

**Wrangell Public School District (49) - FY 2022 - COVID Relief - Rev 0 - ARP Act: ESSER III**

**Section A: District Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services**

\* A.1. Describe how the district developed the plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. Provide how the district sought public comment on the plan and took such comments into account in the development of the plan. Include which stakeholders were involved in the development of the plan.

Wrangell Public Schools have been holding in person classes since September 8, 2020. The schools only closed once or twice for a couple of days to deep clean. All buildings are completely open during the final week of classes.

SmartStart Committee meetings were held June 3, 2020. This meeting was a cross section of stakeholders that included building administrators, classified staff, technology, maintenance, parents and local health personnel.

There was a school board meeting and it included a SmartStart update section. This section is devoted to updates in the planning and any mitigation changes. The section is still present in current meetings, most recently held on May 17, 2021.

A second stakeholder meeting was held and was open to the entire community. This meeting included School Board members, media, business owners, health care professionals, teachers, admins, parents and students. The result of that meeting was that the large group decided the task was too large for everyone to tackle. The group decided that a smaller leadership team should make recommendations and then bring them forth to the rest of the stakeholders.

On June 24, 2020, a third stakeholder group met. This time it included a group of parents who were going to Homeschool if we required masks and social distancing.

On July 7, 2020, a meeting with the City/Borough Manager went over tentative plans for in school or distance learning. The city/borough discussed use of public buildings adjacent to the schools. A task force was created to firm up a plan to present to the school board and turn into DEED.

On July 9, 2020, the Task Force had its first meeting. The framework was discussed and divided. On July 10, a subsequent meeting was held. Daily Task Force meetings were held each Monday and Thursday for the last 3 weeks in July.

Meetings also began with the EOC to discuss their community risk mitigation plan.

A special School Board work session was held on July 20, 2020, to discuss the SmartStart.

Meetings were held with HR on July 22 to discuss teleworking.

A joint session with EOC and Task Force met on July 24, 2020 to finalize the major components of the Mitigation Plan that was to be submitted to the state.

A SmartStart refinement meeting was held on July 27 and the district plan was turned in. We all opted not to have a green status and only go with yellow or red. The reasoning was to keep everything as consistent as possible when the school buildings were open. To date, the final week of school, we do everything the same way we did it the first day of school. Everyone is completely trained in masking, social distancing, hygiene, hall dots for distancing, one way halls in the high school, classroom pods for grades K-8, and small gatherings. The only difference was made in our primary grades. They moved their desks to 3' apart during the last 6 weeks.

Because parents felt safe enough with our mitigation plans and strict adherence, our enrollment went from 178 in Oct to 207 currently. Until the CDC or DHSS changes the recommendations specifically for schools, we will keep the same mitigation plan.

In 2021 - Start Strong was put into place with meetings with the school leaders on developing an updated plan that took the information that had been learned during the past 18 months and adjusting the plan to meet the needs of the Wrangell Public Schools while meeting all of the guidelines of the ESSR III - ARP funds. The previous StartSmart Plan had included many of the unknowns of the COVID 19 Pandemic and had expanded into an unwieldy plan that was not as useful to explain or follow. A new Start Strong plan was put into place based on the state's template.

After Early August meetings with the Assistant Principal/Lead Teachers on the plan updates it was decided to start from the beginning and adjust the template. Three surveys were sent out in early August to the Community, Staff and Parents, and the students (Different for Elem and Middle/High School). These were to get feedback from stakeholders on the plan. These results were presented at the August 16th, 2021 School Board Meeting with discussion and adoption of the new WPS COVID Mitigation Plan which was open to public comment.

The WPS COVID Mitigation Plan was reviewed and updated with several changes during the September 13th, 2021 WPS School Board Meeting and was open for discussion by the public and AASA athletics changes.

