



## LEA ARP ESSER Plan – Use of Funds Template

**Having an LEA ARP ESSER Plan is a condition of receiving ARP ESSER funds for each LEA.**

**Instructions:** Complete this plan template by engaging in meaningful consultation with stakeholders, as identified in the assurances below, and by giving the public an opportunity to provide input in the development of this plan. Email this completed and signed plan, or a Plan developed by the LEA that includes all requirements, to Lisa at [lenglish@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:lenglish@sde.idaho.gov) by October 1, 2021.

<b>LEA # and Name:</b> 528: Forge International
<b>Website link to the LEA's ARP ESSER Plan – Use of Funds:</b> <a href="#">Planned Use of ARP ESSER Funds</a>

### Section 1: Using ARP ESSER funds for the continuous and safe operation of in-person learning

1. *Describe the LEA's process, including timeline, for engaging meaningful consultation with stakeholders. Identify the stakeholder groups involved. Describe how the public was given an opportunity to provide input in the development of this plan.*

Forge International believes, and evidence suggests, that in-person learning is best for children. In order to best utilize our ARP ESSER funding to address this philosophy and combat the effects of Covid 19, we created a strategic development team consisting of our Executive Director, Director of Finance and Operations, Head of School, a board member and our sister school's Head of School in the early spring of 2021. This team regularly met to develop a framework for our planned use of funds, including it's timeline, research required, professional education, collaboration with other LEA's to brainstorm ideas, and the best ways to engage with our varied stakeholders to achieve meaningful feedback to assist with the full development of our plan. We recognize that, as a public school, our stakeholders take many forms: our own school community (students, families, teachers, administrators, operational staff, board members, etc), our sister International Baccalaureate school that we share ideas with, other schools that we regularly collaborate with, our grantors, and the tax paying public. We engaged with stakeholders across this broad spectrum in order to put in place a plan that would most thoughtfully and responsibly use the ESSER funds we have available to ensure we utilize these to best combat the effects of Covid 19 and intentionally address the needs of our stakeholders.

We engaged with school leaders at a national level during a multi-day, hands on workshop to collaborate on how to best achieve and use meaningful stakeholder feedback. The workshop, facilitated by one of the leading school finance instructors in the nation, consisted of an overview of allowable ways the funds could be spent, considerations regarding the effect of such choices, the practicality of implementing them, and the best ways to engage with stakeholders in order to achieve meaningful feedback. In group sessions, school superintendents and finance officers shared ideas regarding what each of our schools were considering, brainstormed the benefits and pitfalls of each and collaborated on effective alternatives. We also explored current financial and other data to inform spending choices, practiced communications and budgeting strategies, and discussed potential drawbacks and constraints. We spent well over a day creating several types of stakeholder surveys, role playing question and answer sessions, and interpreting sample feedback. Receiving input on our planned spending strategies from small and large

school district administrators from across the country was beneficial in helping us seek further stakeholder feedback and input.

In May and June of 2021 we engaged at a local level with one of our grantors, a nationally renowned education coach and other Idaho Charter Schools in multi-day workshops, which considered what strategies might be most effective to recover from student learning loss, student and staff social/emotional fatigue and for the health and welfare of staff and students. We received feedback on our own strategy, helping us to understand unanswered questions that our stakeholders could help us with and draft a plan that would be understandable and impactful to varied stakeholders.

Throughout the Spring and Summer of 2021 we engaged with our entire board in open, public meetings for several months regarding our strategy, considering student learning loss and engagement data, state and federal requirements and our methodology and timeline for ESSER fund spending, engaging in thoughtful conversation and receiving beneficial feedback.

In the summer of 2021 we sought public input from all of our school and community stakeholders to obtain meaningful, essential feedback for the best use of our ESSER funds. In order to reach all of our stakeholders and give everyone, including the broader public, the opportunity to respond and participate we posted it to our website, marketed it through social media and specifically emailed it to our internal community of teachers, administrators, other staff and families to ensure a high level of participation. We received beneficial feedback from a cross section of our stakeholders that has helped in the development of our plan and will serve as a resource as we assess and continue to reevaluate our intended outcomes.

