

South Buffalo Charter School

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Spending Plan

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Introduction

In March 2021, President Biden signed into law the \$1.9 trillion **American Rescue Plan (ARP)**. This groundbreaking legislation 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, **more than \$130 billion** in 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.

South Buffalo Charter School (SBCS) has been awarded

\$2,889,613 in ARP ESSER funds,

\$1,264,376 in CARES ACT 2(ESSER II) funds, and

\$384,648 in CARE ACT 1(ESSER 1)

Total ARP Program Funding: \$5,338,360

We intend to use these funds to support implementation of in-person instruction, improve health and safety throughout our classrooms and school building(s) and strengthen our academic

programs and social-emotional supports. We are grateful to our parents, teachers and entire school community for their input as we developed our applications and plans for spending ARP ESSER, ESSER II and ESSER I funds.

Our School's American Rescue Plan: Federal legislation and federal and state agency guidance regarding the ARP, along with the 2021-22 New York State budget, require each local education agency (LEA)—including each NYS charter school—that receives 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 coming school years. In our ARP plan, we are required to show how our use of ARP funds will create, maintain or expand “evidence-based” programs, services and/or resources that improve outcomes for our students. In addition, our ARP Spending Plan must be developed with input from parents, educators and other school stakeholders. Accordingly, as described later, we have engaged stakeholders from across our school community to provide input into our ARP plan.

The **SBCS ARP Spending Plan** satisfies ARP legal requirements and summarizes how we intend to invest ARP ESSER, ESSER II and ESSER I funds to improve health and safety, academic programs and social-emotional supports for our students. Our ARP Spending Plan will ensure that we use ARP ESSER, ESSER II and ESSER I funds to address specific school needs while aligning our spending with the objectives, requirements and priorities of the ARP legislation and the 2021-22 NYS budget. Accordingly, our ARP Spending 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***— SBCS is committed to the health and safety of our students and community as we engage in in-person instruction in the new school year. Since March 2020, we have invested significant funds from our school budget to address the COVID-19 pandemic, make our school buildings safe and ensure compliance with regulations and guidance from the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC), New York State Department of Health (DOH), New York State Education Department (NYSED) and other relevant agencies. ARP ESSER, ESSER II funds will now be used to recover some of the money spent last year so that it can be reinvested in academic programming, social-emotional learning (SEL) and school improvement. SBCS intends to

use ARP funds to promote the health and safety of our students and staff through extensive COVID-19 screening testing and nursing services. The expansion of our health care staff is necessary because of:

- Ongoing and expanded screening testing,
- Required daily COVID-19-related reporting,
- Coordination with DOH and other agencies,
- Diagnostic health testing of students and staff.

Accordingly, we will use \$104,892 in ARP ESSER funds for COVID 19 Testing Equipment (\$65,000), PPE supplies including: masks, both youth and adult, vinyl gloves, M/L/XL, gowns, face shields, foot coverings replenish stocks funded with other federal funds (\$20,000) and a .6 FTE Health Office Assistant (\$19,892) who will share responsibility for COVID-19-related health and safety practices in ARP ESSER funds.

- ***Maximizing in-person instruction time***—SBCS will maximize in-person instruction time primarily by providing in-person summer academic programs and high-intensity school-day and after-school tutoring. SBCS has implemented a comprehensive assessment program to generate data that will help staff to identify student needs and monitor student progress resulting from planned interventions and support. We will help students strengthen their ELA and writing skills through targeted in-person writing instruction. SBCS plans to use the following assessments:

1. **i-Ready** Students in grades K-8 are administered i-Ready Assessments for both Math and ELA. This assessment is given 3 times each academic year: Fall, Winter, and Spring. Results from these assessments help guide MTSS Intervention services, for both subject areas, as well as for adapting Math and ELA curricula.
2. **Fountas and Pinnell Literacy Assessment** Students in grades K-6 are administered the F&P Literacy Assessment. This assessment is given 3 times each academic year: Fall, Winter, and Spring. The results from this assessment serve as an additional lens for students needing MTSS Intervention.
3. **Lucy Calkins Writing Assessment** Students in grades K-8 are administered this writing assessment two times per academic year; Fall and Spring. The results of this assessment help inform instructional needs in the classroom.

