



ESSER III FUNDING NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 1 July 15, 2021

FEDERAL GRANT FUNDING PLAN

The intent and purpose of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, ESSER III funding is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on students.

To be considered for funding, the District must comply with each of the following requirements:

1. Provide the methodology used by the Local Education Agency (LEA) for the delivery of services or assistance to students and staff in public schools; and
2. Demonstrate compliance with Section 2001 which states that at least 20% of funding must be set aside for learning loss mitigation. Allowable activities may include: afterschool programming, summer school, extended day/year programs, and programming targeted to ESEA subgroups, students experiencing homelessness and children and youth in foster care.

Authorized by ARP Act of 2021, Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) Fund.

FEATURED ARTICLES:

Stakeholder input on funding plan

Safe return to in-person instruction plan

Allowable program activities

ESSER III Funding Plan

Six-month review of plans through the end of the grant in 2024

UT Charter School's allocation of ESSER III federal grant funds is \$4,096,267. There are 28 allowable activities. Of this total allocation at least 20% (\$819,253) must be set-aside for learning loss mitigation. The funding plan described in this document includes a total of seven (7) allowable activities.

In the aggregate, the funding plan includes a total of \$1,909,876, or 47% of the total allocation to address learning loss. The remaining 53% will be used for other activities in an effort to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic. The funding plan includes planned expenditures over a 3-year period: school years 2021 -2022 through 2023-2024.

UT CHARTER SCHOOL STAKEHOLDER INPUT

The District engaged stakeholders in an opportunity to provide meaningful consultation through online surveys regarding the ESSER III grant opportunity on May 24, 2021. The following were invited to participate in the survey:

1. Students
2. Parents
3. School district staff (central and special education administrators) teachers, other administrators and auxiliary staff.
4. Other stakeholders as designated by ESSER III guidelines.

Additional targeted surveys and focus groups were held to dig deeper into student academic and safety needs. The top 5 most identified areas include:

1. Academic – extended learning
2. Supported teachers
3. Social-emotional support services
4. Technology and materials
5. Parent support

The ESSER III Communication Plan is available on our district's website at: www.utcharter.org/ESSER

The District used the quantitative and qualitative stakeholder input to develop a draft *ESSER III Funding Plan* and a *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan*.

SAFE RETURN TO IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION PLAN



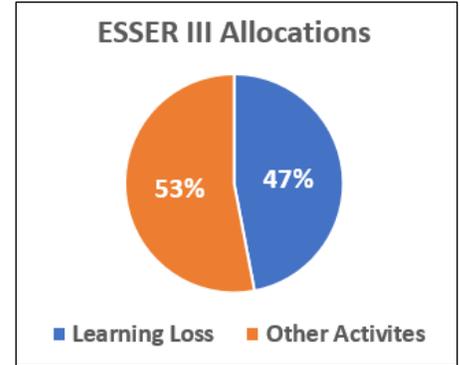
The *UT Charter School Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan* was initially developed during the summer of 2020 with stakeholder input. It has been continuously reviewed and revised as Texas Education Agency, APH and CDC guidance has changed safety protocols over the past year and a half. Public notice and opportunity to comment have been incorporated into local board meetings. The next opportunity will be during the August 11th meeting.

The safety and well-being of all staff and visitors are a priority for UT Charter School as the district welcomes all students and campus-based personnel back to our campuses for the 2021-2022 school year. UT Charter School will not offer remote instruction for the 2021-2022 school year, so all students will be required to attend school on campus unless a medical condition precludes attendance.

UT Charter School will continue to monitor and update practices and protocols based on recommendations by state and local agencies, CDC, APH, and the Texas Education Agency. The goal is to collaboratively ensure that all students, employees, and visitors in district facilities remain safe and secure to the greatest extent possible.

ESSER III ALLOWABLE PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

There are twenty-eight (28) allowable program activities. The allowable activities are listed on the COVID-19/ESSER webpage at utcharter.org/ESSER. Of the 28 activities, there are 8 that address strategies to mitigate learning loss. Another 8 that address strategies related to the safe return to in-person instruction. The remaining activities are generally related to addressing the needs of the students and staff as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.



There is great flexibility in the use of the funds over a span of five (5) fiscal years from 2019-2020 (effective March 2020) through a roll-forward period of 2023-2024. The District has determined that it is in the best interests of the students to expend the funds in next fiscal year, 2021-2022 through the 2023-2024 fiscal year. The ESSER III Grant Application allows for amendments to the original grant application until July 5, 2023. As the District implements the grant activities and conducts ongoing planning, including review of stakeholder input, the District may amend the application to include additional allowable program activities.

ESSER III FUNDING PLAN: TARGETED ACTIVITIES

The targeted seven (7) program activities selected by the District leadership after reviewing stakeholder feedback and student academic needs at the end of the 2020-2021 school year are:

1. Addressing learning loss
2. Supplemental afterschool and Saturday learning opportunities with software subscriptions and additional intervention materials and resources.
3. Summer learning opportunities in core subject areas and campus focused on life skills and transition.
4. Professional services to provide additional professional development for instructional and leadership staff, including extra duty pay for the attendees.
5. Replacement of instructional technology
6. Other activities that are necessary to continue the employment of current staff.
7. Any activity authorized under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*.

ONGOING PLANNING AND FEEDBACK

During the life of the ESSER III grant, the District is required to continually review the *ESSER III Funding Plan* and the *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan*. We seek the ongoing feedback from our stakeholders to ensure that we meet academic and safety needs of our students.

While we thank you for your feedback during the initial stakeholder input surveys, we request your continued feedback through surveys, focus group meetings, etc. on an ongoing basis.

UT University Charter School

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Visit UT Charter School's
ESSER webpage to view the
District's plans:

www.utcharter.org/ESSER



The University of Texas at Austin Division of Diversity and Community Engagement

*The University of Texas University Charter School
is a unit within the Division of Diversity and
Community Engagement at the University of
Texas at Austin.*

Mission Statement

The University of Texas–University Charter School's mission is to provide access to effective educational opportunities for unique learners by creating safe environments and holding high expectations for all.

Vision

In full partnership with our communities, the University of Texas–University Charter School's vision is to provide the best educational system for students with specialized learning needs in unique settings where each student will achieve academic, social and emotional success.

ADVISORY BOARD

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Jessica Toste, Ph.D.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

The development of the *ESSER III Funding Plan* and *Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan* was a collaborative effort between the Superintendent and Cabinet (Leadership Team).

Dr. Melissa M. Chavez, Superintendent
Dr. Nicole Whetstone, Deputy Superintendent
Dr. Autumn Leal, Assistant Superintendent of Operations
Jenny Davis, Director of Finance
Lori Moore, Director of Technology
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