



Northern Highlands Regional High School District

American Rescue Plan (ARP) ESSER III

Board Approved November 15, 2021



American Rescue Plan ESSER III Grant Application

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Funding Considerations

ARP ESSER III Total Allocation (\$606, 538)

- ARP - ESSER (\$406,874) - 20% set aside of learning loss (\$81,374.80)
- Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant (\$74,664)
- Evidence-Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant (\$40,000)
- Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities (\$40,000)
- MTSS Mental Health Support and Staffing Grant (\$45,000)

Materials and Supports for Grant Development

- Also, See the [NJDOE Website](#) for Allowable Uses
- [Budget Preparation](#)
- [Padlet](#) for brainstorming with stakeholders
- Using the comprehensive needs assessment
 - [Survey](#)
 - [Results](#)

Timeline

Board Approval, November 15, 2021

Grant Submitted by November 20, 2021

Funding liquidated by October, 2024



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Needs Assessment

Need 1 ARP ESSER III-Extending Tuition for Out of District Placement

Description of Need

One of the allowable uses for ARP ESSER funding is to provide for students who have unique needs including children with disabilities. This funding will also allow for the addressment of learning loss, by extending programming beyond 21 for students with disabilities. The law provides for special education students to extend placement or programming beyond 21 years of age. Northern Highlands currently has two out of district students who will be extending services until they are 22 years of age. Funding needs to be allocated for both tuition and transportation.

Please highlight:

- **ARP - ESSER**
- **Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant**
- **Evidence Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant**
- **Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School**

Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources to determine need

Data is based on current tuition and transportation rates of two students in out of district placements

Root causes of selected need

Two students have requested extension of services for out of district placement as an allowable use for ARP ESSER III funds. [See article here](#) and bill 5366 found [here](#).



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Need 2 Overall Health, Welfare and Safety

Description of Need

School safety is something Northern Highlands takes very seriously as this connects to students feeling safe and taken care of away from home at our school. If an emergency should happen, currently, we cannot communicate widely to students and community members outside of the immediate school building. As school safety continues to be a focal point for all school districts, we want to be sure students feel safe and secure, not only in the building but on our surrounding fields and around campus.

Please highlight:

- **ARP - ESSER**
- **Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant**
- **Evidence Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant**
- **Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School**

Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources to determine need

This includes upgrading our lockdown system as a campus wide alert system to reach all areas of our outdoor campus structure. This is in response to having more students outside to mitigate COVID-19 during physical education classes as well as courtyards and outdoor dining areas. These areas must be open to more students to allow for social distancing in our school cafeterias while keeping students in schools to avoid social isolation and other effects of COVID-19 on mental wellness. We also, as an open campus, have many community members using our facilities. This includes our track, tennis courts and fitness centers. The expansion of our alert system serves as an indicator to the community that there is an emergency situation at the building and this will allow us to keep the greater community safe as well.

Root causes of selected need

Need enhanced security for areas that are remote on campus due to more outdoor activities and to support social distancing.

[Making Schools Safe for Students](#)

[Impacts of Social Isolation on Staff and Students](#)

Need 3 ARP ESSER III Literacy and Learning Loss

Description of Need

Please highlight:



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Teachers continue to struggle with differentiation and learning loss of skills in some of our science courses. Literacy is the connection to all other disciplines. Now more than ever educators struggle to find materials that allow for differentiation of reading and comprehension levels yet still engage students in similar content. Students have struggled with comprehension, using effective close reading practices. Teachers have struggled to identify tiered texts to support content delivery to meet students where they are at their own comprehension level. Additionally, there is a need for educational technology, including hardware and software, for teachers and students that aids in substantive educational interaction. We will also need to provide training and unit development to infuse strategies that are supported by educational technology software and hardware.

- **ARP - ESSER**
- **Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant**
- **Evidence Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant**
- **Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School**

Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources to determine need

Most AP scores have dropped over the past two school years due to COVID-19. Early Start Strong data suggests that our 9th and 10th grade students are struggling with citing strong textual evidence with over 45% of our students getting those questions aligned with standards RL.9-10.1 and RI9-10.1 incorrect. The other areas students are struggling in is standards RL.9-10.4 and RI.9-10.4 determining figurative and connotative meanings of words in context as well as standards RL.9-10.5 and RI.9-10,5 determining how ideas and claims are developed over the course of the text. According to Start Strong data for the 9th grade students, there is a pattern of students struggling with cross-cutting concepts “Cause and Effect: Mechanism and Explanation” as well as “Structure and Function” (57%, 64%,84%,88%,66% incorrect respectively) There is a high percentage of students getting these type of questions incorrect. Teachers are also reporting that students are struggling in reading comprehension skills in class. This is in alignment with reading literacy standards previously mentioned.

