



# Kenmore - Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District

## *American Recovery Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Plan*

The Kenmore - Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District has been allocated approximately \$11.6 million in Federal relief funding as part of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARP). The ARP Act requires LEAs (Local Education Agencies) to reserve at least 20% of their 90% ARP-ESSER allocation to address 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, and ensure that such interventions respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus on economically disadvantaged students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care. This Federal funding falls into several broad categories, will be available over a three-year period of time, and must be used to address needs brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is a brief overview of our plan for this funding.

Federal Stimulus Funding has been allocated to the district in three forms:

- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) - March 2020
- Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplement Appropriations Act (CRRSA) - December 2020
- **American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) - March 2021:** *Addressed in this document*

Of this total, \$3,000,000 (26%) is specifically earmarked for summer programming and supports to address learning loss. These learning programs are represented by the following areas:

### *Expanded Learning Opportunities (Summer Programs)*

- Expanded Summer Support Program for K-12 students
  - High School - Credit Recovery
  - Middle School - Summer Reading and Math Programs
  - Elementary School - Summer Reading and Math Programs

### *Expanded Learning Opportunities (During the School Day)*

- Professional Development for teachers to address Social Emotional wellness of students
- Enhanced curriculum
  - Digital curriculum and resources to support expanded remote learning opportunities for students consistent with the instructional technology goals of the district.
  - Curriculum resources that align with instructional best practices for high-impact strategies to increase student engagement and accelerate learning.
- Building-based substitutes for greater continuity in programs

*Expanded Learning Opportunities (Beyond the School Day)*

- Before and after school tutoring

*Virtual Supports*

- Additional licenses of iReady to assess student learning and provide differentiated instruction
- Data analysis tools to better determine areas of need in order to target supports

## PUBLIC COMMENT

*The Kenmore - Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District stakeholders, including parents, staff and community members were invited to review the district's initial ESSR plan and provide feedback via a Google Form. A total of 246 individual stakeholders including parents/guardians from all nine district schools as well as students and staff members contributed feedback and ideas on how to allocate ESSR funds through this process.*

An analysis of the survey respondents were categorized by each allowable category including capital improvements, technology, addressing learning loss, instructional programming, social-emotional initiatives, parent/family engagement, and professional development. Participants also contributed their own ideas as to how ESSR funds could be spent.

Capital improvement initiatives which received the broadest support included:

- Upgrade/adapt air ventilation systems (81.5%)
- Upgrade drinking fountains to water bottle refill stations (80.8%)
- Structural and safety improvements for school buildings (76.5%)

Technology initiatives which received the broadest support included:

- Educational technology for students that aids in regular and specialized methods of delivering instruction (74.1%)

- Improved school-wide and neighborhood WiFi (66.3%)
- Training for new teachers in virtual classroom technology and remote learning (49.8%)

Learning loss initiatives which received the broadest support include:

- Additional academic intervention programs for struggling students (69.2%)
- Additional in-person learning time before and/or after school (65.2%)
- Additional in-person learning time during the summer (54.5%)

Instructional initiatives which received the broadest support include:

- New textbooks, instructional programs, instructional supplies, STEM resources/lab equipment, etc. for classrooms (88%)
- Materials/supports for special education programming (75.7%)
- Materials/supports for English is a New Language (ENL) students (54.5%)

Social-emotional initiatives which received the broadest support include:

- Train school staff to better identify students experiencing social/emotional distress/mental health issues (86%)
- Additional mental health prevention resources and support (83.2%)
- A tiered system of support for positive behavior, social-emotional wellness strategies and student attendance (73.6%)

Parent/family initiatives which received the broadest support include:

- More opportunities to engage parents in their children's lives and education (67.3%)
- Mental health resources for families (66.9%)
- Presentations, learning sessions, support groups, and special events provided by the Family Support Center (54%)

Professional development initiatives which received the broadest support include:

- Techniques for a positive school and classroom climate (75.8%)
- Training and support for teachers in using assessment data to individualize instruction for students based on their needs (72.6%)
- Professional development opportunities in academic subject areas (60.1%)

The district will continue to engage its stakeholders in a variety of ways including social media, electronic communications, weekly video/email updates from the Superintendent, the district website, Parent Cabinet, Shared Decision Making Teams, Board of Education meetings, question-and-answer sessions, and community forums. The district also has a dedicated email address for comments, questions and input regarding the ESSER plan ([ARPfeedback@ktufsd.org](mailto:ARPfeedback@ktufsd.org)).

