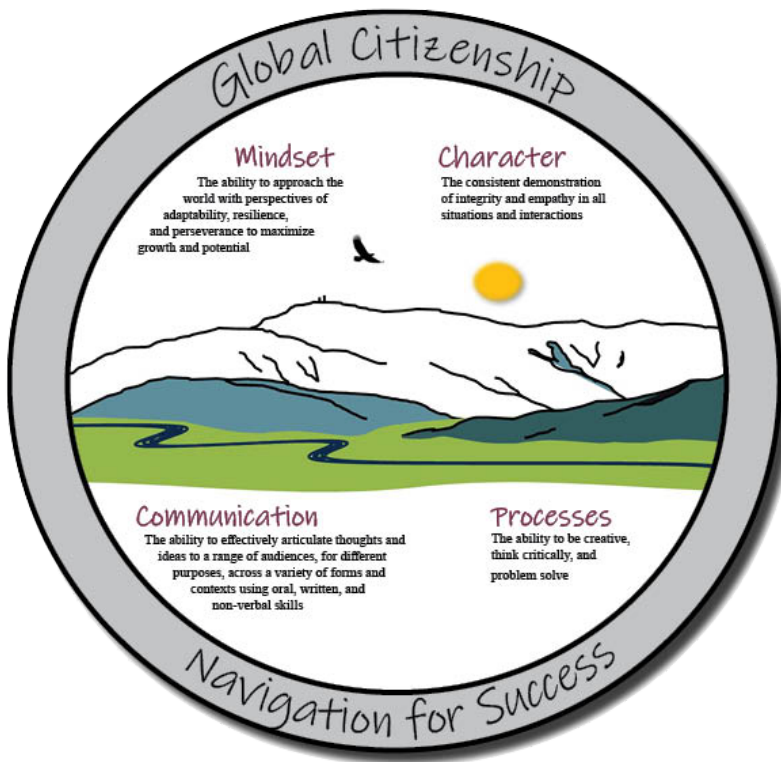


# Conway School District ESSER II and III Funds Recommended Allocations

## SAU9 Portrait of a Learner



August 20, 2021

## Background

Governor Chris Sununu declared a state of emergency on March 13, 2020 and ordered all K-12 schools to be closed for in person learning as of March 15, 2020. That closure required us to immediately pivot and provide education in ways unimaginable just a few days earlier.

The Conway School District responded quickly and within a week had devices in students' hands, schedules for food delivery established, and developed systems for delivering education remotely. As schools worked to reopen for the 2020-2021 school year, challenges and additional costs associated emerged. In response, the federal government allocated funds through the ESSER I - CARES/SPSRF, ESSER II - CRRSA, and ESSER III - ARP. The two largest allocations, ESSER II (CRRSA) and ESSER III the American Rescue Plan. These funds are to be used to address needs specifically resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and meet specific requirements. These allocations will provide the Conway School District with resources needed as it responds to challenges resulting from the pandemic over the next three years.

This document is intended as an overview of the Conway School District's proposed expenditures of ESSER II and ESSER III funds.

### *Definitions*

- **CARES Act:** Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act; federal relief measure signed into law March 20, 2020. Funds must be allocated by September 30, 2022.
- **CRRSA Act:** Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act; federal relief measure signed into law on December 27, 2020. Funds must be allocated by September 30, 2023.
- **ARP:** American Rescue Plan; federal relief measure signed into law March 11, 2021. Funds must be allocated by September 30, 2024.
- **ESSER:** Elementary and Secondary Schools Educational Relief, which could refer to any one of the three funds allocated to by the CARES Act (ESSER I), CRRSA Act (ESSER II) and ARP (ESSER III or ARP ESSER)

- **SPSRF 1:** Supplemental Public School Response Funds; Designated to provide relief and support for unanticipated costs associated with the safe opening and operation of schools during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **SPRF 2:** Application for COVID-19 expenses in excess of \$200 per pupil that had not been reimbursed by other available sources.
- **LEA:** Local Education Agency; specific to New Hampshire, this is the school district
- **SEA:** State Education Agency, specific to New Hampshire this is the state Department of Education

## **ESSER Allocations**

- **CARES Act (ESSER I):** \$507,698.77
- **SPSRF 1:** \$233,800
- **SPSRF 2:** \$236,095.71
- **CRRSA Act (ESSER II):** \$1,980,323
- **ARP (ESSER III):** \$4,447,521\* *Anticipated*

