

**American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Requirement for  
ARP ESSER School District Plan**

Updated: 6/2/2021

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund was established in response to the immense challenges facing students, educators, staff, schools, and districts in preparing for and responding to COVID-19. The funds are for a wide array of activities to address diverse needs arising from or exacerbated by the pandemic, or to emerge stronger post-pandemic. This includes responding to students’ social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs. Because of the unprecedented, one-time funding available to districts, the South Dakota Department of Education (the department) encourages school districts to invest the funding strategically. Investments should provide sustained benefits to students and positively impact the district long-term.

The below plan must be completed by each public school district receiving funding under the ARP ESSER, developed in concert with stakeholders as detailed below and available for public comment. Districts must submit this plan to the department by Aug. 20, 2021; all funds must be obligated by Sept. 30, 2024. All funds must be liquidated by Dec. 10, 2024.

The ARP ESSER School District Plan Template is based on the U.S. Department of Education (US ED) Interim Final Rules 34 CFR Chapter II, Docket IDED-2021-OESE-0061 from April 22, 2021, the [ARP State Plan](#) issued April 21, 2021 from US ED, and US ED’s [Frequently Asked Questions](#) issued May 2021.

This plan must be provided in formats accessible to parents who speak a language other than English and individuals with disabilities.

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| <b>School District:</b><br>Custer School District 16-1   | <b>Total ARP ESSER Funding Available:</b><br>\$1,837,442          |
| <b>Date of School Board Plan Approval:</b><br>8-9-2020   | <b>Budgeted to Date:</b><br>\$1,837,442                           |
| <b>ARP ESSER School District Plan URL:</b><br><a href="http://www.custer.k12.sd.us">www.custer.k12.sd.us</a> | <b>Amount Set Aside for Lost Instructional Time:</b><br>\$367,488 |

## Prevention and Mitigation Strategies

1. Describe how the funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance on reopening schools. Please insert NA if a category is not applicable to your plan.

| Narrative   |  |
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| <p><b>Overview</b><br/>           For the 2020-21 Custer School District mitigation strategies included: washing hands frequently, encouraging families to stay home if they were minimally ill, lines on the floor for social distancing, sneeze guards for secretaries and teachers upon request, installation of a GPS air filtration system. Masks were recommended for staff and students. Visitors were excluded, the TeamMates program was put on hold, and special entry procedures were put in at all buildings. Custodial supplies were a priority and daily cleaning was upped in the classrooms and common areas.</p> <p>SD Dept of Health, as well as CDC guidelines were used to keep staff and students as safe as possible. Our working policies changed often, with many public meetings being held where input was solicited. As the information and guidance evolved, so too did the CSD COVID plan. Weekly COVID numbers were published on the CSD website that gave staff and student COVID numbers. A weekly video was sent to all staff, students, and parents with that week's cases as well as any pertinent information about the district.</p> <p>As a further mitigation strategy for 2021-2022 and beyond the Custer School District will use ESSER III/ARP funding. Options include but are not limited to:</p> |  |
| <p><b>Equipment and/or Supplies</b><br/>           Additional Security Cameras - In an effort to social distance and mitigate, we have students in areas that need increased monitoring and supervision. Key card systems will also be added to make entrance more secure and entrance into the building more convenient and allow for more social distancing.</p> <p>Various tech items such as Owl or Swivel Cameras to put into classrooms. Speaker systems for conference and meeting rooms. Various software programs as needed, Google Classroom, SeaSaw, and math and reading programs to remediate students and catch them up.</p> <p>One to one devices. iPads, laptop computers to keep staff and students at the 1-1 level for devices. These can be used if remote learning is needed or in the classrooms for remediation and daily instruction.</p>   | <p><b>\$100,000</b></p> <p><b>\$67,442</b></p> <p><b>\$500,000</b></p> |
| <p><b>Other Priorities Not Outlined Above</b></p>   |  |
| <p><b>Total Approximate Budget for Mitigation Strategies</b></p>  | <p><b>\$667,442</b></p>  |

**Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time**

- Describe how the school district will use the funds it reserves (i.e., at least 20 percent of funding) under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions (please see U.S. Department of Education’s FAQ A-10 and C-2; districts may also consult the department’s Evidence Based Practices Template found under Documents/Resources here). This can include summer learning, extended school day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year. Please insert NA if a category is not applicable to your plan.