## GOAL

*The Kenmore - Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District remains committed to safely returning students and staff to in-person instruction, following the New York State and Local Health Department regulations. As soon as the updated guidance is released for the 2021-22 school year, the District will review and update the plan to return to in-person instruction.*

### Areas of Spending

*While the Ken-Ton UFSD has been able to gradually re-introduce and increase in-person instruction throughout the 19-20 School Year, we were able to provide in-person instruction on all days for all students K-12 beginning in September 2021. In order to support a full K-12 in-person model of instruction, the Ken-Ton UFSD is planning for some non-recurring expenses in the area of safely returning students to in-person instruction.*

- Personal Protective Equipment
- Cleaning supplies
- Bottle fillers
- Resources to improve safety and health measures in the school buildings
- Invest in hardware and infrastructure to improve safety and security measures in the school buildings
- Professional development for teachers on best practices for ensuring student safety
- Family engagement efforts to provide training and or activities to support collaborative partnerships to improve student safety

*The Ken-Ton UFSD has been able to gradually re-introduce and increase in-person instruction throughout the 19-20 School Year. During the 21-22 School Year, all students will successfully return to full in-person instruction. During the 22-23 and beyond, all students are expected to remain fully in-person with expanded opportunities to recover learning lost during times when in-person instruction was compromised. We plan to use ARP-ESSER funds for non-recurring expenses in the area of maximizing in-person instruction time.*

- Increase opportunities for student support within the school day
- Digital resources to improve service provision opportunities for accelerated learning
- Learning Management Systems will be implemented in order to continue to support blended learning and expanded learning opportunities beyond the classroom.
- Additional building based substitutes to maximize continuity and access which will ensure maximum in-person instruction time

- Digital curriculum tools to support extended (remote) learning opportunities
- Continue to search and implement strategic programming leading towards graduation as well as alternate pathways to graduation

***Ken-Ton UFSD plans to use ARP-ESSER funds for non-recurring expenses in the area of operating schools and meeting the needs of students.***

- Assessment tools to determine areas of student need
- Structural improvements for operating safe and healthy schools
- Equipment upgrades and improvements for school cafeterias

***During the 19-20 & 20-21 School Year, the Ken-Ton UFSD spent significant unplanned funds on instructional technology to expedite the district plans for 1:1 student devices. This was necessary to support remote learning during the pandemic. In order to sustain, improve and grow embedded instructional technology in our classrooms for the 21-22 school year, we used ARP-ESSER funds for non-recurring expenses in the area of purchasing educational technology.***

- Refresh student/teacher devices
- Increase technology in instructional spaces
- Upgrade technology infrastructure to meet the need of additional devices
- Professional Development for teachers to enhance use of technology in the classroom
- Community-based connectivity options

***Our plans for non-recurring expenses in the area of addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on students, including the impacts of interrupted instruction and learning loss and the impacts on low-income students, children with disabilities, English language learners, and students experiencing homelessness.***

- Enhance WIFI connectivity for students experiencing needs
- Increase digital communications to provide multiple methods of communicating with families.
- Specialized digital curricular resources to support expanded (digital) learning options for students with specific learning needs
- Expanded learning opportunities within the school day specially designed for students with specific learning needs
- Resources to support parent and community centers to ensure available access to services for students with specialized needs

***The Ken-Ton UFSD will be providing dedicated professional development in the area of social-emotional health and academic needs. Thus, our plans for non-recurring expenses in the area of implementing evidence-based strategies to meet students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs will be to provide assurance all teachers have access to this needed professional development.***

