

RSU #38 is firmly committed to adhering to *Part 4: Education Reform, Accountability, Transparency, and Reporting Assurances* across all federal relief programs. The district's initiatives directly aligned with and upheld the requirements outlined in sections 442 and 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA).

Regarding section 442, numerous projects showcased the district's proactive efforts to develop procedures and systems that improved preparedness and response capabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic. Examples include implementing contact tracing software on transportation, hiring a dedicated COVID nurse, adding technology support personnel, reconfiguring facilities for social distancing, and procuring devices/network upgrades to facilitate remote learning access. Concurrently, the district made assuring compliance with section 427 a priority by purposefully designing projects that permitted all students, teachers, and other beneficiaries to overcome barriers and participate equitably, regardless of demographics like gender, race, disability status, or age. Initiatives like providing PPE for music programs, adding counselors for mental health support, securing high-quality instructional materials across all environments, and implementing accelerated learning programs with comprehensive services directly addressed equal access challenges exacerbated by the pandemic.

Across all federal relief fund programs, RSU #38's projects consistently demonstrated accountability to stakeholders by investing in evidence-based strategies, increasing transparency around student performance data, and prioritizing resources in high-need areas. Project rationales explicitly cited how purchases enhanced the district's ability to uphold GEPA's assurances while enacting key education reforms responsive to COVID-19 disruptions.

RSU #38 carefully designed a body of work that simultaneously developed improved pandemic preparedness capabilities while proactively removing barriers to equitable participation—staying true to the spirit and letter of GEPA's reform, accountability, transparency, and reporting requirements. The district's deliberate approach ensures federal relief funds support accessible education opportunities for all students.

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND (ESSERF 1)

1.1 For the Regular Instruction (\$18,760)

This cost covers service and support for iPads purchased for Kindergarten through 4th-grade students to enable hybrid and remote learning during the pandemic. Individual iPads that can be taken home will allow these young students to access educational resources and participate in remote instruction regardless of location or home circumstances. The funds pay for things like AppleCare coverage and mobile device management (JAMF) for years 2 and 3 after the first year of service is covered under a separate purchase. Providing functional iPads helps overcome barriers to equal educational opportunities posed by the pandemic's disruption of traditional in-person learning for K-4 students. This aligns with the requirement in GEPA section 427 to permit equal access and participation for all students.

1.2 For the COVID-19 Student Supports (\$140,404.22)

This funds an additional nursing position for up to 2 years to provide increased health screening, isolation monitoring, and case management across the district's rural elementary schools. Having adequate nursing staff is crucial for maintaining a safe and healthy environment for in-person learning during the pandemic. This supports equal access to education by mitigating health risks and enabling schools to operate while following COVID-19 guidelines. This aligns with the GEPA requirement to overcome barriers to equal participation.

Total (\$159,164.22)

ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND (ESSERF 2)

2.1 Network Upgrades (\$80,927.26)

This project aims to upgrade the district's network infrastructure to support increased internet traffic and connectivity demands due to remote and hybrid learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Improving the network speed, stability, and capacity will help overcome barriers and ensure equal access to educational resources and opportunities for all students, teachers, and staff, regardless of location or device. This aligns with the requirement of section 427 of GEPA to permit equal access and participation in the program.

2.2 Software for Remote Learning (\$49,723.87)

This project provides digital software and platforms aligned with the curriculum to facilitate remote learning and two-way communication between students, teachers, and families. By investing in these tools, the district ensures that all students have access to educational resources and can continue their learning despite the challenges posed by the pandemic. This supports the requirement of section 427 of GEPA to overcome barriers and promote equal access and participation.

2.3 Devices (\$355,000.00)

This project aims to lease-purchase laptops for students in grades 6 and 9-12, replacing outdated devices hindering their ability to connect, collaborate, and access online resources during remote and hybrid learning. By providing up-to-date

Submitted to the Maine DOE *FERP Review Team* on April 3, 2024

devices, the district ensures that all students have the necessary tools to participate in remote and hybrid learning environments, regardless of their circumstances. This aligns with the requirement of section 427 of GEPA to overcome barriers and promote equal access and participation.

