**In Person Instruction-Continuity of Service -Use of Funds**

**Planning Overview**

This plan is being provided as a compliance measure and an overall guide for in person instruction and continuity of service as required by the Federal Government, specifically section 2001 of the American Recovery Program (ARP) Act and the requirements relating to the ARP ESSER funds; i.e.,“within 30 days of the receipt of the funds, develop and make publicly available on the LEAs website a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity or services.”

Congress has authorized three relief packages since the onset of the pandemic with ESSER funds in each identified to assist local school districts address needs and to recover student learning loss. ESSER I was included in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act; ESSER II in the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA); and ESSER III in the American Rescue Plan (ARPA).

The investments Focus will make and has made with these federal dollars are all student-centered and staff-centered. These monies will address needs brought on by, or compounded by, the pandemic which includes literacy initiatives,   social-emotional support services, and infrastructure improvements.

**Amount of Funding Focus Expects to Receive**

The amount of federal funds that were allocated to school districts is based on the percent of total federal Title I funds each entity receives. Each of the three types of ESSER funds includes a spending deadline. Focus expects to receive:

Focus North High School- #012529

* ESSER I - $64 thousand
  + Must be spent by September 2022
* ESSER II - $319 thousand
  + Must be spent by September 2023
* ESSER III - $718 thousand
  + Must be spent by September 2024

Focus Learning Academy of Southeastern Columbus: #142935

* ESSER I - $71 thousand
  + Must be spent by September 2022
* ESSER II - $276 thousand
  + Must be spent by September 2023
* ESSER III - $621 thousand
  + Must be spent by September 2024

Focus Learning Academy of Southwestern Columbus  #142927

* ESSER I - $110 thousand
  + Must be spent by September 2022
* ESSER II - $43 thousand
  + Must be spent by September 2023
* ESSER III - $929 thousand
  + Must be spent by September 2024

These monies will be carefully budgeted and tracked and will follow all federal spending guidelines including how the fund will be used. The majority of the funding will be used to address the loss of learning, including but not limited to:

-Developing a Math and Literacy Bridge in each school

-Hiring new Literacy Coaches in each school

-Offering returning staff a reconstructing incentive

-Funding for Special Education loss of learning

-After hours tutoring

-Curriculum development

-Interventions for Engagement

-Facilities development

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) states: “Schools are an important part of the infrastructure of communities, as they provide safe and supportive learning environments for students, employ teachers and other staff, and enable parents, guardians, and caregivers to work. Many students, staff, and caregivers are either missing or have had interruptions in services due to school building closures and virtual and hybrid learning. Evidence suggests that many K–12 schools that have strictly implemented prevention strategies have been able to safely open for in-person instruction and remain open.” Focus has transformed into the epitome of the aforementioned notion by: 1) Being proactive in February 2020, prior to the original pandemic lockdown and creating a total virtual learning environment which could allow for continued learning even though the staff and students had to completely engage in lockdown. (See Focus Reimagined) 2) Being proactive in developing a Remote Learning Plan and a Hybrid Learning Model which again allowed for the safety of all involved while allowing for continued learning and continued care for the social, emotional and physical needs of both staff, students while engaging with the community at large. 3) Following state, local and CDC guidance, all staff members of Focus were then afforded the opportunity to receive their vaccines and all adult students and community members were referred to obtain vaccines as well. 4) Following all protocol prescribed by the CDC and the Franklin County Health Department, Focus was able to move through the initial phases of the pandemic safely and are now poised to enter the 2021-2022 school year with safety and continued learning.

The District will return to pre-pandemic mitigation strategies with modifications. Should health conditions shift or stakeholder feedback necessitate, the district will assemble its Safety Team to review conditions and mitigation strategies and offer necessary revisions. The Safety Team is comprised of the Administrative Team under the direction of the Columbus Public Health Department’s guidance.

All relevant policies have been approved by the Focus Board of Directors and are routinely reviewed for relevance, clarity and appropriate response to the CDC guidelines, the Franklin County Health Department Guidelines and the Governor’s Office mandates.

**This plan is being written in tandem with the School Improvement Plan, the Strategic Plan, the Focus Reimagined Plan and the Building Leadership Team Plans.**

**Mitigation Strategies**:

**Wearing of Masks**

Focus will require masks for all persons not vaccinated and will follow CDC guidelines on those vaccinated.

**Physical distancing**

Focus will return to pre-pandemic protocols. Physical distancing will be recommended and those recommendations will be contingent on the guidance offered monthly by the CDC and Columbus Public Health Department.

