



**Lynn Public Schools Elementary and
Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER
III) Allocation Plan**

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Overview

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, was enacted on March 11, 2021. The ARP Act provides additional funding for school districts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Education portion of ARP is known as the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III or ARP ESSER) Fund. The purpose of the ESSER III fund is to support the safe reopening and sustaining safe operations of schools while meeting students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Lynn Public Schools received an allocation of \$42,106,523 to be spent through August 2024. Therefore, this will be a multi-year plan for anticipated activities. A full scope of requirements can be found here: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/federalgrants/esser/>

Context

The Lynn Public Schools (LPS) is the Commonwealth's fifth largest district, serving 16,317 scholars. Our 25 schools service a wonderfully racially and linguistically diverse student population. Our diversity is a point of pride. Our student population is 66 percent Latino, 16 percent white, 11 percent black, and 8 percent Asian. In addition, 30 percent of our students are English learners, 17 percent are students with disabilities, and 58 percent are low-income.

The district has a fully enforceable [strategic plan](#) in place and has worked diligently to move forward in achieving each of the four objectives therein. The unfortunate experience of the global pandemic has exacerbated many of the challenges the strategic plan was designed to address. Fortunately, with the Student Opportunity Act (SOA), state law designed to provide seven years of increased funding to address longstanding disparities in performance among students of color, English learners, and students with disabilities. With the increased funding the district proposed four areas of focus:

1. Better accommodating and responding to the social emotional needs of students
2. Improving special education supports by deepening the existing inclusion model, reducing caseloads and the provision of ongoing professional development particularly on Universal Design for Learning.
3. Improving services for ELs by building on the existing inclusion model, expanding social and emotional supports at the secondary level, maintaining EL student to English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher ratios (given projected increases), and the provision of focused, district-wide professional development.
4. Creating additional opportunities for enrichment for students, while also creating common planning time for teachers at the elementary level.

These areas of focus will continue to be supported by SOA funding. ESSER III funding can enhance these areas of focus and other critical areas of need caused or worsened by the pandemic.

Planning, Communication, and Stakeholder Input

ESSER III carries with it an explicit expectation for stakeholder input. Clear in the plan below is a three-step approach to provide details about the opportunity that the funding presents and solicit input in multiple, accessible ways on priorities and initiatives that should be considered. Finally, given the three-year time frame to use the funds to support student development and learning, the district will establish an ESSER Advisory, a diverse group of stakeholders who will provide feedback in consultation on the initiatives supported by the funding.

Planning and Communication

Plan		
What	Description	
Advisory Development Invitations will be sent to a small representative group who will serve in an advisory capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and discuss survey outcomes Give feedback on the final plan to be presented to the School Committee Serve as a sounding board on ESSER-funded initiatives. 	
Survey Development Surveys were developed to gather broad input from various stakeholder groups according to requirements.		
Engage		
What	When	Description
Survey Administration Surveys specifically geared toward the following stakeholder groups: Students Families Teachers/Staff School Leaders Special Education Parent Advisory English Learner Parent Advisory Council LPS Partner Agencies	Week of September 13 th	Survey was administered to students, families, and LPS staff with. Email was used to administer survey to other stakeholders.
Virtual Town Hall	September 20, 2021	Superintendent hosted a Virtual Town Hall to explain ESSER funding program, answer questions, and promote survey completion.
Share Survey Outcomes	Week of September 27 th	Survey results will be posted on the LPS website and social media.

Present		
What	When	Description
School Committee Presentation/Public Comment	September 24, 2021	Survey feedback and allocation plan for ESSER funding will be presented to the School Committee for general feedback. It will also be posted on the LPS website for general feedback from the public.
Virtual Town Hall	TBD	Superintendent will host a Virtual Town Hall to present allocation plan and next steps.
School Committee Approval	September 30, 2021	Final allocation plan will be presented for School Committee approval.

Stakeholder Input

Given its rich diversity, the approach to stakeholder input from the Lynn Public Schools community offered multiple accessibility points. The survey was developed and translated into the five most prominent languages spoken in the district. Outreach on the opportunity to provide input through the survey happened in the form of all calls to families, text messages, social media, and website post. Further, to ensure that stakeholders representing groups of students who have unique needs, the survey was sent directly to the members of the English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC) and the Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC).

