

# Federal Relief Funds – Quarterly Report

QUARTER 11: JANUARY - MARCH 2024  
OFFICE OF GRANTS & PROGRAM  
ACCOUNTABILITY

ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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# Federal Relief Funds

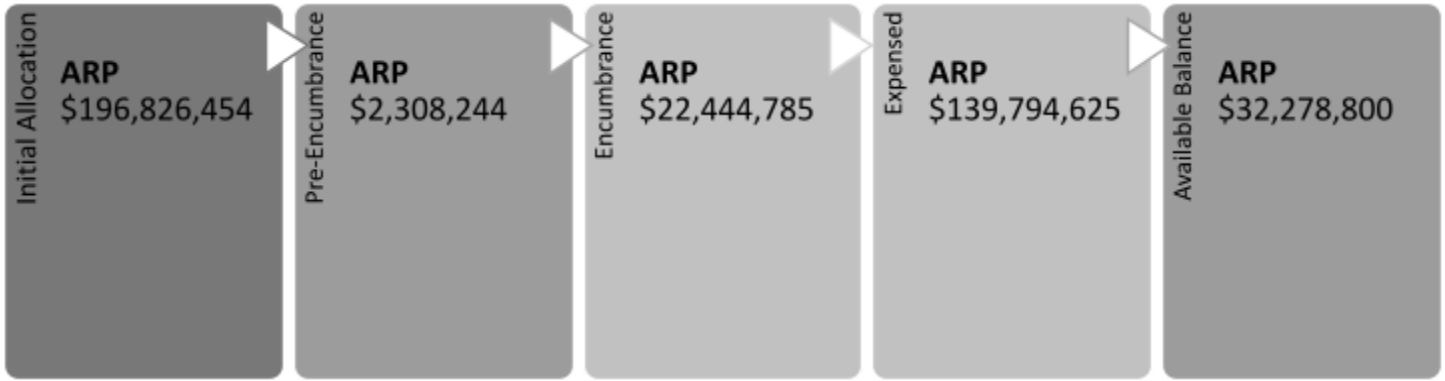
## Quarter 11 Report

### Executive Summary

Beginning in 2020, the Rochester City School District received three different streams of federal funding intended to support the District's ability to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic - CARES, CRRSA, and ARP. CARES and CRRSA have both ended. The District is in the final stages of ARP administration (ARP will sunset in Fall 2024), and is currently operating under the ARP Spend-Down Contingency Plan.

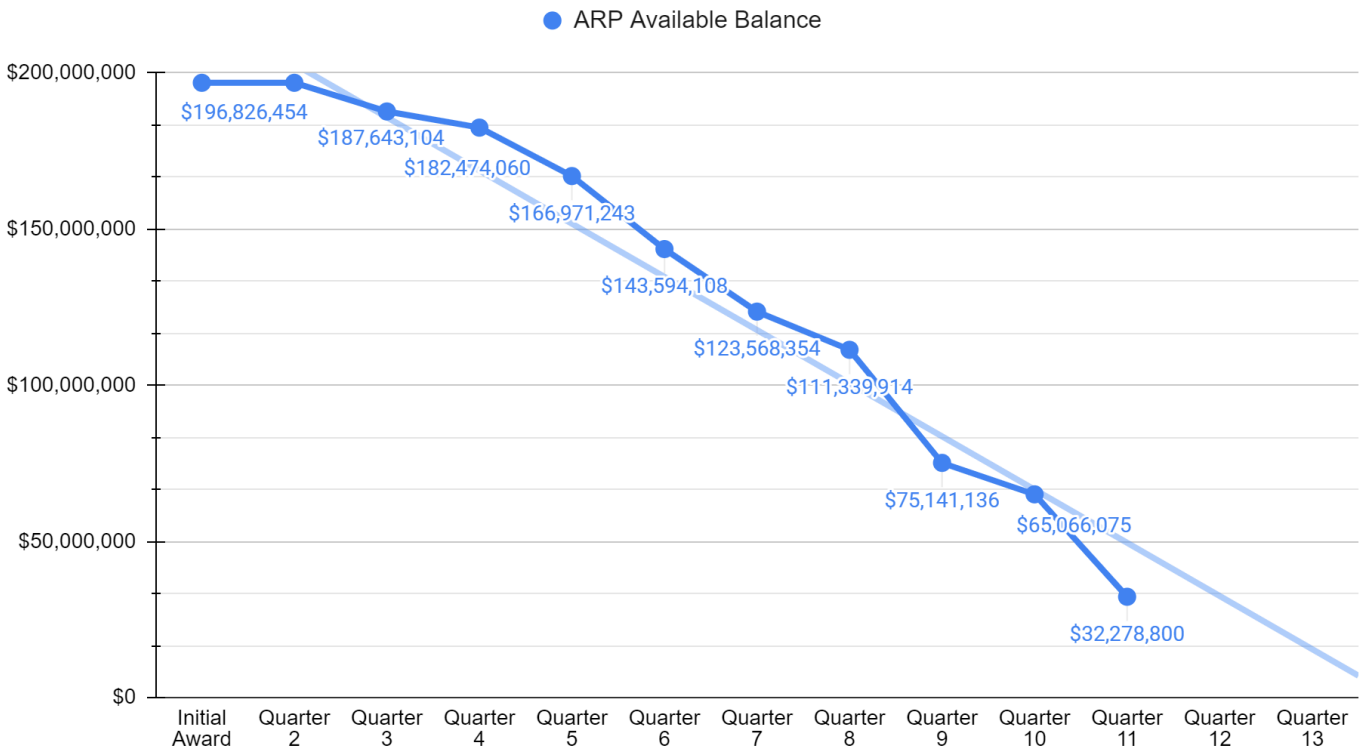
This edition of the Federal Relief Funds Quarterly Report will focus on the continued implementation of ARP-funded activities, and provide information on the District's progress in closing out the grant.

## Overall Fiscal Progress (ARP)



The *Overall Fiscal Progress* of ARP is inclusive of indirect costs and employee benefits. The table below models the actual spending of ARP funds **as of March 31, 2024** as well as the projected spend down for the close of the grant on September 30, 2024. Approximately \$50M of eligible general fund expenditures will be moved into ARP to ensure full spend-down of the grant.

### ARP Spend Down Progress by Financial Quarter



## ARP Contingency Plan

The ARP Contingency Plan timeline ensures full expending of ARP funds and timely submission of final ARP grant reports to New York State Education Department (NYSED). Below are the key checkpoints within the plan that will support the District's ability to fully encumber, expend, and liquidate ARP funds within the time period of the grant.

### Key Dates for ARP Contingency Plan (2023-24)

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- October, November, December, February 2024: Internal close-out of grant expenditures, projections of continued costs through June 30 completed.
- March 31, 2024: Projected amount to be repurposed is identified. This is the target number to be used to offset general funds. Amount available to be repurposed will include funds recouped through actual expenditure analysis, and freeze of activities that have not started as of September 15, 2023.
- April 2024: ARP Amendment #3 prepared and internally approved, includes removal of funds identified to be repurposed and identification of general fund expenses to be taken into ARP.
- June 30, 2024: Positions being funded through ARP, not slated to be funded elsewhere in 2024-25, will end.
- July 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024: Financial close-out of all ARP-funded activity.
- September 30, 2024 – October 31, 2024: Final report for ARP will be prepared, approved and submitted by October 31, 2024.