| Narrative   | Approximate Budget |
|---|--------------------|
| <p><b>Overview</b></p> <p>The Custer School District maintained full-time, in-person instruction 4 days per week for the 2020-2021 school year. A comprehensive needs assessment was completed to determine areas that students were impacted. The District conducted a survey after distance learning in the spring of 2020 to help judge the impact of the pandemic. Another example is the learning loss that students experienced from quarantine or positive COVID tests. Having family members be positive was a big impact on some of our students and their families.</p>   |                    |
| <p><b>Specific Evidence-Based Interventions (eg., curriculum, assessments)</b></p> <p>Math and English-Language Arts Curriculum Purchase - Two disciplines that students are evaluated on for growth or regression is English/Reading and Math. A strong curriculum is very important in promoting growth and combating learning loss. The Custer School District just purchased math curriculum and has conducted extensive training over the summer. The District monitors these subjects via NWEA Map Growth reports and Smarter Balanced Assessment.</p>  |                    |
| <p><b>Opportunities for Extended Learning (eg., summer school, afterschool)</b></p> <p>Summer School: 4 weeks in June – 4 hours per day at \$30 per hour – 4 teachers, summer 2021 and 2022 &amp; Credit Recovery for Middle School: 4 weeks in June, 4 hours per day, 1 teacher:</p> <p><b>Paid for with current title funds.</b></p> <p>The District is committed to ensuring top programming outside of the academic calendar as educational research supports that this initiative reduces the potential for learning loss.</p> <p>“A fundamental problem that continues to plague educators is the achievement gap between low-income and higher-income students. In</p> |                    |

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| <p>the ongoing search for solutions, one of the more promising approaches is expanding opportunities for learning, particularly in the summer. “</p> <p>Camasso, M. J., &amp; Jagannathan, R. (2018). Nurture thru nature: Creating natural science identities in populations of disadvantaged children through community education partnership. <i>Journal of Environmental Education</i>, 49(1), 30–42. Research brief retrieved from <a href="https://naaee.org/eepro/research/library/nurture-thru-nature-creating-natural">https://naaee.org/eepro/research/library/nurture-thru-nature-creating-natural</a></p>   |                           |
| <p><b>Equipment and/or Supplies</b></p>   |                           |
| <p><b>Additional FTE</b></p> <p>The Custer School District has hired additional staff to help with any learning loss as well as to increase student achievement, reduce class sizes, and to help with the up-keep of the building.</p> <p>Cost over three years.</p> <p>The ratio between adults and students has a direct impact on student achievement. The Tennessee Star is a famous study that defends the impact of student to teacher ratios. In the study, students and teachers were randomly assigned to different class sizes. The small class size included 13-17 pupils and the regular class size included 22-25 pupils. The research showed that students in smaller class sizes outperformed those in larger class sizes. The smaller class sizes produced 8% better reading scores and 9% better math scores than the larger classes.”</p> | <p><b>\$1,080,000</b></p> |
| <p><b>Other Priorities Not Outlined Above</b></p>   |                           |
| <p><b>Total Approximate Budget for Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time</b></p>   | <p><b>\$1,080,000</b></p> |

**Investments Aligned with Student Needs**

- Describe how the school district will ensure that the interventions it implements described in question 2 above 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. This should include specific language around each of the below groups. Discuss each category by elementary, middle, and high school, if appropriate.\*

The use of ESSER III/ARP funds that are used for learning loss are directly related to students needs as identified in our comprehensive needs assessment. Using multiple measures such as Smarter Balance Assessments, NWEA MAP Growth reports, and teacher assessments/observations our team created a list of priorities to address learning loss.

Summer school will target all students in the elementary school and to those in need in the middle school. Custer School District strives to ensure students are at grade level as it become more difficult for students to close the achievement gap as they progress through the continuum of K-12 education. These services are open to all students in all subgroups.

Updating curriculum will benefit all students in our district. ELA and math curriculum will allow our distinguished instructional staff the ability to differentiate. The curriculum update will add another tool for our instructional staff

Adding additional paraprofessionals, classroom staff, and a curriculum advisor/data analyst/academic coach, will benefit our district by targeting students who are at risk of falling behind. We will identify learning loss via assessment data and educator observations. The District will be working with TIE to study trends on our SD Assessment information and NWEA data.

| Population                               | Academic  | Social, Emotional, and Mental Health  |
|--|---|---|
| <b>All students</b>                      | The intervention and additional learning opportunities will impact all students.                  | When the District surveyed the parents of the district, slightly over 50% of the parents noticed the negative social, emotional, and mental effects of school closure.<br>To help with that, the District has hired a Behavior Counselor and have trained para-professionals to better work with students who are acting out emotionally or socially. |
| <b>Students from low income families</b> | Students will have equal access to after school programs, summer school, and curriculum upgrades. | The District monitors SEM health and is committed to remaining in-person and offering learning loss opportunities.  |
| <b>Students of color</b>                 | Students will have equal access to after school programs, summer school, and curriculum upgrades. | The District monitors SEM health and is committed to remaining in-person and offering learning loss opportunities.  |