## *What can these funds be used for?*

Approved uses of funds vary between ESSER II and ESSER III (see Appendix 1 ESSER comparison). In general, though, ESSER funds can be used for:

- Educational technology purchases including internet connectivity, hardware, devices, software, etc.
- Supplies and services to enable remote learning
- Mental health services and supports
- Diagnostic assessment tools to gauge students' knowledge and skills as well as potential gaps in learning
- Professional development opportunities for district staff to increase capacity around high quality instruction, assessment, and learning environments
- Supplies and services to sanitize district facilities and provide access to personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Planning and coordinating systems for addressing long-term closures including how to provide meals, technology for online learning, carrying out legal requirements, and providing educational services

- Procedures to coordinate systems to improve district preparedness and response to COVID-19
- After/before school enrichment programming beyond what is currently provided
- Access to tutoring and programming outside of school days and hours
- Addressing loss of opportunities to learn
- School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards and support student health needs
- Inspecting, testing, maintaining, repairing, replacing, and upgrading projects to improve indoor air quality in school facilities including HVAC systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement

*What CAN'T these funds be used for?*

- Building new school facilities
- Substantially reducing local support for public K-12 education
- Expenses that are not specific to preventing, preparing, or responding to the impact of COVID-19

# RECOMMENDATIONS

Over the past 18+ months, we have navigated the unique challenges of providing education during a pandemic. We continue to respond in a flexible manner that is aligned to our strategic plan. We have learned much from this experience and as a result education will never look quite the same as it did in March of 2020. While the availability of vaccines provided hope, we continue to experience a summer surge of cases which tells us this pandemic is not yet over. We know that the academic and social emotional impacts of this pandemic will continue into the future. Therefore, this plan has been developed to leverage the available resources to address identified needs now and respond to those that are discovered in the future. The design incorporated input from a diverse group of stakeholders as each priority and action step is aligned with the goals of our strategic plan. This plan should, and will, change as we respond to the new conditions and needs of our students.

## PRIORITIES

1. Increase student growth and achievement by providing high quality learning experiences through which students develop mindsets, character, communication, and thinking skills necessary for them to achieve regardless of the pathway chosen while addressing losses in opportunities to learn
2. Recruit, recognize and retain high quality personnel dedicated to meeting the needs of each and every student
3. Provide access to reliable technology to minimize interruptions to learning and expand learning opportunities available to students
4. Engage with our community to partner in supporting our students and remove barriers
5. Provide and maintain safe and healthy facilities for all students and staff

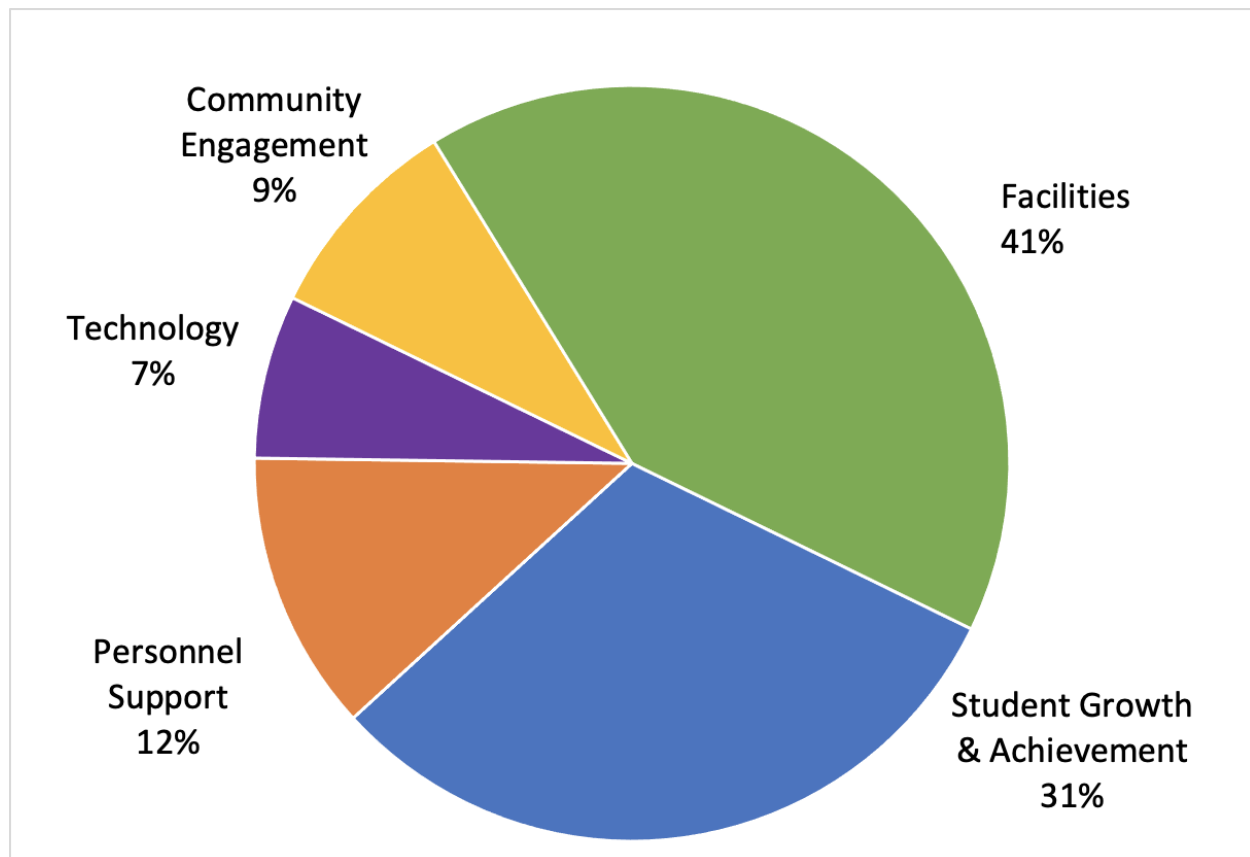
## Proposed ESSER II and ESSER III Allocations