Root causes of selected need

Students are struggling with key critical and careful reading strategies to evaluate text.

Due to the pandemic, educators are experiencing a wider range of abilities and struggle to find the tools to meet the needs of all learners. Some technology to be purchased to allow for teachers to be mobile around the classroom to be in closer proximity to students.

[Newsela for Science](#)

[Strategies for Teaching High School Science Reading](#)



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Need 4

Title: Expanding Instructional Coaching

Description of Need

The foundation of instructional coaching is based on relationships built with teachers over time. Additionally, coaches need to be available to coach during the school day in order to work with teachers effectively. We currently have two instructional coaches but having two instructional coaches who coach only during three periods per day is problematic. We would like to expand coaching activities to meet the needs of more teachers and students. By recording classes to review and providing more personalized support to teachers. There are coaching tools to improve the classroom instruction students receive and this can ultimately ensure that more students benefit from high-quality teaching and learning. This allows for coaches to review teaching and learning when they themselves are not in the classroom with the coaches. We also need time to build content, a coaching “playbook” as well as provide for coaching sessions over the summer for teachers.

Please highlight:

- **ARP - ESSER**
- **Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant**
- **Evidence Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant**
- **Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities**
- **MTSS Mental Health Support and Staffing Grant**

Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources to determine need (1000 character limit)

Through our comprehensive needs assessment, an area that is “developing” and in need of further development are indicators 1.1D and 1.3A. 1.1D indicates a 3.2 on a 4.0 scale that teachers do check for understanding and “may” adjust instruction. Through the use of SWIVL. The cameras, in consultation with the instructional coaches, can discuss ways to better adjust instruction. This would also aid with indicator 1.3A in teachers gathering data to improve practices (The Comprehensive Needs Assessment indicated a score of 3.2 as well) Job-embedded professional learning is one of the best ways to foster instructional growth in our teaching staff. Indicator 5.2A, with a 3.2 on the Comprehensive Needs Assessment shows that instructional coaching would support teacher growth and advancement.

[What Works Clearinghouse on Improving Teacher Performance Through Instructional Coaching](#)
[REL Instructional Coaching](#)

Root causes of selected need (1000 character limit)

Teachers should continue to be reflective of their own practices. Instructional coaching will allow us to prioritize content and learning by focusing on the depth of instruction rather than the pace



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Need 5

Title: Expanding Summer Programming

Description of Need (1000)

Students may feel like they need structured engagement with friends during the summer months here at Highlands. Academic enrichment and extended learning opportunities, including providing tutorial services to help students, particularly those most impacted by the pandemic, meet the challenging State academic standards. Course selections will be designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students. There is a direct need to plan for the growth of the Summer Academy by implementing activities related to summer learning, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months to address learning loss, social emotional learning and fostering wellness. We will continue to offer courses for advancement that will be tuition based, but we will also offer a series of micro courses. These courses may include Computer Animated Design, art courses in ceramics, photography and painting, foods courses, yoga and fitness training. We may offer a course in technology including coding, web and game design. We also intend to expand tutoring activities into the summer months in English, science, math and world languages as well as test taking strategies for the SAT and ACT to alleviate stressors associated with high stakes courses based on student outcomes, data and ongoing assessment.

Please highlight:

- **ARP - ESSER**
- **Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant**
- **Evidence Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant**
- **Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities**
- **MTSS Mental Health Support and Staffing Grant**

Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources to determine need

We have gathered data from our parent association and feedback from students regarding the continuation and additional coursework students would like to see as part of the expanded Northern Highlands Summer Academy. In our JED partners survey taken last year, 60% of those surveyed said they felt as if they were “not flourishing.” Over 42% of students surveyed felt as if they were feeling high or moderate anxiety. 54% of students surveyed expressed that they felt lonely. Loneliness can be exasperated over the summer months in times of isolation. The Summer Academy would alleviate some of these feelings.