The survey itself was short yet provided the district with critical information on what the community deems as priorities in meeting the needs of students as a result of the pandemic. Further, the community had an opportunity to give input on some of the vehicles toward meeting student needs, whether it be summer learning, wraparound social and emotional services, or targeted after school tutoring.

In addition to the survey, a community wide virtual town hall was held on September 20, 2021. This was a live, interactive opportunity for families to hear about the substance of the funding opportunity, ask questions, and give direct input on priorities or strategies to address student need.

Through this input effort, clear themes emerged on what the community deems important in responding to student needs because of the pandemic. They are as follows:

- 1. Learning Recovery & Acceleration**
- 2. Wellbeing**
- 3. Healthy Schools**

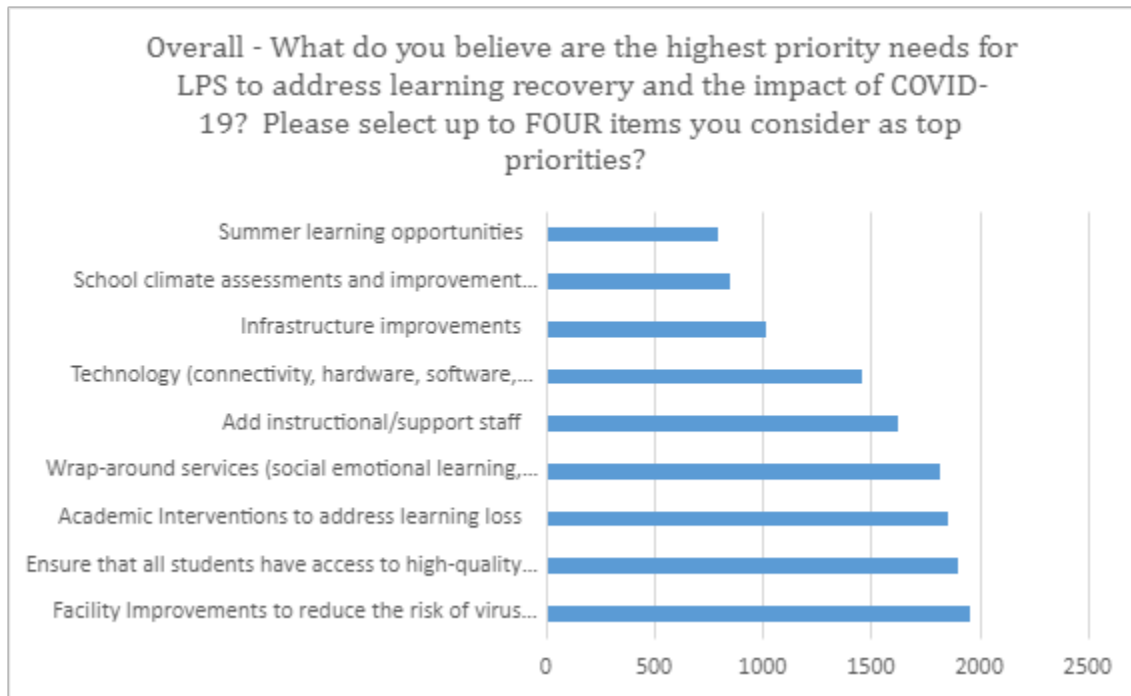
Survey Snapshot

The effort to gather broad input from the Lynn Public Schools community was largely anchored in the survey. Respondents were invited to identify to which stakeholder group(s) he/she/they belong and what they believe to be the highest priority in addressing student need as a result of the pandemic. Below is a snapshot of the input captured in the survey.

