



# Leveraging American Rescue Plan Act Funds for Youth Outcomes



# Overview

U.S. Treasury's American Rescue Plan Act presents a historic opportunity to address gaps and disparities compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. Maximizing this opportunity is especially vital for our children and youth, a group that makes up 35.5% of the San Antonio region population<sup>1</sup> but has limited opportunities to advocate for essential policy and programs to meet their needs. These young people – who faced massive disruptions in education and out-of-school supports – were disproportionately impacted by the pandemic in ways that could adversely impact our region for generations.

There are \$1.6 billion of ARPA funds flowing into the region through direct allocations to the City, County, school districts and higher education institutions<sup>2</sup>. Our local leaders, across these sectors, must coordinate to make transformative shared investments in youth recovery post-pandemic, especially where previous disparities by race, ethnicity, income, and first language have been exacerbated.



This guide was developed by UP Partnership, in conjunction with PFM and Children's Funding Project, to aid local government partners in making transformative ARPA investments to support young people. The Center for Young Minds also provided excellent guidance. Our recommendations are organized by the three outcome areas below:

- **Safe and Stable:** Young people are fed, sheltered, and free from violence.
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing:** Emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing of young people and their support systems.
- **Connected:** Young people are leaders in their communities and connected to positive relationships.

Each of the recommendations notes key stakeholders, recommended timing, and estimated cost ranges where possible. In the Fall of 2021, we will also be issuing recommendations for three additional outcome areas: Academically Prepared, Successful in College, and Career-Focused.

This effort to align ARPA funds builds on past and ongoing efforts to coordinate key funders and stakeholders around shared youth outcomes. In 2020, UP Partnership released the “**Interwoven Futures**” report to support cross-sector strategic alignment in service of an equitable recovery from COVID-19 for children and youth. The report builds on the work of the associated fiscal alignment taskforce, which engaged more than 60 community stakeholders including youth representatives, government, philanthropy, and service providers. This past work is the basis for many of the recommendations outlined in this memo. These recommendations are also aligned to the ongoing cross-sector **Future Ready Planning** effort.

<sup>1</sup> Children and youth ages 0-24. Bexar County, TX, Annual County and Resident Population Estimates by Selected Age Groups and Sex: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2019, U.S. Census Bureau, Available online at: <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2010s-counties-detail.html>

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix A, Regional ARPA Funding Overview

# Investment Recommendations for Youth Outcomes

On May 10, 2021, the U.S. Treasury released the initial guidance for recipients of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds, via an [Interim Final Rule \(“IFR”\)](#). That guidance outlined eligible uses for the more than \$600 million in combined direct allocation for the City of San Antonio (\$326.9 million) and Bexar County (\$389.2 million). In addition to providing guidance on allocations, disbursement timing, eligible and ineligible uses, reporting requirements, and other important rules surrounding the funding, the IFR clearly outlines the eligibility of funding use to support youth.

The following recommendations are organized first by outcome area and then by timing and fiscal impact. Importantly, many of these recommendations impact or align to multiple outcome areas, not just the primary outcome named. Each recommendation should contribute to the equitable recovery of San Antonio and Bexar County by targeting inequities that have deepened during, or pre-date, the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Outcome Area: Safe and Stable

### Ignite a Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Effort (City / County)

Community members named the critical importance of building community capacity to improve safety outcomes. ARPA funds present an opportunity to launch a coordinated investment strategy that improves public safety outcomes, grows the capacity of residents and community-based organizations, and ultimately reinvests deep-end justice system dollars into front-end prevention and positive youth development opportunities.

The City should allocate funds to diversion and restorative justice best practices with a goal of preventing entry into the juvenile justice system, and keeping young people who have been arrested and/or detained from going deeper into the justice system. The County should co-invest in this effort with a focus on decreasing juvenile referrals to probation over time. This work should identify and expand access to community-based programs

that improve public safety outcomes through a youth development approach.

Cost estimates are based on evidence-based diversion and youth development programs as calculated by the Washington State Institute of Public Policy and adapted to reflect a pilot program size of 1,000 Bexar County youth. The combined cost of these programs is comparable to similar diversion and wraparound service programs instituted across the nation.