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Root causes of selected need

By offering various courses “just for fun,” as well as for advancement, students can reduce some anxiety by being in a relaxed summer atmosphere with various social and emotional support available.

[Summer Bridge Programs What Works Clearinghouse](#)
[Regional Educational Laboratory Summer School Gap Research](#)

Need 6

Title: Connecting with Families and Providing Supports

Description of Need

There is a need to foster greater connections with families of diverse backgrounds and would like to consider a school and community family liaison work to connect with families and students of diverse backgrounds. This program will include a liaison position, parallel programs (Back to School night) and other parent programs, with specific and targeted supports that align to cultural needs of the community. Through this program, we will also support academic enrichment and extended learning opportunities, including providing tutorial services to help students. Of particular focus will be those students who are most impacted by the pandemic by meeting the challenging State academic standards and excel in concurrent course work through our expanded tutoring program if students are recommended and they meet the criteria for tutoring services to include mentoring students.

Please highlight:

- **ARP - ESSER**
- **Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant**
- **Evidence Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant**
- **Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities**
- **MTSS Mental Health Support and Staffing Grant**

Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources to determine need

Our student population is continuing to become more diverse and we should continue to meet the needs of all families and students who



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are from diverse backgrounds. Currently, our student population identifies as 15.5% Asian, 1.4% Black, 8.2% Hispanic. While these are not tremendously high percentages of our student population, these percentages represent 359 students.

Root causes of selected need

There is a need to engage educators and parents in the community to prioritize standards, provide scaffolding and personalized supports through extended learning, and ensure equitable access to grade-level standards. By implementing culturally responsive teaching practices that acknowledge and affirm students' cultural identities and expand educators' understanding of the relationship between students' cultural backgrounds and their academic, social, and emotional needs, students will continue to flourish.

[Regional Educational Laboratory Engaging Students and Families from Diverse Populations](#)
[REL Building Connections with Students from Diverse Cultural Backgrounds](#)

Need 7

Title: Supports for Student Wellness

Description of Need

There has been an increased need for student wellness activities, programs and support for our students. Our Wellness Department has grown significantly where we have many students wanting to engage in a variety of wellness activities before, during and after school. We have teachers on staff who are willing to provide services and oversight for the wellness room where students can engage with yoga, mindfulness activities, self-reflect and work with others in coordinated activities. We wish to provide stipends to staff to implement mentoring programs, group interventions, check-in/check-out systems and/or in-school skill-building groups (ie: social skills, problem solving skills, goal setting) for students with identified needs. Additionally, students can self-identify needs for support.

Please highlight:

- **ARP - ESSER**
- **Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant**
- **Evidence Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant**
- **Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities**
- **MTSS Mental Health Support and Staffing Grant**

Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources to determine need



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Last year's partnership JED survey indicated that of those students surveyed, 66% of students felt isolated from others and 35% felt they had low resilience. Furthermore, 43% of students surveyed felt they were at high or moderate risk for anxiety. Fostering student wellness is a goal of the wellness department.

[REL Student Health and Student Achievement](#)
[REL Promoting Positive School Environment for All Students](#)

Root causes of selected need

Supporting all aspects of student wellness continues to be a school priority.

Need 8

Title: Career & Academic Pathways Programming

Description of Need

As we enter the fourth year of the Career & Academic Pathways program, the need for programmatic and technology support systems have increased steadily. Despite the fact that the Career & Academic Pathways program is a department of one (Career & Academic Pathways Coordinator), the program has grown exponentially in terms of enrollment and offerings. The first programs launched were the Senior Internship program and Community Service. In order to help improve our contact management systems, there is a need for some software applications. Programs like Vomo, a cloud-based volunteer management software program and integrated mobile app, would allow all of our students to engage directly with organizations and track hours. Another program called Virtual Job Shadow offers video-based career exploration options. This program will enhance our program by offering career assessments and robust career planning tools.