On October 1st, 2021 a notification was sent out to the Educational Community, Staff, and Students to receive feedback via a survey on the first 4 weeks of the school mitigation plan (with no school closures). These surveys were reviewed and taken to the October 11th, 2021 School Board Meeting during the regular monthly meeting agenda item: Start Strong/COVID-19 Mitigation Update. The plan was adjusted with suggestions from the surveys and the best practices during the school year. We continued to follow CDC Guidelines and Close Contact rules.

COVID-19 review was on the November 15th and December 13th, 2021 WPS School Board agendas and available for public comment.

\* A.2. Provide the link to district's plan.

The most current mitigation plan can be found on the Wrangell Public School District web site following the link:

<https://www.wpsd.us/cms/lib/AK01901527/Centricity/Domain/267/Wrangell%20District%20Mitigation%20Plan%2010.11.21.docx-2.pdf>

This plan will be updated as DHSS and the CDC make specific school recommendations.

## **Section B: Stakeholder Consultation**

\* B.1. Describe how, in the planning for the use of ESSER III funds, the district provided opportunities for input and engaged in meaningful consultation with stakeholders including, but not limited to: students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; Tribes; and other stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory children, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

As these grant funds are being used for FY23 and FY24 the process of consultations are just beginning. We currently use a well-rounded and inclusive ESEA community group for our ESEA committee that includes members of the staff, superintendent, official tribal representative (WCSA), parents, Migrant Coordinator, and Title I Representatives. The Teachers Union and WPS School Board are also involved in any staffing situation that would apply. As this is grant is budgeted for Certified Staff they will also be directly involved in the evaluation and spending of the ESSR III monies.

Assessments both formative and summative will be given at the beginning of next year to determine the scope of our social, emotional, and academic needs in the district. Those results will be used to refine the programs we put in place as described below.

The funds will be used to add two principal positions and a District Grant Writer to support students with social emotional and learning gaps due to the isolation and or reduced class time as a result of the pandemic. The principal positions will allow direct administrative review of educational practices with “fresh” eyes after working two plus years in the current pandemic. These positions have not existed during the previous two years in part to reduction of students enrolled during the pandemic as well as the cost associated with the loss of enrollment. Having two full time principals in our schools will directly affect the educational review and the outcomes for our students.

The Educational Grant Writer will work with the district to not only evaluate and participate in the results of grant funding but to work with our current student body to find grant opportunities that address direct student learning loss and students social and emotional learning by finding grants that the STUDENTS want to concentrate on and finding what is needed rather than from the top down. This also gives the students the opportunity to expand their own knowledge and continue to help the Wrangell Public Schools far beyond the current pandemic.

This staff member will also have the ability to see direct instruction in not only new grant areas but also in current grants by overseeing the impact on students and to advise adjustments to formula grants faster thereby increasing the impact of educational programs and

formula grants.

### **Section C: Identifying Needs**

\* C.1. Describe the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 on student learning and student well-being, including identifying the groups of students most impacted by the pandemic.

We take fall, winter, and spring MAP tests. The students who were in face to face classes all year showed remarkable growth due to the reduced class sizes. However, the students who enrolled from homeschool as the year progressed show significant academic gaps. Some students who enrolled after October showed lapses in social and emotional group behaviors. If we have a return of more homeschool students, we will need to devote even more resources to supporting them as they transition back into the day to day learning they used to know. Our increased staff will be able to give more individual attention as needed.

Only our K-1 and Seniors have had a “regular” school experience in their current building. Every other student has been disrupted. With the largest drop in enrollment in the state in 2020-2021 (200) and a recovering ADM (255) this year it still puts the district 50 FTE less than the 2019-2020 year with a number of families continuing with homeschool. The returning students that full-time homeschooled last year have been showing gaps in subject and foundational learning. The effect of the COVID Pandemic has weighed heavily on the staff too. This impact has made filling the gaps even harder because of the exhaustion of staff in managing the education of students.

