

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PLAINVILLE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**PLAINVILLE, CONNECTICUT**  
**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2021**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING**

**Special Meeting Topics:** 1) Additional Review and Discussion of the Superintendent's Proposed Budget  
2) Continuation of Board Budget Development Session  
3) Discussion of ESSER II Grant Uses and Budget Adjustment Considerations  
4) Information Regarding Programs and Projects to be Considered for Funding by ESSER II  
5) Other

**Place and Time:** Virtual Meeting @ 7:00 PM

**Members Present:** Brent Davenport, Deborah Hardy, Becky Martinez, Nicole Palmieri, Vice Chair Crystal St. Lawrence, Chair Becky Tyrrell, Kathy Wells and Foster White

**Members Absent:** Laurie Peterson

**Also Present:** Steven K. LePage, Superintendent of Schools  
David Levenduski, Asst. Superintendent of Schools  
Sam Adlerstein, Director of Business and Operations  
Administrators

**Early Departures:** None

Board Chair Becky Tyrrell called the special meeting of the Plainville Board of Education to order at 7:02 PM.

Mr. LePage stated that he heard from the State with regard to the ESSER II funds to support COVID expenditures for intervention/acceleration; family and community; mental health; and technology. He then reviewed the District's Vision Statement, Goals and Actions and reviewed the PCS Portrait of the Graduate vision.

Mr. LePage stated that on 01/21/21 he proposed an operating budget with an increase of \$1,112,427 or 2.84% from last year. At the Board's January 28<sup>th</sup> Budget session he proposed changing the Technology Technician position to part-time, it would be a savings of \$25,000 and with the addition of ESSER offset funding of \$100,000, the increase would then be \$987,427 or 2.52%. He then spoke about a new recommendation/proposal for the Board of Education to consider. The change is as follows:

Change Technician position to Part-time	(\$ 25,000)		
USE OF ADDITIONAL ESSER OFFSETS:			
Staffing	(\$205,242)		
Offset already included in Superintendent's budget	\$100,000		
Summer and Afterschool Programs	(\$ 20,000)		
<u>Software and instructional supplies</u>	<u>(\$ 77,482)</u>		
Total Recommended Changes	(\$227,724)		
<b>TOTAL RECOMMENDED BOE BUDGET</b>	<b>\$884,703</b>	<b>2.26%</b>	<b>\$40,028,970</b>
Total ESSER Offset Included	\$302,724		

This reduces the budget by all staffing increases and specific COVID related costs.

While administrators can and should assign these costs to the grant, they must also be mindful of anything recurring for 2023-24, because the ESSER funding must be expended by September 30, 2023.

The administration anticipates most of the \$302,724 to be on the table for ongoing considering in 2023-24.

The administration will reassess over the next couple of years.

He then discussed the primary drivers, and offsets such as Other CARES Act Funding; ESSER II Grant: Student Recovery; ESSER II Plainville's Allocation; COVID Grant Offsets; ESSER II State Level Priorities and PCS Priority Area Projects Aligned to the CSDE (attached to this document).

Mrs. Tyrrell then asked fellow Board Members if they had any questions with regard to the new proposed budget.

Ms. Martinez asked about Summer School and Afterschool Programs.

Mr. Levenduski stated that there is a limited budget and that enrollment has yet to be determined as administrators are looking at data at every level. One of the focuses is on reading and math at the elementary level. Administrators need to determine how many children will need help and must make sure that teachers are skilled in needed areas. The district is hoping to expand the programs but must also be sure that groups aren't too large for the number of teachers, which hasn't been determined as of yet. Administrators will look at end of the year standards and goals for further data.

Mr. White asked how many children are falling behind in Cohort C.

Mr. LePage stated that it is his assumption that remote learners will need some support. Mr. Levenduski said that he will need to look at further data to make that determination.

Mr. LePage also stated that he is doing his best to keep students in-school. Plainville is doing much better than other districts and has received an increase in CRF funds due to in-person learning.

Mr. Adlerstein stated that Plainville's starting point is further along than other districts.

Mr. LePage stated that he is confident in the new budget that he has presented. He commented that he and Mr. Adlerstein met with Robert Lee and Rob Buden during the week and had a good conversation regarding the new proposal. He stated that the 2.26% increase is an aggressive budget but funding from the grants are also there to help support the district.

