



American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) 2021-2024 Overview and Priorities

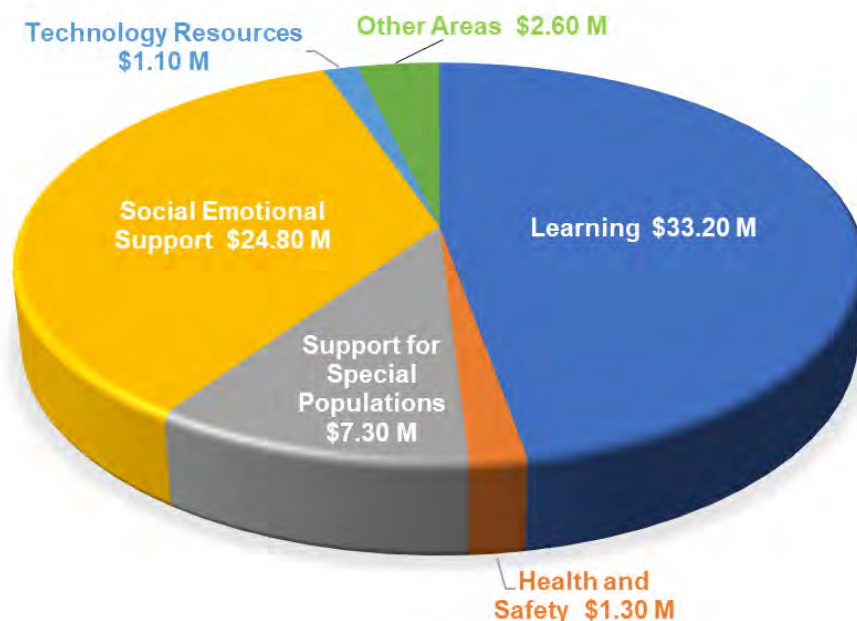
Yonkers Public Schools, through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) is eligible for \$74.5 million in federal funding over the next three years, which includes New York State Education Department reserve funding grants. ARPA will be used to help support Yonkers students, staff and community as we advance the equity agenda to restore, renew and bring hope to our District and City by providing the proper levels of staffing and supports in our schools.

Since the onset of COVID-19 in 2020, Yonkers Public Schools received three federal appropriations that provided:

- additional academic and social emotional support for students;
- planning and delivery of programs to address learning loss;
- resources to address air quality and safety concerns;
- proper COVID-19 mitigation strategies for everyone’s health and safety; and
- technology devices and connectivity across our schools to increase equity and access.

The ARPA funds will be used over the course of the next three years, 2021-2024, to advance the proper levels of instructional and support staff in Yonkers schools.

Yonkers Public Schools Funding Priorities 70.3 Million





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Learning

To accelerate student learning and close the achievement gap exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, Yonkers will initiate a variety of programs and platforms of learning, designed to meet student academic needs and enable them to thrive.



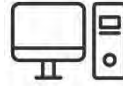
Social-Emotional Support

To meet the needs of the whole child, Yonkers will provide resources and supports necessary to identify student mental health and social well-being needs and support their success.



Health & Safety

To ensure that our schools are safe and healthy for students and staff to learn in-person, Yonkers will provide additional nurses and School Safety Officers.



Technology

To ensure that all students have access to the platforms needed to succeed in school and during approved remote learning, Yonkers will distribute devices and connectivity access to mitigate the technology gap and ensure equity and access for all students.



Supports for Special Populations

To support Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners, Yonkers will initiate programs and platforms of learning designed to address students' unique needs enabling them to thrive.



Other Areas

To support districtwide initiatives and enhance school personnel to support teaching and learning.



LEARNING
\$33.0 Million

Art and Music Teachers

\$10.0 Million

To leverage a Culturally Responsive-Sustaining framework, the District will enhance Arts Education as a vehicle for students to express identity and to teach the whole child. Rebuilding Arts Education in Yonkers provides students equitable access to enrichment activities that help to develop the social, emotional and creative aspects of each student. Due to persistent fiscal constraints, the Art and Music programs in Yonkers were functioning at minimum capacity. Often schools shared teaching staff to provide the minimum required credits and/or contact hours for Arts Education. With ARPA funds, Yonkers will expand art and music programming by adding 13 art teachers and 10 music (instrumental and/or vocal) teachers building back fulltime arts educators in all elementary schools serving prekindergarten through grade 8 students.

