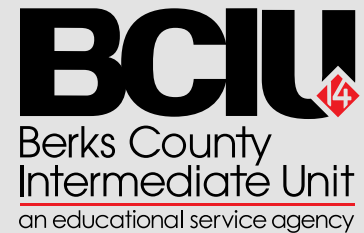


# ARP – ESSER III GRANT | SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

JULY 20, 2022

Berks County Intermediate Unit  
1111 Commons Boulevard  
P.O. Box 16050  
Reading, PA 19612-6050  
610-987-2248



# ARP ESSER APPLICATION

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) recognizes the extraordinary efforts made by Intermediate Units (IUs), schools, and educators to support students during the COVID-19 pandemic. The application requests information from IUs about: (1) Needs and impacts resulting from the pandemic, (2) Stakeholder engagement in the development of local plans to respond to the needs and impacts, (3) Specific elements in the IU Plan for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds; and (4) Plans for monitoring and measuring progress.

The following is the content of the application submitted by the Berks County Intermediate Unit to the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE).



# SECTION 1 | ASSESSING IMPACTS AND NEEDS | INDICATORS OF IMPACT

	<b>Please identify if the students were directly served or if the students were supported</b>	<b>Methods Used to Understand Each Type of Impact</b>
<b>Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time</b>	Student Supports from the IU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus group conversations with Berks Administrators of Special Education relative to COVID Compensatory Services, needs, and areas for increased support.</li><li>• Network meetings and focus group discussions with Berks County-wide Assistant Superintendents and Curriculum Coordinators relative to curriculum support, Tier I and other scaffolded support; and asynchronous professional learning – high yield instructional strategies.</li></ul>

# SECTION 1 | ASSESSING IMPACTS AND NEEDS | INDICATORS OF IMPACT

	Please identify if the students were directly served or if the students were supported	Methods Used to Understand Each Type of Impact
<b>Chronic Absenteeism</b>	Student Supports from the IU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus group conversations with Home School Visitors/Social Workers regarding attendance.</li> <li>• Monthly meetings with Berks Initiative of School Attendance (BISA) which indicates referrals to the SAM attendance program.</li> </ul>
<b>Student Engagement</b>	Student Supports from the IU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus group conversations with job-alike groups regarding multiple social factors and needs of students inhibiting engagement.</li> <li>• TaC referrals for student behavior and academic support.</li> </ul>

# SECTION 1 | ASSESSING IMPACTS AND NEEDS | INDICATORS OF IMPACT

	<b>Please identify if the students were directly served or if the students were supported</b>	<b>Methods Used to Understand Each Type of Impact</b>
<b>Social-emotional Well-being</b>	Student Supports from the IU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mental health survey regarding student programs, and needs for services administered to all county school-based mental health providers in March 2022.</li><li>• Focus group meetings quarterly with Student Assistance Professionals regarding referrals and interventions.</li><li>• Network meetings and focus group discussions with Berks County-wide Assistant Superintendents and Curriculum Coordinators relative to mental health/behavior support to include school climate surveying, data analysis, action planning, and professional learning.</li></ul>



# SECTION 1 | ASSESSING IMPACTS AND NEEDS | INDICATORS OF IMPACT

	Please identify if the students were directly served or if the students were supported	Methods Used to Understand Each Type of Impact
<b>Other Indicators</b>	Student Supports from the IU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation and support with school personnel regarding health and safety.</li> <li>• Network meetings and focus group discussions with Berks County-wide Assistant Superintendents and Curriculum Coordinators relative to data analysis facilitation (1:1, team meetings, protocols, PVAAS, CDTs, District Assessments, and Data Wise implementation) and assessment development and review.</li> </ul>

# SECTION 1 | ASSESSING IMPACTS AND NEEDS | DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS

Please identify if the students were directly served or if the students were supported	Student Group	Provide specific strategies that were used or will be used to identify and measure impacts
Direct Services to Students	Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA])	Data collection for IEP goals, grades, student attendance data, evaluation/reevaluation data, communication logs, and implementation of IEPs and service plans.
Student Supports from the IU	Students experiencing homelessness	Student identification and needs assessment, support and feedback from outreach specialists in each county, and data regarding accessed supports through the ECYEH program.

