

ARP Homeless I Plan:

- 1. How the SEA has used or will use up to 25 percent of funds awarded under ARP Homeless I for State-level activities to provide training, technical assistance, capacity-building, and engagement at the State and LEA levels, including support to LEAs to increase access to summer programming in 2021. This must include how the SEA has supported LEAs to plan for and provide wrap-around services, in collaboration with State and local agencies for immediate needs this spring 2021, and how it will support LEAs for school year 2021-2022. This should include the extent to which the SEA has or plans to build capacity in LEAs that have not received an EHCY subgrant in the past in order to ensure that these LEAs are well-prepared to utilize the funds provided in ARP Homeless II.**

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction (NDDPI) has implemented numerous strategies over the past year to support all students during the pandemic. NDDPI engages with stakeholders around Homeless Children and Youth in multiple avenues, all of which continued to meet virtually during the pandemic. The ND Homeless Coordinator and other NDDPI program staff attends the following statewide convenings to represent Homeless Liaisons and, therefore, homeless students across the state:

- Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Interagency Coordinating Council
- Idea State Advisory Committee
- North Dakota Continuum of Care Committee
- Behavioral Health Planning Council
- Juvenile Justice Commission
- Juvenile Justice Advisory Group
- Children of Incarcerated Parents Committee

In addition, information gleaned from these advisory groups has been shared back with the Homeless liaisons in the field. During this time, quarterly webinars have been held to share information and provide a forum for feedback. The NDDPI also hosts a Microsoft Teams Site, where resources are shared, questions are asked and answered, and discussions occur, facilitated by the ND Homeless Coordinator. Finally, the NDDPI was able to virtually monitor selected sites for Homeless Education program compliance. Throughout these different outlets, a picture of youth homelessness in ND during the pandemic emerged: it was clear that liaisons struggled to identify students who exhibit homelessness in different ways due to school being held at a distance or in a hybrid mode. Oftentimes, liaisons were pulled in several directions to help all at-risk students, and it became more difficult to identify homeless students. As the economy was disrupted, there were more housing issues. However, on a positive note, the schools felt there were resources to support students with technology and transportation, but most felt that there were many students who might be homeless or unaccompanied, and not identified. NDDPI has factored this input into both ESSER and ARP Homeless I and II funding conversations and plans, as it continues to develop strategies to support schools in educating homeless children and youth.

In March, the current ND Homeless Coordinator left her position. The Director of the Educational Improvement and Support office seamlessly transitioned into this role and has led the continued liaison support, answered any questions and concerns, and facilitated training sessions about the new funds. As the funds were only made available in late April, many of the projects discussed regarding community schools, wraparound services, summer learning, and community partnerships were accomplished through available ESSER funds. However, during this time of transition, it was the perfect time to increase our statewide capacity. Previously, the NDDPI had one staff member devoted to programs serving homeless

children and youth. However, due to the increased funding and focus in this area, the NDDPI restructured portfolios to have one assistant director, one program administrator, and one support staff trained and providing support to the field to manage this program, as well as the Director of the office integrally involved in the planning and application process. The Educational Improvement and Support office has NDDPI staff who actively serve on planning committees for the following efforts:

- In partnership with the South East Education Cooperative, NDDPI, NDDHS, the Governor's Office, and the Department of Commerce, the Central Region Education Association leads a statewide coalition called the ND Education to Workforce Pathways through the SEL (Social Emotional Learning) Coalition, to break down barriers and support greater implementation of SEL in the development of K-12 workforce pathways. The coalition consists of 25 members representing diverse, cross-sector private, public, and non-profit perspectives. This effort leverages SEL competencies to create greater opportunity for state-level initiative alignment and cohesion, strengthening partnerships between education and business/industry, to build respect and shared responsibility in preparing students to become [Choice Ready](#).
- Additionally, the [ND Full-Service Community Schools Consortium](#), supported by REAs, LEAs, NDDPI, NDDoH and NDDHS, is a group of schools actively partnering with pipeline service partners and providers to serve as a neighborhood hub where comprehensive supports are coordinated and provided for students and families through an integrated approach in their local community. The eight service areas are Early Childhood Development, Family Engagement, Remedial and Academic Enrichment Activities, Community-Based Supports, Wellness, Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Workforce Readiness, and Mentoring and Other Youth Development Programs. The NDDPI is actively partnering with the leaders of this initiative to expand this model to more schools in North Dakota. Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) are both a place and set of partnerships that serve as a hub to a neighborhood or community. FSCS partner with other organizations to provide a coordinated and integrated set of comprehensive supports. The FSCS model promotes partner collaboration, so schools don't have to navigate these challenges alone. This model serves to measure and improve the following areas:
 - Family Engagement
 - Community Engagement
 - Whole-Child Education
 - Student Attendance
 - Student Behavior
 - Student Academic Achievement
 - Student Engagement
 - Choice Readiness