Concurrently, the District will increase instrumental music instruction in prekindergarten to grade 8 schools offering equitable access for elementary students to rebuild interest and skills. These programs act as feeder schools for the depleted 9 through 12th grade instrumental programs and will foster robust concert and marching band programs essentially abandoned during the pandemic.

Career & Technical Education Teachers \$3.2 Million

The District's Career and Technical Education (CTE) Programs are constantly evolving to meet ever-changing industry standards. CTE supports Career, College and Civic Readiness and improves graduation rates. Programs of study integrate rigorous academic and relevant career and technical skills. College and career exploration is further supported through work-based learning, which is a key component of the approved courses, provides students with practical experience and additional information to inform their college and career choices. COVID-19 affected the District's delivery of CTE programs as we integrated all of the required safety and mitigation strategies outlined in NYSED, CDC & DOH guidelines. There currently are 11 approved CTE Programs at Saunders Trades and Technical High School including Technical, Occupational and Vocational Programs; 1 approved program at Roosevelt High School - Early College Studies and 1 approved program at Lincoln High School.

ARPA will provide an additional 8 CTE teachers to expand capacity in the eight high schools, inclusive of the aforementioned 13 certified programs, to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on students. These additional teachers and course sections provide students with the opportunities to engage in the NYSED CTE approved coursework and Work-Based Learning projects necessary to pass industry certification exams for endorsement at graduation.

World Language Teachers \$1.8 Million

World Language education is an integral component of Yonkers' Culturally Responsive-Sustaining framework and the increasing number of Yonkers student earning the prestigious New York State Seal of Biliteracy endorsement upon graduation, estimated to exceed 150 students annually. ARPA will provide 5 additional World Language teachers. To mitigate learning loss and build the District's capacity to provide instruction aligned with the NYSED World Language Learning Standards (revised March 2021), this funding will also be used to update students' access to learning platforms and materials aligned to the new standards.

Library Media Specialists \$3.0 Million

To diminish learning loss and close the achievement gap caused by the pandemic, 7 additional school library media specialists were hired through ARPA. Strengthening the library program promotes early literacy, supports a strong standards-based educational foundation aligned to state and local curricula and accelerate learning within a Culturally Responsive-Sustain framework. Library media specialists offer resources that support student social and emotional learning and well-being by creating inclusive learning environments. School libraries foster equitable access and offer safe spaces where students can read and explore different cultures, religions and lifestyles. ARPA funding will promote a districtwide initiative of student service learning that seeks to address different outlets for social justice.

Additional school library media specialists will create learning environments that offer students greater exposure to a variety of literature in both physical and digital formats. In educating the whole child, school library media specialists will facilitate project-based learning and hands-on making in library media centers. ARPA will increase school libraries equitable access to technology and connectivity to close the achievement and digital gaps that disproportionately impacted Yonkers students during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Physical Education Teachers \$2.9 Million

Recognizing that many students were home-bound for over a year as a result of the pandemic and may have had limited exposure to physical activity and movement, ARPA funding expanded physical education course offerings by adding 7 physical education teachers and purchasing COVID-19 screening and social distancing materials such as thermometers to screen students prior to entering the field for practice and games.

As students adjust to in-person instruction and learn to negotiate physical activities while social distancing, physical education curriculum, which involves the development of students in the three domains psychomotor, cognitive and affective, is a significant component of the District's post pandemic work. The lower grade levels (PK- 4) will initially focus the first few weeks developing class routines while introducing a variety of movement and skill themes. Grades 5 -12 physical education program will start with fitness units to assess individual student skills and needs that may have resulted from lost learning time. Physical education teachers will help students develop their own personal fitness program to be used throughout the year.

Reading Teachers

\$2.2 Million

To accelerate student learning and mitigate the achievement gap exacerbated by COVID-19, 5 additional reading specialists were hire through ARPA. Through collaboration with classroom teachers the reading teachers will analyze summative and formative data in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and develop standards-based action plans for students that address academic needs building their specific strengths and identify essential skills/standards in need of additional support.

