Puerto Rico State Plan for the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund

U.S. Department of Education

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Introduction

The American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief ("ARP ESSER") Fund, authorized under the American Rescue Plan ("ARP") Act of 2021, provides nearly $122 billion to States to support the Nation's schools in safely reopening and sustaining safe operations of schools while meeting the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students resulting from the coronavirus disease 2019 ("COVID-19") pandemic. It is particularly important that ARP ESSER funding will enable States and local educational agencies ("LEAs"), and more directly schools, to support students who have been most severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and are likely to have suffered the most because of longstanding inequities in our communities and schools that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The U.S. Department of Education ("Department") is committed to working in partnership with States so that these unprecedented resources are quickly put to work to ensure students have sustained access to in-person instruction and that the resources are used to provide the effective support students need as they persist through and recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The thoughtful and timely use of these funds will have a lasting impact on our Nation's schools and help to address the inequities in resources, services, and opportunities available to our students.

This template presents an opportunity for States to share their plans for the use of ARP ESSER funds with the public. The Department must approve a State educational agency's ("SEA's") plan in order to make the State's remaining ARP ESSER allocation available for use. Please note that the Department intends to issue ARP ESSER reporting requirements separately.

Instructions

Each SEA must provide descriptions and other information that address each requirement listed below. An SEA may use this template or another format as long as every item and element is addressed in the SEA's response. Throughout this document, questions that refer to an SEA's ARP ESSER funding are referencing the total allocation to be received by the SEA, including that which it allocates to its LEAs.

Each SEA must submit to the Department by **June 7, 2021,** either: (1) its ARP ESSER plan or (2) the State requirements that preclude submission of the plan by that date and a date by which it will be able to submit its complete ARP ESSER plan.

To submit the SEA's plan, please email the plan to your Program Officer at [State].OESE@ed.gov (e.g., Alabama.OESE@ed.gov).

In order to ensure transparency, the Department will post each plan on the Department's website when it is received and will indicate each plan's approval status.

This template also allows States to fulfill the requirement of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations ("CRRSA") Act ESSER II 6-month reporting requirement in section 313(f) of the CRRSA Act.

Cover Page

Grantee and Contact Information

ARP ESSER PR Award Number (e.g., S425U2100XX):

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By signing this document, I agree to each of the assurances listed in Appendix C and further assure that: To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information and data included in this plan are true and correct.	
Chief State School Officer or Authorized Representative (Printed Name) Eliezer Ramos Parés, Esq.	
Signature of Authorized SEA Representative (b) (6)	Date: 9/15/2021

Table of Contents

Public Education in Puerto Rico 6

A. Describing the State's Current Status and Needs 8

1. Progress and Promising Practices 8
2. Overall Priorities 11
3. Identifying Needs of Underserved Students 14
4. Understanding the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic 21
5. School Operating Status 24

B. Safely Reopening Schools and Sustaining their Safe Operations 27

1. Support for LEAs 27
2. Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plans 38

C. Planning for the Use and Coordination of ARP ESSER Funds 40

1. SEA Consultation 40
2. Coordinating Funds 46

D. Maximizing State-Level Funds to Support Students 60

1. Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time 60
2. Evidence-Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Programs 70
3. Evidence-Based Comprehensive Afterschool Programs 72
4. Emergency Needs 75

E. Supporting LEAs in Planning for and Meeting Students' Needs 76

1. LEA Plans for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds 76
2. LEA Consultation 81
3. Describe how the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs 84
4. Describe the extent to which the SEA will support its LEAs in implementing additional strategies for taking educational equity into account 85

F. Supporting the Educator Workforce 87

1. Supporting and Stabilizing the Educator Workforce 87
2. Staffing to Support Student Needs 92

G. Monitoring and Measuring Progress 94

1. Capacity for Data Collection and Reporting 94
2. Monitoring and Internal Controls 95

Appendix A: School Operating Status and Instructional Mode Data Template 97

Appendix B: Reporting Language Included in the Grant Award Notification ("GAN") 99

Appendix C: Assurances 100
Appendix D: GEPA 102
Appendix E: Stakeholders Input 106
Appendix F: PRDE's Academic recovery plan 130

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Public Education in Puerto Rico

The Department of Education of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico ("PRDE") or ("the Department") was organized under Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico ("the Commonwealth").

On July 15, 1999, the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico enacted Law Number 149, *"Ley Orgánica del Departamento de Educación Pública de Puerto Rico",* as amended by Law Number 85-2018 [1] *"Ley de Reforma Educativa de Puerto Rico del 29 de marzo de 2018"*. This law established Puerto Rico's public policy in the education field and created a public education system focused mainly on the students. In addition, it established free selection school and educational voucher program, among others.

PRDE is the responsible entity for the planning and administration of all public elementary, secondary and some post-secondary education throughout Puerto Rico. The Secretary of Education is appointed by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

The Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) is a unitary system serving as both the state educational agency (SEA) and a local education agency (LEA). The PRDE oversees one island-wide education system. From the SEA perspective, PRDE's Central Level develops policies and guidelines, provides materials and technical assistance, engages in oversight and monitoring and provides leadership to all schools and the seven (7) Regional Education Offices (OREs, per its acronym in Spanish). From the LEA perspective, PRDE provides direct services to schools and ensures the implementation of SEA level policies.

PRDE's has 860 (K-12) public schools, including 4 public charter schools, that serve 271,685 students. PRDE also provides higher education, vocational, career technical courses, and alternative adult programs. PRDE's organization is composed of one central administrative office and seven educational regions, each of which are led by a Regional Superintendent.

The Commonwealth is currently facing a severe fiscal, economic and liquidity crisis, due to multiple factors, including, significant governmental deficits, a 15-year long recession, high unemployment rates, population declination, and high levels of debt and pension obligations. These challenges have depleted the Commonwealth's tax base such that its revenues no longer cover essential funding for other essential services such as PRDE.

The Legislature approved, by joint resolution, the allocation of $2,342,589,000, charged to the General Fund of the State Treasury, for ordinary operating expenses of the PRDE for fiscal year 2021-2022. This allocation resulted in a decrease of $152.4 million or 6% when compared to the general budget approved in FY 2020-2021.

COVID-19 related Federal Education Stabilization Funds, provide critically needed fiscal resources to support the safe reopening of schools, the maintenance of on-going educational programs, and the provision of evidence-based learning loss initiatives. Without this federal

[1] https://www.de.pr.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/ley-85-2018-enmendada.pdf

assistance, and the deep and disruptive cuts to education program, these funding have been necessary, due to the weakened ability of the Commonwealth to appropriately fund PRDE's ability to maintain state support during the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and associated economic slowdown.

The American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) Fund, authorized under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, will provide nearly $2.9 billion to Puerto Rico to ensure a significant return of students in the modality of in-person instruction and maintain safe operations while meeting the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students resulting from the Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. Moreover, these funds will help to address long-standing inequities in our communities and schools that were exacerbated by the pandemic so that we can ensure that the students most severely affected by the pandemic are provided with the opportunities, resources and support they need as they recover from its impacts.

This document is intended to share PRDE's overall plan for the use of ARP ESSER funds with the public and the United States Department of Education (USDOE). PRDE considers this application to be a living document as needs and priorities may develop over the lifespan of the American Rescue Plan.

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A. Describing the State's Current Status and Needs

The Department recognizes the extraordinary efforts made by States, LEAs, and educators to support students during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this section, SEAs will describe the progress they have made, the priorities and student needs guiding their ARP ESSER funding decisions, and their current and projected operating status.

1. Progress and Promising Practices: Provide your assessment of the top 2-3 strategies that have been most effective in supporting the needs of students in your State during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for students most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please include, if applicable, how your State will submit and encourage its LEAs to submit lessons learned and best practices to the Department's *Safer Schools and Campuses Best Practices Clearinghouse* so that they can be shared with other States and LEAs.

   The Government of Puerto Rico coordinated with the Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) and other island-wide agencies, efforts to provide the necessary support to students that were most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Below, are included the top strategies that resulted the most effective in supporting student's needs.

   Provided Affordable and Accessible Internet Services. Low-income households in Puerto Rico counted on federal aid that granted discounts on internet service during the pandemic starting on May 12, 2021.

   Through the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program, eligible families were granted monthly discounts on internet service, ranging from $50 to $75 and up to $100 in a singular discount for the purchase of electronic equipment. Through this program, families were granted better resources for access to education. Eligible households and consumers were able to subscribe to the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program and receive a discount or monthly subsidy on the cost of internet service as provided by more than eight participating internet providers.

   Devices for students and teachers, and Professional Development. On July 2020, a total of 159,330 computers were distributed, including 18,000 tablets, 132,330 laptops and mobile carts.

   From the month of May 2020 through August 2021, PRDE offered Professional Development for software program usage, digital lesson plan design, and integration of technology, among other topics.

   Devices allowed for the implementation of redesigned learning strategies to provide a rich and innovative learning experiences with technology for students. The acquisition of electronic books, tablets and other technological devices helped teachers anticipate their support to the needs of each student and allowed teachers to structure learning plans at a faster pace according to their needs.

Vaccination Campaign for Educators, School Staff and Students. PRDE worked with school regions as well as with the Puerto Rico Health Department (PRHD) to create a comprehensive vaccination plan for education-related personnel in our schools that included central level administrative employees, contractors, and students of twelve years or more. This plan was managed and administered by the PRHD. A massive campaign was developed and disseminated on TV, social media, malls, and employment fairs throughout the island.

Flexibility for School Nutrition Programs. Another strategy was ensuring students had daily access to breakfast and lunch, regardless of the learning environment. For the health and well-being of students, adaptation of meal services remained a priority.

PRDE leveraged the flexibilities provided by the USDA for School Nutrition Programs in order to allow schools to provide meals for students. Many schools started out on the National School Lunch Program at the beginning of the school year, before switching to the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) as allowed by USDA due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This flexibility allowed schools to provide more opportunities for students living in poverty, easing the access to meals and reduce hunger anxiety.

After a rigorous analysis of the situation and the available alternatives, the School Food Authority (AEA), using the waivers granted by the USDA, modified the way of offering the food services from a congregated to a non-congregated manner.

In other words, to maintain the recommended social distancing, the food services that the AEA has offered during this emergency were in the "Grab and Go" or "Pack and Go" modality. In this modality, food was offered to participants in disposable utensils, in front of the school gate, or in a place identified by the school director.

From May 2020 to July 2021, food services were offered to all children between the ages of 1-18 years, whom visited the PRDE schools to collect them. The AEA offered more than 18 million food services to children, as summarized below:

DATE (month and year)	FOOD SERVICING	
	Breakfast[2]	Lunch
May 2020	0	995,527
June 2020	0	1,503,259

[2] Breakfasts began to be offered in schools in March 2021, date where face-to-face education was authorized by the Government of Puerto Rico.

July 2020	0	549,807
August 2020	0	81,217
September 2020	0	142,661
October 2020	0	1,273,498
November 2020	0	742,438
December 2020	0	828,987
January 2021	0	782,974
February 2021	0	1,180,170
March 2021	1,241,808	1,373,532
April 2021	1,221,948	1,295,586
May 2021	1,016,571	1,103,091
June 2021	928,292	1,097,746
July 2021	274,788	409,716
Totals	**4,683,407**	**13,360,209**

On the 15th of January 2021, the Federal Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved the plan submitted by Puerto Rico for the Pandemic-EBT (PEBT) program. Through the Pandemic EBT program the USDA provided electronic food benefits to students currently valued at $724.4 million.

On March 4, 2021, the Puerto Rico Family Department (PRFD) began distributing P-EBT federally funded benefits to the families of nearly 339,145 children, from the public and private schools, who attended school remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic and who otherwise would have had access to free-and-reduced-price meals, in school, during the 2020–21 school year. P-EBT helps families cover the cost of lunches their children would have been eligible to receive for free or at reduced price through the National School Lunch Program.

2. Overall Priorities: Provide your assessment of the top 2-3 issues currently facing students and schools across your State as a result of or in response to the COVID-19 pandemic including, to the extent possible, data illustrating why these are the most critical and/or most widespread issues facing schools and students.

   The pandemic ushered in a set of challenging learning conditions across the island. These circumstances created unique needs for educators and students, while exacerbating existing inequalities. The following issues listed below surfaced as the priorities:

   Addressing unfinished learning through asset-based acceleration strategies. The loss of in-person instruction made it difficult for some students to make expected academic gains. In many cases, teachers were unable to maintain traditional pacing guide schedules, resulting in students lacking exposure to essential concepts that serve as building blocks in subsequent academic years.

   In order to increase student engagement and accelerate learning in response to the pandemic, students need access to high-quality, culturally sustaining and revitalizing instruction.

   Distance learning has created conditions where many students from historically underserved communities are falling further behind because schools lack the resources to adequately engage with families. The inconsistent access to high-quality instruction will continue through 2021-22 as some families will continue with the distance learning option and some others with the hybrid learning option.

   During distance learning last year and according to the available data, 52% of the students were disengaged during the months of February thru May. During that period, 39% of the students enrolled at the end of the year never connected to MS Teams sessions, while 13% connected less than 25% of the enrolled time.

   The Educational Regions have struggled with online attendance, inconsistent work submissions, and inconsistent engagement. While schools have been working diligently to keep students engaged through various means, such as by providing targeted PD to teachers on strategies to engage students through on-line teaching, the concern is that the students have not received the quality of education they would in a normal year due to COVID-19 related absences, lack of engagement, etc. Efforts to reach those most at-risk have already been under way during the 2020-21 academic year and continued through the Educational Summer program.

   PRDE identified a total of 24,000 students with the highest risk factors to fail. Through the Regional Education Offices, PRDE was able to contact approximately 21,000 of those students and provided academic assistance through the Educational Summer Program. The decrease in enrollment between August 2020 and 2021, along with those students who were disengaged during distance learning are missing valuable learning, which could exacerbate learning loss.

This priority includes investing in strategies and supports that strengthen instructional practices and lead to positive post-secondary outcomes. This entails an investment in programs that provide relevant learning experiences for students that build off from their strengths, identities, and interests.

In general, PRDE had an enrollment decrease of around 16,000 (5.5%). For the Primary level, preschool grades (PK and K) contributed to19% of the decrease in enrollment with just over 3,000 students, while grades 1st through 8th accounted for 58% with an approximate loss of 9,400 students, being 2nd grade the one with a higher contribution at an 11%. At the Secondary Level, the net drop in enrollment was 16%, as 10th grade enrollment increased by 5%. At this level, the grade with the highest impact was 9th grade, representing a 12.5% loss of the total enrollment, or approximately 2,000 students. Full-time Special Education Classroom students decreased by a net factor of nearly 6%, as Secondary Level students in this population increased by 3%.

Due to widespread school closures related to the novel Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), USDE waived the statewide assessment[3] for the 2020 and 2021 school years.

Collected data demonstrates the impact of the pandemic on students and schools, including an approximate decrease of 600 students in Technological Institutes; 117 schools offering 66 specialized CTE courses were paused and modified during the 2020-2021 school year, as a result of lack of in-person instruction. All required course workshop hours could not be provided, due to the pandemic, and instead, PRDE had to modify courses by requesting students to complete their learning sessions through the Work Based Learning (WBL) strategy. At the end of the academic year, students submitted a portfolio as evidence that WBL was properly performed.

Supporting the academic, social emotional, and health needs of students and educators. Achievement gaps in Puerto Rico have decreased persistently for approximately 5 years[4]. School building closures, extended quarantines, and disrupted learning environments are expected to widen those gaps. While this is not a new challenge, the pandemic has served to highlight existing gaps in student achievement and opportunities. PRDE will provide statewide interim assessments by subject, in order to establish baseline data of student achievement. These interim assessments at 10-week intervals are imperative for PRDE to focus its funding on an academic strategy for both elementary and middle grades.

[3] PR Covid19 Waiver approved and PR Covid19 Waiver approved 2021 year

[4] PRDE measures student academic achievement through a standardized test "Measurement and Evaluation for the Academic Transformation of Puerto Rico", hereinafter known as META-PR. This test is aligned to agency-approved content standards and grade expectations and measures content proficiency in the subjects of Spanish, math, English as a second language, and science. All 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, and 11th grade students participate, except science, which is administered only in 4th, 8th, and 11th grade. Data regarding achievement gap is available at. PERFIL ESCOLAR 2019-2020 (dde.pr)

In addition to supporting the academic component, PRDE recognizes that many students are facing a multitude of traumatic stressors resulting from the pandemic, such as the illness or loss of friends or family. PRDE was able to identify that more than 500[5] students had lost a family member during 2020-2021, due to the illness of COVID-19.

According to increased numbers[6] of child abuse, neglect reports, food and income insecurities have been identified as additional traumatic stressors for students. Their basic needs – including food, rest, emotional safety and sense of belonging – must be met before effective learning can occur. This hierarchy of needs applies equally to adults in the school setting. Social and emotional learning (SEL) and mental health are best addressed with a collaborative approach of building relationships with students and caring for the well-being of everyone in the school community during summer programming and the traditional school year. SEL helps support student mental health needs by fostering a sense of safety and security, building positive relationships with others and providing equitable support to learning. The combined impact is a strengthened school community.

Unfortunately, students and families are facing higher incidences of crises during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the most recent needs assessment performed by the PRDE's Social Worker Program (PTSE, per its acronym in Spanish), approximately 68,000 students have been identified to be in need of support by the school's social worker in the 2021-2022 academic year, either due to an emotional, mental or behavioral situation.

The impact of COVID-19 has the potential to exacerbate these numbers. The longer students are quarantined and isolated, there is a higher risk of exposure to more traumatizing, negative experiences such as abuse, neglect, and violence. It is imperative that PRDE take a proactive approach to address the mental health and well-being of students and staff.

Staffing shortages and a lack of capacity in school and regions. These shortages include teachers and professional support staff, specialized staff, school mental health professionals, substitute teachers, paraprofessionals, school nurses, and other school administrators and leaders.

Over the course of the years, the PRDE has taken proactive steps to address educator recruitment and retention challenges; however, the pandemic has exacerbated some of the challenges in this area. Therefore, understanding the pandemic's true impact on the education workforce will be paramount.

[5] Data was collected during a recent statistics report generated by the PRDE's School Social Worker Program.
[6] PRDE's School Social Worker Program - 2021 social well-being needs assessment

3. Identifying Needs of Underserved Students: Describe your State's 2-3 highest priority academic, social, emotional, and/or mental health needs for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year (if applicable) and for the 2021-2022 school year related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on each of the following student groups:
    i. Students from low-income families,
    i. Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity),
    ii. Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender),
    iii. English learners,
    iv. Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act ("IDEA")),
    v. Students experiencing homelessness,
    vi. Children and youth in foster care,
    vii. Migratory students, and
    viii. Other groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic that have been identified by the SEA (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, and LGBTQ+ students).

    To the extent possible, this description should include data on indicators such as estimates of the academic impact of lost instructional time,[7] chronic absenteeism, student engagement, and social-emotional well-being.

    Complete the table below, adding rows as necessary, or provide a narrative description.

    As of the writing of the Puerto Rico State Plan, there is limited state-level data available. Therefore, as quantitative data becomes available (e.g., state assessment results, WIDA, interim assessments, certified 2021 student enrollment data (due on September 2021), among other), PRDE has used information gathered from surveys, needs assessments performed by regional offices and the limited state-level data that PRDE has available at this moment.

    PRDE conducted five (5) surveys and a focus group round table discussion to gather stakeholder perspective regarding the highest priorities in order to target strategies to support all students, especially those most impacted by the pandemic.

    As evidenced by the data collected from the surveys and focus groups, there is consensus concerning the supports needed the most by all groups and subgroups. Because, as it is known, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all students, and

[7] For the purposes of the plan, "academic impact of lost instructional time" refers to "learning loss" experienced by students as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, as referenced in the ARP Act and the CRRSA Act.

some trends have been identified on all subgroups, PRDE is including below a general description of these challenges.

Lost instructional time. During the pandemic, many students did not have immediate access to internet services in order to connect to their remote learning. Students in foster homes, were not able to connect to their online learning for almost four (4) months, due to lack of accessibility of laptops and to internet connectivity. It was not until July 2020, that PRDE initiated the distribution of computers, that included 18,000 tablets and 132,330 laptops.

An additional 117 schools offering 66 specialized CTE courses were paused during the 2020-2021 school year. As a result of the lack of in-person instruction, required workshop or lab hours could not be fulfilled. PRDE modified courses by requiring students to complete their learning sessions through the Work Based Learning (WBL) strategy. At the end of the academic year, students submitted a portfolio as evidence that WBL was dully performed.

Students within the Juvenile and Correctional facilities, participated of educational modules. Teacher collected the completed modules and proceeded on doing corrections and assigning grades. During the 2020-2021 school year, and in compliance with the Public Policy for the Regular Education Program and Adult Program, educational services were offered virtually. The PRDE Alternate Education Program highlighted that, both students and teachers, experienced a process of adaptation during this period of time. Initially, students showed resistance. At certain times the internet system failed, therefore, teachers had to distribute instructional material in paper.

This led to a one-size-fits-all approach, which does not effectively support our schools, students, or educators. PRDE must uniquely respond to schools and classroom needs. Each and every child has unique unfinished learning and has experienced different learning models throughout the pandemic. Each and every educator needs specific and targeted professional learning to support their content areas and academic disciplines, as well as training to support accelerated learning and instruction.