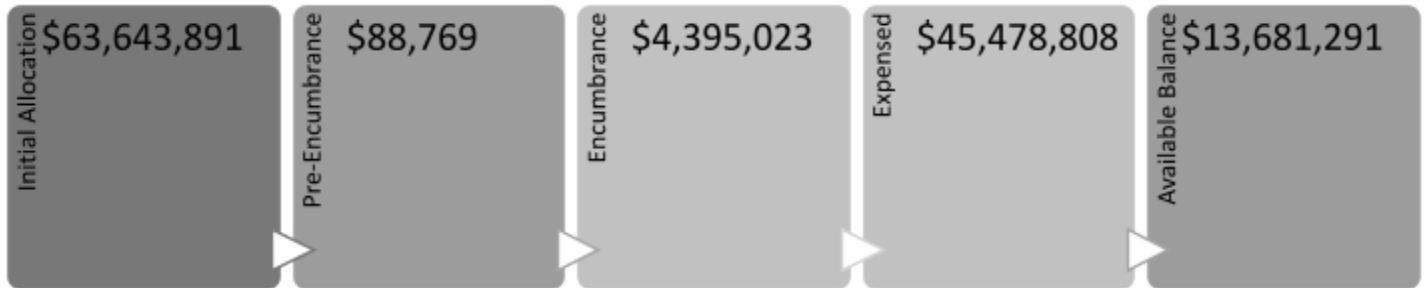
## Quarter 11 - January-March 2024

### Relief Funds Priority 1 – Rigorous Academics & Instruction

#### Rigorous Academics and Instruction – Fiscal Progress

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ARP



### Supporting High Quality Learning Environments

#### Supporting High Quality Learning Environments – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Discovery Education Techbook will continue to provide high quality supplemental instruction to students during the 2023-24 school year, with continued funding anticipated for 2024-25.
- Vehicles purchased as part of Federal Relief funds will continue to be utilized to enhance work-based learning engagements and interscholastic events and needs.

### Improving Academic Programs

#### Improving Academic Programs – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- The Arts Department and the Department of Health, Physical Education & Athletics completed purchases of various supplies and materials to enhance the instructional resources and curriculum districtwide.
- The Office of School Chiefs leveraged Project Implementation Specialist positions to support the oversight of school improvement activities and serve as a critical link between School Principals and Central Office. The district is determining how this work may be continued during the 2024-25 school year.

## Promoting College & Career Readiness

### Promoting College & Career Readiness – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- East EPO collaborated with a vendor to create promotional videos and materials to support advertising CTE programs available at East Upper school. East EPO provided transportation resources to increase student access to work-based learning opportunities for CTE programs at East as well as new materials and resources to promote new and continued CTE opportunities for students.
- The Panorama program will continue to be utilized during the 2024-25 school year to support data tracking within the Multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) process.
- Materials purchased to support district-wide CTE programs will continue to be utilized during instruction in the 2024-25 school year.
- The Department of Teaching and Learning will continue utilizing several academic intervention and enrichment programs to promote achievement and address learning loss during the 2024-25 school year. To support reading K-12, RCSD plans to continue using iReady, Amplify, Really Great Reading, Amira and Power Up. In addition, the IXL program will continue to support targeted intervention for mathematics.
- TCA Consulting and Realizing Others' Outstanding Talents provide social learning and provide professional development coaching for school leaders.

## Building Staff Capacity for Student Success

### Building Staff Capacity for Student Success – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) Science of Reading training instructs teachers and administrators in the literacy skills students need to be taught, why and how to plan to teach them. It also delves into the research behind the recommendations and prepares teachers to diagnose and respond to reading challenges and differentiate instruction. LETRS Science of Reading will continue in the 2024-25 school year.
- The District provided teachers and school administrators with external professional learning opportunities that promote best practices in teaching and instructional practices across the District.

## East EPO Technical Assistance Center: Curriculum and Professional Development

### East EPO Technical Assistance Center: Curriculum and Professional Development – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- East EPO staff will continue to provide professional development and curriculum support to schools through their Technical Assistance Center during the 2024-25 school year. The Teacher Leader (TL) model at East EPO will continue to promote high-quality instruction and support the refinement of guaranteed and viable curriculum for all grade levels.

## School Redesign and Program Diversification

### School Redesign and Program Diversification – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- The Expeditionary Learning (EL) specialized school model will continue at World of Inquiry School 58 during the 2024-25 school year. This work will be supported through a consultant contract with EL Education who will provide training and technical assistance for staff on the implementation of their school learning model.
- The Project Based Learning instructional model will continue to be implemented at various elementary schools in the coming academic year to provide authentic learning experiences and promote student engagement.
- The *Leader In Me* program builds leadership and life skills for students and staff members. Implementation fosters high-trust cultures of learning while accelerating academic achievement. Program practices will continue during the coming academic year.

## District Based Expanded Learning (ARP)

### District Based Expanded Learning – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Expanded Learning Opportunities are one of the District's top priorities in order to improve student outcomes and success. RCSD will continue to provide engaging, creative and fun learning activities that enhance students' social, emotional, physical, and academic development through exploration, inspiration, and discovery of their own passions for continued growth.
- Students across the District had the opportunity to participate in the Lego League and attend the First Lego League Challenge. Coaches participated in professional learning opportunities to ensure students have access to the systems and structures of a quality Lego League beyond Federal Relief Fund initiatives.

## Building Freshman Academies (ARP)

### Freshman Academies – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

- Freshman academies are small learning communities that focus on students entering ninth grade, with the goal of establishing a more intimate program to promote academic performance and engagement. Freshman Academies will continue to operate within RCSD secondary schools during the 2024-25 school year.



## Transforming Instruction (ARP)

### Transforming Instruction – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) and Receivership schools will continue to receive intensive training and support in the implementation of the Data Wise process for continuous improvement during the 2023-24 school year. RCSD educators will continue to engage in collaborative data inquiry and utilize Data Wise practices to improve instruction and promote continuous growth.

## Supporting Digital Learning (ARP)

### Supporting Digital Learning – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Creating online course materials that support digitally rich and blended instruction for students will continue in the 2024-25 school year and beyond.

## Improving Learning for Students with Disabilities (ARP)

### Improving Learning for Students with Disabilities – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Unique Learning and Readtopia have been selected for program continuation during the 2024-25 school year to support improved learning for students with disabilities.
- The Special Education Department attended conferences to build understanding of learning styles of individuals with autism and how to develop teaching strategies that support and enhance the resources provided to students in the District.
- Paraprofessionals will continue to support schools based on student needs.

## Supporting ENL Achievement (ARP)

### Supporting ENL Achievement –Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- The Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages (BEWL) completed orders for culturally responsive texts to support print-rich bilingual and multilingual school environments to meet the unique needs of diverse students at each school building.
- The LAS Links Assessment tool will continue to be utilized during the 2024-25 school year to provide authentic language proficiency assessment for Spanish-speaking bilingual students.

## School Based Supports (ARP)

### **School Based Supports – Common Practices and Continuation Plans**

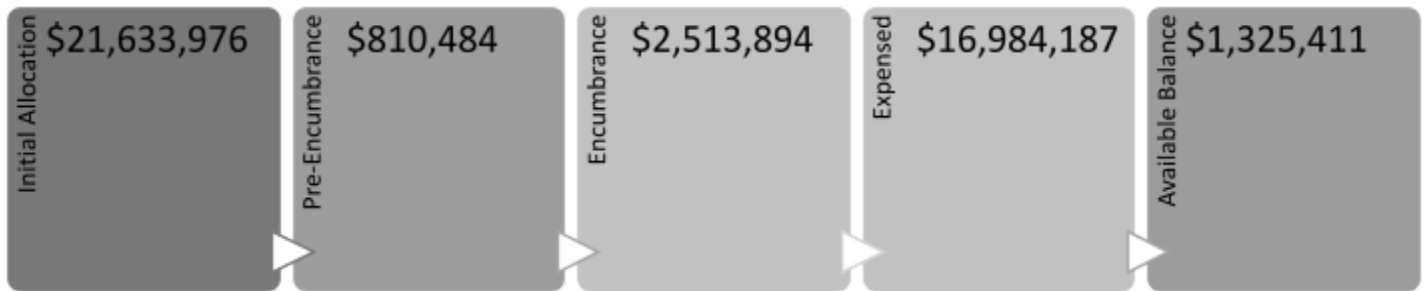
- Schools attended field trips during the 2023-2024 school year to engage with the community and create experiential learning opportunities for students.
- School staff attend professional learning opportunities focusing on topics that support school initiatives which will extend beyond Federal Relief Funds.