The increased reading staff will provide opportunities for smaller group settings in which high-quality, research-based reading instruction adapted to diverse students' needs will be delivered in collaboration with the classroom teachers. The reading teachers address these needs by a) teaching specific skills and strategies that students need to learn, based on data, b) making instruction more explicit and systematic; c) increasing opportunities for practice; d) providing appropriate text at students' instructional reading levels; e) monitoring students' mastery of key skills and strategies and reteaching when necessary; and (f) providing actionable feedback to encourage reflective practice. Smaller-groups will allow for instructional conversations in a safe learning space where students are provided opportunities to express what they know and receive impactful feedback from other students and the teacher with the mindset of cultivating a passion for reading. The increased attention to student needs builds confidence as they develop into independent readers and critical thinkers.

Assistant Principals

\$3.4 Million

School building leaders are charged with additional challenging responsibilities since the onset of COVID-19. Through ARPA funding 6 additional Assistant Principals were hired to bolster administrative and supervisory support for all children, families and staff in schools. In-person learning requires significant attention to health and safety to mitigate the spread of the disease, the social-emotional repercussions from isolation, and, most importantly, closing the achievement gap from learning time lost for all students.

Classroom Support

\$6.5 Million

Post COVID-19 in-person learning necessitates additional school aides and Teaching Assistants to provide nurturing assistance for students. Working under the supervision of teachers, these individuals support classroom instruction to address the gaps that have resulted from the learning loss associated with the pandemic as well as assist in maintaining health and safety protocols. ARPA funds 11 General Education and 14 Special Education School Aides and 7 General Education Teaching Assistants and 7 Integrated Co-Teaching Assistants to reinforce students' academic skills and aid with mandated services for Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners. From these professionals, students are able to receive more targeted instruction, more individualized feedback and higher levels of confidence in the safety procedures of their school.



SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

\$24.7 Millions

School Counselors

\$13.2 Million

School counselors are an integral component of the District's school-based Pupil Support Teams, provide College, Career, and Civic Readiness (CCCR) services and deliver daily academic and Social-Emotional Learning supports to mitigate the learning loss experienced across the prekindergarten to 12 continuum. ARPA funds 36 school counselors.

To mitigate the residual effects from COVID-19 for students, families and staff the District has procured a plethora of resources and professional development to support counseling services at the primary, elementary, intermediate and high school levels. Per NYSED guidance, social-emotional well-being must be schools' top priority in supporting in-person learning. All counseling services will be provided following NYSED and DOH social distancing guidelines and in accordance with the School Counseling/Guidance Programs Commissioner's Regulations. Certified counselors provide activities and the opportunity to reflect on individual students' educational progress, including achievement, behavior, socio-emotional development, and college/career readiness.

Psychologists

\$6.7 Million

ARPA funds 25.2 school psychologists. These professionals will provide mental health services to students, to address the many social traumas directly associated (e.g., loss of parent, caretaker, loved one) or indirectly associated (e.g., loss of family income, resulting in loss of housing) from the COVID-19 pandemic. Psychologists are members of a newly established Core Service Team on-site in each school. Regional (Central Office-based) Psychologists provide an additional layer of embedded mental health supports to a designated panel of schools. To promote student and staff safety and security, Psychologists are available through scheduled sessions, and in response to identified needs. Enhanced emotional supports are also provided to students through counseling, mental health check-ins and support groups.

These student supports are delivered through a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) framework that includes school-wide, small-group and individual therapeutic interventions at increasing levels of intensity. Regional School Psychologists also supplement the District's response to large scale events, involving mental health crises. Additional Psychologists are available to expedite testing and to complete evaluations, thereby facilitating Committee on Special Education (CSE) functions and the Committee on Pre-School Education (CPSE) transition process.

Social Workers

\$4.6 Million

Serving as an integral link between the school, family and student, Social Workers are part of the Core Service Team on-site in each school. ARPA funds 14 social workers. There are also Central office-based Regional Social Workers to assist with case management for students and their families.

Students in foster care, those living with grandparents and students identified as at-risk, receive specialized support from additional social work staff. Children and families are referred to community organizations, including groups addressing food insecurities, temporary housing and after-school care. In addition, students experiencing mental health crises, have Social Workers to counsel them and provide guidance to their schools and families.

PEACE Program

\$0.2 Million

The Program for Extended Academic & Civic Engagement - PEACE Program offers a unique learning environment for students who face challenges completing high school graduation requirements due to learning loss or other circumstances. PEACE students maybe on extended suspension as a result of a Superintendent's Hearing, potential year 5 or 6 graduates who need support to pass a Regents Examination or coming out of incarceration preparing to reintegrate into District schools. ARPA funds the PEACE Program Director.

