

# AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN

## Survey Feedback & Action

**Respondent Says:** *Add more staff, more teachers & teaching assistants to reduce class size and add more therapists for speech, occupational and physical therapy and hearing impaired*

**District Response:** YES! The 2021-22 Budget includes 26 elementary positions that could have been reduced based on enrollment. The District left these positions to reduce overall class sizes K-5. As a result, the average class size for Kindergarten is 17, first grade is 20, and grades 2-5 are 21.

Additionally, Math and ELA Intervention teachers will serve six students at a time providing more individualized academic attention. ARPA funds will provide 19 Math AIS Teachers and 31 Math Teaching Assistants.

	Math	ELA
Teachers	31	35
Teaching Assistants	31	29

The District currently has more than 250 student support staff and plans to use federal funding to increase the staff and contracts with local professional agencies to provide students necessary services.

**Respondent Says:** *Provide Tutors before and after school and in the evening*

**District Response:** YES! We will revisit the current tutoring and mentoring model to accommodate the changing needs of students. ARPA funds will provide eleven positions in the Virtual Academy plan that will support tutoring and we are working on flexible schedules to align tutor schedules with student schedules!

**Respondent Says:** *Provide Peer Mentor and Community Mentor / Role Model programs*

**District Response:** YES! Although COVID protocols this school year might limit the in-person mentoring opportunities, we are working with student leaders and

with community leaders to partner with our youth to provide not only academic skills, but social skills and life skills that will better prepare students for college and careers. In fact, this summer we pursued paid summer tutoring opportunities!

**Respondent Says:** *Start school two weeks earlier rather than operating summer school in July and provide 12-month enrichment programming*

**District Response:** There are rules about the days of instruction and contractual obligations that make this suggestion complicated in the short-term. Certainly, this is a great suggestion that we can consider for the future.

Year-round enrichment is almost achieved with our six-week summer school program this year and the county and city parks do a tremendous job offering camps and day programs for kids to enjoy all summer long.

**Respondent Says:** *Provide consistent curriculum and universal design for learning*

**District Response:** YES! During remote and hybrid learning, teachers provided Demonstration Lessons and Playlists for classroom instructors to tailor to their class needs. We also recorded all K-5 lessons on WCNY, which were broadcast and available for on-demand streaming. This model provided great results and positive feedback from staff, so we will look to expand the reach of Demonstration Lessons and Playlists, along with pre-recorded WCNY lessons, going forward.

**Respondent Says:** *Provide student-friendly materials and systems*

**District Response:** YES! The remote and hybrid learning models highlighted the importance of having streamlined systems like Canvas and Seesaw, which are planned for expanded rollout this year.

Also, at-home kits and FOSS for One Science Kits have been ordered for homebound instruction.

**Respondent Says:** *Assimilate new online streaming culture to engage kids. Create a District Portal to encourage students to learn at their own pace*

**District Response:** YES! This past year, we rolled out districtwide Seesaw and Canvas, which are classroom academic programs that allow students to access coursework and materials electronically. Additionally, our teachers taped lessons on WCNY that play on your television from our own school district station.

**Respondent Says:** *Provide more adaptive equipment for special needs students including speech and hearing impaired*

**District Response:** YES! The Federal Government provides special needs funding and the District has a matching requirement. Several programs currently provide adaptive equipment including Snap & Read, Microsoft Speak & Read, ULS Curriculum Supports and others. The District works with instructional support staff and professional providers to ensure that equipment is available for students.

**Respondent Says:** *Re-establish clubs and committee activities*

**District Response:** YES! We cautiously have plans to do this and to enhance the number and variety of clubs and activities offered to students as COVID-19 restrictions allow.

**Respondent Says:** *Provide more supply money for classroom teachers*

**District Response:** YES! ARPA funds have allowed us to restore half a million dollars of classroom supply budgets for teachers. Additionally, we are stocking schools with grade-appropriate basic school supplies to assist families unable to purchase supplies this Fall.