4. **NYS Math and ELA Assessments** Traditionally, all students in grades 3-8 take the ELA and Math State Assessments, once per academic year. Results from these assessments inform instructional practices in the classroom, enrichment services, and MTSS intervention services.
5. **NYS Science Assessment** Students in grades 4 and 8 take the annual NYS Science Assessment. The results of this assessment help to inform instructional practices in the classroom.
6. **Attendance Data and Summative Assessments** The pandemic has offered significant challenges to the SBCS ability to understand the impact of prolonged remote learning among our students all of whom reside in low income families.

In addition, SBCS plans to institute the following:

1. Students will be assessed earlier in the school year using the i-Ready assessment for reading and math. The data from i-Ready assessment will be used to group students into intervention groups that will target weak skills for the first 6-8 weeks of school.
 2. The Learning Objective Guide will be revised to include and emphasis on the most important grade level skills for each cohort ("Power Standards") along with prerequisite skills from the grade prior. Teachers will prioritize the "Power Standards" throughout their instruction and student assignments.
 3. Grades K-2 schedule will include additional time for phonics instruction and guided reading.
 4. Teachers will participate in professional development that will include a deeper analysis of using i-Ready data to drive student growth, best practices for remote instruction, and trauma/SEL (as it relates to COVID-19)
 5. SBCS will continue to communicate with parents as well as offer professional development for parents around i-Ready, Remote Learning, and Social Emotional Learning.
- ***Operating schools and meeting the needs of students***— ARP ESSER, ESSER II and ESSER I funds will be spent to support and improve school operations, including implementing COVID-19 safety measures to support physical distancing. SBCS has determined that the most important educational need is to reactivate the ventilation system

in order to mitigate the spread of diseases in the air and create a safe learning environment for students and staff.

SBCS uses natural ventilation to provide code mandated ventilation requirements but with the harsh winter season in our region, which has proven to have limits as the school transitions its educational program back to in-school. First, the current HVAC systems must be serviced and filters changed. Second, **the addition of five outdoor classrooms increases the safety of the school environment by provided additional educational space where outdoor educational spaces which are well ventilated.** These initiatives provide the following benefits:

1. Removing pollutants that build up and have a negative impact on the body including headaches, fatigue and irritation.
2. Fresh air cleans a person's lungs and allows more oxygen into the body (brain uses 20% of body's oxygen) therefore keeping brains working at top capacity.
3. Makes white blood cells stronger to kill bacteria and germs - fewer absences

SBCS will use \$75,000 in ARP ESSER funding to provide HVAC filters and system maintenance (\$25,000) and five Outdoor Classrooms (\$50,000) funds. No building construction or structural alterations were required or completed in the upgrading project.

SBCS is using ARP ESSER funds to improve the school operation and meet student needs:

1. First, SBCS is using \$40,000 in ARP ESSER funds to improve the traffic flow into and out of the school by sealing and striping the school parking lots. The bus loop was striped to accommodate busses. Due to COVID SBCS has completely changed the bus loop to a car pick up line. For safety it needs to be completely re-striped, which means it needs sealant placed over all current stripes. The other lot is now the bus lot and is striped for cars, which has to be changed.
2. Second, many of SBCS students are experiencing social and emotion stress from the heavy noise due a lack of sound deadening on the ceiling. Sound proofing will reduce unwanted noise. \$18,000 in ARP ESSER funds are earmarked for sound proofing.
3. Third, SBCS is using \$8,922 for wall dividers, which for increased student safety, both student (\$40,560) and faculty standing desks (\$24,500) as students

have gotten used to both sitting and standing learning. SBCS will purchase two student standing desks per room and one teacher standing desk per room, and new carpeting (\$6,925). For safety all old rugs have been removed and new carpets for students to sit on will be purchased.

- ***Purchasing educational technology***— \$609,885 in ARP ESSER funds will be invested in educational technology as follows:
 - \$194,202 - Chromebooks and protective cases for students
 - \$9,600 - Laptops for teachers,
 - \$40,080 for computer servers,
 - \$6,600 for document cameras,
 - \$144,243 to increase broad band capacity
 - \$215,160 for printers
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Our investment of ARP ESSER funds to provide every student with a Chromebook and teachers with new and replacement laptop computers will help them in collaborative planning and curriculum development and in delivering effective instruction.