# SECTION 1 | ASSESSING IMPACTS AND NEEDS | DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACTS

<b>Please identify if the students were directly served or if the students were supported</b>	<b>Student Group</b>	<b>Provide specific strategies that were used or will be used to identify and measure impacts</b>
Student Supports from the IU	Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act [IDEA])	Provision of professional development by Training and Consultation staff in various areas of special education. Provision of networking support, interagency collaboration, and training for trauma, mental health needs, and access to counseling/treatment.



# SECTION 1 | ASSESSING IMPACTS AND NEEDS | LOCAL STRATEGIES MOST EFFECTIVE IN SUPPORTING THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS

## Impacts that Strategy #1 best addresses:

- Academic impact of lost instructional time
- Chronic absenteeism
- Student engagement
- Social-emotional well-being

## Student group(s) that Strategy #1 most effectively supports:

- Students from low-income families
- Students from each racial or ethnic group
- Gender
- Children with disabilities
- Students experiencing homelessness
- Children and youth in foster care

# SECTION II | ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS IN PLAN DEVELOPMENT | STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- On-going interactions between staff and students and families as part of the planning and delivery of services.
- Special education and related services providers engaged with families to determine the need of COVID compensatory services.
- Program Administrators participated and continue to participate in the Head Start Policy Council, Berks Early Care and Education Council (LICC), and Right to Education Local Task Force.
- Focus group data was solicited from Berks County Assistant Superintendents and the Berks County Curriculum Coordinators
- BCIU's Leadership Team was requested to offer recommendations based on office priorities and needs expressed by staff
- Stakeholder Engagement Sessions were held for staff during which a proposed funding plan was presented, and staff were encouraged to provide input and identify other priorities.

# SECTION II | ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS IN PLAN DEVELOPMENT | USE OF STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Following these stakeholder sessions, staff suggestions were summarized and shared with the BCIU's Leadership Team on May 16, 2022. The Leadership Team considered the suggestions and identified the highest priority areas prompting further revisions to the initial proposed funding plan presented to staff.

# SECTION III | PLAN FOR ARP ESSER III FUNDS

## CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

- Address students' academic needs | Address student's and staff's social, emotional, and mental health needs

## ACCESS TO INSTRUCTION

- Increase opportunities to learn and equity in instructional delivery

## MITIGATION STRATEGIES

## FACILITIES IMPROVEMENT

## STAFF RECRUITMENT, SUPPORT, AND RETENTION

- Attract and Retain IU Staff | Provide professional training and/or improve working conditions for IU Staff

## SUMMER SCHOOL, EXTENDED DAY, OTHER STUDENT PROGRAMS

ARP – ESSER III  
PROPOSED  
EXPENDITURES

CATEGORY	TOTAL PROPOSED EXPENDITURE
Continuity of Services	\$396,751.45
Recruitment, Support, and Retention	\$1,298,620.76
Mitigation Strategies	\$28,830.98
State-Level Reservation	\$208,237.10
Indirect Costs	\$149,930.71
<b>TOTAL ARP-ESSER III ALLOCATION AVAILABLE TO BCIU</b>	<b>\$2,082,371.00</b>

# CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

## **Discovery Education Streaming Services**

The BCIU will support all 18 Berks County school districts and nearly 70,000 students by providing Discovery Education Streaming services to supplement instruction in all K-12 content areas as a means of providing resources for in-classroom as well as virtual instruction use. Resources will be supplied to all teachers in Berks County along with options for professional learning to be able to embed DE Streaming resources for accelerated learning as part of the remedial, core, and enrichment instruction for 2021-2022 and 2022-2023.

## **Workplace Climate: A Culture of Belonging and Wellness**

An organization is only as good as its culture – and the BCIU is committed to ensuring our organization is one that is a supportive and engaging place to work. The BCIU is requesting to set aside dollars for the implementation of initiatives that reinforce a culture that values and respects all people.

# CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

## **Mental Health, Train the Trainer**

The Office of Early Childhood and Student Services is seeking funding to administer a comprehensive, multi-tiered suicide prevention train-the-trainer program within Berks County. Elements of this program will include the participation of qualified, professional employees of the BCIU, 18 school districts, and 2 CTCs in Youth Mental Health First Aid training and QPR Gatekeeper Instructor Training, the establishment of a training program for Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), and the development of a core team of school-based mental health professionals to serve as Suicide Prevention Specialists in schools.