Below is a graph to show the percentage of funds anticipated to support each of our five priorities. This document overviews plans at the current time. It is important to note that the plan will continue to be revised as conditions and the needs of our students change.

Percentage of ESSERII and ESSERIII Funds Allocated by Priority Area:

ESSER II - \$1,980,323.12

ESSER III - \$4,447,521 (Anticipated)



## STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT

Being able to document both growth and achievement over time is critical to the success of our students. We know that the pandemic has increased gaps in learning and has negatively impacted many students' opportunities to learn. Therefore, funds are allocated in this plan to keep class sizes at a reasonable level to support personalized learning experiences, expand access to learning experiences outside of

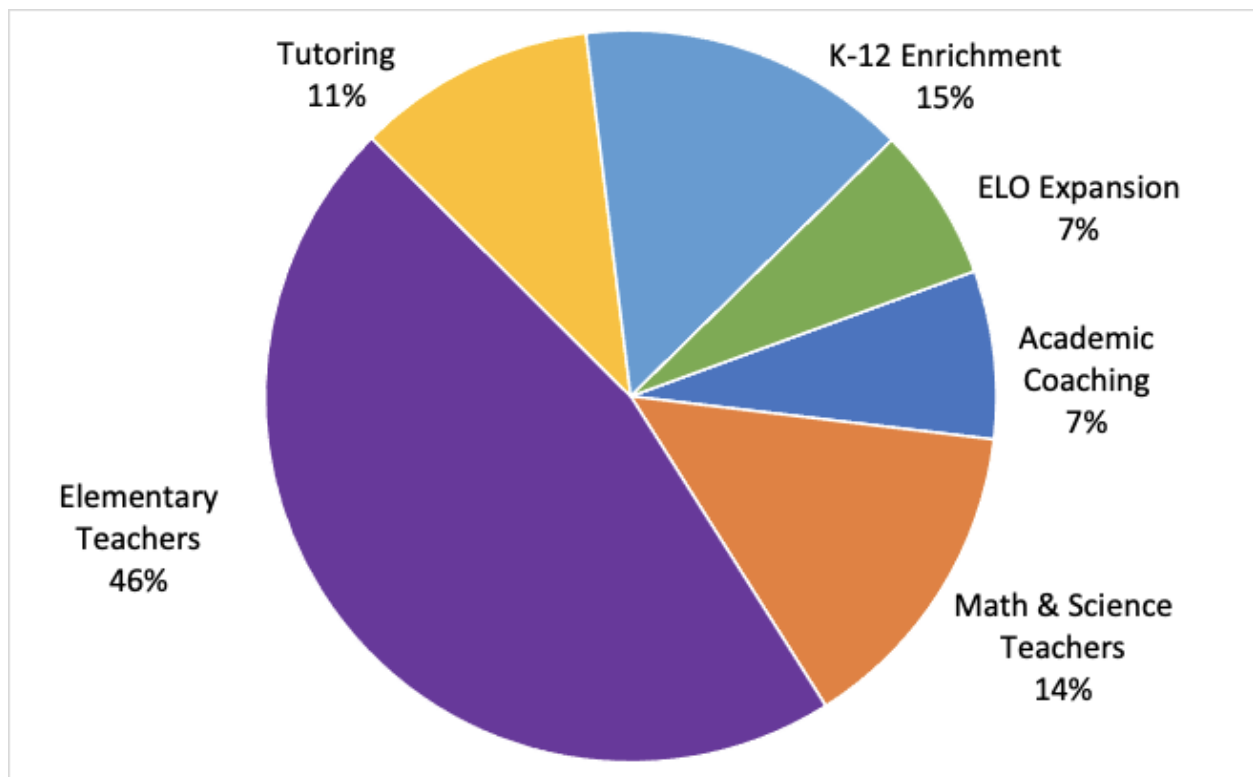
the traditional school day and year, and increase academic offerings for students. This will also allow us to return safely to face-to-face instruction by minimizing potential exposures through cohorting as needed.