Ms. Palmieri asked what will happen should grant funding run out? Is there a guarantee that, down the road, the district will be able to pay for their requests through the grants?

Mr. Adlerstein stated that they are planning accordingly.

Mr. LePage stated that he still considers it safe to go ahead with the proposed five positions. The district will not over-expend grant funds and will look ahead over the next couple of years to determine what is priority and what is not. He stated that they are constantly assessing and monitoring and hopes to manage without the use of the operating budget.

Mrs. Pugliese had a question regarding the Transition Coordinator position.

Ms. Trzcinski stated that the position is mandated by the State as a means of helping Special Education students up until the age of 22. The position is paid through the operating budget.

Mrs. Pugliese also stated that she has heard that the federal government has put a \$1.2 trillion dollar package together and that a large piece of that package is dedicated to education. She hopes to hear more soon.

In response to Ms. Palmieri's question, Mr. Adlerstein stated that Special Education outplacements will remain the same. No grant funding can be used for student outplacements. He stated that the Special Education department is doing a great job supporting students by keeping them in-district, which helps keep costs down.

Mrs. Tyrrell then proposed the three budget scenarios (2.84%, 2.52% and 2.26%) to the Board Members and asked their opinions.

The consensus:

Crystal St. Lawrence—If administrators are confident, she is okay with 2.26%.

Deborah Hardy—2.26% is good

Kathy Wells—will support 2.26%

Nicole Palmieri—on the fence, not sure

Becky Martinez—not sure, don't know the impact yet. But need to be a little bit more conservative this year.

Foster White—Feels the budget is good, as it focuses on the needs now, but is flexible enough to allow options for the future. He praised the team of administrators who put forth a good budget in a short amount of time. He can support a 2.26% budget increase.

Brent Davenport—will support a 2.26% budget

Laurie Peterson—Absent

Becky Tyrrell—She is happy to have access to funding and is very excited about the proposed projects and having the resources to get things done. She feels good about the newly proposed budget and commented that budgets are always changing.

Mr. Levenduski wanted to clarify that they are pulling in supports for all students based on where they are. They will also provide more insights, differentiation, and solid structure classrooms.

Mrs. Graham-Douglas stated that administrators are tapping into the skills of educators to help fill the needs of students. Research is being done with regard to where schools have been disrupted. An example is information on schools dealing with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina and the disruption of the educational process. She assured everyone that the district is building a solid foundation for Tier I students.

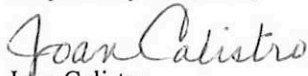
Ms. Palmieri asked if the district needs to let the Governor's office know how funds are being expended.

Mr. LePage stated that the district must provide information on areas of need, impact, etc. Any repercussions on how districts aren't spending appropriately will be dealt with by not allowing draw down of funds.

The Board will vote on the 2021-22 budget at their February 8<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

**A MOTION WAS MADE BY DEBORAH HARDY TO ADJOURN THE BOARD'S SPECIAL MEETING AT 8:10 PM. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY FOSTER WHITE. THE MOTION UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED 8-0.**

Respectfully submitted,



Joan Calistro

Recorder of Minutes

# Other CARES Act Funding

ESSER II is not intended for districts in the midst of budgeting to think about how they can reduce typical budget expenses. There are other grants available for that purpose, each of which is detailed in this document.

Our PCS district and school leadership team is working to set end goals for 2 years from now, backward plan for projects and activities that will work to achieve the outcomes for our students.



## Office of Fiscal Analysis

January 28, 2021  
Updated

### FEDERAL STIMULUS FOR CONNECTICUT

The Office of Fiscal Analysis continues to examine the federal response to the current pandemic. The information in the document outlines the estimated grants for Connecticut that have been identified in the Federal Funds Information for States (FFIS) Budget Brief 20-13 as well as other sources of federal information. Additionally, we have included information relevant to states on other provisions of federal legislation in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Please note some of this information is preliminary, and for many aspects still contingent on further federal guidance. OFA will continue to work with the various state agencies tasked with implementing these programs and will provide additional information as available. This document was last revised on 1/28/21

#### TREASURY

##### Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) (Updated 8/26/20)

Provides \$130 billion fund to states, territories, local and tribal governments to use for expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency. COVID-19. Funds can be used for costs that are necessary expenditures incurred due to COVID-19, were not accounted for in the budget most recently approved as of the date of enactment of this section, and were incurred during the period from March 1, 2020, to December 30, 2020. It does not appear that these funds can currently be used to offset revenue loss related to the economic downturn.