The impact on our youngest students will have the longest impact because these are their foundational years and the continuing educational impact will not even be seen for 10 plus years. Teacher shortages will continue and curricular challenges will have to be dealt with more innovatively. We believe that adding the staff in the ESSR III will ease some of these challenges and extend the benefits far beyond the pandemic and the ESER III funds. Have administrators to working both district/school tasks and grant writing to expand the student opportunities and education our students in their future pursuits (including college/internship/apprenticeship applications) and being directed by students to get what they need and squeeze every possible advantage can turn the tide the pandemic has brought on.

### **Section D: Coordination of Funds**

\* D.1. Describe how the district will coordinate with other federal education funding (i.e., other COVID Relief funding, ESEA, IDEA, CTE, child nutrition).

The staff and support we are adding this year will be in addition to the existing intervention programs we have set up in ESEA, IDEA and previous COVID funds. ESEA, IDEA, and previous COVID funds are used for professional development for Rtl, technology, and

after school learning.

All three positions requested directly deal with students at all three of our schools and directly engage in the learning of our Wrangell students. Administrative positions are essential to the concentration and well running of the schools and when schools are running “at capacity” and the students are engaged in their own futures and learning, we can overcome the gaps that the pandemic has created and meet long term goal far beyond the present monies and current students. Foundational work done now during a disruption will pay dividends for students that currently have COVID Learning Loss and the students that will follow in their footsteps. The pandemic doesn't seem to be letting go and we need to prepare for the future with one-time money.

These staff members will do this specialized work for this year only to compensate for the time and learning lost from the pandemic. All other federal education funding will be as details in their applications. We do not participate in the NSLP.

### **Section E: Use of Funds**

\* E.1. Describe how the funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, in line with the most recent CDC guidance, in order to continuously and safely operate schools for in-person learning.

Having the additional staff will supplement the learning environment because the students and staff will increase a stable and less distracted learning environment. The staff will not be as weary and worried about providing enough compensation for the students' losses. The mitigation plan will stand as is until the DHSS and CDC make recommendations specifically for schools.

We have not had a 2021-2022 school closure due to following masking and CDC guidance and being conscious of the need to keep students and staff safe and in school. Although we have had close contacts with students and staff and followed guidance as best we could. We also are doing in-school testing for our athletes and staff (if requested) . We also have had take home kits that have been used to go home.

We review our plan at every board meeting for public comment and to include any changes based on EOC/State/CDC guidances. We work very hard at every level to meet the needs of keeping our students/staff in school and prepare for the possibility of closures with robust online hybrid options.

\* E.2. Describe how the district will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 20 percent of the LEA's total allocation of ESSER III funds) 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.

Offering after school homework rooms, tutoring and summer school for student that need additional assistance.

The funds will be used to add two principal positions and a District Grant Writer to support students with social emotional and learning

gaps due to the isolation and or reduced class time as a result of the pandemic. The principal positions will allow direct administrative review of educational practices with “fresh” eyes after working two plus years in the current pandemic. These positions have not existed during the previous two years in part to reduction of students enrolled during the pandemic as well as the cost associated with the loss of enrollment. Having two full time principals in our schools will directly affect the educational review and the outcomes for our students.

The Educational Grant Writer will work with the district to not only evaluate and participate in the results of grant funding but to work with our current student body to find grant opportunities that address direct student learning loss and students social and emotional learning by finding grants that the STUDENTS want to concentrate on and finding what is needed rather than from the top down. This also gives the students the opportunity to expand their own knowledge and continue to help the Wrangell Public Schools far beyond the current pandemic.

This staff member will also have the ability to see direct instruction in not only new grant areas but also in current grants by overseeing the impact on students and to advise adjustments to formula grants faster thereby increasing the impact of educational programs and formula grants.

\* E.3. Describe how the district will use funds to meet students' social, emotional, and academic needs, including through summer enrichment programming and other evidence-based interventions, and how they advance equity for underserved students.