**Handwashing and respiratory etiquette**

Handwashing will be emphasized throughout the school day. Hand sanitizers have been placed throughout the buildings and students will be encouraged to sanitize their hand when entering

and again when leaving a classroom. Cough and sneeze etiquette will be taught, monitored, and reinforced.

**Facilities**

District cleaning protocols will return to pre-COVID routines with the exception of more use of disinfectant cleaning. Air filtering devices placed strategically throughout the schools have a MERV rating of 15 or higher.

**Contact tracing**

Contact tracing will occur based upon Franklin County Health Department’s guidance for all highly infectious diseases. A letter will be sent to all interested stakeholders informing them of a positive case with information on where to find assistance and next steps.

**Community Transmission**

Focus will work with local public health officials to stay abreast of the burden of the disease in the community. Focus will be mindful that the higher level of community transmission, the more likely that COVID will be introduced into the school facility from the community.

**Diagnostic and screening testing**

Focus Schools will continue to have testing and screening supplies at the Administration offices. Test kits will be delivered upon request. The districts will strategically utilize test kits for COVID concerns in order to keep students safely in school as much as possible.

**Vaccinations**

The district will continue to encourage faculty, staff, and students to be vaccinated. The district is willing to serve as a host site as vaccinations are available.

**Learning Loss Strategies:**

Focus is aware that a primary concern of all educators who have monitored the pandemic and its effects on our students, is loss of learning. Focus will make every effort to address this concern in the following manner:

Summer 2021:

1. Implementation of Math and Literacy Bridge Program: Funds have been allocated to support a system of strong academic intervention for the summers of 2021, 2022, 2023 and 2024. The Math and Literacy Bridge Program will provide certified teachers throughout the summer to intervene, instruct and provide additional assistance in the areas of math and reading, increasing literacy across all subjects.
2. Individually addressing the extent to which each student has been impacted by the lockdown:
3. Academically- Focus will review STAR assessment data, EOC assessment data, OELPA data, Midterm and Final assessment data and will use informal observation, and end of unit assessments to determine levels of performance and move students forward.
4. Socially- Focus will monitor the overall engagement of each student including attendance, participation, the need for one on one instruction and the lack of reciprocal communication, to triage social needs.
5. Emotionally- Focus will monitor the need for contact with the Social Worker, gauge the students sense of belonging as well as their self-management and also will determine if the student is having difficulty building relationships with staff and other students.
6. Physically-Focus will be on high alert for physical trauma including Informal observation of abuse/neglect, food insecurity, hygiene, and obvious lack of resources.

August 2021

Academic Overview

As Focus students return to in person programming in August of 2021, teachers will formally and informally assess each student to identify individual stressors that may be plaguing them, due to the pandemic (#2 above). All Focus staff have been trained in Mental Health First Aide and are equipped to identify and triage students who may be at risk for mental health, social and/or physical ills. Academically, each student, upon enrollment, will be assessed using the STAR assessment. The data from this assessment will be compared to previous STAR assessments if the student is reenrolling. If a student is a first time enrollee, upon entry into Focus, the students grade levels will be reviewed for qualification as Academic Disadvantaged by the Academic Adviser, based on the following criteria:

1. **Baseline Skills Assessments:** After the Enrollment process is complete, the Academic Adviser will check the assessment testing scores which are STAR scores. STAR testing is an adaptive test which begins at the appropriate grade level and then the assessment automatically adjusts according to student answers, indicating at which grade they are performing. If they are performing below their age and appropriate grade level, they are determined to be academically disadvantaged.

2. **Age/Transfer Credits**: Upon receipt and review of all transfer credits, the Academic Adviser will determine if the student has earned enough credits to be properly placed in his/her appropriate grade level. (Cohort group). If the student is not eligible to be placed with the original cohort group, they will be deemed academically disadvantaged based on the following criteria:

**A. Automatic qualifying factors**:

1. If the student is at least 1 year in age senior to his/her grade level, (i.e. student is18 years of age and placed in the 9th grade).

**Age/Transfer Credit Equivalency**:

16 yrs. of age 4 Core Credits 9th Grade

16-17 yrs. of age 8 Core Credits 10th Grade

17-19 yrs. of age 12 Core Credits 11th Grade

19-23 yrs. of age 16 Core Credits 12th Grade

**B. Variances of non-qualifying factors include:**

1. If the student is at least 1 years in age senior to his grade level and/or the student has passed the Reading and Writing Ohio Graduation Test (OGT) or the LA (Language Arts) and EOC (End of Course Exam).

3. **Exceptional Child** (EC): A student officially identified as having a disability condition through the administration of an ETR (Evaluation Team Report) and is receiving special education and related services in accordance with an IEP (Individual Education Program) is reported with the appropriate option in the Disability Condition Element, and not as Academically Disadvantaged.

