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**La Feria Independent
School District**

ESSER III

Use of Funds Plan

(Updated September 2022)

For Fiscal Years 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024

ARP ESSER III

Introduction:

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, enacted on March 11, 2021 provides a total of nearly \$122 billion to States and school districts to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operations of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the nation's students. The following will outline the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) plan.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States Department of Education released \$11.2 billion appropriated for public education in Texas. Two-thirds of the total federal appropriation to Texas under ESSER III is available right away. The remaining one-third will be released after the U.S. Department of Education (ED) approves TEA's required state plan.

The top priorities within Texas' plan is to address lost instructional time as a result of the pandemic through summer, extended learning, and afterschool programs. Local education agencies (LEAs) must apply through the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for these funds. The grant is known/called ARP ESSER III.

The ARP ESSER III grant program is authorized in the [American Rescue Plan Act \(ARP\)](#), signed into law in March 2021. The period of availability for ARP ESSER III funds is from March 2020 (with pre-award), to September 30, 2024 (with carryover). The ESSER III FAR code is 282.

See TEA's [ARP ESSER III Grant Program](#) page for more information.

Stakeholder Meetings

May 10: Public Notice Meeting of the Intent to Apply: Regular School Board Meeting

May 10: Noemi Dominguez Elementary ESSER III Teacher/Administrative Team Meeting

May 11: W. B. Green Jr. High ESSER III Teacher/Administrative Team Meeting

May 11: Sam Houston Elementary ESSER III Teacher/Administrative Team Meeting

May 11: David G. Sanchez Elementary ESSER III Teacher/Administrative Team Meeting

May 11: C. E. Vail Elementary ESSER III Teacher/Administrative Team Meeting

May 12: La Feria High School ESSER III Teacher/Administrative Team Meeting

May 12: La Feria Academy ESSER III Teacher/Administrative Team Meeting

May 13: Technology Committee Meeting to Review ESSER III

May 18: Student ESSER III Input Meetings at Sam Houston, LFHS, Academy & Green

May 20: Student ESSER III Input Meetings at Dominguez, Sanchez, & Vail

May 25: Principal/Director ESSER III Meeting

May 26: Long Range Facility Committee Meeting

May 31: Child Nutrition ESSER III Meeting

June 9: Finance Committee Meeting

June 10: Region One ESC ESSER III Meeting w/ Cory Green

June 14: Presentation of Use of Funds Plan for ESSER III to Board of Trustees

Stakeholder Survey

214 responses were received from the stakeholder survey. The survey was emailed to all parents and staff (May 26 - June 2).

85	Parents
18	Support Staff
7	Instructional Aides
87	Teachers
6	Administrators
3	Students
4	Others

Timeline

April 27, 2021	TEA released initial allocation amounts
May 10, 2021	Intent to apply is presented at Regular Board Meeting
May 11 – June 11, 2021	Stakeholder Input
June 14, 2021	Present ESSER Plan to Board of Trustees
July 27, 2021	Application/Use of Funds Plan due to TEA
July – August 2021	LEA must post plan to website within 30 days of receiving NOGA
September 26, 2022	Town hall meeting with community and district stakeholders
September 30, 2023	NOGA end date before carryover
September 30, 2024	Period of availability, including carryover (Tydings Amendment)

La Feria ISD ARP ESSER III Allocation:	<u>\$11,939,921</u>
20% Minimum Spending Requirement addressing learning loss:	<u>\$2,387,985</u>

Spending and Plan Requirements

The purpose of the ARP ESSER III grant in general is to award sub grants to local educational agencies to address the impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools.

Each district MUST spend at least 20% of its ESSER III funds for the following:

- Addressing learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs; and
- Ensuring that such interventions respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus on the student subgroups described in ESEA, Title 1, Part A, students experiencing homelessness, and youth in foster care.
- Two plans are required under ESSER III:
 - Use of Funds Plan
 - Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan

Maintenance of Equity Requirement

- Districts are subject to a maintenance of equity (MOE) requirement, absent an exemption (*i.e., less than 1,000 students, only 1 school*)
- Requires Districts to ensure equity for high-need and high-poverty schools
- Requires Districts to ensure that schools with large proportions of historically underserved groups of students – including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness – receive an equitable share of ESSER funds/resources.