- 2. Describe how funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are consistent with the most recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines<sup>1</sup> for reopening and operating schools for in-person learning.*

Forge International recognizes that safely reopening schools and sustaining safe operations to maximize in-person instruction is essential for student learning and student well-being. The school will maintain the health and safety of students, educators and other school staff and volunteers. To support the safe return to in-person instruction and sustain safe operation, the district developed the Updated Network Reopening Plan & Safe Return to In-Person Checklist - Updated for 2021-2022 School Year available at: [Updated Network Reopening Plan - 21-22 School Year](#). This board approved guide is reevaluated and updated regularly, at a minimum every six months, to meet the guidelines and requirements provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Our ESSER funds will be utilized to support and meet the standards set forth in our safe reopening plan. Air cleaning and filtration can help reduce airborne contaminants, including particles containing viruses. Effective air circulation and purification will be achieved by the use of portable air purifiers, regular maintenance of our HVAC units and utilization of high quality Merv 13 filters, reducing air recirculation and increasing the rate of air change and the amount of outdoor air coming in. The utilization of outdoor space for overflow classes, physical

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<sup>1</sup> The most recent guidelines can be found here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>



education and eating lunch will allow for safe social distancing and open air flow. The continual purchase of health supplies such as high quality cleaning solutions, hand sanitizer, masks, gloves and health training tools will help mitigate against Covid 19 in order to keep the school open and operating for in-person learning. Forge International also has available a dedicated Covid contact tracer to work, in collaboration with the school nurse, to effectively identify and isolate cases and close contacts to reduce COVID-19 transmission and ensure the school will remain open for in-person learning.

3. *Describe how the LEA will use no less than, 20% of allotted ARP funds to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year. Specifically, address how the LEA will utilize funds to identify, reengage, and support students most likely to have experienced the impact of lost instructional time on student learning, such as:*
  - a. *Students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years;*
  - b. *Students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures; and*
  - c. *Students most at-risk of dropping out of school.*
  - d. *Subgroups of students disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, Hispanic students, and Native American students.*

Forge International School believes, and evidence suggests, that in-person learning is best for children. The use of ARP funds will assist us to specifically address students who have missed the most in-person instruction, students who were unable to consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during the FY20 and FY21 school years, students most at-risk of dropping out of school and students who are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Through our engagement with our varied stakeholders and reinforced by evidence, we will address learning loss primarily through Targeted Intensive Tutoring. This will consist of intervention with individual students and small groups using skill-building curriculum. To achieve this, we will use ARP funding to employ additional Response to Intervention and Special Education Paraprofessionals. This will provide a higher student/teacher ratio, resulting in more direct instruction and intervention and allow for students to engage in active learning and the development of higher order thinking skills. We will also maintain and support our 1:1 technology program and will reach out to families with training and educational tools in order to help them reinforce learning and best support their students.

4. *Describe how the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act (See Appendix A). In your description, please identify how funds will be allocated to schools and for districtwide activities based on student need to equitably and inclusively support student success.*

Section 2001(e) of the ARP Act permits school districts to use the ARP Act ESSER III funding not reserved for learning loss to address the impacts of COVID-19 in a variety of ways. Forge International will use the remaining funds to address student social emotional needs through the hiring of a Dean of Students, outdoor experiential enrichment programming, a school

dedicated psychologist, mentoring and culture building to re-engage and build connections between students, teachers and families.

We will design and develop a large outdoor grass playfield, gravel track and blacktop to create an open air space for children to play on during recess and provide outdoor space for physical education and health classes, a safer alternative to our indoor gym. These outdoor spaces will engage students and help compensate for the loss of regular, consistent physical education our students experienced during March of 2020 and May of 2021. This is expected to also address the urgent social/ emotional fatigue our students have experienced by creating a space for them to play and socially reconnect with friends and teachers. Further, it provides students with opportunities to enhance social/emotional and behavioral skills such as trust, communication, problem solving, responsible decision making, emotional regulation, and leadership skills.

