Section: Narratives - Assessing Impacts and Needs

LEA ARP ESSER APPLICATION

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) recognizes the extraordinary efforts made by Local Education Agencies (LEAs), schools, and educators to support students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The application below requests information from LEAs about: (1) Needs and impacts resulting from the pandemic, (2) Stakeholder engagement in the development of local plans to respond to these needs and impacts, (3) Specific elements in the LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds; and (4) Plans for monitoring and measuring progress. As submitted and accepted by PDE in final form, this application shall become part of the Grant Agreement for ARP ESSER funds as Appendix B. As used in this application, "the LEA" refers to the Grantee defined in the Grant Agreement.

ARP ESSER includes a significant focus on vulnerable student populations. Given these requirements, as well as PDE's own equity commitments, the LEA application includes specific fields requesting information on programs to serve student groups that have experienced disproportionate impacts from the pandemic. Student groups are inclusive of the following:

- Students from low-income families;
- Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity);
- Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender);
- English learners;
- Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA]);
- Students experiencing homelessness;
- Children and youth in foster care;
- Migrant students; and
- Other groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic that have been identified by the LEA (e.g., youth involved in the criminal justice system, students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures, and LGBTQ+ students).

Section I: Assessing Impacts and Needs

In this first section, LEAs are asked to describe the impact of the pandemic on their students, examine disproportionate impacts on specific student groups, and highlight the LEA's promising practices in supporting student needs since March 2020.

Indicators of Impact

1. Understanding the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Describe how the LEA has identified or will identify the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning and well-being. Specifically, what methods (i.e., collecting and analyzing data and information from focus groups, surveys,

and local assessment results) were used or will be used to identify and measure impacts in four key areas: (1) Academic impact of lost instructional time, (2) Chronic absenteeism, (3) Student engagement, and (4) Social-emotional well-being?

	Methods Used to Understand Each Type of Impact
Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time	At PA Virtual, all students are screened at the beginning, middle, and near the end of the school year using a variety of screening and benchmarking measures such as DIBELS, CDT, Study Island Benchmarks, as well as Curriculum-based and teacher-created assessments. This data is continuously reviewed to determine changes needed in curriculum and instructional delivery as well as to group students according to level and need.
Chronic Absenteeism	The PA Virtual attendance policies and procedures are designed to promote a student's academic achievement; develop time management skills, self-responsibility, self-advocacy; and foster success in the online learning environment. PA Virtual utilizes daily communication, in a variety of modalities such as email, phone and text, to inform parents of absences. Attendance is captured for each class period during the school day and is monitored and acted upon by dedicated attendance support staff, family support coordinators. Attendance data is reviewed daily and utilized to initiate interventions and supports to both our students and learning coaches according to their needs.
Student Engagement	At PAVirtual, student engagement is observed and assessed through multiple means. Attendance, as described in its own category above is the first indicator. Once in school, students have their online classwork through which data can be collected and analyzed such as completion, mastery, and in several courses, time on task. Students have live synchronous class time in which attendance, attention, and participation are all monitored by the teacher. Data observed and collected in synchronous and asynchronous classes that indicates a student is becoming disengaged is escalated through the MTSS process to work with students and families to identify root causes and develop appropriate, targeted support strategies.
Social-emotional Well-being	PA Virtual completed a needs assessment to collect data from students and parents in grades K thru 12 to determine the social-emotional areas respondents identified as critical areas for support. Additionally, through the MTSS process, teachers and all staff can identify individual student needs and work with the counseling team to bring in added support.
Other Indicators	

Documenting Disproportionate Impacts

2. Identify **at least three student** groups in the LEA that faced particularly significant impacts from the pandemic. For each, provide specific strategies that were used or will be used to identify and measure impacts.

Student Group	Provide specific strategies that were used or will be used to identify and measure impacts
Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity)	As indicated on state reporting measures, students identifyiing as historically underserved racial or ethnic subgroups have underperformed in the areas of math and reading. In year, this data will be monitored with CDT and grade level reporting measures.
Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA])	As indicated on state reporting measures, students with IEPs have underperformed in the areas of math and reading in comparison to their non-identified peers. In year, this data will be monitored wtih CDT and grade level reporting measures.
Students from low-income families	As indicated on state reporting measures, students identified as having socio-economic barriers through qualifying for free and reduced lunches have failed to meet grade level standards in the areas of math and reading. In year, this data will be monitored wtih CDT and grade level reporting measures.

Reflecting on Local Strategies

3. Provide the LEA's assessment of the top two or three strategies that have been most effective in supporting the needs of students, in particular specific student groups most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Include at least one strategy addressing **academic needs** and at least one strategy addressing **social-emotional needs**.