The district has added a daily component to each class that will support each student's social, emotional, and academic needs. Our current grant work (it is a teacher working with students in multiple areas of the school and classrooms on a primarily voluntary basis.) the students have written a number of grants to support the Wrangell Public Schools BASE program (Building A Supportive Environment) which is run by students for students and was created to support the SEL of our students during the difficult times that our students have. This has extended its reach due to COVID and mitigation policies. Expanding the role in the school to include a certified staff member will expand the reach of all our programs and will also allow concentration on the student needs (Academic as well as social emotional). All of our students that are dealing with the current school situation are in need. Especially those that are dependent on the school for support, food, and basic needs. These positions will help not only the direction of help but also directly impact our student body.

A specialized intervention teacher is assuming a role of SEL support through art. Classes have been added to the secondary schedules to include psychology, sociology, and specific middle school behavior intervention classes. These classes will be in addition to the school counseling and peer intervention programs that are already effective and in place.

\* E.4. If applicable, describe how the district will use funds to sustain and support access to early childhood education programs.

N/A

## **Section F: Evaluation**

\* F.1. Describe how the district will evaluate the level of implementation and effectiveness of programs funded.

The classes offered in the secondary schools will be evaluated by the decrease in the number of issues the students are complaining about such as cyberbullying, inappropriate phone usage, inappropriate touching, suicide ideation, and depression. The evidence will also be seeing an increase in self care, social interactions with others, and participation in group activities.

The distance or online learning will be evaluated by the timely completion of classes and an increase in MAP scores when appropriate.

The principals will expand the evaluation aspect of the needs of our students while making sure that curriculum and school functions continue to limit disruption to learning. Having outside eyes on the school programs and the evolving landscape of modern educational thought will be essential in the success of our students. This will show in many areas of the educational program: state test scores, MAP Results, feedback from students and parents, the staff and students will show a more connected approach to school-wide initiatives and be involved in the outcome of learning (and in the case of students their own learning.)

The Certified Grant Writer will evaluate programs and spend the time concentrating on the needs of the schools and the district to meet all of the other areas that need support. Whether the foundational grants, public or private, they will concentrate on making sure that the funds not only do not misuse funds but also to stretch them as far as possible and receive the best outcome.

The evaluation of staff support will be evident in a staff survey sent out and compared to this spring. Staff will feel more balanced in their schedules between home and work. They will express less signs of anxiety for fears of learning loss for students and that they are doing enough for their students during the time they are in classes.

## **Section G: General Education Provision Act (GEPA)**

\* G.1. Describe how the district will comply with the requirements of Section 427 of GEPA, 20 U.S.C 1228a. The description must include information on the steps the district proposes to take 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 access to, or participation in, the program.

In accordance with Board Policy 5145.3 - Nondiscrimination, The Wrangell Public School District will provide all students and staff with a discrimination-free environment that allows equal and equitable access to all programming, especially as it relates to programming and resources tied to funds in ESSER III. The Wrangell Public School District will regularly review and monitor programming to ensure all students, K-12, have equal and equitable access to be able to fully participate as part of its quarterly meetings. As programming is implemented and established, the administration will review activities to identify if there are areas in which equal and equitable access

are not being fully supported. Due to the size of our school district, we are confident that we can fully monitor and identify any gaps that may identify as an area of impeded access to, and participation in, programming. The Wrangell Public School District regularly reviews and updates policies. **This policy was last updated January 18th, 2021.**

In addition the Wrangell Public School District added several staff positions specifically to combat the need of Social, and Emotional, Learning for students at our elementary and secondary schools. These staff members positions are expected to continue through the support of the ESSR III - ARP funding provided to the district in FY23 and FY24.

BP 5145.3 - <https://www.wpsd.us/cms/lib/AK01901527/Centricity/Domain/194/BP-5145.3%20Nondiscrimination.pdf>

AR 5145.3 - <https://www.wpsd.us/cms/lib/AK01901527/Centricity/Domain/194/AR-5145.3%20Transgender%20Students%20and%20Employees.pdf>