**Outcome Area(s):** Safe and Stable

**Fiscal Impact:** \$11.2 million annually (with near-term cost savings for Bexar County)

### Fund FTE to Collect Child Welfare Case Data from Bexar County Child Welfare Board (County)

An uptick in cases referred to Child Protective Services (CPS) threatens to overwhelm the County’s services and indicates alarming levels of family instability. Redirecting families to a network of community programs and resources that help them to meet their basic needs and obtain stability will allow CPS to more efficiently allocate resources to violent and complex cases. In order to achieve this, we recommend that the county fund one or more full-time employees (FTE) to collect data through Bexar County Child Welfare Board programs on child welfare cases that would primarily be resolved by meeting the basic needs of those involved, to quantify the types of unmet basic needs, to identify inequities and barriers for families whose first language is not English, and to identify city and county resources to meet these basic needs. In Year 2, this FTE should transition to coordinating connection between basic needs cases referred to CPS and programs/services that can meet those needs.

Cost estimates for this recommendation include the salary of one FTE, based on comparable existing positions within the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

**Outcome Area(s):** Safe and Stable

**Fiscal Impact:** \$55,000 annually

## Support the Expansion of Programs to Reduce Recidivism (County)

Funding should be set-aside to scale-up or sustain programs and resources that the FTE identifies as successfully preventing entry or recidivism into CPS by stabilizing families and helping meet their basic needs long-term.

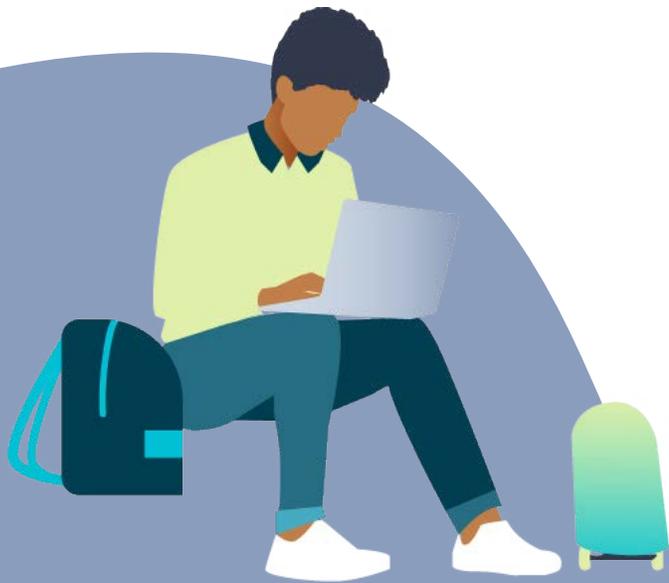
In its 2019-2020 adopted budget, Bexar County addressed CPS recidivism through a \$1,000,000 pilot version of this work. To match increased demand in FY2022 and beyond, we recommend a continuation of this pilot investment and an 18% increase, proportionate to the increase in calls for service relating to child abuse in the region between 2019 and 2020, as reported by the SAPD.

**Outcome Area(s):** Safe and Stable

**Fiscal Impact:** \$180,000 annually

## Mental Health and Wellbeing

Community members identified the need for a holistic approach to youth recovery and wellbeing that emphasizes positive development, prevention, and education, as well as improved coordination of youth connections to culturally competent mental and behavioral health providers. Community members, including youth leaders, have also underscored the importance of youth being heard and engaged in implementation of these recommendations.



## Fund Gaps in Integrated Student Supports (City / PreK12)

Directly fund the implementation of Integrated Student Supports in schools lacking those integrated services, which at the least should support designated school-based coordinators to assess, identify, integrate, and measure services and resources, and the scaling of existing supports in schools that have already effectively implemented a model. Integrated Student Supports rely “on five essential elements to support service delivery: community partnerships, student support coordination, integration into the school setting, needs assessments, and data tracking.”<sup>3</sup> These investments should prioritize multi-agency coordination and collaboration.

The cost for this recommendation assumes the cost of one student support FTE per school, in up to half of all registered public schools in Bexar County.

This cost is based on existing student support service coordinating positions in the San Antonio Independent School District. Metrics for measuring the impact of this investment should include non-academic measures such as growth in the number of quality, supportive relationships in a young person’s life.

**Outcome Area(s):** Mental Health and Wellbeing

**Fiscal Impact:** \$21.0 million annually

## Fund FTEs to Coordinate School Based Mental and Behavioral Health (City / County / PreK12)

Allocate city and county FTEs to the coordination of public mental and behavioral health resources (MH/BH services) with ISDs/schools in Qualified Census Tracts. These FTEs should be focused on supporting successful school implementation of integrated student supports and community schools strategies using ESSER dollars. These FTEs

<sup>3</sup> Moore, K. A., Lantos, H., Jones, R. M., Schindler, A., Belford, J., Sacks, V., & Harper, K. (2017, December 7). Making the Grade: A Progress Report and Next Steps for Integrated Student Supports. Child Trends. <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/making-grade-progress-report-next-steps-integrated-student-supports>.

may sit within city/county offices or could sit within ISDs/school buildings to provide on-site coordination of access to MH/BH resources.