	Strategy Description
Strategy #1	PA Virtual expanded its Academic Support Staff to work with identifying student deficits in Math and Reading and providing more, small group, concentrated support in those areas with direct instruction with certified teachers working as intervention specialists in those areas of identified need.

   i. **Impacts that Strategy #1 best addresses:** (select all that apply)

☑ **Academic impact of lost instructional time**

☐ **Chronic absenteeism**

☑ **Student engagement**

☐ **Social-emotional well-being**

☐ **Other impact**

   ii. **If Other is selected above, please provide the description here:**

   iii. **Student group(s) that Strategy #1 most effectively supports:** (select all that apply)

☑ **Students from low-income families**

☑ **Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity)**

☑ **Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender)**

☑ **English learners**

☑ **Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA))**

☑ **Students experiencing homelessness**

☑ **Children and youth in foster care**

☑ **Migrant students**

☐ **Other student groups: (provide description below)**

   iv. **If Other is selected above, please provide the description here.**

Reflecting on Local Strategies: Strategy #2

	Strategy Description
Strategy #2	Pa Virtual expanded its oversight of all teaching staff to improve quality of instruction for all students in accordance with the Danielson model through more frequent classroom observations and more frequent evaluation of teacher lesson plans.

   i. **Impacts that Strategy #2 best addresses:** (select all that apply)

☑ **Academic impact of lost instructional time**

☐ **Chronic absenteeism**

☑ **Student engagement**

☐ **Social-emotional well-being**

☐ **Other impact**

ii. **If Other is selected above, please provide the description here:**

iii. **Student group(s) that Strategy #2 most effectively supports:** (select all that apply)

☑ **Students from low-income families**

☑ **Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity)**

☑ **Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender)**

☑ **English learners**

☑ **Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA))**

☑ **Students experiencing homelessness**

☑ **Children and youth in foster care**

☑ **Migrant students**

☐ **Other student groups: (provide description below)**

iv. **If Other is selected above, please provide the description here.**

Reflecting on Local Strategies: Strategy #3

	Strategy Description
Strategy #3	

i. **Impacts that Strategy #3 best addresses:** (select all that apply)

☐ **Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time**

☐ **Chronic absenteeism**

☐ **Student engagement**

☐ **Social-emotional well-being**

☐ **Other impact**

ii. **If Other is selected above, please provide the description here:**

iii. **Student group(s) that Strategy #3 most effectively supports:** (select all that apply)

☐ **Students from low-income families**

☐ **Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity)**

☐ **Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender)**

☐ **English learners**

☐ **Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA))**

☐ **Students experiencing homelessness**

☐ **Children and youth in foster care**

☐ **Migrant students**

☐ **Other student groups: (provide description below)**

iv. **If Other is selected above, please provide the description here:**

Section: Narratives - Engaging Stakeholders in Plan Development

Section II: Engaging Stakeholders in Plan Development

In this second section, LEAs are asked to provide information on how stakeholders will be engaged in planning for the use of ARP ESSER funds, how stakeholder input will be utilized, and how the LEA will make its LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds transparent to the public—all critical components in developing, implementing, and adjusting plans based on the differential impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

4. Stakeholder Engagement

Describe how the LEA, in planning for the use of ARP ESSER funds, has engaged or will engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders. **(3,000 characters max)**

> (Stakeholders include students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); teachers; principals; school leaders; other educators; school staff; and unions. In addition, to the extent that the following groups are present in or served by the LEA, stakeholders also include community partners, civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migrant students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students; and tribes.)

The plan for the use of ARP ESSER funding was developed at each grade band level and reviewed by the Academic Leadership Team to include Guidance, ELL, Special Education, and other school leaders to determine the student benefits of the plan, the capacity to implement the program with fidelity, sustainability beyond grant funding, and the assurance of a means to appropriately monitor and assess the program. The plan was presented to the Executive Leadership Team to include the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, and the Chief Human Resources & Marketing Officer in discussion of and adjustment to the plan. In August 2021, the plan was presented by the program level principals at a public board meeting and was a continued agenda item through December 2021 when it was ultimately approved by the Board of Trustees.

5. Use of Stakeholder Input

Describe how the LEA has taken or will take stakeholder and public input into account in the development of the LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds. **(3,000 characters max)**

The plan for the use of ESSER and ARP ESSER funding was developed by each school program and reviewed by the Academic Leadership Team to determine the student benefits of the plan, the capacity to implement the program with fidelity, sustainability beyond grant funding, and the assurance of a means to appropriately monitor and assess the program. Once approved, the plan was presented to the Executive Leadership Team where there was an opportunity to ask questions and make adjustments to the plan by the CEO, CFO, and Human Resource Department. The plan was then presented to, discussed, and eventually approved by the Board of Trustees.