Chronic Absenteeism. Even before the pandemic, Puerto Rico's vulnerable students were more likely to be chronically absent, a key risk factor in shaping students' opportunity to learn. For 2020-2021, "All Students" absenteeism rate was up for 3%, when compared to previous year; being the absenteeism rate in a 10% average for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Student engagement. In general, PRDE had an enrollment decrease of around 16,000 (5.5%). However, it is important to highlight that PRDE's 2021-2022 enrollment data is not yet certified, until the process is fulfilled in September 2021. This decrease in enrollment is yet to be updated once the certification is completed by the PRDE.

For the Primary level, preschool grades (PK and K) contributed 19% of the decrease in enrollment with just over 3,000 students, while grades 1st through 8th accounted for 58% with an approximate loss of 9,400 students, being 2nd grade the one of higher contribution with an 11%. At the Secondary Level, the net drop in enrollment was 16%, as 10th grade enrollment increased by 5%. At this level, the grade with the highest impact was 9th grade, representing a 12.5% loss of the total enrollment, or about 2,000 students. Full-time Special Education Classroom students decreased by a net factor of nearly 6%, as Secondary level students in this population increased by 3%.

STUDENT ENROLLMENT 2021-2022*	
SUBGROUP	TOTAL STUDENTS
All Students	260,354
Gender - Feminine	128,019
Gender - Masculine	132,335
Native Indian or Alaskan Native	112
Asian or Pacific Islander	38
Black or African American, not Hispanic	68
Hispanic or Latino	259,411
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	15
White (not Hispanic)	710
Students from low-income families	197,330
Children with Disabilities	79,109
Section 504	800
Spanish Learners (SL)**	393
Students experiencing homelessness	6
Military Children	85
Students in Correctional and Juvenile Institutions	1,574
Children and youth in foster care	54

** Data was gathered from the active enrollment information as of August 24, 2021. This information is not considered the certified enrollment data of PRDE, for the enrollment certification for the 2021-2022 academic year is scheduled for September 2021.*

*** In Puerto Rico, Spanish is the language of instruction, as well as the predominant language used in commerce and social interaction. Spanish Learners (SL) in Puerto Rico is the group of students that is not fluent or is limited in the Spanish language in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and parallels the English language learner (ELL) group in mainland states.*

Social-emotional well-being. In addition to mental health, there is concern among stakeholders that students in underserved groups have exhibited a lack of student engagement and could be significantly impacted by lost instructional time. Disengagement is expected to be high among this group, including among students learning in-person.

According to the most recent needs assessment performed by the PRDE's Social Worker Program (PTSE, per its acronym in Spanish), approximately 68,000 students have been identified as being in need of support by the school's social worker in the 2021-2022 academic year. The following behavioral, emotional or health issues were the ones identified in the need's assessment report:

- 11,043 students manifested emotional, mental or behavioral situations.
- 2,168 students experienced inadequate interpersonal relations with school personnel or other students.
- 7,068 students experienced a family or personal issue at home, either due to divorce, domestic violence, use or abuse of substances, among other.
- 733 students manifested inadequate sexual behavior.
- 2,275 students experienced a type of child abuse.
- 3,005 students experienced some type of health issue, and
- 71,119 students manifested an indicator of dropping out of school.

An increase in behavioral issues was expected, including additional increases in aggression and risky behavior among identified students upon return to in-person instruction.

Below, PRDE has included the table describing by each of the subgroups, the highest priorities in academic, social, emotional, and/or mental health needs that were identified during the 2020-2021 school year and continues to be present during the 2021-2022 school year.

Table A1.

STUDENT GROUP	HIGHEST PRIORITY NEEDS[8]
Students from low-income families	• *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Attendance and engagement* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress* • *Food security*
Students from each racial or ethnic background used by the State for reporting purposes – please add a row for each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race/ethnicity)	***Puerto Rican students*** • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Attendance and engagement* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress*

[8] Priorities identified in the right-hand column of this table reflect analysis of stakeholder input and other data and research. These include statewide administrative data, responses gathered through ARP ESSER questionnaires and through focus groups.

STUDENT GROUP	HIGHEST PRIORITY NEEDS[8]
	Hispanic students (other than Puerto Rican) • *Provisions for bullying* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Attendance and engagement* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress* ***White non-Hispanic students*** • *Provisions for bullying* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Attendance and engagement* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress* ***Other origin*** • *Provisions for bullying* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Attendance and engagement* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress*
Students by gender – please add a row for each gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender)	*PRDE has not yet observed significant disparities in attendance and achievement by gender, but will revisit this with regards to summative state assessment results. For topics related to School Climate, PRDE will carry out a survey to acknowledge the specific needs of this subgroup.*
English learners[9]	• *Loss of Spanish language learning and proficiency* • *Equitable access to core content. SLs require higher levels of support to engage in academically rigorous instruction.* • *Language development opportunities will lag due to parameters in place for*

[9] In Puerto Rico, Spanish is the language of instruction, as well as the predominant language used in commerce and social interaction. Spanish Learners (SL) students is the group of students in Puerto Rico that is not fluent or is limited in the Spanish language in reading, writing, speaking and listening and parallels the English language learner (ELL) group in mainland states.

STUDENT GROUP	HIGHEST PRIORITY NEEDS[8]
	COVID-19 mitigation, such as mask wearing and be able to hear clearly. • *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Attendance and engagement* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress*
Children with disabilities	• *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Lack of knowledge of how to operate the technology.* • *Attendance and engagement* • *Transition support, as students return to in-person instruction* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress*
Students experiencing homelessness	• *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Increased lack of identification due to remote learning* • *Lack of school engagement leading to poor academic progress* • *Increased need for mental health services* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Support with classroom materials and resources* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress*
Children and youth in foster care	• *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Interruption of academic services* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Support with classroom materials and resources* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress*
Migratory students	PRDE does not have any migratory students
Other groups of students identified by the State (e.g., youth involved in the criminal justice system, students who	***Students enrolled in a career and technical education (CTE) program*** • *Social and emotional wellness*

STUDENT GROUP	HIGHEST PRIORITY NEEDS[8]
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)	• *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Interruption of academic services* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress* ***Adult students*** • *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Interruption of academic services* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress* ***Youth involved in the criminal justice system*** • *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Interruption of academic services* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Periodic assessments to measure the impact of learning loss* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress* ***Students with F grades during 2020-2021*** • *Social and emotional wellness* • *Lack of connectivity in remote learning* • *Interruption of academic services* • *Academic remediation and acceleration* • *Assessment to measure the impact of learning loss and monitoring of student progress*

4. Understanding the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Describe how the SEA will support its LEAs in identifying the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning and student well-being, including identifying the groups of students most impacted by the pandemic. Where possible, please identify the data sources the SEA will suggest its LEAs use in thoughtfully diagnosing areas of need, including data on the academic, social, emotional, and mental health impacts of lost instructional time.

   PRDE is supporting school educational regions and schools in identifying the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning and student well-being.

   PRDE disaggregates the above-referenced data (sections A.2 and A.3) by educational school region and schools and shares this data with our educational school regions to help them understand the impact of the pandemic on their communities and students.

   PRDE will support its educational school regions by providing and encouraging multiple avenues for data analysis. It will encourage its school educational regions to analyze different types of data such as attendance, discipline, grades, formative and summative assessment results, among others, to identify groups who might have suffered the most during the pandemic.

   PRDE is investing in supporting the use of and access to high-quality interim assessments to support schools' efforts to continue close monitoring of student progress and targeted interventions. PRDE is also making available a variety of professional learning sessions and supports for both school leaders and educators on assessing and accelerating student learning.

   Student well-being. To help schools identify and respond to the impact of the pandemic on student well-being, PRDE will support schools by performing initial screenings, identifying students at-risk for mental health concerns, and addressing students' mental and behavioral health needs.

   An interdisciplinary socio-emotional team will assist teachers through this process. The socioemotional assessments will not only allow for collection of useful information for teachers, but also serves to strengthen relations between students and teachers, which often occur in the context of face-to-face education and that are necessary for the development of socio-emotional skills of our students.

   In addition to the socioemotional assessments, qualitative data such as counselor visits, social workers input and teacher relations will be analyzed to help determine the highest areas of needs among students, including student mental health and behavior.

PRDE will also support school educational regions in identifying the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning in a number of ways.

Due to widespread school closures related to the novel Coronavirus disease (COVID-19), USDE waived the statewide assessment for the 2020 and 2021 school years. As part of our approved assessment waivers requested for statewide assessments, PRDE required all K-12 schools to report information about non-summative assessments administered in tested grades at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

PRDE has also developed and made available a variety of tools and resources to support schools in building multitiered systems of support, strong policies and procedures for handling aspects of loss of instruction.

PRDE will use the information collected to target island-provided supports, technical assistance and oversight through annual monitoring and oversight activities.

To assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students with disabilities, PRDE has developed guidelines and protocols to assist in identifying any skill loss, lack of adequate progress, learning loss, or the emergence of new needs that students may have experienced.

Later, during the 2021-2022 school year, PRDE will also examine how learning in remote, hybrid, and in-person environments affected outcomes including, but not limited to:

- Student academic achievement and growth on available assessment data;
- Academic growth;
- Attendance;
- Spanish Language Proficiency gains

Data Collection and Analysis. PRDE will also continue to expand its collection and communication of available student data. PRDE's data collection and reporting system will be leveraged to provide parents/guardians, school and educational school regions leaders, and the public with available data on how students are achieving and progressing. This data system is not limited to test result data and includes detailed information on student enrollment, attendance, course completion, and graduation as well as school climate.

Collection of these data elements will directly support PRDE's efforts to better understand the pandemic's impact on school communities and identify appropriate actions to meet the academic, social emotional, and physical health and safety needs of students.

Guidance for prevention on COVID-19 in schools. Faced with the public health emergency due to the 2019 coronavirus disease pandemic (COVID-19), the PRDE

has established prevention guidance to provide schools the necessary strategies for the safe operation of schools during the pandemic. The guidance is based on the guidelines of the Centers for the Control and Prevention of Diseases (CDC) and the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), among others. The prevention strategies presented in the guide aim to achieve a safe operation of schools under strict health prevention and mitigation measures to reduce the risk of virus transmission SARS-CoV-2 on school sites while serving the educational needs of students, children and youth, including those receiving services from the Special Education Program.

Accelerated Learning through a SMARTS Integrated System of Support. To achieve the accelerated learning, PRDE will implement the **SMARTS** (**S**tudents, **M**easurable, **A**ccelerated, **R**elevant, **T**eachers, and **S**ocioemotional and health) **Integrated System of Support**.

The **SMARTS Integrated System of Support** will be used as a structure of continuous planning and responding to address student and teacher's needs. The cycle will also support the most impacted groups of students with an individual academic improvement plan, if necessary.

Through this strategy PRDE will provide a systematic process and technical support for school communities to make key decisions and establish a mindset that will lead to strategic vision, needs assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring, and adjusting, with each element integrated systemically.

Key components within the associated **SMARTS Integrated System of Support** will include operational and system conditions, social and emotional wellness, academics, and scaffolded supports.

Local Assessments. To assist education school regions and schools in gaining early and important insights into the impact of COVID-19 on student learning, PRDE provided a statewide interim assessment in order to have a baseline data on student achievement. Every 10 weeks, PRDE will be able to identify, in which subject, the student's performance is most affected. These interim assessments are imperative for PRDE to focus its funding on an academic strategy for both elementary and middle grades.

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5. School Operating Status: It is essential to have data on how students are learning in order to support the goals of access and equity, especially for student groups that have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Describe the current status of data collection on operational status and mode of instruction of all schools in your State. This description must include:

    i. A description of to what extent, and how frequently, the State collects now and will collect in the future data for all schools in your State on:
        a. Mode of instruction: The number of schools in your State that are offering fully remote or online-only instruction; both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid model); and/or full-time in-person instruction;
        b. Enrollment: Student enrollment for all students and disaggregated for each of the student groups described in A.3.i-viii for each mode of instruction; and
        c. Attendance: Student attendance for all students and disaggregated for each of the student groups described in A.3.i-viii for each mode of instruction.

    Mode of Instruction: During the 2020-2021 academic year, all schools in the Puerto Rico Department of Education operated remotely (virtual) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As of March 1, an order was issued for the gradual opening of schools, allowing approximately 75% of schools to resume face-to-face education. This guideline was reversed during the month of April due to the increase in positive cases of COVID-19, causing a return to remote (virtual) education for the rest of the academic year.

    For the new academic year, all 860 schools were given the option to provide in-person, hybrid or full virtual instruction for the 2021-2022 academic year for the 261,485 students that are enrolled as of today. Onsite instruction is traditional instruction where a student attends full-time (100%) of their time on campus; 770 schools are opting for this alternative, while 31 schools are providing a virtual option, in which students attend full-time off-site (either synchronous or asynchronous) and utilize technology resources for instruction. The last option for schools is a hybrid model where 59 schools are providing its students a combined virtual and on-site instruction and utilize a combination of resources. This data was collected on September 8, 2021.

    The state included a data collection process to capture the mode of instruction for each student. This data will be collected twice a week on the number of students who are on-site or virtual. Therefore, the map below will periodically be updated. To see a current status for mode of instruction, please press the following link: https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiMmZiOGNjNDUtYjMyYi00ZmUxLTkwYWQtOGEzMjYyNGViZDgxIiwidCI6IjRjYjY3NTUwLTkzMm

YtNGUzMS05MmM5LTQxYzNjNjlkMDEzMSIsImMiOjZ9&pageName=ReportSection1e8754f5e54a26d7dff0



Enrollment: Enrollment data is collected from the Student Information System (SIE, per its acronym in Spanish) during the enrollment window. However, PRDE certifies the enrollment data by September of each year.As of today, a total of 261,485 students have enrolled in the public education system.

Attendance: PRDE has available the attendance data for the 2020-2021 school year. During distance learning last year and according to the available data, 52% of the students were disengaged during the months of February thru May. During that period 39% of the students enrolled at the end of the year never connected to MS Teams sessions, while 13% connected less than 25% of the enrolled time.

ii. The data described in A.5.i.a. and b. using the template in Appendix A (and to the extent available, the data described in A.5.i.c.) for the most recent time period available. Please note that this data can be submitted separately within 14 calendar days after a State submits this plan. The SEA must also make this data publicly available on its website as soon as possible but no later than June 21, 2021, and regularly provide updated available information on its website. The Department will periodically review data listed in A.5.i on SEA websites.

PRDE will make data publicly available on the PRDE website at: Perfil Escolar2020-2021 (dde.pr)

iii. To the extent available, a description of the planned operational status and mode of instruction for the State and its LEAs for Summer 2021 and for the 2021-2022 school year.

In the summer of 2021, PRDE determined to provide in-person instruction to the majority of the 24,000 students that were at risk of failing their grades. With the support of the Educational Regions, PRDE was able to contact approximately 21,000 of those students and provided in-person academic assistance through the Educational Summer Program.

In the 2021-22 school year, all schools were given the option to provide in-person, hybrid or full virtual instruction, depending on their local needs or when COVID-19 cases are identified at the schools.

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B. Safely Reopening Schools and Sustaining their Safe Operations

The Department recognizes that safely reopening schools and sustaining their safe operations to maximize in-person instruction is essential for student learning and student well-being, and especially for being able to address the educational inequities that have been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this section, SEAs will describe how they will support their LEAs in this vital area.

1. Support for LEAs: Describe how the SEA will support its LEAs in safely returning to in-person instruction and sustaining the safe operation of schools. This description must include:
    i. How the SEA will support its LEAs implementing, to the greatest extent practicable, prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ("CDC") for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff;

    PRDE has developed and made publicly accessible a series of guides to manage COVID-19 within the school community, including teachers and parents.[10]

    Recently, on July 2021, the Puerto Rico Department of Health, also issued a prevention guidance for schools K through 12.[11]

    The PRDE aims to initiate the transition to face-to-face classes gradually, considering protection of students, teachers and school staff. It is essential that schools open their doors as soon as possible safely and that they remain open to take advantage of the benefits of face-to-face classes and social-emotional support services that are offer. In order for schools to start this opening process, PRDE considers important to systematically adopt and implement measures to slow the spread of COVID-19, both in schools and in the community. That is, all members from the community, students, families, teachers, and staff members take steps to protect themselves and others where they live, work, study and entertain themselves. Success in preventing COVID-19 in schools is related to preventing transmission in the community at large.

[10] Teacher's manual for the reopening of school's facilities on the academic year 2021-2020: https://de.pr.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/cambio-aceptados-manual-para-el-maestro-final-2-7.pdf
Parent's manual for the reopening of schools' facilities on the new academic year 2021-2022: https://de.pr.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/cambios-aceptados-manual-para-padres-3.pdf

[11] Puerto Rico Department of Health – COIVD-19 prevention guidance for schools K-12: http://www.salud.gov.pr/Documents/Guia%20para%20la%20prevenci%c3%b3n%20de%20COVID-19%20en%20escuelas%20K-12.pdf

Complete the table below, adding rows as necessary, or provide a narrative description.

Table B1.

MITIGATION STRATEGY	SEA RESPONSE
Universal and correct wearing of masks	*By the Administrative Orders (No. OA 2021-509 of July 22, 2021 and of the no. OA 2021-509B of August 9, 2021) issued by the Department of Health of Puerto Rico (DSPR) and Executive Order (No. OE-2021-058 of July 28, 2021) issued by the executive, the PRDE establishes that all teaching and non-teaching employees, students or visitor who works or attends an installation of the PRDE shall use the security measures corresponding, which includes the use of the mask, social distancing and any other measures that is further arranged.*
Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)	*PRDE's guidance establishes that to the extent possible, schools should organize their students into cohorts (groups that stick together all day) during instruction face-to-face so that there is little or no interaction between the groups. A distance of at least 3 feet will be maintained among students in the classroom, combined with the use of masks for all students, regardless of vaccination status.*
Handwashing and respiratory etiquette	*PRDE's guidance states that schools must teach and enforce the practice of hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and increase monitoring to ensure that students, teachers, and staff comply with these standards. If it is not possible to wash hands, a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol must be used.*
Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation	*All equipment or resources used by more than one student or staff must be disinfected after each use. Otherwise, it will be out of order. Teachers must not allow materials such as pencils, pens, calculators, to be shared between students, teachers, non-teachers or visitors. Schools that do not use a central ventilation system must open all windows and doors from classrooms or spaces, as the situation allows. To improve ventilation, schools should increase fresh air circulation from the outside. Fresh air intake reduces contaminants in closed spaces. PRDE's guidance also states to use window fans, with child restraint systems, to increase*

MITIGATION STRATEGY	SEA RESPONSE
	the effectiveness of open windows. The fan should be fixed in a window to remove potentially contaminated air and allow fresh air to enter.
Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments	*PRDE's guidance establishes that even though the risk of a fully vaccinated person getting COVID19 is low, if a fully vaccinated person exhibits symptoms consistent with those of COVID-19, it must be isolated from others, and evaluated for COVID-19, including get a diagnostic test for COVID-19.* *Fully vaccinated persons who does not have symptoms of COVID-19 does not need to be Quarantined.* *Quarantine is necessary for students, teachers, and staff members who could have been exposed to COVID-19 or had an encounter with someone identified through contact tracing, then it must comply with a quarantine period.*
Diagnostic and screening testing	*PRDE's guidance states that screening tests must guarantee the confidentiality of the results and safeguard the privacy of students, teachers, and other staff school. Students, Teachers, and staff should stay home if they are sick, if they have symptoms and have a diagnostic test for COVID-19.*
Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible	*In collaboration with the Health Department of Puerto Rico, PRDE has performed multiple vaccination campaigns. Vaccination is a mandatory for staff, teacher and non-teacher of public schools. This requirement also applies to visitors and contractors in contact with the school community. These may provide service if they present evidence of:* *□ be vaccinated,* *□ or have started the vaccination process and have received the first dose of the vaccine against COVID-19.*
Appropriate accommodations for	*On November 2020[12], PRDE issued a contingency and protection plan against*

[12] PRDE's contingency and protection plan against COVID-19 for teachers, assistants and special education students: https://de.pr.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/plan-de-contingencia-y-proteccion-saee-nov-2020conmemo.pdf

MITIGATION STRATEGY	SEA RESPONSE
children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies	*COVID-19 for teachers, assistants and special education students. This plan ensures the appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to health and safety issues. In addition, on the general K-12 COVID-19 guidance, PRDE establishes that on those cases where disabled students may need assistance with handwashing their hands, teachers may adopt the protocol, wear gloves and assist these students.*

As mentioned in our introduction to our State Plan, the Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) is a unitary system serving as both the state educational agency (SEA) and a local education agency (LEA).[13] Therefore, all prevention and mitigation policies and procedures are implemented island-wide.

PRDE proactively collaborates with the Puerto Rico Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on guidance for our schools, and central level.

As PRDE prepares for the return of more students to in-person learning, we will continue to diligently monitor developments related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Regardless of the level of transmission of COVID-19 in the community, the CDC has highlighted the consistent and combined implementation of different strategies to prevent its transmission in schools and continue offering face-to-face classes safely. The nine (9) essential prevention strategies are:

- Get vaccinated as soon as you are eligible
- Universal, correct and mandatory use of masks
- Maintain physical distancing
- Use of tests for early identification of cases, clusters and outbreaks
- Improve classroom ventilation
- Hand washing and respiratory hygiene
- Stay home when you are sick and get tested for COVID-19
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine measures
- Cleaning and disinfection of school buildings

[13] The PRDE oversees one island-wide education system. From the SEA perspective, PRDE's Central Level develops policies and guidelines, provides materials and technical assistance, engages in oversight and monitoring and provides leadership to all schools and Districts. From the LEA perspective, PRDE provides direct services to schools and ensures the implementation of SEA level policies.