## **Healthy Minds Program Application**

Software powered by science and decades of research from neuroscientist Dr. Richard Davidson and his team at the Center for Healthy Minds at the University of Wisconsin-Madison & Healthy Minds Innovations, the Healthy Minds Program app provides relief from pandemic stress and offers a guided path to well-being, grounded in the concept that people can train their minds to be calmer, focused, and resilient. ARP-ESSER funding will provide for paid subscriptions.

# CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

## **BCIUnify Re-Design**

The pandemic served as a reminder of the importance of being able to access information, documents, and forms remotely and equally as important, the importance of staying informed and maintaining a sense of belonging and connection with one another. The BCIU will be revisiting BCIUnify to consider ways in which the site may be enhanced through a change in platform, design, and content and would look to ARP-ESSER funding to offset expenses associated with this initiative. Funding would allow for any costs associated with a change in platform and design.

## **Zoom Professional Services**

Through the use of ARP-ESSER funds, the BCIU would continue to secure licenses for ZOOM, a proven platform utilized by staff, students, families, and the community that enabled new ways of teaching, learning, and working across the organization to ensure the continuity of academic services and communications.



# CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

## SC View Software

ARP-ESSER funding would offset the expense to the BCIU as it continues to implement SC View Software through SC Strategic Solutions. SC Strategic Solutions has focused its efforts on the K12 market for over a decade and has developed one of the most cost-effective and efficient solutions relating to records management in the industry. SC View offers a solution for all offices and document types that may encompass scanning, records management software, workflow, and electronic forms. Further, it is Integrated with CSIU/FIS allowing for significant operational efficiencies.

## Constant Contact

Constant Contact is an email tool that allows the BCIU to streamline communications to staff, students, families, and the community. The tool enables the BCIU to create mailing lists to send targeted, segmented, and personalized emails to increase the relevance of the content to the user, offers advanced automation features, and includes detailed analytics.



# CONTINUITY OF SERVICES

## **Survey Monkey**

Survey Monkey is a survey platform currently deployed by the BCIU. However, with funding, the BCIU would have the opportunity to expand its functionality, including the provision of multilingual surveys and sentiment analysis, unlimited responses, and extend the number of users within the organization to make it easy to measure and understand feedback from all stakeholders; staff, students, families, and the community to improve engagement and inform action.

# RECRUITMENT SUPPORT RETENTION

- **Professional Development for Berks County Administrators and Educators**
  - Administrators Conference
  - Core Connections
  - Leadership Series
  - Learning & Design Certification
  - Implementing Instructional Practices to Meet the New Pennsylvania Science Standards
  - Mathematical Practices and Instructional Strategies Support
- **Teach-able Platform** to support academic recovery and acceleration of Berks County's 70,000 students

# RECRUITMENT SUPPORT RETENTION

- **Increase staff capacity** within the BCIU's Creative Team to support and bolster the BCIU's marketing and communications initiatives and support stakeholder engagement efforts in response to the Pandemic. Given their expertise, the team can design and promote initiatives and campaigns addressing the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students, staff, and families as well as recruitment, to attract both passive and active applicants.
- **Recruitment and Retention**
  - Wage Adjustments and Bonuses paid during the 2021-2022 school year to Transportation staff to offer competitive wages to attract and retain staff
  - Paid Social Media recruitment campaigns to expand the reach of qualified applicants

# MITIGATION STRATEGIES

# STATE – LEVEL INITIATIVES

# INDIRECT COSTS

- **Print Services Equipment**

The use of ARP-ESSER funds would enable the BCIU's Print Services Center to expand its services and finishing options, as well as produce other finishing efforts more efficiently and effectively with greater speed, precision, and quality. The Print Services Center has been called upon to produce materials to include posters and signage in response to health and safety protocols and building access in response to the pandemic along with producing educational materials for students' and families' use during those times of remote learning/flexible instructional days. Print Services are available to both the BCIU and Berks County Districts.

- **State-Level Reservation**

- Mandated funding allocated to Pennsylvania to fund state-level activities and interventions administered by PDE

- **Indirect Costs**

- Administrative costs associated with the management and implementation of ARP – ESSER III funds

# SECTION IV | MONITORING AND MEASURING PROGRESS

	Data Collection and Analysis Plan (including plan to disaggregate data)	Identify if the students were directly served by the IU or if the students were supported by the IU
<p><b>Student learning, including academic impact of lost instructional time during the COVID-19 pandemic</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data will be collected relative to COVID Compensatory Services provided and areas identified for increased support via ongoing meetings with Berks Administrators of Special Education.</li> <li>• Data will be collected at network meetings with Berks County Assistant Superintendents and Curriculum Coordinators to monitor the districts' request for and use of curriculum supports provided by the IU including curriculum writing, professional learning, curriculum warehousing, consortium leveled resources, and other curriculum writing, revisions, and auditing requests.</li> </ul>	<p>Student Supports from the IU</p>