6. Public Access to LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds

Describe the process for development, approval, and making public the LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds. The LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds must be made publicly available on the LEA website and submitted to PDE within 90 days of LEA receipt of ARP ESSER funding, must be written in a language that parents/caregivers can understand, and must be provided in alternate format upon request by a parent/caregiver who is an individual with a disability. **(3,000 characters max)**

The plan outlined in this application was presented, discussed, and ultimately approved in a series of public board meetings from August 2021 through December 2021. Upon approval of the ARP ESSER grant application, the plan for the use of funds will be publicly posted on the school's website with language and formats available upon request.

Section: Narratives - Using ARP ESSER Funds to Plan for Safe, In-Person Instruction

Section III: Using ARP ESSER Funds to Plan for Safe, In-Person Instruction

In this third section, LEAs are asked to reflect on both the impacts and needs described in Section I and stakeholder engagement described in Section II to provide a description of the LEA plan for the use of ARP ESSER funds , beginning with the minimum 20 percent reservation, to address the impact of lost instructional time as required by section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act.

Instructions: For both (a) the 20 percent reservation to address the impact of lost instructional time and (b) remaining funds, describe the LEA's principles for emphasizing educational equity in expending ARP ESSER funds, including but not limited to:

- Responding to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, and addressing opportunity gaps that existed before—and were exacerbated by—the pandemic.
- Allocating funding to individual schools and for LEA-wide activities based on student need.
- Implementing an equitable and inclusive return to in-person instruction. An inclusive return to in-person instruction includes, but is not limited to, establishing policies and practices that avoid the over-use of exclusionary discipline measures (including in- and out-of-school suspensions) and creating a positive and supportive learning environment for all students.
- Taking steps to permit students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers (including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age) that impede equal access to, or participation in, the ARP ESSER-supported program, in compliance with the requirements of section 427 of GEPA (20 U.S.C. 1228a).
- Attending to sustainability of plans supported by non-recurring ARP ESSER funds beyond the ARP ESSER funding period.

7. Plan for 20 percent Reservation to Address the Impact of Lost Instructional Time (Learning Loss)

How will the LEA use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs? **(3,000 characters max)**

The response must include:

a. A description of the evidence-based interventions (e.g., providing intensive or high-dosage tutoring, accelerating learning) the LEA has selected, and how the LEA will evaluate the impact of those interventions on an ongoing basis to determine effectiveness.
b. How the evidence-based interventions will specifically address the needs of student groups most disproportionately impacted.
c. The extent to which the LEA will use funds it reserves to identify, engage, and support (1) students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and (2) students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.

The focus for the 2021 - 2022 is to ensure that students receive necessary support by opening additional learning opportunities. Students will be identified using the CDT Diagnostic Exam. Example Tier I Interventions: office hours, Homework Help, Remediation classes, Executive Functioning and skills management meetings. Students scoring below grade level on the CDT Diagnostic and not responding to differentiated instruction in the classroom are placed in Tier II for additional interventions. Students are referred for additional resources ie Academic Support classes, Homework Help, additional remediation classes with an academic support teacher. Classroom assessments, Blackboard proficiency report, and Study Island data will be collected on Tier II students every 2 weeks. Results are documented following the PA Virtual progress monitoring procedure. PA Virtual hired additional teachers funded through ARP ESSER for academic support to provide additional remediation for students to address learning loss. Students not responding to Tier II Interventions are referred to Tier III for more intensive and explicit direct instruction that may include supplemental support programs. Administration Responsibilities: Additional administrative support is being funded through ARP ESSER to support, mentor, and manage teachers, monitor grade level data, review teacher lesson plans, complete walkthroughs, and evaluate teachers. Administration will gather the data for each subject during each walkthrough, and conduct follow-up meetings with teachers. Principals will monitor grade level Study Island data and Blackboard classroom data to ensure that students are making the appropriate academic gains within each of the academic areas of focus. Principals will work closely with teachers in the MTSS process to ensure that they are taking the appropriate steps in the process and that they are implementing classroom strategies with fidelity. This will be accomplished by enhanced classroom walkthroughs using Frontline which will allow us to record and track data and establish short term smart goals in conjunction with the teachers from one walkthrough to the next. Teachers will work with the principals to establish smart goals during each of the three walkthroughs conducted each semester. Teachers' goals will be tracked using the Frontline walkthrough form. These goals will be based on the classroom data and on reports from Study Island targeting individual student achievement and CDT. This will ensure that students are receiving the appropriate level of classroom differentiation and are retaining the information presented during the spiral review activities by providing baseline data to set a starting point for measuring student growth.

