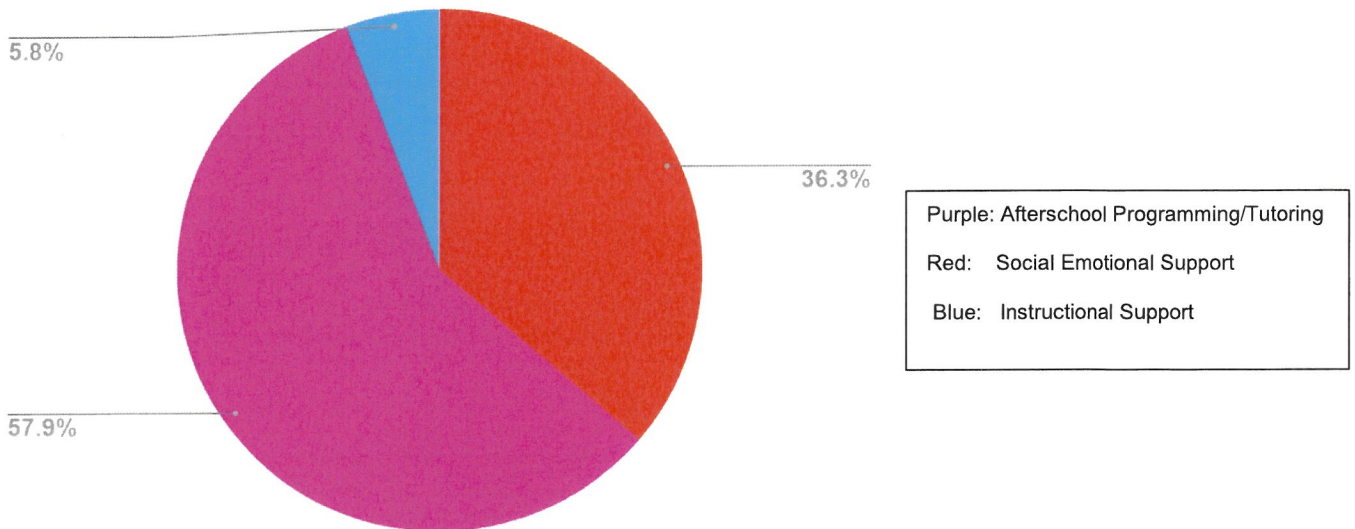
- 2021-2022 School Year - \$100,000.
- 2022-2023 School Year - \$ 100,000.
- 2023-2024 School Year - \$100,000.
- Through September 2024 - \$18,858.14

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 keep class sizes at a reasonable level 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

Student Growth and Achievement



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 shared social emotional interventionist. We will also update our student assistance program to align with New Hampshire expectations.

Instructional Support and Academic Interventionist - We have increased our interventionist who will work with identified students to ~~create~~ individualized learning pathways based upon students' strengths, needs, and goals.

