

**Purpose of this letter.** This is a template letter that can be used by **TSTA Local Affiliates** to notify the Local Superintendent of Schools and/or School Board of the Local's interest in meaningful participation in planning for the safe and equitable operation of schools utilizing the American Rescue Plan funds. The letter may also be used to **alert the district to any concerns** about adherence to grant conditions. Letters should be customized to address any specific local concerns and should most certainly be used to **recommend priority needs, programs and services that the local affiliate** believes will effectively address the impacts of COVID-19 on students and schools and will require these federal emergency funds.

Please remember to remove all highlighted areas before sending.

Dear [Superintendent]:

I am writing to you on behalf of [Local Association], which represents [number] [District] educators, as the District undertakes the crucial work of planning for the allocation of American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds. As you are aware, [District] has already been guaranteed [amount] in emergency funding.

The Department of Education requires Local Education Associations (LEAs) to create a publicly available plan for the use of ARP ESSER funds, which is reached through meaningful consultation with stakeholders, including educators, school staff, and their unions/associations. Collaboration with and reliance upon the expertise and invaluable perspective of the educators who serve our students day in and day out, is essential to effective planning, as was reflected in the [Department's guidance to state commissioners](#) and grant guidance stating that *“educators and their unions, should be an essential component of the process.”*

[INCLUDE — a specific demand for inclusion in the planning and oversight of programs developed with ARP ESSER funds — e.g., seats on committees, opportunities for advance review and comment on draft plans, etc.]

[IF APPLICABLE — If the District has not yet created and publicly posted its plan for in-person instruction and continuity of services:

As you are aware, the receipt of ARP ESSER funds is also conditioned on the District developing and making publicly available on its website a plan for safe in-person instruction and continuity of services. The District is required as part of this process to seek public comment on this plan and to take those comments into account. See ARP Sections 2001(i)(1) – (2). Meaningful engagement and participation in planning by teachers and staff is essential to building trust and ensuring the best possible allocation and use of resources and the highest degree of support for students. ]

[IF APPLICABLE — If the District's plan for in-person instruction and continuity of services was not subject to public comment prior to posting:

As you are aware, the receipt of ARP ESSER funds is also conditioned on the District developing and making publicly available on its website a plan for safe in-person instruction and continuity of services. The District is required as part of this process to seek public comment on

this plan and to take those comments into account. See ARP Sections 2001(i)(1) – (2). Although the District has a plan posted on its website, this plan was developed without opportunity for public comment, and therefore does not meet the grant requirements. Moreover, meaningful engagement and participation in planning by teachers and staff is essential to building trust and ensuring the best possible allocation and use of resources and the highest degree of support for students. We call on the District to provide the required opportunity for public comment on the plan, in particular, input from and discussion with the educators who are directly tasked with implementing it, before it is released as a final plan.]

*[IT IS CRITICAL THAT YOU - Highlight priority needs, programs and services identified by your local affiliate that will address the many impacts of COVID-19 on students and schools. (See these NEA resources--[Learning Beyond COVID](#) – for ideas and effective ways to address COVID Opportunity Gaps and disrupted instruction that your affiliate can champion and support in your letter.*

NEA’s guidance on [Mitigation Strategies for Safe In-Person Learning](#) for ideas on how schools should be complying with CDC-recommended COVID-19 mitigation measures. |

NEA’s guidance [on COVID-19 staffing considerations](#).

As an organization representing the educators who have been on the frontlines throughout this crisis and on behalf of the students they serve, we will continue to push for accountability and transparency in the allocation of funds.

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

Sincerely,

**[Local affiliate signature]**

cc:

Texas State Teachers Association