- ***Addressing the impacts of COVID-19 on students, including the impacts of interrupted instruction and learning loss and the impacts on at-risk students***—To address the impact of COVID-19 on all students by providing intensive summer (\$30,000) and extended school day (\$40,000) and high-intensity tutoring (\$152,000) and other academic interventions targeted at improving students' literacy and writing skills (\$79,895).
- \$397,337 in ARP ESSER funds (23.2%) as follows:
 - \$30,000 for Summer School and Afterschool staffing (\$40,000) for professional staff: Coordinators, teachers, tutors, and data service; and (\$38,880 for support staff including Coaches (\$12,000), and Enrichment Assistants (\$28,880)
 - \$112,000 – Latera Tutoring -.Support for curriculum development and academic implementation for learning loss remediation.
 - \$79,895 – Readers and Writers Workshop - Currently SBCS utilizes Readers and Writer's Workshop as ELA curriculum for grades 3-8. Given the level of learning loss, after school and daycare centers closed due to the pandemic SBCS would like to introduce this curriculum in the primary grades as well. The cost of the curriculum will. The purchase is consistent with ARP ESSER Use of Funds #16. The curriculum will add libraries of leveled books to each homeroom for teachers

to accurately diagnose reading level and have students read appropriate books to make up learning loss.

ARP ESSER funds will also be used to strengthen school-family connections to support students in transitioning to full-time in-person instruction and addressing the impact of the COVID-19 disruption on student learning. With the support of the Buffalo Charter School Ell Consortium, we will also use funds for family ESL and literacy programs targeted specifically to help parents and family members of ELLs and other at-risk students support their children in completing homework and succeeding in school. \$20,000 in ARP ESSER funds have been earmarked for five parent workshops designed to provide parents with approaches they can use to support their children with school requirements, and accessing assistance when needed.

- ***Implementing evidence-based strategies to address students' social, emotional, mental health and academic needs***— We shall use ARP ESSER funds to expand teacher knowledge and skills focusing on students' mental health and social and emotional growth and development. These professional development programs include:
 - Trauma Informed Care (\$5,000)
 - Conflict Resolution (\$5,000)
 - Wellness Development and Team Building
 - Clarity, Culture and Compassion (\$5,000)
 - Cultural Competency (\$10,000)

We are investing ARP ESSER funds to better implement these and other evidence-based initiatives to help students transition emotionally and behaviorally to formal, structured in-person instruction and support their social-emotional health. We will also use ARP funds to address students' academic needs through summer and after-school academic programming, high-intensity tutoring, targeted ELA/writing and arts education interventions, summer orientation programs and other evidence-based academic initiatives.

- ***Offering evidence-based summer, afterschool, and other extended learning and enrichment programs***—We will use ARP ESSER funds to support evidence-based summer and after-school instructional programs, high-intensity in-school and out-of-school time (OST) tutoring, summer student orientation initiatives and other new and expanded academic and enrichment programs.

Elements of the ARP Spending Plan

The SBCS ARP Spending Plan shows how ARP funds will be invested to support the school in each of the above-listed ARP-allowable areas. At the core of SBCS's plan for accelerating student learning is strengthening the school's instructional program and the ability of the entire staff to deliver it. SBCS is committed to providing small group instruction and support to our students, especially to students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students. Our commitment to these students is evidenced by the fact that nearly half of our ARP funds will be devoted to enhancing the school's curriculum and supporting teachers. SBCS is investing its ARP allocation over two years to: a) evaluate and expand our assessment program including ensuring that assessments are administered equitably; b) hire instructional support staff to help teachers provide small-group instruction; c) expand and enrich instructional curriculum materials to improve student achievement and growth in reading and writing; d) expand and improve academic interventions; and e) provide professional development for teachers and other key instructional staff.

SBCS will use ARP funds to address the needs of all students by providing high-quality after-school and summer programming. In addition, we are expanding and strengthening our academic interventions for at-risk students, including integration of the research-based ENGAGE program that supports English language learners (ELLs) by building academic language and creating context before lessons begin. We are also investing ARP funds in services and resources for exceptional learners.