Please highlight:

- **ARP - ESSER**
- **Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant**
- **Evidence Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant**
- **Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities**
- **MTSS Mental Health Support and Staffing Grant**

Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources to determine need (1000 character limit)

Grades 9-12 are able to participate in our community service program, and last year, students amassed over 2,000 hours of service. A



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volunteer management program would help students engage with volunteerism more easily and help streamline the documentation process. The Virtual Job Shadow program not only would support the Career & Academic Pathways program, but it also would support our entire staff. Next September, all content areas need to integrate career readiness curriculum standards. The estimated cost is \$1,200.00 per program per year.

[Motivations and Benefits of Student Volunteering: Comparing Regular, Occasional, and Non-Volunteers in Five Countries](#)
[Does it Make a Difference? The Effects of Volunteering from the Viewpoint of Recipients – A Literature Review | Diaconia VOMO](#)
[Virtual Job Shadow](#)

Root causes of selected need (1000 character limit)

The NJDOE has made it very clear that the wave of the future of education is career-readiness. Students learn these skills in the Career & Academic Pathways program, and additional support to help grow this program is essential to ensure our students learn career ready practices.

Need 9

Title: Social Support and Social Skills

Description of Need

As a result of the pandemic, students are struggling to engage with a variety of peers outside of structured settings. Some students need skill development while others could use additional opportunities to practice the skills. Some ideas are grade level activity nights (BBQ with structure, speed-friending, outdoor movie night, etc.) Additionally there is a need for greater peer mediation training/peer conflict resolution, social skills/support groups facilitated by NJHW both at school, lunch, and referrals to office. With the increase in student negative behaviors and students struggling socially, there is a need for staff student mentoring that includes mentoring for attendance and school refusal students. In coordination with launching our revised core values and mission and vision statements, we are in need of a schoolwide character building program to provide curriculum, strategies and support. Our Boomerang program for 9th grade students is very successful. Through additional peer mentoring support programs, we may need to expand this

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- **ARP - ESSER**
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- **Evidence Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant**
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- **MTSS Mental Health**



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<p>program as well. Finally, using restorative justice practices will allow students to foster wellness as they see how to solve problems as well as see how their actions affect others. We need to explore these strategies as well.</p>	<p>Support and Staffing Grant</p>
<p>Identify qualitative and quantitative data sources to determine need There is a sizable increase in HIB investigations, student misbehaviors</p>	
<p>Root causes of selected need (1000 character limit)</p> <p>Due to the pandemic, students continue to struggle with peer interactions and expanding friend groups. Students require additional skills and social opportunities in order to feel a sense of belongingness and inclusion. Time for re-socialization and developing social-emotional skills and growth mindsets in students; An array of activities responding to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, such as service-learning and youth development activities, health, and wellness education, counseling programs, experiential and project-based learning in STEM and the Arts (visual and performing), and other programs tied to an in-demand industry sector or occupation for high school students that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students;</p> <p>REL Promoting Positive School Environment for All Students REL Student Health and Student Achievement</p>	



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LEA Plan for Use of Funds

1. 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; (0 of 2000 maximum characters used)

School safety is something we take very seriously as this connects to students feeling safe and taken care of away from home at our school. If an emergency should happen, we cannot communicate widely to students and community members outside of the immediate school building. As school safety continues to be a focal point for all school districts, we want to be sure students feel safe and secure, not only in the building but on our surrounding fields and around campus. This includes upgrading our lockdown system as a campus wide alert system to reach all areas of our outdoor campus structure. With the need to increase social distancing in common areas, this includes expanding lunch rooms to our courtyards and outside spaces. Students are also outside to a greater extent, due to COVID-19 guidance.

2. How the LEA will use the funds it reserves 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 such as summer learning or summer enrichment extended day comprehensive after school programs or extended school year; (0 of 2000 maximum characters used)

To address learning loss, social emotional learning and fostering wellness, we will continue to grow our Summer Academy courses. We will continue to offer courses for advancement that will be tuition based, but we will also offer a series of micro courses. These courses will include Computer Animated Design, arts courses in ceramics, photography and painting, foods courses, yoga and fitness training. We will also offer a course in technology including coding, web and game design. We also intend to expand tutoring activities into the summer months in English, science, math and world languages as well as test taking strategies for the SAT and ACT to alleviate stressors associated with high stakes courses. We will increase socialization activities for students as well as expand our mentoring programs for students.

