**ARP-ESSER Grant Application**

**Narrative Responses**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **School Name** | St HOPE Leadership Academy |
| **Section 1: Intent to Apply** | |
| Please provide contact information for the LEA Business Official and Board President. Please confirm that each individual has reviewed and approved of the application, including all plan descriptions and use of funds.   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | Name | Email Address | Date of Final Review/Approval | | LEA Business Official | Meghann Persenaire | mpersenaire@sthopeharlem.org | 9/23/2021 | | LEA Board President | Ankur Dalal | ankurdalal@gmail.com | 9/23/2021 | | |
| Does the LEA intend to use American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act - Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) LEA Base 90% funding for construction-related expenditures?  Yes  No | |
| **Section 2 – Plan Development and Dissemination** | |
| Narrative Response 1: Please describe how the LEA meaningfully engaged a diverse and representative set of the applicable stakeholders in developing a plan to use these funds and implementing that plan.  In developing a plan to use these funds, our LEA engaged families, students, and staff via multiple virtual town halls. In addition, our LEA engaged the school’s leadership team and Board of Trustees through numerous meetings. Based on feedback received from these stakeholders, we adjusted our plan. For example, teachers and staff asked that we prioritize mental health of all members of our community and, as a result, we added an additional school counselor and funds for external therapy. We intend to continue to host town halls, while also continuing to regularly meet with the school’s leadership team and Board of Trustees, while we implement our plan. | |
| Narrative Response 2: Please provide the URL for the website(s) where the LEA ARP-ESSER Plan is/will be publicly posted. For an LEA that does not have a website, the LEA may identify an online platform (e.g. social media group or post, file sharing service, email listserv) that allows plans to be directly communicated to students, parents or legal guardians, school staff, and other stakeholders. As appropriate, the LEA should provide details about how the plan will be made available to people who request it.  <https://www.sthopeleadershipacademy.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=509996&type=d>  In addition to our LEA’s website, hard copies will continue to be provided to people who request it. | |
| Narrative Response 3: Please describe the extent to which and how the funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent CDC guidance on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning.  Federal coronavirus relief funds (ESSER I and ESSER II) have been used to purchase an abundant supply of 3-ply and KN95 masks in both child and adult sizes, air purifiers for each classroom, replacement air filters, Clorox wipes, hand sanitizer, and temperature screeners. We will use this next tranche of funds to subsidize weekly COVID testing for teachers, staff and students in order to continue the identification and contact tracing of cases that is essential to safely remaining open. | |
| Narrative Response 4: Please describe the data that the LEA will use to identify student needs and monitor student progress as a result of planned interventions and supports.  Our LEA will identify student needs in ELA and Math with a baseline NWEA MAP assessment administered in September that will provide individual and aggregate student mastery data on appropriate grade-level standards. In addition, our LEA will administer a level set in Achieve 3000 during the first week of September to determine individual student non-fiction reading levels. Our LEA will monitor student progress as a result of planned interventions in ELA and Math with a mid- and end-line NWEA MAP assessment, in addition to interim assessments in both subjects in October and January and monthly Achieve 3000 progress reports. This is all in addition to regular weekly and bi-weekly teacher-based assessments that also align with grade-level standards and are closely monitored by teachers and coaches. | |
| Narrative Response 5: Please describe how the LEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) -the required reserve of 20% of 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.    Our LEA will address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. Specifically, our LEA offered to all students a summer learning and enrichment program via the St HOPE Summer Spark Program and we plan to offer this extended program again next summer. We also increased our afterschool program offerings to include programs that both support students academically and from a social and emotional perspective including, but not limited to, Poetry, Spoken Word, Math Club, Coding, Book Club, Celebrating Muslim Women, Cooking Club and Plant Club. Additionally, our LEA added an additional Achieve 3000 teacher to be able to offer Achieve 3000 to students in all grades one period per day. Achieve 3000 is an evidence-based non-fiction reading program that drives improved reading skills. Finally, our LEA added an Intervention Specialist to our math team who will track student progress and work directly with teachers to target interventions.  A key strategy our LEA uses to address the social, emotional and mental health impact of the pandemic is through the implementation of our daily advisory program, a program where every student meets with their advisor each morning in a group of no more than 10 students.  These advisory groups typically remain together throughout the students’ three-year tenure at St HOPE to ensure that every scholar has an adult in the building who is their advocate and go-to person, as well as a group of peers who serve as a trusting support group.  In advisory, students complete a WOOP each week through which they identify a Wish, which is an academic or social-emotional goal for the week, an Outcome, an Obstacle, and a Plan. Students, with their advisor, check-in on the progress towards their WOOP each Wednesday, and then reflect on their WOOP each Friday. Advisors collect this data weekly in an effort to prioritize the wellness of every child. In addition, the setting and discussing of a social-emotional goal enhances mental health literacy and reduces the stigma of mental health. It is through our advisory program that we are able to identify students who may benefit from further planned interventions including, but not limited to, crisis counseling or long-term counseling. As more than 90% of our students qualify as low-income and we have a significant number of students experiencing homelessness, we also use advisory to immediately respond to any issues of hunger or other immediate crises that arise. In addition to advisory, our Students With Disabilities set specific academic and social-emotional goals during their annual IEP meetings that are monitored by their teachers and our Director of Student Support Services with quarterly progress reports provided to students and families.  