

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

February 8, 2022

SUBJECT:

Update to the American Rescue Plan

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) was signed into law on March 11, 2021. The SC Department of Education (SCDE) was allocated approximately \$2.1 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) funds from ARP, of which \$63,386,401 is allocated to Aiken. The School Board approved the District's original ESSER III spending plan at its August 10, 2021, meeting, and a spending plan and narrative in a state template were submitted by a deadline of August 24, 2021. The narrative is referred to as the Academic Recovery Plan. The state requires these plans to be posted online for the public, and prior to major changes, these plans require an opportunity for public input and board consideration.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

The following changes/updates have been made to the budget and narrative since submission in August through a regularly scheduled board meeting:

- The board approved the removal of evening school (\$1,450,000) and summer fine arts camps (\$250,000) on September 14, 2021, in order to pay for dual modality stipends for teachers for the first semester. The original ESSER III plan included \$250,000 for dual modality; however, the estimated cost for first semester was \$1,825,000. An amendment to cover the second semester costs is forthcoming.
- The State requested the district to supply the specific information regarding the classroom technology activity included in the spending plan as well as a breakdown of costs. The district added specifics regarding the Audio Enhancement Classroom systems to the description in the activity to answer the state's request as well as a breakdown of other technology costs. These included laptops (\$9,625,000), the Audio Enhancement System for classrooms (\$8,250,000), hotspots (\$50,000), cords and other peripherals (\$75,000). A demonstration of the Audio Enhancement Classroom Systems was provided to the board during the January 25, 2022, board meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

Accept as information

PREPARED BY:

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