This recommendation may be implemented through city/county hiring of FTEs or contracts with experienced community-based service coordinators, or by creation of a grant program for ISDs seeking community MH/BH service coordination in their schools. Knowledge of available services, how to access/finance those services for students, and capacity for this work are some of the largest barriers schools/school counselors cite to connecting youth to the MH/BH services needed.

Cost estimate includes the salaries of three FTEs, based on comparable existing positions within San Antonio city government.

**Outcome Area(s):** Mental Health and Wellbeing

**Fiscal Impact:** \$166,000 annually

### Connected

Community members indicated a need to grow youth access to positive developmental relationships that provide opportunities for belonging, security, employment, and community connection. Specifically, stakeholders named a critical gap in Social-Emotional Learning programs and supports, mentoring opportunities, arts and enrichment programming, and leadership and internship opportunities.

Approximately 80% of waking hours that children spend outside of school before age 18 is critical developmental time during which young people can be engaged, connected, supported, and enriched. In particular, the summer months present an incredible opportunity for enrichment programs that can provide a powerful variety of positive developmental pathways across the cradle to career continuum. Building on their existing investments in youth services, the City of San Antonio should take a leadership role to ensure all young people have access to high quality summer enrichment, no matter where they live or their household income level.



### Design and Issue RFP to Expand Summer Learning and Enrichment Access (City / County / PreK12)

Issue an RFP for Community Based Organizations and providers to provide programs and services for ambitious and coordinated summer enrichment in 2022, 2023, and 2024. Coordinate with ISDs to ensure that City RFPs fill gaps in summer opportunities that remain after the use of ESSER funds for academic recovery in the summers of 2022, 2023, and 2024, and that the programs and services selected support the year-round learning and development objectives of schools and other youth-serving institutions. The RFP should take into account costs associated with enrollment and staffing needs as programs scale.

The cost of providing programs and services for this three-year summer learning initiative was calculated for 15,000 new summer seats using an average annual cost per student of robust summer enrichment programming of \$1,375 (identified by the Wallace Foundation). Cost estimate includes the salary of one FTE, based on comparable existing positions within the San Antonio Department of Human Services, who would be responsible for developing and overseeing the RFP.

**Outcome Area(s):** Connected, Academically Prepared

**Fiscal Impact:** \$20.63 million annual investment and \$87,000 annual staffing.

# Overview of Investment Ideas

A comprehensive overview of each investment idea, their associated outcome area(s), fiscal impact and ARPA eligibility are outlined below.

Overview of Investment Recommendations					
Recommendation	Outcome Area(s)	Annual Fiscal Investment	ARPA Eligibility		
			Aid to Disproportionately Impacted Populations	Responding to Negative Economic Impacts	Revenue Replacement: Provision of Government Services
Ignite a Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Effort	Safe and Stable	\$11.2 million	✓		✓
Fund FTE to Collect Child Welfare Case Data from Bexar County Child Welfare Board	Safe and Stable	\$55,000	✓	✓ (Promoting Healthy Childhood Environments)	✓
Support the Expansion of Programs to Reduce Recidivism	Safe and Stable	\$180,000	✓	✓ (Addressing Educational Disparities)	✓
Fund Gaps in Integrated Student Supports	Mental Health and Wellbeing	\$21.0 million	✓	✓ (Addressing Educational Disparities & Promoting Healthy Childhood Environments)	✓
Fund FTEs to Coordinate School Based Mental and Behavioral Health	Mental Health and Wellbeing	\$166,000	✓	✓ (Addressing Educational Disparities & Promoting Healthy Childhood Environments)	✓
Design and Issue RFP to Expand Summer Learning and Enrichment Access	Connected, Academically Prepared	\$20.63 million and \$87,000 staffing	✓	✓ (Addressing Educational Disparities)	✓

## Regional ARPA Funding Overview from the Strive Together Partnership, conducted by Children's Funding Project

Coronavirus State And Local Fiscal Recovery Fund (Slrf) Allocations To Cities And Counties			
County/City Name	Allocation	Key Local Decisionmaker	SLRF Resources and Guidelines
San Antonio	\$326,919,408	San Antonio City Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>*State-specific:</b> Local Government Stimulus Information (Texas Comptroller)</li> <li>Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Guidance (Federal Dept. of Treasury)</li> <li>Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund Final Interim Rule (Federal Dept. of Treasury, 5/17/2021)</li> <li>Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund FAQs (National Association of Counties)</li> <li>Information on allocations to Non-entitlement Units of Government (NEUs) (Federal Dept. of Treasury)</li> <li>Compliance and Reporting Guide (Federal Dept. of Treasury, June 2021)</li> </ul>
Bexar County	\$389,166,877	Bexar Co. Commissioners Court	