## Relief Funds Priority 2 – Social and Emotional Learning Support

### Social and Emotional Learning Support – Fiscal Progress

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#### ARP



### Creating a Culture of Support (ARP)

#### Creating a Culture of Support – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Various special education providers were trained in Therapeutic Crisis Interventions for Schools (TCIS) in order to continue supporting students and staff throughout the 2023-24 school year and beyond.
- The Rochester City School District recently entered into a partnership with the University of Rochester Medical Center (URMC), Rochester Regional Health and a variety of community health centers to improve mental health care for RCSD students. The District aims to increase the number of health centers across the district from seven (7) to sixteen (16), and to establish telemedicine units at all schools. The Health Centers will continue to operate beyond Federal Relief Funds through the Medicaid reimbursement process.
- East EPO will carry out several contracts with community based organizations for the 2023-24 school year to ensure students and community members have access to resources outside the school community.
- Initiated a contract for approval by the RCSD Board for Children’s Institute to provide GROW screenings, focused on health and development, to all RCSD Pre-K students.
- Contracted services with University of Rochester Medical Center (URMC) to support Pre-K mental health and early intervention screening is being considered for continuation during the 2024-25 school year.

### Supporting Equity, Inclusion & Social-Emotional Learning (ARP)

#### Supporting Equity, Inclusion & Social-Emotional Learning – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Services delivered by community partners for social emotional learning support and bilingual restorative practices will continue to be provided for students to access during the 2024-25 school year. Internally, RCSD will continue the work of the RocRestorative Teachers on Assignment (TOAs), by empowering students to participate in restorative practices and provide continued training opportunities.
- RCSD aims to continue the practice of assigning a School Counselor to serve students at every elementary school during the coming academic year to ensure that students’ social and emotional needs are met at all grade levels.

- The District seeks to continue its partnership with Pathways to Peace to support with facilitating mediations, settling social media disputes, supporting students with re-entry into the school environment after behavior-related absences, as well as preventing and/or mitigating emergency situations during the 2024-25 school year.
- RCSD expanded participation in the Second Step social emotional learning curriculum to 39 elementary and middle schools. The District plans to continue the practices found within the curriculum during the coming school year to build students’ social-emotional skills, help manage emotions, and nurture positive relationships.
- Trauma, illness, and grief training for RCSD staff will continue to be offered next school year in order to prepare staff to understand how trauma can affect learning and to better meet the academic and emotional needs of students.

## Supporting NorthSTAR and Responding to the Unique Needs of SWD (ARP)\*

\*Activities were completed prior to the sunset of the NorthSTAR program.

### Supporting NorthSTAR and Responding to the Unique Needs of SWD – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- The Audiology Department purchased supplies and materials, including speakers, microphones, and receivers, to support the repair and replacement of audiology equipment and accessories with an aim of providing students with equitable access to education.
- Continue to utilize translation services to support Committee on Special Education meetings during the 2024-25 school year to support the needs of students with disabilities.

## School Based Supports (ARP)

### School Based Supports – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- School staff attended professional learning opportunities focused on supporting the social emotional needs and practices of students and school-based initiatives which will extend beyond Federal Relief Funds.

## Relief Funds Priority 3 – Leadership & Instructional Capacity

### Leadership & Instructional Capacity – Fiscal Progress

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## Establishing Teacher Recruitment Pipelines (ARP)

### Establishing Teacher Recruitment Pipelines – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- For the 2023-24 school year, RCSD onboarded 19 new ROC Urban Teaching Fellows (UTF) as follows: Four (4) Fellows are from New York University; Six (6) Fellows from Nazareth University; and Nine (9) Fellows from the University of Rochester. At the completion of the coursework and teacher immersion experience, Teaching Fellows will have the opportunity to enter full-time teaching positions in the 2024-25 school year.
- The fellows will receive a contract by the end of the 2023-24 school year as a full time certified educator for the following school year; helping sustain pathways into education in the district.
- The RCSD will continue to partner with local colleges in order to provide tuition reimbursement for substitutes and other staff who are pursuing teacher certification in high-need certification areas during the 2024-25 school year.

## Rochester Urban Fellowship & Mentoring (ARP)

### Rochester Urban Fellowship & Mentoring – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- The ROC Urban Fellowship Mentor TOA (1.0 FTE) has worked to provide mentoring support and arrange professional development opportunities for ROC Urban fellows. Professional development has focused on diversity, equity, privilege, microaggressions and racism.

## Recruitment & Retention Incentives for High-Need Staff (ARP)

### Recruitment & Retention Incentives for High-Need Staff – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Recruitment and retention incentives for high-need staff were one-time opportunities afforded by the availability of Federal Relief Funds. The Office of Human Capital is continuously working to develop creative and appealing ways to recruit and retain highly qualified, diverse staff for the Rochester City School District.

## Increasing Staff & Educator Effectiveness (ARP)

### Increasing Staff & Educator Effectiveness – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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#### Office of Human Capital

- TeachBoost Pro has been selected for program continuation during the 2024-25 school year to support the teacher evaluation process.
- The Board of Education attended several professional learning opportunities, including the Council of Great City Schools conference, where school districts, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit organizations share success stories that have led to improved academic achievement for students in urban schools. The knowledge gained will assist them in making District decisions. The Board of Education will continue to participate in professional development opportunities in the 2024-25 school year.

## Targeted Professional Learning to Schools in Accountability Status (ARP)

### Targeted Professional Learning to Schools in Accountability Status – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- The New Teacher Project (TNTP), Inc. provided professional development for all sitting school leaders during the 2022-23 school year. This includes the development and delivery of monthly professional development sessions to all principals. Leaders have completed the Leader Professional Development Series for Year One and continue to attend sessions with TNTP to initiate and strengthen instructional practices in the 2023-24 school year. The monthly professional development sessions focus on the following three phases: Phase One: Foundations of Instructional Best Practices, Phase Two: Growing Teachers for Stronger Instruction, and Phase Three: Preparing to Launch for Next Year
  - A comprehensive evaluation of the TNTP professional learning initiative was conducted by an external evaluator to understand best practices and components identified for continuation after Federal Relief Funds.
- Schools with Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI), Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI), and Receivership accountability status will continue to implement strategies and methodologies to develop School Improvement Plans that support student achievement.

## Developing Youth Leadership (ARP)

### Developing Youth Leadership – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Support for Student Leadership Congress will continue during the 2024-25 school year to empower student leaders and promote student voice.

## East EPO Technical Assistance Center: Urban Leadership Academy (ARP)

### East EPO Technical Assistance Center: Urban Leadership Academy – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

- East EPO will continue to support student, staff and family leadership development through continued professional learning and activities such as Family Group and Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Committee.

## School Based Supports (ARP)

### School Based Supports – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

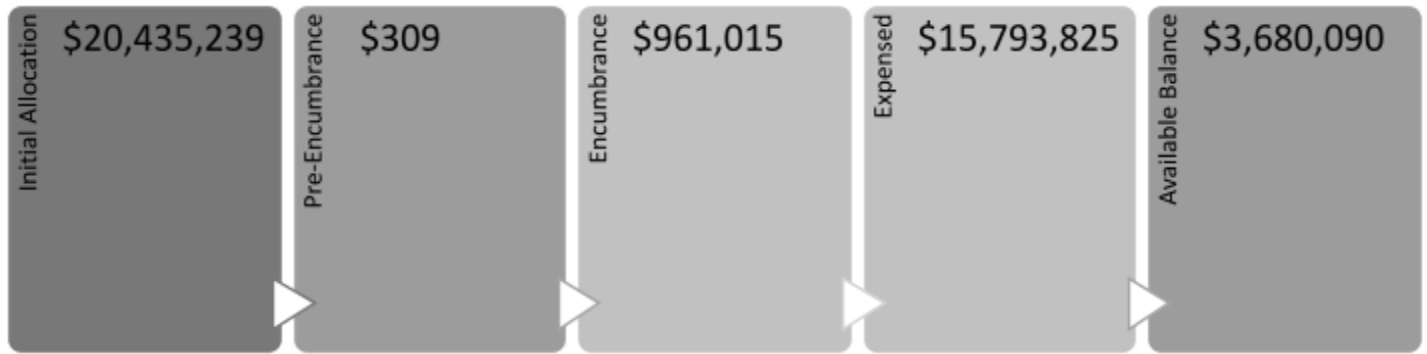
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- School leaders attend professional learning opportunities focusing on topics that utilize student-level data to drive instructional practices and support school initiatives which will extend beyond Federal Relief Funds.