ARP Homeless I funds, when released, were immediately included in our grant application processes and have been communicated to all stakeholders. In terms of timing, the project period for the current McKinney-Vento subgrantees was extended until September of 2022 and a new grant application/funding opportunity including new funds was posted on June 1, 2021. The NDDPI encouraged applicants to consider summer programming and continuing to fund community schooling and assured that projects included in summer programming would qualify for reimbursement.

2. How the SEA has used or will use their funds for State-level activities to provide support to LEAs to increase access to summer programming and plan for and provide wraparound services for summer 2021, in collaboration with State and local agencies and other community-based organizations.

The NDDPI communicated regularly with LEAs to strongly encourage them to offer evidence-based learning and enrichment opportunities over the summer months. The NDDPI uses its accountability process to identify schools and students most in need of support and makes this information available through its [Insights Dashboard](#). The accountability process uses state assessment data (NDSA), Choice Ready data, Student Engagement surveys, and graduation rate to determine lowest performing schools and its highest priority needs. In addition, the NDDPI breaks down data by subgroups, including children and youth experiencing homelessness, and has been using data drill downs to identify needs and create action plans through program management to target resources where they are most needed. Currently, summer programming has been offered locally through either state funding, federal Title I funding, or other grants. Through state funding, the NDDPI served approximately 9,000 K-6 students and 15,000 7-12 students in the summer of 2020. However, the NDDPI anticipates this number will climb significantly with the influx of funding and is in the process of creating a process to collect better data on those students who attend summer school. In addition, the NDDPI made the following programs available to all parents and families, independent of school district action:

- During the 2021 Legislative Session, a bill was heard and passed into law that allowed all North Dakota students in grades K-12 to attend state-funded summer school. This is significant as in the past only K-4 students deemed as remedial could attend summer school. This flexibility and the ability to utilize ESSER and/or ARP Homeless I funding to expand summer school would help minimize the summer slide and close widening achievement gaps – especially with the most vulnerable learners.
- The NDDPI made Schoolhouse.world available to all ND schools and students. Schoolhouse.world provides free tutoring for math (pre-algebra through calculus), SAT prep, AP prep, and college applications. Schoolhouse.world provides the opportunity for students to participate in live, small-group tutoring sessions. Tutoring can be used independently or to complement [Khan Academy](#) lessons. Small-group, high-impact tutoring is immensely effective in closing achievement gaps, and this partnership was beneficial for students, as well as for teachers and administrators.
- The NDDPI made Exact Path available at no cost to students and families in August 2020, after the COVID-19 pandemic closed schools to in-person instruction and will continue to offer this resource throughout the next two years. Families and students struggling to adapt to different learning platforms being used by different grades and classes found that Exact Path platform offered a single, accessible resource for instruction. Edmentum Exact Path offers personalized online instruction in mathematics, reading, and language arts to students in grades kindergarten through 12. It adapts to each student's needs and provides assessments that document a student's learning progress.
- Six hundred North Dakota families with pre-school aged children participate in the [Waterford Upstart](#) funded grant program. NDDPI is looking to meet this demand by funding an additional 800 slots. Families receive a computer, access to a coach, and, if needed, internet connection to participate.

North Dakota, just as all the other states, has many issues facing students and schools across the state as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the most critical and widespread issues facing our state impacting children and youth experiencing homelessness are outlined below:

- School personnel have been particularly impacted by the pandemic. The majority of ND schools opened their buildings for in-person learning in August/September 2020 while also teaching online for families who chose that option for their students. Along with numerous safety concerns, having to teach both in person and online has been challenging for staff. We continue to get reports of COVID fatigue across the state. This summer, many were interested in offering summer school and various

camps to students. However, schools had difficulty finding staff willing to work a summer school program. In addition, students and families are tired from attending a full school year in-person with COVID restrictions and were less interested in extending their learning opportunities over the summer months.