The Academic Adviser will confer with the Intervention Department to determine if the student should be considered Academically Disadvantaged.

4. **Career Based Intervention (CBI) program**: A student must meet the following requirements to be a member of the CBI program.

A. Age 16-21

B. 0-15 Credits (Freshman-Junior Level)

C. Enrolled in (1) Academic course (2) Corresponding CBI elective course

Once qualified for the CBI program, a career-technical student should be reported as Academically Disadvantaged if he/she:

- lacks knowledge in one or more of the academic areas of mathematics, English/language arts, science or social studies, and

  - performs two or more years below grade level on standardized tests, including

but not limited to the OGT /EOC tests.

As previously noted, all students are assessed using the STAR Assessment in Reading and Math upon enrollment. The data is used to determine the student's current academic level in Reading and Math and so *inform the teacher's instruction* with each individual or group of students, as well as serves as one data point used in determining the appropriate Tier assignment within our Response to Intervention structure.

Using their previously developed Individual Graduation Plan, teachers will be able to easily see what progress was made in the 2021 school year, or what progress was lacking, and begin working with the individual student on their math and literacy. Additionally, Focus teachers. Instructional coaches, and leaders will administer and analyze data from multiple sources throughout the school year to ensure timely identification and response to observed gap areas.

Data will be analyzed collaboratively to identify students with learning needs or gaps. Additionally, teachers will identify students in need of intervention or remediation from daily observations of engagement and performance.

Focus teachers will utilize this data to observe student progress and achievement over time to identify shifts in progress or concerns.

Students with identified learning gaps will be assigned the appropriate level of instruction based on the RTI Tiered levels of support.

Teachers will support students with gaps through the implementation of high-impact instructional strategies.

School leaders, instructional coaches, department leaders, and MTSS teams will work with teachers to develop personalized goals that address students' specific learning gaps. They will monitor student progress, achievement, and daily engagement through various data sources and intentionally select high- impact researched strategies to address student needs. The

impact of implemented interventions will be reviewed to determine the necessity of a new or modified intervention.

During the 21-22 school year, Focus will also implement an EC (Exceptional Children) pilot Math and Literacy Bridge as well. The EC Department is working to develop a Math Literacy Bridge program as a supplement and enhancement to the current curriculum guided by state standards. The supplements and enhancements will include using manipulatives, direct and indirect instruction and the use of technology. The goal is to improve math proficiency on end of course assessments and to improve understanding of math concepts.

Social/Emotional Overview

August 2021

Although the academic success of the students we serve is critical to their success, we find with the at risk population that learning cannot take place without addressing the social and emotional barriers that may be hindering the learning process. Serving an “at risk” population inherently brings additional challenges to a learning environment as our students are plagued with a variety of issues. Now add to that, the isolation, insecurity and fear associated with the pandemic and it is clear that all staff members must be willing to show genuine concern, empathy, tolerance and kindness to the students in the new year.

To that end, the staff members themselves were also living in a world full of the same isolation, insecurity and fear as the students. They devoted themselves tirelessly to moving the students forward in very troubled times, many times fearing for their own safety and the safety of their families. Making certain that those staff member’s needs and concerns are addressed is critical for those teachers to be poised to care for the students. It is critical that Focus ensures that the emotional balance of all staff members is level and energy has been rejuvenated for the challenge ahead.

The Administration of Focus is taking steps to support, reward, engage and listen to all staff members as they once again take on the challenge of following the end game in the pandemic.

A successful and equitable school reopening strategy for Focus requires engaging the entire school community to establish a safe environment for our educators, school staff, and students and promote trust and confidence. School reopening planning at Focus includes:

* Administrators
* Directors
* Academic Advisers
* Teachers
* Student and parent representatives
* Specialized instructional support personnel
* Community Members

All staff members have been given or will receive training on therapeutic conversations, empathy group training and trauma informed care. All staff members will be available to the students but will also be cognizant of the need to develop and maintain a nurturing and cohesive safe harbor for fellow staff members.

Focus will also develop a Restorative Justice program so that any negative behavior can be addressed rather than merely removing an offending student from the school community. Focus believes there are 4 pillars to this process including [inclusion](http://restorativejustice.org/restorative-justice/about-restorative-justice/tutorial-intro-to-restorative-justice/lesson-1-what-is-restorative-justice/inclusion/) of all parties, meeting with those parties, [making](http://restorativejustice.org/restorative-justice/about-restorative-justice/tutorial-intro-to-restorative-justice/lesson-1-what-is-restorative-justice/amends/) amends for any harm done and reintegration of the offending student back into the school community. Keeping students in the school is vital.