We propose utilizing these funds over a three-year period. Under that proposal, the largest portion would be used during the 2021-2022 school year, with reduced amounts in subsequent years

- 2021-2022 School Year - \$772,164
- 2022-2023 School Year - \$581,727
- 2023-2024 School Year - \$526,852
- Through September, 2024 - \$77,000

#### SNAPSHOT OF STUDENT GROWTH AND ACHIEVEMENT BUDGET

Total Amount Allocated to this Priority: \$1,957,743



**Academic Coach (KHS)** - This individual will work with identified students at KHS to determine individualized learning pathways based upon students' strengths, needs, and goals. Together, the coach will work with students, educators, and the wider community to identify potential learning experiences and pathways.

**Math and Science Educators** - Achievement in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) continues to be an area in which many students need to grow. Noting gaps in learning, these educators will provide additional contexts in which students can engage in learning experiences that will allow them to overcome lost opportunities to learn.

**Elementary Educators** - Keeping class sizes at or below 20 students is one strategy for reducing potential exposure to COVID-19 and at the same time allows for more personalization of instruction.

**Tutoring** - We are aware that the pandemic has led to a loss of opportunities for many students to learn which resulted in gaps in achievement. We also know that as COVID-19 continues to be a threat to our public health, students will likely be exposed to COVID-19 and may need to be temporarily excluded from school. Access to tutoring will allow for individualized support to address gaps in learning resulting from disruptions caused by COVID-19 and provide continuity of education.

**Summer/Vacation Week Enrichment Programming** - We know that students continue to learn outside of school days and hours. These funds are designed to provide students in kindergarten through grade 12 with access to enrichment/learning activities during vacation periods and the summer months. This will also create opportunities for students to explore Career and Technical Education pathways.

**ELO Coordinator** - Currently, the operating budget provides for the coordination of Extended Learning Opportunities (ELOs) three days per week. Funds would be allocated to increase student access to this programming so that it is available each school day and honor learning that occurs beyond the school walls.

## **PERSONNEL SUPPORT**

The Conway School District is committed to recruiting, retaining, and recognizing the highest quality personnel possible. Research suggests that access to high quality teachers is the most important factor in ensuring student success. All staff who will be paid through these grant funds are intended to have a positive impact on student achievement. Budget items include funds to support:

- Professional development for staff that will continue our transformation to a competency-based system of education through which we will meet the needs



of individual students by building upon strengths and using data to determine next potential steps in learning

