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### **END OF COVID-19 FEDERAL FUNDING SIGNALS CHANGES FOR ARLINGTON ISD**

*District prepares to pivot as Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds expire*

**MARCH 7, 2024, ARLINGTON, TEX.** – During the COVID-19 pandemic, the federal government granted Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds to school districts nationwide to help address educational issues caused by the pandemic. The grants were administrated over three years, expiring at the end of the 2023-24 assignment period. Arlington ISD is a recipient of these federal grant funds and is now preparing to transition its operations and make adjustments that will impact grant-funded staffing and organizational structure.

The ESSER III grant for Arlington ISD, which provided \$134 million in crucial financial support, has been instrumental in ensuring the safety and well-being of students and staff through unprecedented circumstances.

Superintendent Dr. Matt Smith expressed gratitude for the invaluable support provided by the ESSER III grant and emphasized the district's unwavering dedication to delivering quality education to its students. "The ESSER III grant has been instrumental in our ability to respond effectively to the challenges posed by the pandemic," said Smith. "As we navigate this transition, our priority remains ensuring the continuity of education and the well-being of our students and staff. We are committed to maintaining essential services and educational standards."

*Here's how Arlington ISD allocated its ESSER III funds:*

After-school programs, tutoring, summer programs, parent outreach
Math, Science, English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Bilingual/ESL, Special Education and campus supports

Supports for mental health, social and emotional needs, intervention, dyslexia, drop-out prevention, AVID, P-TECH, advanced academics and campus-based supports
ESSER grant monitoring and reporting
Technology to maintain district operations
Library resources, transportation, student assessments, campus-based supports

In total, 275 positions will end at this school year's conclusion. These positions were utilized to assist with classroom support, mental health resources, after-school care, tutoring and more.

"ESSER III funding was always intended to be a short-term grant to address learning loss caused by COVID-19," said Smith. "Student learning remains our highest priority and we'll actively work to align the funds we have to meet that priority. That's not to say there won't be challenges. With no adjustments in funding from the State and the loss of ESSER III funds, we will be challenged. But we've tackled every challenge related to COVID-19 and this won't be an exception."

A few steps the Arlington ISD will take to ensure student learning remains strong include the continuation of:

- Summer learning, tutoring, interventions and other resources for students.
- Professional learning to ensure high-quality classroom instruction for teachers and campus administrators.
- Professional work certifications, dual-credit courses, AVID, extra-curricular activities and other academic opportunities for all students.

Affected employees are encouraged to explore opportunities for re-employment within the district and are eligible to apply for other available positions. The district is committed to supporting affected staff members throughout this process and facilitating a smooth transition to new roles within the organization.

The Arlington ISD remains steadfast in its commitment to excellence in education and looks forward to continuing to serve the community with dedication and resilience.

***About the Arlington ISD:***

The Arlington ISD is a unique district passionate about academics, specialized learning, fine arts, athletics and many other student development opportunities. The district is home to nearly 55,000 students and 8,500 staff members.

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