

**American Rescue Plan Act
Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund (ESSER)
Tioga ISD ESSER Plan**

Background on ESSER

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) signed into law on March 11, 2021 provided nearly \$122 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund (ESSER). ARP ESSER funds are provided to State educational agencies in the same proportion as each State received under Title I-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in fiscal year (FY) 2020. An SEA must allocate at least 90 percent of its ARP ESSER grant funds to its local educational agencies (LEAs) in the same proportion that the LEAs received under Title I-A of ESEA in FY 2020. LEAs must reserve at least 20 percent of their total ARP ESSER allocation to address the academic impact of lost instructional time on all students, through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) published Interim Final Requirements (IFR) on April 22, 2021 requiring LEAs receiving ARP ESSER funds to submit an LEA ARP ESSER Plan and an LEA Plan for the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services. If an LEA had already developed a plan for safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services prior to the enactment of ARP that meets the statutory requirements of section 2001(i) but did not address all of the requirements in the IFR, the LEA must revise and post its plan no later than six months after receiving its ARP ESSER funds. This applies even if an LEA has been operating full-time in-person instruction but does not apply to fully virtual schools and LEAs.

The IFR and ARP statute, along with other helpful resources, are located here:

- April 2021 Interim Final Requirements: [American Rescue Plan Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund](#)
- ED Fact Sheet American Result Plan Act: https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/03/FINAL_ARP-ESSER-FACT-SHEET.pdf
- The American Rescue Plan Act: <https://www.congress.gov/117/bills/hr1319/BILLS-117hr1319enr.pdf>
- CDC COVID-19 School Operation Guidance: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html#anchor_1616080023247

- ED COVID-19 Handbook Volume I:
<https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/reopening.pdf>
- ED COVID-19 Handbook Volume II:
<https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/reopening-2.pdf>
- ESEA Evidence-Based Guidance:
<https://oese.ed.gov/files/2020/07/guidanceusesinvestment.pdf>
- TEA ARP ESSER III Guidance:
<https://tea.texas.gov/finance-and-grants/grants/arp-esser-iii-grant-program>

Purpose of the Plan

The IFR issued by ED outlines several requirements for all Districts to ensure that funds under ARP (ESSER III), specifically, are spent in a manner consistent with the new statutory set-aside and that key stakeholders have been consulted in this process. The ARP also requires that LEAs have in place a plan for ensuring safety during in-person instruction (either in-progress or planned) as well as ensuring continuity of services should the LEA or one or more of its schools be required to close temporarily for COVID-19-related public health reasons in the future.

The following requirements and assurances pertain to both the statutory requirements and the IFR published by ED. Plans are required for all districts, regardless of operating status, unless a district is fully virtual with no physical location.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) may create a single plan that includes all the required elements or may add in additional requirements, as it deems appropriate. Districts may provide any additional information they believe are helpful in assessing their plan. LEAs are required to make these plans publicly available on the LEA's website.

According to TEA's guidance, local boards are not required to approve these plans; however, the local board is required to discuss the uses of funds. The District plan includes all schools, including campus charter schools without separate boards.

Tioga ISD operates as a single-campus district under the guidance of the Texas Education Agency and therefore, the district plan is the campus plan.

Tioga ISD ESSER Use of Funds Plan Guide

The Tioga ISD will ensure that its ARP Funds meet all the required elements and are spent in an allowable manner.

1. ARP ESSER 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.

The Tioga ISD will continue the prevention and mitigation strategies employed in 2020-21 with support from ARP ESSER funds, including, but not limited to: provision of masks, hand sanitizer at entry points and in all classrooms, sanitizing surfaces in classrooms and high touch areas throughout the day, materials for sanitizing surfaces available to staff, use of shields at reception areas, use of shields during periods of community spread, and utilizing staff for monitoring attendance and quarantining students and staff with symptoms or close contact.

2. The District will 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.

The Tioga ISD will utilize the 20% set aside for learning loss/academic impact of lost instructional time in the following manner: hiring full-time interventionists to serve at elementary, middle, and high school using research based materials for intervention, paying teacher stipends for teaching summer school for identified students, and purchasing research based materials for intervention and acceleration. Programs proposed for purchase are research-based with support from TEA and/or the What Works Clearinghouse.

3. The District will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act.

The Tioga ISD will utilize ESSER funds to support the academic needs of students, as well as the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students. ARP ESSER funds will be utilized to hire the following positions for the next three years to provide additional mental health and social-emotional support. One at-risk intervention counselor to provide social-emotional counseling. The district will hire one aide to support technology and library services. Additionally, the district will utilize funds to purchase high quality and research-based academic materials and interventions, as well as to purchase technology (hardware, software, and infrastructure) to ensure that students are able to access course materials remotely in the case of a future school closure due to the pandemic. The district will also utilize ESSER funds to improve indoor air quality in accordance with CDC guidance.

4. The District will ensure that any implemented interventions, including those implemented under ARP section 2002(e)(1) 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.

The Tioga ISD will ensure that the utilization of ESSER funds will support the academic needs of students, as well as the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students. The following positions have been determined as needs based on survey of stakeholder groups in order to serve the mental health needs of students disproportionately impacted by COVID-19: One at risk intervention counselor to provide social-emotional counseling. Two special education aides will assist in serving the needs of students who receive special education services. At-risk students, low-income students, students with disabilities, and English learners will receive benefit from the additional support.

