

**ARP ESSER Plan  
Nelson County Schools  
Revised, November 2024  
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**PREVENTION & MITIGATION STRATEGIES**

Nelson County Schools continues to prioritize COVID-19 prevention and mitigation efforts, aligned with 2024 guidelines from the CDC, KDE, and local/state/federal mandates. The district administration (including the Director of Community Health and School Nursing Coordinator) monitors public health guidance closely and rapidly deploys updates to procedures as necessary. Communication protocols are actively maintained, ensuring swift notification via email, social media, the website, text, voice, and email to school administrators, staff, students, families, and community members of any policy change.

The district employs ten full-time registered nurses and two APRNs to ensure ongoing compliance with health guidance and to provide services across schools. Universal precautions are still emphasized to reduce the spread of contagious diseases.

ARP ESSER funds supported facility improvements that reduce virus transmission risks. Key upgrades included increased ventilation measures, new seating arrangements allowing for flexible distancing, and enhanced hygiene stations throughout school facilities. Frequent sanitization and adjustments to physical spaces remain part of the district's plan to create a safer in-person learning environment.

Our communication and health updates are also accessible on the "NC Care Clinic" website, providing families and staff with centralized resources. [Care Clinic Website LINK](#)

**ACADEMIC IMPACT ON LOST INSTRUCTIONAL TIME**

*(Please refer to endnotes for research studies/research base supporting use of the selected activity.)*

To address learning loss due to COVID-19, Nelson County Schools will continue using the nationally norm-referenced i-Ready assessment for reading and math in elementary and middle schools. For high school students, the ACT is administered annually to evaluate college readiness and assess academic needs. Each school has established a local intervention protocol, with regular progress monitoring through local assessments, to measure and support student growth.

Extended school year options (summer programming) will be offered through 2025, catering to all students across academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. Students can still apply to participate in our virtual learning academy, Connected Campus.

Screening and support for social-emotional and mental health remain priorities, with trained staff in Youth Mental Health First Aid and trauma-informed care. Nelson County collaborates with Astra Mental Health and The Thrive Center to provide direct support for students requiring mental health services.

To ensure equitable access and resource distribution, the Chief Operating Officer (COO) oversees all school protocols and data on student outcomes, guiding a comprehensive approach to addressing both academic and emotional needs.

### **MEANINGFUL CONSULTATION**

The district has engaged in broad and meaningful consultations with community stakeholders to shape the 2024 plan:

1. **Educators, Staff, and Stakeholders:** Consultations conducted from April through May included needs assessments with school staff, and community-based leaders. Facilitators gathered feedback from Legacy Leaders, a group of retired educators, who collaborated on literacy and instructional support strategies.
2. **School Administration and Principals:** Individual assessments with each school principal facilitated by the CFO and district representatives took place in early 2024, focusing on building-specific needs. This engagement has informed the budget allocation adjustments and additional interventions tailored to address learning gaps.
3. **Students and Families:** Direct family and student engagement occurred through “Family Table Conversations” and forums, held both virtually and in person. These discussions gathered perspectives on students' academic and emotional needs, leading to expanded summer learning opportunities and additional supports for mental wellness.
4. **Civil Rights & Disadvantaged Groups Representation:** In consultation with families from civil rights groups, EL families, and economically disadvantaged groups, 1:1 conversations captured unique needs. Partnerships with the local EL/Title III coordinator and Astra Health ensure equitable access to mental health and academic resources.

Holistically, feedback from each of these consultations was tracked and summarized to identify key funding needs and priorities at the local school and district levels. Each school administrator participated in an individual discussion with district administration to identify needs, provide feedback on the identified priorities, and contribute to the plan design. A draft was created to align the spending funds to the priorities, and the final plan included a comprehensive budget alignment unifying available resources to address and remedy the identified needs.

## **HOW REMAINING FUNDS WILL BE SPENT**

As of 2024, Nelson County Schools has fully allocated and utilized all available ARP ESSER funds to support COVID-19-related safety measures, learning loss interventions, technology improvements, and mental health services. These funds were critical in addressing the immediate impacts of the pandemic on our students and staff and have allowed the district to implement enhanced health and safety measures, provide resources to mitigate learning loss, and support the social-emotional needs of our school community.

With the conclusion of ARP ESSER funding, Nelson County Schools will continue to explore sustainable funding sources and partnerships to maintain these vital programs and services. We remain committed to prioritizing the health, academic progress, and well-being of all students, utilizing the resources at our disposal to adapt to evolving needs.

This revised 2024 plan emphasizes continued safety, support for diverse learning needs, and community partnerships to overcome ongoing challenges associated with the pandemic, reaffirming Nelson County Schools' commitment to fostering a resilient educational environment.

- <sup>1</sup> i-Ready's Impact on Students' Reading and Mathematics Achievement, retrieved from <https://www.curriculumassociates.com/research-and-efficacy/i-ready-evidence-impact>
- <sup>2</sup> Allen, J. & Radunzel, J. (2017). What are the ACT College Readiness Benchmarks? Issue Brief retrieved from <https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/pdfs/R1670-college-readiness-benchmarks-2017-11.pdf>
- <sup>3</sup> Knight, D. S., & Skrtic, T. M. (2021). Cost-effectiveness of Instructional Coaching: Implementing a Design-based, Continuous Improvement Model to Advance Teacher Professional Development. *Journal of School Leadership*, 31(4), 318-342.
- <sup>4</sup> Reading Recovery: IES What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Snapshot retrieved from <https://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/pdfs/R1670-college-readiness-benchmarks-2017-11.pdf>
- <sup>5</sup> Haggerty, D., Carlson, J.S., McNall, M. *et al.* Exploring Youth Mental Health First Aider Training Outcomes by Workforce Affiliation: A Survey of Project AWARE Participants. *School Mental Health* 11, 345–356 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-018-9300-5>
- <sup>6</sup> Jesse Diggins (2021). Reductions in Behavioural and Emotional Difficulties from a Specialist, Trauma-Informed School. *The Educational and Developmental Psychologist*, DOI: [10.1080/20590776.2021.1923131](https://doi.org/10.1080/20590776.2021.1923131)
- <sup>7</sup> Matthew K. Burns, Meredith R. Naughton, June L. Preast, Ze Wang, Robert L. Gordon, Vicki Robb & Michelle L. Smith (2018). Factors of Professional Learning Community Implementation and Effect on Student Achievement, *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, 28:4, 394-412, DOI: [10.1080/10474412.2017.1385396](https://doi.org/10.1080/10474412.2017.1385396)
- <sup>8</sup> McLeod, J. (2017). Research Base and Instructional Design of Edmentum Digital Curriculum retrieved from [https://www.edmentum.com/sites/edmentum.com/files/resource/media/Instructional%20Design%20White%20Paper%20FINAL\\_1.pdf](https://www.edmentum.com/sites/edmentum.com/files/resource/media/Instructional%20Design%20White%20Paper%20FINAL_1.pdf)