2.4 Student Mental Health (\$4,516.00)

This project focuses on implementing a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) curriculum to support student mental health, which has been impacted by the stress and anxiety caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. By addressing the social-emotional needs of students, the district is promoting an inclusive learning environment that supports the overall well-being and academic success of all students, regardless of their backgrounds or circumstances. This aligns with the requirement of section 427 of GEPA to overcome barriers and promote equal access and participation.

2.5 Literacy Interventionist (\$64,697.57)

This project involves hiring a literacy interventionist to provide additional support and address learning gaps in literacy skills exacerbated by the disruptions caused by remote and hybrid learning. The district ensures that all students can develop essential literacy skills and achieve academic success regardless of their starting points or circumstances by providing targeted interventions and support. This aligns with the requirement of section 427 of GEPA to overcome barriers and promote equal access and participation.

2.6 Comprehensive Evidence-Based Core Literacy Program (\$109,983.69,762.37 + PD - \$1500.00):

This project aims to adopt and implement a comprehensive, evidence-based literacy program for grades PK-5 to address learning gaps and challenges in foundational reading skills, vocabulary, and comprehension. By investing in a research-based program and providing professional development for teachers, the district is taking measures to ensure that all students receive high-quality literacy instruction and have the opportunity to develop essential reading and language skills, regardless of their backgrounds or circumstances. This aligns with the requirement of section 427 of GEPA to overcome barriers and promote equal access and participation.

Total (\$159,164.22)

**AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN (ARP) ELEMENTARY AND
SECONDARY SCHOOL EMERGENCY RELIEF (ESSER)**

3.1 Summer Programming (\$240,733.43)

The 4-week summer program provides accelerated learning and evidence-based interventions to students in grades 1-11 most impacted by pandemic learning loss, identified through factors like intervention services, assessments, and teacher input. Comprehensive services, including meals, transportation, nursing, and guidance, help ensure equitable access regardless of potential barriers like economic status or disability. The program does not discriminate based on gender, race, etc., in identifying and serving those most in need. Formative assessment monitors attendance, engagement, and learning growth to guide continuous improvement in overcoming achievement gaps across all student groups. By designing the program to permit eligible students to overcome barriers to equal participation per GEPA section 427 while maintaining assurances per section 442, the district aims to provide an equitable opportunity for accelerated learning to mitigate COVID-19's disproportionate impacts.

3.2 Credit Recovery (\$63,840.73)

The Credit Recovery Project addresses pandemic learning loss by providing a flexible, research-based Edgenuity curriculum and dedicated staffing to support students in recovering credits needed for graduation and post-secondary goals. Formative assessment using multiple measures like credit attainment, assessment data, grades, attendance, and graduation rates allows monitoring of student progress and the intervention's overall impact to guide continuous improvement across all groups. By offering this evidence-based option with supporting resources, the project provides an equitable opportunity to overcome barriers to academic progress posed by COVID disruptions, regardless of factors like economic status, disability, or race per GEPA section 427. Procuring the curriculum and staffing demonstrates the district's tangible actions to permit student access to this recovery program, mitigating pandemic impacts while complying with federal assurance requirements in GEPA sections 427 and 442.

3.3 Middle School Accelerated Learning Program (\$6,245)

The Middle School Accelerated Learning Project addresses pandemic-related learning loss for grades 6-8 by implementing the research-based Edgenuity MyPath online intervention program for reading and math. This targeted, data-driven program provides personalized learning paths to fill skill gaps, monitoring student performance in real time to guide additional support as needed. Evaluating multiple formative measures like assessment data, grades, attendance, and credit attainment allows monitoring of student progress and the intervention's impact to promote continuous improvement across all groups. By investing in this evidence-based, adaptive intervention, the district aims to provide an equitable opportunity to accelerate learning and overcome barriers caused by COVID disruptions, regardless of factors covered under GEPA section 427. Procuring the MyPath program demonstrates tangible action to give all students access

to recover pandemic learning losses, aligning with federal assurance requirements around accessibility in sections 427 and 442.