PEACE's staff conduct home visits for chronically absent students who may be experiencing social emotional or familial issues related to the impact of COVID-19, visit and provide services to our McKenny Vento students and families and are liaisons with multiple community-based agencies to assist students who are experiencing social emotional, mental health, addiction and a host of other obstacles to graduation and promotion as a result of COVID 19 and learning loss.



SUPPORT FOR SPECIAL POPULATIONS \$7.3 Millions

Special Education Teachers

\$1.5 Million

Special Education Teachers design instruction and deliver lessons to meet the unique learning needs of Students with Disabilities (SWD). ARPA funds 3 special education teachers. For management and support purposes, Special Education programs in Yonkers are situated within one of three distinct panels each augmented with an emergency management team and Autism program – Panel A prekindergarten through grade 6 schools with an estimated 1,317 SWDs; Panel B prekindergarten through grade 8 schools with an estimated 1,587 SWDs; and Panel C secondary schools with an estimated 1,667 SWDs. ARPA funds 3 additional teachers for the District's growing number of students on the Autism Spectrum and is designed to address their unique needs. This panel allows for targeted professional development for Special Education Teachers, focused on learning differences.

English as a New Language Teachers

\$3.1 Million

For students – including our Multilingual Learners (MLL) – to experience school success, Yonkers is committed to recruiting certified teachers of diverse backgrounds. ARPA funds 7 teachers to enable MLLs to thrive post-pandemic. These educators are ready to contribute to the existing district-wide work to promote social-emotional and academic development and continue to ramp up their capacity to do so through ongoing professional learning. Building the capacity of Yonkers educators to design and deliver evidence-based pedagogy, family engagement programs, and afterschool programs which will provide targeted supports to benefit some of our most vulnerable students with interrupted/inconsistent education, newcomers, and long-term MLLs.

Speech Teachers

\$1.4 Million

Speech-Language Pathologists provide students with a means to communicate both their understanding and their needs. ARPA funds 4 additional Speech Teachers to provide mandated speech services to assist students with their ability to speak, listen and write as they

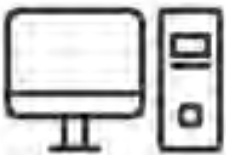
navigate social challenges. Staff development is provided to assist Speech Teachers in addressing the on-going communication needs of students.

As critical members of the Core Service Team, Speech Teachers provide enhanced supports for students to communicate their feelings and experiences, especially in light of the additional stressors introduced by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Hydrotherapy Program

\$1.3 Million

The Aquatic Therapy Program is designed to improve strength, coordination, gross motor development and reflex repatterning for students with certain limitations. Yonkers program was developed in consultation with Swim Angelfish, an adaptive swimming program. The founders, Cindy Freedman, MOTR and Ailene Tisser, MA, PT developed an adaptive swim methodology (Swim Whisperers®), specifically designed to help children with Autism, sensory and motor coordination issues, anxiety, trauma, or discomfort in the water, to become safe and independent swimmers. ARPA funds 1 physical education teacher, 2 lifeguards, 1 pool maintenance worker, 1 pool operator, and professional development.



TECHNOLOGY **\$1.2 Million**

Personal Computer Technician

\$1.2 Million

ARPA funds 4 technical support staff. The staff will maintain computer hardware and software in schools that has significantly increased due to COVID-19. The additional staff enhances the Technology Department support in schools by lessening response time and expediting problem resolution. Working with building administrators, teachers and staff, the technicians provide the technical support necessary to ensure that all of the hardware is functioning properly.

The District is working towards a 1:1 District-wide solution for students while ensuring the District has the infrastructure in place to support this initiative. Devices are being secured through other funding sources.



HEALTH AND SAFETY **\$1.8 Million**

COVID-19 Medical Support

\$1.3 Million

Since the onset of COVID-19 the required demands of the District's medical staff of professional nurses has significantly increased. ARPA funds provides 5 additional registered nurses. These nurses will support the District's ability to offer COVID-19 screening testing to the school community, throughout the year, along with all other medical services necessary to support the daily health of students and staff. The additional nurses support vaccination

efforts in schools, in partnership with the Westchester County Department of Health, for age-eligible students.