Agency: Various

Intended Population: Statewide

Eligibility: not applicable

Distribution Date: The Department of the Treasury must make payments no later than 30 days after enactment.

Amount: \$1.4 billion; Current major allocations include:

- \$159.3 million to support schools, teachers, and students. These funds will support reopening (\$130.8 million), devices and connectivity (\$22 million), public WiFi hotspots (\$4.5 million), and social and emotional learning (\$2 million).
- \$66.9 million to support grants to nursing homes, including funds for temporary increases (April through June). COVID Recovery Facilities, and reporting and rate review. An additional \$56.8 million is available to support hardship grants for nursing homes experiencing extraordinary costs above those mitigated by CRF grants and Medicaid rate increases.
- \$30 million to support increased grant funds for providers including home health, behavioral health, substance abuse, waiver service, Community First Choice, chronic disease hospitals, and Connecticut Children's Medical Center.



# ESSER II Grant: Student Recovery

The grant can be used until September of 2023. This link is to a four page document that's worth understanding. It outlines the priorities and authorized uses. The document states: *"The CSDE recognizes that the pandemic has exacerbated disparities that already existed and as we have previously communicated, it is our collective responsibility to address our challenges through an equity focused lens."*

The effectiveness of this grant will be in the execution (in each district) and how this funding is put to use for recovery of all students and where it is needed most. We will be sharing a DRAFT of our plan in the coming weeks, knowing it will require multiple iterations even as our situation evolves.



## Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, 2021 Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II)

January 28, 2021

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is proud of how our Connecticut school communities continue to navigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and how students, families, and staff, have adapted to the changing and evolving approach to education during this time. In recognition of the ongoing need to support these efforts, the United States Department of Education (USED) has notified CSDE that pursuant to section 313 of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, 2021 (Public Law 116-260), Connecticut will be receiving an additional \$492,426,458 in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER II). This brings Connecticut's total ESSER funding to \$603,494,517.

Similar to the original ESSER appropriation the funds will be distributed as follows:

- CSDE may reserve up to 10% of the funds for state level activities, including up to 0.5% for state level administration costs.
- Not less than 90% of the funds must be allocated to Local Education Agencies (LEAs).
- The CSDE will allocate these funds to LEAs on the basis of their respective shares of funds received under Title I, Part A, of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in fiscal year 2020.

During April of 2020, CSDE first highlighted the Connecticut state-level priorities for education that were deemed critical to meeting student need. This document updates and supplements those priorities given the new funding available and the evolving educational needs at the district and school level. It continues our commitment to provide equitable access to education for all students and focuses the use of resources on supporting our school communities.