3.4 Laptop Replacement (\$413,187.30)

The Laptop Replacement project procures up-to-date laptops, cases, warranty coverage, and mobile device management software for all students grades 6-12 and staff to ensure equal access to technology-enabled learning opportunities amid potential pandemic disruptions. By providing these educational technology resources to all students, including those from low-income families and children with disabilities, the project directly aligns with the stated allowable use of funds to overcome barriers to equal access and participation caused by COVID-19. The timeline allows for immediate implementation to facilitate regular and substantive educational interactions between students and teachers, regardless of the need for remote or quarantined learning. This tangible investment in modern technological tools supports accountability, transparency, and education reform by equipping students and staff to mitigate pandemic impacts while complying with federal assurance requirements outlined in GEPA sections 427 and 442.

3.5 The Readfield Elementary Space Configuration Project (\$66,933.37)

This project reallocates and renovates underutilized spaces within the 50-year-old school building to maximize social distancing capabilities and reduce virus transmission risk for students and staff during the pandemic. By reconfiguring classrooms, enlarging pre-k space, and optimizing rooms for specialized programs like readiness skills, the project directly aligns with the allowable use of funds for repairing and improving school facilities to mitigate environmental health hazards posed by COVID-19. Completing construction over the summer of 2021 enabled a timely reopening for full-time, complete, in-person learning with appropriate distancing measures in place. This prudent investment in facility improvements demonstrates the district's commitment to reducing viral spread, promoting safety, and permitting equal access to in-person instruction per federal assurance guidelines outlined in GEPA.

3.6 Transportation Covid Response (\$59,918.25)

This Transportation Covid Response project directly supports compliance with sections 442 and 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). By implementing contact tracing and notification procedures using the Traversa software system on district transportation, the project overcomes barriers to equal access and participation for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries during the COVID-19 pandemic. Accurate seating assignments, time tracking, and efficient notification capabilities help mitigate transmission risks across all demographic groups. The project increases transparency into potential exposure events and enhances the district's preparedness to respond swiftly to minimize learning disruptions. Providing this essential health and safety measure promotes accountability to stakeholders and ensures continuous access to education for all students regardless of gender, race, disability, age, or national origin.

3.7 PPE Music Program (\$3,116.86)

Providing personal protective equipment to students participating in music education supports equal access and participation as required under Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act. By implementing safety protocols with specialized masks and bell covers, this project overcomes potential barriers to involvement in instrumental music programs based on health concerns during the pandemic. It increases transparency in the district's preparedness efforts and enhances the ability to continue providing quality music instruction regardless of a student's gender, race, national origin, disability, or age. Procuring the necessary PPE demonstrates accountability to stakeholders by mitigating COVID-19 risks and ensuring equitable access to this core component of a well-rounded education for all students. Enabling safe participation promotes continuous learning opportunities aligning with GEPA's assurances.

3.8 Social Distancing (\$54,600.57)

Procuring furniture and equipment to facilitate social distancing aligns with Section 442 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) requirements. Implementing COVID-19 safeguards like spacing students apart with desks, dividers, and reconfigured classroom layouts overcomes physical barriers that could impede equal access to in-person learning opportunities. This project enhances the district's preparedness to bring all students back safely, regardless of gender, race, national origin, disability, or age. Providing these protective measures demonstrates accountability to families and the community by mitigating virus transmission risks. Transparently ensuring a safe learning environment promotes participation and helps assure continuous, equitable educational services despite the challenges of the pandemic. Addressing facility needs upholds GEPA's assurances for accessible programming.

3.9 Teacher Development Strategies (\$76,809.48)

This comprehensive initiative directly targets learning loss exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and aligns with the key assurances under the General Education Provisions Act. By providing research-based professional development through the EAB partnership and leveraging data to inform instructional strategies, the project overcomes barriers to educational progress stemming from disrupted learning environments. The Performance Matters system increases transparency into student performance across demographics, allowing for targeted interventions and equal access to supplemental academic/SEL supports. Implementing evidence-based practices enhances accountability to stakeholders for effectively mitigating pandemic impacts. This proactive approach promotes the continuous, equitable delivery of high-quality

Submitted to the Maine DOE *FERP Review Team* on April 3, 2024

education for all students regardless of gender, race, national origin, disability, or age, as outlined in GEPA Section 427. Addressing learning loss upholds these federal reform and equity assurances.

