

**American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief
(ESSER) III Plan
for Westmoreland County Public Schools**

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Section 1: Introduction

The purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III Fund is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The Westmoreland County School Division has been awarded \$4,434,471.87 in ESSER III funds. This plan describes how the awarded funds will be used.

Questions about this plan should be directed to Catherine R. Rice, Deputy Superintendent at ricecr@wmlcps.org, or call at 804-493-8018.

Summary of the School Division's Response to COVID-19

The primary goal of the Westmoreland County Public Schools continues to be to offer in-person instruction safely and to the greatest extent possible under the guidelines provided by the Governor's Office, Virginia Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Virginia Department of Education. Westmoreland County Public Schools is planning for a return to in-person learning five days a week for all PreK-12 students beginning on August 09, 2021. The instructional staff will focus on the design and delivery of engaging, in-person instructional experiences for all students.

For those families who continue to be interested in a virtual learning option for the next school year, the Westmoreland County Public Schools will be partnering with Virtual Virginia to provide a virtual learning option for the 2021-2022 school year. There will be no virtual learning option for PreK students. Virtual Virginia is a program of the Virginia Department of Education and serves students in grades K-12 throughout the state of Virginia who wish to participate in a full-time virtual program. Families who completed the application process and whose children were accepted will be receiving additional information directly from Virtual Virginia.

Section 2: Summary of Proposed Expenditures

Regulatory provisions for projects funded under the ARP Act ESSER III Fund allow for the expenditure of funds from March 13, 2020 – September 30, 2024. Reimbursement requests must be submitted to the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) by November 15, 2024. This will allow Westmoreland County Public Schools to use the funds to plan for the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years. All positions listed will be supported for those two school years with grant funds.

Each section of this plan provides a narrative about the proposed expenditures, which are summarized in the following table. All proposed expenditures are approximate and subject to change.

Expenditure Category	Nature of Expenditure	Funds Requested
Section 3: Prevention and Mitigation Strategies	Supplies for implementation of prevention and mitigation strategies	
Section 4: Addressing Unfinished Learning	Strategies to facilitate the recovery of learning and mitigate the effects of unfinished learning through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. Stipends/FICA: Compensation provided for delivery of extended learning opportunities to address students' academic and social-emotional needs.	\$ 836,600.00 + \$ 63,999.90 + \$ 6,037.30
Section 5: Other Uses of Funds	Purchase cameras for buses to assist in contact tracing	\$ 82,884.48
	Construction of the Westmoreland High School track for enhanced physical distancing during PE and athletic activities	\$425,000.00
	Replacement of the HVAC equipment at Washington District to provide better air quality in the school	\$200,000.00
	Purchase of six air-conditioned buses to replace six non-air-conditioned buses. This will enhance the air quality and will allow the school division to ensure adequate social distancing for students being transported.	\$700,038.00
	The Cople Elementary Entrance will be remodeled to allow visitors to be screened and for health measures to be administered before individuals enter the school.	\$303,326.13
	The Montross Middle School Entrance will be remodeled to allow visitors to be separated	\$609,000.00

	from students when entering the building. Car and bus routes will be separated and health measures will be administered before individuals enter the school.	
	The bathrooms at Montross Middle will be renovated to promote social distancing, better hygiene, student dignity, and good cleaning practices.	\$772,000.00
	Replacement of the HVAC equipment at Montross Middle School and Cople Elementary to provide better air quality in the schools	\$421,838.00
	Stipend/FICA: Compensation provided for management, supervision and proper accounting of ESSER funds.	\$ 64,000.00 + \$ 4,896.00
Section 6: Addressing Students' Academic, Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs		
TOTAL		\$4,489,619.54

Section 3: Prevention and Mitigation Strategies

ARP Act ESSER III funds may be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, consistent with the most recent [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) guidance](#) on reopening schools, in order to continuously and safely open and operate schools for in-person learning.

Section 4: Addressing Unfinished Learning

Section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act requires each LEA to use twenty percent of its formula funds to address the academic impact of lost instructional time (learning loss) through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after school programs, or extended school year programs. According to the provisions of the ARP Act, a minimum of 20% (\$897,923.91) of available funding must be devoted to extended day, extended year, summer school

programs, or other instructional programs. The Westmoreland County Public Schools is designating \$911,541.54 of its ARP Act ESSER III funds to address unfinished learning as described below:

The LEA will use ESSER III grant funds to facilitate the recovery of learning and mitigate the effects of unfinished learning.

The division will offer extended learning time through after school programs for a minimum of two days/week and four additional hours/week. These programs will run throughout much of the 2022-2023 school year, and be provided at each of the division's four schools. This extended learning time will offer robust programming to include providing academic supports, a variety of extension and enrichment activities addressing visual and performing arts, physical education, STEAM, and student-selected activities. Teachers, school counselors, bus drivers, and secretaries will be paid hourly/daily stipends to plan and deliver program activities. Programming may be scheduled differently at various levels. For example, elementary students may stay after school 2-3 days/week for 90-120 minutes, while some high school programming may be offered immediately before or after an athletic practice. A variety of schedules will promote maximum participation from students.

