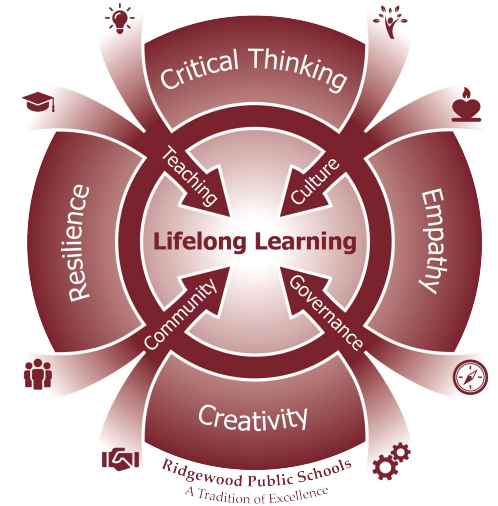




Ridgewood Public Schools

June 21, 2021



**American Rescue Plan
Requirements for Federal Grant Application**

ARP ESSER Grants

The ARP (American Rescue Plan) Act provides \$122 billion in funding to states and school districts to facilitate the reopening and safe operation of schools.

The **first step in acquiring our allocation** is that we must publicly provide information to the state and federal government on specific areas of our operation (**Safe Return Plan**), allow public comment, and then include these summaries on the first phase of the application.

Our allocation is roughly \$1.1 million to be spent through the 2024 school year. Learning about allowable uses and planning for these funds will take place through November 2021, when the next phase of the grant application will be due.



Safe Return Plan: Areas of Operation

These are the required areas that we must present for the first phase of the grant application:

- Universal and correct wearing of masks
- Physical distancing
- Hand washing and respiratory etiquette
- Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation
- Contact tracing, in combination with isolation and quarantine
- Diagnostic and screening testing
- Efforts to provide vaccines to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible
- Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety policies



Universal and correct wearing of masks

Should districts be authorized to make decisions on a local level, the District will collaborate with the VOR Health Department, the school physician and district mental health coordinator to determine local guidelines while considering the risks/benefits for the physical/mental health of the students and staff. Currently, face coverings are required in classrooms as per the State guidance for K-12 schools. Signs are placed at all building entrances as a reminder of this policy. Face coverings may be removed during physical education and music classes when individuals are in a well-ventilated location and are able to maintain a physical distance of six feet apart. Considerations are made for excessive heat. If a student is unable to wear a mask, parents will be expected to provide medical documentation. This is subject to change based on updated guidance.



Physical Distancing

In accordance with guidance issued by the Governor's Executive Orders, the New Jersey Department of Health and the Village of Ridgewood Health Department, all instructional and non-instructional rooms in schools and district facilities will be configured to maintain physical distance to the maximum extent practicable while considering instructional best practices and the risk/benefit for the physical, mental, and social-emotional health of students and staff. This is subject to change based on updated guidance.



Hand Washing and Respiratory Etiquette

Fully functional hand sanitizer stations with alcohol-based hand sanitizers (at least 60% alcohol) are located at all public entrances in each building, as well as at regular distances in each hallway and instructional space. There are fully functional hand washing stations with soap in most elementary classrooms and all staff and student bathrooms which are located throughout the buildings and close to the cafeterias. Any elementary classrooms that do not have sinks will have hand sanitizer. A schedule of sanitizing and/or hand washing will be disseminated in each school, where students are required to wash hands for at least twenty seconds at regular intervals during the school day and always before eating, after using the bathroom, and after blowing their nose, coughing, and/or sneezing.



Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities

All spaces will be cleaned daily by the custodial department using the following three-step process: (1) remove all visible soil from all surfaces with attention to high touch areas, (2) thoroughly disinfect all hard surfaces using hospital-grade disinfectant, (3) re-sanitize all rooms using our electrostatic spray applicators with hydrogen peroxide based disinfectant. Bathrooms will be spray disinfected once during the school day on a minimum day at the halfway point of the day. Appropriate cleaning will take place three times per day. All ventilation systems are operable and in good repair, including room unit-ventilators and rooftop units. Units are maintained and filters are changed per manufacturer's specifications. All windows are operable with opening restrictions for student and personnel safety. Air Conditioner units and filters are maintained per manufacturer's specifications.



Contact Tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine (in collaboration with State and local health departments)

All school nurses are trained contact tracers and work directly with the Village of Ridgewood Health Department to conduct investigations pertaining to any reported positive cases within the district. The District follows all isolation and quarantine guidelines as defined by the New Jersey Department of Health and the Village of Ridgewood Health Department. When a student or staff member comes to the health office and presents symptoms typical of the COVID-19 disease, following the NJDOH guidelines, students will be placed safely and respectfully in isolation. This isolation will be supervised in a reasonable manner, maintaining appropriate physical distancing and appropriate PPE will be worn to protect the staff member. The parent/guardian will be notified and instructed to pick up the child promptly. Quarantine protocols are subject to change based on updated guidance and should the District be authorized to make decisions on the local level.



Diagnostic and screening testing

Parents and students are required to adhere to their responsibility for determining whether to attend school by answering the daily symptom check questions and keeping students home from school when symptomatic; submission of the electronic symptom questionnaire will not be required. Temperature checks will not be conducted as students enter school. This is subject to change based on updated guidance.



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

The District distributed information about local vaccination sites and coordinated registration for vaccination clinics for staff members through the Village of Ridgewood Health Department.



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

Accommodations pertaining to health and safety policies are addressed according to the individual student's need and in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.



Ensuring continuity of services

Continuity of instruction is assured through daily in-person attendance for all students to advance the goals of the academic program. The District has a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) in place to address academic, social, and behavioral concerns. The Intervention and Referral Services team in all buildings monitors and supports identified students. The School-Based Mental Health Team utilizes the MTSS framework to provide a continuum of social/emotional care that integrates schools, families and communities. Economically disadvantaged students who qualify receive free and reduced lunch, even in the event of school closure.



Next steps in this federal grant process

We will accept public comment on these specific issues this evening.

This presentation will be posted on the district website.

The next presentation on 6/28 will address specific scenarios and operations questions for September 2021.



Thank You!

