

## **General Uses of ESSER III Funds**

**Purpose 1: This section is to document the LEA's required Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan due by June 23,2021.**

**1. Please describe the extent to which the LEA has adopted policies on each of the following health and safety strategies:**

**a. Universal and correct wearing of masks**

Freire Charter School Wilmington's policy on face masks currently indicates masks are mandatory for all individuals while in the building. We will continually monitor CDC as well as state and local guidelines for updates to modify this requirement.

**b. Physical Distancing (e.g. use of cohorts/podding)**

Building spaces have been reorganized to ensure optimal physical distancing according to CDC guidelines. Specific practices include adjusting seating arrangements; increasing signage, markers and posters to promote physical distancing and hygiene practices; adopting one way traffic patterns where possible; and allowing outdoor instruction. We will continually monitor CDC as well as state and local guidelines for updates to modify distancing requirements.

**c. Handwashing and respiratory etiquette**

During the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, we replaced many of our manual faucets and soap dispensers with motion-sensor faucets and soap dispensers. Additionally, hand sanitizer is readily available throughout the building especially in high-touch areas.

Staff will continue to reinforce handwashing and respiratory etiquette by guiding students on all health and safety protocols and following CDC guidelines, with a significant emphasis on handwashing and other hygiene/etiquette procedures. Ample signage directing proper etiquette and hygiene is posted throughout the building. We will continually monitor CDC as well as state and local guidelines for updates to modify these handwashing and respiratory etiquette requirements.

**d. Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation**

Freire Charter School Wilmington has developed intensified cleaning and sanitization schedules and procedures for each campus according to current CDC and OSHA guidelines.

MERV-13 filters and air ionizers were installed in the central HVAC units in spring 2020 to support greater air filtration. To further support air filtration, the

school has secured portable air purifiers and staff are encouraged to open windows, weather permitting. We will continually monitor CDC as well as state and local guidelines for updates to modify our cleaning, ventilation, and sanitization procedures and protocols.

**e. Contacting tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine in collaboration with the state, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments**

Freire Charter School Wilmington currently requires all students and staff members to follow CDC, state, and local health department directives regarding contact tracing, isolation, and quarantine in the event of a positive case of COVID-19 within the community. We will continually monitor CDC as well as state and local guidelines for updates to modify protocol in the event of a positive case.

**f. Diagnostic and screening testing**

In the 2020-21 school year, Freire Charter School Wilmington partnered with The Delaware Department of Health and Human Services – Division of Public Health to offer free COVID-19 testing to all students and staff free of charge. Since we have a system developed to provide COVID-19 testing internally with tests provided by the state, we will continue this service until conditions indicate otherwise. We will continually monitor CDC as well as state and local guidelines for updates to modify our testing procedures.

**g. Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible**

After the close of the 2020-21 school year, Freire Wilmington will hold a Network-wide vaccination event in partnership with Care Force MD. At this event, all Freire students above 12 years old will have the opportunity to receive a free COVID-19 vaccination. Freire Wilmington will consider hosting additional on-campus vaccination events in the Fall if there is sufficient interest.

To support our vaccination efforts, we also held a Network-wide COVID-19 vaccine information session for students and families during the 2020-21 school year. The information session included a panel of medical professionals that presented on the topic and responded to questions and concerns from families. Additionally, we will continue to update families about vaccination opportunities in the area in our weekly family newsletter.

**h. Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies**

Additional protective equipment will be provided, as appropriate, for settings that require close human contact, such as staff providing supports for students with

disabilities and counseling services. Emotional Supports services were also available virtually to students in 2020-21. We will continually monitor CDC as well as state and local guidelines for updates to modify our accommodations to students with disabilities.

**2. How will the LEA ensure continuity of services including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff members' social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services?**

Continuity of services for all students returning to our buildings for the 2021-22 school year is a top priority for Freire Wilmington as we prepare to reopen with a 100% in-person instructional program. We will be able to maintain continuity of services within staffing and programming during the summer as well as the 2021-22 school year with ESSER III funding.

Our expanded summer enrichment program at Freire Wilmington will enable us to provide all students with a diverse mix of in-person activities throughout the summer. Our summer program will offer students the opportunity to both strengthen their academic skills and reconnect with the school community before the coming school year. Further, these programs will be managed by school staff and will be held on-campus apart from scheduled field trips.