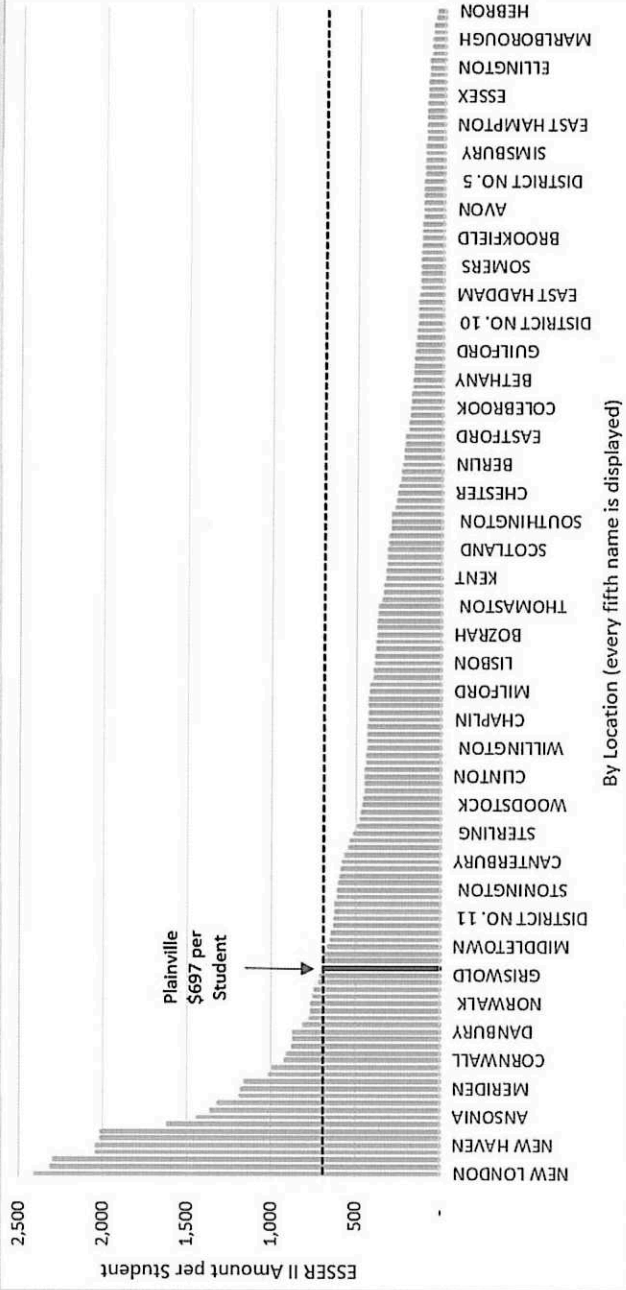
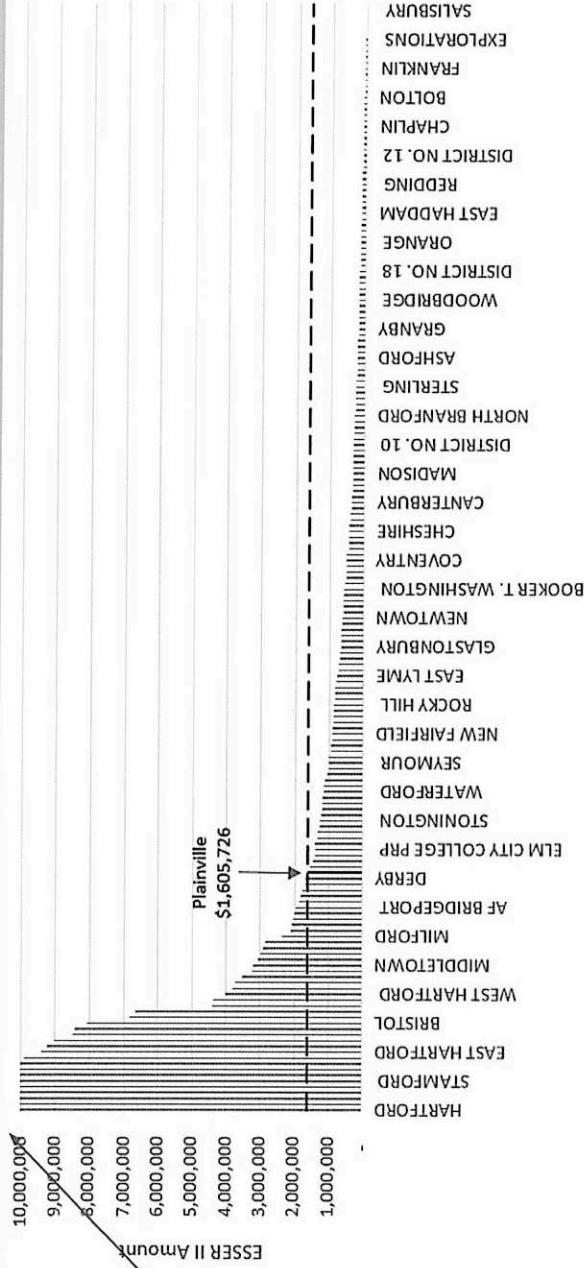
To accomplish our common goals of educational recovery and learning acceleration for every student, we urge LEAs to take a comprehensive look at the federal, state, and local resources available to them in meeting the priorities outlined below. To assist in this process and in accessing the ESSER II funding, the CSDE is developing a new application which will be available in eGMS. The application will be designed to serve as a planning tool and will require a needs assessment (how the LEA has identified the educational gaps created by the pandemic), an articulation of the steps that will be taken to mitigate the gaps, and a description of the intended alignment of the resources available under ESSER I and II to implement the plan over the summer and the 2021-22 school year. The CSDE's review of the applications will focus on how the plans and resource allocations align. The CSDE anticipates updates from LEAs that will be used to assess effective plan implementation.