8. Plan for Remaining Funds *(funds not described under the question above)*

How will the LEA spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds including for each of the four fields below, as applicable? **(3,000 characters max)**

a. Continuity of Services: How will the LEA use ARP ESSER funds to sustain services to address students' academic needs; students' and staff social, emotional, and mental health needs; and student nutrition and food services?

b. Access to Instruction: How will the LEA use ARP ESSER funds to support the goals of increasing opportunity to learn and equity in instructional delivery? Consider regular attendance/chronic absenteeism data from the 2020-21 school year, including data disaggregated by student groups, in developing the response.

c. Mitigation Strategies: How will the LEA use ARP ESSER funds to support prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the reopening and operation of school facilities and transportation services to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff? Consider the

LEA's Health and Safety Plan in developing the response.

d. Facilities Improvements: How will the LEA use ARP ESSER funds to repair and improve school facilities to reduce risk of virus transmission, address environmental health hazards, and/or improve ventilation? Consider the LEA's Health and Safety Plan in developing the response.

PA Virtual will use a portion of ARP ESSER funding to maintain staff through a Board approved retention incentive for returning staff for the 2021-22 school year. PA Virtual will also use remaining ARP ESSER funds to digitize Student Records. Currently, pupil health and other student records are physically maintained off site. This requires staff to be physically present in the building to access certain student files. Upgrading to a system that will digitize all student records supports a paperless process which will provide necessary access to records even when in a fully remote environment. PA Virtual will also use a portion of ARP ESSER funding to upgrade related services software to better support students with IEPs who have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic through the cancelation and rescheduling of face to face services.

9. For LEAs with one or more Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) or Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) school only

Please verify consultation of the Evidence Resource Center in developing the LEA Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds and provide a justification for any intervention that is not supported by tier 1, 2, 3, or 4 evidence. If the LEA does not include a school with a CSI or ATSI designation, indicate "Not Applicable." **(3,000 characters max)**

N/A

10. 20% Reservation Calculation

Please enter your ARP ESSER total allocation amount and then click Save.
   *Please ensure that your 20% (or greater) budgeted amount for Learning Loss is itemized in your Budget.

	ARP ESSER Allocation	Reservation Requirement	Reservation Amount (calculated on save)
20 Percent Reservation	6,429,877	20%	1,285,975

Section: Narratives - Monitoring and Measuring Progress

Section IV: Monitoring and Measuring Progress

In this fourth section, LEAs are asked to describe efforts to build local capacity to ensure high-quality data collection and reporting to safeguard funds for their intended purposes.

11. Capacity for Data Collection and Reporting

LEAs must continuously monitor progress and adjust strategies as needed. Describe the LEA's capacity and strategy to collect and analyze data (disaggregated by student group, where applicable), for each of the following measures:

	Data Collection and Analysis Plan (including plan to disaggregate data)
Student learning, including academic impact of lost instructional time during the COVID-19 pandemic	All students will be screened at the beginning, middle, and near the end of the school year using a variety of screening and benchmarking measures such as DIBELS, CDT, Study Island Benchmarks, as well as Curriculum-based and teacher-created assessments. This data will be continuously reviewed to determine changes needed in curriculum and instructional delivery as well as to group students according to level and need.
Opportunity to learn measures (see help text)	At PA Virtual, student engagement is observed and assessed through multiple means. Attendance is the first indicator. Once in school, students have their online classwork through which data can be collected such as completion, mastery, and in several courses, time on task. Students have live synchronous class time in which attendance, attention, and participation are all monitored by the teacher. Data observed and collected in synchronous and asynchronous classes that indicates a student is becoming disengaged is escalated through the MTSS process to work with students and families to identify root causes and develop appropriate, targeted support strategies.
Jobs created and retained (by number of FTEs and position type) (see help text)	The Federal Programs Coordinator in conjunction with the CFO will maintain a spreadsheet that lists the positions funded through ARP ESSER and tracks when they were filled and by whom. Employees will sign a time and effort form minimally twice a year that correlates to the spreadsheet and confirms position and hours or percentage of time worked under the ARP ESSER funded position.
Participation in programs funded by ARP ESSER resources (e.g., summer and afterschool programs)	Student participation with be tracked and monitored via the PA Virtual class attendance policy. Students who are not attending their required intervention class will be escalated through MTSS and supported through targeted interventions based on the root cause of each individual student's attendance issue.