Bargaining Proposal Suggestions for Federal Money

Between ESSER II and ESSER III funds authorized by the 2020 Consolidated Relief Bill and the 2021 American Rescue Plan, a significant investment in Minnesota’s public schools is expected. The 2021 American Rescue Plan alone provides $1.3 billion in E-12 funding for Minnesota schools. It’s enough to protect our schools from most painful and unnecessary cuts and, if spent wisely, can provide the academic and social-emotional supports our students need after the traumas of the past 12 months.

Members have consistently named a number of priorities for students and communities that are critical coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. Here we suggest possible bargaining demands in support of broad categories of investment that are allowable under the federal guidelines.

Address disrupted learning with Extended Learning Time (ELT) programming[[1]](#endnote-1)

**Demands specific to summer school**

1. Schools shall provide fully-staffed extended learning programs that include regular support from and interaction with licensed school psychologists, social workers and counselors.
2. Summer school classes shall be capped at class sizes that maximize individualized instruction.
3. Non-licensed school staff shall be hired to provide additional one-on-one support and educational opportunities to students enrolled in summer school.
4. Summer school programming for elementary students shall include daily recess.

**Demands for both summer school and extended school-year demands**

1. Licensed and non-licensed staff shall earn a pay premium for working an extended contract.
2. Licensed and non-licensed staff shall earn additional incentives for working an extended contract.
3. Staff shall jointly determine the instructional schedule for an extended learning year based on student need.
4. Extended time programming shall be paired with additional preparation time to ensure that plans are targeted to student need. The parties will jointly determine additional paid preparation time based on the additional instructional time.
5. Employees working an extended contract shall have access to district-provided child care at no cost.

# Maintain and support school staff

American Rescue Plan funding may specifically be used for activities necessary to open and maintain services in districts including continued employment of existing staff. Possible demands could be as follows:

The parties agree that American Rescue Plan funding distributed through the third allotment of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) shall be used to:

1. Prevent non-renewals and layoffs of licensed and non-licensed education staff who have been critical to the operation of schools over the past year.
2. Increase the number of licensed educators and non-licensed education staff to address disrupted learning from the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years to provide tutoring to students and mentoring and targeted professional development to educators
3. Provide $ in COVID-19 recognition pay in acknowledgement of the uncompensated time spent meeting the challenges of the 2020-21 school year.
4. Provide an additional contribution of $ to the employee’s:
   1. 403(b) arrangement outlined in Article \_\_\_ of the Collective Bargaining agreement OR
   2. IRS 127(a) Education Assistance Program in Article \_\_\_ of the Collective Bargaining agreement OR
   3. health care reimbursement arrangements (HRA) outlined in Article \_\_\_ of the Collective Bargaining agreement
5. Ensure that employee contributions to health insurance outlined in Article \_\_\_ of the Collective Bargaining agreement do not increase for the duration of the 2021-23 collective bargaining agreement.

# Provide student and staff mental health support

1. The district shall hire \_\_\_ additional licensed counselors/school psychologists/social workers to support the social-emotional health and learning needs of students and educators to address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.
2. The district shall ensure that the health insurance plan under Article \_\_\_ of the Collective Bargaining Agreement includes comprehensive, in-network options for mental health care as agreed to by the parties.
3. The parties agree to a joint committee that shall develop a professional development curriculum and recommendations for district infrastructure that promote both understanding of and use of trauma-informed and non-exclusionary discipline policies.

# Create, expand and support full-service community schools

# The school district and the union will work together to establish full-service community schools (FSCS), which will feature expanded services for the community, a FSCS coordinator and community input in school governing decisions.

# Invest in student and staff physical health and safety

We recommend examining all health and safety provisions outlined in the Education Minnesota back-to-school sample MOU on the bargaining section of the website for sample language relating to health and safety. <https://educationminnesota.org/EDMN/media/edmn-files/members-only/bargaining/Sample-Back-to-School-MOU-(August-14-draft).docx>

1. For a longer discussion and presentation of the research base for these recommendations, see “Equitable Extended Learning Opportunities: Requirements and Components” which is posted on the Education Minnesota website here: <https://educationminnesota.org/members-only/bargaining/American-Rescue-Plan-resources>

   <https://educationminnesota.org/EDMN/media/edmn-secure/bargaining/EquitableExtendedLearningOpportunities.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)