## Relief Funds Priority 4 – Unfinished Learning

### Unfinished Learning – Fiscal Progress

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### Expanded Learning Before and After School (ARP)

#### Expanded Learning Before and After School – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Staff developed lesson plans and units, as well as provided direct services to students during after school programs throughout the 2023-24 school year.
- The District utilized contract service providers for community-based expanded learning programs throughout the 2023-24 school year.
- The District will evaluate After-School programming for the 2023-24 school year to understand impact and make data-driven decisions for school years beyond Federal Relief Funds.

### Expanded Summer Programming (ARP)

#### Expanded Summer Programming – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Summer Learning opportunities have undergone comprehensive program evaluation to inform need and quality practices for building and sustaining expanded summer programming beyond Federal Relief Funds.

### School Based Supports

#### School Based Supports – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Substitute teachers and paraprofessionals support supplemental and intervention resources to students during the 2023-24 school year.
- School staff attend professional development aligned instruction to school priorities, interventions and targeted supports, and strategies outlined in School Improvement Plans.
- Schools attended field trips during the 2023-2024 school year to engage with the community and differentiate learning for students.



## Relief Funds Priority 5 - Community Collaboration

### Community Collaboration – Fiscal Progress

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## Participatory Budgeting (ARP)

### Participatory Budgeting – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Participatory budgeting is an initiative focused on creating and enhancing student voice activities. Moving into the 2024-25 school year, student voice activities will continue to promote and engage students throughout the District.

## Community Schools Implementation (ARP)

### Community Schools Implementation – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Implementation of the Community School Model will continue through staff allocation to Community Schools during the 2024-25 school year.
- RCSD is pursuing opportunities to resource projects at Community Schools and food pantries during the coming year.

## Parent Engagement (ARP)

### Parent Engagement – Common Practice and Continuation Plans

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- Parent Engagement activities such as Parent University will continue to be supported by the District during the 2024-25 school year through alternate funding sources.

## Engaging Multilingual Families (ARP)

### Engaging Multilingual Families – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- The Department of Bilingual Education and World Languages (BEWL) will continue to support multilingual students and their families through existing staff capacity and districtwide programs.

## Partnering with Communities (ARP)

### Partnering with Communities – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- The Let's Talk platform will continue to be utilized during the 2024-25 school year for streamlined communication with families that promotes equitable access through multiple languages and easy to use chat features.

## School Based Supports

### School Based Supports – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- Support staff provide enrichment and intervention support to students and families outside of school hours to promote a restorative and culturally relevant environment.

## Relief Funds Priority 6 – District-Wide Infrastructure

### District-Wide Infrastructure – Fiscal Progress



## Effective Use of Federal Funds (ARP)

### Effective Use of Federal Funds – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

- Additional resources to promote the effective use of federal funds will no longer be needed in the 2024-25 school year.

## District Infrastructure Improvements (ARP)

### District Infrastructure Improvements – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

- The installation of a generator at Central Office is expected to be completed during summer of 2024. This generator will serve the District for years to come.
- The District will continue to utilize the services of foreign language translators to promote family and community engagement during the 2023-24 school year and seek to identify funding for 2024-25.
- The Oracle Enterprise Resource Planning project will continue during the 2024-25 school year. The project is focused on transitioning and improving RCSD's current financial and human resource management systems.
- The Board of Education completed the update for the public meeting space in conference room 3A/B at Central Office. These upgrades, with easy-to-use control interfaces, will help the district achieve equitable access to online and in-person meetings in this conference room, which has divider walls and can be used as a single large room (such as during BOE meetings), or two small conference rooms.
- IM&T will continue to purchase google licenses for RCSD staff and students for the 2024-25 school year.

## Achieving and Maintaining Digital Equity (ARP)

### Achieving and Maintaining Digital Equity – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

- In order to maintain digital equity for all students, the purchase of updated technology will continue through the 2024-25 school year within alternate funding sources.

## School Based Supports

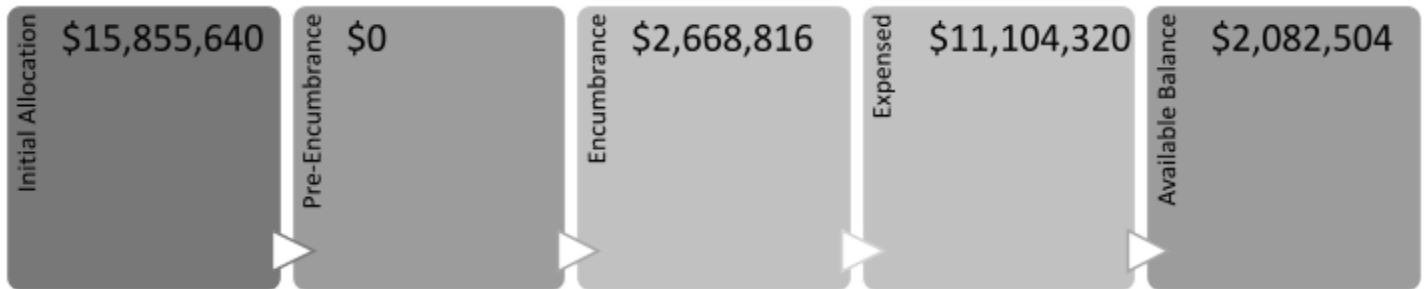
### School Based Supports – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- School of the Arts is utilizing an Account Clerk during the 2023-24 school year.

## Relief Funds Priority 7 - Safe & Healthy Reopening of Schools

### Safe & Healthy Reopening of Schools – Fiscal Progress



### Student Health & Safety (Reopening & COVID Response) (ARP)

#### Student Health & Safety (Reopening & COVID Response) – Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- The health and safety of students and staff of the District will remain a top priority, approved expenditures will be finalized at the end of Federal Relief Funds.

### School Based Supports (ARP)

- Supplies and materials, and security equipment upgrades will be completed by the end of the 2023-24 school year.

## Homeless Children and Youth – Part I (\$217K)

The Rochester City School District’s Families In Transition Program’s (FIT) mission is to ensure that all homeless students are identified and afforded their educational rights under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, eliminating barriers to their attendance and academic success in a safe and caring environment. The national pandemic has had a devastating impact on the families served through the FIT Program. In working with families, FIT staff have identified the following main areas of impact.

- Services to provide mental health support and services by NYS licensed practitioners (\$79K)
- Social workers to provide service during summer months (\$29K)
- Supply kits, including bus passes, for students and families in need (\$46K)
- Technology support for students experiencing homelessness (\$57K)

### Intended Outcomes

- Increase access to mental health services and supports year-round
- Increase access to basic needs and technological services for students and families experiencing homelessness

### Research-Base

- Homeless students report increased levels of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), have higher rates of suicide, and are more likely to suffer from social-emotional and mental health issues.