The consistent and combined implementation of these different prevention strategies in the K-12th grade schools is supported by the following fundamental concepts:

- K-12 schools should be the last venues to close after exhausting all other preventive measures in the community and the first to reopen when be safe to do so.
- K-12 schools should implement recommended physical distancing but should not exclude students from classroom instruction if school structures do not allow to implement the optimal distance between them.
- Removal of any of the preventive measures must be done one at a time, combined with close monitoring of increases or outbreaks of COVID-19 cases. To the extent possible, schools should organize their students into cohorts (groups that stick together all day) during face-to-face instruction so that there is little or no interaction between groups.
- Face-to-face instruction should be prioritized over extracurricular activities, including sports and school events, to minimize the risk of transmission in schools and protect face-to-face classes.
- The low susceptibility and incidence of COVID-19 among the youngest children in relationship with adolescents suggests that younger students (for example, elementary grade students) are likely to have less risk of transmission in the school during face-to-face classes than older students (middle school and higher).
- Families of students at highest risk of becoming seriously ill (including those with special medical needs), or who live with people at high risk, must have the option of accessing virtual classes, beyond the education modality offered at the school.

Despite careful planning and consistent implementation of prevention, there may be situations that call for the temporary closure of a school or parts of a school (such as a class, a cohort, or a grade) for classes face-to-face. These decisions will be made jointly by the officials of the Health Department and the PRDE, after careful consideration of various factors and with an emphasis on ensuring the health and well-being of students, their families, teachers and school staff. In such cases, schools should do their best to continue classes through synchronous remote learning or home activities.

As mentioned on section A.1 of this state plan, PRDE has worked with the Puerto Rico Department of Health to host massive vaccination campaign for staff, students, and school communities across the island. With the authorization to administer the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to children who are at least 12 years of age, the PRDE has approximately 46,000 students (eligible for vaccination) that have completed their vaccination doses. The

goal is to increase the number of fully vaccinated people on school campuses and in school communities.

ii. Any Statewide plans, policies, estimated timelines, and specific milestones related to reopening and operation of school facilities, including any mechanisms the SEA will use to track, monitor, or enforce their implementation;

PRDE has also developed additional prevention and mitigation support strategies to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff as school facilities continue to reopen.

School staff vaccinations. The Central Government coordinated a statewide, cross-agency effort to make vaccines available to all interested education and school support staff. Approximately 95% of in person educators and school staff throughout the island have already completed the vaccination series.

Puerto Rico central government launched a vaccine registration system and developed a series of logistical processes and forms. Thanks to the teamwork of three government agencies, the Department of Health, the Department of Transportation and the Office of Innovation and Information Services of Puerto Rico a vaccination credential against COVID-19 was launched (VACU ID, per its acronym in Spanish). This mechanism will allow agencies to track, monitor, or enforce the vaccination process.

In order to have access to the VACU ID, the person must have the complete dose series, as appropriate to the manufacturer of the vaccine, and must register their information in the electronic application made available for this purpose.

Student Monitoring system. PRDE has also made available a monitoring system to identify students with any signs and symptoms of COVID-19, influenza and mycoplasma in schools. On August 24, 2021, PRDE shared its protocol for School Directors and Nurses to complete and identify any possible cases. It will be carried out in schools that offer face-to-face classes on a regular and interlocking schedule.

School nurse support. PRDE provided, and will continue to provide, school nurses throughout its schools to maintain and monitor health services for students aimed at prevention, preparedness and response to the challenges PRDE will continue to face as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic during the 2021-2022 school year. Nurses will be responsible for the:

- Organization and management the evaluation processes of students, according to the identified needs.

- Referring students, in those that health situations have been identified, to the assigned health service provider.
- Collaboration on the development of a student intervention plan that includes the study plan when the student returns to attend school.
- Offering guidance to students, parents or guardians, teaching and non-teaching staff, on the health services offered by the Program and the established public policies.
- Visiting students' homes with school support staff when necessary.
- Following up and helping the school director with health situations that may cause a risk of outbreak and transmission of diseases among the school population, according to the policies established by PRDE.

Healthy Environments at Classrooms. PRDE will invest ARP funds to create classrooms that meet standards for accessibility and safety, both considered fundamental for teaching and learning. PRDE will dispose contaminated furniture to limit contamination of mold, fungus, and rust that build up during the lockdown. PRDE will provide students and teachers appropriate desks, that are free of mold or any rust residues.

In addition, PRDE will be addressing ventilation issues within classrooms. Natural ventilation through operable windows can be an effective and energy-efficient way to supplement air-conditioning (HVAC) systems by providing outside air ventilation, cooling and thermal comfort when conditions permit (e.g., temperature, humidity, outdoor air pollution levels, precipitation). Windows that open and close properly can enhance occupants' sense of well-being and feeling of control over their environment. In order to improve air ventilation for the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff, PRDE will replace and update windows that are not properly functioning.

However, for most part of the year, Puerto Rico's climatic conditions require that outdoor air be cooled to provide acceptable thermal comfort for students, faculty, and staff, requiring the addition or replacement of air-conditioning (HVAC) systems. PRDE will use ARP ESSER funds to purchase or replace outdated HVAC systems that meet standards identified by the EPA. According to the Department’s regulation at 34 CFR § 75.616(c), PRDE will also comply by using the services of a certified electrical engineer, licensed by the Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Technicians College of Puerto Rico.

PRDE will determine through an assessment, which schools require to update their HVAC systems and power substations. The acquisition process will consider the costs necessary to install the HVAC system, and repairs necessary to improve the school's energy consumption (i.e. power substations).

In order to ensure compliance with social distancing inside our classrooms, PRDE has applied many strategies to accommodate students and teachers in one place. However, PRDE has identified that some classrooms simply cannot accommodate a reasonable minimum of students. Therefore, PRDE is identifying schools with classroom spaces that need to be extended or modified. PRDE considers this a remodeling activity that is necessary to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. Once a rigorous assessment is properly performed, PRDE will use ARP ESSER funds to perform school facility improvements allowing PRDE to create a learning environment that could better sustain social distancing.

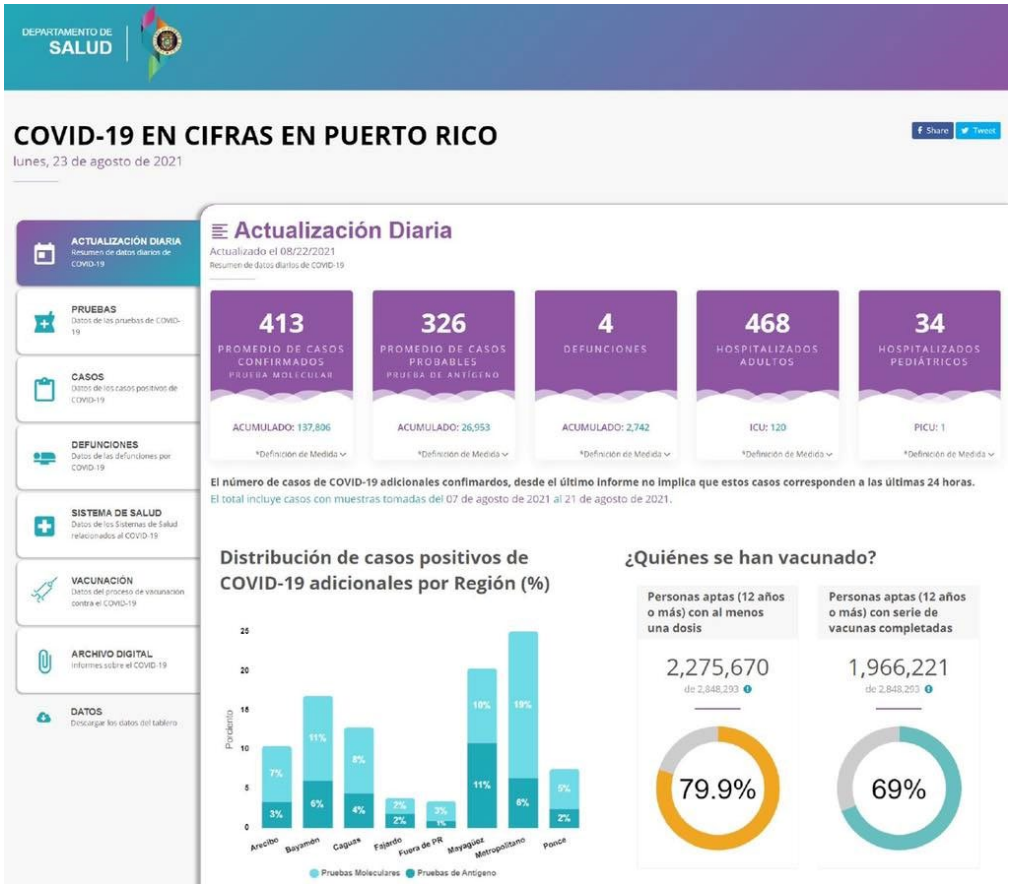
iii. To what extent the SEA and its LEAs consult with Federal, State, and local health officials. This description should include, if available, whether the SEA and its LEAs have received support for screening testing from their State or local health department based on funding awarded by the CDC; and

The Puerto Rico Department of Health in collaboration with central government is providing screening testing to all the population. These are held throughout the island and are available at different locations in order to become as reachable as necessary.

An example of a recent screening testing calendar is included below:



As of August 23, 2021, 79.9% of the eligible population of Puerto Rico has at least one dose of the vaccine, and two million of the population has the total doses.



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The Puerto Rico Department of Health continues with its massive vaccination campaign and publicly announces its weekly calendar notifying all the island wide locations where vaccination is being applied.



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iv. Any guidance, professional learning, and technical assistance opportunities the SEA will make available to its LEAs.

As mentioned above, at section B.1(i), PRDE has developed and made publicly accessible a series of guidelines for schools' community, teachers and parents reach a safely reopening of schools and sustain their safe operations to maximize in-person instruction.

In addition to the guidelines that have been made publicly available, PRDE held a summit for educational leaders during August 1-4, 2021. PRDE invited to this summit all school directors, leaders of the Regional Educational Office (ORE, per its acronym in Spanish), regional superintendents, school superintendents, assistant superintendents, and teacher facilitators.

The fundamental purpose of the Summit was to provide technical assistance and high-level professional development in the effective implementation of changes conducive to a safe return to in-person instruction, academic achievement and continuous improvement of the school organizational culture. The professional development sections were provided by public and private entities that presented their innovative ideas and alternatives to strengthen and develop changes in participant learning through the following core issues:

- Instructional loss
- Data analysis
- Implementation of mitigation plans
- Integration of technology in the school community
- Socio-emotional learning
- Emphasis on services for students with disabilities
- Use and management of virtual platforms
- Community agreement or school partners
- Staff empowerment
- Accelerated learning
- Management and supervision skills
- Transformational leadership for change in the academic environment.

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2. Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plans: Describe how the SEA will ensure that its LEAs that receive ARP ESSER funds meet the requirements in section 2001(i) of the ARP Act and the requirements relating to the ARP ESSER funds published in the Federal Register and available at https://oese.ed.gov/offices/american-rescue-plan/american-rescue-plan-elementary-and-secondary-school-emergency-relief/ (ARP ESSER requirements) to either: (a) within 30 days of receipt of the funds, develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services, or (b) have developed and made publicly available on the LEA's website such a plan that meets statutory requirements before the enactment of the ARP Act, including:

    i. How the SEA will ensure that each LEA plan includes, or will be modified to include, the extent to which it has adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the strategies listed in table B1;
    ii. How the SEA will ensure that each LEA plan describes how it will ensure continuity of services including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services;
    iii. How the SEA will ensure that the LEA periodically reviews, no less frequently than every six months for the duration of the ARP ESSER grant period (i.e., through September 30, 2023),[14] and revises as appropriate, its plan, and how the SEA will ensure that the LEA seeks public input, and takes such input into account on (1) whether revisions are necessary and, if so, (2) the revisions to the plan; and
    iv. Describe, to the extent the SEA collects it, information about LEA implementation, to the greatest extent practicable, of each element of the most up-to-date CDC guidance listed in table B1 and its LEAs' needs for support and technical assistance to implement strategies consistent, to the greatest extent practicable, with relevant CDC guidance.

    PRDE has made publicly available all information regarding the procedures and policies adopted to ensure the safe return to in-person instruction on its webpage: https://de.pr.gov/ prior to the 2020-2021 school year and continuously has updated the guidance as necessary, as recently as in July 2021.

    Through the webpage, PRDE includes health and safety guidelines, information on the school models being implemented, relevant data reports, resources for staff and families, and announcements shared with staff and the community. Regional Educational Offices (OREs, per its acronym in

[14] ARP ESSER funds are subject to the Tydings amendment in section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act, 20 U.S.C. 1225(b), and are therefore available to SEAs and LEAs for obligation through September 30, 2024. Review and revisions of these plans, if necessary, are not required during the Tydings period.

Spanish) and schools were notified of the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services for this new academic year.

PRDE will also make publicly available the ARP ESSER State Plan and the use of ARP ESSER funds. PRDE is prioritizing student and staff needs to facilitate a successful return to in-person instruction, including the continuity of social emotional support and access to counseling services.

Our State Plan assurances have been duly signed and have provided the Department with the link where the public can readily find data on school operating status and the URL of our website where the public can find the PRDE State Plan.

As a way to ensure that the PRDE periodically reviews the ARP ESSER grant period, and revises the plan as needed, PRDE will adapt the use of its Early Warning System. On a quarterly interval, the Early Warning System is used to monitor the implementation and compliance of work plans, including, but not limited to ensuring funds are being expended in a timely manner.

In addition to the use of the Early Warning System, PRDE performs monitoring procedures. PRDE's monitoring process focuses on meeting program quality as well as compliance with federal requirements, providing oversight of fiscal and programmatic aspects of work plans, and ensuring the continuity of services including, but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services.

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C. Planning for the Use and Coordination of ARP ESSER Funds

The Department recognizes that seeking input from diverse stakeholders is essential to developing plans for the use of ARP ESSER funds that are responsive to the needs of students, families, and educators. In this section, SEAs will describe their plans for consultation and for coordinating the use of ARP ESSER funds with other resources to meet the needs of students.

1. SEA Consultation: Consistent with the ARP ESSER requirements, describe how the SEA engaged in meaningful consultation with stakeholders, and incorporated input into its plan, including, but not limited to:
    i. students;
    ii. families;
    iii. Tribes (if applicable);
    iv. civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations);
    v. school and district administrators (including special education administrators);
    vi. superintendents;
    vii. charter school leaders (if applicable);
    viii. teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; and
    ix. stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

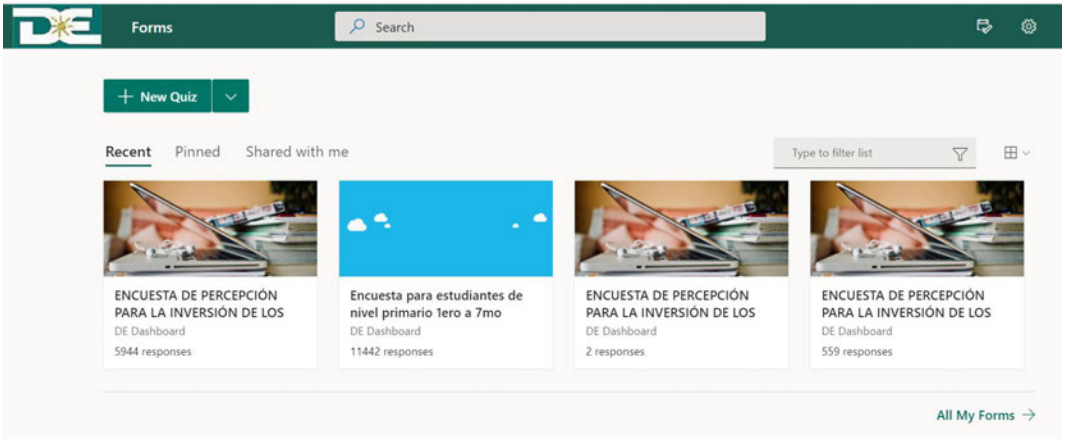
    The description must include how the SEA provided the public the opportunity to provide input in the development of the plan, a summary of the input (including any letters of support), and how the SEA took such input into account.

    Surveys. PRDE distributed online surveys related to the ARP ESSER plan to all stakeholders. The survey asked respondents to identify most pressing needs currently facing students and schools in their area; what lessons could be learned from the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic to improve the K-12 education system; and what they saw as spending priorities for Puerto Rico's ARP ESSER funds. In response, the PRDE received:

    5,944 questionnaires from parents, teachers, students from the 8th grade and 12th grade, representatives of civil organizations, stakeholders representing children with disabilities, Spanish learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and incarcerated children.

    Another **11,442** surveys were answered by students from 1st grade and 7th grade, **2** surveys were answered by non-for-profit organizations, and **559** surveys were answered by school leaders, superintendents, and charter school leaders.

    While PRDE attempted to receive input from all stakeholder groups, none was received related specifically to unions.



As a result of these surveys, PRDE was able to identify students from the 1st grade through 7th grade that they felt they learned the least in their English and Math subjects. (see **appendix E**, for survey results)

On the social-emotional aspect, 57% of the participants, preferred to study at home, because they were afraid to get infected with COVID-19. (see **appendix E**, for survey results)

From the parents, teachers and students of the 8th grade through 12th grade, PRDE was able to gather their top priorities for the 2021-2022 academic year. (see **appendix E**, for survey results)

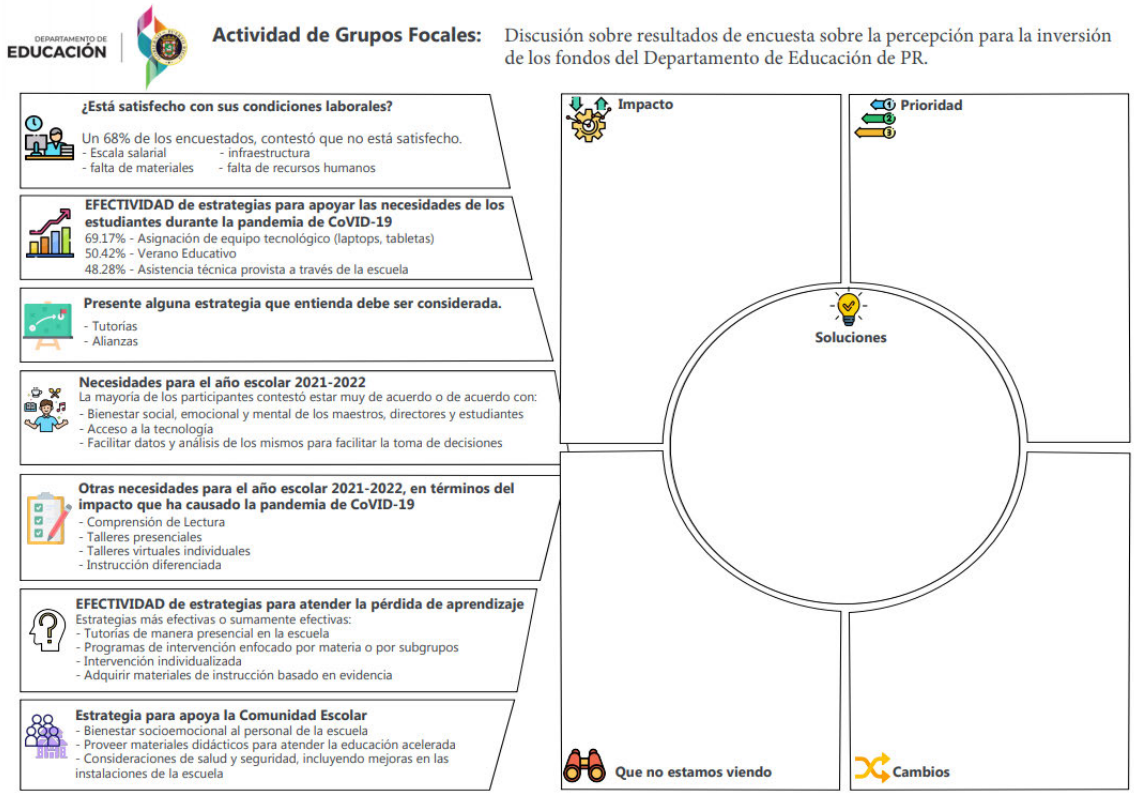
- This group of stakeholders identified that it is necessary to facilitate schools with data, along with the analysis of the data.
- Another top priority is to provide social emotional support to the students, and school personnel.
- Continue with the distribution and access to technological devices.
- Provide accelerated learning strategies or activities to deal with learning loss.
- Distribution of learning materials for educators.

Focus Group. From the beginning of the pandemic, PRDE has maintained focus on collaboration and consultation with many stakeholder groups. In anticipation of a third federal relief package and to develop a recovery plan with meaningful consultation, the PRDE facilitated a School Leader focus group meeting on August 5, 2021 to determine needs of students, families, and educators due to the impact of COVID-19.

Representatives of school leaders were asked to identify the greatest needs for students, families and educators. They were also provided a list of possible focal areas, from which the PRDE could prioritize support, including use of federal relief funds.