Our Comprehensive Contact Tracing Program allows Yonkers to continue in-person instruction in schools, while minimizing community spread. When students attend school in person, their social-emotional well-being is supported, by having resources and staff readily available to provide intervention. Through our District COVID-19 Coordinator/Nurse Practitioner, district nurses, staff, parents, and students are informed regarding current COVID-19 protocols, guidelines and mandates in a timely fashion.

School Safety

\$0.5 Million

The School Safety and Security Department in coordination with the Yonkers Police Department and building administration are responsible for ensuring the well-being of our students, faculty and parents while on school grounds. Aligned with the District's Code of Conduct and Board of Education policies, school personnel maintain expectations regarding behavior and conduct aligned with all COVID-19 mitigation strategies. Public Safety Officers in all 40 schools and central office operate and monitor COVID-19 temperature scanners, scanning equipment, safety cameras, districtwide radio frequency, verify identity of visitors, limit in-person visitors to mitigate potential COVID-19 exposures, and deter unauthorized individuals from entering school property. Public Safety Officers are also responsible for supervision of COVID-19 vaccination and testing sites within the district as well as enforcing COVID-19 protocols at all Interscholastic Athletic Events.

ARPA funds 3 additional Public Safety Officers to maintain a safe and secure learning environment for students and staff, aligned with New York State, NYSED, CDC, and DOH COVID-19 guidelines and Yonkers Public Schools 2021-2022 Opening Plan.



OTHER AREAS

\$2.0 Millions

Custodial Staff

\$1.3 Million

School custodial workers are charged with additional facilities management responsibilities since the onset of COVID-19. In-person learning requires additional attention to facilities to mitigate the spread of the disease. ARPA funds 5 additional custodial workers to bolster cleaning required in schools following COVID-19 NYSED and NYSDOH guidelines, and to restore custodial positions eliminated due to persistent fiscal constraints.

Clerical Assistance

\$0.7 Million

ARPA funds 2 additional clerical staff to support districtwide ARPA initiatives. These programs require significant record keeping, communication and reporting. The additional clerical staff working will work collaboratively with District administrator to provide these services to school administrators, students, families and staff participating in these program.

Seeking Ongoing Stakeholder Input

The Yonkers Public Schools is committed to implement a Restoration, Renewal and Hope Plan 2021-2022, 2022-2023, 2023-2024 and Beyond that *Creates Conditions for ALL Students' Success*. The District plan addresses the collective needs of Yonkers Public Schools stakeholders, always with our students at the core of every decision. The foundation of the plan is the District's New York State approved 2020-2021 School Reopening Plan and the addendums implemented during that period that were developed using the recommendations and feedback received from parents/guardians, students, teachers, administrators and staff through numerous virtual meetings and surveys. The priorities continue to be the health, safety and well-being of everyone, robust teaching and learning enriched with Culturally Responsive curricula, and equity for all students.

Yonkers Public Schools' comprehensive 2021-2022 Opening Plan for the safe return to full in-person instruction provides continuity of services aligned to the American Rescue Plan (ARPA) statute, guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), New York State Education Department and the New York State Department of Health. The plan will continue to evolve through collective feedback from all stakeholders.

The 2021-2022 Opening Plan is aligned to the New York State Education Department Health and Safety Guide for the 2021- 2022 School Year August 2021, New York State Department of Health Interim Guidance for Classroom Instruction in P-12 Schools during the 2021-2022 Academic Year – September 2, 2021 and Commissioner's Determination on COVID-19 Testing Pursuant to 10 NYCRR 2.62 – September 2, 2021.

VIRTUAL OR IN-PERSON STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

2021-2022 Dates for Let's Chat – YCPTA with the Superintendent at 5:00 p.m.

- Wednesday, October 27, 2021 & Thursday, October 28, 2021
- Thursday, December 2, 2021 & Monday, December 6, 2021
- Tuesday, February 1, 2022 & Thursday, February 3, 2022
- Tuesday, April 5, 2022 & Wednesday, April 6, 2022
- Wednesday, June 8, 2022 & Thursday, June 9, 2022

These meetings will be scheduled annually.

Available on the Yonkers Public Schools Website

OPENING PLAN

ONLINE STAKEHOLDER INPUT FORM

The Online Stakeholder Input Form for ARPA will remain available throughout 2023 on the District's website.

Anyone can access the

- **2021-2022 Opening Plan at <https://bit.ly/Opening-Plan-Document>**

2021-2022 Stakeholder Input at <https://bit.ly/21-22-Opening-Plan-Input>



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2021-2022