The division will also offer a Summer 2023 Academy. This Academy will operate Mondays - Thursdays for four weeks, beginning in June of each year. The Summer Academies will offer robust programming, to include academic intervention/remediation, academic enrichment and extension, related arts, physical education, STEAM, and social-emotional learning. The high school will also have a focus on credit recovery. The Summer Academy will be staffed by teachers, school counselors, school nurses, and bus drivers. Each employee will receive a stipend for days worked.

Section 5: Other Uses of Funds

Section 2001(e) of the ARP Act permits school divisions to use the ARP Act ESSER III funding not reserved to address unfinished learning to address the impacts of COVID-19 in a variety of ways. The Westmoreland County Public Schools will use ARP Act ESSER III funds in accordance with Section 2001(e) of the ARP Act as described below:

Westmoreland County Public Schools has several facility issues that need to be upgraded to improve the quality of the student academic learning experience. These improvements will also address the core purposes to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impacts of COVID-19 on the nation's students by addressing students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

HVAC equipment in our division is currently 20 years and older. With COVID being an airborne virus, it is essential to improve the air quality in each school. The older equipment, which we can no longer purchase parts to fix, will be replaced with a newer and more efficient equipment.

The Cople Elementary School was originally constructed in 1977. This entrance project is designed to prevent adult unvaccinated populations from entering the school building before being administered a health check. The project will add a door that will prevent individuals from entering the school commons until they are buzzed in. It will also include a window where individuals can undergo a health check before entering into the building. The renovation project is needed to enforce social distancing and provide separation from potentially COVID-19 infected individuals. This project will allow sick individuals to be identified before they enter the main body of the school. This project will also enhance social distancing mitigation factors outlined by the CDC and VDH.

The Montross Middle School was originally constructed in 1950. This project is designed to renovate the current bathrooms. The project will remove outdated urinals and fixtures in the boys' and girls' bathroom and bring the bathrooms up to code. There are six bathrooms for the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. The bathrooms have open 1950's style wide floor urinals, 1960's style army barrack type windows, and a system of uneven ventilation. The renovation project is needed because the current facilities threaten the health and safety of students through its design. This project will allow students to implement the mitigation factors outlined by the CDC and VDH. Students will be able to clean/wash without spraying water on other students. Likewise, students will no longer use a trough-like urinal which spreads water droplets. They will have private water closets. Students' social and emotional needs will be addressed because they will not have to hide the embarrassment or anxiety that accompanies their peers viewing their changing bodies. They will feel more free to use the bathrooms knowing that classmates are not viewing their bodies.

The Montross Middle School Entrance project is designed to separate the different populations that enter the building, specifically to separate visiting adults from entering students. The project will add a door where there is currently a ceiling to floor window (storefront). A small entrance awning will be added along with a separate driveway to separate bus and car drivers. The renovation project is needed to enforce social distancing and provide separation from potentially COVID-19 infected individuals. This project will allow students to address the social distancing mitigation factors outlined by the CDC and VDH. Students will be able to enter and leave the building without mixing with a potentially unvaccinated public. Student social and emotional needs will be addressed because students will be distanced and sick individuals will be able to leave the building without mixing with their colleagues.

Westmoreland County Public Schools believes teachers and students should have the option of outdoor venues to learn. This addresses social emotional and other important needs of students and staff. The opportunity to improve students' physical health by offering a walking track is essential. A track will offer opportunities to social distance while participating in running, walking, other track and field activities, as well as group and independent classroom instruction.

To provide increased social distancing on buses, the delivery of meals, transportation for after-school activities, and to provide quality air for students, six additional air-conditioned buses will be purchased to replace six current buses that are not air-conditioned.

Cameras will also be purchased for all 48 buses to assist in contact tracing of students. Some buses currently do not have cameras and others have cameras that are deficient in showing details of transported students. These cameras will enhance the safety of students and the drivers.

Funds will be utilized to support the salary of extended hours for current employee(s) to supervise the management of expenditures and reimbursements for these and other CARES ESSER federal grant funds received by the division. The payments will include project implementation as a clerk of the works and supervision of all academic programs for extended learning.

Section 6: Addressing Students' Academic, Social, Emotional, and Mental Health Needs

The Westmoreland County Public Schools will ensure that the interventions it implements 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.

Section 7: Consultation with Stakeholders and Opportunity for Public Comment

In developing the ARP ESSER Plan, the Westmoreland County Public Schools sought public input and took such input into account. Stakeholder input was collected through an online survey, Division Leadership Team meetings, and individual communications received at the school and division planning levels. Stakeholder representation for the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students were included in the development of the ARP ESSER III plan for the Westmoreland County Public Schools.

Section 8: Making the Plan Available to the Public

The Westmoreland County Public Schools Division has taken the following steps to make this plan available to the public:

- The plan is posted at: <http://division.wmlcps.org>
- Upon request, a parent/guardian who is an individual with a disability as defined by the ADA may be provided with the plan in an alternative format accessible by contacting Cathy Rice, Deputy Superintendent, at ricecr@wmlcps.org, or at 804-493-8018.