- Even before the COVID-19 pandemic began, North Dakota was struggling with teacher shortages like many other states. The pandemic further exacerbated this problem. The stress of having to both teach in person and teach those students who wanted to remain in a distance learning format has caused many teachers to contemplate retiring earlier or making a career change.

The NDDPI continues to work with its partnership councils, community organizations, and statewide stakeholder groups to develop a strategic plan to serve homeless liaisons regionally. It is the NDDPI's intent to put out a request for proposals in early October for this work.

3. How the SEA has used or will use at least 75 percent of funds awarded under ARP Homeless I for distribution to LEAs in accordance with all requirements of EHCY. This must include the extent to which the SEA has or will use funds to supplement existing EHCY subgrants to allow for more rapid fund distribution to address the needs of students experiencing homelessness, and the extent to which the SEA analyzed and reviewed where there are significant concentrations of students and families experiencing homelessness across the State (including in LEAs that are not existing EHCY subgrantees), and how it has or will ensure that supports from ARP Homeless I can urgently reach them.

The NDDPI began the work of supporting school districts in developing their plans for the use of ARP Homeless I right away. The NDDPI immediately set to work brainstorming for the use of funds and planning how to quickly utilize internal processes to disperse these funds appropriately and efficiently. Again, the application posted on June 1, 2021 for ARP Homeless I, with the first training to the field held, virtually, that same day. This training outlined the ARP Homeless I requirements, so districts could begin the planning process. We have followed up with individual training events, sharing updated resources and guidance in our various communication channels, such as the Weekly Blast, the NDDPI website, and the Homeless Liaisons TEAMs site.

This first application simplified McKinney-Vento application requirements and pared it down to ensure the ultimate flexibility to districts. The funding opportunity was described with the following language: "The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is authorized under Title VII-B of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ([42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.](#)). The McKinney-Vento Act was originally authorized in 1987 and most recently re-authorized in December 2015 by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Under the McKinney-Vento Act, the ND Department of Public Instruction must ensure that each homeless child and youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as other children and youths. Homeless children and youths must have access to the educational and related services that they need to enable them to meet the same challenging State academic standards to which all students are held. Additional funds have been released through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021's Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief- Homeless Children and Youth Fund designed to provide funding to States as a supplement to their McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth funds, so that districts can address urgent needs of homeless children and youth." We also expanded our Allowable Uses of Funds to include information from the USED guidance. This can be found on the NDDPI website here: <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/education-programs/federal-title-programs/title-vii-part-b-homeless-mckinney-vento>. Finally, we adjusted our application to include what other federal funds the LEA is using to support the enrollment, identification, and educational success of children and youth experiencing homelessness. This adjustment will really help

reviewers determine the need of the LEA and quality of programming the school district will engage in around these funds.

Significant concentrations exist in our larger cities and tribal communities. Our efforts and services will focus on accurately identifying and appropriately providing services to these students and families. Previously, we have only had six-seven school districts in the state apply for these funds. Already, with the training and technical assistance provided throughout the summer, we have at least three more interested. That may seem insignificant, but these nine-ten districts account for more than half of our total student population. In addition, these are the communities that have reported the most incidences of children and youth homelessness in the state. The NDDPI is pleased to report that several tribal communities are currently working on applications that have never applied before.

ARP Homeless II Plan:

- 1. How the SEA will use up to 25 percent of funds awarded under ARP Homeless II for State-level activities to provide training, technical assistance, capacity-building, and engagement at the State and LEA levels, including support to LEAs to plan for and provide wrap-around services, in collaboration with State and local agencies, for school year 2021-2022.**

The NDDPI has identified several methods to ensure ARP Homeless II requirements pertaining to training, technical assistance, capacity-building, and engagement with stakeholders are met.