The CSDE recognizes that the pandemic has exacerbated disparities that already existed and as we have previously communicated, it is our collective responsibility to address our challenges through an equity focused lens. The best results will be achieved as we leverage existing and/or advance new school-family-community partnership structures. The priorities outlined contemplate robust partnerships, which include the CSDE. We will be positioned to provide technical assistance and support.

# ESSER II: Plainville's Allocation

ESSER \$1,605,726 ranked 42

The grant entitlement is equity based. The top 10 = \$243.4M, 54.91% of grant entitlement, ranging \$45.7M to 9.9M, off the scale of this graph.



Per student \$697 ranked 30th (using ADM)

# COVID Grant Offsets

Description	Begin	End	Total Award	PCS Award	Allowable uses	Status
1. ESSER Part I Funds	3/13/2020	9/30/2022	362,176	337,511	Expenditures remote or in person to address the COVID epidemic	~ 50% used in 2020-21
2. Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF)	3/1/2020	12/30/2020	875,794	875,794	Expenditures allowing return to in-person learning	Expended
3. ESSER Funds Part II	3/13/2020	9/30/2023	1,605,726	1,605,726	For COVID related expenditures in the specific areas outlined below.	Announced

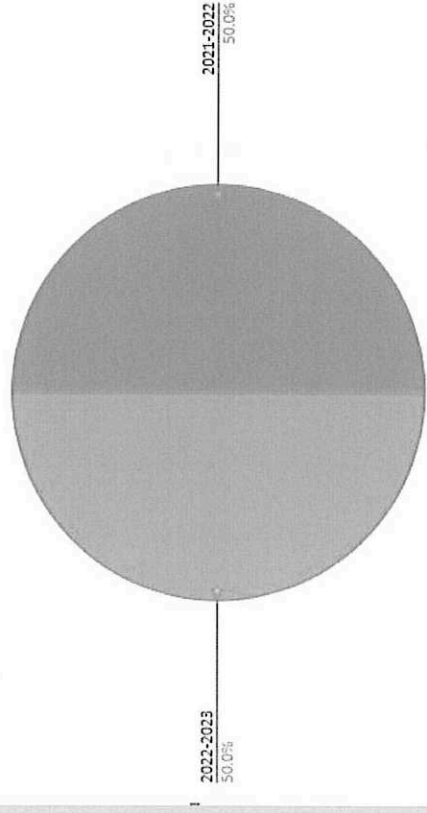
- The Superintendent's budget(with 2.84% increase) assumed \$100,000 of ESSER offsets
- We estimate that by the beginning of FY 21-22, we will have expended **over \$1,000,000** of the above grants.
- ESSER II grant in the amount of 1.605 million can be used for COVID related expenses incurred and specifically for:
  - *Academic Supports, Learning Loss, Learning Acceleration and Recovery*
  - *Family and Community Connections*
  - *School Safety and Social-Emotional Well-being of the "Whole Student" and of School Staff*
  - *Remote Learning, Staff Development, and the Digital Divide*
- State and federal guidelines disallows these funds for use to supplant typical operating budget expenses, clarifying that funds should be used to expand and/or develop programs in support of the four priority areas noted above.
- Prior to learning of these funds being available, our PCS team had already started outlining a number of programs and services aimed to address the named priority areas. The new staff members all align perfectly with these priority areas. Additional programs and need for personnel for recovery efforts will be shared in more detail over the coming months.