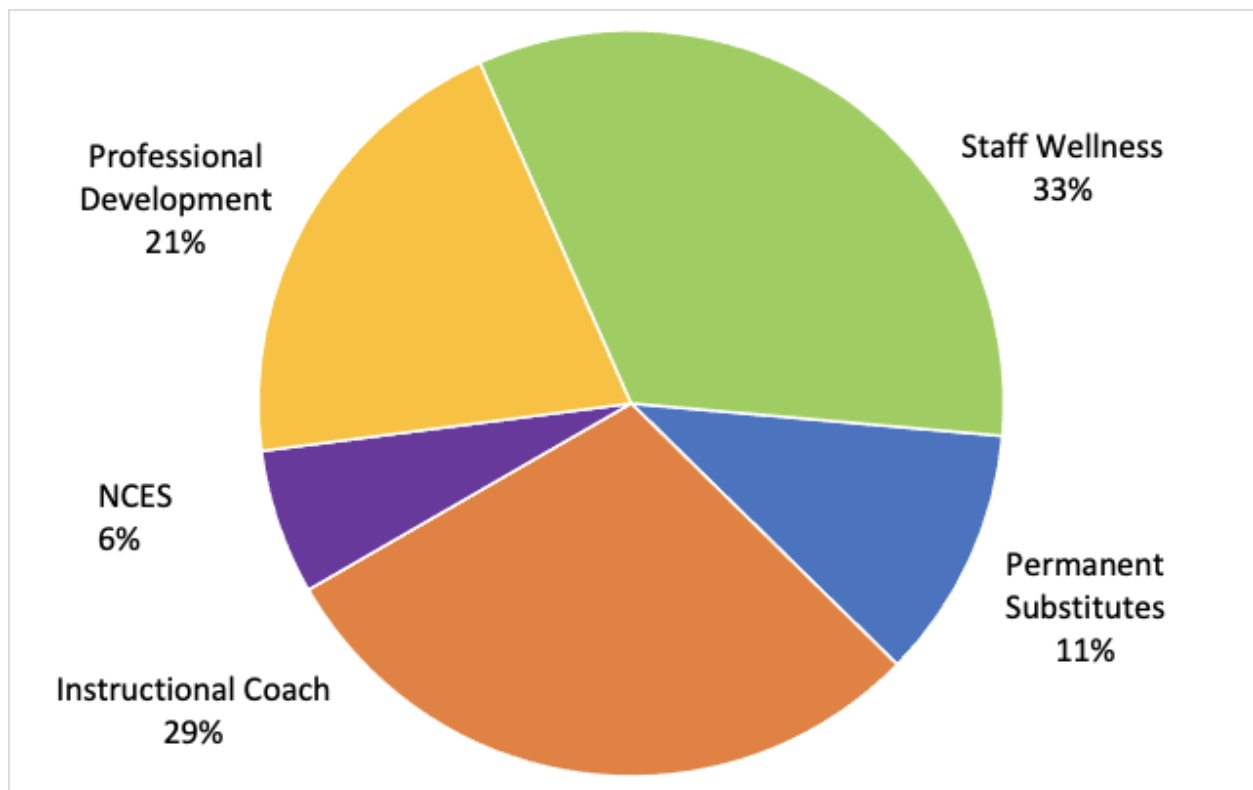
- Instructional coaching to provide job-embedded professional learning opportunities
- Permanent substitutes and continuity of education in the case staff absences
- Staff wellness to address educator fatigue

We propose utilizing these funds over a three-year period.

- 2021-2022 School Year - \$321,137
- 2022-2023 School Year - \$351,435
- 2023-2024 School Year - \$112,000
- Through September, 2024 - \$10,000

#### *SNAPSHOT OF PERSONNEL BUDGET*

Total Amount Allocated to this Goal: \$794,572



#### **PROPOSED EXPENDITURES EXPLAINED**

**Permanent Substitutes** - Individuals hired as substitute teachers who are guaranteed to work all 180 days of the school year; These individuals increase consistency of learning for students as they are knowledgeable of the school, routines, and students in the building while covering for staff absences.

**Instructional Coach**- Providing support for educators as they enhance their instructional and assessment skills is critical as we work to address lost opportunities to learn resulting from the pandemic. This individual will support educators as they engage in reflective practice and use collaborative approaches to analyze student work to identify next steps in learning.

**NCES (North Country Educational Services) Membership** - This service provides a platform for staff to engage with colleagues from across the region to increase access to resources and learning opportunities for students.

**Professional Development** - These funds will provide access to experts in instruction, assessment, social emotional development and competency-based learning from whom our staff can learn when engaging in job-embedded, on-going professional development.