- Professional development in the areas of mental health and social/emotional wellness
- Professional development in the areas of re-teaching, replacing and supporting problematic behaviors, including restorative practices, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive practices
- Professional development for Human Resources and teams to find new innovative ways to attract and secure a more diverse workforce
- Training for parents and community to support student social, emotional and mental health needs

***In order to target learning gaps resulting from the pandemic and subsequent shifts to remote instruction, we plan to use ARP-ESSER funding for non-recurring expenses in the area of offering evidence-based summer, afterschool, and other extended learning and enrichment programs.***

- Expanded Summer School
- Increase before/after school programs and tutoring to support learning recovery
- Expanded opportunities within the school day to address learning needs
- Resources to support accelerated and enrichment learning opportunities within and beyond the school day
- Invest in learning management systems that support remote interactive learning opportunities for students
- Enhanced parental communication efforts to regularly provide updates on student progress and performance

***In order to assist with preparing our youngest learners for beginning education, our plans for non-recurring expenses in the area of supporting early childhood education are specific to the expansion of pre-k programming.***

- One time expenditures to enhance Universal Pre-Kindergarten
- Classroom equipment and furniture to support our youngest learners
- Specialized equipment to support the physical and emotional learning needs of pre-k students

***The following programs will continue beyond the availability of federal funds and we will use the following local funds in order to minimize disruption to core academic and other school programs.***

- The District will continue to support efforts to expand pre-kindergarten learning opportunities for your youngest learners to improve readiness for school programming
- The District will continue to review programming and pathways for all students to support specialized learning needs and interests and ensure multiple options for students to successfully achieve graduation requirements

## **SUMMARY OF 2021-2022 PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT LEARNING RECOVERY**

*The Kenmore - Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District remains committed to supporting students through the learning recovery process, including expanded learning beyond the school day and summer months, and greater access to credit recovery options.*

### ***Learning Recovery***

The Kenmore-Town of Tonawanda UFSD Learning Recovery Program was designed to support students with expanded learning opportunities in order to recover skills lost or skills not taught due to the long-term closure. The Learning Recovery Program supported multiple evidence-based interventions that were available before or after school. This program also included credit recovery for high school students.

The Learning Recovery Program was created to support a successful return to in-person instruction for all students, by providing opportunities to target those skills lost during the long-term closure and to support those skill deficits caused by the lack of access to in-person instruction or disruptions thereof. The Learning Recovery Program would occur before and/or after school which would allow for extended learning opportunities beyond the instructional day, and include options for academic, social-emotional and general physical and mental health skill development. Our goal is to help students develop the skills and confidence to accelerate learning to close learning gaps and feel successful in school. Learning Recovery Sessions aim to be both enjoyable and engaging, ensuring that students continue to develop their love for learning while closing academic learning gaps as a result of the global pandemic.

Students work with a Learning Recovery Teacher individually or in a group based on their individual needs. This is an elective program to provide additional opportunities to support school performance. Learning Recovery Sessions are not available to all students, but rather identified students based on learning gaps that may not normally be able to be addressed during the regular school day hours.

Ratios range from 1:1 to 15:1 based on the content and needs of students at each of the various grade levels K-12.

## *Summer School and Expanded Learning Opportunities*

While the district historically provides summer programming for students K-12, we are able to offer expanded programming for additional learning opportunities. The elementary program will be extended to a full-day program and will include a focus on social-emotional, physical activity and music and arts skills, beyond the traditional academic skills. We will also offer this program for an additional week beyond the typical schedule.

- The middle and high school programs will offer programs for more students, including skill-building programs and social-emotional skills-based opportunities.
- Transportation will be offered to all students this summer.
- The number of students will only be limited by the number of staff available for hire. The number of staff will only be limited by the number of students interested in participating.

**Elementary Program Goals:** The primary goal for the Elementary Summer Program is to accelerate learning by providing equity and access for all students. LitCamp is a literacy program that combines innovative lessons with an engaging and interactive summer camp approach. It is our goal that students will make reading, writing, and social-emotional gains that they'll carry back to school in the fall. Students' reading levels will be tracked from the beginning of the program and at the end of the program. Math skills will also be included using the district's core curriculum, and supplemental resources. Those math skills that will be prioritized during the summer program were carefully chosen after completing a data analysis of student performance information during the school year.