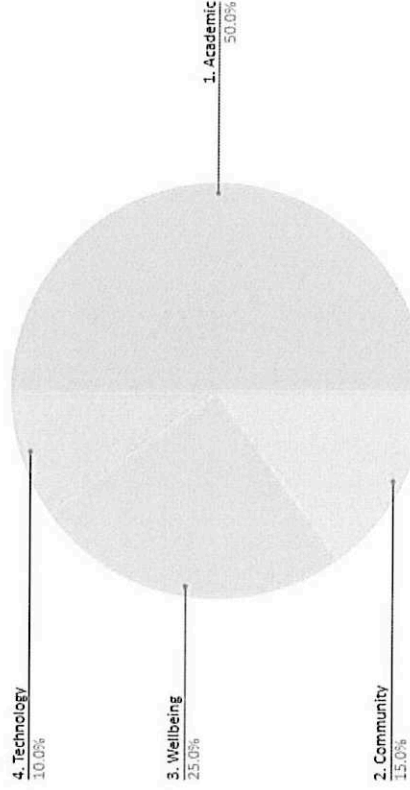
# ESSER II State Level Priorities

State Level Priorities	State Level Priorities - Definition
<p><b>1. Academic:</b> Academic Supports, Learning Loss, Learning Acceleration and Recovery</p>	<p>Equity and access in education for students in Connecticut remains a top priority. As we have worked to help close the digital divide through technology and connectivity, we must measure and plan to address learning loss. Our academic supports must be positioned to accelerate learning and facilitate recovery. It is particularly important that we measure learning loss and target resources for our students disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Access must be focused on our most vulnerable students, including students whose progress decreased, students with disabilities, English learners, students experiencing homelessness, disengaged youth, or those with barriers to remote learning. Targeted supports that should be implemented include but are not limited to additional classroom supports, high dosage small group tutoring programs including in school and after school, extended day programs and expanded access to summer school.</p>
<p><b>2. Community:</b> Family and Community Connections</p>	<p>Direct engagement with families and the community, such as faith-based organizations, businesses, and social service providers, will provide added supports for our students while we continue this school year and adapt to the changing dynamics of this pandemic. Among other opportunities to increase initiatives that engage school, family and community connections, schools should engage "Family academy" programs aimed at providing parents and guardians with the skills to support their children's academic endeavors, including those skills necessary to support technology use in the home.</p>
<p><b>3. Wellbeing:</b> School Safety and Social-Emotional Well-being of the "Whole Student" and of our School Staff</p>	<p>There is an unprecedented level of stress on both students and staff members which must be addressed, both through social and emotional support and also through continued emphasis on public health safety measures. One focus area should be on additional behavioral and mental health services delivered in-person or via remote/ telehealth access and social and emotional support mechanisms, so that these supports are available even for individuals who may have limited in-person access. Resources should also continue to be allocated to support the physical health and safety of our students and staff, (e.g., to ensure adequate personal protective equipment (PPE), cleaning supplies, etc.).</p>
<p><b>4. Technology:</b> Remote Learning, Staff Development, and the Digital Divide</p>	<p>We have successfully worked to close the digital divide in Connecticut. Resources should be allocated to (1) maintain or upgrade access to technology and connectivity for the long term; (2) increase robust professional development for staff to hone their skills in providing remote learning; and (3) provide technical assistance and/or training for families, so that students, school staff, and families are all prepared to use remote platforms to effectively maximize student learning.</p>

ESSER II by Year



Est. Breakdown:





## Draft PCS Priority Area Projects Aligned to the CSDE

Category	Areas of improvement (preliminary)
1. Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded Summer Remediation and Acceleration Programs</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased Access to Rigorous Coursework</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation and Marketing of Academic Pathways</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment in Sensory Self-Regulation Equipment (supporting our most needy students)</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-K Funding Project</li> </ul>
2. Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central Registration and Welcome Center</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportive Community Outreach Programs</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family/Community Connections, Training, PD, Guest Speakers</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expansion of our Business Based Internships (UELPE) for Credit</li> </ul>
3. Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addition of School Psychologist</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued SEL Programs and Supports</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of a Collaboration and Problem-Solving(CPS) Assessment/Training Team</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider Retrofits to Water Fountains - Bottle Filling Stations</li> </ul>
4. Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider Training Sessions for Families, Hosted in Multiple Languages</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider Acquiring a Learning Management System Such as Canvas for the District.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Look at Replacement Cycle and Possibility of Continuing 1:1, Grades k-12</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace Old Macbooks that Support Staff are Using, Replace with Chromebooks</li> </ul>