**Staff Wellness** - Staff wellness is critical for meeting the diverse and growing needs of our students. The New Hampshire Department of Education identified this as one of the priorities for these funds. In this budget funds are provided to allow staff to engage in a variety of wellness activities aligned with their interests and needs.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

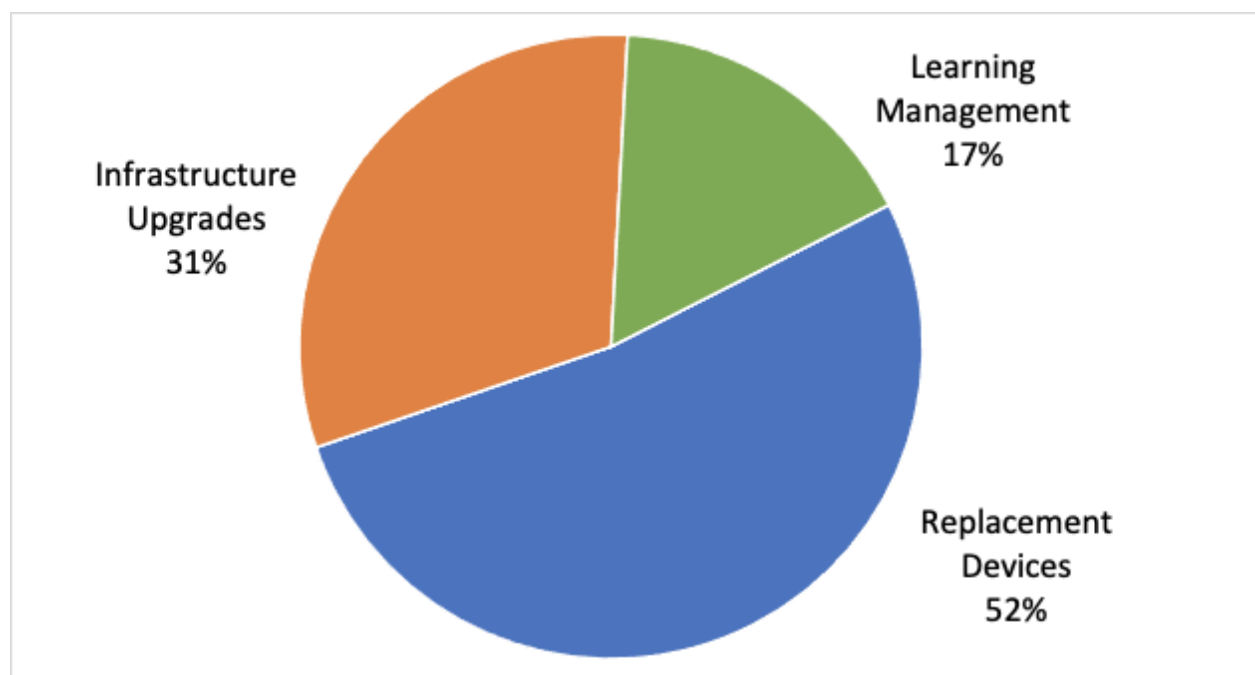
The importance of having access to reliable, current technology was magnified as we work to provide uninterrupted access to education regardless of the setting. COVID-19 required us to be able to pivot without warning from face-to-face to remote delivery of instruction. As a result, we have allocated funds to continue to upgrade both our devices and infrastructure. We have also allocated funds to support the implementation of a learning management system that has the flexibility to allow students to access learning remotely and communicate effectively regarding their progress towards competency. Ensuring reliable, dynamic technology access for all students continues to be critical as we work to meet the demands of providing education during a pandemic.

We propose utilizing these funds over a three-year period. Under that proposal, the largest portion would be used during the 2021-2022 school year, with reduced amounts in subsequent years

- 2021-2022 School Year - \$40,420
- 2022-2023 School Year - \$175,000
- 2023-2024 School Year - \$175,000
- Through September 2024 - \$77,000

#### SNAPSHOT OF TECHNOLOGY BUDGET

Total Amount Allocated to this Goal: \$450,420



**Replacement Devices** - As students and staff increase their use of technology devices there is a need to accelerate our obsolescence cycle and replace devices more frequently. Funds here will allow for the purchase of additional student and staff devices to allow remote and on-going access to education across a variety of settings.

**Infrastructure Upgrades** - As devices need to be upgraded, so does the infrastructure so that it can handle increased demands. These funds will be used to support school-based infrastructure needs as well as mobile access for students.

**Learning Management System** - Monitoring student growth and achievement as students access education from various settings and engage in learning both inside and beyond the classroom requires a system that is responsive to the changing nature

of education. We will be working with experts to build a tool that is capable of supporting a competency-based system of learning and will allow students, families, and educators to better monitor both growth and achievement over time.

