April \_\_, 2021

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| **Note from NEA: purpose of this letter.** This is a template letter that can be used by **NEA Local Affiliates** to notify the Local Superintendent of Schools and/or School Board of the Union's stakeholder interest in meaningful participation in planning for the safe and equitable operation of schools utilizing the American Rescue Plan funds. The letter may also be used to **alert the district to any concerns** about adherence to grant conditions, especially regarding equity requirements. Letters should be customized to address any specific local concerns and should can be used to proactively **recommend priority needs, programs and services that the local affiliate** believes will effectively address the impacts of COVID-19 on students and schools and will require these federal emergency funds. Please remember to remove all highlighted areas before sending. |

Dear [Superintendent]:

I am writing to you on behalf of [Local Union], which represents [number] [District] educators, as the District undertakes the crucial work of planning for the allocation of American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds.

Collaboration with and reliance upon the expertise and invaluable perspective of the educators who serve our students day in and day out, is essential to effective planning as was reflected in the [Department’s guidance to state commissioners](https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/03/ARP_Letter_Sec_to_Chiefs_Final_03.24.2021-1.pdf) and grant guidance calling “***educators and their unions, should be an essential component of the process*.**”

This letter is our request to participate in discussions with the district on how we will collectively use these funds to support our students and staff in moving through and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic.

**EDIT ONE IF APPLICABLE –** *Where the District has not yet created and publicly posted its plan for in-person instruction and continuity of services:*

As you are aware, the receipt of ARP ESSER funds is conditioned on the District developing and making publicly available on its website a plan for safe in-person instruction and continuity of services. The District is required as part of this process to seek public comment on this plan and to take those comments into account. See ARP Sections 2001(i)(1) – (2).

Meaningful engagement and participation in planning by teachers and staff is essential to building trust and ensuring the best possible allocation and use of resources and the highest degree of support for students. We look forward to working through this process with you.]

**EDIT TWO IF APPLICABLE** *– Where the District’s plan for in-person instruction and continuity of services is posted and was* ***not*** *subject to public comment prior to posting:*

As you are aware, the receipt of ARP ESSER funds is conditioned on the District developing and making publicly available on its website a plan for safe in-person instruction and continuity of services. The District is required as part of this process to seek public comment on this plan and to take those comments into account. See ARP Sections 2001(i)(1) – (2).

Although the District has a plan posted on its website, this plan was developed without opportunity for public comment, and therefore does not meet the grant requirements. Moreover, meaningful engagement and participation in planning by teachers and staff is essential to building trust and ensuring the best possible allocation and use of resources and the highest degree of support for students. We call on the District to provide the required opportunity for public comment on the plan, in particular, input from and discussion with the educators who are directly tasked with implementing it, before it is released as a final plan.]

In addition to our participation in discussions over the resources from the American Rescue Plan, we would like to know how the district has spent or obligated resources from previous allotments of federal funding related to the pandemic. Please provide our local union with a summary of expenditures made using funds from the following revenue streams:

1. CARES Act Coronavirus Relief funds
2. CARES Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER I) funds:
3. CARES Act Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER I)
4. CRRSA Act ESSER II funds
5. CRSSA Act GEER II funds

We look forward to working with you to ensure prudent, effective allocation of these funds to provide safe and equitable schools for all students.

Sincerely,

[Local union president signature]

cc: Education Minnesota field staff

Key local partners/collaborators where appropriate