

Dolton West School District 148 ARP ESSER Use of Funds Plan

Revised 9.15.2021

Dolton West School District 148 has elected to utilize the ARP ESSER Funds as outlined by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). Dolton West School District 148 will ensure all funds are utilized to reduce the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on educational opportunities for students and to upgrade Dolton West School District 148 facilities to ensure a safe and healthy environment for student to return to in person learning. To ensure all stakeholders are familiar with safety protocols, Dolton West School District 148 posted a Return to Learn Plan on the district website 8/26/2021. This plan is reviewed and updated at a minimum every six (6) months.

In addition, Dolton West School District 148 is creating this **ARP ESSER Use of Funds Plan** to ensure all stakeholders are aware of how the funds will be allocated to ensure:

- The extent to which and how the funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the extent practicable, consistent with CDC guidance.
- How the LEA will use the funds it reserves under Section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time.
- How the LEA will use its remaining ARP ESSER funds.
- How the LEA will ensure the interventions it implements will respond to the social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs of all students, particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dolton West School District 148 created this comprehensive Use of Funds Plan after reviewing the needs of students, staff and community through the collection of information from the 5Essentials Survey, local surveys, public comments at Board of Education meetings, and will continue to utilize these means to ensure public input throughout the implementation of the plan.

Prevention and Mitigation Strategies

Dolton West School District 148 has budgeted for supplies to reduce contamination and ensure sanitary procedures at both the elementary and junior high buildings. Funds are allocated for FY22 and FY23 school year at both facilities. This will ensure the facilities are safe learning environments for all ages, student populations, and staff members.

To reduce contamination and ensure sanitary procedures in the cafeteria, Dolton West School District 148 has added two (2) cafeteria managers to each building (elementary & Jr/Sr high school). ESSER III funds will be utilized to pay wages and benefits for all four (4) additional employees.

All prevention and mitigation strategies will follow current CDC guidance.

Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time

Dolton West School District 148 will provide Summer School in 2022 to address academic needs of all students, particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. ARP ESSER Funds will be utilized for Summer School Teacher salaries/benefits and Paraprofessional staff salaries/benefits. Staff will utilize benchmark assessments to determine students selected for the summer school program. At the conclusion of the summer school program, students will be reassessed to determine the impact summer school intervention has on learning loss of the students.

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Throughout the school year, two substitute teachers will be utilized to cover teachers quarantined and provide homebound services to students with medical conditions that prevent them from attending in person learning. This service will ensure the maximum amount of in person instruction is provided to all students, particularly children with disabilities and those students disproportionately impacted by the loss of in person instruction at the height of the pandemic. This service will also assist in mitigating homebound student learning loss since they are unable to attend in person classes.

After school program, will serve students identified for support and intervention in deficit areas. The time with students will be spent specifically to build skills and provide foundational supports. Assistance with homework will be addressed if time permits.

During previous remote learning times, staff experienced difficulties providing materials through online platforms and current curriculum. To mitigate that barrier to providing quality instruction, Dolton West School District 148 staff will be selecting updated curriculum in mathematics, social studies, and science. The new curriculum will enhance learning opportunities through digital resources and opportunities for students required to learn remotely to have equitable access to all learning materials, synchronized learning opportunities, and staff support.

Access to technology to mitigate the digital divide in the Dolton West School District 148 community has been a long-term project. By collaborating and blending funding opportunities, Dolton West School District has minimized the digital divide. Funding from ESSER III will provide more digital devices to ensure this long-term project reaches the goal of all students having access to a device and connectivity.

The social and emotional strain on students and staff throughout the pandemic greatly impacts student learning and staff effectiveness. To address the impact of social emotional learning and support staff mental health, Dolton West School District 148 will utilize these funds to extend two social worker contracts. ESSER III funding will be utilized for the two social worker salaries and benefits associated with the additional work hours.

Remaining Use of Funds

Air quality and ensuring adequate ventilation is another element of the Dolton West School District 148 plan. ESSER III funding will be utilized to update the HVAC at Dolton West elementary and junior high buildings providing reassurance to adequate ventilation for students and staff.

Reporting

Dolton West School District 148 will complete all reporting required for receiving ESSER III funding. Reports will be completed semi-annually or as deemed necessary by ISBE and ESSER III grant requirements.

Dolton West School District 148 will gather evidence and data to report to ISBE on the following interventions:

- Learning renewal strategies: student progress as determined through benchmark assessments.
- After-school activities: monitor students enrolled in these activities through benchmark assessments.

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- Summer school activities: student data from the spring assessment will be compared to the fall benchmark assessment as well as pre- summer evaluation compared to post-summer school evaluations.
- SEL and mental health activities: data will be collected by district social workers

Dolton West School District 148 will track all remote learners to ensure equitable use of funds for each student is documented.

Dolton West School District 148 will disaggregate the data collected in multiple ways. Examples: student group (homebound, remote learners, grade level, low income, children with disabilities, race/ethnicity, etc.)

Learning Loss Equity

A school district must reserve not less than 20 percent of its total ARP ESSER allocation to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after-school programs, or extended school year programs. It must ensure that such interventions respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student subgroups. Dolton West School District 148 has set aside eighty (80) percent of the total ARP ESSER allocation to address learning loss in summer learning or summer enrichment, after school tutoring program, social and emotional support of learners, and to address any disproportionate impact of the pandemic on underrepresented student groups.