

Challenge Preparatory Charter School

American Rescue Plan (ARP)

Introduction

In March 2021, President Biden signed into law the **American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP)**. ARP makes available \$122.8 billion nationally resulting in a third round of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. This groundbreaking ARP ESSER III legislation along with the prior ESSER I and ESSER II funds is designed to help individuals and institutions across our country address the impact of COVID-19 and the resultant disruptions in our schools, our workplaces, and our daily lives. Under the new law, federal funds will be provided to help the nation's K-12 schools, including Charter Schools, return to in-person instruction and address the impact of the COVID-19 disruption on students' learning and social-emotional health. In New York, more than \$9 billion in ARP funds have been allocated to school districts and charter schools.

Challenge Preparatory Charter School has been awarded \$1,402,075 in ARP ESSER III funds. We will expend these funds based on the priorities resulting from our community and staff surveys, and our research focusing on learning recovery and accelerated learning targeted to individual student needs. We are grateful to our entire school community for their input as we developed our application and plans for spending funds.

Federal legislation and federal and state agency guidance regarding the ARP ESSER III funds (herein referred to as ARP funds), along with the 2021-22 New York State budget, require each local education agency (LEA)—including NYS Charter Schools—that receive funding under the ARP to post on its website a plan summarizing how these funds will be spent. The primary purpose

of ARP funding is to help schools like ours overcome the challenges of the COVID-19 disruption and succeed in the upcoming school years. Our ARP plan must show how we will use these funds to create, maintain and/or expand vetted and research-based programs, services, and resources, which improve the educational and social outcomes for our students. In addition, our ARP plan must be developed with input from our families, educators, and stakeholders.

The Challenge Preparatory Charter School ARP Plan

The Challenge Preparatory Charter School’s ARP Plan satisfies the legal requirements and summarizes how our school intends to invest these funds. The funds will provide additional academic programs and social-emotional supports for our students, and continue to aid in the improvement of the health and safety within our school community. Our ARP plan is designed to ensure that we use these federal dollars to address specific school needs in alignment with the objectives, requirements, and priorities of the ARP legislation and the 2021-22 NYS budget. Accordingly, our plan prioritizes spending on **non-recurring expenses** and **demonstrably sustainable recurring expenses** in the following ARP-allowable areas:

- ***Safely returning students to in-person instruction***—Challenge Preparatory Charter School (herein referred to as Challenge Prep) in its commitment to the health and safety of our entire school community has utilized prior ESSER I and ESSER II funds to improve COVID-19 monitoring and sanitation protocols, improve technology infrastructure for both remote and in-school learning, and ensure that each student has access to a learning device and internet access in school and at home. A small portion of ARP funds (less than 1%) will be allocated for consulting partner JPS Solutions to assist us in monitoring (and modifying as needed) our reopening plans, protocols and infrastructure. Adjustments in these areas will be made depending on the status of COVID-19 community spread or

reduction. We continue to work cooperatively with the NYC Department of Education (NYCDOE), New York State Education Department (NYSED), and NYC Test and Trace Corps to ensure we are compliant with their guidance and regulations.

- ***Maximizing in-person instruction time***—Challenge Prep will return to our pre-COVID-19 extended day and school year schedule where we will maximize in-person instruction in a technology-enriched environment. Just over 12% of the ARP funds will be used to increase the professional capacities of supervisory, instructional, and pupil personnel services through the coordinated work of our consultant partners Educators for Success and The New Teacher Project (TNTP). Educators for Success will provide ongoing executive coaching to our principals and their teacher leadership teams. TNTP, using their validated Pathways to Leadership in Urban Schools (PLUS) program, will provide training for school leaders to promote teacher effectiveness in developing and sustaining rigorous and engaging classrooms. These coordinated professional development programs will support the effective transition to in-person student learning, assessing individual needs, redesigning curricula, and moving from learning recovery to accelerated learning.
- ***Operating schools and meeting the needs of students***— Over 16% of ARP funds will be allocated to effectively meeting the needs of all students through a two-pronged strategy of ongoing school leadership supports and the implementation of a new Parent Academy. This Academy, further described in a section below, will focus on providing adult education for parents, grandparents and caregivers to assist their children to thrive in the classroom. Consultant partners JPS Solutions, Educators for Success and TNTP will provide supports to school leadership. The JPS Solutions group will assist school leadership in: a) planning and transitioning effectively between remote and in-person

learning; b) reviewing and revising current reopening plans; and, c) effectively implementing ARP funds coordinated with other federal, state and private sources. As indicated in the section above, the coordinated work of Educators for Success and TNTP will provide instructional coaching and mentoring to school principals and teacher leadership teams to promote teacher effectiveness in developing and sustaining rigorous and engaging classrooms that meet the needs of all learners.