As a result of the focus group meeting, PRDE was able to identify the following top priorities:

- Improve working conditions, as to salary increase, providing school materials, human resources recruitment, and improving school infrastructure.
- Continue providing effective strategies during distance learning as to distribution of laptops, internet devices, providing summer learning to students that are at a greater risk of failing, and continue providing technical assistance to educators.
- Provide after school and/or tutoring services to students that are at risk of failing.
- Regarding the social emotional support, focus group participants mentioned the need to facilitate data and analysis to better assist school personnel and students.



As a summary of the input received from stakeholders, PRDE identified that it was overwhelmingly aligned to the stated prioritization and needs around learning acceleration and mental health.

Ongoing Consultation. PRDE is conducting and will continue to conduct ongoing meaningful engagement with stakeholders.

PRDE requested its School Educational Regions (ORE's) to provide a list of what they understand would be the most relevant initiatives to address the academic acceleration and social emotional needs. Below some of the initiatives that were presented by the OREs:

- Create a mobile app for students to exchange, publish and store information in different formats and topics, with the purpose of sharing useful and reliable information and that in turn serves to support the student allowing it to complete self-learning and learn from its peers. The use of this app will be in collaboration and interrelationship among community members, content is supervised, mediated and monitored by expert teachers in the different subjects. [15]

- Develop six (6) multidisciplinary technological centers (CTM, per its acronym in Spanish) in alliance with the municipalities within our region. The CTM project aims to use technology combining a hybrid education to address the student's academic gaps and provide them with a continuous and safe educational environment. Through this initiative, our ORDE could offer equitable and accessible access to computers and internet service to students and members of the school community. The CTM center would as a study and technology center.[16]

- Provide school directors a specialized support through specialists in the field of education and administration. It is necessary to extend the integration of the services offered, educational strategies and resources for five to six consecutive school years in order for them to effective. The ORE has identified the need to purchase equipment and materials, teacher salaries to carry out the school extended day, teacher's assistant, security guards, office clerks and part-time administrative assistant. [17]

- Create centers, known as Centers for Academic and Social-Emotional Strengthening for Students, Families, and the Community. Centers would offer learning support and address socio-emotional needs during afterschool hours. The ORE could design the structures for the targeted interventions through differentiation of instruction and offer the services to guarantee and address the particular needs of our students.[18]

[15] ORE Caguas – best strategies to address academic acceleration

[16] ORE Mayaguez – best strategies to address academic acceleration

[17] ORE Ponce – best strategies to address academic acceleration

[18] ORE Arecibo – best strategies to address academic acceleration

- Improve both the emotional and educational well-being of students. Integrate and collaborate with teachers and parents who are the ones who interact directly with students. Create an infrastructure department to support OMEP in dealing with minor or emergency improvements in schools at the ORE. Provide support on Saturdays, through the arts and sports. Offer practical tools and methods to help teachers and parents with the educational and emotional development of students with autism problems, which has been strongly affected by social distancing due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Create alliances with companies to offer workshops and "coaching" to teachers by professionals on educational issues, and that these workshops include materials, diagnostic tests and development plan. Offer a strategic plan that will impact the 1st, 7th, and 9th grades. Speak over self-esteem and personal development to high school students.[19]

- Create educational laboratories, strategically located in close proximity to communities. Students seeking to improve their English language skills can visit these laboratories after school. Each municipality would have at least 1 laboratory, with another laboratory added for every 12 schools. The laboratories would offer self-learning modules on the basic, intermediate, and advanced levels.[20]

- Provide students distance tutoring in the subject of Spanish (K-3rd grade) and Math (6th through 8th grades) through the in-person and virtual modalities. Tutoring would be offered as an afterschool service. In order to address the student's social emotional needs, the ORE could perform activities (workshops, literature, movies) allusive to managing emotions (anxiety, fear, sadness, and frustration).[21]

The Department will continue to develop a comprehensive set of strategies for the ARP ESSER funds in the coming months using feedback from ongoing engagement and consultation with the US Department of Education. PRDE will utilize established networks to expand and deepen engagement with the advisory groups, partners, and the public to assess PRDE's progress toward developing a plan that reflects the needs of our communities. Staff will capture public input and consider recommendations as the plan is finalized.

[19] ORE San Juan – best strategies to address academic acceleration

[20] ORE Bayamón – best strategies to address academic acceleration

[21] ORE Humacao – best strategies to address academic acceleration

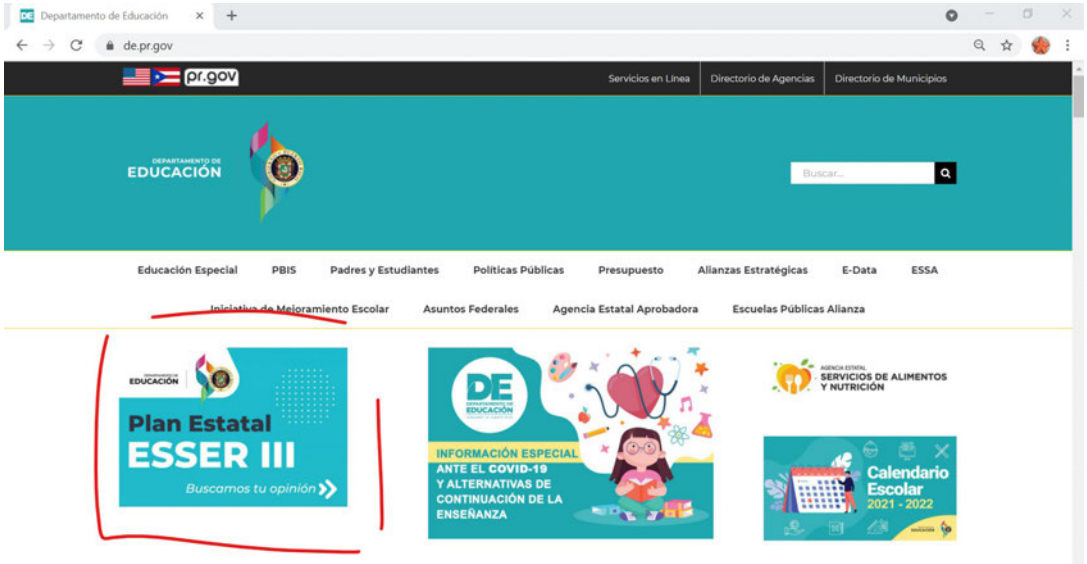
Online Public Comment Period. PRDE has also posted a draft of its ARP ESSER plan on the PRDE website for any member of the public to provide feedback from September 10th – 20th, 2021. As of the date this state plan was submitted to USDE, PRDE has received 70 comments.

PRDE analyzed comments received, and has identified that 34% of the comments stated the urgency to improve school's infrastructure and classroom conditions, including the purchase of 21st Century technology for the classrooms.

Another 23% of the comments stated that PRDE needs to reinforce the academic, psychological and health support within schools due to the pandemic of COVID-19, as to providing the alternative of mode of instruction, screening testing, and reducing school hours.

A 11% of comments stated the urgency to increase salary and provide additional incentives to the school personnel due to the work performed during the pandemic.

This was followed by a 9% of the comments which stated that PRDE needs to provide teachers better instructional materials.



Stakeholder input taken into account. The input received will inform how PRDE will prioritize the use of ARP ESSER funds as it plans for the return of students to its school campuses and the implementation of educational opportunities to reengage students and accelerate learning to increase student achievement. It is important to highlight that through this state plan, PRDE's intention is to promote a safe and healthy learning environment for students and staff and to assess learning loss mitigation strategies. PRDE's plan was shaped by all of these stakeholder's interactions; those main themes are reflected throughout this document.

It is important to highlight that through the ongoing consultation that PRDE plans to follow, this state plan is considered a live document. All strategies, here included (section D and E), are subject to modifications, if our school community such requires it. In addition, PRDE may identify and develop other strategies to help support the students. Any other strategy, not included in this state plan, will be presented to USDE for approval and proceed with an amendment process of the Puerto Rico's ARP ESSER State Plan.

2. Coordinating Funds: Describe to what extent the SEA has and will coordinate Federal COVID-19 pandemic funding and other Federal funding. This description must include:
    i. How the SEA and its LEAs 1) are using or have used prior to the submission of this plan and 2) plan to use following submission of this plan, Federal COVID-19 funding under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security ("CARES") Act and the CRRSA Act to support a safe return to and safely maximize in-person instruction, sustain these operations safely, and address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individual student groups (including students from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial or ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students);

    Complete the table below or provide a narrative description.

    Table C1.

FUNDING SOURCE	PRIOR/CURRENT SEA AND LEA USES (INCLUDING FUNDING AMOUNTS, IF APPLICABLE)	PLANNED SEA AND LEA USES (INCLUDING FUNDING AMOUNTS, IF APPLICABLE)
ESSER I (CARES Act)	*See narrative below*	*See narrative below*
GEER I (CARES Act)	*In the process to be sub awarded by the Governor of Puerto Rico*	*In the process to be sub awarded by the Governor of Puerto Rico*
ESSER II (CRRSA Act)	*See narrative below*	*See narrative below*
GEER II (CRRSA Act)	*In the process to be sub awarded by the Governor of Puerto Rico*	*In the process to be sub awarded by the Governor of Puerto Rico*

ESSER I (CARES Act)

The CARES ESSER I funds were allocated to enable schools to support distance learning; train staff for COVID-19-related procedures; and procure

psychological and health personnel, including the purchase of health and safety items for schools, and regional offices.

As of August 30, 2021, PRDE has expended $39.5 million and encumbered $59.4 million of the $349.1 million ESSER I award.

Nurses. PRDE completed the recruitment of nurses to perform physical evaluation in the school community, both for students and for the faculty. These personnel will be in charge of making referrals, preparing a prevention and action plan against possible COVID-19 infections.
*404 Nurses from August 2020 to June 30, 2021.
Funding - $12.8M

*429 Nurses from August 2021 to June 30, 2022.
Funding - $15.6M

Population to be impacted: Students. Specifically, the 59,630 students who were identified with chronic health conditions, following the needs assessment conducted utilizing the student health profile for the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school year.

As a planned use of these funds, PRDE is in the process of completing an auction to purchase the materials that are necessary for nurses to carry out their tasks effectively.

Funding - $2.6M

Development of educational materials for the school year. The PRDE teachers will develop educational materials for the upcoming semester as we adapt to the reality of distance education. The structure of the materials includes a variety of digital resources such as: presentations with interactive content, practice activities, assignments, evaluations and supplementary material such as links and multimedia.

Funding - $242k

Distance Education System. A Distance Education System will be acquired so that PRDE can provide digital content for primary courses. This sub-initiative will impact a total of 276,413 students and 23,698 teachers.

Funding - $35M

Mobile app. A mobile app will be developed to help the PRDE provide better support to parents, students and teachers addressing the new academic challenges.

Funding - $976k

Online courses. The purpose of this sub-initiative is to hire resources to help optimize the revision, updating, design, and creation of online courses. The initiative includes the hiring of resources that will update 100% of the online courses, the hiring of 1,404 teachers that will offer the online courses, the hiring of technical support and the purchase of necessary technological equipment for the administration of the online courses.

Funding - $9.8M

Purchase of paper for printing educational materials at the school level. Purchase of paper to print the documents necessary for distance education, due to the lack of technological resources that were available during the beginning of the school year. This provides schools with necessary resources to provide printed modules for students, as needs are identified. A total of 9,125 boxes of paper were purchased for all schools in the public system.

Funding - $256k

Online Campus. The initiative seeks to offer an Online Campus (Moodle) as the space in which 50,000 teachers and administrative personnel, 89,438 students from 9th to 12th grade and 29,062 parents can find trainings, certification courses (webinar), and online professional development, among other similar functions.

The initiative also includes the hiring of technical support personnel and the necessary technological equipment for the implementation of the project.

Funding - $281k

Online Planning Platform. This sub-initiative proposes the enhancement and improvement of a platform that will help in the online planning of teachers for all the subjects offered, so that they can demonstrate their work and the strategies implemented with their students during the distance education.

Funding - $ 602k

Digital Books. This sub-initiative proposes the purchase of licenses to access digital books on the following subjects matters: Spanish, Mathematics, English, Science and Social Studies, both for the regular academic program and for the special education academic program.

Funding - $9.1M

Technological equipment for PRDE's essential administration personnel. Purchase of devices or other technological equipment to maintain the Administration of the Department to assure essential services are met. Type of equipment to be purchased: 3,400 DELL Latitude 3500 laptops. The laptops will be distributed as follows:

1) 50 laptops per Regional Office= 350 laptops
2) 3 laptops per school= 2,571 laptops
3) 479 laptops for Central Level

Funding - $3.2M

Disinfection and cleaning of PRDE schools and buildings. For deep cleaning and sanitation of schools. Acquisition of materials needed for cleaning 856 schools. Purchase of 3,219 wall thermometers stations in order to maintain the safety measures required by taking the temperature of school staff and others.

Funding - $20.8M

Equipment and materials for food distribution. This initiative is to support cafeterias in maintaining social distance in schools. They will implement a "grab and go" system for the distribution of food. The changes to keep social distancing will require the acquisition of materials and equipment as follows:

- Frying pans - 200 units
- Hot cabinets - 380 units
- Ice machines - 840 units
- Plastic bags - 2,000 boxes
- Plastic boxes - 5,040 units
- Beach coolers - 2,000 units
- One door fridge - 119 units
- Two door fridge - 119 units
- Milk coolers -119 units

School cafeterias that will participate: 840
Projection of services: 150,000 services of food per day

Funding - $9.4M

Private Schools Allocation. Funds Reserved for private schools, which will be awarded based on the need of each participating school.

*Budget is based on the Proportional Share of the full enrollment according to available data 2018-19.

Funding - $74.1M

Office Telephone and VoIP. This initiative seeks to reestablish the telephone infrastructure of the PRDE by developing a system of VoIP which will improve communications and avoid disruptions throughout the PRDE. This will allow our regional offices, Central Level and schools to communicate with each other during distance education offerings. This will also benefit the coordination of special education and other similar services.

Funding - $4M

Interactive Screens for Occupational Schools (CTE). Purchase of 490 interactive screens to be installed in Occupational Schools, in order to make accessible distance education offering to CTE students.

Funding - $2.8M

Backpacks for students. PRDE intends to prepare students for the return to face-to-face classes by acquiring backpacks, notebooks, school supplies and lunch boxes. The lunch boxes and backpacks will have a different color for each grade and the materials they will carry inside will depend on the specific needs of the grade.

This initiative will impact 272,621 students from kinder to twelfth grade.

Funding - $12.8M

Emergency Backpacks. The initiative aims to acquire 31,228 backpacks containing emergency materials that will be located in the schools and in the administrative offices of the DEPR. Backpacks will include personal protective equipment to handle an emergency in these times of COVID 19.

This initiative initially contemplated 8,445 backpacks; however, the lead of the initiative identified the need to acquire 22,783 additional backpacks.

Funding - $4.9M

Joined Academic Network (JANET). JANET is a pilot project that delivers fast, real-time, and secured educational intranet encrypted signal to 8,892 students in the municipalities of Guánica, Guayanilla and Yauco, as a response to the ongoing pandemic crisis in these schools that show disproportionate impact from other schools of PR.

Funding - $9.9M

Internet Vouchers. This initiative proposes a subsidy of $50 for internet vouchers for students and teachers in need, starting in June 2021 and ending in December 2021. The initiative will impact approximately 30% of the

students and teachers of the PRDE (based on the active enrollment as of May 2021: 27,479 teaching staff and 81,553 students from kindergarten through twelfth grades).

The objective of this project is to ensure that PRDE teaching staff and PRDE students (who do not qualify under other subsidies) to have adequate and reliable access to broadband internet needed to participate in virtual and/or hybrid education programs during the COVID-19 health emergency. The project consists of a subsidy for the payment of broadband internet service. A monthly credit of $50 per family will apply from June through December 2021 (summer session and the SY 21-22 first semester), up to a maximum of $350 per family for the term set for the subsidy. Qualified teaching staff will need to go directly to the companies registered and authorized by the Puerto Rico Department of the Treasury (PRDT) and the Puerto Rico Telecommunications Bureau. Each applicant will choose the service of their choice, among the authorized suppliers.

PRDE will provide the PRDT a list of teaching staff and students qualified for this initiative. That is, the PRDT evaluates and submits the invoices to the PRDE and the PRDE issues the payment order to PRDT, who will disburse the subsidy directly to the supplier that the qualified teacher or student selected.

Funding - $49.2M

Virtual Appointments System - PRDE Complaints Procedure and Provisional Remedy Unit (Special Education). This initiative proposes an online system for requesting appointments virtually. With this initiative the people that requires the services of PRDE's Complaints Procedure and Provisional Remedy Unit, can request the appointment at their convenience online. The virtual appointments will allow the Unit to address and resolve the requests, limiting in-person appointments as a measure to combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Complaints Procedure and Provisional Remedy Unit is in charge of guiding, receiving and evaluating complaints, receiving and evaluating provisional remedies forms, issuing copies of approval or objection letters, referrals for doping tests, solving service problems, creating complaint files, among others. During the month of April 2021, the Unit received 27,328 requests for provisional remedies and 463 complaints. From January 2021 to the end of April 2021, 226 walk-ins were received at the offices and 1,089 phone calls were also received. This initiative will help the PRDE to provide appointments in an organized way without the need for in person appointments or phone calls.

Funding - $46k

Training of Educational Leaders for Academic Recovery. The Summit Plan of Educational Leaders for Academic Recovery (COVID-19) seeks to offer a five-day training workshop to promote academic and socio-emotional recovery, and to promote the implementation of all public policies, regulations, protocols of safety and security for the 2021-2022 school year to continue combating the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as to support regional leadership in the development of innovative solutions or reducing academic slide as a result of COVID-19 instructional disruptions.

Funding - $1.5M

Charter School *Vimenti*. The initiative seeks the acquisition of equipment and materials that assist this Charter School to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Some of the materials that they will acquire are: acrylic protection dividers, face shields, disinfectant spray and antibacterial soaps.

Funding - $117k

Essential Competencies. Hire 72 teachers to design the guide of essential competencies for each grade and subject, design the personalized plan for academic recovery, establish a protocol for assisting students with greater lag and for guiding teachers and families in the use of these tools.

Funding - $245k

Payment of Provisional Remedy Services for Students Participating in the Special Education Program. PRDE's Complaints Procedure and Provisional Remedy Unit administers the Provisional Remedy mechanism, which was created as an alternative to offer certain related, supplementary and support services to students, including those in special education who are entitled to therapy, evaluation and assistant services, but that cannot be offered at the moment by PRDE's Special Education Program.

The Special Education Program, for reasons attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic, has seen the need to refer more students to the Provisional Remedy Unit due to the closure of school facilities, lack of specialists, increase in students served, prohibition of group therapies, among others.

Because of the reasons mentioned above, the budget assigned to this unit for the payment of services is not enough and there are currently 470 invoices submitted that have not been paid due to lack of funds.

The PRDE under this initiative intends to pay 470 pending invoices for therapy, evaluations and assistance services provided to the students

participating in the Special Education program during the pandemic situation.

Funding - $8.4M

Materials and Equipment to Process Teacher Certification Requests. The initiative aims to acquire 12 computers, 1 printer and other equipment and office supplies necessary to process in a more quickly and efficiently way the requests of certifications from teachers that are made through a recently acquired platform to meet the needs that have arisen from the COVID-19 pandemic and to decrease the in-person interactions. Teachers need these certificates because they establish their functions as teachers in the PRDE and it is a requirement with which they must comply to exercise their functions within the PRDE.

The platform was developed to fulfill the purposes of maintaining social distancing during the pandemic and the level of requests has been so high that it requires the PRDE to acquire the necessary equipment to process them in an agile, effective and efficient manner during the emergency.

Funding - $41k

Purchase of materials and equipment for psychologists. The PRDE hired psychologists to provide early intervention services, supports, and related services to special education students during the pandemic situation, with other non- ESSER funds. The purpose of hiring these psychologists was to address the students' socio-emotional needs during distance education schools' offerings and as the PRDE prepares for reopening schools. To achieve these goals and to address any pandemic related needs, the Special Education Program has developed this initiative so that psychologists can have the materials and equipment necessary to continue carrying out their tasks effectively and for safeguarding the health and safety measures required of these personnel.

Funding - $26.6M

Active Zone. The main objective of this initiative is to provide a kit of physical education materials for home use with the purpose of continuing with the physical education class while it is offered in virtual or hybrid modality due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative will also provide a high-resolution technological equipment for the physical education class while it is offered in virtual or hybrid modality.

Funding - $31.3M

Administrative % allocation. Payment of salaries for two administrative assistants (transitory positions) that will be working full time directly with the ESSER grant. They will provide support to the program personnel, follow up to the leads of the initiatives and the reporting they must comply with, and assistance during the overall implementation of the projected activities of all initiatives. The PRDE will acquire two laptops, printers, equipment, and supplies to carry out the administrative task of the ESSER program, as needed. In addition, hire of professional services contractors that will assist the ESSER program.

Funding - $1.3M

ESSER II (CRRSA Act)

Surveillance Coordinators. PRDE will hire 22 epidemiologists for the control and reduction of COVID-19 cases in the school community, since we will have professionals who will follow the monitoring of the contagious virus and support school directors, nurses and administrative offices in the decision-making.

Funding - $4.6M

DE INNOVA Learning Center. The purpose of this initiative is to provide systemic instructional support through the continuity of training activities through the INNOVA Moodle platform to achieve a reopening and training service process, create a continuous service center in the area of technological integration, design and condition regular classrooms with equipment and learning spaces to facilitate the implementation of distance learning strategies and empower all the regional educational offices.