- There are negative correlations with academic achievement and absenteeism, when students’ basic needs are unmet

### Alignment to District Improvement Planning

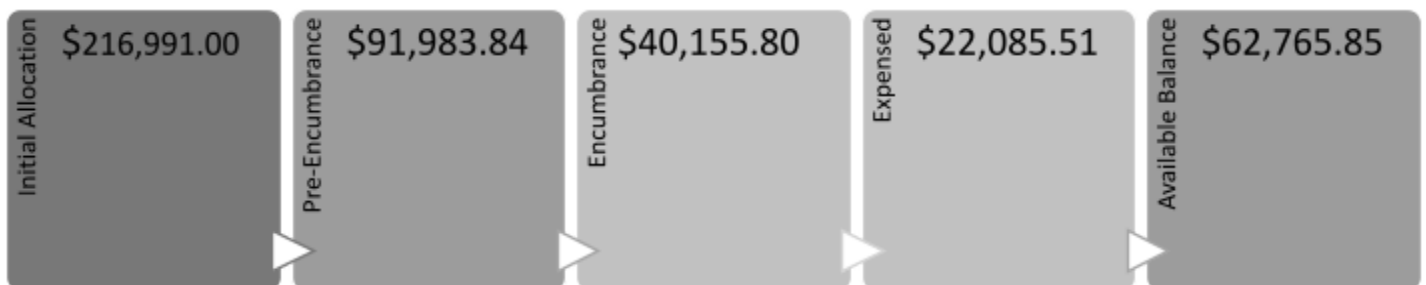
District Priorities:

- 2.3. Establish training norms for cultural responsiveness, antiracism, diversity and inclusion.
- 3.1. Create non-traditional, innovative opportunities for family engagement.

### Homeless Children and Youth (Part I) - Common Practices and Continuation Plans

- The Department of Social Work Services will continue to support families in need and finalize purchasing of necessary supplies to support families in transition.

### Homeless Children and Youth (Part I) - Fiscal Progress



## Homeless Children and Youth – Part II (\$756K)

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on Rochester students experiencing homelessness. The world is living with new and uncertain health risks, along with ever-changing, and often misunderstood, guidance on how to stay safe, but in addition to these challenges, students in transition are also trying to cope with disruption in their personal lives and are struggling to keep up with school work. Schools, specifically teachers, are often the first to notice the signs of children who are facing challenges in their out-of-school lives, but in the world of remote learning, these observations were more difficult to make. The Rochester City School District (RCSD) has identified two critical needs that will be addressed using ARP-Homeless Children and Youth, Part II funds.

- Staffing to support the identification of students experiencing Homelessness (\$168K)
- Training for staff providing services to support students and families experiencing homelessness (\$4K)
- Staffing for Crisis Support for Students experiencing Homelessness (\$336K)
- Transportation for homeless students living out of district (\$6K)
- Supplies for visits to temporary residences (\$3K)

### Intended Outcomes

- Increase access to mental health services and supports year-round
- Increase access to crisis supports
- Homeless students report increased levels of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), have higher rates of suicide, and are more likely to suffer from social-emotional and mental health issues.
- There are negative correlations with academic achievement and absenteeism, when students' basic needs are unmet

### Research-Base

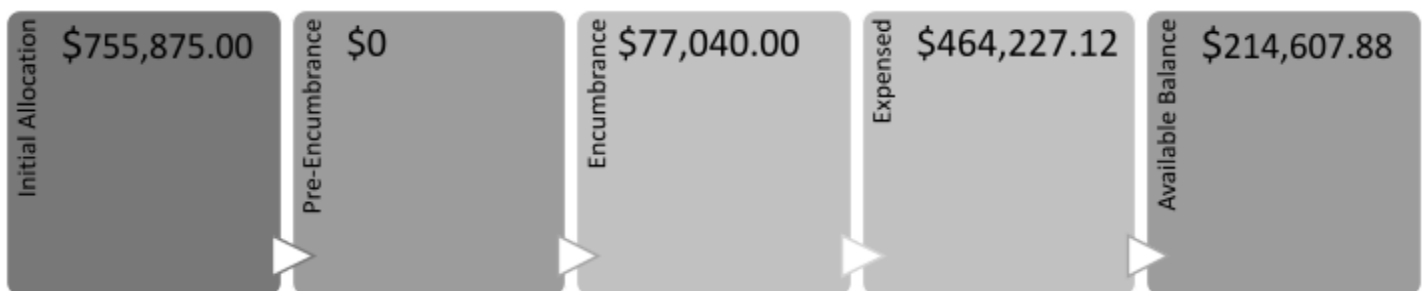
#### Homeless Children and Youth (Part II) - Common Practices and Continuation Plans

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- The Department of Student Support services will continue to support families in need and finalize purchasing of necessary supplies to support families in transition.

#### Homeless Children and Youth (Part II) - Fiscal Progress

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## Federal Relief Funds Program Evaluation

The Rochester City School District (RCSD) received an allocation of just over \$300M to invest in our students' education over three years (September 2024). School administrators and building leaders identified expenditures to spend down Federal Relief Funds to support the District's mission and vision, and align to the five strategic priority areas; culturally responsive and informed, high-quality learning experiences, diverse programming, extended learning, and high-quality staff. The Rochester City School District identified program evaluation as an area of need to better support data decision-making. The Program Evaluation Framework provides an overview for how the District will assess and analyze programs to ensure implementation fidelity and effectiveness. Programs selected for comprehensive program evaluation aim to inform best practices, guide decision making, support district accountability and increase educational return on investment.

### **Learning Focused Leadership 2024 Program Evaluation by Gibson Consulting Group**

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The District engaged The New Teacher Project (TNTP) for professional learning in the 2022-23 school year. TNTP is a non-profit organization that partners with school districts to support and facilitate the change process for schools.

Five initiatives were a focus for the school year:

1. Leadership Development Programming\*
2. Executive Coaching for School Chiefs supervising building principals\*
3. Development of a Principal Pipeline based on RCSD Leadership Competencies\*
4. Central Office Transformation
5. School Leaders of Color Collective (SLOCC)

\*Of the five initiatives listed above, these initiatives were identified for evaluation.

RCSD released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for evaluation of three of these initiatives, with Gibson Consulting Group (Gibson) being awarded the contract for services.

The various initiatives with which RCSD engaged TNTP for the 2022-23 school year were implemented at different points across the school year. Gibson worked with RCSD to identify three Research Questions to guide the evaluation scope. Gibson developed evaluation activities to inform and provide insight into the research questions identified, which included surveys, interviews, and focus groups. Gibson conducted these activities in the fall of 2023 to develop a formative evaluation to provide RCSD feedback regarding success.

Feedback from those who participated in evaluation activities regarding these initiatives was very positive. Across all evaluation activities, there was a consistent theme that participants appreciated the support, with the professional development and coaching being helpful in adjusting practice to improve student outcomes through more effective classroom instruction. Leaders were pleased with the newly developed RCSD Leadership Competencies and few felt they would be a burden to implement.



## Research Questions

Qualitative data collection was designed to learn about the experiences of all participants, including successes, difficulties, and ideas for improving the Learning-Focused Leadership initiative. The evaluation was guided by the following research questions.

1. How has the Learning-Focused Leadership initiative impacted the practices of school leaders within RCSD?
2. What are the perceived benefits and challenges experienced by RCSD assistant principals who participated in the Learning-Focused Leadership initiative during the 2022-23 school year?
3. In what ways can the professional development and coaching components of the initiative be optimized to better support the professional growth and effectiveness of school leaders within RCSD?

To inform these questions, the research team collected and analyzed information in multiple forms: focus groups and interviews, and an online survey.

## Findings & Analysis

Almost all survey participants believed TNTP professional development sessions enriched their knowledge about school leadership (see figure below). Approximately nine of 10 participants surveyed indicated professional development sessions enriched their knowledge to a moderate or great extent in implementing practices of effective teachers (87%), characteristics of a strong school leader (87%), potential impact of strong school leadership (89%), and strategies to engage with building staff in data-related conversations (92%). Approximately seven out of ten felt the sessions enriched their knowledge of district supports that are available to a moderate or great extent (71%).

