

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

July 13, 2021

SUBJECT:

Consideration of Proposed ESSER II Funding Revisions

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II) resulted from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) that was signed into law on December 27, 2020. The SC Department of Education (SCDE) was allocated \$940.4 million in ESSER II funds. From that, our District is projected to receive \$28,203,447. Funds must be spent by September 30, 2023.

The Board approved the original plan at its March 23, 2021, meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

The Administration requests consideration of three ESSER II plan revisions:

1. The District seeks to acquire a facility to house central operations of the Aiken Innovate program that is expected to serve 300 – 350 virtual students during the 2021 – 2022 school year. An ideal facility would provide meeting space when in-person student interactions become necessary and could accommodate possible expansion of the Aiken Innovate program or other programs in future years. The estimated budget of \$5.0 million would include the cost of property acquisition and preparation.
2. The maintenance department requested the creation of two preventative maintenance (PM) mechanic positions among its 2021 – 2022 budget requests. Those positions did not make the final General Fund budget. After additional consideration, review, and discussion with the Director of Operations, the Administration believes it is appropriate to fund the positions from ESSER II funds while ensuring necessary ESSER documentation is maintained. Both positions' sole focus would be replacing air filters throughout the District. Once a replacement cycle has been completed, the next replacement cycle immediately commences. The estimated cost for two PM mechanics is \$120,000 per year.
3. Shift \$100,000 within the ESSER II technology budget to cover the cost of monthly hotspot subscriptions. The State recently announced they will cease to cover those costs beginning August 1, 2021. The offset is a reduction in the original ESSER II budget for devices.

The SCDE has directed school districts to exhaust ESSER II funding before utilizing ESSER III funds. [Aiken's ESSER III allocation is \$63,340,935.] To fund items 1 and 2, ESSER II components currently scheduled for 2022 – 2023 would be built into the ESSER III plan.

The Administration expects additional ESSER II revisions in the future as various components near their close out and balances are shifted to other components.

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve utilization of ESSER II funds for the building acquisition and preparation, to fund two PM mechanic positions, and to cover the cost of hotspots. Upon Board approval, the revised plan will be submitted to the SCDE for consideration.

ATTACHMENT:

ESSER II Budget Overview (Original, Revision #1, proposed revision #2)

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ESSER II BUDGET OVERVIEW

	ORIGINAL BUDGET	REVISION #1 FOR EAP	PROPOSED REVISION #2 FOR BUILDING #2 ACQUISITION & 2 PM MECHANICS	REVISED BUDGET
Summer Program				
Summer 2021	\$ 3,270,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,270,000
Summer 2022	3,270,000	-	-	3,270,000
Summer 2023	2,396,320	(60,000)	(2,336,320)	-
After School/Saturday School	1,125,000	-	-	1,125,000
Early Intervention				
2021-2022	2,000,000	-	-	2,000,000
2022-2023	2,000,000	-	(2,000,000)	-
Technology Curriculum Specialist				
2021-2022	95,000	-	-	95,000
2022-2023	95,000	-	(95,000)	-
Instructional Services Division - Various supplies, purchased services, etc.	2,000,000	-	-	2,000,000
FFCRA extension (i.e. Covid leave benefits) <i>this will likely change (possibly upwards) once we have final #'s through June 30.</i>	1,000,000	-	-	1,000,000
PPE and related	500,000	-	-	500,000
Facilities	2,793,000	-	-	2,793,000
Technology	6,002,000	-	(298,680) *	5,703,320
Technology Staffing				
2021-2022	390,000	-	-	390,000
2022-2023	390,000	-	(390,000)	-
Employee Assistance Program				
2021-2022	-	60,000	-	60,000
Indirect Cost	877,127	-	-	877,127
Maintenance - two PM mechanics				
2021-2022	-	-	120,000	120,000
Property Acquisition & Preparation	-	-	5,000,000	5,000,000
	<u>\$ 28,203,447</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 28,203,447</u>

Note: Our plan, per State directives, should be to spend ESSER II before hitting ESSER III. Removed 2022-2023 to extent possible to cover proposed revision 2. Items removed from ESSER II could shift to ESSER III plus additional years for the PM mechanics and EAP. The overall plan will continue to be fluid and will require revisions as certain aspects are fulfilled.

*would shift \$100,000 within this technology line item, from devices, to cover the cost of hot spots