To further embed strategies that promote positive social-emotional learning, our entire staff received training in August on Trauma-Informed Teaching Practices. As part of that training, our staff learned how to identify trauma responses in students and various ways to respond that both acknowledge the trauma and provide teachers and students with short-and long-term strategies to ensure that learning continues. Our staff was also trained on how to set and uphold community agreements, a more trauma-informed approach to classroom management. Our staff continues to receive monthly coaching on trauma-informed teaching practices. Our LEA also uses Education Modified, an online platform that allows for collaboration between teachers in the planning and implementing of academic interventions for each student. With Education Modified, teachers share what’s working for students and what strategies and interventions help students attain their goals. While we have confidence in our internal resources, we are also exploring other programs and platforms that are new to the market such as Aperture Education that might improve our ability to track social-emotional goals and student growth in this area.   Our goal is to have a fully integrated framework of academic, social, emotional and behavioral-health support that will benefit all of our scholars. | |
| Narrative Response 6: Please describe how the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) - the allowable uses of funds - of the ARP Act.  The majority of our ARP ESSER funds will be spent on evidence-based strategies and programs that will continue to identify and mitigate learning loss. This includes the additional Achieve 3000 teacher, the new Math Intervention Specialist position, the expanded afterschool program, Achieve3000 program costs, and the classroom sound systems to improve student access to instruction described in Response 5 and Response 7. We are also extending the external mental health supplement all staff receive to a second year because staff asked that this continue be a priority. We will also spend significant ARP funds on weekly COVID testing for staff, teachers and students in order to continue the identification and contact tracing of cases that is essential to safely remaining open. ARP funds will also be used to purchase licenses, warranties and cases for the new Chromebooks that will be purchased using ESSER II dollars. A small portion of funding will be used to cover services provided by Lightspeed Technologies for the setup of teacher microphones and other classroom sound improvements to better hear masked teachers as well as support with technology-related issues and remote learning. Staff time to manage the significant coordination required with local and state Departments of Health and Departments of Education amid ever-changing COVID conditions and requirements will round out the budget. | |
| Narrative Response 7: Please describe how the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements, including but not limited to the interventions implemented under section 2001(e)(1) - the required reserve of 20% of funds - to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, 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, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students.    Our LEA will address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. Specifically, our LEA offered to all students a summer learning and enrichment program via the St HOPE Summer Spark Program and we plan to offer this extended program again next summer. We have also significantly increased our afterschool program offerings to include programs that both support students academically and from a social and emotional perspective including, but not limited to, Poetry, Spoken Word, Math Club, Coding, Book Club, Celebrating Muslim Women, Cooking Club and Plant Club. Additionally, our LEA added an additional Achieve 3000 teacher to be able to offer Achieve 3000 to students in all grades one period per day. Achieve 3000 is an evidence-based non-fiction reading program that drives improved reading skills. In addition, our LEA plans to better support our students with hearing impairments through Lightspeed Technologies, a system that gives each teacher a microphone and an enhanced sound system for both students in the classroom and students learning remotely due to COVID exposure. Finally, our LEA added an Intervention Specialist to our math team who tracks student progress and works directly with teachers to target interventions.  Our LEA monitors academic interventions through monthly benchmark assessments in Math and monthly Lexile reading growth as measured through Achieve3000.  These benchmarks provide teachers and coaches with individualized student data on progress made towards grade-level standards in both ELA and Math.  Teachers then make individualized instructional decisions based on this data, including placement in targeted teaching groups.  Benchmark data is then supplemented with interim assessment data that is gathered in ELA and Math in October and January as well as NWEA MAP assessments in both subjects implemented in September, January, and May. In 6th grade ELA, students at or below the 40th percentile on the baseline NWEA MAP Assessment in ELA receive instruction in Lexia, an adaptive blended learning program that accelerates literacy skills. This is in addition to a daily period dedicated to Achieve 3000 for students in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades. In Math, all of our students have two dedicated periods for Math, and one of those periods is a dedicated small group academic intervention period where students are placed in small groups with no more than 10 students per teacher. In those small groups, students receive targeted teaching based on their individualized “ready to learn” academic standards.Our English Language Learners also set specific ELL goals with their ELL teacher who monitors progress throughout the year, with quarterly progress reports provided to students and families.  