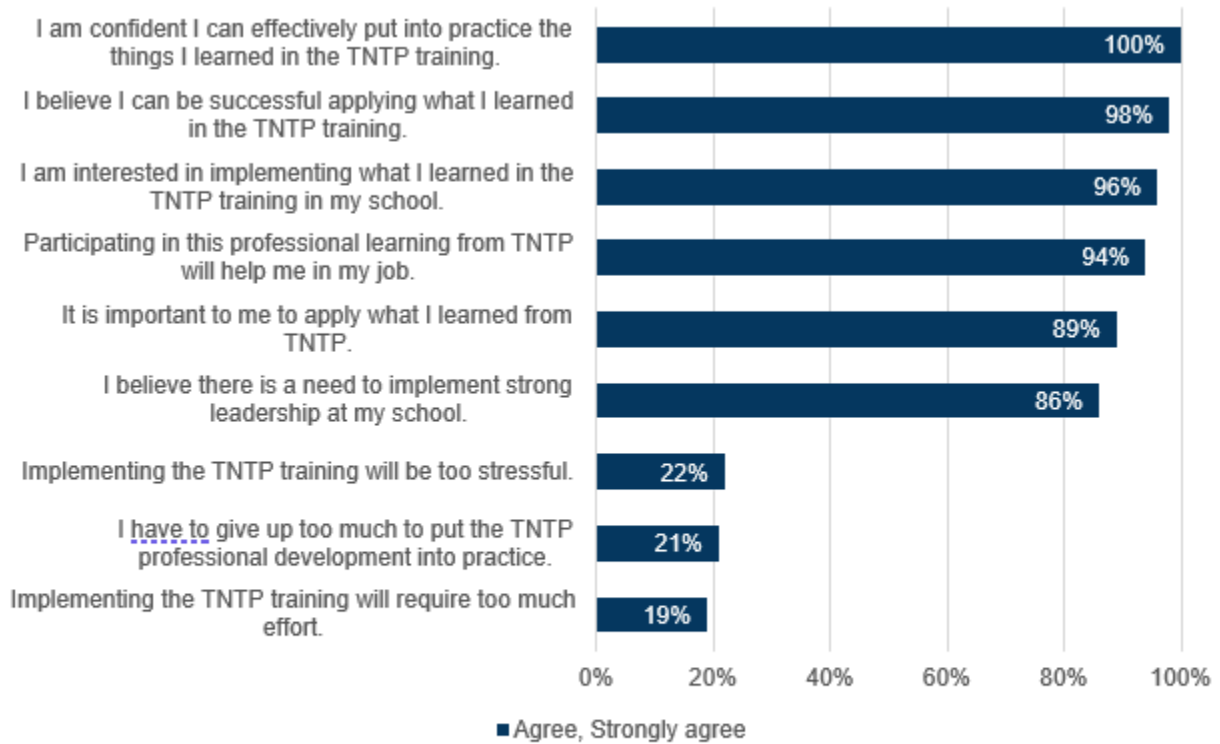


Note: Total number of respondents ranged between 43 and 44.

Source. Learning Focused Leadership Principal and Assistant Principal Survey

In general, survey participants believed that they were able to implement what they learned in TNTP professional development sessions (see figure below). Every participant surveyed agreed or strongly agreed they were able to effectively put into practice what they had learned in professional development sessions (100%). At least ninety percent believed they could be successful applying what they had learned (98%), were interested in implementing what they had learned at their school (96%), and felt that participating would help them in their job (94%). Approximately nine out of 10 thought it was important to apply what they had learned (89%), and just under ninety percent believed there was a need to implement strong leadership in their school (86%).

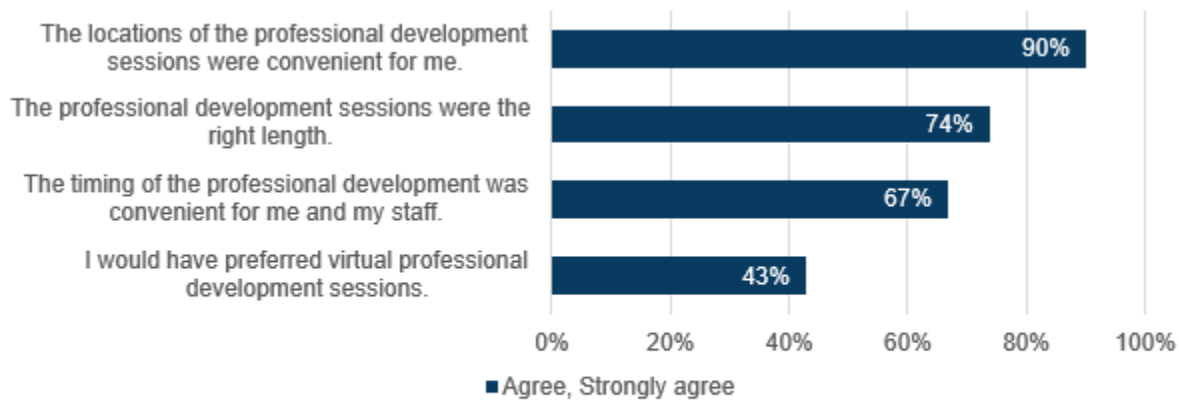
In addition, most survey participants did not believe that implementing what was learned in the professional development sessions would be difficult (i.e., perceived costs). Only about one of five survey participants agreed or strongly agreed implementing the training would be too stressful (22%), they would have to give up too much to put what they had learned into practice (21%), and that implementing the training would require too much effort (19%).



Note: Total number of respondents ranged between 42 and 44.

Source. Learning Focused Leadership Principal and Assistant Principal Survey

In general, TNTP professional development session attendees who completed surveys reported being satisfied with session logistics (see figure below). Almost all participants were pleased with session locations, with 90% of those surveyed either agreeing or strongly agreeing that they were convenient. Approximately three-fourths of leaders felt the sessions were the appropriate length (74%), while two-thirds indicated the timing was convenient for their staff (67%). Just under half of those surveyed would have preferred to have received the training through virtual sessions (43%).



Note. Total number of respondents ranged between 42 and 43.

Source. Learning Focused Leadership Principal and Assistant Principal Survey

### **i-Ready Impact Analysis 2024 Program Evaluation by Gibson Consulting Group**

In collaboration with Gibson Consulting Group, the District's research team designed a study to examine student use of i-Ready across RCSD schools, the relationship between i-Ready use and i-Ready diagnostic assessment scores, and teachers' use and perceptions of i-Ready. All data collected is from the 2022-23 school year.

#### **Research Questions**

1. What does i-Ready use look like across the district?
2. To what extent is i-Ready use (measured by number of lessons completed) associated with the i-Ready diagnostic assessment scores?
3. How do teachers in RCSD use the i-Ready platform and what are their perceptions of it?

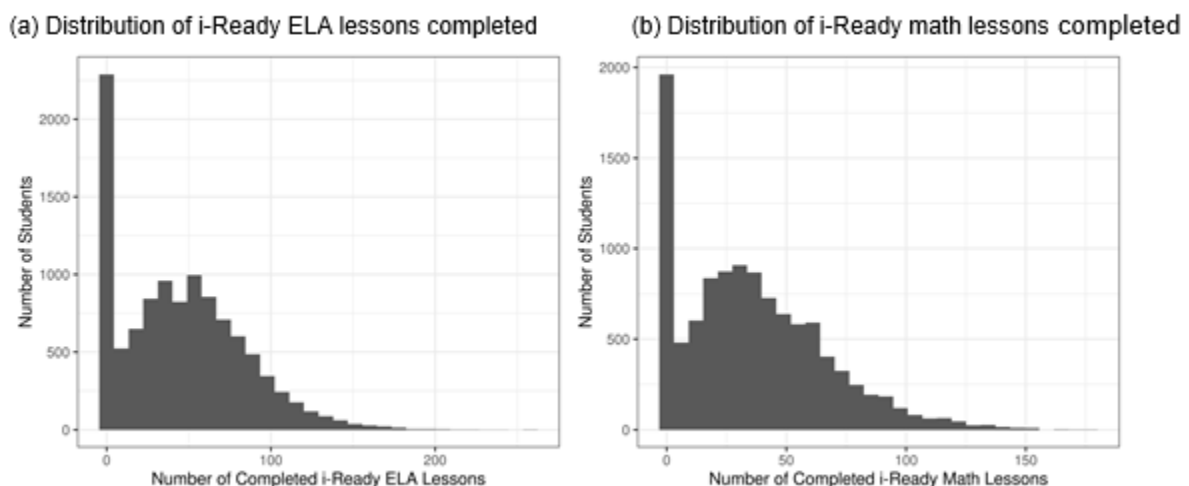
#### **Findings & Analysis**

To answer Research Question 1, the research team calculated the number of students enrolled in Grades K-8 across the district to first determine the analytic sample (see figure below). Subsequently, descriptive data for the overall population was calculated by school and grade level using data from the Spring 2023 term. Next, the percentage of students across the district, by school, and by grade level who completed at least one i-Ready lesson by subject during 2022-23 was calculated. Additionally, the average number of i-Ready lessons by subject for each school and grade level respectively. Finally, the team calculated the percentage of i-Ready lessons completed at each student's grade level as well as the percentage of lessons completed that were below the student's grade level.