Finally, we will use ARP funds to integrate evidence-based strategies to meet our students' social, emotional and mental health needs with our overall curricula and programs. Our primary strategy for supporting the social-emotional development and health of our students and staff focuses professional development aimed at improving the quality of the social and academic environment at school through the implementation of evidence-based solutions to conflict resolutions, trauma care, cultural competence in supporting the characteristics and needs of the SBCS student population.

The SBCS ARP Spending Plan's goal is to help our students and school community transition successfully from the COVID-19 disrupted educational experience of 2020-21 to a high-quality in-person educational experience in and after 2021-22. Specifically, we are spending ARP funds to: a) ensure the health and safety of students and staff; b) support the academic growth and achievement of students; and c) promote our students' social emotional health and development. Our school's investment of ARP ESSER funds will be coordinated with spending of other federal and non-federal funds including per-pupil, Title I, ESSER I, ESSER II and private grant funding to maximize its impact and improve programs and outcomes for students.

We intend to use ARP funds to:

- ***Ensure the safe return of students to in-person instruction.*** SBCS will continue to implement health and safety protocols and guidance established by the New York State Department of Health (DOH), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the New York State Governor's Office. Our health and safety policies and practices are described in our Health and Safety Plan, which is incorporated by reference in this ARP Spending Plan. We 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 needed to conform to new health and safety requirements and guidance.

Our investment in ensuring the safe return of students to in-person instruction will include the following:

- ***Using ARP funds to improve the physical climate at SBS with the addition of five outdoor classrooms and attention to school's ventilation system.*** By adding five outdoor classrooms SBCS provides additional safe, well ventilated educational spaces for students, while increasing the spacing in existing classrooms. The provision of HVAC maintenance and filters to existing buildings also increases the safety of students and staff members. Improving ventilation is one of the key strategies recommended by the CDC to ensure health and safety in school buildings. Also, improving ventilation is a core recommendation in the most recent DOH

guidance – Interim Guidance for In-Person Instruction at Pre-K to Grade 12 Schools during the COVID 19 Public Health Emergency (June 7, 2021) which says *“Indoor air quality should be improved by increasing outdoor air delivery to the building (ventilation) and removing particulates/viral particles from the air (air filtration) to the greatest extent possible. Ventilation and filtration together can reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission.”* Our objective in upgrading the ventilation system was to maintain a safe indoor environment for our school community and reduce transmission of COVID-19, emerging variants and future epidemic outbreaks. Our ventilation improvements were made to ensure that air quality in the building would be excellent and that our air ventilation and circulation system would be compliant with the recommendations of the CDC.

- Providing HVAC filters and system maintenance as part of the SBCS ventilation initiative is an evidence-based strategy for improving safety and safeguarding against COVID-19. A May 2021 report from Johns Hopkins (*School Ventilation: A Vital Tool to Reduce COVID-19 Spread*, https://www.centerforhealthsecurity.org/our-work/pubs_archive/pubs-pdfs/2021/20210526-school-ventilation.pdf) specifically recommends that schools utilize air filtration for supplemental protection, saying:

“School administrators and decision makers should purchase HEPA air filtration units to be placed in classrooms and common occupied spaces. Even if ventilation in a school already meets current building standards (many do not), additional air filtration from a portable device can help reduce the potential for SARS-CoV-2 transmission. Portable HEPA air filters are easy to use, HEPA filtration is a proven technology, and the units have the advantage of being always “on.”

These air purifiers will be employed in areas of the school facility where supplemental air ventilation will be most beneficial.

- **Maximize In-Person Instruction Time.** SBCS will use ARP funds to increase the duration and impact of instruction. In March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, SBCS pivoted from on-site, in-person instruction to home-based remote learning using online technologies. Throughout the 2020-21 academic year, we engaged most of our students in

on-site, and in-person learning, with some temporary COVID-19-related interruptions. While our in-person and remote learning over the last 18 months have provided continuity in high-quality instruction, it was challenging for many of our students and families. We recognize that effective and consistent in-person instruction has many benefits over remote instruction and/or interrupted in-person instruction. These benefits range from more consistent direct teacher-to-student time in a structured learning environment to greater opportunities for student social interaction and relationship-building with teachers and peers. Accordingly, we are committed to establishing permanent in-school academic programs, re-engaging all our students and addressing the impacts of lost instructional time. Specifically, we intend to invest ARP funds in:

Summer Academic Programming - SBCS will engage students in intensive in-person academic instruction in a summer school program planned for the summer of 2022. The summer programming will be overseen and implemented by our school's leadership and faculty. Specifically, SBCS will invest \$30,000 of our ARP ESSER allocation for in-person summer academic programming. Our use of ARP funds to support summer academic programming is consistent with the ARP objective of maximizing in-person instruction and addressing the impact of the COVID-19 disruption on student learning. Summer academic programs are one of the primary evidence-based strategies recommended by the U.S. Education Department to accelerate student learning and recovery from the impacts of the COVID-19 disruption. Our summer program will adopt the effective practices endorsed in the Handbook by the U.S. Department of Education including voluntary, extensive (several hours per day) and rigorous instruction in ELA and Math delivered by experienced and certified teachers. See ED COVID-19 HANDBOOK Roadmap to Reopening Safely and Meeting All Students' Needs, Volume 2, pages 31-32 and research cited therein.

High Dosage After School Tutoring

A key component of our strategy to accelerate student learning and address the educational impacts of the COVID-19 disruption is in-person ESSER allocation over two years in after-school programs featuring high-intensity tutoring as follows:

- \$40,000 for instruction
- \$112,000 for Latera Tutoring Support

Extended School Day Programming

Students accepted to this program are those in need of more intense academic interventions. To assist with learning loss and to accelerate learning SBCS will institute an extended day program for Grades 1-8 students. Students would be recommended through standardized testing done in house through i-Ready in both ELA and Math. Student attendance records during the 20-21 school year and SBCS interim assessments as well. The program would be for a total of 20 students per grade level. SBCS would employ 16 teachers (2 per grade level). The program would run for one hour each day, Monday through Thursday with a start date of October 1 and end date of May 26.

Our use of ARP funds to support high-dosage tutoring is consistent with the ARP objective of maximizing in-person instruction and addressing the impact of the COVID-19 disruption on student learning. High-dosage tutoring is one of the key evidence-based strategies recommended by the U.S. Education Department to accelerate student learning and recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 disruption. (ED COVID-19 HANDBOOK Roadmap to Reopening Safely and Meeting All Students' Needs, Volume 2, pages 29-30 and research cited therein, <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/reopening-2.pdf>). Our high-dosage tutoring program will adopt the effective practices listed in the “Evidence-informed Tutoring Practices Checklist” endorsed in the Handbook by the U.S. Department of Education including:

- **Conducting tutoring sessions during after-school programming**— The Handbook states clearly that “after school tutoring programs have been shown to have positive effects” and that “To promote the best results, ensure these (after school and out-of-school-time) programs provide high-dosage tutoring.” (Page 30) Our tutoring program will provide intensive tutoring in ELA and Math during designated periods in after-school sessions. In addition, we will provide transportation to ensure that all students have access to our after-school programming.
- **Providing high-dosage tutoring each week**—Our approach to tutoring and after-school programming does not consist of infrequent, “drop-in” or “scattershot” sessions but, rather, provides an integrated series of tutoring sessions targeted to

address student needs and delivered several times per week over a period of several weeks.

- **Using an evidence-based program and practices**—Our tutoring program will adapt evidence-based strategies and practices to address the specific needs of our students. We will also employ the effective tutoring practices endorsed by the U.S. Department of Education in the Handbook (pages 29-30), including quizzing, asking deep explanatory questions, spacing learning over time, incorporating worked example solutions with problem-solving exercises and connecting and integrating abstract and concrete representations of concepts. We will also provide enrichment and project-based learning activities to ensure that students remain engaged in our after-school programs.
- SBCS will use \$397,337 in ARP ESSER funds to support expanded in-person instruction time during the school day and in out-of-school-time (OST). In March 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we pivoted from in-person instruction on-site in our school building to a remote learning model in which students engaged in school online from their homes. While our remote learning programs provided continuity in instruction, it was challenging for many of our students and families. We recognize that in-person instruction has many benefits over remote instruction ranging from more direct teacher-to-student time in a structured learning environment to greater opportunities for student social interaction with teachers and peers. Accordingly, we are committed to returning to in-school programs, re-engaging our students and addressing the impacts of lost instructional time.
- ***Purchase educational technology***—We intend to use \$609,885 in ARP ESSER funds for our investment in educational technology as follows:
 - \$194,202 - Chromebooks and protective cases for students
 - \$9,600 - Laptops for teachers,
 - \$40,080 for computer servers,
 - \$6,600 for document cameras,
 - \$144,243 to increase broad band capacity
 - \$215,160 for printers
- ***Address 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***—In