3. How the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act; and (0 of 2000 maximum characters used)



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We shall provide extended tuition for out of district placements for students with disabilities. We will extend our communication system for the entire high school campus where more students have had to use outside spaces due to COVID-19 that were in the past underutilized. We will purchase materials and support to build literacy skills and other forms of educational technology to support student learning. Through the expansion of instructional coaching we will develop a more comprehensive coaching program to support teachers and improve student learning. For the second summer we will expand our Northern Highlands Summer Academy to offer more courses and microcourses. To meet the needs of our diverse learners, we will provide greater connections and support that are culturally responsive for our students. We will expand our reach for student wellness through providing support and oversight for the wellness room and expand offerings for students. This will also include more social support for social skills for our students.

4. How the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements, including but not limited to the interventions implemented under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act 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. Under this requirement, an LEA must engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders and give the public an opportunity to provide input in the development of its plan. Specifically, an LEA must engage in meaningful consultation with students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); and teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions.

Teachers continue to struggle with differentiation and learning loss of skills in some of our science courses. Literacy is the connection to all other disciplines. Now more than ever educators struggle to find materials that allow for differentiation of reading and comprehension levels yet still engage students in similar content. Students have struggled with comprehension, using effective close reading practices. Teachers have struggled to identify tiered texts to support content delivery to meet students where they are at their own comprehension level. There is a need to foster greater connections with families of diverse backgrounds and would like to consider a school and community family liaison work to connect with families and students of diverse backgrounds. Meaningful engagement was conducted through a district-wide comprehensive needs assessment survey through google forms, stakeholder engagement and planning with all members of the administrative team. Review of all aspects of the plan was conducted at the board of education meeting, where public comment was encouraged, and approved at the November 15, 2021 BOE meeting.

5. Additionally, an LEA must engage in meaningful consultation with each of the following, to the extent present in or served by the LEA: Tribes; civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students,



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children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students. (0 of 2000 maximum characters used)

Many of these are not part of those served by the LEA but meaningful consultation was sought through our needs assessment survey through google forms, stakeholder engagement and planning with all members of the administrative team.



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Appendix A

Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant (\$74,664)

The Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant is a formula grant for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to provide evidence-based professional learning and coaching opportunities to a variety of school staff, including educators and key support staff (e.g., school counselors, special education personnel, nurses, social workers, and psychologists) on the principles in [New Jersey's Learning Acceleration guide](#) and on topics tailored to the unique academic as well as social, emotional, and mental health needs of their students. The research-based principles that undergird learning acceleration in New Jersey are:

1. Provide conditions for teaching and learning that will foster the social and emotional well-being of students, families, and educators;
2. Improve equitable access to grade-level content and high-quality resources for each student;
3. Prioritize content and learning by focusing on the depth of instruction rather than the pace; and
4. Implement a K-12 accelerated learning cycle to identify gaps and scaffold as needed.

In practice, these principles facilitate high-quality accelerated instruction and engaged personalized learning. Relevant and permitted topics of professional learning on the learning acceleration concepts might include but are not limited to:

- Developing positive school climates that promote the social, emotional, and well-being of students using universal tier I supports, strategies, and interventions;
- Integrating social and emotional learning in classroom, schools, and communities;
- Implementing culturally responsive teaching practices that acknowledge and affirm students' cultural identities and expand educators' understanding of the relationship between students' cultural backgrounds and their academic, social, and emotional needs;



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- Increasing digital literacy and equitable access to high-quality curriculum and instructional technology with a focus on understanding how access differs for students of poverty, of color, with special needs, and English learners;
- Using local and state assessment data to improve instruction;
- Engaging educators and parents in the community to prioritize standards, providing scaffolding and personalized supports through extended learning, and ensuring equitable access to grade-level standards;
- Identifying the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on different student subgroups and based on differing levels of access to in-person learning since March 2020;
- Administering and using high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable, to accurately assess students' academic progress and assist educators in meeting students' academic needs, including through differentiating instruction;
- Support of Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS), Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS), and Response to Intervention (RTI);
- Extending and expanding high-quality professional learning activities supported by the Learning Acceleration Grant that NJDOE made available in March 2021; and
- Facilitating other professional learning that will empower educators to meet the needs of their students better.