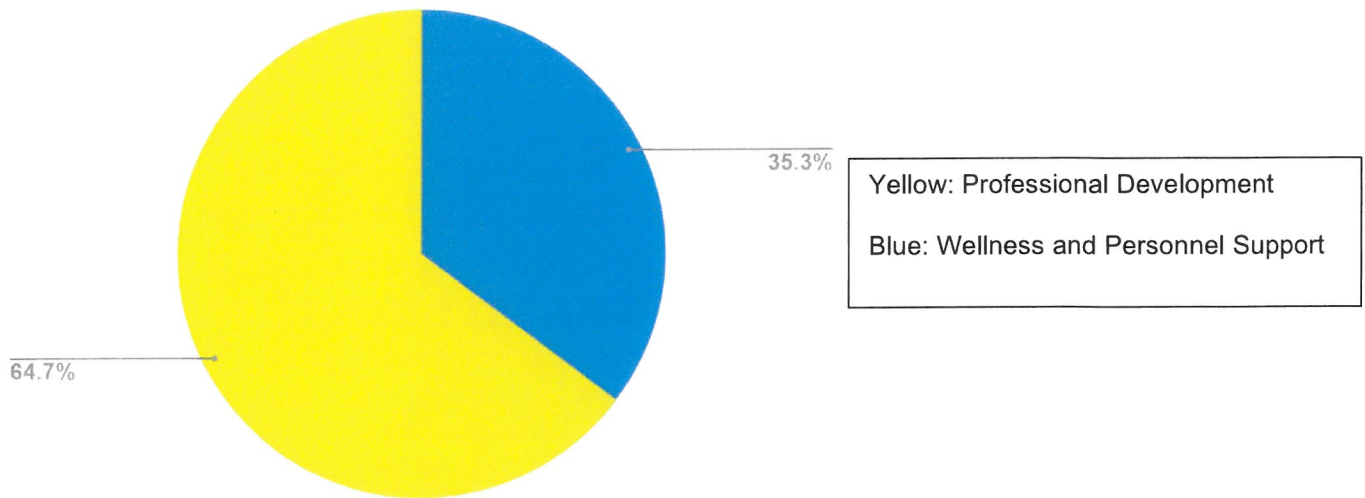
PERSONNEL SUPPORT

The Pittsburg 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 staff that 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 Coach- Providing 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. This individual will support educators as they engage in reflective practice and use collaborative approaches to analyze student work to identify next steps in learning.

Training – These funds will provide 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-gong professional development.

Wellness and Personnel Support

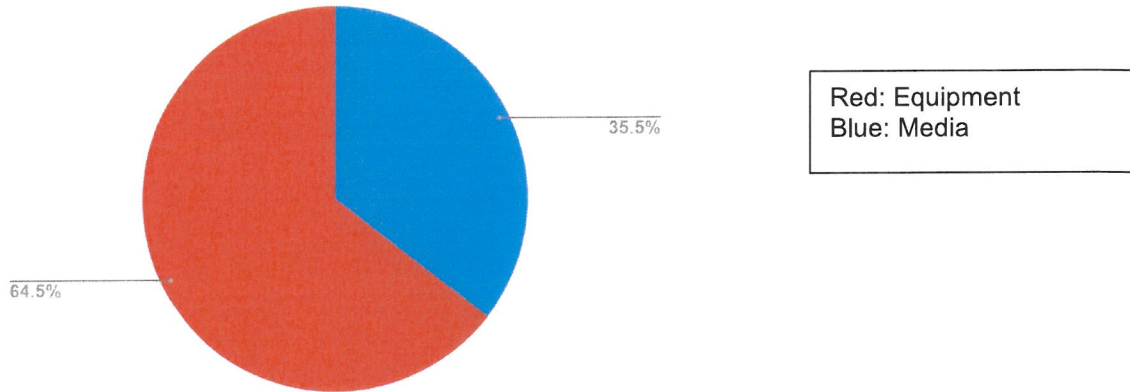
Staff Wellness - Staff wellness is critical for meeting the diverse and growing needs of our students. The New Hampshire Department of Education identified this as one of the priorities for these funds. In this budget funds are provided to allow staff to engage in a variety of wellness activities aligned 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.

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 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.