ARPA Elementary And Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER III)			
School District Name	Allocation	20% Min. for Learning Recovery	ESSER Resources and Guidelines
Alamo Heights ISD	\$3,353,019	\$670,604	<p><b>Federal ESSER III Resources and Guidelines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FAQs for ESSER III (Federal Dept. of Education)</li> <li>ESSER III Interim Final Rule (Federal Dept. of Education, 4/22/2021)</li> <li>Federal Emergency Aid for Public Education: A Guide to Funding Amounts, Uses, and Requirements (National Education Association, March 2021)</li> <li>Description of ESSER III's Learning Recovery Reservation (Afterschool Alliance)</li> </ul> <p><b>State ESSER III Resources &amp; Guidance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Texas's ESSER III Preliminary State Plan</a> <b>The preliminary state plan recommends the following priority learning recovery strategies:</b> 1) High dosage tutoring for all learners. 2) High quality instructional material for all learners. 3) Job-embedded professional learning to support teachers and coaches working with students with special needs. 4) Extended school day and year. 5) Support for additional academic and non-academic time available for all students during the summer.</li> <li><a href="#">Recent ESSER III Grant Program guidance for LEAs</a> (Texas Education Agency)</li> <li><a href="#">Link to Assurances Application for LEAs</a> (Texas Education Agency)</li> </ul>
East Central ISD	\$19,000,441	\$3,800,088	
Edgewood ISD	\$32,412,517	\$6,482,503	
Fort Sam Houston ISD	\$1,117,673	\$223,535	
Harlandale ISD	\$45,824,593	\$9,164,919	
Judson ISD	\$55,883,650	\$11,176,730	
Lackland ISD	\$1,117,673	\$223,535	
North East ISD	\$150,885,854	\$30,177,171	
Northside ISD	\$104,502,425	\$20,900,485	
Randolph Field ISD	\$201,016	\$40,203	
San Antonio ISD	\$271,594,537	\$54,318,907	
Somerset ISD	\$11,176,730	\$2,235,346	
South San Antonio ISD	\$38,000,882	\$7,600,176	
Southside ISD	\$17,882,768	\$3,576,554	
Southwest ISD	\$39,118,555	\$7,823,711	

Note on School District Data: The primary source for TX ESSER III allocations used in the first phase of the project is from [www.HelpKidsRecover.Org](http://www.HelpKidsRecover.Org). These totals will be updated as the state releases its final ESSER III allocations to LEAS.

## ARPA Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF III)

Institution Name*	Institutional Aid Allocation**	Student Aid Allocation***	HEERF Resources and Guidelines
Northwest Vista College	\$13,179,339	\$13,781,925	<p><b>Federal HEERF Resources &amp; Guidance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds Comparison Chart (NASFAA, May 2021)</li> <li>HEERF III FAQs (U.S. Department of Education, May 2021)</li> </ul> <p><b>Guidance for Historically Black Colleges and Universities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidance on HEERF III Funds reserved for HBCUs St. Philip's college</li> </ul>
Our Lady of the Lake University	\$3,037,271	\$3,057,245	
Palo Alto College	\$7,281,647	\$7,943,670	
San Antonio College	\$15,555,927	\$16,587,133	
St. Mary's University	\$4,135,883	\$4,137,949	
St. Philip's College	\$7,421,234	\$8,016,027	
Texas A&M University - San Antonio	\$8,886,628	\$9,175,170	
The University of Texas at San Antonio	\$43,094,802	\$43,484,932	
Trinity University	\$2,132,656	\$2,132,657	
University of the Incarnate Word	\$7,451,151	\$7,843,183	
Northeast Vista College (Northeast Lakeview College)	\$3,812,030	\$3,967,442	
Somerset ISD	\$11,176,730	\$2,235,346	
South San Antonio ISD	\$38,000,882	\$7,600,176	
Southside ISD	\$17,882,768	\$3,576,554	
Southwest ISD	\$39,118,555	\$7,823,711	

\* Note: this resource does not include private or for-profit colleges or universities as they were not eligible to receive HEERF \$ funds from sec. 2003(o) of ARPA

\*\*The portion of an institution's allocated HEERF III funds that can be used to defray expenses incurred because of COVID-19

\*\*\*The portion of an institution's allocated HEERF III funds that must be used to make emergency grants to students



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[uppartnership.org](http://uppartnership.org)