Furthermore, plans must include measures to address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain student groups by identifying disparities and focusing on the underserved learners. Disproportionally impacted student groups include students from low-income families, each racial or ethnic group, gender, English learners, children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA")), students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, and others identified by the [NJDOE's State Plan](#) (e.g., youth exhibiting mental health issues as a result of the pandemic).

The NJDOE establishes a minimum allocation of \$50,000 to provide each LEA capacity to carry out meaningful, and equitable evidence-based allowable grant activities.

Additional Information & Resources:

- [New Jersey Tiered System of Supports](#)



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- [New Jersey's Learning Acceleration Guide](#)
- [N.J.A.C. 6A:9C, Professional Development](#)
- [Non-Regulatory Guidance: Using Evidence to Strengthen Education Investments](#)

Evidence Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant (\$40,000)

The Evidence-based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant is a formula grant to LEAs for supporting evidence-based academic summer activities such as learning academies and 1:1 tutoring, as well as other summer activities that support the broader learning ecosystem of students, staff, and families. These activities include but are not limited to:

- Time for re-socialization and developing social-emotional skills and growth mindsets in students;
- Academic enrichment and extended learning opportunities, including providing tutorial services to help students, particularly those most impacted by the pandemic, meet the challenging State academic standards;
- An array of activities responding to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, such as service-learning and youth development activities, health, and wellness education, counseling programs, experiential and project-based learning in STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics) and the Arts (visual and performing), and other programs tied to an in-demand industry sector or occupation for high school students that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students;
- Professional learning for educators in the use of universal screening assessments and other topics relevant to the summer program; and
- Education and training programs for the parents and caregivers of students to meaningfully engage in their children's education, including literacy and other related educational development opportunities.

LEAs will be required to target funds to content areas or grade levels most impacted by the disruptions of COVID-19 at that LEA (e.g., STEM, early elementary grades, transition grades, or visual and performing arts).

While funds can be used for intervention and remediation, credit recovery, and traditional Extended School Year (ESY) services, applications may include innovative programs that go beyond these traditional activities. For example, funds may be used to



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provide high dosage tutoring or instruction that previews standards for students' upcoming year, rather than repeats instruction from the prior year. Additionally, funds can be used to create and design interdisciplinary, project-based instruction. See [New Jersey's Summer Learning Resource Guide 2021](#) that guides LEAs in transforming traditional summer school and advancing priorities, including the expansion of equitable opportunities for all students.

Furthermore, plans must include measures to address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain student groups by identifying disparities and focusing on the underserved learners. Disproportionally impacted student groups include students from low-income families, each racial or ethnic group, gender, English learners, children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA")), students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, and others identified by the [NJDOE's State Plan](#) (e.g., youth exhibiting mental health issues as a result of the pandemic).

The NJDOE establishes a minimum allocation of \$40,000 to provide each LEA capacity to carry out meaningful and equitable evidence-based grant activities over the summer.

Additional Information & Resources:

- [New Jersey's Summer Learning Resource Guide 2021](#)

Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities (\$40,000)

The Evidence-based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities Grant is a formula grant to LEAs for supporting evidence-based academic enrichment activities during out-of-school time, such as 1:1 tutoring, as well as activities that support the broader learning ecosystem of students, staff, and families. Out-of-school time includes the periods before school, after-school, weekends, and holiday breaks. The purpose of this grant is to support LEAs in enhancing the quality and equitable access of their comprehensive out-of-school time programs and services that improve the academic, social, and emotional wellness of their students during the school year. Allowable uses include but are not limited to:

- Time for re-socialization and developing social-emotional skills and growth mindsets in students;
- Academic enrichment and extended learning opportunities, including providing tutorial services to help students,



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particularly those most impacted by the pandemic, meet the challenging State academic standards and excel in concurrent course work;

- An array of activities responding to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, such as service-learning and youth development activities, health, and wellness education, counseling programs, experiential and project-based learning in STEM and the Arts (visual and performing), and other programs tied to an in-demand industry sector or occupation for high school students that are designed to reinforce and complement the regular academic program of participating students;
- Professional learning for educators in the use of universal screening assessments and coordinating with beyond the school day activities; and
- Education and training programs for the parents and caregivers of students to meaningfully engage in their children's education, including literacy and other related educational development opportunities.

LEAs will be required to target funds to content areas or grade levels most impacted by the disruptions of COVID-19 at that LEA (e.g., STEM, early elementary grades, transition grades, or visual and performing arts).

