



Friend Public School ESSER III Use of Funds Plan

The Federal Programs Advisory has met to discuss the ESSER III funding, the Safe Return Plan and the "Use of Funds" requirements. Stakeholders on the advisory reviewed the requirements and the allowable uses of funding. The group was tasked with listing ideas on what they believe would benefit our students most. 20% or more of the funding is reserved to be used for closing the achievement gap. Due to students being out of school over the last year during quarantines and virtual learning, a look at gaps is necessary. Funds can also be used for continuity of services, and for implementing prevention and mitigation strategies consistent with the most recent CDC guidance for reopening schools.

Prevention and Intervention Strategies

A Safe Return Plan was created earlier this summer and put on our District Website to inform our patrons of things being done to keep our students safe, healthy and in school. The plan includes mask use, handwashing, respiratory etiquette, social distancing, and the sanitizing buildings and buses. The plan also discusses COVID symptoms, positive cases, quarantines, and isolations, as well as preventive measures during the school day. Weekly monitoring and safety protocols complete the plan. Funds from ESSER III may be used as resources in this area.

Continuity of Services

Stakeholders reviewed the positives from reducing class size in 1st - 3rd grades this past school year. This was a result of a Care's Act Incentive Grant. The advisory believes this needs to continue. ESSER III funds would allow this to be sustained. The class size promotes more time with individual students, and social distancing.

The district also received a Verizon Hotspot grant last year. The distance learning program with Verizon has been continued and we are eligible to utilize this opportunity again this year. This was a great help with students who did not have connectivity, and students with several family members working at home. ESSER III would allow for the use of hotspots to be sustained.

The Oklahoma State Department of Education made Exact Path from Edmentum available to Districts at no charge for one year. This is a program that helps identify where our students are performing in Math and Reading. The program assesses our students, identifies gaps which help our teachers. It gives them a path to bridge gaps and be prepared to move ahead. This would be another tool our school would be able to continue to use this school year with ESSER III funds.

We have recently received a grant with the Corp of Counselors. This grant pays \$8,000 per year over the next 3 years for counseling services. The district has to match the amount. This could possibly be done through ESSER III to address social and emotional learning.

Closing the Gap

20% or more of the reserved ESSER III funds will be used to close the gap and to address the academic impact of lost instructional time. The advisory team began discussion and the creation of a list of various evidence based interventions. Summer options, tutoring, and after school programs are things that will be considered for intervening for students. Comments were made about attendance historically with supplemental opportunities not being very high. Transportation may be an option for students if families indicate a need. A survey to see what would work best for our families will be utilized.

There have been requests by several teachers for programs, and technology/textbooks to work with closing the gap. The team suggested researching those and selecting proven evidence based interventions.

Professional development was suggested by a parent on the advisory to assist parents and prepare them for the possibility of moving to distance learning during quarantines and isolations.

Other Thoughts

- Keep an eye on the numbers in our middle school classes
- School repairs
- Sanitation possibilities

Extended collaboration with stakeholders will allow us to put our plan into action with specific strategies, monitor how the plan is working by evaluating results, and making any needed adjustments along the way. Please feel free to contact our school office with any questions, suggestions, or concerns you may have. The school is very appreciative of the opportunities provided by ESSER III funding.