



INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

In the Fall of 2021, the federal government announced another round of special relief funding available to public schools called the Elementary Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III). ESSER III had two separate funds available with distinctly different requirements: ESSER III ARP and ESSER III 11t. Fruitport Community Schools was not eligible for ESSER III 11t.

To collaborate on the best use of these potential funds, and to meet the requirements of the funding, Fruitport Community Schools sought meaningful consultation with key stakeholders in the development of the plan, including:

- Survey input from District staff
- Survey input from District parents
- Survey input from District students
- Survey input from local community
- One-on-one and small group meetings
- Emails and phone calls

We were then able to use information gathered from stakeholders to determine the best way to spend the allocated funds.

FCS USE OF FUNDING

While there were specific requirements and qualifications applied to how the funding could be used, Fruitport Community Schools was able to utilize this funding to provide a number of new and expanded benefits and supports to our school community and families in need. The specific requirements for the funding and the plans FCS has put in place for the funding can be found below.

This plan has been revised multiple times throughout the grant due to the additional one-time grants that have been provided throughout the years. Additionally, the needs of our students and staff have changed which is another reason for the revision of our spending plan.



ESSER III ARP (American Rescue Plan)

FCS Allocation: *\$2,936,626 (includes \$65,000 allocated for indirect services)*

- The District must mitigate the spread of COVID
- Spend at least 20% to address learning loss (\$586,910)
- USED has released five questions for districts to consider when evaluating whether the proposed spending is appropriate:
 - Will the proposed use of funds "prevent, prepare for, and respond to Coronavirus?"
 - Is it an allowable use of funds under the CARES Act?
 - Is it reasonable and necessary?
 - Does it promote equity?
 - Does it support returning students to the classroom?

Our revised plan of use for ESSER III ARP funds as submitted (last revised on 1/15/2024):

Staff to help accelerate learning and reduce learning gaps (\$922,710):

The district has maintained staffing in the elementary levels throughout the period for the ESSER 3 grant. The district understands that maintaining appropriate staffing levels allows for the implementation of smaller class sizes, promoting better student-teacher interactions and creating a conducive atmosphere for individualized instruction. While there were possibilities to reduce staffing during the past couple of years, the district used this grant to maintain the staffing levels.

The district has also added staff throughout the grant period. The secondary buildings have added two teachers to allow the buildings to either add electives or reduce the class size during the core instruction. The district has added an ESL teacher to better serve our students that do not have use English as their primary language at home.

The district has also increased staffing levels using additional grants that were awarded in the 2023 and 2024 fiscal years. The increase to the At-Risk grant has allowed the district to add additional supports in the elementary buildings.



Instructional materials to help with learning recovery (\$536,635):

During the meaningful consultation meetings along with great discussion during our curriculum improvement meetings, the district started to discuss upgrading our instructional materials to better suit our teachers and students. The district used a little less than \$500,000 with the other covid related grants (included on the website). Central office received good feedback on the changes so the district continued to make changes. The district would pilot a couple textbook/materials throughout the year and discuss what materials would be the best for the group. Once the decision was made, the district would purchase the materials for the upcoming year. This process would be repeated for the next content area.

The district updated K-12 science, 6-12 social studies, K-5 math, and 6-12 health education and foreign language.

Services for students with disabilities (\$0):

The district has included a memo on the website explaining the reasoning for not spending any money on this category even when it was ranked third. The district has also included a spreadsheet on the website showing that the district has increased services for students with disabilities. It is estimated Fruitport will spend around \$9,131,000 in the 2023-24 school year compared to \$6,969,000 in 2019-20. The district has also added staff using grants such as Section 31o and 31n which would not be included in these figures.

Cleaner indoor air quality, crowding, and capacity (\$660,019):

Students that are 100% virtual allowed the district to reduce the crowding and capacity within the building. The district has continued to allow students to attend a consortium through the Muskegon Area ISD or another virtual program since 2020. This situation is different in the eyes of the community as the community sees virtual learning (ranked last) as what the district did in the 2020-21 school year which was the hybrid model (some days in person and some days virtual for all students).

The district has also continued the increased contract for the third party cleaning service. This has allowed the cleaning company to allow the district cleaned as best as possible while adding the ability to keep the carpets cleaned which increases indoor air quality.

Technology updates, infrastructure and connectivity (\$0):

The district has not spent any ESSER 3 funds on this category even with it being ranked fourth (tied). The district has spent around \$600,000 in the previous covid related grants (posted on the website). The district has also received E-Rate funding.



Social/Emotional Support and training (\$560,582):

The district has added MTSS services for the entire district. The district contracted with AIR to help the district with the PBIS systems throughout all buildings. This work with AIR is giving the district a better process for our tier 2 and 3 students to provide behavior and social supports. During the district strategic planning survey, many stakeholders stated that behavior is a major concern the district is starting to see.

The district hired a staff member to develop a system in our secondary buildings to promote positive culture. This will allow the buildings to promote or increase student pride so students have a place to belong. This employee is part of the PBIS team. During the last year, the staff at the two buildings have stated that students feel more involved and included. This is an improvement as research shows that if students feel more connected, the students are happier and has less behavior issues.

The district has also added another homeless driver as the district has additional students that are experiencing homelessness in the past couple years. By adding additional transportation, the district is giving the students the ability to focus on their education instead of getting to and from school. This will reduce the emotional toll homelessness takes on the students.

Lastly; the district has contracted with a third party to provide a parent educator to provide home visits and education services for parents. During the last couple of years, the district has seen that if there are issues at home, the students will have emotional needs at school. Therefore, the district is working with a company that will try to provide support and needs at the home so the parents can then focus on providing support for their kids. If the district supports our highest need parents through this service, the students will have an indirect benefit.

Additional learning time to accelerate learning (\$191,680):

The district has continued to have a “beefed” summer school program for our students that have tested below grade level on the I-Ready test. The building work with the teaching staff to ensure that we have the students that need to be at the program. The district has also removed one barrier for students to attend which was transportation. By offering transportation, we have seen a better level of attendance compared to the years that the district did not offer transportation.

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