Specifically, our month-long summer enrichment program will engage students in sports, academic skill builders, as well as enable all extracurricular clubs held during the school year to reconvene in person. Students will have the opportunity to select multiple topics to work with over the duration of the program. Additionally, TECH will hold in-person summer school and credit-recovery to prioritize students needing additional instruction to be best prepared for the coming school year.

During the 2021-22 school year, Freire Wilmington will ensure continuity of services with increased teaching and student support roles. ESSER III funds will enable us to fund the salary and benefits of new and existing positions that support student growth both academically and socially. Funded positions include an IT Coordinator, a Dean of Students, a school Psychologist, a Social Studies Teacher, and teacher residents. In conjunction with ESSER III funding, we were also able to successfully transition our robust Emotional Supports program to a completely virtual format in March 2020 to support continuity of services within the virtual-learning program as well as to expand the flexibility of our in-person program in the 2021-22 school year.

**Purpose 2. This section is to document the LEA's required ARP ESSER Plan due by August 23, 2021, which at a minimum must describe:**

- 1. The extent to which and how ARP ESSER Funds will be used by the LEA to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, in line with the most recent guidance**

Throughout the execution of our in-person learning program for the 2021-22 school year, Freire Wilmington will ensure our prevention and mitigation policies are aligned with current guidance from the CDC as well as state and local authorities. To achieve this, the operations team at the Freire Schools Collaborative Network Office will review and analyze any new health and safety guidance regarding the reopening of schools. As new information becomes available, the Network Office will support school administration in revising policies and procedures as well as communicating updates with families and staff.

**2. How the LEA will use the mandatory 20% set-aside to address the academic impact of lost instruction time through the implementation of evidence based interventions**

Freire Wilmington will use 20% or more of the ESSER-III funds to provide a variety of learning acceleration programs and opportunities for students in accordance with federal requirements. School administrators are developing the details of these programs.

**3. How the LEA will use the remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with the statutory requirements**

ESSER Funds will support the salaries and OECs of valuable personnel positions, including one ELA teacher and one Social Studies teacher, as well as a Student Supports Coordinator and a Psychologist, both of whom will work to provide counseling and support to students who are in crisis or are facing other challenges that require intervention and support. Funds will also support the salary and OEC of an IT Coordinator, who is responsible for maintaining the day-to-day technology needs of the school.

Grants funds will be used for the purchase of Chromebook computers and relevant supplies (e.g. chargers, replacement screens, computer cases) for every Freire student to ensure they have access to the technology they need to participate in our 1:1 learning model. Funds will also be used to provide ELA Curriculum professional development sessions from Rethinc, our external DEI partner for the Freire Network.

**4. How the LEA will ensure that the ARP ESSER funded interventions, including but not limited to the 20% set-aside, 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 and youth in foster care, and migratory students**

Freire Wilmington recognizes that the impact of COVID-19 has affected our students beyond learning loss. Prior to COVID 153 students visited our school counselors for therapy sessions. Since COVID, that went down to 23 students. Also worth noting is that approximately 47% of our students had their cameras on during class time. We believe that this is a reflection of social-emotional disengagement that was prevalent in schools

throughout the country. Much like programs designed to address learning loss, we have been looking at ways to accelerate social-emotional wellbeing and re-engaging students in a way that is supportive and authentic. One step we are taking is adding a psychologist on our staff in order to lead these efforts as well as a Student Support Coordinator for a more holistic approach to student wellbeing.

The Student Support Coordinator will work closely with our Emotional Supports Department and our Culture and Discipline Team to provide counseling to students in crisis or facing other challenges that require intervention and support. This position will also focus on developing school culture and family engagement initiatives in conjunction with supporting the Director of Advising in resolving student attendance issues. As a result of funding these positions, we anticipate an improvement in student attendance during COVID-19 and/or an increase in engagement with the remote learning program.

**5. Describe the promising practices the LEA has implemented to accelerate learning.**

As previously mentioned, Freire Wilmington expanded our summer enrichment program. This included skill builder sessions in math, ELA, science, and social studies to all students. These skill builders provided students with targeted development in the most high leverage standards to help build student's mastery.

Furthermore, with the understanding that one of the best ways to accelerate learning is exposing students to high quality, grade level instruction and curriculum, FCSW has adopted high-quality, standards aligned ELA curriculum (EngageNY), is continuing with the implementation of Illustrative Mathematics curriculum, and will begin groundwork for identifying HQIM in Social Studies.