Consistent with health equity considerations, Focus will conduct active and specific outreach to underserved families – including parents/guardians of students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, English learners, students experiencing homelessness, and students in foster care. This communication will be conducted in families’ home languages or a mode of communication and in alternate formats as needed to facilitate effective communication for individuals with disabilities and, where appropriate, in partnership with trusted community-based organizations. Home visits will be conducted to ensure all students and their families find help in these troubled times.

Assurances:

The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER Fund) is intended to address the impact that Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) has had, and continues to have, on public and nonpublic elementary and secondary schools. Focus shall abide with all the requirements and assurances specified in the ESSER Certification and Agreement for Funding under the Education Stabilization Program signed by the state. Focus will, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to compensate its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to COVID-19, Focus is required to maintain, the following documentation about the consultation process:  
  
\* Written Affirmation ESEA section 1117(b)(5), Results of Agreement: ESEA section 1117(b)(1) and, if applicable Reason for Disagreement ESEA section 1117(b)(2).Focus will ensure that every recipient and sub recipient of ESSER funds will cooperate with any examination of records with respect to such funds by making records available for inspection, production, and examination, and authorized individuals available for interview and examination, upon the request of (i) the Department and/or its Inspector General; or (ii) any other federal agency, commission, or department in the lawful exercise of its jurisdiction and authority.Any LEA receiving funding under this program will have on file with the SEA a set of assurances that meets the requirements of section 442 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232e)Focus will ensure that it will comply with the requirements of section 427 of GEPA

(20 U.S.C. 1228a). Focus commits to maintaining and will produce upon request by the (i) the Department and/or its Inspector General; or (ii) any other federal agency, commission, or department in the lawful exercise of its jurisdiction and authority, a description of how the LEA complied with this requirement including putting in place steps to permit students, teachers and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers (including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability and age) that might impede equal access to, or participation in, the program

Focus will periodically review, no less than every six months for the duration of the ARP ESSER grant period and will revise this plan as appropriate with the Board of Director’s approval and the approval of the Sponsor, Buckeye Community Hope Foundation.

Focus requested public input into this plan prior to its writing by placing the request/invitation for input on the website at: focuslearn.org

## Resources from Additional State Agencies

* [**Ohio Department of Health:** COVID-19 Health and Prevention Guidance for Ohio K-12 Schools](http://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/schools/K-12-Schools-Guidance.pdf)
  + [**Ohio Department of Health:** COVID-19 Guidance: Graduation Ceremonies 2021](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/graduation-ceremonies-21.pdf)
  + [**Ohio Department of Health:** COVID-19 Guidance: Prom 2021](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/prom-and-post-prom-21.pdf)
  + [**Ohio Department of Health:** COVID-19 Fact Sheet K-12 School Quarantine Guidelines](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/covid-19-fact-sheet-k-12-exposure-and-quarantine.pdf)
  + [**Ohio Department of Health:** COVID-19 Resources for School Nurses](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/schools/COVID-19-Resources-School-Nurses.pdf)
  + [**Ohio Department of Health:** Don-Doff Mask Procedure for Schools](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/static/responsible/schools/Don-Doff-Mask-Procedure-for-School.pdf)
* [**Ohio Department of Agriculture:** Proper Use of Disinfectants](http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Reset-and-Restart/Proper-use-of-disinfectants-from-the-Ohio-Departme)
* [**Ohio Department of Health/Ohio Environmental Protection Agency:** Recommendations for Water Supply Flushing for Reopening of Buildings Under Statewide COVID-19 Transition Plan](http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Reset-and-Restart/ODH-OEPA-Letter-to-Building-Owners-Occupants-and-Tenants.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US)
* [**Ohio Environmental Protection Agency/Ohio Department of Health:** Guidance for Premise Plumbing Water Service Restoration](http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Reset-and-Restart/OEPA-ODH-Guidance-for-Premise-Plumbing-Water-Service-Restoration.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US)
* [**Ohio Department of Job and Family Services:** Child Care and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA): Frequently Asked Questions](https://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/docs/Q-and-A-Child-Care-and-Schools-Final.pdf)
* [**Ohio Department of Commerce/State Fire Marshal:** School Drills and Fire Safety During Covid-19 Pandemic](https://www.com.ohio.gov/documents/TB20-002SchoolDrillsandFireSafetyDuringCovid-19Pandemic.pdf)
* [**Ohio Facilities Construction Commission:** Ohio Schools and SARS-CoV-2: A Summary of HVAC and Plumbing Industry Guidelines](https://ofcc.ohio.gov/Portals/0/OFCC_HVAC_COVID_Guidelines.pdf)

***This plan has been published on the Focus website at: Focuslearn.org following a public request for input.***