- The NDDPI has recently onboarded a new Assistant Director who will serve as the North Dakota Homeless Coordinator to oversee implementation.
- The NDDPI will conduct trainings around application technical assistance and guidance. In addition, due to the increased capacity at the state level, several members of the NDDPI Office of Educational Improvement and Support can provide one on one technical assistance to applicants. In addition, site visits will occur as requested and for all new subgrantees.
- The NDDPI publishes a “Weekly Blast” that shares key information with North Dakota educators. Each week, from the inception of the pandemic in March 2020, this weekly communication shared important information and updates regarding funding opportunities, key updates, resources available, and action items requested. This communication has a broad audience and is an opportunity to share timely information with the field. In addition, the NDDPI has several updated homeless liaison directories, separated by all liaisons, those that receive McKinney-Vento subgrants, and those that will receive ARP I and II funds. Although some of the information needs to be shared to all, other information will be shared in these unique channels.
- The NDDPI conducts monthly webinar events with all homeless liaisons. During this event, best practices of the use of funds will be highlighted. In addition, subgrantees will be required to attend, at a minimum, quarterly professional learning events and new subgrantees will receive even more targeted communication and reach outs.
- Additionally, the NDDPI will be fully supporting and growing [ND Full-Service Community Schools Consortium](#). Again, Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) are both a place and set of partnerships that serve as a hub to a neighborhood or community and we believe this model serves as a basis for wraparound supports available to schools in North Dakota. Since FSCS partners with other organizations to provide a coordinated and integrated set of comprehensive supports, they will be a featured player in many of the webinars, presentations, and idea-sharing events. To reiterate, this model promotes collaboration with outside organizations, so schools don’t have to navigate these challenges on an island. In addition, strong family and community engagement is a key factor in this model.

2. **How the SEA will use at least 75 percent of funds awarded under ARP Homeless II for distribution to LEAs in accordance with the final requirements. This must include a description of how the SEA will distribute funds in accordance with the required formula to address the needs of students experiencing homelessness and the extent to which the SEA has encouraged or will encourage the creation of consortia for those LEAs that may not meet the required minimum formula amount.**

The NDDPI is planning on dispersing ARP Homeless II funds exactly as the USED has proposed, using the LEA distribution formula. Please see the attached spreadsheet which outlines both the methodology, raw data, and formulas used to come up with preliminary allocations. Using this allocations chart, the NDDPI plans on opening the funding opportunity to all, creating a simplified application process, and encouraging districts under the \$5,000 eligible amount to form consortiums and apply together. As shown on the spreadsheet, 24 out of 176 eligible school districts will receive an allocation above \$5,000. However, there are many on the list that have previously formed consortiums to receive support in other areas. For example, the NDDPI has a similar process in place for Title III, so this will not be a new process to many of them. The NDDPI will be releasing this information soon and plans on making awards as soon as possible- most likely in early to mid-October. As is our regular process of releasing funding opportunities, the NDDPI communicates through its regular communication channels, including utilizing its introductory homeless liaison events to encourage all to apply, either on their own or through consortiums. We will also be hosting a technical assistance webinar when the funding opportunity opens, as we did with the availability of ARP Homeless I funds.

For both ARP Homeless I and ARP Homeless II:

1. **How the SEA will ensure that ARP-HCY supplements the support and services provided with ARP ESSER funds and does not replace the use of ARP ESSER funds to support the needs of students experiencing homelessness.**

North Dakota has a robust plan to support and monitor LEAs in using both ARP Homeless I & II funds and ESSER funds. We have identified multiple approaches to supporting and monitoring LEAs in their implementation of evidence-based interventions that respond to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The NDDPI has provided training to school districts on both the evidence-based requirements in ESEA and on providing interventions to students. In addition, we have numerous resources posted on the NDDPI website and the Homeless Liaison TEAMS site.

Schools have also been notified multiple times that they will need to collect evidence of effectiveness on the interventions they are implementing. North Dakota recently completed the 2021 Legislative Assembly. House Bill 1013 passed with language outlining reports schools will need to submit to the NDDPI addressing interventions implemented and the impact these interventions had on accelerating learning recovery with ESSER funds. School districts receiving funds from the elementary and secondary school emergency relief fund must include information regarding learning losses of students identified within the district, including subgroup gaps and school district plans to accelerate learning recovery for all students, including closing subgroup gaps. In addition, it must include use of ESSER funds by category and the impact ESSER funds have had on accelerating learning recovery for the districts' students, including subgroups. Due to this requirement, it is fairly straightforward to districts that these ARP Homeless I and II funds are to supplement activities and programs put in place with ESSER funds and NDDPI will be able to monitor compliance to this requirement.

Finally, the NDDPI included the required narrative in its ESSER applications “How the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements, including but not limited to the interventions under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, will respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students” and will be monitored on this requirement and ARP I and II funds to ensure compliance to this requirement. NDDPI will also include language to the affect above on its ARP Homeless II application. In addition, the NDDPI hosts training events regularly that share best practices on blending and braiding funding to best meet needs throughout the state. Due to the size of our state, we get great turnout at conference and webinars that feature these presentations. For more information on North Dakota’s ESSER plan, please see [ND ARP ESSER State Plan](#).