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| <b>English learners</b>                   | Students will have equal access to after school programs, summer school, and curriculum upgrades.                  | The District monitors SEM health and is committed to remaining in-person and offering learning loss opportunities.  |
| <b>Children with disabilities</b>         | Students will have equal access to after school programs, summer school, and curriculum upgrades.                  | The District monitors SEM health and is committed to remaining in-person and offering learning loss opportunities.  |
| <b>Students experiencing homelessness</b> | Students will have equal access to after school programs, summer school, and curriculum upgrades.                  | The District monitors SEM health and is committed to remaining in-person and offering learning loss opportunities.  |
| <b>Children in foster care</b>            | Students will have equal access to after school programs, summer school, and curriculum upgrades.                  | The District monitors SEM health and is committed to remaining in- person and offering learning loss opportunities. |
| <b>Migratory students</b>                 | The District monitors SEM health and is committed to remaining in person and offering learning loss opportunities. | The District monitors SEM health and is committed to remaining in- person and offering learning loss opportunities. |

*\*If a population is not traditionally and was not present during the 2020-21 school year, the district may include a statement on how it will address the needs of such students should that population be present in the 2021-22, 2022-23 or 2023-24 school years.*

#### **Investments in Other Allowed Activities**

- Describe how the school district will spend its remaining allocation consistent with [section 2001\(e\)\(2\)](#) of the ARP Act (see [here](#) for remaining allowable uses of funds). Please insert NA if a category is not applicable to your plan.

| Narrative   | Approximate Budget |
|---|--------------------|
| <b>Overview</b><br>The District will provide opportunities for all students in a multi-modal setting that will address the variety of learning modes. |                    |
| <b>Academic Supports</b>  |                    |

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| <b>Educator Professional Development</b><br>District will complete a data review and engage in professional development related to English Language Learners and students from low socio-economic status.                              |          |
| <b>District Funds unless modifications made to plan.</b>   |          |
| <b>Interventions that Address Student Well-Being</b><br>The District will remain committed to educating all students in multimodal settings. The District will investigate curriculum to address social, emotional, and mental health. |          |
| <b>Strategies to Address Workforce Challenges</b>  |          |
| <b>Other Priorities Not Outlined Above</b>   |          |
| <b>Total Approximate Budget for Investments in Other Allowed Activities</b>  | <b>0</b> |

5. If the school district proposes to use any portion of ARP ESSER funds for renovation, air quality, and/or construction projects, describe those projects below. Each project should be addressed separately. (Districts may add boxes as needed). Please insert NA if this category is not applicable to your plan.

Please also note that these projects are subject to the department’s prior approval. For further guidance, see [U.S. Department of Education’s FAQs](#) B-6, B-7, B-8 and C-27.

| <b>Narrative</b>   | <b>Approximate Budget</b> |
|--|---------------------------|
| <b>Overview</b> COVID-19 mitigation strategies have required the District to use creative strategies to social distance. It is imperative to ensure safety and security for our students while the instructional staff explores new areas to provide education. In prior ESSER allocations the district upgraded HVAC in the District with GPS systems in all of the district buildings. |                           |
| <b>Project #1</b><br>Artificial Turf on part of the Custer Elementary Playground – In an effort to social distance, artificial turf will be installed at Custer Elementary. The current grass turns to mud quickly and students tend to congregate in one spot. This will allow them to use the entirety of the playground.  | <b>\$90,000</b>           |
| <b>Project #2</b>  |                           |

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| <b>Total Approximate Budget for Renovation, Air Quality, and/or Construction</b> | <b>\$90,000</b> |
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6. Before considering construction activities as part of the district’s response to COVID-19 and as a component to emerging stronger post-pandemic, describe how and with which funding sources the district will support other essential student needs or initiatives.

| <b>Narrative</b>  | <b>Approximate Budget</b> |
|---|---------------------------|
| <p><b>Overview</b></p> <p>Educating the children in the Custer School District from all subgroups continues to be the #1 priority. The uses Title I and Federal REAP funding to focus on student achievement and students from multiple backgrounds such as: homeless, low socio-economic status, English Language Learners, and children with disabilities. The District has used previous ESSER funds and Coronavirus Relief Funds to purchase technology to address learning loss, as well as improve air quality with GPS filtration.</p> <p>The Custer District will also use it’s general and capital outlay funds as needed to ensure the quality education of its students.</p> |                           |

**Engaging Students at Risk**

7. Describe how the school district will use ARP ESSER funds to identify, reengage, and support students most likely to have experienced the impact of lost instructional time, including, but not limited to:
- a. Students who have missed the most in-person instruction in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years
  - b. Students who did not participate or participated inconsistently in remote instruction
  - c. Students most at risk of dropping out of school.