Funding - $31M

Bonus for permanent, probatory and transitory employees working during the COVID-19 emergency. The purpose of this initiative is to compensate the staff who showed a high sense of responsibility during the pandemic and supported the continuity of the services and the educational process. The incentive will be of $5,000 to compensate the effort of 44,883 PRDE employees with permanent, probatory and transitory status.

Funding - $200M

Administrative Support for School Directors. The objective of this initiative is to recruit 651 administrative assistants to support to the schools' directors to implement contingencies and prevention strategies before starting the next school year. This initiative will also provide support to parents or guardians to attend their concerns and needs before the start of

presential or hybrid classes. These personnel will carry out periodic inspections on school sites, in order to verify compliance with safety and prevention measures needed to avoid the spread of the COVID-19.

Funding - $10.8M

Hiring Security Officers. The objective of this initiative is to hire three security officers per school, impacting all public schools, totaling 2,568 security officers. These officers will be taking the temperature of all school personnel, thus ensuring the compliance of social distancing and use of face masks.

Funding - $89.6M

Hiring Maintenance Staff. This initiative aims to hire 1,536 maintenance staff employees to keep areas safe for students and school personnel. The purpose is to complete the periodical sanitation, in compliance with COVID-19 protocols and updates set by CDC and the department of health as a measure to combat and prevent the spread of the COVID-19.

Funding - $58.1M

Educational Summer. The Education Summer initiative has the purpose of reinforcing students' academic skills, giving priority to the students who may fail the grade in order to reduce failures by 80% due to the challenges face during the COVID-19 pandemic. The project consists in hiring all Educational and non-teaching staff from June 10, 2021 to July 28, 2021 to offer dynamic, interactive and flexible learning environments and motivate students to obtain the necessary skills and competences to increase academic achievement.

The plan includes face-to-face and online modality of classes. Classes will last 75 minutes, and each teacher will have 15 students per period for a 6-hour day from Monday to Friday.

In addition, a bonus of $900 to 1,500 tutors who will offer individualized help to students is contemplated.

Funding - $145.7M

Rehabilitation of PRDE's Schools. The main objective of this initiative is to guarantee that our students and personnel have a safe and healthy school environment and infrastructure. The initiative seeks to rehabilitate spaces and be able to safely reopen in-person education. Also, for PRDE's schools' buildings are in compliance with the health and distance education guidelines and construction regulations.

The initiative will include:

- deep cleaning of walls and ceilings
- repairing of cracks and dampness (due to the presence of rust)
- repair deformations
- correction of water filtration
- removal of mold, asbestos and lead paint
- painting of interior and exterior walls and ceilings
- inspections
- needs assessments

Funding - $193.5M

Acquisition of Technological Equipment to Support the Operations of the School Food Authority. Acquisition of 146 computers to provide services in approximately 700 school dining rooms currently operating. The school food authority is an agency ascribed to the PRDE and this initiative will assist the agency to be prepared and able to respond effectively to the challenges faced as a result of the pandemic and the increase in administrative jobs like the procurement processes, reconciliation of drivers, required reports, etc.

Funding - $306k

System for Continuous Monitoring of Academic Recovery. The objective of this initiative is to develop standardized assessment instruments and a test system for basic subjects (science, Spanish, social studies, English and math) that will help the PRDE to obtain quantitative and qualitative data collection, and analyze the data collected from the different 4 instruments.

Thus, PRDE will test their students, monitor the progress of school populations and obtain the necessary data to make adjustments to the action plans aligned with academic recovery. After each test, modules with specific lessons are applied to attend the areas of academic lag.

Funding - $27.6M

Retroactive Premium Pay. The objective of this initiative is to compensate schools' food authority personnel who showed a high sense of responsibility with their actions and supported the continuity of services and the educational process, offering them an incentive for the work done during the pandemic and the risk of getting COVID-19 during their daily work.

The incentive will be of $5,000.00 for all 3,968 employees.

Funding - $21.7M

Student Information System Platform (SIE). Through this initiative, PRDE will acquire a platform that provides the mechanism to register students' attendance both in present and remote learning. Also, to identify students using a code identification card to register attendance electronically and promote location monitoring while using school transportation services; and provide efficient and modern communication between student parents and school staff.

Funding - $10M

Acquisition of Chairs and Tables for School Food Authority. Acquisition of tables and chairs for the PRDE's school food authority. Food services will be offered to students in a presential, uninterrupted and safe way in the face of the COVID-19 public health emergency. The school dining rooms need tables and chairs that facilitate the necessary disinfection process to offer the services to the students, since most of the tables and chairs in the school dining rooms are made of material not resistant to constant disinfections. Also, due to the closure of the school dining room after the pandemic, the chairs and tables have been deteriorated with mold, moth and fungus.

The initiative includes the following acquisitions: 10,000 tables and 62,208 chairs (72 chairs per school dining room).

Funding - $8.5M

Remedial After School Program. The initiative proposes an after-school program with 2 additional hours (3:00pm to 5:00pm) from Monday through Thursday during the school year 2021-2022 for all schools.

In addition, occupational schools will work with the required soft skills according to the specialty, using the equipment and materials available in the workshop.

Funding - $303.8M

Hiring of School Transportation Routes. The objective of this initiative is to guarantee the transportation of students living in poverty, with additional impediments and / or limitations despite the restrictions imposed to maintain social distance. Through this initiative, we will ensure that students arrive to the classroom when their itinerary requires it. Also, ensure students who require in-site therapies, they can continue attending them, and ensure that the students of the occupational program can attend their classes.

Funding - $106.5M

Leasing Agreement. The objective of this initiative is to lease facilities to relocate students and school staff from schools that were impacted by the earthquakes in the south part of the island. This will allow to begin the in-person classes during the school year 2021-2022 and to ensure the proper social distancing and prevention measures required during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funding - $1.3M

MIPE. PRDE will launch a new version of its Special Education System (MIPE, per its acronym in Spanish) that will allow the program to effectively complete student's registration process, electronically fill the student's Individualized Educational Program (PEI, per its acronym in Spanish), issue Child Count certifications, dashboards, among other essential features.

Funding - $5.1M

Industrial psychologist. The PRDE will hire 38 psychologists that will apply psychological principles and research methods to improve the overall work environment, including performance, communication, professional satisfaction and safety within the administrative offices, School Educational Regions, and schools.

Funding - $2.5M

ii. To what extent ESSER I and ESSER II funds have been awarded to LEAs and, if funds have not yet been made available to LEAs, when they will be. In addition, please provide any available information on the total dollar amounts of ESSER I and ESSER II funds that have been obligated but not expended by the SEA and its LEAs, including whether the SEA is able to track LEA obligations.

As a unitary SEA-LEA system, PRDE has made all ESSER I and ESSER II funds received available for the LEA allowable uses.

As of August 30, 2021, PRDE has expended $39.5 million and encumbered $59.4 million of the $349.1 million ESSER I award.

As of August 16, 2021, PRDE has expended $1 million and encumbered $75 million of the $1.320 million ESSER II award.

iii. In supporting LEAs as they plan for the safe return to and continuity of in-person instruction and for meeting the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the extent to which the SEA is also using other Federal funding sources including but not limited to the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 ("ESEA"), IDEA, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act ("WIOA"), funding for child nutrition services, and McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and the funds to support the needs of students experiencing homelessness provided by section 2001(b)(1) of the ARP Act.[22]

PRDE plans to maximize the use of all federal funds awarded to address the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students while fulfilling the requirements of all grant programs as a unitary system.

ESSER funds will be used to supplement the use of ESEA, IDEA, and McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act funds to provide additional supports to students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. These supports include, but are not limited to, afterschool programs, deepen tutoring, and wraparound services to address students' social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs.

ESSER funds will also be used to supplement child nutrition funds to continue to provide all students with school meals. After a rigorous analysis of the situation and the available alternatives, the School Food Authority (AEA), using the waivers granted by the USDA, modified the way of offering the food services from a congregated to a non-congregated manner. In other words, to maintain the recommended social distancing, the food services that the AEA has offered during this emergency were in the "Grab and Go" or "Pack and Go" modality. In this modality, food was offered to participants in disposable utensils, in front of the school gate, or in a place identified by the school director.

WIOA funds will continue to be used to provide non-traditional students with career readiness programs.

[22] Please note that the needs of students experiencing homelessness must be addressed (along with the other groups disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic) through the use of the ARP ESSER SEA reservations and the required LEA reservation for the academic impact of lost instructional time; the funding provided to support the needs of students experiencing homelessness by section 2001(b)(1) of the ARP Act is in addition to the supports and services provided with ARP ESSER funds.

D. Maximizing State-Level Funds to Support Students

The Department recognizes that States have an extraordinary opportunity to address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on underserved students through the ARP Act's required State set-asides to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, provide summer learning and enrichment programs, and provide comprehensive afterschool programs. In this section, SEAs will describe their evidence-based strategies for these resources.

1. Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time: Describe how the SEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(f)(1) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 5 percent of the State's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds). The description must include:
    i. A description of the evidence-based interventions (e.g., providing intensive or high-dosage tutoring, accelerating learning) the SEA has selected, and the extent to which the SEA will evaluate the impact of those interventions on an ongoing basis to understand if they are working;

    PRDE's students and educators have been greatly impacted by the pandemic and related events, which have exacerbated existing inequalities. This has been demonstrated by data and the needs identified in previous sections of this plan.

    As PRDE turns to address these issues, with the support of the American Rescue Plan, there is both a need of urgent action while also considering a multi-year plan and a well-thought-out approach.

    PRDE will reserve at least the respective amount of funding for each intervention in the section, including at least 5% of the state's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds for evidence-based interventions to address the academic impact of lost instructional time. The services provided will target vulnerable students most impacted by the pandemic.

    However, it is important to highlight that through the ongoing consultation that PRDE plans to follow, this state plan is considered a live document. All strategies, here included (section D), are subject to modifications, if our school community such requires it. In addition, PRDE may identify and develop other strategies to help support the students. Any other strategy, not included in this state plan, will be presented to USDE for approval and proceed with an amendment process of the Puerto Rico's ARP ESSER State Plan.

    Multi-year plan. To effectively implement the evidence-based interventions, PRDE will develop, through collaborative network, a coherent plan, adequately supported and designed for long-term impact.

When an academic, social emotional or health component is planned with the goal of creating a cycle of continuous improvement, opportunities are created to assess ongoing needs, experiment with new evidence-based strategies allowing PRDE to make necessary adjustments. As a result of this sustainable and continuous growth cycle, PRDE fully intends to support students in achieving accelerating learning rates so that students are meeting grade and/or content level standards.

Over the course of this multi-year plan, and based on PRDE's review of data, stakeholder input and implementation of evidence-based practices, PRDE will support schools with accelerating student learning to address learning loss needs and close performance gaps. These will be addressed through an acceleration cycle, and will include:

High-Impact tutoring. PRDE will use ARP ESSER funds to expand and extend the tutoring services that are being currently provided by the University of Puerto Rico. The Professional Development and University Relationship Institute in collaboration with the University of Puerto Rico (UPR) is offering tutoring services for students from the 3rd and 12th grade.

The purpose of this program is to provide innovative and relevant educational experiences to the student, resulting in better academic achievement, within the following subjects: English, mathematics, Spanish, social studies and science.

Tutoring service is currently being provided in the distance modality, from Monday to Thursday, through the Moodle platform of Microsoft Teams. Students can request the service through www.tutoriasde.upr.edu. PRDE plans on expanding these services to all student population, and extend it through 2024.



During the first phase, tutoring services will be provided by the UPR students and teachers from the Puerto Rico Department of Education. The tutorial model consists on providing services to a small group, so that students receive a personalized service and the skills in need of each student can be effectively addressed. Each group will be made up of 5 to 10 students accompanied by a designated tutor. The activities and teaching strategies have been designed by an interdisciplinary group of experts in content, technology and family issues and psychosocial support, in the hands of a group of coordinators who are teachers of the humanities, education, social sciences and general studies faculties of the UPR - Río Piedras Campus.

High quality instructional materials. A full suite of optional, high-quality, innovative instructional materials including long term scopes and sequences, unit plans, unit assessments, daily lesson plans, student activities, and additional supports for the most affected students. Accelerated learning, requires that students consistently receive grade-level materials, tasks, and assignments, campus experiences, along with appropriate scaffolds that make the work accessible in order to close the most critical gaps.

HyFlex Classrooms. Providing high-quality instructional materials includes equipping classrooms with 21st century technology. PRDE understands the educational importance of technology. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the overdue need to integrate technology into regular educational process. Integration of well-designed technology allows teachers to enrich the overall learning experience for all students. For this reason, PRDE will invest ARP funds to equip classrooms still lacking a dashboard with projector and touch screens. The basic configuration of a HyFlex classroom supports the ability for both in-person students and remote students alike to interact and actively participate in class.

Healthy environments at Classrooms. Research[23] shows there is a direct link between children's health and performance and their physical environment, including students' exposure to toxic environmental factors. Unfortunately, many classrooms across the island fail to meet the minimum standards of providing appropriate air ventilation, dry, mold or rust-free furniture.

PRDE will therefore, invest ARP funds to create classrooms that meet standards for accessibility and safety, both considered fundamental for

[23] The organization of Center for Green Schools, recently issued an overview titled, Green school buildings are better for teachers and students | Center for Green Schools of existing research related to health and the learning environment at schools. The document states that school buildings create an environment where students and teachers are more comfortable, less prone to illness and more focused on teaching and learning. The quality of school facilities is often overlooked as a major factor in students' scholastic performance. However, school buildings are not only the setting for learning, they can also help or hinder the learning process.

teaching and learning. PRDE will dispose contaminated furniture, presenting mold, fungus, or rust build up during the lockdown. PRDE will provide students and teachers appropriate desks, that are free of mold or any rust residues.

In addition, researchers[24] observed a 5% decrease in "power of attention" in poorly ventilated classrooms. Natural ventilation through operable windows can be an effective and energy-efficient way to supplement air-conditioning (HVAC) systems by providing outside air ventilation, cooling and thermal comfort when conditions permit (e.g., temperature, humidity, outdoor air pollution levels, precipitation). Windows that open and close properly can enhance occupants' sense of well-being and feeling of control over their environment. In order to improve air ventilation for the health and safety of students, faculty, and staff, PRDE will replace and update windows that are not properly functioning.

However, for most part of the year Puerto Rico's climatic conditions require that outdoor air be cooled to provide acceptable thermal comfort for students, faculty, and staff, requiring the addition or replacement of air-conditioning (HVAC) systems. PRDE will use ARP ESSER funds to purchase or replace outdated HVAC systems that meet standards identified by the EPA. According to the Department's regulation at 34 CFR § 75.616(c), PRDE will also comply by using the services of a certified electrical engineer, licensed by the Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Technicians College of Puerto Rico.

PRDE will use the ARP ESSER funds to perform the assessment at schools and determining improvements necessary in our HVAC systems and schools' energy substations. The acquisition process will consider the costs necessary to install the HVAC system, and repairs necessary to improve the school's energy consumption (i.e. power substations).

In order to ensure compliance with social distancing inside our classrooms, PRDE has applied many strategies to accommodate students and teachers in one place. However, PRDE has identified that some classrooms simply cannot accommodate a reasonable minimum of students. Therefore, PRDE is identifying schools with classroom spaces that need to be extended or modified. PRDE considers this a remodeling activity that is necessary to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. Once a rigorous assessment is properly performed, PRDE will use ARP ESSER funds to

[24] With similarly poor CO2 levels and ventilation rates in school buildings, students have been observed to experience greater fatigue, impaired attention span, and loss of concentration (Chatzidiakou et al., 2012); poorer performance on tests of concentration (Dorizas et al., 2015a); and lower levels of focus among university students during lectures (Uzelac et al., 2015).

perform school facility improvements allowing PRDE to create a learning environment that could better sustain social distancing.

Professional learning. Professional development and technical assistance for educators, leadership, and school health professionals to address the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students.
In order to empower educators, school support staff, and school leaders to develop skills and implement creative and evidence-based strategies to improve instructional practices, PRDE will offer incentives to those educators, school support staff, and school leaders, when they attend to professional development trainings, focusing on topics directly related to addressing the academic impact of lost instructional time, summer learning, and enrichment programs, after school programs or any other related to community violence.

PRDE will offer an additional incentive to educators, school support staff, and school leaders that were able to reach the school's goal. Each school will be provided a baseline data and the improvements that should be established as a goal in order to receive the incentive.

Extended school day. PRDE will extend its Extended Academic Enhancement initiative, (RAE, per its acronym in Spanish) as an academic recovery strategy. The purpose is to offer an extended-hour program that focuses on math, science, Spanish, English, social studies, fine arts or physical education, school health, and occupational programs (as needed). The supervised study program will emphasize reading comprehension skills in Spanish and English using the STEAM educational approach that encourages integrated learning of the disciplines. Schools that do not PROVIDE extended hours services through other federal programs for the same purposes (i.e. 21st Century) will participate in this project.

Summer learning programs. A strategic planning process to design and align summer learning program to extend instructional time with high-quality, innovative instructional materials, curriculum-aligned, and enrichment options for students.

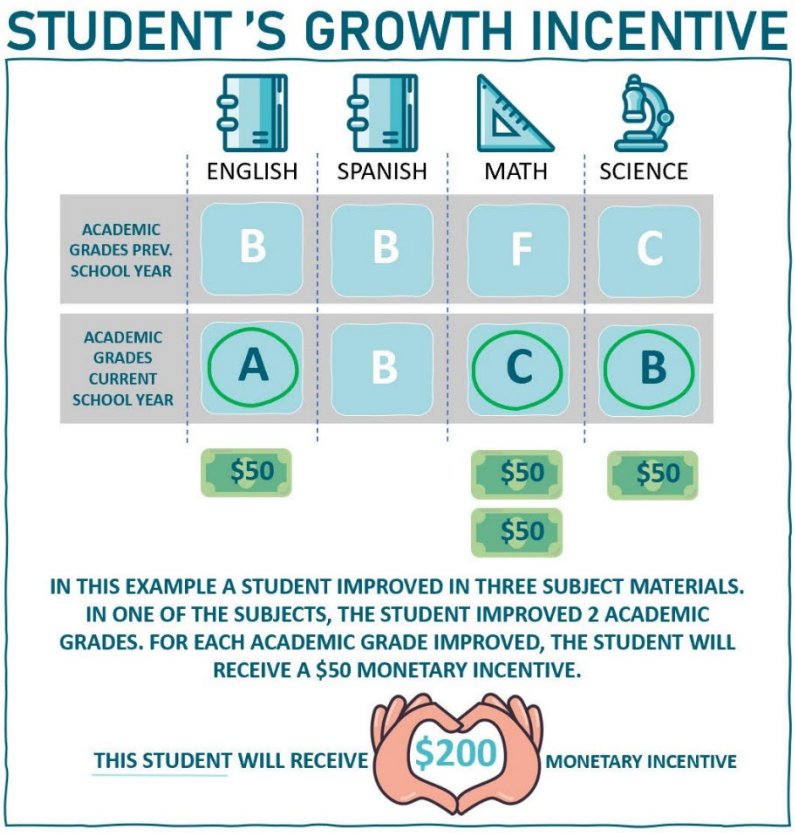
Student Growth Incentive. PRDE recognizes that our students have struggled academically during this pandemic, and have also been impacted socially and emotionally. Due to the deep understanding PRDE has of this situation, it has developed and put forth strategies, initiatives, and practices that will support all students impacted by COVID-19 in closing those academic gaps, working diligently as a team to also provide the support needed to work with the social-emotional and health component. As part of the initiatives', PRDE will recognize the effort of students in improving their academic achievement, taking ownership, responsibility and interest in their own academic progress. This monetary recognition will be given at

the end of the school year to the participating students who demonstrate growth.

PRDE plans on using ARP ESSER funds to implement this merit program for students, which also serves as additional motivation during these troubled times, for our most impacted and at need students.

Students interested in participating from this incentive, would need to enroll in the **Student Growth Incentive Program**. They must meet certain criteria to successfully complete the program, such as raising their performance one grade level in any of the core subjects (Spanish, English, math or science). Generally, a student must be performing at least one grade level below their current status to qualify. PRDE will pair their prior year baseline data in order to measure improvement achieved at the end of each year in the multi-year plan.

These students will receive continuous social, emotional, academics, and scaffolded supports through the SMARTS Integrated System of Support, further explained in this state plan.



The PRDE's Planning, Transformation and Performance Auxiliary Secretariat (SAPTRE, per its acronym in Spanish) will provide oversight over the implementation of this program.

Social, emotional, and mental health supports. Hire or contract school mental health staff or the implementation of programs targeted at mitigating social, emotional, and mental health impacts of COVID-19. School mental health staff (including counselors, social workers, psychologists, and other mental health professionals) have the necessary skills to build capacity within the school environment to meet the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students to support academic growth and prepare students to be career-ready adults.

PRDE has identified that schools do not provide the space or office for our social, emotional and health professionals to provide their services and meeting with standard privacy requirements. Therefore, PRDE will use ARP ESSER funds to renovate or remodel schools' facilities, considered necessary for PRDE to respond to the traumas caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through these renovations or remodeling, PRDE will create the adequate space for our students to receive the social emotional and health support needed.

The **SMARTS** (Students, Measurable, Accelerated, Relevant, Teachers, and Socioemotional and health) **Integrated System of Support** is embedded within the multi-year plan. This will include operational and system conditions, social and emotional wellness, academics, and scaffolded supports. Through the SMARTS Integrated System of Support, PRDE will address the academic, social emotional and health needs of all students.