3.10 Elementary Administrative Supports (\$206,488.43)

Adding dedicated principal leadership at two high-need Title I elementary schools directly supports the provision of equitable educational opportunities as outlined in the General Education Provisions Act. By increasing administrative capacity at these sites with high populations of students from low-income families, racial/ethnic minorities, English learners, and students with disabilities, this project helps overcome barriers to academic achievement exacerbated by the pandemic. A full-time principal presence allows for focused efforts to address learning loss, support new staff, and improve school culture - key reforms needed to meet the diverse needs of underserved student groups. This investment demonstrates accountability to stakeholders by targeting resources where they are most critically needed. Transparent data tracking student outcomes will enable equitable access to supplemental services and interventions. Ultimately, this project upholds GEPA's assurances by promoting educational reform initiatives to raise achievement levels equitably.

3.11 Covid Nurse (\$74,278.88)

Hiring a dedicated COVID response nurse directly supports the district's preparedness efforts to mitigate and respond to the pandemic, aligning with the key assurances under Section 442 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). This focused position overcomes potential barriers to continuous in-person learning by systematically identifying cases, conducting contact tracing, managing testing protocols, and ensuring proper isolation/quarantine procedures across all campuses. The nurse's efforts increase transparency around COVID-19 exposures and precautions, allowing equitable access to a safe, educational environment for students, staff, and community members, regardless of demographics. Implementing cohesive pandemic response procedures enhances stakeholders' accountability. This project supports the ongoing health and safety standards reform necessary to maintain accessible programming amid evolving public health conditions, upholding GEPA's spirit of promoting equal educational opportunities.

3.12 Technology Ed Tech (\$54,881.31)

Providing dedicated technical support during remote learning directly enhances the district's preparedness to ensure continuous educational access aligned with Section 442 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). This technology position overcomes potential connectivity barriers that could impede equal participation in online instruction for students across all demographics. By proactively monitoring access issues, troubleshooting devices, and maintaining clear communication channels, the project increases transparency around the district's capability to pivot to remote modalities when warranted by public health conditions. It demonstrates accountability to families by sustaining learning opportunities regardless of school facility status. Implementing this system reform enables ongoing instructional delivery and upholds GEPA's assurances of promoting equitable educational services despite disruptive circumstances like the pandemic. Dedicated tech support personnel are critical to pandemic preparedness plans.

3.13 Elementary Guidance Counselor (\$112,393.67)

Adding an elementary guidance counselor position directly provides increased mental health services and support as allowed under the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). The disruptions caused by the pandemic have heightened the need for social-emotional learning resources for students across all demographics. This project helps overcome barriers to equitable access to counseling services that support healthy youth development during this challenging time. Proactively addressing mental health needs promotes accountability to families and aligns with evidence-based practices for developing the whole child. Increasing counselor staffing levels enhances transparency around the district's commitment to prioritizing student wellbeing. Ultimately, this initiative upholds GEPA's assurances by implementing reforms that equitably provide supplemental services tailored to students' non-academic needs exacerbated by COVID-19's impacts. Supporting mental health accessibility advances educational equity principles.

3.14 High Quality Instructional Materials (\$63,555.51)

Investing in evidence-based, high-quality curriculum materials directly supports addressing learning loss stemming from the pandemic in alignment with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA). By providing standards-aligned, coherent instructional resources across all learning environments, this initiative helps overcome barriers to academic achievement that may disproportionately impact certain student groups. The systematic review and adoption process promotes transparency around the district's data-driven efforts to implement proven strategies for raising student outcomes equitably. Securing high-quality materials enhances stakeholders' accountability by prioritizing evidence-based reforms. This project provides equitable access to rigorous, grade-level content regardless of a student's gender, race, national origin, disability status, or other demographics, as outlined in GEPA's assurances. Ultimately, securing a high-quality curriculum upholds the spirit of targeting resources to address pandemic-related learning loss and raise student achievement.

Total (\$1,496,982.79)