## COMMUNITY FOCUSED ENGAGEMENT

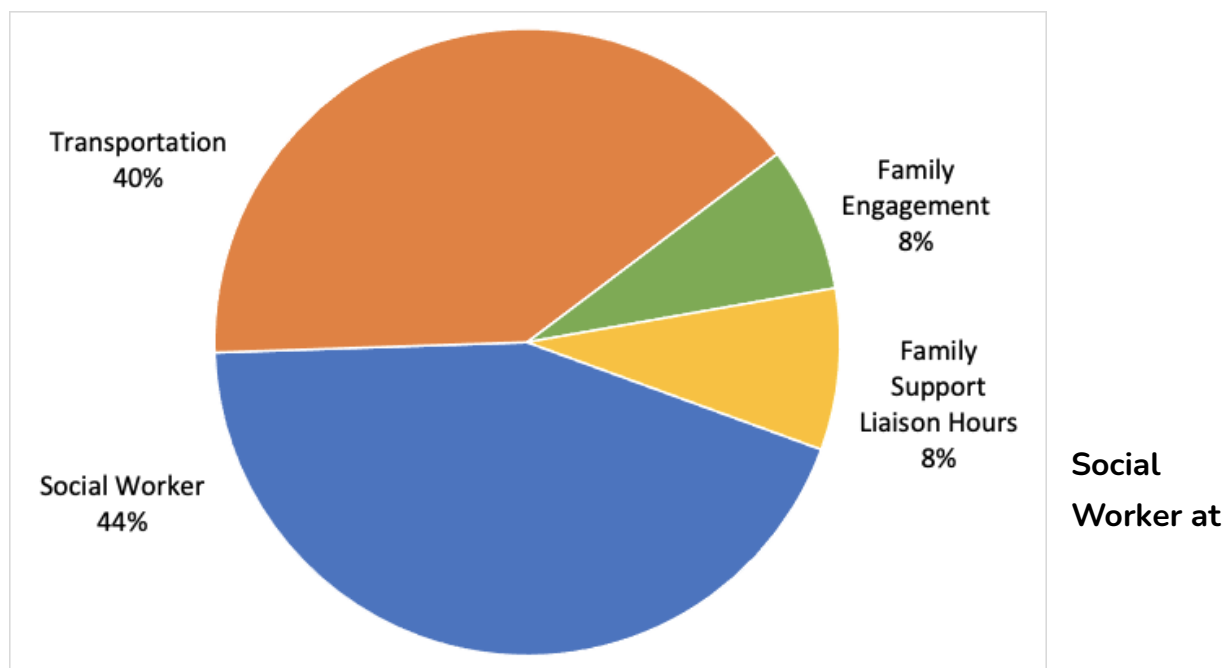
In the Mount Washington Valley we recognize and value the importance of working with our community. Our students truly are OUR students. Efforts to engage collaboratively can be seen in the various ways in which local businesses and community members continually step up to support our students. From providing internship and work-based learning opportunities to supporting reimaged graduation celebrations on the top of Cranmore, our community continues to be an integral part of our school environment. Funds in this area are intended to further strengthen connections between our schools and the wider community while also removing barriers to accessing resources.

We propose utilizing these funds over a three-year period.

- 2021-2022 School Year - \$224,938
- 2022-2023 School Year - \$169,000
- 2023-2024 School Year - \$168,000
- Through September, 2024 - \$39,000

### SNAPSHOT OF COMMUNITY FOCUSED ENGAGEMENT BUDGET

Total Amount Allocated to this Goal: \$600,938



**KHS** - As the pandemic continues to impact our students, supporting their mental health needs must be a priority. This individual will work directly with students to connect them to resources outside of school to support both academic and social emotional needs.

**Transportation** - A barrier to engaging in work-based learning, internships, and extended learning opportunities within our community is transportation. We do not have access to public transportation and the valley is geographically large. Purchasing a vehicle that a staff person could drive to enable students to access learning experiences outside of school is one strategy that we can use to engage students who are currently disconnected from school as a result of COVID-19.

**Family Support Liaison Increase in Hours** - Currently, the family support liaisons are a resource for many students and the families during the school year. However, needs persist into the summer months and those needs have been magnified as a result of the pandemic. These funds would provide access to the family support liaisons for ten additional days beyond the school year.

**Family Engagement School Showcases** - These funds will be used to engage families and pull them into the school community. They will be used to support opportunities for families to participate in events such as family math nights, shared reading experiences, student showcases, and field trips. These funds will also allow us to further partner with members of the community and take advantage of local resources.