The students to staff ratio for the Elementary Summer Program is 15:1 with additional support for ENL and students with disabilities (not eligible for ESY) thus further reducing the ratio for students who need additional support. The program features the use of a research-based literacy program (Scholastic Lit Camp), an evidence-based Math program (Eureka) with research-based supplemental resources (i.e. IXL, Zearn) in addition to enrichment opportunities in STEM, Physical Education, art and music.

**Middle School Program Goals:** The Middle School Summer Program primary goal is to increase student performance in all core subject areas through appropriate hands-on applications and/or programs that will integrate all disciplines in alignment to Next Generation Learning Standards.



Students will focus, specifically, on building literacy and numeracy skills. Students will also engage in collaborative team building activities, with a focus on social-emotional well being.

The ratio for the Middle School Summer Program is 15:1 with additional support for ENL and students with disabilities (not eligible for ESY) thus further reducing the ratio for students who need additional support. The program features the use of research-based ELA and Math Interventions, including but not limited to iReady, Lexia and Successmaker in addition to enrichment opportunities in writing and team building.

**High School Program Goals:** The High School Summer Program primary goal is to provide opportunities to recover credits lost due to compromised in-person instruction or lack of available support during the long-term closure. The secondary goal of the program is to provide social and emotional opportunities for students to continue to engage in the recovery process for those skill deficits.

More specifically:

- Exam Review Courses: Regents Exam Review Courses will be offered in 2022.
- "New" Courses: 1/2 credit new courses are 123 minutes in length, daily. These courses are for those students who have not yet taken the course. Economics, Government, and Health are the only "new" courses offered in summer school.
- Physical Education: Students enrolled in Summer School Physical Education classes will swim everyday.
- Regents Examination Only: Regents exams will be offered in August of 2022.
- Remedial Courses: Remedial courses are 123 minutes in length each day and are for students who have previously taken and failed a course. Students' course failure grade will count towards 10% of their Summer School grade.

The student to staff ratio for the High School Summer Program is 15:1 with additional support for ENL and students with disabilities (not eligible for ESY) thus further reducing the ratio for students who need additional support. The program is available for all students in grades 8-12.

### ***Be Well Ken-Ton***

The district will offer a targeted series of professional development offerings for teachers to support instructional understanding of supporting social and emotional health and wellness in the classroom. All teachers who participate in the full series will be eligible for compensation. The district recognized that as students returned from the pandemic, there would be a rush of emotional skills, needs and strengths that would need support and channeling, while balancing the academic program. This series would offer teachers a deeper glimpse into the developmental understandings of social and emotional maturity and ways to support developmental challenges.

### ***Building-Based Substitute Support***

The pandemic has demonstrated a global shortage in the workforce that has significantly impacted the teaching profession. The pandemic has been especially difficult as cases of COVID resulted in extended absences for many teachers causing further disruption to the return to in-person instruction. Each building was provided with at least two building-based substitute teachers in order to offer some stability and continuity to the programs during the safe return for students and teachers. This will also support employment gaps that would further impact each school's ability to provide coverage for teacher absences.

## SUMMARY OF 2021-2022 INVESTMENTS IN CURRENT YEAR ACTIVITIES

*The Kenmore - Town of Tonawanda Union Free School District used ARP-ESSER Funding during the 2021-22 School Year to support several planned goals.*

Safely returning students to in-person instruction.	\$1,075,597
Maximizing in-person instruction time.	\$42,000
Operating schools and meeting the needs of students.	\$45,926
Purchasing educational technology.	\$321,692
Addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on students, including the impacts of interrupted instruction and learning loss and the impacts on low-income students, children with disabilities, English language learners, and students experiencing homelessness.	\$790,799
Implementing evidence-based strategies to meet students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs.	\$139,828
Offering evidence-based summer, afterschool, and other extended learning and enrichment programs.	\$460,053