Key components within the associated **SMARTS Integrated System of Support** will include operational and system conditions, social and emotional wellness, academics, and scaffolded supports.

The multi-year planning cycle is necessary for PRDE to provide effective support. The steps and process of planning, intervention, evaluation, assessment, and readjustment create the foundations for fidelity of implementation and sustainable improvement. The **SMARTS** system of support continues through 2024 when the goals of ARP ESSER III funds are met.

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The goal of the planning phase is to diagnose student's unfinished learning of the prerequisite content knowledge and skills, as well as the social, emotional, and mental health needs. PRDE will collaborate with schools to identify the areas or subjects that student need the most support. This will lead to a relevant planning of intervention, necessary to properly address the most impacted students.

During the intervention phase, teachers, psychologist, social workers, nurses, counselors, educational therapist, educational therapist, and other school personnel will provide the necessary support to the students in need. Intervention will be targeted to the individual student and provided by the appropriate personnel or professional. In order to ensure targeted interventions, PRDE will provide all schools with appropriate accelerated learning resources, high quality curricula, and all additional necessary tools, including data collection protocols.

PRDE will evaluate the impact of each of these interventions, with qualitative data, including stakeholder feedback, in order to assist schools in determining next steps.

Other quantitative metrics will include those that indicate changes to the learning environment such as results of school climate surveys, hours of mental health services provided, and percent of students receiving social emotional support.

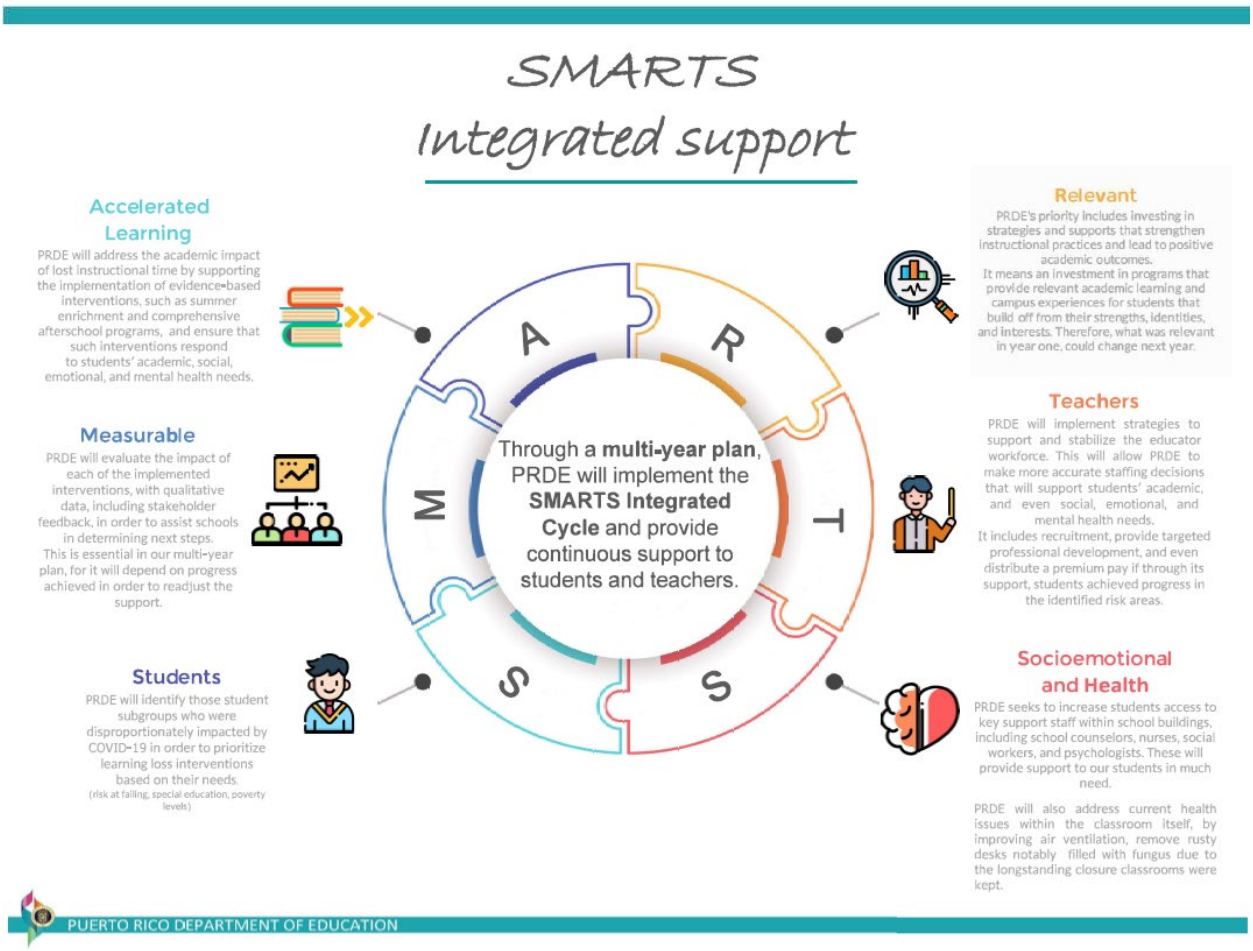
Evaluation of these interventions will occur annually during the multi-year cycle. If the intervention worked, PRDE will proceed with the cycle and address additional needs, as these where identified; if not, PRDE will

readjust the intervention in order to effectively provide its students the support needed.

During the assessment phase, a wide variety of rich data collected during the previous phases will be collected and analyzed. This allows PRDE to identify areas of strength and areas in need of improvement within and across programs and divisions.

The Island of Puerto Rico is composed of seven unique and extremely diverse educational regions. Therefore, the readjustment phase of the cycle will empower each region to modify practices according to the unique needs of the students, staff, and community, to meet on going and changing needs.

Over the course of the next three years, the SMARTS Integrated System of Support will be systematically implemented, to address student and educator needs in a strategic and targeted manner, as well as create a culture of growth and continuous improvement.



ii. How the evidence-based interventions will specifically address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii. When possible, please indicate which data sources the SEA will use to determine the impact of lost instructional time; and

Student groups who were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 will be prioritized for learning loss interventions based on their needs identified by student data and through the analysis performed in the multi-year cycle. Student data will include, but not be limited to, diagnostic data, statewide assessment data, student attendance data, quantitative and qualitative student performance data, and school climate data.

PRDE will provides additional support for students with disabilities, Spanish language learners, economically disadvantaged students, students experiencing homelessness, and students struggling in the traditional classroom setting through multiple federal and state programs and will supplement these supports with ARP ESSER-funded interventions, through the SMARTS Integrated System of Support.

These interventions include a comprehensive summer program targeting these subgroups of students and mobile and community outreach to provide academic supports and wraparound services within the communities of need. Funds will be prioritized to provide evidence-based interventions for underperforming students of identified subgroups based on complex area data to address academic, social, emotional and mental health needs.

PRDE will continue to provide students with devices to ensure equitable access to all learning opportunities and to ensure students have the resources necessary to be successful in school. This will require PRDE to invest resources in systems to ensure student safety, monitor device utilization, and maintain software and hardware.

Distance Learning will be leveraged to increase the opportunity to facilitate learning of challenging content and courses, especially for students in rural areas where accessibility may be limited.

iii. The extent to which the SEA will use funds it reserves to identify and engage 1) students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and 2) students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.

In addition to the aforementioned strategies in reengaging students to in-person learning, PRDE will reach out to families and students who were

disengaged, chronically absent or at risk of failing during the 2020-2021 school year. These students are at greater risk of learning loss due to their lack of participation in online learning and may need intensive student supports to accelerate learning.

During distance learning last year and according to the available data, 52% of the students were disengaged during the months of February thru May. During that period 39% of the students enrolled at the end of the year never connected to MS Teams sessions, while 13% connected less than 25% of the enrolled time.

PRDE will provide essential counseling services to help students with social, emotional, and behavioral support as they readjust to in-person learning on school premises. Engaging family members of students who were chronically absent will allow for a joint effort in identifying the supports both the students and their families need to facilitate student success. Comprehensive supports are especially vital for students in middle school who are not only struggling with engagement, but are also transitioning from one school to another and adjusting to the cognitive and physical changes of adolescence.

2. Evidence-Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Programs: Describe how the SEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(f)(2) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 1 percent of the State's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) for evidence-based summer learning and enrichment programs, including those that begin in Summer 2021, and ensure such programs respond to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The description must include:

    i. A description of the evidence-based programs that address the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students (e.g., providing intensive or high-dosage tutoring, accelerating learning) the SEA has selected, and the extent to which the SEA will evaluate the impact of those programs;

    PRDE will utilize no less than one (1) percent of the state's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds for summer learning and enrichment programs for Summer 2022.

    Summer 2021 was primarily funded with CRRSA ESSER funds. However, PRDE intends to continue with the summer learning programs over the course of the multi-year cycle.

    The purpose of the Education Summer initiative is to reinforce students' academic skills, giving priority to those students who may fail the grade in order to reduce failures by 80% due to the challenges face during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PRDE will hire and contract all the Educational and non-teaching staff necessary to offer dynamic, interactive and flexible learning environments and motivate students to obtain the necessary skills and competencies to increase academic achievement. The Educational Summer initiative includes face-to-face and online modality of classes.

PRDE will monitor student data to evaluate the effectiveness of the summer learning and enrichment programs implemented. Student data includes, but is not limited to, diagnostic data, student attendance data, quantitative and qualitative student performance data, and student feedback.

Evaluation of these interventions will occur annually during the multi-year plan. If data determines the success of the intervention, PRDE will proceed with the cycle and address additional needs, as these where identified. If data determines the intervention is an area in need of improvement, PRDE will readjust as needed, in order to effectively provide students with necessary supports.

ii. How the evidence-based programs will specifically address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3. i.--viii. When possible, please indicate which data sources the SEA will use to identify students most in need of summer learning and enrichment programs; and

Student groups who were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 will have prioritized enrollment for summer learning and enrichment programs based on their needs as identified by student data and the multi-tiered system of support. Student data includes, but is not limited to, diagnostic data, statewide assessment data, student attendance data, quantitative and qualitative student performance data, and school climate data.

PRDE will prioritize summer programs for students who are academically behind, students in transition grades (incoming kindergarten, elementary to middle, middle to high, and high school to college or career), and students who are identified with engagement challenges due to the pandemic.

Specialized student support programs will be offered to students as appropriate. These summer programs target students with disabilities, Spanish language learners, students experiencing homelessness, and students struggling in the traditional classroom setting.

iii. The extent to which the SEA will use funds it reserves to identify and engage 1) students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and 2) students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.

PRDE has communicated with families and students who were disengaged, chronically absent or at risk of failing during the 2020-2021 school year. These students are at greater risk of learning loss due to their lack of participation in online learning and may need intensive student supports to accelerate learning during the summer.

PRDE will provide essential counseling services during the summer to help students with social, emotional, and behavioral support as they transition to in-person learning in schools.

However, PRDE recognizes that extended summer learning is not sufficient for students who have lost significant instructional time due to absenteeism; thus, learning loss mitigation for students who are disengaged and behind grade level academically will require a multi-year approach to address their academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs to ensure student success.

3. Evidence-Based Comprehensive Afterschool Programs: Describe how the SEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(f)(3) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 1 percent of the State's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) for evidence-based comprehensive afterschool programs (including, for example, before-school programming), and ensure such programs respond to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The description must include:
    i. A description of the evidence-based programs (e.g., including partnerships with community-based organizations) the SEA has selected, and the extent to which the SEA will evaluate the impact of those programs;

    PRDE will utilize no less than one (1) percent of the state's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds for comprehensive afterschool programs. PRDE will extend its Extended Academic Enhancement initiative, (RAE, per its acronym in Spanish) as an academic recovery strategy. The purpose is to offer an extended-hour program that includes the following subjects: math, science, Spanish, English, social studies, fine arts or physical education, school health, and occupational programs (as needed).

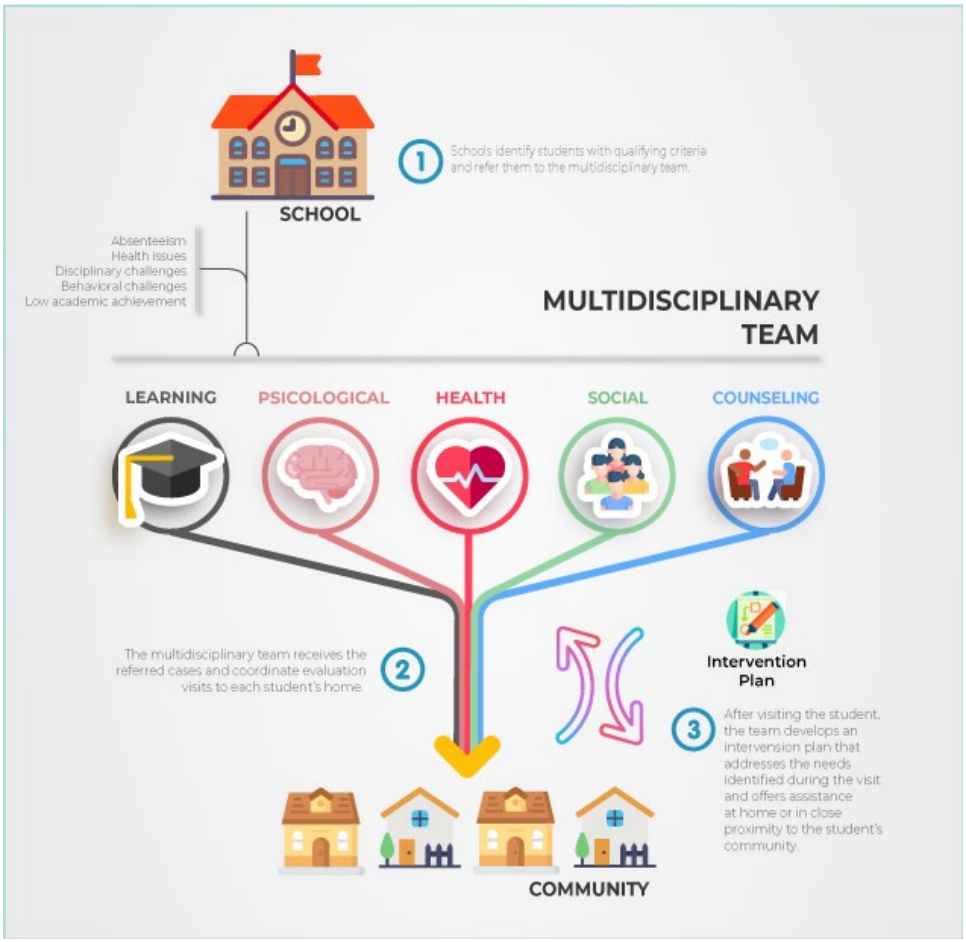
    The supervised study program will emphasize reading comprehension skills in Spanish and English using the STEAM educational approach that encourages integrated learning of the disciplines. Schools that do not

qualify for extended hours services through other federal programs for the same purposes (ie. 21st Century) will participate in this project.

ARP ESSER funds will also be used to continue, expand, or enhance these offerings for complex student cases. Through a multidisciplinary team, schools will provide additional support to students experiencing chronic absenteeism, health issues, discipline problems, or low academic achievement.

To provide the individualized support, afterschool programs will be held within community learning centers, outside school structures, or even at home if necessary.

Schools will identify students that need the most support, either academic, social emotional, or health. The data that has been gathered will be then be provided to the Regional Multidisciplinary Team through a formal referral, and together with the host school, will proceed with collaborative development of the student's intervention plan.



PRDE will monitor student data to evaluate the effectiveness of the comprehensive afterschool programs. Student data includes, but is not limited to, diagnostic data, student attendance data, quantitative and qualitative student performance data, and student feedback.

Evaluation of these interventions will occur annually during the multi-year cycle. If data determines success of the intervention, PRDE will proceed with the cycle and address additional needs, as these where identified. If data determines the intervention is an area in need of improvement, PRDE will readjust the intervention in order to effectively provide its students with the necessary support.

ii. How the evidence-based programs will specifically address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii. When possible, please indicate which data sources the SEA will use to identify students most in need of comprehensive afterschool programming; and

Student groups who were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 will be prioritized for comprehensive afterschool programs based on their needs as identified by student data and the multi-tiered system of support. Additional support will be provided to students experiencing chronic absenteeism, health issues, discipline problems, or low academic achievement.

Student data includes, but is not limited to, diagnostic data, statewide assessment data, student attendance data, quantitative and qualitative student performance data, and school climate data.

Currently, students with disabilities, Spanish language learners, economically disadvantaged students, and enrolled students identified for comprehensive support and improvement prioritized eligibility for afterschool programs funded by federal funds. The use of ARP ESSER funds will allow PRDE to prioritize all students who need additional support

iii. the extent to which the SEA will use funds it reserves to identify and engage 1) students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and 2) students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.

PRDE will communicate with families and students who were disengaged, chronically absent or at risk of failing during the 2020-2021 school year. These students are at greater risk of learning loss due to their lack of participation in online learning and may need intensive student supports to

accelerate learning through comprehensive afterschool programs, either at school or through the multidisciplinary intervention team at the community centers.

4. Emergency Needs: If the SEA plans to reserve funds for emergency needs under section 2001(f)(4) of the ARP Act to address issues responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, describe the anticipated use of those funds, including the extent to which these funds will build SEA and LEA capacity to ensure students' and staff's health and safety; to meet students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs; and to use ARP ESSER funds to implement evidence-based interventions.

   PRDE plans to reserve funds to address any emergency needs that may result from the COVID-19 pandemic. ESSER funds are currently being used to build capacity to ensure the health and safety of students and employees is tended to appropriately; meet students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs; and implement evidence-based interventions to mitigate learning loss. Funds will also be used to ensure the continuity of educational services should the impact of the pandemic worsen.

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E. Supporting LEAs in Planning for and Meeting Students' Needs

The Department recognizes that the safe return to in-person instruction must be accompanied by a focus on meeting students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, and by addressing the opportunity gaps that existed before – and were exacerbated by – the pandemic. In this section, SEAs will describe how they will support their LEAs in developing high-quality plans for LEAs' use of ARP ESSER funds to achieve these objectives.

1. LEA Plans for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds: Describe what the SEA will require its LEAs to include in LEA plans consistent with the ARP ESSER requirements for the use of ARP ESSER funds, how the SEA will require such plans to be made available to the public, and the deadline by which the LEA must submit its ARP ESSER plan (which must be a reasonable timeline and should be within no later than 90 days after receiving its ARP ESSER allocation). The LEA plans must include, at a minimum:
    i. The extent to which and how the funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, in line with the most recent CDC guidance, in order to continuously and safely operate schools for in-person learning;
    ii. How the LEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 20 percent of the LEA's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs;
    iii. How the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act; and
    iv. 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.

    As a unitary system, PRDE will fulfill the ARP ESSER requirements of both the SEA and LEA. The PRDE will implement the mitigation strategies described in section B.1.i and the interventions to mitigate learning loss described in section D as the SEA and LEA.

    Faced with the public health emergency due to the 2019 coronavirus disease pandemic (COVID-19), the PRDE has established a prevention guidance to provide schools the necessary strategies for the safe operation of schools during the pandemic. The guidance is based on the guidelines of the Centers for the Control and Prevention of Diseases (CDC) and the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), among others. The

prevention strategies presented in the guide aims to achieve a safe operation of schools under strict health prevention and mitigation measures to reduce the risk of virus transmission SARS-CoV-2 on school sites while serving the educational needs of students, children and youth, including those receiving services from the Special Education Program.

PRDE proactively collaborates with the Puerto Rico Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on guidance for our schools, and central level.

In preparation for the return of more students to in-person learning, the PRDE will continue to diligently monitor developments related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Regardless of the level of transmission of COVID-19 in the community, the CDC has highlighted the consistent and combined implementation of different strategies to prevent its transmission in schools and continue offering face-to-face classes safely. The nine (9) essential prevention strategies are:

- Get vaccinated as soon as you are eligible
- Universal, correct and mandatory use of masks
- Maintain physical distancing
- Use of tests for early identification of cases, clusters and outbreaks
- Improve classroom ventilation
- Hand washing and respiratory hygiene
- Stay home when you are sick and get tested for COVID-19
- Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine measures
- Cleaning and disinfection of school buildings

Despite careful planning and consistent implementation of prevention, there are situations in which the temporary closure of a school or parts of a school (such as a class, a cohort, or a grade) for classes face-to-face proceeds. These decisions will be made jointly by the officials of the Health Department and the PRDE, after careful consideration of various factors and with an emphasis on ensuring the health and well-being of students, their families, teachers and school staff. In such cases, schools should do their best to continue classes through synchronous remote learning or home activities.

To improve ventilation, schools must increase fresh air circulation from the outside. Fresh air intake reduces contaminants in closed spaces. PRDE's guidance also states to use window fans, with child restraint systems, to increase the effectiveness of open windows. The fan should be fixed in a window to remove potentially contaminated air and allow fresh air to enter.

In those cases where windows don't function properly, PRDE will proceed on replacing those in order to improve classroom's air ventilation.

As mentioned on section A.1 of this state plan, PRDE has worked with the Puerto Rico Department of Health to host massive vaccination campaign for staff, students, and school communities across the island. With the authorization to administer the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to children who are at least 12 years of age, the PRDE has approximately 46,000 students (eligible for vaccination) that have completed their vaccination doses. The goal is to increase the number of fully vaccinated people on school campuses and in school communities.

