

Buena Vista School District

ARP ESSR Funds



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The American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER), under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, provided stimulus funding to state departments of education across the country to be distributed to local school districts. Distribution of this funding was determined by a formula called “Title 1” based on district families’ self-reported economic eligibility.

Buena Vista School District (BV Schools) has been allocated about \$1.1 million from the ARP ESSR (commonly known as ESSR 3). ESSR 3 funding has been dedicated to support schools in its recovery efforts from the pandemic. To receive the ESSR 3 allocation of federal stimulus money, BV Schools must:

1. Demonstrate **community input** into the development of the ARP ESSR budget for the district;
2. Submit a **budget plan to the Colorado Department of Education (CDE)** for review and approval to determine if all proposed expenditures are allowable;
3. Ensure budget is used exclusively for the **safe operation of schools** and at least 20% to **address the impact of the pandemic on students** (learning loss);
4. Provide an **instructional plan for the 2021-22 school year** available on the website
5. Demonstrate **transparency of budget and student impacts** as a result of the funding.

Each of the five requirements for Buena Vista School District are detailed below.

1...Community input

Buena Vista School District leadership established the final ESSR 3 Budget using internal and external feedback along with an evaluation of student academic and well-being data.

A [survey](#) was distributed to families and staff seeking input into the reopening plan that guided the Budget Plan. Results showed strong support for the proposed re-opening plan and the associated budget needs to do so.

[Community stakeholder groups](#) (DAC and BV PEAKS) provided input into the prioritized allocation of ESSR 3 funding to the district through forums held in August

District and school leadership sought feedback from staff through individual and small group meetings.

All input was evaluated through the lens of allowable costs, as determined by the federal government and CDE. Because the funds are one-time, salary increases or other similar, ongoing costs could not be responsibility considered.

2...Budget Plan

Four general themes rose from the evaluation of feedback received through community input and from an analysis of student impacts. There was consensus these identified themes should be prioritized in the Budget Plan for the spending of the ESSR 3 funds. These themes established with input from stakeholders, guided the detailed development of the Budget Plan by the district leadership team.

Theme 1: Capital improvements to allow continuation of educational programming (Industrial Arts)

Theme 2: Professional Learning support for staff for strategies to respond to meet students where they are academically and personally

Theme 3: Intervention resources to accelerate learning for all students

Theme 4: Staff additional duties compensation (Indirect expenses)

The [Working Document](#) of the Budget Plan is a detailed working document used by the district leadership team and Board of Education to justify the allocation, to identify who benefits from the spending, and to monitor the impact of the stimulus dollars on students over time.

The Budget Plan was submitted to CDE in December 2021. Review updates of the [Budget Plan](#) were submitted in January 2022 and awaiting final approval. Once final approval is given by CDE the district can begin submitting expenditures for reimbursement. District Budget Plans will also be available on the CDE site once approved. Update: On 1/31/2022 the District received final approval of its ESSR 3 budget.

3...Safe Operation of Schools and Impact on Students

The [Budget Plan](#) approved by CDE gives evidence that all expenditures are for the safe operation of school and at least 20% addresses the pandemic's impact on student learning.

Preapproval for Theme 1: capital improvements was given by CDE to the district in November.

4...Instructional Plan for 2021-22

BV Schools has had fully in-person learning since the 2020-21 school year. While in-person, the plan that was guided by protocols established by Public Health agencies, was very disruptive to student learning. Staff, students, and families were faced with the need to switch to remote learning while fully healthy. We defined this year as

disrupted in-person learning to distinguish there were significant challenges even though BV students were in-person.

The [Instructional Plan for 2021-22](#) was revised from 2020-21 to progress toward *undisrupted in-person learning*. To achieve this more *undisruptive* learning environment, the district notified families of “routine exposures,” rather than excluding from school. This has kept students in-person with far more consistency.

A [weekly dashboard](#) with school -related COVID information and [weekly update](#) has been provided to families for both 2020-21 and 2021-22. There is also a weekly virtual call hosted by the superintendent to answer questions and provide further input and discussion regarding the Instructional Plan and School Response.

5...Transparency of Budget Plan and Student Impacts

The [Working Document](#) of the Budget Plan is a dynamic (updated regularly) report of the implementation of the Budget Plan and its impact on student growth.