# SECTION IV | MONITORING AND MEASURING PROGRESS

	<b>Data Collection and Analysis Plan (including plan to disaggregate data)</b>	<b>Identify if the students were directly served by the IU or if the students were supported by the IU</b>
<b>Student learning, including academic impact of lost instructional time during the COVID-19 pandemic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data will be collected relative to COVID Compensatory Services provided and areas identified for increased support via ongoing meetings with Berks Administrators of Special Education.</li> <li>• Data will be collected at network meetings with Berks County Assistant Superintendents and Curriculum Coordinators to monitor the districts' request for and use of curriculum supports provided by the IU including curriculum writing, professional learning, curriculum warehousing, consortium leveled resources, and other curriculum writing, revisions, and auditing requests.</li> </ul>	Student Supports from the IU



# SECTION IV | MONITORING AND MEASURING PROGRESS

	<b>Data Collection and Analysis Plan (including plan to disaggregate data)</b>	<b>Identify if the students were directly served by the IU or if the students were supported by the IU</b>
<b>Student learning, including academic impact of lost instructional time during the COVID-19 pandemic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The implementation of Discovery Streaming Services will be monitored and requests for professional learning to embed DE Streaming resources for accelerated learning as part of remedial, core, and enrichment instruction.</li><li>• Data will be collected relative to attendance/participation in multi-session series of professional learning opportunities related to the implementation of instructional practices to meet the new Pennsylvania Science Standards.</li></ul>	Student Supports from the IU



# SECTION IV | MONITORING AND MEASURING PROGRESS

	Data Collection and Analysis Plan (including plan to disaggregate data)	Identify if the students were directly served by the IU or if the students were supported by the IU
<b>Student learning, including academic impact of lost instructional time during the COVID-19 pandemic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data will be collected relative to attendance/participation in multi-session series of professional learning opportunities related to mathematical practices and instructional strategies focused on accelerated learning and student-centered instruction.</li> </ul>	Student Supports from the IU
<b>Opportunity to learn measures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data will be collected relative to the provision of Training and Consultation (TaC) referrals made for academic and behavior support.</li> </ul>	Student Supports from the IU

# SECTION IV | MONITORING AND MEASURING PROGRESS

	<b>Data Collection and Analysis Plan (including plan to disaggregate data)</b>	<b>Identify if the students were directly served by the IU or if the students were supported by the IU</b>
<b>Jobs created and retained (by number of FTEs and position type)</b>	ARP-ESSER dollars have been allocated to fund a .5 Marketing and Communications Specialist. A system will be developed to track all requests and deliverables for marketing and communication support, i.e., recruitment campaigns, promotional materials related to professional development opportunities, mental health supports for students, families, and staff, and written communication pieces.	

# SECTION IV | MONITORING AND MEASURING PROGRESS

	Data Collection and Analysis Plan (including plan to disaggregate data)	Identify if the students were directly served by the IU or if the students were supported by the IU
<b>Participation in programs funded by ARP ESSER resources (e.g., summer and afterschool programs)</b>	ARP-ESSER dollars were not allocated for programs.	
<b>Professional Development, Training, and Support</b>	Data will be collected using the following measures: professional development activities held for administrators and educators, Berks-County wide; the use of Discovery Education Streaming Services and professional development opportunities requested and provided relative to <i>(continue to next slide)</i>	Student Supports from the IU

# SECTION IV | MONITORING AND MEASURING PROGRESS

	<b>Data Collection and Analysis Plan (including plan to disaggregate data)</b>	<b>Identify if the students were directly served by the IU or if the students were supported by the IU</b>
<b>Professional Development, Training, and Support (continued)</b>	embedding DE Streaming resources for accelerated learning as part of remedial, core, and enrichment instruction; participation in the comprehensive, multi-tiered suicide prevention train-the-trainer program; and the number of Health Minds app subscriptions utilized by staff. Tracking and recordkeeping systems are currently in place to collect data concerning professional development activities. Other systems required will be considered and/or developed.	Student Supports from the IU

*thank you*

**BCIU** Berks County  
Intermediate Unit  
an educational service agency