PRDE has made publicly available all information regarding the procedures and policies adopted to ensure the safe return to in-person instruction on its webpage: https://de.pr.gov/ prior to the 2020-2021 school year and continuously has updated the guidance as necessary, as recently as in July 2021.

In relation to how the unitary system will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs; PRDE will do so by extending those initiatives described in section D.1.i and ii.

However, it is important to highlight that through the ongoing consultation that PRDE plans to follow, this state plan is considered a live document. All strategies, here included (section E), are subject to modifications, if our school community such requires it. In addition, PRDE may identify and develop other strategies to help support the students. Any other strategy, not included in this state plan, will be presented to USDE for approval and proceed with an amendment process of the Puerto Rico's ARP ESSER State Plan.

Through a collaborative network and coherent plan, PRDE will effectively implement the abovementioned evidence-based interventions.

Schools will be part of the planning of the multi-year cycle. Having a continuous improvement mindset, opportunities will be constantly created to assess ongoing needs, trying new strategies, and making necessary adjustments. PRDE fully intends to support students in achieving accelerated learning rates so that students are meeting grade and/or content-level standards.

The coherent plan will begin with the review and analysis of data, community input and research on evidence-based practices to address lost instructional time and close performance gaps.

Regional Educational Offices and Schools will be supported through the following initiatives:

(Please note, details of these initiatives are included in section D.1.i)

- High-Impact tutoring
- High quality instructional materials
- HyFlex Classroom
- Healthy environments at Classrooms
- Professional learning
- Extended school day
- Summer learning programs
- Student Growth Incentive
- Social, emotional, and mental health supports

The **SMARTS** (Students, Measurable, Accelerated, Relevant, Teachers, and Socioemotional and health) **Integrated System of Support** is embedded in the multi-year plan. Through the SMARTS Integrated System of Support, PRDE will be able to address the abovementioned student's academic, social emotional or health needs.

As mentioned in section D.1.i, the multi-year planning cycle is necessary for PRDE to provide effective support, by starting with the planning, that will lead to the intervention, followed by an evaluation or monitoring of the support provided, complete an assessment of the outcome, and readjust the planning, accordingly. The **SMARTS System of Support** will continue through 2024 when the goals of ARP ESSER III funds are met. Please refer to section D.1.i, for specific details of the six phases included in the multi-year cycle.

For the next three years, the **SMARTS Integrated System of Support** will be used as a structure for continuous planning and responding to address student and teacher's needs. The cycle will also support the most impacted groups of students with an individual academic improvement plan, if necessary.

PRDE will evaluate the impact of each of these interventions, with qualitative data, including stakeholder feedback, in order to assist schools in determining next steps.

Other quantitative metrics will include those that indicate changes to the learning environment such as results of school climate surveys, hours of

mental health services provided, and percent of students receiving social emotional support.

Evaluation of these interventions will occur each year during the multi-year cycle. If the intervention worked, PRDE will proceed with the cycle and address additional needs, as these where identified; if not, PRDE will readjust the intervention in order to effectively provide its students the support needed.

Student groups who were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 will be prioritized for learning loss interventions based on their needs identified by student data and through the analysis performed in the multi-year cycle. Student data will include, but not be limited to, diagnostic data, statewide assessment data, student attendance data, quantitative and qualitative student performance data, and school climate data.

PRDE will provides additional support for students with disabilities, Spanish language learners, economically disadvantaged students, students experiencing homelessness, and students struggling in the traditional classroom setting through multiple federal and state programs and will supplement these supports with ARP ESSER-funded interventions, through the SMARTS Integrated System of Support.

These interventions include comprehensive summer programming targeting these subgroups of students and mobile and community outreach to provide academic supports and wraparound services within the communities of need. Funds will be prioritized to provide evidence-based interventions for underperforming students of identified subgroups based on complex area data to address academic, social, emotional and mental health needs.

PRDE will continue to provide students with devices to ensure equitable access to all learning opportunities and to ensure students have the resources necessary to be successful in school. This will require PRDE to invest resources in systems to ensure student safety, device-use monitoring, and maintenance of software and hardware.

Distance Learning will be leveraged to facilitate the learning of challenging content and courses, especially for students in remote rural areas where offerings may be limited at the home school.

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2. LEA Consultation: Describe how the SEA will, in planning for the use of ARP ESSER funds, ensure that, consistent with the ARP ESSER requirements], its LEAs engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders, including, but not limited to:
    i. students;
    ii. families;
    iii. school and district administrators (including special education administrators); and
    iv. teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions.

    The LEA must also engage in meaningful consultation with each of the following to the extent present in or served by the LEA:
    i. Tribes;
    ii. civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and
    iii. stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

    The description must also include how the SEA will ensure that LEAs provide the public the opportunity to provide input in the development of the LEA's plan for the use of ARP ESSER funds and take such input into account.

    Consultation efforts described in section C.1 applies to PRDE as a unitary system.

    Please refer to the abovementioned section for details over consultation efforts. Survey results have been included in appendix E.

    PRDE distributed online surveys related to the ARP ESSER plan to all stakeholders.

    5,944 questionnaires from parents, teachers, students from the 8th grade and 12th grade, representatives of civil organizations, stakeholders representing children with disabilities, Spanish learners, children experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and incarcerated children.

    Another **11,442** surveys were answered by students from 1st grade and 7th grade, **2** surveys were answered by non-for-profit organizations, and **559** surveys were answered by school leaders, superintendents, and charter school leaders.

    While PRDE attempted to receive input from all stakeholder groups, none was received related specifically to unions.

    From the beginning of the pandemic, PRDE has maintained focus on collaboration and consultation with many stakeholder groups.

As a summary of the input received from stakeholders, PRDE identified that it was overwhelmingly aligned to the stated prioritization and needs around learning acceleration and mental health.

As a SEA, PRDE requested its School Educational Regions (ORE's) to provide a list of what they understand would be the most relevant initiatives to address the academic acceleration and social emotional needs. Results of this SEA consultation were included in section C.1 of this document for it responded to our SEA consultation.

PRDE will conduct ongoing meaningful engagement with stakeholders. The Department will continue to develop a comprehensive set of strategies for the ARP ESSER funds in the coming months using feedback from ongoing engagement and consultation with the US Department of Education.

PRDE has also posted a draft of its ARP ESSER plan on the PRDE website for any member of the public to provide feedback from September 10th – 20th, 2021. As of the date this state plan was submitted to USDE, PRDE has received 70 comments.

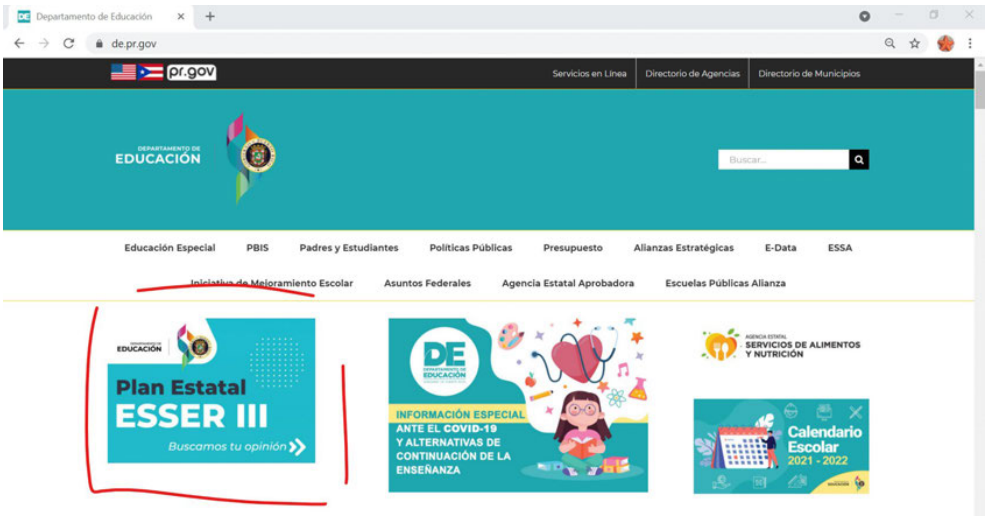
All comments received were analyzed. PRDE identified that 34% of the comments stated the urgency to improve school's infrastructure and classroom conditions, including the purchase of 21st Century technology for the classrooms.

Another 23% of the comments stated that PRDE needs to reinforce the academic, psychological and health support within schools due to the pandemic of COVID-19, as to providing the alternative of mode of instruction, screening testing, and reducing school hours.

A 11% of comments stated the urgency to increase salary and provide additional incentives to the school personnel due to the work performed during the pandemic.

This was followed by a 9% of the comments which stated that PRDE needs to provide teachers with better instructional materials.

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The input received will inform how PRDE will prioritize the use of ARP ESSER funds as it plans for the return of students to its school campuses and the implementation of educational opportunities to reengage students and accelerate learning to increase student achievement.

It is important to highlight that through the ongoing consultation that PRDE plans to follow, this state plan is considered a live document. All strategies, here included (section D and E), are subject to modifications, if our school community such requires it. In addition, PRDE may identify and develop other strategies to help support the students. Any other strategy, not included in this state plan, will be presented to USDE for approval and proceed with an amendment process of the Puerto Rico's ARP ESSER State Plan.

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3. Describe how the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs in using ARP ESSER funds. The description must include:
    i. How the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs' implementation of evidence-based interventions that respond to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, such as through summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs – including the extent to which the SEA will collect evidence of the effectiveness of interventions employed;
    ii. How the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs in specifically addressing the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii; and
    iii. How the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs in using ARP ESSER funds to identify, reengage, and support students most likely to have experienced the impact of lost instructional time on student learning, such as:
        1. Students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years;
        2. Students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures; and
        3. Students most at-risk of dropping out of school.

    In order to support and monitor schools in implementation of evidence-based interventions that address disproportionate impact of the pandemic on groups of students, the department will continue to collect disaggregated data to include, but not limited to, data from interim and annual statewide assessments, attendance, discipline, social worker reports, and a variety of surveys related to school climate and social emotional aspects.

    PRDE will analyze the abovementioned data from the student's groups who most likely have experienced the impact of lost instructional time on student learning, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii.

    PRDE is investing in supporting the use of and access to high-quality interim assessments to support schools' efforts to continue close monitoring of student progress and targeted interventions. PRDE will continue integrating training on how ESSER funds may be used to implement interventions that respond to students' needs.

    External Monitoring: PRDE is currently working with a procurement competitive process to select an adequate external vendor to perform monitoring and program review professional services.

    For ESSER I, II, and III funds, as an additional internal control, PRDE will contract a firm with experience in auditing, monitoring and/or program review of federal grants, to have an external point of view and experts on

the filed evaluating the procedures performed related to these emergency grants. Both parties (PRDE and the external evaluator) will agree to perform a risk analysis in order to prioritize the evaluation of implementation of these federal programs at schools and PRDE offices (LEA and SEA levels).

Once a representative sample of schools and initiatives are selected, desk monitoring and visits to locations will take place. After visits and desk monitoring are completed, PRDE will request the noncompliance reports and identification of findings, to follow-up and ensure the Corrective Action Plans (CAP) required are implemented or followed, accordingly. The vendor and PRDE SEA level program will follow up to the CAP.

4. Describe the extent to which the SEA will support its LEAs in implementing additional strategies for taking educational equity into account in expending ARP ESSER funds, including but not limited to:
    i. Allocating funding both to schools and for districtwide activities based on student need, and
    ii. Implementing an equitable and inclusive return to in-person instruction. An inclusive return to in-person instruction includes, but is not limited to, establishing policies and practices that avoid the over-use of exclusionary discipline measures (including in- and out-of-school suspensions) and creating a positive and supportive learning environment for all students.

    Educational equity means that every student has access to the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background, and/or family income, including socioeconomic status. Different communities, families and students experience the effects of the pandemic in different ways, requiring schools to in turn differentiate responses based on need.

    It is for this reason that schools and their academic, social emotional and health personnel are required to provide detailed student information, in order for PRDE to register it by student subgroup and better identify their specific needs. To the extent possible, the detailed description should include the academic impact of lost instructional time, chronic absenteeism, student engagement, and social-emotional well-being.

    Through the specific and detailed student data, including student discipline and suspension data, is that PRDE will be able to monitor, evaluate and refine the strategies and interventions implemented.

Extensive supports and services will be provided throughout the academic year in order to reengage students in learning and to help them develop appropriate behaviors and social-emotional competencies.

PRDE is committed to providing support to guide Regional Educational Offices and schools toward the strategic and effective use of funds to ensure students get the most learning advantage as schools fully recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Targeted and equitable use of resources is a significant component of closing gaps in students' success among highest needs students' groups.

Return to in-person learning. PRDE understands that in-person instruction is very much needed. For this reason, for the new academic year, all 860 schools were given the option to provide in-person, hybrid or full virtual instruction for the 261,485 students that are enrolled as of today.

770 schools are opting for the onsite instruction (100% face-to-face instruction), while other 31 schools are offering a virtual option, in which students attend full-time off-site (either synchronous or asynchronous) and utilize technology resources for instruction. And a remaining 59 schools are providing the hybrid learning option, by providing students a combined virtual and on-site instruction and utilize a combination of resources.

Policies and practices that avoid the over-use of exclusionary discipline measures. PRDE included provisions in the Special Education Contingency Plan (2020) for Special Education students with maladaptive problem behavior. A student with maladaptive behavior is considered to be those experiencing tantrums, spitting, scratching, pulling hair, getting outside of the classroom, aggression, self-harm, among others.

For these students, the Auxiliary Secretariat of Special Education (SAEE, per its acronym in Spanish) established that the Programming and Locating Committee (COMPU, per its acronym in Spanish) identifies the triggers for these behaviors. The Committee will establish a crisis management protocol within the classroom and an instructional plan that can ensure student health and safety. This provision is aligned to what the IDEA Act establishes: the education of students with disabilities will take place, to the greatest extent possible, in regular classrooms and that a more restrictive placement alternative will only be considered when the impact of the disability is such that, even with modifications, adaptations, supplementary and related services the student is unable to progress academically.

F. Supporting the Educator Workforce

The Department recognizes the toll that the COVID-19 pandemic has taken on the Nation's educators as well as students. In this section, SEAs will describe strategies for supporting and stabilizing the educator workforce and for making staffing decisions that will support students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

1. Supporting and Stabilizing the Educator Workforce:
    i. Describe the extent to which the State is facing shortages of educators, education administration personnel, and other school personnel involved in safely reopening schools, and the extent to which they vary by region/type of school district and/or groups of educators (e.g., special educators and related services personnel and paraprofessionals; bilingual or English as a second language educators; science, technology, engineering, and math ("STEM") educators; career and technical education ("CTE") educators; early childhood educators). Cite specific data on shortages and needs where available.

    PRDE has identified multiple areas of shortages in the educator workforce (teaching and student support) which are identified in Table F1. For this analysis, shortage of full-time equivalent (FTE) is defined as the number of educators whose credentials are not aligned with their current placement.

    To determine shortage areas, teaching areas are ranked by the percentage of courses with teachers lacking aligned credentials to the relevant subject area, grade level or student population. Student support areas are ranked by the percent of the statewide full-time equivalent positions currently filled without the appropriate credential.

    Complete the table below, changing or adding additional rows as needed, or provide a narrative description.

    Table F1.

Area	Data on shortages and needs	FTE (full-time equiv. %)
Special educators and related service personnel and paraprofessionals	*1,296*	*4.61*
Bilingual educators	*252*	*.85*
English as a second language educators	*899*	*3.26*
STEM educators	*411*	*1.36*
CTE educators*	*16*	*Not available*
Early childhood educators	*53*	*.10*
School counselors**	*42*	*.11*
Social workers**	*64*	*.17*

** **Health and behavioral health professionals (Schools Counselors and Social workers).** PRDE will need to recruit additional personnel in order to effectively implement the **SMARTS Integrated System of Support** that is embedded within the multi-year plan. PRDE will perform an assessment in order to identify the specific number of counselors and social workers that are deemed necessary. The assessment will not only cover the above FTE shortage, but also the additional number required to effectively implement the SMARTS Integrated System of Support.*

*** **Career Technical Education.** The Career and Technical Program experienced an increase in retirements of its occupational teachers due to the lack of skillful knowledge in technological equipment. PRDE will perform an assessment to update the above number of FTE shortage reported to USDE.*

The above table provides data on identified shortages area at the PRDE. On February 18, 2021, PRDE submitted to USDE the fiscal year 2019-2020 data over its Teacher Shortage Area.

However, additional information regarding non-teaching personnel that would provide social, emotional and health support to students; and administrative personnel that need to assigned to work at schools and Educational Regional Offices is described below to provide more context on workforce needs and ongoing efforts to address those concerns.

School Nurses. PRDE hired, and plans to continue recruiting school nurses throughout its schools to maintain and monitor health services for students aimed at prevention, preparedness and response to the challenges we continue to face as a consequence of the coronavirus pandemic. For the previous and current academic year, PRDE used ESSER I fund to recruit nurses to perform physical evaluation in the school community, both for students and for the faculty. However, PRDE expects that the service that is being provided to our students, will continue to be in the foreseeable academic years. PRDE plans to use ARP ESSER funds to recruit 429 school nurses for the effective implementation of the SMARTS Integrated Support System for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 academic years.

School Psychologists. PRDE hired, and plans to continue recruiting psychologists to provide early intervention services, supports, and related services to students during the pandemic situation. The purpose of hiring psychologists is to address the students' socio-emotional needs caused during distance education schools' offerings and continues to have during the in-person instruction modality. Even though, PRDE has already recruited psychologists for the previous and current academic year, PRDE expects that the service that is being provided to our students, will continue to be needed in the foreseeable academic years. PRDE plans to use ARP ESSER funds to recruit 116 additional school psychologists to effectively implement the SMARTS Integrated Support System for the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 academic years.

Educational Therapist. During the planning phase of the SMARTS Integrated System of Support, schools will be able to identify students who

are experiencing learning disorders, or attention problems that make learning unusually difficult. Once a child's learning challenges are identified, an educational therapist will provide academic support to help the student develop the skills he or she is missing, and on devising learning strategies that build on her strengths and compensate for her weaknesses. PRDE will use ARP ESSER III funds to recruit educational therapist needed to effectively implement the SMARTS Integrated System of Support.

School leaders: School Directors, Assistant Director, Teacher leaders, and other school staff. As evidenced in the data collected from the surveys and focus groups, there is consensus concerning the supports that Directors need at schools. As of today, PRDE has identified dozens of schools lacking a School Director. Within the surveys, School Directors stated the urgent need to recruit Assistant Directors, Teacher leaders, and other school staff to assist them in performing academic and administrative tasks. The PRDE Alternate Education Program also stated a need of Auxiliary Administrative personnel for its Juvenile Institutions. PRDE will perform an assessment to identify the specific need in each school in order to recruit necessary personnel.

Administrative and Academic personnel at the Regional Educational Offices (OREs, per its acronym in Spanish). As evidenced in the data collected from the surveys and focus groups, there is consensus concerning the supports that OREs need. Within the surveys, Superintendents stated the urgent need to recruit additional Superintendents, Auxiliary Superintendents, Academic and Special Education facilitators, IT personnel, administrative personnel, Procurement personnel, and other office personnel in order to assist them in performing the administrative tasks. PRDE will perform an assessment to identify the specific need in each ORE in order to recruit necessary personnel.

ii. Describe how the SEA will assist its LEAs in identifying the most urgent areas of shortages or potential shortages, with particular plans for individual LEAs facing the most significant needs (e.g., by avoiding layoffs, providing high-quality professional learning opportunities, and addressing the impact of stress or trauma on educators). Include a description of how other Federal COVID-19 funding (e.g., ESSER and GEER funds under the CARES Act and CRRSA Act) have already been used to avoid layoffs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PRDE will held an assessment in schools and at the Regional Educational Offices to identify the most urgent areas of shortages or potential shortages.

Certification and Recertification. As a way to address areas of shortage or potential shortages, the PRDE officially signed a partnership with the

University of Puerto Rico to offer opportunities to current teachers in grades PreK-12 to earn graduate school credit hours - at no cost to them, and achieve a certification or recertification in the area or subject it teaches. PRDE plans to use ARP ESSER funds to extend this strategy to offer courses in other universities and colleges.

PRDE's certification and recertification process is also a way on how PRDE has used funding to avoid layoffs.

Professional Development Organizational System. On September 27, 2021 PRDE plans to launch the Professional Development Organizational System, a platform envisioned to be used as a system for data driven decision making, collection of targeted professional development information, identifying personnel readiness and, target state provided supports and technical assistance. In addition, the platform will provide a variety of professional learning sessions and support to all school staff and PRDE personnel on how to access and accelerate student learning. The Professional Development platform will also allow self-service, interactive training sessions with on-demand resources available to all educators and administrative staff.

The Professional Development platform will allow PRDE to identify the most urgent areas of shortages.



iii. Describe the actions the SEA will take to fill anticipated gaps in certified teachers for the start of the 2021-2022 school year and to what extent the SEA will further support its LEAs in expanding the educator pipeline and educator diversity while addressing the immediate needs of students disproportionately impacted by the pandemic (e.g., recruiting teaching candidates to provide high-dosage tutoring or implementing residencies for teacher candidates).

Certification and Recertification. PRDE plans to use ARP ESSER funds to extend this strategy (explained in detail above) to offer courses in other universities and colleges.

Professional Development Organizational System. The Professional Development Organizational System (explained in detail above) will provide relevant data that will allow PRDE to identify anticipated gaps in certified teachers before the academic year.

