

# Update on Revisions to the US Department of Education ARP Plan

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# OVERVIEW

- **Review of the ARP Plan**
- **Timeline of Events**
- **Initial Revisions**
- **Additional Clarifications**
- **Next Steps**
- **Concerns**

# Review of the ARP Plan

- ARP Template
  - Initial response to COVID-19 pandemic
  - Use of ESSER I, GEER, ESSER II
  - Broad plan for use of ESSER III
- The required template includes 7 sections:
  - Description of the State's current status and needs
  - Safely reopening schools and sustaining their safe operations
  - Planning for the use and coordination of ARP ESSER funds
  - Maximizing state-level funds to support students
  - Supporting LEAs in planning for and meeting students' needs
  - Supporting the educator workforce
  - Monitoring and measuring progress
- Our plan was approved unanimously by the NC State Board of Education on June 17, 2021 (BSOP 2)
  - posted for a 30-day comment period
  - submitted to the US Dept. of Education on June 21, 2021.

# Timeline of Events

- June 17, 2021 – SBE Approves ARP Plan
- June 22, 2021 – Federal Program Monitoring submits ARP Plan to US Dept of Education
- July 9, 2021 – US Dept of Education requests revisions (10 items)
- July 16, 2021 – OLR & FPM submit revisions to US Dept of Education
- July 22, 2021 – US Dept of Education requests further clarification (two items)

# Initial Revisions

There were 10 specific revisions required by the US Dept of Education. These revisions fell into 3 general categories:

- 1) inclusion of full documents rather than links (3 instances)
- 2) Additional narrative response (identification of priorities based on student subgroup and how NCDPI holds LEAs accountable for adhering to the law)
- 3) Consultation on the plan and "how NCDPI will ensure reserved funds are
  - (a) used for interventions that address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on specific groups of students and
  - (b) only used to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through evidence-based interventions that respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students.

\*Reference USED to Dr. Townsend 7.9.21

# Initial Revisions

The following clarifications were made:

## 1. inclusion of full documents rather than links

- a) Lighting Our Way Forward: North Carolina's Guidebook for Reopening Public Schools
- b) Session Law 2021-4: Senate Bill 220 which legislates a return to in-person learning
- c) Strong Schools NC Public Health Toolkit (K-12)

## 2. Identified specific metrics from the initial table provided for each demographic subgroup with brief justification based on available data

## 3. Further clarified our consultation process including the 30-day period of availability

## 4. Eliminated problematic language “plans to allocate funds under this reservation to LEAs “based on need, as demonstrated by the expenditure of existing federal funding received for COVID-19 related impacts.” It is not clear that prioritizing LEAs to receive reserved funds based on LEAs’ expenditures of existing Federal COVID-19 funding will ensure that students who were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 receive services.”

## 5. Included SBE approved proposed funding categories

\*Reference USED Revision 7.16.21

# Additional Clarification

Follow up response from US Dept. of Education

1. Accepted 8 of the 10 revisions
2. Required additional feedback on 2 items
  - Consultation - Please clarify how NCDPI consulted with the following stakeholders: Students, Civil rights organizations, Unions. children with disabilities, English learners, homeless children, children in foster care, migratory children, incarcerated children, other underserved students
  - Please provide a description that addresses E.1.iv. and the deadline by which the LEA must submit its ARP ESSER plan.

\*Reference USED Update 7.22.21

# Next Steps

- Dr. Townsend and Dr. Maher will meet directly with the stakeholder groups to receive additional feedback.
- The plan will be revised to include the specific date by which LEAs must submit ESSER III plans, 9.30.21
- US Dept of Education expectation is that DPI will update the plan as programs are developed.



# Concerns

- The delay in ESSER III appropriation has presented significant challenges in the development of a comprehensive recovery plan.
- The lack of a comprehensive plan means we cannot engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders as required by USED.
- Lack of control over the appropriation could result in spending proposals not being part of a larger pandemic recovery plan, could result in appropriations that are not consistent with federal law, or be written in such a way as they are not compliant with the federal law.