Use of Funds Plan

This plan will be used to explain how funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent CDC guidance on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning.

The Use of Funds Plan will also explain how the District will use the required 20% to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. The District will spend its remaining ESSER II funds consistent with the authorized uses.

The District will ensure that the interventions it implements will respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students.

Allowable Activities and Use of Funds

Allowable activities and use of funds for this grant may include but are not limited to the following:

A. Use of Funds – LEA Allowable Activities

1. Any activity authorized under Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA)
2. Any activity authorized under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
3. Any activity authorized under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)

4. Any activity authorized under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006
5. Coordination of preparedness and response efforts of LEA with State and local public health departments, and other relevant agencies, to improve coordinated responses among such entities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.
6. Activities to address the unique needs of low-income students, students with disabilities (SWD), English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.
7. Developing and implementing procedures and systems to improve the preparedness and response efforts of LEA.
8. Training and professional development for staff of the LEA on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.
9. Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of the LEA, including buildings operated by the LEA.
10. Planning for, coordinating, and implementing activities during long-term closures, including providing meals to eligible students.
11. Planning for, coordinating, and implementing activities during long-term closures, including providing technology for online learning to all students.
12. Planning for, coordinating, and implementing activities during long-term closures, how to provide guidance for carrying out requirements under IDEA.
13. Planning for, coordinating, and implementing activities during long-term closures, how to ensure other educational services can continue to be provided consistent with all Federal, State, and local requirements.
14. Purchasing educational technology (hardware, software, and connectivity) for students, that aids in regular/substantive educational interaction between students and instructors, including low-income students and SWD, which may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.
15. Providing mental health services and supports, including through implementation of evidence based full-service community schools.
16. Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning – providing classroom instruction or online learning during summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, SWD, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care.
17. Planning and implementing activities related to supplemental afterschool programs, providing classroom instruction or online learning, addressing the needs of low-income students, SWD, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care.

B. Use of Funds – LEA Allowable Activities (continued)

1. Addressing learning loss among LEA students, including low-income students, SWD, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care – Administering and using high-quality assessments.
2. Addressing learning loss among LEA students, including low-income students, SWD, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care – Implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students.
3. Addressing learning loss among LEA students, including low-income students, SWD, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and

- children in foster care – Providing information and assistance to parents and families on effectively supporting students.
4. Addressing learning loss among LEA students, including low-income students, SWD, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care – Tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education.
 5. School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs.
 6. Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems.
 7. Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems.
 8. Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including window and door repair and replacement.
 9. Developing strategies and implementing public health protocols including, to the greatest extent practicable, policies in line with guidance from CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities.
 10. Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation of and continuity of services in the LEA.
 11. Other activities that are necessary to continuing to employ existing staff of the LEA.

The District took the following steps to determine the Use of Funds Plan:

1. Understand the purpose of ESSER III
2. Review Goals of the District
 - Goal 1: Academics
 - Goal 2: Technology
 - Goal 3: College, Career, & Post-Secondary Readiness
 - Goal 4: Safety/Health
 - Goal 5: Facilities
3. Conduct a Needs Assessment
4. Determining Use of Funds for ESSER III
 - a. Each expense must align to a goal
 - b. Each expense must be based upon a need
 - c. Each expense must be an allowable expense under the ESSER III guidelines.
 - d. Each expense must be monitored and evaluated for the effectiveness of reaching the goal.
5. Use of Funds Plan Presented to Board of Trustees
6. Application submitted to the Texas Education Agency

Program Description

The ARP ESSER III Federal Grant will be used for any activity outlined to meet the goals of the District for the school year 2020-2021, including summer 2021; 2021-2022, including summer 2022; 2022-2023, including summer 2023, and 2023-2024, including summer 2024 (carryover period).

The La Feria Independent School District took the following steps in determining the Use of Funds Plan for ESSER III. The first step was to conduct a needs assessment based on the goals of Academics, Technology, College, Career & Post-Secondary Readiness, Safety/Health, Facilities, and Staffing. Data was reviewed as well as meetings were held with Stakeholders to gather input on needs to address learning loss from COVID-19 and needs of district in safety, staffing, facilities, and health of students and staff.