We will also purchase vision and hearing equipment for use by our school nurse to identify problems that may impair student learning and well-being. Vision and hearing impairments in children are common and uncorrected problems interfere with early literacy and learning and contribute to the development of educational, emotional and behavioral problems. Often, schools are the first to identify deficits in vision and hearing that can and have the potential for lifelong disability. Performing screenings by our full-time RN will allow us the ability to identify problems that already have or will impede a child's ability to perform well in school.

The efforts of these remaining funds will be distributed equitably and inclusively to support student success and well-being.

- 5. Describe how the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements, including but not limited to the interventions implemented to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, will respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, Hispanic students, and Native American students.*

Forge International IB Coordinators and Directors will work collaboratively with Campus and Network Administrators to support and monitor implementation of evidence-based academic interventions. Our IB/Curriculum/Assessment Director, in conjunction with the Campus and Network Administrators will be responsible for data collection and analysis of the interventions and will help in identifying the most effective interventions employed. Our Dean of Students, counsellor, dedicated psychologist and school nurse will work in collaboration with campus and network administrators to regularly evaluate our social/emotional and mental health interventions to ensure they respond to the needs of our students. Special attention will be given to students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, Hispanic students, and Native American students.

- 6. Describe how the LEA will consistently monitor student progress and effectiveness of the strategies/interventions implemented to address gaps in student learning and well-being.*

Forge International School believes that in-person learning is best for children. Our intended use of ESSER ARP funds to address the academic impact of lost in-person instructional time during





the FY20 and FY21 school years through the implementation of evidence-based academic, social/emotional and mental health interventions will help recapture learning loss, reengage, and support students. We will intentionally and regularly evaluate our interventions through data collection, analysis and collaboration with our stakeholders. Data collection and analysis will include academic indicators, social-emotional indicators, and instructional time indicators including excessive absenteeism. In addition, the administrative team will work closely with the Dean of Students, school counselor, psychologist and community liaisons to reduce and/or remove barriers to learning. This will ensure that families have the necessary resources to support the needs of students disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. Through the collaboration of teachers, support staff and administrators and consultation with all our stakeholders we will ensure that our interventions remain effective.

## Section 2: Assurances

Assurance	LEA Response	
	Yes	No
1. The LEA assures that, to the best of the LEA's knowledge and belief, all information in this plan is true and correct.	Yes ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>
2. The LEA engaged in meaningful consultation with stakeholders and gave the public an opportunity to provide input in the development of this plan. Specifically, the LEA engaged in meaningful consultation with students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); and teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions. Keep documentation of stakeholder communications and meetings on file at the LEA.	Yes ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>
3. The LEA engaged in meaningful consultation with each of the following, to the extent present in or served by the LEA: Tribes; civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students. Keep documentation of stakeholder communications and meetings on file at the LEA.	Yes ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>
4. The plan is in an understandable and uniform format; to the extent practicable, written in a language that parents can understand or, if not practicable, orally translated; and, upon request by a parent who is an individual with a disability, will be provided in an alternative format accessible to that parent.	Yes ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>
5. The plan is publicly available on the LEA website.	Yes ✓	No <input type="checkbox"/>

## Signatures

Superintendent/Charter Administrator Printed Name: Andrew Johnson, Executive Director	
Superintendent/Charter Administrator Signature: 	Date: Click or tap to enter a date. 20 SEP 21
Local Board of Trustees, President's Printed Name: Michael Lawrence, Board Chair	
Local Board of Trustees, President's Signature: 	Date: Click or tap to enter a date. 9/22/2021

Email this completed and signed plan to Lisa English at [lenglish@sde.idaho.gov](mailto:lenglish@sde.idaho.gov)  
no later than October 1, 2021.