**Respondent Says:** *Improve relationship-building with students and families so they feel connected to the school community*

**District Response:** YES! A designated family engagement staff person will be assigned to every school. Each staff person will develop a comprehensive family engagement plan in collaboration with the school's newly developed Family Engagement Team. Each plan will have four components: 1. Academic 2. Behavioral 3. Professional Development 4. Relationship Building. Opportunities to connect with families will be offered both virtually and in person. We are also hiring

school counselors at the elementary level in all of our schools to provide additional support for students and families.

**Respondent Says:** *Bring back the middle school GREAT Program & DARE*

**District Response:** YES! The District has applied for a Department of Justice Grant designed to implement gang and drug prevention programs. If awarded the grant, the District will partner with Street Addiction and Goodlife Foundation. These organizations are both excellent local resources in our community.

**Respondent Says:** *Provide robust college & career readiness centers in the high schools*

**District Response:** YES! In fact, last year Corcoran High School implemented a Participatory Budgeting initiative and their winning proposal was to create a college and career center in the high school. Nottingham is planning to engage in the High School Redesign program which specifically addresses college and career readiness.

**Respondent Says:** *Re-establish health classes led by certified health instructors and mental health professionals*

**District Response:** YES! Health-Certified teachers are the instructional professionals in our Health courses, and we are increasing the staff and resources aligned to mental well-being including social workers, social work assistants, counselors and school psychologists.

We also have resources available for staff mental health to ensure their overall well-being. Before school begins in September, we plan to provide classroom teachers with professional development to assist them in recognizing when children may need additional support and resources. Our school counselors, social workers, social work assistants, and school psychologists will be present in all buildings to support student and staff mental health needs.

**Respondent Says:** *Open school libraries all summer*

**District Response:** YES! Great suggestion! During summer school, the libraries are open at each site for the duration of summer school programs. This year, our local libraries in the community have had limited hours due to COVID restrictions. We will work with our community libraries to ensure that next summer, more library options are available to students!

**Respondent Says:** *Create outdoor learning labs, provide field trips & provide investigative and exploratory activities*

**District Response:** YES! These are great recommendations. Our summer programming does include outdoor science and reading activities. We will consider more formal learning labs as suggested to enhance the current program offering!

We are re-establishing field experiences, including Historically Black Colleges & Universities (HBCU), when it's safe, that have been previously limited or cancelled due to COVID restrictions.

We do offer many high school Career & Technical Education (CTE) courses that are investigative and exploratory in nature. We are looking to expand these offerings to middle school, along with implementing a CTE exploratory curriculum in grades 6-8.

**Respondent Says:** *Increase Transportation*

**District Response:** ARPA funds are short term; so if used for transportation, when the funds expire, we would have to tell families that they no longer qualify for transportation.

The transportation industry is suffering a severe shortage of drivers. There simply are not enough drivers for the school transportation needs in Onondaga County.

Guidance on the number of students allowed on a bus may change as COVID positivity rates fluctuate, which will further reduce our capacity for transporting students. Many districts are asking parents to drive students to school each day.

**Respondent Says:** *High expectations for behavior and social skill development for early grades*

**District Response:** YES! The District's Strategic Plan, Building Our Future, is based on a culture of high expectations for our staff and our students.

All schools currently participate in PBIS – Positive Behavior Incentive Systems. This program is age and grade level appropriate and recognizes and rewards behavior that reflects high expectations.

The pandemic has impacted children differently and we recognize that unwanted behavior may be the result of other issues in a child's life which could be exacerbated by the pandemic. We are putting many mental health resources in our schools to address the issues that may manifest as poor behavior.

Our elementary grades all participate in PAX Good Behavior Games which provides a consistent system to

support inclusive and culturally responsive engagement strategies.