Stakeholder meetings were held with district and campus level administration. The next step was district administration met with campus leadership and department heads to discuss needs of the campus, purpose of ESSER III, and activities and initiatives that could be addressed with ESSER III. Stakeholder meetings were with students led by the campus administration, Technology Committee, Long-range Facility Committee, Finance Committee, and District Departments (transportation, maintenance, special education, bilingual;/ESL, and child nutrition). Surveys were also obtained from parents, staff, and students. In determining the Use of Funds for the grant, each expenditure had to meet the following criteria.

1. Each expense must be assigned to a goal.
2. Each expense must be based on a need.
3. Each expense must be an allowable expense under the ESSER III guidelines.
4. The campus or department administrator must ensure that each expense is monitored and evaluated for the effectiveness of reaching the goal. The grant initiatives will be evaluated bi-annually in December and July for the duration of the grant. A report will be presented to the Board of Trustees.

District level administration also attended a meeting with Cory Green, Associate Commissioner and Chief Grants Officer with the Texas Education Agency to receive guidance for the funds.

Learning Loss

The first need identified was to address the learning loss students have experienced due to COVID-19. The pandemic has forced school closures, shifted many of our students into virtual classrooms, and significantly changed in-person instruction. Research conducted by TEA on benchmark data from Fall 2020 across the state shows learning loss for many students. ESSER III focuses on school districts reopening and operating safely, as well as, addressing the impact of the pandemic on students. After-school planning for teachers was built into the use of funds plan, as well as ongoing professional development in responding to the specific interventions needed for each child. Students have not had the opportunity to work together, therefore campuses responded by focusing on reading centers, manipulatives, and classroom furniture that would make small groups and centers easily accessible in student learning. During the pandemic, science labs have been mainly demonstrative. Funding has been allocated at all campuses to provide additional equipment for students to experience hands-on opportunities in science labs. Staffing in the area of an Instructional Coach/Interventionist will be added to each campus for the next 3 school years to address the learning loss and ensure that each child is supported with a plan that meets his/her unique educational needs. Furthermore, each campus will have a Parental Involvement liaison to assist administration and teachers in planning trainings for “make and take” activities for parents, and training for hands-on manipulatives that can reinforce learning at home. La Feria ISD understands the importance of parental involvement to address the learning loss impact that the pandemic has left with many of our students. Literacy will also be a focus as well as after-school and summer enrichment programs to assist with the learning loss from COVID-

19. Technology infrastructure, software, and equipment will be purchased and updated to provide the support and enrichment needed for the success our students. All purchases will be based on a specific campus-based need and will be evaluated for effectiveness to meet the goals as outlined in the District Improvement Plan, the Superintendent Performance Goals, HB 3, and the strategic plan.

Facilities/Air Quality Control

Funding from the ESSER III grant will also be used to ensure facilities are ready for 100% in-person instruction. HVAC equipment and systems that are 15+ years old will be replaced, and air purification systems will be installed at all campuses and on all school buses. When assessing the needs of facilities, the health and safety of students and staff will be taken into account for these initiatives, as well as the needs of our Child Nutrition Department. Cleaning and sanitation supplies for the district and campuses is also part of the use of funds plan. The purchase of two (2) additional school buses (77-passenger) is also a part of the use of funds plan to address social distancing.

Safety and Health Services

As the district plans to reopen full in-person instruction, the district must consider social and emotional learning (SEL) as a priority. Christina Cipriano, who holds a doctorate in educational psychology and is director of research at the [Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence](#), is among those pushing for more SEL. She recently stated, “It is next to impossible to expect teaching and learning to occur in a crisis without attending to our emotions.”

As La Feria ISD plans for all campuses to be in 100% in-person instruction in the fall, initiatives have been established with ESSER III funding. Social and Emotional Curriculum & Training will be purchased for the next 3 school years to focus on the students’ social and emotional needs. An additional LSSP will be hired using ESSER III funds to help current LSSP staff, as well as a counselor at specified campuses where the need has been established. Parental training in social and emotional learning will also be addressed. Electric gates for security and updated security cameras will be purchased and installed district-wide. Due to the pandemic, a need for our students to participate in physical activity due has been identified, due to many of our students staying home and not being as active. Purchase of playground equipment and outdoor running trails for all elementary campuses has been incorporated into the use of funds plan.