Past COVID funding used for emergency response and to sustain efforts for safe in-person learning

Three additional federal stimulus funds were distributed earlier in the pandemic. These are commonly known now as CRF (Coronavirus Relief Fund) ESSR 1 and ESSR 2. CRF was distributed very early in the COVID response, Spring 2020 to assist schools for unrestricted and locally determined needs. ESSR 1 was dedicated as *emergency* response needs. ESSR 2, which came later, was for the purpose of *sustaining* learning through the pandemic.

Throughout the pandemic, BV Schools has prioritized its use of federal dollars for health and safety, continuation of operations, and supporting the additional duties needed of staff.

CRF - Coronavoius Relief Fund No budget submission required. \$541,554.71

1. Staff stipends for additional, unanticipated work needs:
 - Summer planning to prepare for probable groups and individuals required to remote learn during quarantine and isolation
 - Developing mitigation procedures in all departments
 - Developing HR procedures
2. Risk Mitigation Purchases:
 - Masks, PPE for nurses, shields, gowns, gloves, hand sanitizer,
 - Disinfecting sprayers for buses, UV lighting, ionization system, additional filters, portable ventilation, plexiglass
 - Food service for providing meals
3. Resources for Temporary Remote Learning
 - Additional Devices
 - Online platforms for assessment and instruction

ESSR 1 – Emergency Response [linked here.](#) \$130,740.

1. Risk Mitigation Purchases:
 - a. Additional custodial support for operating sanitization equipment
 - b. Additional supplies - masks, cleaning supplies
 - c. Athletic mitigation - superior masks and live streaming capabilities

2. Additional substitutes/staff to sustain learning:
 - Part time medical support
 - Long term substitutes for each school
 - Additional part time reading specialist for K-2 identified learning needs as a result of remote learning

ESSR 2 – Sustaining Learning Response [budget linked here](#) \$496,636

1. Retain additional substitutes/staff to sustain learning from ESSR 1 Emergency Response:
 - Part time medical support
 - Additional custodial support for routine disinfecting
 - Long term substitutes for each school
 - Additional part time reading specialist for K-2 identified learning needs as a result of disrupted in-person learning
2. Risk Mitigation Purchases:
 - Masks, PPE for nurses, shields, gowns, gloves, hand sanitizer,
 - Disinfecting sprayers for buses, UV lighting, ionization system, additional filters, portable ventilation, plexiglass
2. Additional technology infrastructure to sustain learning during disrupted in person learning
 - Additional devices at alternative school for high risk students
 - Additional devices for elementary students when in need for short term remote learning
 - Improved remote access for elementary through additional network switches
3. Maintain mitigation practices:
 - Custodial support
 - PPE and other safety purchases
 - Furniture to increase social distancing

ESSR 3 – Learning Recovery Response [budget linked here](#) \$1,116,162.00

1. Capital improvements to allow continuation of educational programming (Industrial Arts)
 - Advance engagement through multiple pathways to learning in an area at risk of closure
 - Support leadership team in preparing for and responding to COVID related learning disruption due to poor ventilation (Industrial Arts building)
 - Allow for continuation of music programming while mitigating risk

2. Professional Learning Support for Staff for strategies to respond to meet students where they are academically and personally
 - Refresh and renew staff in the use of strategies for meeting students academic and overall wellbeing during the recovery phase of the pandemic
 - Support leadership team in preparing for and responding to COVID related learning disruptions

3. Interventions to accelerate learning for all students
 - Add Preschool Lead Teacher
 - Expand and enhance Internship/Work Based Learning Programs
 - Develop tutoring/volunteer extended day program for middle school
 - Increase accessibility and opportunities for post-secondary readiness guidance and overall wellbeing support for 9-12 grade students
 - Attend to the demonstrated increase in mental and behavioral needs of students due to disrupted learning to achieve higher academic growth through a BV Wrap Team
 - Address increased needs at elementary school for students not meeting reading benchmarks, particularly in 1st grade
 - Prepare and provide interventions for small groups and formative assessment to assess loss
 - Purchase Learning Recovery- Curriculum materials
 - Purchase Mitigation - supplies
 - Prepare Learning Loss -Employee Training/Development
 - Address needs of increased absences due to quarantine of staff
 - Address increased needs for documentation and response in our school clinics

4. Staff Additional Duties Compensation (from Indirect Expenses)
 - Retainment Stipend for all staff