Please note if these strategies represent a continuation from either ESSER I or ESSER II funding.

| <b>Narrative</b>  |
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| <p><b>Overview</b></p> <p>95% of students in the District attended in-person instruction during the 2020-2021 school year. Some students missed extended time due to the virus or being a close contact to a classmate, family member etc.</p> <p>Our district outlined strategies for remote learning based on the phases correlated to the Custer School District COVID Operational plan.</p> |

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| <p>Some students participated in the classroom via Zoom and others used online programs (e.g., Black Hills Online Learning Community or Ingenuity).</p>   |
| <p><b>Missed Most In-Person</b></p> <p>The Custer School District encouraged all stakeholders to stay home if they were minimally ill. For those who did miss extended time our district adopted Google Classroom and SeeSaw for students who were absent. When a teacher was absent, we allowed them to work remotely so that students would stay on pace.</p> |
| <p><b>Did Not Participate in Remote Instruction</b></p> <p>Students who chose not to attend were given Black Hills Online Learning, or Ingenuity. Some of the lower grades participated via Zoom and joined the lesson as it was taken place. This proved very difficult for staff to manage.</p>   |
| <p><b>At-Risk for Dropping Out</b></p> <p>We did not identify students at-risk of dropping out. Any student who was behind schedule based upon semester grades met with administration. Students who were behind grade level according to the NWEA completed a goal-setting document with their teacher.</p>  |

**Stakeholder Consultation:**

- 8. Describe how the school district did and will continue to engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders around the planned use of ARP/ESSER funds.

| Narrative   |
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| <p><b>Overview, including the three highest priority needs that emerged from consultation</b></p> <p>The District has attempted to effectively communicate with stakeholders since the start of the COVID pandemic in 2020. The district disseminated surveys, provided weekly COVID video updates of the numbers of students and staff infected with the virus as well as created dashboard updates via email and school website.</p> <p>Three priorities from the stakeholders: provide in-person learning, make our schools as safe as possible while giving students personal freedoms, and use ARP/ESSER funds to improve our academic achievement and district.</p> |
| <p><b>Students</b></p> <p>Administration will monitor student needs and factor input into the decision-making process. The School Board, administration, and staff are committed to making every decision based upon the best education for our kids!</p>   |

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| <p><b>Families</b> – Custer School District will continue to disseminate surveys and gather parent input. The District will encourage 2 way communication and be transparent with ARP/ESSER spending by sharing information at school board meetings, newspaper articles, and website posting.</p>   |
| <p><b>School and district administrators (including special education administrators)</b><br/>The District will have bi-monthly administrative team meetings to analyze the impact of COVID on students. ESSER/ARP will be a standing agenda item on these administrative team meetings.</p>   |
| <p><b>Teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions</b><br/>Administration will discuss needs at staff meetings and through information conversations. ARP/ESSER will be addressed at the teacher in-service prior to the beginning of the school year.</p>  |
| <p><b>Civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations), as applicable</b><br/>The District will be accommodating and transparent to any organization that wishes to share input regarding ARP/ESSER funding and how it can help the students within our district. The District will encourage any civil rights organization to visit with the superintendent.</p>  |
| <p><b>Stakeholders representing the interests of: children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students</b></p> <p>Prior to the start of the year, student registration surveys families who are homeless, foster, migratory, or underserved students. Once those families are identified, the district will allow them to comment on ideas or suggestions for ARP/ESSER funds.</p> |
| <p><b>The public</b><br/>The District will inform the public by providing articles in the newspaper and posting information on the school website. The public can attend school board meetings and provide input or suggestions during the public comment agenda item.</p>   |

**District Assurance of Regular Review**

The South Dakota Department of Education will collect assurances from superintendents that ARP/ESSER Plans have been reviewed, available for public comment, and amended if necessary at these points during the school year:

- December 2021 (in conjunction with December Child Count)
- June 2022 (in conjunction with Year-End Sign-off)
- December 2022 (in conjunction with December Child Count)
- June 2023 (in conjunction with Year-End Sign-off)

To facilitate transparency, the department will post the link to each school district's plan on its website. It will be the responsibility of the district to ensure its link remains valid.