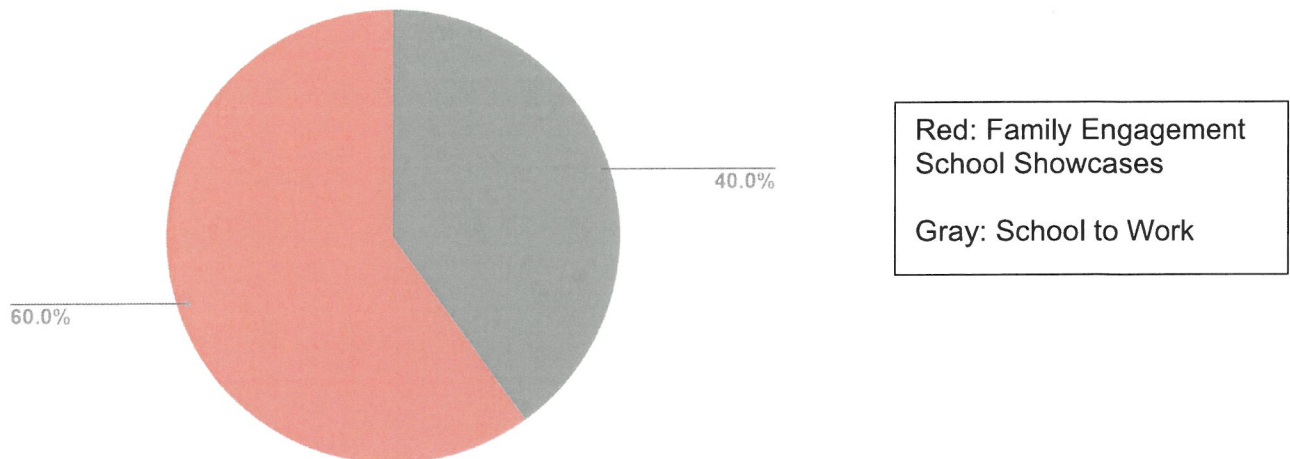
Media

We will upgrade our Projector/Screen/Audio for the Gym to ensure that we have the necessary equipment to hold academic, informational, or community events while following and maintaining health and safety guidelines. This will enable the school to facilitate after-school activities, as well as academic, informational, and community events.

COMMUNITY FOCUSED ENGAGEMENT

In Pittsburg 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. From providing internship and work-based learning opportunities to supporting graduation celebrations, 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



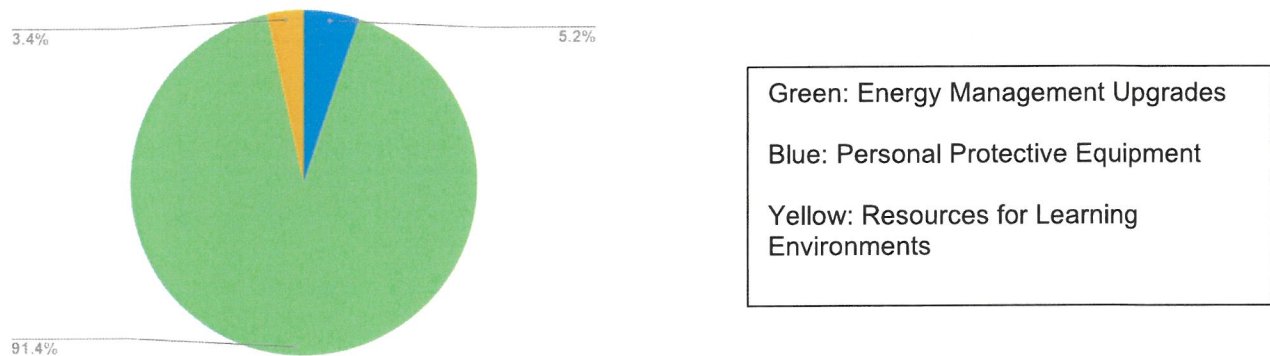
Family Engagement School Showcases - These funds will be used to engage families and pull them into the school community. They will be used to support opportunities for families to participate in events such as family math nights, shared reading experiences, student showcases, and field trips. These funds will also allow us to further partner with members of the community and take advantage of local resources.

School to Work - To ensure students preparedness for the career, our school to work program should be expanded and aligned with competencies. We will work actively with students, community partners and state consultants to expand and augment our efforts on behalf of students.

FACILITIES

In providing instruction during the 2020-2021 school year, the Pittsburg 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

If you have feedback or comments, please contact:

Debra Taylor, PhD., SAU 7 Superintendent of Schools

dtaylor@sau7.org