Grade	Total Number of Students
K	1,530
1	1,584
2	1,412
3	1,611
4	1,636
5	1,553
6	1,632
7	1,566
8	1,662

For Research Question 2, the team identified two analytic samples, one for each subject. The ELA sample included students enrolled in Grades K-8 throughout the District during 2022-23 who had scores for at least one i-Ready ELA diagnostic assessment during Fall 2022 and at least one of the same assessments from Spring 2023. The math analytic sample was determined similarly, except the students were required to have at least one fall and at least one spring i-Ready math diagnostic assessment score. Students who completed 300 or more ELA lessons or 180 or more math lessons were excluded from the samples as outliers, since they completed many more lessons than the vast majority of students and including this very small number of students could have overly biased the results overall. Students who did not complete any i-Ready lessons were included in order to have a comparison group to see how not using the i-Ready platform compares to students who did use it. The final ELA and math samples together included 10,893 students (76.8% of students district-wide in those grade levels). The maximum number of completed i-Ready lessons for the sample for ELA was 258 and 177 for math. The i-Ready lesson usage for these samples are provided in Figures 1a and 1b.

**Figure 1. i-Ready Lesson Usage for Research Question 2 Samples**



Source. Authors' analysis of RCSD i-Ready data from 2022-23

For Research Question 3, the team developed and administered an electronic survey to assess staff use and perceptions of i-Ready. The survey was sent to 1,295 potential participants in 42 schools with i-Ready accounts. The survey invitation

asked staff to respond regardless of their level of i-Ready use. The research team received valid responses from 372 staff who reported teaching grades Kindergarten through Grade 8 (response rate = 28.7%, with 39 schools represented).

The teacher sample disaggregated by grade level is shown in the table below.

Grade	Total Number of Teachers
K	60
1	80
2	67
3	78
4	83
5	71
6	71
7	71
8	66

The following is a summary of findings collected from the analysis of student data and teacher surveys related to the use of the i-Ready platform for English Language Arts (ELA) and math in Rochester City School District (RCSD) during the 2022-23 school year. A brief summary of findings is listed below. These findings are described in greater detail throughout the report.

- Overall, the i-Ready platform is being used by over 75% of Grade K-8 students in the district and most schools have 76% or more of students completing at least one i-Ready lesson.
- The school-level average number of i-Ready lessons completed by students was 53 for ELA and 41 math, which indicates that students are completing i-Ready lessons across the school year.
- i-Ready usage peaks in Grade 3 and has sharp decreases in use in Grades 7 and 8.
- Over 70% of students who completed i-Ready lessons completed lessons below their grade-level.
- Overall, i-Ready use was positively associated with spring i-Ready diagnostic scores. However, associated increases in scores did not happen until students on average completed 35 i-Ready math and 45 lessons for ELA.
- According to teacher surveys, most i-Ready instruction and practice is done in class during the school day; most lessons are assigned to students by i-Ready (rather than by the teacher); and i-Ready is predominately assigned to all students in a classroom (as opposed to only students with Tier 2 or Tier 3 supports).
- Teachers, in general, have low levels of concern about the use of i-Ready. Areas of least concern reflect teachers' perceptions of their knowledge and ability to use i-Ready. Areas of greater concern, higher among middle school (seventh and eighth grade) teachers, reflect perceptions of student attitudes toward i-Ready, as well as i-Ready's usefulness and alignment.

## Appendix 1: Federal Relief Funds Amendment

The Federal Relief Funds budget planning and amendment\* process is in progress to ensure proper and equitable allocation of funds for the 2022-23 school year and subsequent funding years. At the close of the 2021-22 school year, spending for activities funded through both CRRSA and ARP were calculated. The budget was adjusted based on actual expended amounts, and projected costs for projects that will continue in the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. Through this process, surplus funds were identified from projects with actual and projected costs that were lower than the originally allocated dollar amounts. In addition, funds were also recovered from initially approved activities that will not move forward in the 2022-23 school year and beyond. Altogether, funding that was recouped from the original budget will be reallocated to fund new and/or existing projects. When selecting activities for additional funding through the amendment process, considerations included 1) urgent and emergent needs of the District; 2) efficiency of spend-down; and 3) stakeholder feedback (pg. 15). The amendment process focused on emerging needs within the District and aimed to maintain funding requests that aligned to the original priorities and initiatives outlined in the Federal Relief Fund Spending Plan. The District's amendment process for Federal Relief Funds (ARP and CRRSA) are planned by the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendents, and approved by the District's State Monitor before being sent to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) for formal approval.

Through the process, amendments were organized into two key categories:

- *New Requests for Funding* - Departments made requests for additional money for new activities, or to repurpose funds for a new activity.
- *Requests for Additional Funding* - Departments made requests for additional funding to support a project or activity that was part of the originally approved ARP budget

The final amendments will be approved by NYSED, at which time an updated FS-10 will be available on the [RCSD website](#).

### ARP Amendment #1

During the 2022-23 budget process, actual and projected costs for projects funded through ARP were calculated to identify available/unused funds. After budgets were adjusted, RCSD teams were able to add \$5.4M worth of expenses from the General Fund budget into ARP in order to create a cost-savings for the District and balance the budget. These items are identified below using an asterisk\*. During a second round of calculations, taking into consideration actual and projected costs of ARP-funded activities and project budgets that were adjusted, approximately **\$26M** was repurposed to support the following new and existing projects to ensure continuity in the 2022-23 school year.

#### Priority 1: Rigorous Academics and Instruction

##### *Improving Academic Programs*

- NEW: Instructional materials to support science curriculum adoption (~\$1.9M)\*
- NEW: Instructional materials to support science curriculum adoption (~\$1.2M)

##### *Building Staff Capacity for Student Success*

- Additions to Existing Project: Support of the LETRS training initiative (~\$964K)

##### *Transforming Instruction*

- Additions to Existing Project: Discovery Education Techbook resource for 7-12 students (~\$687K)

##### *Supporting High Quality Learning Environments*

- NEW: Contract with agency to support root cause analysis of RCSD chronic absenteeism issues (~\$77K)

## Priority 2: Social and Emotional Learning Support

### *Creating a Culture of Support*

- NEW: LyncX Academy staff and operating budget (~\$1.3M)\*

### *Supporting NorthSTAR and Responding to the Unique Needs of Students with Disabilities*

- NEW: Special Education expenditures to support Speech Language and Audiology services, as well as Special Education operations district-wide (\$1M)\*

### *Improving Learning for Students with Disabilities*

- NEW: Additional paraprofessional positions to support school-based needs (~\$1.2M)\*

## Priority 3: Leadership & Instructional Capacity

### *Increase Staff & Educator Effectiveness*

- Additions to Existing Project: Funds to support SAMs Time Management programs (~\$105K)
- NEW: BENTE Pipeline Development Program (~\$735K)

### *Targeted Professional Learning to Schools in Accountability Status*

- NEW: Funds to support school-based professional learning in Receivership schools (~\$700K)

### *Establish Teacher Recruitment Pipelines*

- Additions to Existing Project: Funding to establish teacher recruitment pipelines (~\$2.2M) (pending State Monitor approval)

## Priority 6: District-Wide Infrastructure

### *Effective Use of Federal Funds*

- NEW: Additional staffing to Support the Legal Department (~\$776K)
- NEW: Contracted Services: Fees for external legal services to support Department of Law operations (~\$502K)

### *Achieving and Maintaining Digital Equity*

- NEW: Laptops for support staff use (~\$623K)

### *District Infrastructure Improvements*

- Additions to Existing Project: Additional funding to support Oracle Cloud Enterprise Resource Management transition (~\$4M)
- NEW: Additional funding and staff to support Mailroom and Distribution Center operations (~\$750K)

## Priority 7: Student Health & Safety, Reopening, and COVID Response

### *Student Health & Safety, Reopening, and COVID Response*

- NEW: RCSD Pathways to Peace staff support City Pathways to Peace (~\$771K)
- Additions to Existing Project: Continue District Wide Door Security Project to provide door contacts and video cameras at all exits (~\$4M)
- NEW: Replace locksets on all classroom doors (~\$4.5M)
- NEW: Replace PA headend equipment in 23 schools (~\$2M)

\*A grant amendment is a formal change to the originally approved grant budget. Requesting an amendment is a routine part of the grant process and allows grantees to modify their original budget in order to accomplish the goals established by the grant.