Furthermore, plans must include measures to address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain student groups by identifying disparities and focusing on the underserved learners. Disproportionally impacted student groups include students from low-income families, each racial or ethnic group, gender, English learners, children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA")), students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, and others identified by the [NJDOE's State Plan](#) (e.g., youth exhibiting mental health issues as a result of the pandemic).

The NJDOE will establish a minimum allocation of \$40,000 to provide each LEA capacity to carry out meaningful and transformative evidence-based grant activities.

Additional Information & Resources:

- [New Jersey's Afterschool Programs](#)

MTSS Mental Health Support and Staffing Grant (\$45,000)



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Under the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Mental Health Support Staffing Grant, LEAs will be required to allocate funds to develop and implement Tier II (targeted, small group interventions) and Tier III (intensive interventions) services in accordance with a multi-tiered system of supports framework that addresses students' and educators' mental health and social emotional needs through the hiring of staff, contracting with service providers, and/or providing professional development in effective implementation of Tier II and Tier III services.

Allocations for this grant will be made via a formula that assesses an LEA's need to enhance its mental health support services based on four indicators:

1. Each LEA's average rate of chronic absenteeism over the last two years;
2. Each LEA's average suspension rate over the last two years;
3. Each LEA's average rate of violent incidents reported to the DOE over the last two years; and
4. Each LEA's average rate of substance abuse incidents reported to the DOE over the last two years.

The entirety of the allocation should be designed to increase access to school-based mental health supports and services for students by building or enhancing a tiered intervention model of comprehensive school-based mental health supports and services that are sustainable after the life of the grant. Planning Considerations have been developed to assist LEAs with determining the best use of their allocation.

Mental Health Supports and Services (Tier 2):

- Designate certificated staff and/or contracted provider to assess students who show signs of mental health concerns, including trauma
- Purchase valid and reliable assessment tools to assist in identifying students' mental health needs
- Invest in a system, district-wide and within school buildings, to track students in need of referral to community-based mental health supports
- Develop a system, district-wide and within school buildings, to assist school-based personnel with follow-up activities and services



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- Provide stipends to staff to implement mentoring programs, group interventions, check-in/check-out systems and/or in-school skill building groups (ie: social skills, problem solving skills, goal setting) for students with identified needs
- Provide stipends to certificated staff for home visits to follow-up on students who are identified through early-warning systems
- Contract with a mental health provider to provide brief individual and group therapeutic services to identified students
- Create partnerships with appropriate mental health providers to perform risk assessments for students in crisis to reduce or eliminate the use of emergency room visits for students with mental health needs and to directly link the student(s) to appropriate community-based services

Mental Health Supports and Services (Tier 3):

- Contract with a mental health provider to provide individual and group therapeutic services to identified students
- Contract with community agencies to provide family therapy and support to identified students
- Fund district mental health staff to provide after-school or before school gap services (ie: individual, group, and/or family therapy)
- Create a position, or contract with a provider, to individually assess students who are identified as having significant behavioral needs, develop behavior plans, and consult with teachers and support staff responsible for implementing the plans
- Provide staffing (ie: consultants, additional counseling staff, aides) to assist with the transition of students who may have been placed in out-of-school settings for Tier 3 interventions as they return to in-person learning

Mental Health Supports and Services Professional Development:

- Identify relevant professional development opportunities for I & RS team members to increase the team's ability to develop plans for Tier 2 and Tier 3 behavior interventions
- Support CST implementation of individualized interventions with additional training or certifications.
- Provide more intensive training to counselors and/or CST in methods to identify students exhibiting signs of depression or suicidality



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- Provide training to establish or enhance the skills of a crisis intervention team
- Provide training and technical assistance to educators in order to support students transitioning back from out-of-school settings for Tier 3 interventions as they return to in-person learning
- Pay for coverage in order to provide for release time so educators could receive training on mental health topics

Additional Resources to Support Development of MTSS Mental Health Support Staffing Application:

- [NJDOE American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief \(ARP ESSER\)](#)
- [NJ Tiered System of Supports](#)
- [Center for Excellence for Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation](#)
- [National Center for School Mental Health](#)
- [Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network](#)
- [School Health Assessment & Performance Evaluation System](#)