5. The District made its plan available to the public and provided an opportunity for feedback that was collected and incorporated into the plan.

The District published its ESSER plan on the district bulletin and on the website, www.tiogaisd.net, on June 17, 2021 and again on July 19, 2021 . Notice was made to the public on June 17 on the TISD Social Media and TISD website (regular communication avenues for the community) regarding a public meeting and hearing of the ARP ESSER plans to be held on Monday, June 21, 2021 at 7:00 PM as part of a regularly scheduled school board meeting. Feedback from the Board of Trustees and public were included in the plan.

6. The District engaged in timely and meaningful consultation with students, families, school and district administrators (including special education administrators), teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff and their unions, 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, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

The district took the following action steps to engage in timely and meaningful consultation on the plan: the district surveyed stakeholders including teachers, staff, parents, and community members representing interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, and other underserved students regarding the use of ARP ESSER funds; the district's District of Innovation team developed strategies to meet the learning needs of students, including traditionally underserved students; the district reviewed all survey feedback and included feedback in the development of the plan; the district met with student focus groups at the Tioga School to hear input from students; the district met with the District of Innovation team comprised of teachers, parents, and community to gain input and feedback; the district established a ESSER team with representatives focused on underserved populations listed above to review the draft plans of the district for use of ESSER funds and to serve as an advisory board meeting semi-annually to monitor and adjust the plans over the next three years.

In addition, the Tioga ISD provides the following assurances:

- The District engaged in meaningful consultation with the following groups:
 - a. Students, families, school and district administrators (including special education administrators), teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and the TISD School Board .
- The District engaged in meaningful consultation with each of the following groups, to the extent present in or served by the LEA:
 - b. 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, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.
- The District has created its plan in an understandable and uniform format.
- The District's plan is, to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand, or if not practicable, orally translated.
- The District will, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provide the plan in an alternative format accessible to that parent.
- The District provided the public an opportunity to provide input on its plan and took such input into account.
- The District has made its plan publicly available on its website.
 - o The link to the plan is here: www.tiogaisd.net

Tioga ISD Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

The Tioga ISD has amended its plan for ensuring safe in-person instruction and continuity of services.

1. The District has a plan that is already compliant and will review it every six months, or the District will amend its plan and post it within 30 days of receiving funds. Tioga ISD has a compliant plan for safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of service posted in English at www.tiogaisd.net

2. The LEA will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other school and LEA staff, and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the CDC's safety recommendations, including: universal and correct wearing of masks; modifying facilities to allow for physical distancing; handwashing and respiratory etiquette; cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation; contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments; diagnostic and screening testing; efforts to provide vaccinations to school communities; appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies; and coordination with State and local health officials.

The Tioga ISD has a compliant plan for safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of service posted in English at www.tiogaisd.net for 2020-21. The updated guidance titled TISD Return to Learn 2021-22 includes updated guidance for the 2021-22 school year. The guidance includes the district's procedures and protocols for wearing masks, physical distancing, handwashing and respiratory etiquette, cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, contact tracing, and isolation and quarantine procedures. The District works closely with the Grayson County Emergency Manager and the City of Tioga Emergency Management. The District will review and revise guidance periodically, at least every six months.

3. The LEA will ensure continuity of services, including but not limited to services to address students' academic needs and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

The Tioga ISD discussed the continuity of services in the TISD Return to Learn 2021-22 plan. The District will utilize distributed technology and learning platforms to ensure continuity of learning in the case of quarantine and/or future school closures. In the event of future school closure, the District will utilize the 2020-21 Return to Learn Guidance with regard to providing services for students with disabilities and English learners. Meal service, in the event of future closure, will continue with delivery or curbside meal pick up, both of which were employed in the 2020-21 school years. The Return to Learn Guidance can be accessed at www.tiogaisd.net

4. The District sought public comments in the development of its plan and took those comments into account in the development of its plan.

In addition, the Tioga ISD provides the following assurances:

The District included surveys of parents, students, community, and staff in the development of the continuity of learning plans. The District had multiple public meetings regarding the 2020- 21 Return to Learn Guidance. The 2021-22 guidance will be reviewed in a public meeting and followed by a public hearing at the June 21, 2021 regular school board meeting. The TISD administrative team reviewed and gave feedback to the guidance and will convene at least every six months for review and revision.

- The District made its plan publicly available no later than 30 days after receiving its ARP ESSER allocation.
 - o The link to the plan is here: www.tiogaisd.net
- The District sought public comment in the development of its plan and took those public comments into account in the development of its plan.
- The District will periodically review and revise its plan, at least every six months.
- The District will seek public comment in determining whether to revise its plan and, if it determines revisions are necessary, on the revisions it makes to the plan.
- If the District revises its plan, it will ensure its revised plan addresses each of the aspects of safety currently recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), or if the CDC has revised its guidance, the updated safety recommendations at the time the LEA is revising its plan.
- The District has created its plan in an understandable and uniform format.
- The District's plan is, to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand, or if not practicable, orally translated.
- The District will, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, provide the plan in an alternative format accessible to that parent.