Students complete the NYSESLAT each spring to measure annual progress.  Through their annual IEP meetings, our Students With Disabilities set specific academic and social-emotional goals that are monitored by their teachers and our Director of Student Support Services with quarterly progress reports provided to students and families. Our LEA also uses Education Modified, an online platform that allows for collaboration between teachers in the planning and implementing of academic interventions for each student. With Education Modified, teachers share what’s working for students and what strategies and interventions help students attain their goals.  Our LEA gathers data on the social, emotional and mental health impact of the pandemic through the implementation of our daily advisory program, a program where every student meets with their advisor each morning in a group of no more than 10 students.  These advisory groups typically remain together throughout the students’ three-year tenure at St HOPE to ensure that every scholar has an adult in the building who is their advocate and go-to person, as well as a group of peers who serve as a trusting support group.  In advisory, students complete a WOOP each week through which they identify a Wish, which is an academic or social-emotional goal for the week, an Outcome, an Obstacle, and a Plan. Students, with their advisor, check-in on the progress towards their WOOP each Wednesday, and then reflect on their WOOP each Friday. Advisors collect this data weekly in an effort to prioritize the wellness of every child. In addition, the setting and discussing of a social-emotional goal enhances mental health literacy and reduces the stigma of mental health. It is through our advisory program that we are able to identify students who may benefit from further planned interventions including, but not limited to, crisis counseling or long-term counseling.  As more than 90% of our students qualify as low-income and we have a significant number of students experiencing homelessness, we also use advisory to immediately respond to any issues of hunger or other immediate crises that arise.  To further embed strategies that promote positive social-emotional learning, our entire staff received training in August on Trauma-Informed Teaching Practices. As part of that training, our staff learned how to identify trauma responses in students and various ways to respond that both acknowledge the trauma and provide teachers and students with short-and long-term strategies to ensure that learning continues. Our staff was also trained on how to set and uphold community agreements, a more trauma-informed approach to classroom management. Our staff continues to receive monthly coaching on trauma-informed teaching practices. Our LEA also uses Education Modified, an online platform that allows for collaboration between teachers in the planning and implementing of academic interventions for each student. With Education Modified, teachers share what’s working for students and what strategies and interventions help students attain their goals. While we have confidence in our internal resources, we are also exploring other programs and platforms that are new to the market such as Aperture Education that might improve our ability to track social-emotional goals and student growth in this area.   Our goal is to have a fully integrated framework of academic, social, emotional and behavioral-health support that will benefit all of our scholars. | |
| **Return to In-Person Instruction** | |
| Narrative Response 1: Please provide the URL for the website(s) where the district's most current re-opening/return to in-person learning plan is/will be located. For an LEA that does not have a website, the LEA may identify an online platform (e.g. social media group or post, file sharing service, email listserv) that allows plans to be directly communicated to students, parents or legal guardians, school staff, and other stakeholders. As appropriate, the LEA should provide details about how the plan will be made available to people who request it.  <https://www.sthopeleadershipacademy.org/apps/pages/index.jsp?uREC_ID=457187&type=d>  In addition to our LEA’s website, it will be made available via our LEA’s weekly parent newsletter and, if requested, hard copies will continue to be provided to people who request it. | |
| Narrative Response 2: An LEA must periodically, but no less frequently than every six months (through September 30, 2023), review and, as appropriate, revise its plan. Consistent with section 2001(i)(2) of the ARP Act, which requires an LEA to seek public comment on the development of its plan, an LEA must seek public input and take such input into account in determining whether to revise its plan and, if it determines revisions are necessary, on the revisions it makes to its plan, i.e., the LEA must seek public input on whether to revise its plan and on any revisions to its plan no less frequently than every six months (taking into consideration the timing of significant changes to CDC guidance on reopening schools). If the LEA revises its plan, the revised plan must address each of the aspects of safety currently recommended by the CDC or, if the CDC has updated its safety recommendations at the time the LEA is revising its plan, each of the updated safety recommendations.  Please describe how the LEA will review and regularly update (at least every six months through September 30, 2023) its plan for in-person instruction, including a description of how public comment will be collected.  Our LEA will continue to host regular Town Hall meetings for students, parents, and staff. Our LEA will continue to review our plan with the LEA’s leadership team and seek feedback from the Board of Trustees, as well as regular consultation with our schoolwide Building Council. Responding to feedback received via these Town Hall, leadership and Board of Trustee meetings, and changing CDC guidance, we will regularly revise and post our updated plans. | |
| **ARP-ESSER LEA Base 90% Allocation - Construction-Related Costs (IF APPLICABLE)** | |
| Response 2. Please describe the planned construction activities and costs.  Not applicable. | |
| Response 3. Will the planned construction impact and/or effect any district, site, building, structure, or object that is: Included in the National Register of Historic Places; or Eligible under criteria established by the Secretary of Interior for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places? | |