**Respondent Says:** *Designated recess time*

**District Response:** YES! Elementary school schedules all include grade level recess time.

**Respondent Says:** *Sports offerings at all grade levels and upgrade baseball fields to turf*

**District Response:** YES! These are tremendous ideas! We will consider how to offer athletic opportunities to younger grades.

The District will consider upgrading our baseball fields to turf with capital project funds.

**Respondent Says:** *Offer bridge programs for transitioning to middle and high school*

**District Response:** YES! We agree that students benefit from orientation, school visits, and formal assistance with the transition to middle and high school.

Middle school staff and students visit fifth grade classes and some of our middle schools host sixth grade orientation. We plan to expand this to middle and high schools with general operating funds.

Algebra Summer Bridge is provided for rising ninth grade students, and P-TECH Summer Bridge opportunities are in place over the summer for students engaging in those CTE programs.

**Respondent Says:** *Teach life skills in school such as taxes, insurance, banking, buying or leasing a car, buying a house, parenting*

**District Response:** YES! The District believes life skills are essential tools for graduates! Last year, we introduced a new high school course on financial literacy that is designed to teach students how to manage money and finances. The Board of Education approved the curriculum earlier this year.

**Respondent Says:** *Partner with ethnic-based community organizations*

**District Response:** The District partners with several ethnic-based local business for both services (100 Black Men, for example) and for good . We comply with federal and state regulations and requirements for MWBE and DAV procurement.

**Respondent Says:** *Bring back Foster Grandparents*

**District Response:** YES! We miss our Grandparents too! Once we feel it is safe for both our volunteers and our students, we will consider bringing back Foster Grandparents and other volunteers.

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**Respondent Says:** *Add air conditioning, cover sky lights, add fans and improve air quality, filtration, and circulation*

**District Response:** Several school buildings are undergoing various stages of construction and renovation that will address air conditioning and air quality! We will look at options for covering sky lights (great idea!).

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**Respondent Says:** *Building renovations and updates*

**District Response:** YES! If you drive down Geddes Street, you will see the newly opened fields at PSLA at Fowler. Several of our schools are currently undergoing renovations now with \$300 million of JSCB Phase III state funding. In addition, we continue to prepare for JSCB Phase III funding and projects to continue the cycle of renovations to improve our schools.

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**Respondent Says:** *Cleanliness of buildings*

**District Response:** Yes! We have added five custodial staff this year; and since the pandemic began, the District has made significant investments in sanitizing and disinfecting equipment and products. Our custodial staff has been trained on the new CDC cleaning standards as our base expectations.

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**Respondent Says:** *Provide devices to all students in all grades and several responses suggest various brands and types of technology*

**District Response:** The cost of replacing and maintaining more than 20,000 mobile devices and potentially WIFI devices is cost prohibitive long-term. We are planning to rollout student devices to all high school students up entering 9th grade starting in 2022. This is a smaller, manageable number of devices to support over the long term and will prepare high school students tools for completing work outside of the classroom as appropriate.

The District has to streamline the brands and styles of devices in order to efficiently maintain and operate additional devices on our network, a process we will implement over the course of the next few years.

**Respondent Says:** *Citywide Broadband access*

**District Response:** YES! This is a City or County matter. We have provided hot spots to students without WIFI during remote instruction and fully support the City and County in this.

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**Respondent Says:** *Test and upgrade water systems and update bathroom facilities with more sinks and replace classroom furniture*

**District Response:** The District complies with annual state water testing regulations. As we renovate buildings, we are upgrading school bathrooms. There are about 2,500 classrooms across the District and in the past 5 or so years, many buildings have received new classroom furniture as a result of either renovations or funding opportunities for particular buildings or programs.

Certainly, the District prioritizes updating classroom technology, supplies and furniture as funds become available and will continue to refresh classrooms across the District. When school opens this fall, Clary, Lincoln, and ELMS will all have brand new furniture throughout the school. Additionally, new cafeteria furniture has been ordered for Seymour, Corcoran, Franklin, and Webster.