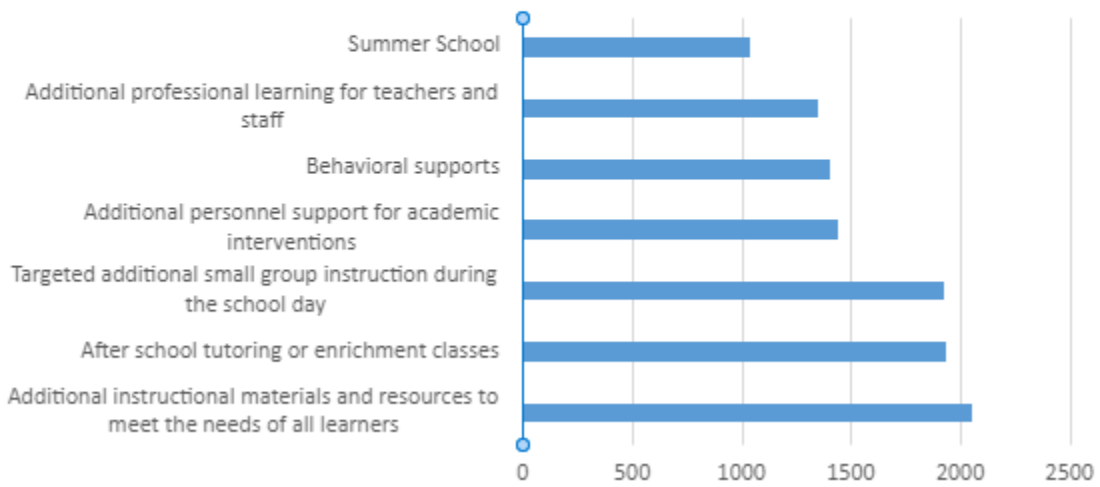
Participation:

- Family/Caregiver: 1,415
- Students (grades 6-12): 1,003
- Teacher: 697
- Other Educators: 186
- Administrator: 135
- Member of Community Agency: 64
- Stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English Learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved student: 169

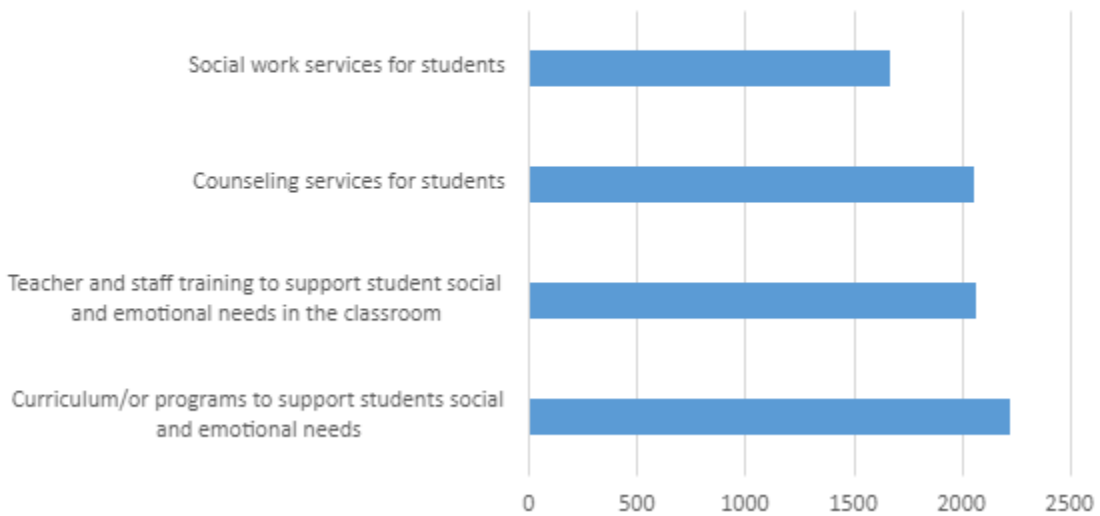
Total: 3,669



Overall - At least 20% of the ESSER III funds received must be used for learning recovery. Please select the academic strategies that you consider vital to addressing learning loss resulting from COVID-19. (Check all that you want considered)



Overall - An allowable use of ESSER III funds is providing mental health services and supports for students. With this in mind, please select the supports you would like the district to consider:



In addition to the questions aligned to eligible expenditures, participants were invited to give narrative feedback with the following prompt: *Please share any additional feedback you may have on how the Lynn Public Schools can use ESSER III funding to meet the needs of our students and staff.* An analysis of the narrative feedback reflected an emergence of eight overarching themes (presented in order of frequency from respondents):

Themes from Narrative Responses	Notes
Learning Recovery	Heavy emphasis on providing small group or individualized attention for students through smaller class size.
Mental/Physical Health	Expand or increase clinical resources for students and staff.
Facilities	Improve in myriad of facilities issues and/or build new schools. Address ventilation and other safety-related facilities concerns. ¹
Pay/Benefits	Increased pay/benefits for staff.
General Safety	Responses ranged from the addition of school resource officers and crossing guards to more strategic opportunities for students and families to get the COVID-19 vaccine. ²
Transportation	Address driver shortage.
Technology	Continue to expand access to technology and ensure more frequent use in classes.
Food/Nutrition	Improve quality and expand options for students, particularly at the elementary level.

¹ Note that construction of new buildings or remodeling projects are not eligible ESSER III expenditures.

² School Resource officers are reflective of a partnership between the Lynn Public Schools and the Lynn Police Department (LPD). The ability to expand this program depends on LPD capacity.

Funds Allocation Plan

Based on stakeholder input and ongoing assessment of student need, the following is a high-level allocation plan leveraging ESSER III funds. The funding will be used to create new or deepen, refine, and expand existing efforts to support student learning and growth as result of the COVID-19 pandemic. ESSER III funds must be spent by 2024.

Priority	Description	Proposed Allocation
<p>Learning Recovery & Acceleration</p> <p>Survey ties: Academic interventions to address learning loss</p> <p>Add instructional/support staff</p> <p>Ensure that all students have access to high-quality instructional materials and assessments</p> <p>Technology (connectivity, hardware, software, training)</p>	<p>Learning recovery and Acceleration includes a broad set of initiatives designed to eliminate learning gaps created or broadened due to circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic. They include but are not limited to after-school tutoring and summer learning programs, special education compensatory programs, during-the-day acceleration and intervention programming, instructional technology equipment, and related staffing additions and professional development.</p>	<p>55%</p> <p>OR</p> <p>\$23,158,585</p>
<p>Wellbeing</p> <p>Survey tie: Wrap-around services- social emotional learning, counseling, mental health and wellness resources</p>	<p>The social-emotional, mental, and physical wellbeing of students and staff is critical and core to progress in all facets of our work with students. Wellbeing initiatives supported by this funding include expansion of access to clinical supports in schools and related staffing additions and professional development. It also includes refining and/or expanding existing social emotional learning initiatives and clinical services.</p>	<p>25%</p> <p>OR</p> <p>\$10,526,630</p>
<p>Healthy Schools</p> <p>Survey tie: Facility improvements to reduce the risk of virus transmission</p>	<p>Healthy Schools builds upon an ongoing effort to ensure that all LPS facilities are fully aligned with the Center for Disease Control standards for safety. This includes but is not limited to ventilation repairs, upgrades and related projects and enhancements to buildings that support a safe and learning-conducive experience for students and staff.</p>	<p>20%</p> <p>OR</p> <p>\$8,421,308</p>

Next Steps

Pending approval from the LPS School Committee, an application will be submitted to state authorities. Once approved, the district may begin leveraging ESSER III funds according to the allocation plan. Specific activities and initiatives will be anchored in the input collected as well as data derived from student assessment and teacher/staff recommendation. Further, before funds are allocated to any specific initiative or activity, the ESSER III Advisory will be in place and will begin work providing perspective and feedback.

Communication Plan and Feedback

The commitment to transparency and communication about ESSER III expenditures will continue in earnest. A dedicated space in the “Reopening Safely” icon on the LPS homepage has been created for ESSER III information under the tab entitled “COVID Recovery Plan”. Documentation and data will be collected and organized in keeping with federal requirement. Feedback on the substance of programs and initiatives will be formally collected as part of the documentation and data requirements. All of this information will be organized in the COVID Recovery Plan space on the website.