- 2. The extent to which the SEA will use its State-level activities funds to award subgrants or contracts to community-based organizations that are well-positioned to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness in historically underserved populations such as rural children and youth, Tribal children and youth, students of color, children and youth with disabilities, English learners, LGBTQ+ youth, and pregnant, parenting, or caregiving students experiencing homelessness, and connect them to educationally-related support and wraparound services.**

The state of North Dakota is extremely fortunate in that most schools conducted in-person learning for the entire 2020-2021 school year. However, a significant concern statewide is the disparity in learning and equity gaps for the most vulnerable learners. Whereas most students were able to quickly adapt to the shift to distance learning, many of our at-risk learners struggled with the distance learning format and the pure disruption of lives COVID 19 has caused. There is evidence the pandemic has put them further behind or in jeopardy with learning at the same pace as their peers. It is our intent to use funds to award subgrants and contracts to community-based organizations through already established partnerships and state-wide councils. Again, the NDDPI has engaged with stakeholders around Homeless Children and Youth in multiple avenues. The ND Homeless Coordinator and other NDDPI staff in the Educational Improvement and Support office attend and actively participate in multiple statewide convenings that provide valuable partnerships and data around homelessness in the state of North Dakota and how to best serve all students who are at-risk. Information gleaned from these advisory groups provides a forum for feedback and partnership and will contribute to the Request for Proposal process utilized by North Dakota. The data included below shows the disparity in learning for the subgroups most closely linked to youth experiencing homelessness.

Student Group	Highest Priority Needs
Students from low-income families	30% of students in ND are designated as low-income. There were existing academic disparities even prior to the pandemic, as 67% of low-income students compared to 52% of all students remain novice or partially proficient in ELA. Math fares no better; While 56% of all students are considered novice or partially proficient, the number is 73% of low-income students. Literacy and numeracy will continue to be a focus in upcoming years.

Student Group	Highest Priority Needs
Children and youth experiencing homelessness	Only 21% of students experiencing homelessness are proficient in Math and 25% in ELA. In addition, 39% of homeless students are chronically absent. The equity gap in achievement and increasing student engagement for students experiencing homelessness care is a priority area.
Children and youth in foster care	Only 20% of students in foster care are proficient in Math and 36% in ELA. In addition, 22% of students in foster care are chronically absent. The equity gap in achievement and increasing student engagement for students in foster care is a priority.
Other groups of students identified by the State (e.g., youth involved in the criminal justice system, students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures, LGBTQ+ students)	At-risk subgroups such as those served by Neglected and Delinquent programs, those suffering from chronic absenteeism, and transient students have missed the most in-person instruction. The NDDPI has a variety of data metrics to track these areas, and efforts have been made to increase statewide guidance in Credit Accrual and Recovery, as a high-priority need in many at-risk groups is the ability to earn and recover credit. In addition, effective transitions between and among districts is a high-priority need area, and efforts are being made to increase communication, evaluate/track student outcomes, and improve guidance to the field.

3. How the SEA will encourage LEAs to award contracts to community-based organizations to help identify and support historically underserved populations experiencing homelessness.

Not only will the NDDPI make this an assurance and narrative requirement in its application, NDDPI plans to host monthly webinars to subgrantees to create a shared cohort experience where great ideas can be shared and replicated. Staff from the NDDPI has attended all technical assistance webinars hosted by NCHY and the USED. From these webinars and prior expertise, many ideas have been shared. Specifically, the NDDPI plans to immediately share ideas around allocating funds around the following concepts:

- Establishing quiet rooms so students have a place to go when they feel overwhelmed
- Assisting students in their transition to trade schools and institutions of higher education
- Creating summer internships that support housing, food, etc.
- Identifying technology needs and supporting applicants with laptops to check out, upgraded internet at facilities, pay-as-you-go cards for internet service, pay-as-you go phones/phone cards, etc.

We also plan on bringing in key stakeholders from community providers, including presentations related to North Dakota Full-Service Community Schools, to present on best practices and support services that are available through their organizations. The NDDPI is hopeful that through this level of technical assistance and idea sharing, subgrantees will feel comfortable reaching out in their communities to those who can best support their efforts.

Chief State School Officer or Authorized Representative (Typed Name):	
State Superintendent Kirsten Baesler	
Signature:	Date:
	September 7, 2021