- ***Purchasing educational technology***— A small percentage of ARP funds (less than 1%) will provide for expanding engagement of parents, grandparents and other caregivers through the use of presentation technology in Challenge Prep’s Parent Academy which is further described below.
- ***Addressing the impacts of COVID-19 on students, including the impacts of interrupted instruction and learning loss and the impacts on low-income students, students with disabilities (SWDs), English language learners (ELLs) and homeless students***—A significant amount of APR funds, just over 30% of the \$1.4 million allocation, will address the impact of COVID-19 on Challenge Prep’s entire school population which is predominantly eligible for free and reduced lunch. We will place a major emphasis on our SWD and ELL populations to ensure we can remediate as much learning loss as possible. ARP funds will support the implementation of Challenge Prep’s new Parent Academy providing adult education for parents, grandparents and caregivers to assist their children to thrive in the classroom. Funds will enable the hiring of a Parent Academy Coordinator whose salary and benefits will be covered by APR funds for the first two years and then be supported through school funds thereafter. APR funds will also be used to support the Parent Academy speakers, presentation materials, supplies and presentation technology.

JPS Solutions will support leadership as indicated in the section above, particularly regarding supports for in-person and hybrid learning, and ongoing planning and coordination of funding. Learner Centered Initiatives (LCI) will provide professional development for ELA curriculum design to accommodate learning loss and adaption to individual student needs. The Lavinia Group will train teachers and instructional leaders in the Close Reading Model which supports our scholars' ability to engage with complex texts in all subject areas. The Eisenberg Leadership Academy (TELA), as described below will work with school leadership in developing each student's individual learning/achievement plan in order to identify individual learning goals and appropriate interventions and supports as needed.

- ***Implementing evidence-based strategies to address students' social, emotional, mental health and academic needs***—Just over 8% of ARP funds will be used to support SEL strategies and curriculum through the work of the Parent Academy, and Challenge Prep's Social Emotional Learning Team's work with TELA. The result of this work will be a Life, College and Career course for all grade levels. The course will incorporate developing and updating each student's individual learning/achievement plan, career portfolio, and total talent portfolio. It will incorporate student advisory modules and address strands within our school's SEL curriculum.
- ***Offering evidence-based summer, afterschool, and other extended learning and enrichment programs***—Nearly 32% of the ARP funds will support the extended learning and enrichment opportunities provided through the Parent Academy, and afterschool and weekend tutoring through Challenge Prep's partnership with Practice Makes Perfect (PMP). PMP will offer high dosage small group tutoring in math and reading to all

eligible scholars. PMP has a proven track record of offering impactful services based on individual lesson designs initiated with clear learning goals and associated outcomes per session. iReady assessment data will be used to determine student eligibility and will assist teachers in providing strategic intervention to students in the program.

Review and Evaluation of Effectiveness

Challenge Preparatory Charter School will review this Plan every six months. The purpose of this review is to: a) ensure that it is implemented with fidelity; b) measure and document the impact of ARP fund spending; and c) modify the plan, as appropriate, to improve the quality and outcomes of the programs, services and resources supported by ARP funds. The review will be coordinated by the school's Leadership Team with approval of the Board of Trustees. The Plan will include input from teachers, parents, students and other school stakeholders. To this end, we will engage stakeholders through use of surveys, public meetings and other means. The results of each review—including changes in ARP-funded services and activities—will be posted on our website and shared with the school community.

We recognize that this plan may be revised as a result of changing COVID-19 circumstances and new or revised legislative and regulatory guidance. We also recognize that protocols and guidance may change as information about COVID-19 and effective health and safety measures evolve. Accordingly, we will monitor the guidance provided by these agencies on an ongoing basis and make changes to our policies, practices, and spending as we see fit.