

Proposal for ESSER Grant Spending

New Dawn Charter High School II located at 89-25 161st Street in Jamaica, Queens, has been awarded \$382,210 through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act which was signed into law by President Biden on March 27, 2021. This money is coming from New York State through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds.¹

As part of our responsibility in receiving this money, we are requesting public comment to our spending plan. Under the CARES Act, this money can be spent on a variety of programs listed in Appendix A, attached at the end of this document. Further, we have a 20% set aside (\$76,442) which must be spent on learning loss due to the pandemic.

If you wish to comment on this plan, please send all comments to PubComment@ndchsqueens.org

Subject Line: ESSER Fund Use

After surveying the needs of students and reviewing the needs of the school, we have determined that to combat learning loss, we will spend our 20% set aside (\$76,442) on hiring a certified special education teacher with a specialty in math and/or science who will work with ALL students. These were the two hardest hit areas of the school year during remote/hybrid learning which occurred between September 2020 and June 2021. Of all the students who enrolled in a math class only 16% received credit; for science, 20% received credit. While ELA and Social Studies also need support, we currently have the necessary supports both in intervention and special education/at-risk already in place at the school. Therefore, we are planning on hiring a full-time, certified math/science/special education teacher to support existing staffing and programming.

This aligns with funding categories 15 and 16. This deficit is a direct result of students not being able to attend school. This meets the 20% set aside for the school.

With the remaining \$305,768, we will combat learning loss in a very different way. Our school is based on the belief that a robust Internship Program, combined with a rigorous academic program is key to the success of our students, many of whom are lower income, have disabilities, are English learners, are racial & ethnic minorities, and students who are homeless. We have always believed that the Internship Program is what helps our students bridge the gap between school, which many struggle through, and future careers. The pandemic has had a devastating impact on our Internship Program. When NYC closed down and went into quarantine, we lost all of our community internship sites. We purchased virtual internship programs to take the place of real internships, and only 22% of the students were able to pass these programs.

We understand the argument that college is for everyone, and we believe it. However, when dealing with students who are struggling with success in school, college is many times the last place they wish to be. Research has shown that linking academics to community internships can result in experiential and transformative learning, resulting in students' eventual enrollment

¹ More information can be found at: <http://www.nysed.gov/federal-education-covid-response-funding>

in higher education.² Students who struggle in school, even if they wish to go to college, need to involve themselves in activities that increase their self-worth. Internships provide this opportunity. When the pandemic hit, this opportunity for our students ended. Unfortunately, the virtual methods we used were just no substitute for what our students need to be successful.

We are proposing to use the rest of the funding to redesign the cafeteria and kitchen in the school. New Dawn Queens holds a 30-year lease, so the money will not go to a developer, but will be used towards providing internships in the culinary and hospitality field to our students. There is already a sizable kitchen on site, although it is very outdated and is not situated as a teaching environment. By reconfiguring this space and updating the equipment, we will always have an internship site available for our students. True, it will be on site with the school, but it is a culinary kitchen, and we will hire a chef/teacher to oversee the process. Our goal is to have this kitchen certified as a CTE (career technical education) program with the New York State Education Department.

Culinary teaching kitchens in high schools have also shown to have an impact on learning. Authors at Harvard's T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the Culinary Institute of America are now beginning to identify "teaching kitchens" as bridging many disciplines including nutrition, science, health, and focusing on lifestyle changes.³ Research has shown that these situations are not just teaching cooking but also the need for physical activity, using web-based resources, and motivation.⁴ These are all things that at-risk students listed in funding category 8, struggle with and when resolved, will have a positive impact on quality of life, including education.

A Culinary Teaching Kitchen also impacts learning in general. Because cooking involves all the senses, students with different learning styles are effortlessly learning math, safety, science and are increasing self confidence and are making the connection between learning and building positive memories, which aids in further education.⁵ Culinary kitchens also promote a love of social studies by introducing students in real time to other cultures, providing an opportunity to discuss the history around such cultures.⁶ Renovating the space not only will impact categories 15 and 16, but 17 as well (Appendix A).

Providing the extra supports in science and math, supported by work opportunities for students will increase student well being and make up for the loss of learning during the pandemic.

² Angelique, H. L. (2001). Linking the Academy to the Community Through Internships: A Model of Service Learning, Student Empowerment, and Transformative Education. *Sociological Practice*, 3(1), 37–53. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43735783>

³ Found on <http://familycookproductions.org/blog/what-is-a-teaching-kitchen/> on 9/21/2021.

⁴ Eisenberg, D. M., & Imamura, Be. (2020). Teaching Kitchens in the Learning and Work Environments: The Future Is Now. *Global Advances in Health and Medicine*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2164956120962442>

⁵ Found on <https://healthy-food-choices-in-schools.extension.org/cooking-with-kids-in-schools-why-it-is-important/> on 9/21/2021.

⁶ Found on <https://www.ecpi.edu/blog/importance-of-studying-culinary-arts-why-its-so-necessary> on 9/21/2021

Appendix A

Funding Categories

1. Any activity authorized by ESEA, including the Native Hawaiian Education Act and the Alaska Native Education Equity, Support, and Assistance Act.
2. Any activity authorized by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).
3. Any activity authorized by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA)
4. Any activity authorized by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (Perkins V).
5. Any activity Authorized by subtitle B of the title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (McKinney-Vento).
6. Coordinating preparedness and response efforts of LEAs with State, local, Tribal, and territorial public health departments, and other relevant agencies, to improve coordinated responses among such entities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.
7. Providing principals and other school leaders with the resources necessary to address the needs of their individual schools.
8. Activities to address the unique needs of low-income children or students, students with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.
9. Developing and implementing procedures and systems to improve the preparedness and response efforts of LEAs.
10. Training and professional development for staff of the LEA on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.
11. Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of the LEA, including buildings operated by such LEA.
12. Planning for, coordinating, and implementing activities during long-term closures, including providing meals to eligible students, providing technology for online learning to all students, providing guidance for carrying out requirements under the IDEA and ensuring other education services can continue to be provided consistent with all Federal, State, and local requirements.
13. Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity) for students who are served by the LEA that aids in regular and substantive educational interaction between students and their classroom instructors, including low-income students and students with disabilities, which may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.
14. Providing mental health services and supports, including through the implementation of evidence based full-service community schools.
15. Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and enrichment and supplemental after-school programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, students with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care.
16. Addressing the academic impact of lost instructional time among an LEA's students (including low-income students, students with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care) by: a) Administering and using high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable

to accurately assess students' academic progress and assist educators in meeting students' academic needs, including through differentiating instruction; b) Implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students; c) Providing information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support students, including in a distance learning environment; and d) Tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education.

17. School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs.
18. Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement.
19. Developing strategies and implementing public health protocols including, to the greatest extent practicable, policies in line with guidance from the CDC for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff.
20. Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation of and continuity of services in the LEA and continuing to employ existing staff of the LEA.