## ARP Amendment #2

At the close of the 2022-23 school year actual and projected costs for projects funded through ARP were calculated to identify available/unused funds. ARP Amendment #2 was approved on October 19, 2023 and can be viewed on the [District website](#). Outlined below are new expenditures or additions to existing projects that were include in ARP Amendment #2. Items removed or reduced can be viewed in the FS-10A2.

### Priority 1: Rigorous Academics and Instruction

#### *Supporting High-Quality Learning Environments*

- Additions to Existing Project: Staffing for Specials Teachers (~\$2.4M)
- NEW: Staffing to support inventory of instructional materials (~\$88K)

#### *Improving Academic Programs*

- Additions to Existing Project: Project Implementation Specialist to support School Chiefs, academic programs and school operations (~\$600K)
- Additions to Existing Project: Staffing to support special education services (~\$130K)
- NEW: Contracted services to support various curriculum and instructional program implementation (~\$385K)
- NEW: Supplies and materials to update Visual and Performing Arts classrooms (~\$750K)
- NEW: Additional Learner Chromebook boxes to support student engagement (~\$263K)
- NEW: Equipment to update gymnasias and physical education spaces (~\$84K)

#### *District-Based Expanded Learning*

- NEW: Equipment to support the implementation of District-wide athletics and intramural programs (~\$132K)

#### *Supporting Digital Learning*

- NEW: Substitute coverage for IM&T (~\$123K)

#### *Building Staff Capacity for Student Success*

- NEW: Contracted services to support the implementation and participation of LETRS Science of Reading (~\$585K)
- NEW: Staff participation in various professional learning conferences (~\$500K)

#### *East EPO Technical Assistance Center: Curriculum and Professional Development*

- NEW: Hourly pay and substitute coverage to support curriculum development (~\$75K)

#### *Transforming Instruction*

- Additions to Existing Project: Teacher and administrator stipends to support the implementation of Data Wise (~\$140K)
- Additions to Existing Project: Contracted services to support strategic planning for Data Wise implementation (~\$26K)

#### *School Redesign and Program Diversification*

- NEW: Executive Director of Strategic Initiatives (~\$130K)
- NEW: Substitute coverage to support teachers, administrators and support staff with professional learning opportunities around school program models (~\$136K)
- NEW: Contracted services to support the implementation of specialized school models (~\$628K)
- NEW: Travel and field trips to support program implementation of specialize school models (~\$405K)

#### *Building Freshman Academies*

- Additions to Existing Project: Planning and coordination for Freshman Academies (~\$54K)

#### *Promoting College and Career Readiness*

- NEW: Work-based learning coordinator to support programmatic expansion (~\$70K)
- NEW: Contracted services to support the implementation of computer intervention services, including i-Ready, PAPER and Read180 (~\$850K)



- Additions to Existing Project: Purchase of vehicles and equipment for Driver and Traffic Safety program (~\$127K)

## Priority 2: Social and Emotional Learning Support

### *Creating a Culture of Support*

- NEW: Contracted services to set-up District-Wide Mental Health Centers and Telehealth Services, including early intervention services for PreK students (~\$1.7M)
- NEW: Contracted services to provide School Resource Officers at schools through the Rochester Police Department (~\$150K)
- NEW: Contracted services to support various needs at East Upper and Lower Schools (~\$155K)

### *Supporting Equity, Inclusion, and Social-Emotional Learning*

- Additions to Existing Project: Additional FTE School Counselors (~\$390K)
- NEW: Contracted services to support various restorative and intervention services for students (~\$1.25M)
- NEW: Purchasing access to Second Step Social Emotional Learning Curriculum (~\$117K)

### *Supporting NorthSTAR and Responding to the Unique Needs of Students with Disabilities*

- Additions to Existing Project: Temporary staffing to support the fulfillment of the consent decree requirements and IEP mandates (~\$284K)

## Priority 3: Leadership & Instructional Capacity

### *Establish Teacher Recruitment Pipelines*

- NEW: Employment contracts for Psychology Interns to establish employment pipeline (~\$120K)

### *Recruitment & Retention Incentives for High-Need Staff*

- NEW: Recruitment and retention incentive for Rochester Teachers Association (RTA) (~\$4.9M)
- NEW: Recruitment and retention incentive for School Safety Officers (~\$1.0M)

### *Targeted Support to Schools in Accountability Status*

- Additions to Existing Project: Hourly pay for TSI/CSI/Receivership staff to attend professional learning opportunities (~\$80K)

### *Developing Youth Leadership*

- NEW: Compensation for participation in the District-Wide Student Leadership Congress (~\$159K)

### *East EPO Technical Assistance Center: Urban Leadership Academy*

- NEW: Contracted services for Leader in Me program at East Upper and Lower Schools (~\$75K)

## Priority 4: Unfinished Learning

### *Expanded Learning Before and After School*

- Additions to Existing Project: Overtime pay for custodial, clerical, paraprofessionals and other school-based support staff to support Saturday programming (~\$57K)

## Priority 5: Community Collaboration

### *Participatory Budgeting*

- NEW: Funding to support Community-Driven Participatory Budgeting (~\$100K)

### *Community Schools Implementation*

- Additions to Existing Project: Additional Community School Site Coordinators (~\$440K)
- NEW: Supplies, materials and food to support Community School food pantries (~\$140K)

## Priority 6: District-Wide Infrastructure

### *Effective Use of Federal Funds*

- Additions to Existing Project: Staffing to support grant administration (~\$520K)
- REVIEW CODE 16
- NEW: Temporary staffing to support the Procurement Department (~\$100K)

- NEW: Contract services for external program evaluation vendor (~\$600K)
- Additions to Existing Projects: Temporary staffing to support the Auditor General (~\$88K)

*District Infrastructure Improvements*

- NEW: Foreign Language Translators for District communications (~\$264K)
- NEW: Contracted services to support the transition and implementation of Oracle (~\$21.4M)
- NEW: Financial and Human Capital Management Replacement; various licensing costs (~\$1.2M)
- NEW: Supplies and materials to upgrade to Microsoft A5 Security bundle (~\$1.5M)
- NEW: Upgrade to District Firewall Protection (~\$142K)
- NEW: Equipment upgrades to the Board of Education Public Meeting Space (~\$190K)

*Achieving and Maintaining Digital Equity*

- NEW: HelpDesk Assistants to support families, students and staff IT needs (~\$180K)
- NEW: Contracted services for the installation of Smart Flat Panel TV project District-wide (~\$983K)

**Priority 7: Student Health & Safety, Reopening, and COVID Response**

*Student Health & Safety, Reopening, and COVID Response*

- Additions to Existing Project: Building Substitute to support school re-opening and staffing needs (~\$2.2M)
- NEW: Staffing for Custodians (~\$347K)
- NEW: Overtime pay for School Safety Officers (~\$172K)
- NEW: Contracted services for the purchase and installation of the Central Office Generator project (~\$2.8M)
- NEW: District-wide enhancements to building safety and security project (~\$3.2M)