

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

November 15, 2022

SUBJECT:

Aiken County Public School District Head Start / Early Head Start Program American Rescue Plan (ARP) Grant Amendment – FY23

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

As a result of Public Law 117-2, the American Rescue Plan Act, 2021 (ARP) which is a \$1.9 trillion plan that includes \$1 billion for Head Start programs for one-time activities in response to COVID-19, all Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnership grantees are eligible to receive additional funds proportionally based on funded enrollment levels. The Aiken County Public School District's Head Start/Early Head Start Program has been allocated \$459,456.00 in ARP grant funds.

Head Start programs may need to undertake a wide range of one-time, specific actions or activities in response to COVID-19. Activities will include:

1. Providing additional weeks of Head Start/Early Head Start programming through summer programs or as extensions of the program year.
2. Purchasing services, materials, and technology to ramp up recruitment and enrollment efforts.
3. Enhancing family supports by addressing their employment, education, and career goals and provide mental health support for children and families.
4. Providing meals and snacks not reimbursed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Distribution of health & nutrition packages to families to address food insecurities and materials/equipment to support remote food delivery.
5. Providing staff wellness and mental health support.
6. Providing training and professional development for staff on infectious disease management, trauma skilled practices and other topics.
7. Purchasing necessary supplies and contracted services to sanitize and clean facilities and vehicles.
8. Renovating facility and/or other space modifications such as room dividers.
9. Other actions that are necessary to maintain and resume the operation of programs, such as investing in technology infrastructure, making improvements to air conditioning systems, or other emergency assistance.

Due to continued increases in the costs of materials and supplies and condition of the current equipment, the initial amount allocated in the ARP plan for the replacement of the HVAC systems at the Aiken and Monetta Early Learning Centers is inadequate. Our Head Start program is requesting an additional \$46,448.15 of ARP funds to complete the approved HVAC project. In addition the program is requesting to purchase a storage building (~\$3000.00) for the Aiken Early Learning Center to house cleaning equipment and supplies that were purchased by COVID funds and adaptive playground equipment (~\$7500.00) at Macedonia Early Learning Center. Funds will be provided from other activities in the ARP plan that were over budgeted or no longer needed.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

Administration has reviewed the requirements of the Head Start/Early Head Start ARP Grant and find them consistent with district goals and policies.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the submission of the Office of Head Start ARP Funding Grant application and the receipt of funds, if awarded.

PREPARED BY:

Amy Edwards
Shadie Hall
Krystal Cansler