

November 10, 2021

Dear East Hartford Town Council Members,

The East Hartford Public Schools (EHPS) FY23 General Budget development process is well underway, and to help set the stage for Town/BOE budget discussions, I would like to expand upon past communications regarding the District's approved plan for the use of federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding. While our conversations moving forward will focus on our annual budget process, we wanted to outline our plan for the use of these one-time, non-sustainable Federal funds.

Last May, East Hartford Public Schools received \$20,941,266 as a part of the \$1.1 billion ARP allocation to Connecticut. These monies were provided by the federal government with a targeted focus on renewal, reducing opportunity gaps, accelerating learning and advancing equity for all students. As a district we were required to submit a plan to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) for approval. We are proud of the manner in which our now approved ARP plan integrates into both our five year strategic plan, [Pride in 5](#), and [Capital Improvement Plan](#). The table below captures the high-level details and budget of this plan.

EHPS ARP Utilization Plan: Organized by CSDE Priority Categories

CSDE Priority 1: <i>Learning Acceleration, Academic Renewal, and Student Enrichment:</i>	Budget
Addressing learning loss and working to provide enhanced access to academic programming is a top priority of the ARP plan. This segment of the plan provides new and additional staffing and support designed to enhance learning during the school day, after school, and over the summer.	\$6,097,334
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceleration Specialists (9): Certified teachers deployed to all elementary schools and the ECLC that are integrated into classrooms and tasked with targeted instruction to make up for pandemic-related learning loss. • Instructional Coaches (2): Math Coach for all secondary schools as well as a Reading Coach at Sunset Ridge. • Bi-Lingual/ESL Teachers (3): Certified Bi-Lingual/ELL Certified teachers to provide district supports at the elementary, middle and high school level. • Expansion of Summer School Opportunities (Middle School/Alternative): Summer learning opportunities to augment existing elementary programs as well as adds a middle and alternative level summer option. • Support of After School Programs at all Elementary Schools: Provides after-school learning opportunities for a limited number of students at all district elementary schools. • (3) additional years of student and staff software originally covered by ESSER 1. • Retention of staff originally removed from District budget and funded through ESSER 2 for one additional year (FY24). Includes a cross section of instructional staff from paras to reading teachers. 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supplies and materials to support student learning. 	
CSDE Priority 2: <i>Family and Community Connections</i>	Budget
The complex issues brought about by the pandemic have made it clear that the success of schools, families, and communities are interdependent. This segment of the plan provides a staffing model designed to support school-family-community partnerships centered on student success.	\$3,364,013
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bi-Lingual Family Support Specialists at all District Schools (15): A new district role focused on supporting students and families including a focus on student attendance, home-school connections, and improved communication. Construction of a Welcome Center to provide wrap-around resources for families new to EHPS. Additional year of funding (FY24) for Attendance Officer cut from FY22 budget. 	
CSDE Priority 3: <i>Social, Emotional, and Mental Health of Students and Staff:</i>	Budget
The experience during the pandemic has been one of collective challenge and trauma. This segment of the plan provides additional programming to support students' social, emotional, and mental health.	\$795,974
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deployment of specialized staff to support student needs including a Board-Certified Behavioral Analyst (BCBA) as well as an Inclusion Facilitator to support the needs of students with special needs district wide. 	
CSDE Priority 4: <i>Strategic Use of Technology, Staff Development, and the Digital Divide</i>	Budget
Maintaining our new-found technology systems that were launched during the pandemic is vital to accelerating learning and recovery. This segment of the plan supports recent investments with back-end infrastructure and helps to maintain the 1:1 device initiative.	\$2,094,521
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintenance of the 1:1 student device replacement program for (2) years (FY23 and FY24). IT Infrastructure from the district Capital Improvement plan, including classroom instructional devices (SMART boards) and vital IT infrastructure. IT Software/Licensing agreements for (3) years beyond ESSER 1 funding for “back-office” IT requirements. 	
CSDE Priority 5: <i>Building Safe and Healthy Schools</i>	Budget
Provides an unprecedented opportunity to make sustainable, long-term investments in school facilities that will not only further the useful life and aesthetic appeal of the school, but will provide greater comfort and air quality to students and staff and allow for greater utilization of our infrastructure assets. This segment of the plan funds several projects lifted from the district Capital Improvement Plan as well as addresses current infrastructure issues.	\$7,069,897
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Full Window Wall Replacement Projects at five (5) additional elementary schools- Norris, O’Connell East and West, Goodwin, and Pitkin. Mayberry funded through ESSER 2. Construction to take place at (2) schools each summer and beyond incredible aesthetic impact and facility modernization will increase occupant comfort, energy efficiency, and ventilation capability. 	

- Additional capital for the Indoor Air Quality project primarily funded through ESSER, which has a goal of providing cooling and additional ventilation to more than 250 classrooms across 11 schools. Construction to take place in Summer 22 and 23.
- Replacement of original Gymnasium windows at Woodland School to provide better temperature control, aesthetic appeal, and ventilation.
- Replacement of the end of life tri-generation system at EHHS responsible for providing critical chilled water, hot water and power generation. The system will be completely re-designed to provide the most efficient, reliable, and energy-saving system with the lowest ongoing maintenance costs.
- Implementation of a full-building electrical power generation system at EHHS that will ensure constant, uninterrupted power to supply life safety and ventilation equipment and enable EHHS to fulfill its current designation as an emergency shelter.
- Construction of School Based Health Center (SBHC) sites at Woodland and Sunset Ridge Schools, building on the success of the SBHC program and enabling service to hundreds of children, including mental health services.
- Fine Arts Department health/safety operational measures such as routine instrument sanitizing.
- Systems to further “paperless” initiatives.

CSDE Priority “Other”: Other ARP ESSER Eligible Activities	Budget
Items not tied to a specific priority but attributable to maintaining services provided by EHPS and enabling management of a historic level of Federal grant funding.	\$1,519,527
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One additional year of funding (FY24) for non-instructional staff cut from FY22 budget and moved to ESSER 2. Cross-section of staff from custodial to IT. • Grants Assistant to manage over \$30M of Federal grants and Construction Manager to oversee \$14M+ of concurrent construction projects. 	

As we move forward into the annual budget process, clearly identifying the difference between our town appropriation and federal stimulus revenues will be critically important. While these funds provide an opportunity for us to accomplish significant work, the “one-time” status of these funds forces us to recognize the importance of developing a fiscally sustainable plan and avoid the “fiscal cliff” when these grants have been expended. In advance, we appreciate your understanding of the appropriate use of these funds and their relationship to our FY23 General Budget preparation process.

Thanks for your continued support,



Nathan Quesnel
Superintendent
 East Hartford Public Schools