## **FACILITIES**

In providing instruction during the 2020-2021 school year, the Conway School District worked closely with local health care providers to incorporate recommendations from the NH Department of Public Health (NHDPH), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) to ensure students were able to access face to face learning with minimal interruptions. Changes to facilities included the installation of hand sanitizing station, marking the building to create visual cues to support physical distancing, and the installation of plexiglass in high traffic areas. As we continued to navigate providing education during the pandemic, we became aware of necessary facility upgrades such as window repairs that will improve air flow and circulation. We also recognize the need for increased cleaning and sanitation supplies as well as access to personal protective equipment (PPE). This creates an increased burden on the local budget to provide these products and ensure high quality cleaning

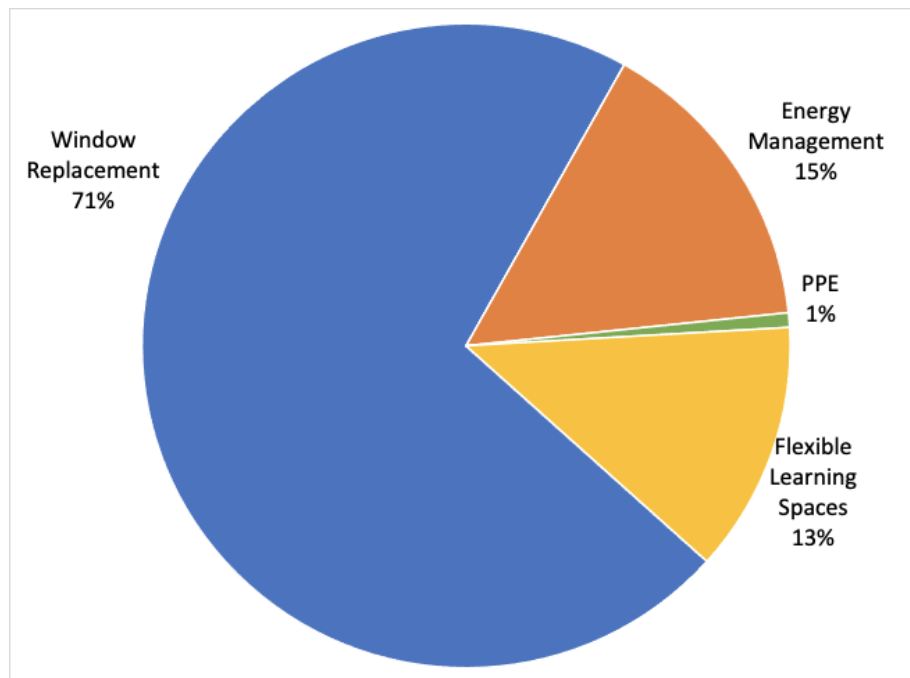
takes place. To that end, funds are allocated to support both facilities improvements and access to materials needed.

We propose utilizing these funds over a three-year period.

- 2021-2022 School Year - \$1,237,000
- 2022-2023 School Year - \$1,135,000
- 2023-2024 School Year - \$252,171

#### SNAPSHOT OF FACILITY BUDGET

Total Amount Allocated to this Goal: \$2,624,171



**Window Replacement** - The windows at KHS are inoperable and therefore need to be replaced in order to improve the air flow and circulation within the building. Additionally, there are windows in other buildings across the district that need to be replaced to ensure quality airflow and circulation.

**Energy Management Upgrades** - Upgrading the energy management system will allow our maintenance staff to monitor the air flow within the buildings and respond to issues should they appear.

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Sanitation Materials** - COVID-19 continues to be a threat to the health of our school community. Therefore, there is a

need for increased access to PPE and cleaning materials. Funds are allocated to ease the burden on the local budget to provide these increased, necessary supplies.

**Furniture for Flexible Learning Environments** - Each individual building needs access to funds to provide furniture, tents, and other resources to support flexibility in learning environments.

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Links to emergency funding for schools documents from NH DOE site

[NH DOE Emergency Funding For Schools](#)

U.S. Department of Education American Rescue Plan Fact Sheet

[https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/03/FINAL\\_ARP-ESSER-FACT-SHEET.pdf](https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/03/FINAL_ARP-ESSER-FACT-SHEET.pdf)

If you have feedback or comments, please contact:

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