ESSER III

YEAR 1 2021-2022 <small>(JULY 2021 - JUNE 2022)</small>	YEAR 2 2022-2023 <small>(JULY 2022 - JUNE 2023)</small>	YEAR 3 2023-2024 <small>(JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024)</small>	YEAR 4 2024-2025 <small>(JULY 2024 - SEP 2024)</small>
ESSER III GRANT AWARD AMOUNT: \$ 11,939,921.00	ESSER III BEGINNING FUNDS, 07/01/2022 \$ 4,671,029.40	ESSER III BEGINNING FUNDS, 07/01/2023 \$ 2,840,892.72	ESSER III BEGINNING FUNDS, 07/01/2023 \$ 0.00
EXPENDITURES:	EXPENDITURES:	EXPENDITURES:	EXPENDITURES:
Staff Salaries:	Staff Salaries:	ESSER Positions (Transferred from ESSER III) \$ 1,250,000.00	
ESSER III Positions \$ 1,275,915.32	Summer 2022 Programs \$ 103,309.06	Instructional Coaches (7)	
Tutoring/Extra-Duty \$ 5,850.00	Summer 2023 Programs \$ 100,000.00	Parental Liaisons (4)	
Substitutes \$ 377,290.00		STEM Lab Aides (7)	
Summer School \$ 5,677.53	Instructional Contracted Services \$ 20,000.00	Math Coordinator	
Health Services \$ 128,018.74	Instructional Supplies & Materials \$ 100,000.00	Reading Coordinator	
Other Salaries (Functions 36, 41, 53) \$ 37,037.22	Instructional/Curriculum Software & Licenses \$ 120,000.00	Director - Early College High School	
Maintenance & Transportation \$ 2,410,272.95	Parental/Community Outreach \$ 50,000.00	LSSP	
Board Approved ESSER Retention Stipend (\$1,50 \$ 766,608.80	Campus Funds Allocations \$ 300,000.00	Counselor (HS)	
	Library Learning Centers \$ 300,000.00	Truancy Officer	
Contracted Services:	Replace HVAC Equipment and Control Systems \$ 600,000.00	LVN	
Dr. King Consulting \$ 30,000.00		Food Service Worker	
Instructional Contracted Services \$ 6,932.50			
Other Contracted Services \$ 4,957.25		Board Approved ESSER Retention Stipend (\$1,500) \$ 803,250.00	
		Spring Retention Stipend (\$550) \$ 294,525.00	
Other Expenditures:		Summer 2024 Programs \$ 100,000.00	
Apple iPads & STEM Lab Computers \$ 238,359.50		Parental/Community Outreach \$ 50,000.00	
UV Air Purifiers & Thermometers \$ 216,572.84		Other Expenditures \$ 30,521.17	
Disinfecting & Sanitizing Supplies & Masks \$ 40,728.00			
Desk Guards \$ 68,958.53			
Band Instruments \$ 44,112.00			
Classroom Furniture & Equipment \$ 189,570.27			
Technology Equipment & Software \$ 158,061.15			
Instructional Licenses & Software \$ 31,922.49			
Enrichment Programs \$ 48,225.24			
Summer School Supplies & Materials \$ 1,009.95			
Student Incentives \$ 15,093.23			
Staff Wellness \$ 9,932.01			
All Other Expenditures \$ 52,070.99			
Capital Expenditures:			
Outdoor Playground (SH) \$ 113,677.00			
Lu Interactive Play System (4) \$ 100,096.00			
School Buses (2) \$ 164,162.00			
Technology Equipment & Software \$ 27,504.90			
Indirect Cost (11.440%) \$ 700,275.19	Indirect Cost (12.515%) \$ 136,827.63	Indirect Cost (12.515%) \$ 312,596.54	Indirect Cost (12.515%)
TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$ 7,268,891.60	TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$ 1,830,136.69	TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$ 2,840,892.71	TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$ -
ESSER III REMAINING FUNDS, 06/30/2022 \$ 4,671,029.40	ESSER III REMAINING FUNDS, 06/30/2023 \$ 2,840,892.72	ESSER III REMAINING FUNDS, 06/30/2024 \$ 0.00	ESSER III REMAINING FUNDS, 09/30/2024 \$ 0.00