addition to the ARP investments in summer academic programming, tutoring and other services and resources to support all students, we will also use ARP funds for family ESL and literacy programs targeted specifically to help parents and family members of ELLs and other at-risk students support their children in completing homework and succeeding in school. This investment is consistent with the U.S. Department of Education-recommended strategies outlined in the Handbook, including partnering with families—i.e., “Giving) family members specific resources and strategies to support their children’s learning, consistent with legal requirements to communicate in a language and format they can understand.” (Handbook page 33)

- ***Implement evidence-based strategies to address students' social, emotional, mental health and academic needs***—We are committed to supporting the social, emotional and mental health of our students and families. We are especially concerned with our students’ transitioning from remote in-home learning to structured, in-person instruction and with addressing the stress and trauma that many students and families experienced during the COVID-19 disruption. Our approach to addressing social, emotional and mental health issues is grounded in the effective evidence-based practices outlined by the U.S. Department of Education in the Handbook including: a) building strong and trusting relationships among students, families, and educators; b) establishing safe, positive, and stable environments; c) explicitly teaching critical social, emotional, and academic skills; d) actively engaging students in meaningful and culturally and linguistically relevant learning experiences rooted in high academic expectations for all students; e) providing supportive and specific feedback to encourage skill growth across all domains. Among the practices and strategies that we intend to use to help address social, emotional and mental health needs are summer school, after school and First 8 Day programs.

Stakeholder Involvement and Input

The SBCS ARP Spending Plan was developed with the input and involvement of key members of our school community, including school leadership, faculty and parents. Our campaign to obtain community input occurred over several months and included:

- ***Town Hall Meetings***—SBCS has held virtual Town Hall Meetings at least monthly, and ARP fund spending has been a topic of discussion at several of them. The town hall

meetings were videotaped and are available for viewing at https://www.academyofthecity.org/apps/news/show_news.jsp?REC_ID=669057&id=0.

At the town hall meeting held in April 2021, a presentation about the ARP was provided to participants by our Executive Director which emphasized the importance of stakeholder input and involvement in the development of our ARP Spending Plan. In the April meeting and in subsequent meetings parents and other participants shared their thoughts and recommendations about ARP spending, the school's reopening and/or school needs in the 2021-22 academic year. Also, the Executive Director wrote and posted on the school's website an informative message about the ARP and need for public input. https://www.academyofthecity.org/m/news/show_news.jsp?REC_ID=716174&id=0

- *Surveys*—Surveys were made available online and in paper format to teachers and parents throughout the school. Each survey included a brief description of the ARP and a series of questions about what respondents considered the school's primary needs and how respondents felt the ARP funds should be spent. Each survey also included an open-ended question that enabled respondents to write at length about their expectations and recommendations for ARP fund spending.
- *Focus Group Discussions*—Two focus group discussions were held in May and June 2021, with one focus group comprising a diverse group of parents (i.e., a racially and culturally inclusive group of parents of students enrolled in elementary and middle grades) and another focus group comprising subject matter and grade-level teachers in our school's elementary and middle grades. The focus group discussions were facilitated by a charter school specialist consultant and focused on identifying and prioritizing school needs that could be addressed with ARP funds.
- *School Leadership Team Meetings*—Beginning in early May 2021, the SBCS Charter School's leadership team met for one hour at least weekly to discuss the ARP and how the school intends to invest ARP funds. The leadership team comprises administrators from across the school including our Executive Director, Principal, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Dean of Students, Director of Finance and Operations, and the Technology Coordinator. Among the topics discussed at the ARP School Leadership Team Meetings were survey and focus group results, our academic and operational needs and our school's reopening plan.

Evaluation of Effectiveness

Our school will review this Plan at least 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 and will include input from teachers, parents, students and other school stakeholders. To this end, our school 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.