Retention strategy. PRDE plans to use ARP ESSER funds to provide a one-time paid-leave license to qualified personnel that will help PRDE address its most urgent areas of shortages or potential shortages. Those who complete the certification or recertification process, through the one-time paid-leave license, will be required to sign a 5-year commitment to teach that particular subject matter in PRDE. This strategy also contributes to a more professional workforce, which is so needed in the educational field.

Bonus and Salary increase for permanent, probatory and transitory employees. PRDE also plans on using ARP ESSER funds to further compensate staff who continues to shows a high sense of responsibility during the pandemic and supports the continuity of the services and the educational process.

However, thru the various consultation processes that were performed, PRDE repeatedly identified the urgency to also address salary increase. Therefore, this will be further analyzed and considered as an indirect retention strategy. PRDE understands that further shortages may arrive if it doesn't address this need.

Both of these strategies will help PRDE on minimizing the effect we are experiencing; more teachers and school personnel leaving the public system.

2. Staffing to Support Student Needs: Describe the extent to which the SEA has developed or will develop strategies and will support its LEAs in increasing student access to key support staff within school buildings, including school counselors, special education personnel, nurses, social workers, and psychologists (e.g. hiring additional personnel or freeing up these staff to focus on providing services to students).

Is through a collaborative network and coherent plan, that PRDE will effectively increase student access to key support staff within school buildings, including school counselors, special education personnel, nurses, social workers, and psychologists.

Schools will be part of the planning of a multi-year cycle that will allow PRDE to achieve a continuous improvement mindset, create constant opportunities to assess ongoing needs, trying new strategies, and making necessary adjustments.

The coherent plan will begin with the review and analysis of data, community input and research on evidence-based practices to address lost instructional time and close performance gaps.
Regional Educational Offices and Schools will be supported through the following initiatives:

(Please note, details of these initiatives are included in section D.1.i)

- High-Impact tutoring
- High quality instructional materials
- HyFlex Classroom
- Healthy environments at Classrooms
- Professional learning
- Extended school day
- Summer learning programs
- Student Growth Incentive
- Social, emotional, and mental health supports

The **SMARTS** (Students, Measurable, Accelerated, Relevant, Teachers, and Socioemotional and health) **Integrated System of Support** is embedded in the multi-year plan. Through the SMARTS Integrated System of Support, PRDE will be able to address the abovementioned student's academic, social emotional, or health needs.

As mentioned in section D.1.i, the multi-year planning cycle is necessary for PRDE to provide effective support, by starting with the planning, that will lead to the intervention, followed by an evaluation or monitoring of the support provided, complete an assessment of the outcome, and readjust the planning, accordingly. The **SMARTS System of Support** will continue through 2024 when the goals of

ARP ESSER III funds are met. Please refer to section D.1.i, for specific details of the six phases included in the multi-year cycle.

For the next three years, the **SMARTS Integrated System of Support** will be used as a structure for continuous planning and responding to address student and teacher's needs. The cycle will also support the most impacted groups of students with an individual academic improvement plan, if necessary.

PRDE will evaluate the impact of each of these interventions, with qualitative data, including stakeholder feedback, in order to assist schools in determining next steps.

Other quantitative metrics will include those that indicate changes to the learning environment such as results of school climate surveys, hours of mental health services provided, and percent of students receiving social emotional support.

Evaluation of these interventions will occur each year during the multi-year cycle. If the intervention worked, PRDE will proceed with the cycle and address additional needs, as these where identified; if not, PRDE will readjust the intervention in order to effectively provide its students the support needed.

Student groups who were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 will be prioritized for learning loss interventions based on their needs identified by student data and through the analysis performed in the multi-year cycle. Student data will include, but not be limited to, diagnostic data, statewide assessment data, student attendance data, quantitative and qualitative student performance data, and school climate data.

PRDE will provides additional support for students with disabilities, Spanish language learners, economically disadvantaged students, students experiencing homelessness, and students struggling in the traditional classroom setting through multiple federal and state programs and will supplement these supports with ARP ESSER-funded interventions, through the SMARTS Integrated System of Support.

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G. Monitoring and Measuring Progress

The Department recognizes that transparency on how ARP ESSER funds are used and their impact on the Nation's education system is a fundamental responsibility of Federal, State, and local government. In this section, SEAs will describe how they are building capacity at the SEA and LEA levels to ensure high-quality data collection and reporting and to safeguard funds for their intended purposes.

1. Capacity for Data Collection and Reporting: It is important for an SEA to continuously monitor progress and make adjustments to its strategies, as well as to support its LEAs in making adjustments to LEA strategies, based on impact. Describe how the SEA will ensure its capacity and the capacity of its LEAs to collect data on reporting requirements, including but not limited to the examples of reporting requirements described in the SEA's Grant Award Notification (listed in Appendix B). Describe the SEA's capacity and strategy to collect data from its LEAs (disaggregated by student group, where applicable), to the greatest extent practicable, including any steps the SEA will take to build its capacity in the future (which may include the use of ARP ESSER and other Federal COVID-19 pandemic funds at the SEA and LEA levels), on issues that may include the following:
    i. Student learning, including the academic impact of lost instructional time during the COVID-19 pandemic;
    ii. Opportunity to learn measures (e.g., chronic absenteeism; student engagement; use of exclusionary discipline; access to and participation in advanced coursework; access to technology, including educator access to professional development on the effective use of technology; access to high-quality educators; access to school counselors, social workers, nurses, and school psychologists; and results from student, parent, and/or educator surveys);
    iii. Fiscal data that is comparable across the State (e.g., per-pupil expenditures at the LEA and school levels);
    iv. Jobs created and retained (by position type);
    v. Participation in programs funded by ARP ESSER resources (e.g., summer and afterschool programs); and
    vi. Other reporting requirements reasonably required by the Secretary (please refer to Appendix B of this template; final requirements will be issued separately).

    PRDE will acquire a platform that provides the mechanism to register students' attendance both in present and remote learning. Also, to identify students using a code identification card to register attendance electronically and promote location monitoring while using school transportation services; and provide efficient and modern communication between student parents and school staff.

    The new Student Information System will ensure PRDE's capacity and the capacity of our schools to collect data on reporting requirements.

In order to support and monitor schools in implementation of the abovementioned evidence-based interventions, that will address disproportionate impact of the pandemic on groups of students, PRDE will continue to collect disaggregated data to include, but not limited to, data from interim and annual statewide assessments, attendance, discipline, social worker reports, and a variety of surveys related to school climate and social emotional aspects.

It is for this reason that schools and their academic, social emotional and health personnel are required to provide detailed student information, in order for PRDE to register it by student subgroup and better identify their specific needs. To the extent possible, the detailed description should include the academic impact of lost instructional time, chronic absenteeism, student engagement, and social-emotional well-being.

Through the specific and detailed student data, including student discipline and suspension data, is that PRDE will be able to monitor, evaluate and refine the strategies and interventions implemented.

Extensive supports and services will be provided throughout the academic year in order to reengage students in learning and to help them develop appropriate behaviors and social-emotional competencies.

PRDE will analyze the data from the student's groups who most likely have experienced the impact of lost instructional time on student learning, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii.

PRDE is investing in supporting the use of and access to high-quality interim assessments to support schools' efforts to continue close monitoring of student progress and targeted interventions.

2. Monitoring and Internal Controls: Describe how the SEA will implement appropriate fiscal monitoring of and internal controls for the ARP ESSER funds (e.g., by updating the SEA's plan for monitoring funds and internal controls under the CARES and CRRSA Acts; addressing potential sources of waste, fraud, and abuse; conducting random audits; or other tools). In this response, please describe the SEA's current capacity to monitor ARP ESSER; steps, if needed, to increase capacity; and any foreseeable gaps in capacity, including how the SEA will provide its LEAs with technical assistance in the anticipated areas of greatest need.

   PRDE is currently working with a procurement competitive process to select an adequate external vendor to perform monitoring and program review professional services.

For ESSER I, II, and III funds, as an additional internal control, PRDE will contract a firm with experience in auditing, monitoring and/or program review of federal grants, to have an external point of view and experts on the filed evaluating the procedures performed related to these emergency grants. Both parties (PRDE and the external evaluator) will agree to perform a risk analysis in order to prioritize the evaluation of implementation of these federal programs at schools and PRDE offices (LEA and SEA levels).

Once a representative sample of schools and initiatives are selected, desk monitoring and visits to locations will take place. After visits and desk monitoring are completed, PRDE will request the noncompliance reports and identification of findings. PRDE will proceed on ensuring the Corrective Action Plans required are implemented or followed, accordingly. The vendor and PRDE SEA level program will follow up to the Corrective Action Plans.

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Appendix A: School Operating Status and Instructional Mode Data Template

Indicate the date or time period represented by the following data.

Click here to enter text.

Table 1

In the most recent time period available, how many schools in your State offered each mode of instruction or learning model described below? Each row should account for all schools in your State, so that, for each row, the sum of the numbers in the "offered to all students," "offered to some students," and "not offered" columns is equal to the number in the "all schools" column.

Add or change rows as needed

Number of schools	All schools	Offered to all students	Offered to some students	Not offered
Remote or online only	31	0	31	0
School buildings open with both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid)	59	0	59	0
School buildings open with full-time in-person instruction	770	0	770	0

To the extent data are available, please complete the above table for 1) all schools in the State, and 2) separately for each instructional level (e.g., pre-kindergarten/elementary schools, middle schools, high schools).

Below, PRDE is including data segregated by instructional level.

Number of schools	All schools	Remote or online only	hybrid	In-person instruction
Primary Schools	605	16	45	544
Secondary Schools	153	6	9	138
Schools will all level	85	9	3	73

Below, PRDE is segregating from above the data from our eight (8) shared schools, six (6) Post-Secondary Institutes, and three (3) Post-Secondary Vocational.

Number of schools	All schools	Remote or online only	hybrid	In-person instruction
Shared Schools	8	0	2	6
Post-Secondary Institutes	6	0	0	6
Post-Secondary Vocational	3	0	0	3

Table 2

In the most recent time period available, what was the enrollment and mode of instruction for the schools in your State?

Add or change rows as needed

Data included in this table was gathered from the active enrollment information. This information is not considered the certified enrollment data of PRDE, for the enrollment certification for the 2021-2022 academic year is scheduled for September 2021.

Number of students	**Total enrollment**		**Remote or online only**	**Both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid)**	**Full-time in-person instruction**
Students from low-income families	203,170		5,671	13,011	184,488
White, not Hispanic	733		25	45	663
Black or African American, not Hispanic	64		2	2	60
Hispanic, of any race	258,842		7,516	16,360	234,966
Asian, not Hispanic	38		1	1	36
American Indian or Alaskan Native, not Hispanic	116		1	9	106
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, not Hispanic	16		0	5	11
Two or more races, not Hispanic	Not collected		Not collected	Not collected	Not collected
Race/Ethnicity information not available	0		0	0	0
English learners*	392		13	30	349
Children with disabilities	79,482		1,913	4,795	72,774
Students experiencing homelessness	16		0	7	9
Children and youth in foster care	55		1	3	51
Migratory students		PRDE does not have any migratory students.			

***** *In Puerto Rico, Spanish is the language of instruction, as well as the predominant language used in commerce and social interaction. Spanish Learners (SL) in Puerto Rico is the group of students that is not fluent or is limited in the Spanish language in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and parallels the English language learner (ELL) group in mainland states.*

Appendix B: Reporting Language Included in the Grant Award Notification ("GAN")

As described in the Grant Award Notification ("GAN"), the SEA will comply with, and ensure that its LEAs comply with, all reporting requirements at such time and in such manner and containing such information as the Secretary may reasonably require, including on matters such as:

- How the State is developing strategies and implementing public health protocols including, to the greatest extent practicable, policies and plans in line with the CDC guidance related to mitigating COVID-19 in schools;
- Overall plans and policies related to State support for return to in-person instruction and maximizing in-person instruction time, including how funds will support a return to and maximize in-person instruction time, and advance equity and inclusivity in participation in in-person instruction;
- Data on each school's mode of instruction (fully in-person, hybrid, and fully remote) and conditions;
- SEA and LEA uses of funds to meet students' social, emotional, and academic needs, including through summer enrichment programming and other evidence-based interventions, and how they advance equity for underserved students;
- SEA and LEA uses of funds to sustain and support access to early childhood education programs;
- Impacts and outcomes (disaggregated by student subgroup) through use of ARP ESSER funding (e.g., quantitative and qualitative results of ARP ESSER funding, including on personnel, student learning, and budgeting at the school and district level);
- Student data (disaggregated by student subgroup) related to how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected instruction and learning;
- Requirements under the Federal Financial Accountability Transparency Act ("FFATA"); and
- Additional reporting requirements as may be necessary to ensure accountability and transparency of ARP ESSER funds.

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Appendix C: Assurances

By signing this document, the SEA assures all of the following:

1. The SEA will conduct all its operations so that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under the ARP ESSER program or activity based on race, color, national origin, which includes a person's limited English proficiency or English learner status and a person's actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics; sex; age; or disability. These non-discrimination obligations arise under Federal civil rights laws, including but not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. In addition, the SEA must comply with all regulations, guidelines, and standards issued by the Department under any of these statutes;
2. The SEA will comply with all ARP Act and other ARP ESSER requirements and all requirements of its Grant Award Notification, including but not limited to:
    a. Complying with the maintenance of effort provision in section 2004(a)(1) of the ARP Act, absent a waiver by the Secretary pursuant to section 2004(a)(2) of the ARP Act; and
    b. Complying with the maintenance of equity provisions in section 2004(b) of the ARP Act, and ensuring its LEAs comply with the maintenance of equity provision in section 2004(c) of the ARP Act (please note that the Department will provide additional guidance on maintenance of equity shortly);
3. The SEA will allocate ARP ESSER funds to LEAs in an expedited and timely manner and, to the extent practicable, not later than 60 days after the SEA receives ARP ESSER funds (i.e., 60 days from the date the SEA receives each portion of its ARP ESSER funds). An SEA that is not able to allocate such funds within 60 days because it is not practicable (e.g., because of pre-existing State board approval requirements) will provide an explanation to the Department within 30 days of receiving each portion of its ARP ESSER funds (submitted via email to your Program Officer at [State].OESE@ed.gov (e.g., Alabama.OESE@ed.gov)), including a description of specific actions the SEA is taking to provide ARP ESSER funds to LEAs in an expedited and timely manner and the SEA's expected timeline for doing so;
4. The SEA will implement evidence-based interventions as required under section 2001(f) of the ARP Act and ensure its LEAs implement evidence-based interventions, as required by section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act;
5. The SEA will address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on underserved students (i.e., students from low-income families, students from racial or ethnic groups (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity), gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender), English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students), as required under section 2001(f) of the ARP Act, and ensure its LEAs address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on underserved students (i.e., students from low-income families, students from racial or ethnic groups, gender, English

learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students), as required by section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act; and

6. The SEA will provide to the Department: (1) the URL(s) where the public can readily find data on school operating status and (2) the URL(s) for the SEA and/or LEA websites where the public can find the LEA plans for a) the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services required under section 2001(i) of the ARP Act, and b) use of ARP ESSER funds. SEAs should consider ensuring a standardized URL format in all cases (e.g., xxx.gov/COVIDplan).

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Appendix D: GEPA

OMB Control No. 1894-0005 (Exp. 06/30/2023)

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Educations General Education Provisions Act ("GEPA") that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access to, or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

(1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving,

among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

(2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

(4) An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concerns of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

Puerto Rico Department of Education - General Education Provisions Act (GEPA):

Under the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ARP ESSER Fund), the PRDE is required to comply with the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA).

Hereby, in carrying out its educational mission, the PRDE will ensure to the fullest extent possible equitable access to, participation in, and appropriate educational opportunities for individuals served. Federally funded activities, programs, and services will be accessible to all teachers, students and program beneficiaries and other PRDE personnel and staff.

The PRDE does not discriminate under any circumstance on the grounds of age, race, color, gender, birth, religion, veteran status, political ideals, sexual orientation, gender identity, social condition or background, physical or mental incapacity; or for being victim of aggression, harassment, or domestic violence. This statement is widely utilized in all the Agency's procedures, which include, hiring of personnel, human resources procedures, enrolment process, etc.

The PRDE is engaged to provide an equal opportunity for all students and teachers, among others, to fully participate from Federally-funded project and/or activities. PRDE has a legal division with attorneys and investigators, that work with all complaints concerning Civil Rights. All cases are investigated and viable ways for a fair resolution in a timely manner are provided.

Among PRDE's efforts to comply with these provisions are the following:

- Holding program related sessions/activities in Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible and compliant facilities
- Printing materials in multiple languages
- Offering multi-lingual services for participants and others as needed and appropriate
- Responsiveness to cultural differences
- Fostering a positive school climate through restorative practices

- Conducting outreach efforts and target marketing to those not likely to participate
- Making program materials available in braille, via audiotapes, or by providing interpretation services
- Providing assistive technology devices to translate/make accessible grant and program materials for participants requiring such accommodations (i.e. inclined planes, communicators (Go Talk 9), FM equipment, electronic Braille notepads and programmed computers that facilitate learning for students who cannot read or are blind, printers, reading guides, equipment to expand font size and chairs adapted for lounges, wheelchairs).
- Using technologies to convey content of program materials
- Using materials that include strategies for addressing the needs of all participants
- Development and/or acquisition and dissemination of culturally relevant and sensitive curriculum and informational materials
- Use of transportation services that include handicapped accommodations
- Adapted Physical Education - A diversified program of development activities, games, sports, and rhythms tailored to the needs and interests of students with disabilities who cannot benefit from unrestricted participation in vigorous Regular Physical Education program activities
- Providing School nurses and social work services

In addition, in designing the projects and activities, PRDE address equity, including students and teachers with disabilities. Every year, the Special Education Program staff, visit all school buildings in the search for physical barriers and the findings are reported in order for the corresponding Agency to promptly adapt structures and/or provide special accommodations for people with disabilities. In addition, for students with visual impairments, PRDE ensures they have the instructional materials and equipment adapted for them to fully join activities and instruction services. Depending on the disability, the IEP will describe the accommodations needed for students to assure equal participation.

As for the dissemination of the grant opportunities, PRDE will post the information in the webpage to inform all public. In addition, PRDE will ensure the participation of students from all subgroups into charter schools.

PRDE will require charter schools to comply with all policies and procedures that address equal opportunities in all areas. An orientation will be provided to all applicants, where this topic will be discussed. Finally, PRDE will monitor compliance and will provide technical assistance to charter schools managers as needed.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.

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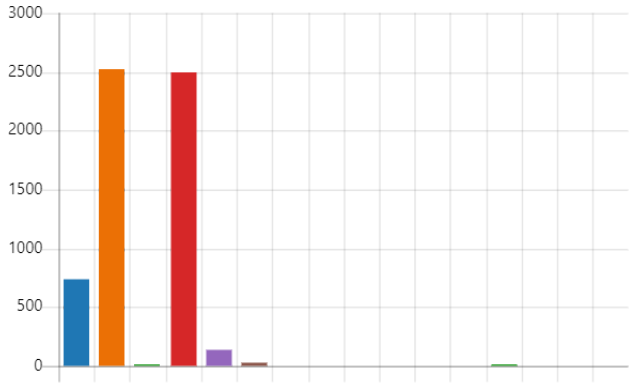
Appendix E: Stakeholders Input

ENCUESTA DE PERCEPCIÓN PARA LA INVERSIÓN DE LOS FONDOS DEL DEPR

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Responses	Average time to complete	Status

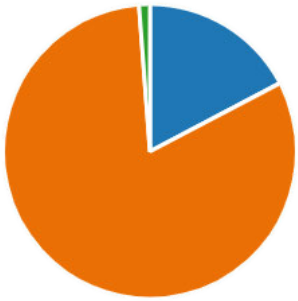
1. **Elija el grupo de interés que mejor le representa**

Estudiante	737
Padre o tutor	2521
Miembro de la comunidad	18
Maestro/a	2489
Personal Escolar	132
Director Escolar	32
Director o Representante de E...	2
Superintendente Regional	1
Superintendente Auxiliar	1
Facilitador Docente	1
Miembro de una Organizació...	0
Miembro de una Organizació...	0
Persona que representa los int...	10
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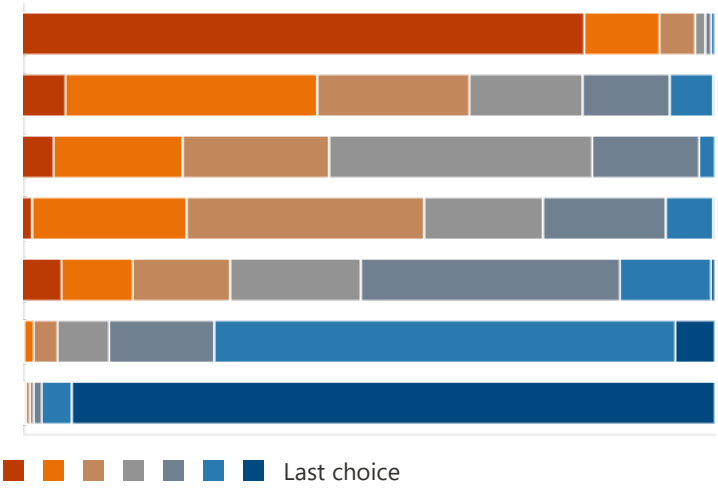
2. **¿Está satisfecho con sus condiciones laborales?**

Sí	462
No	2174
No aplica	32

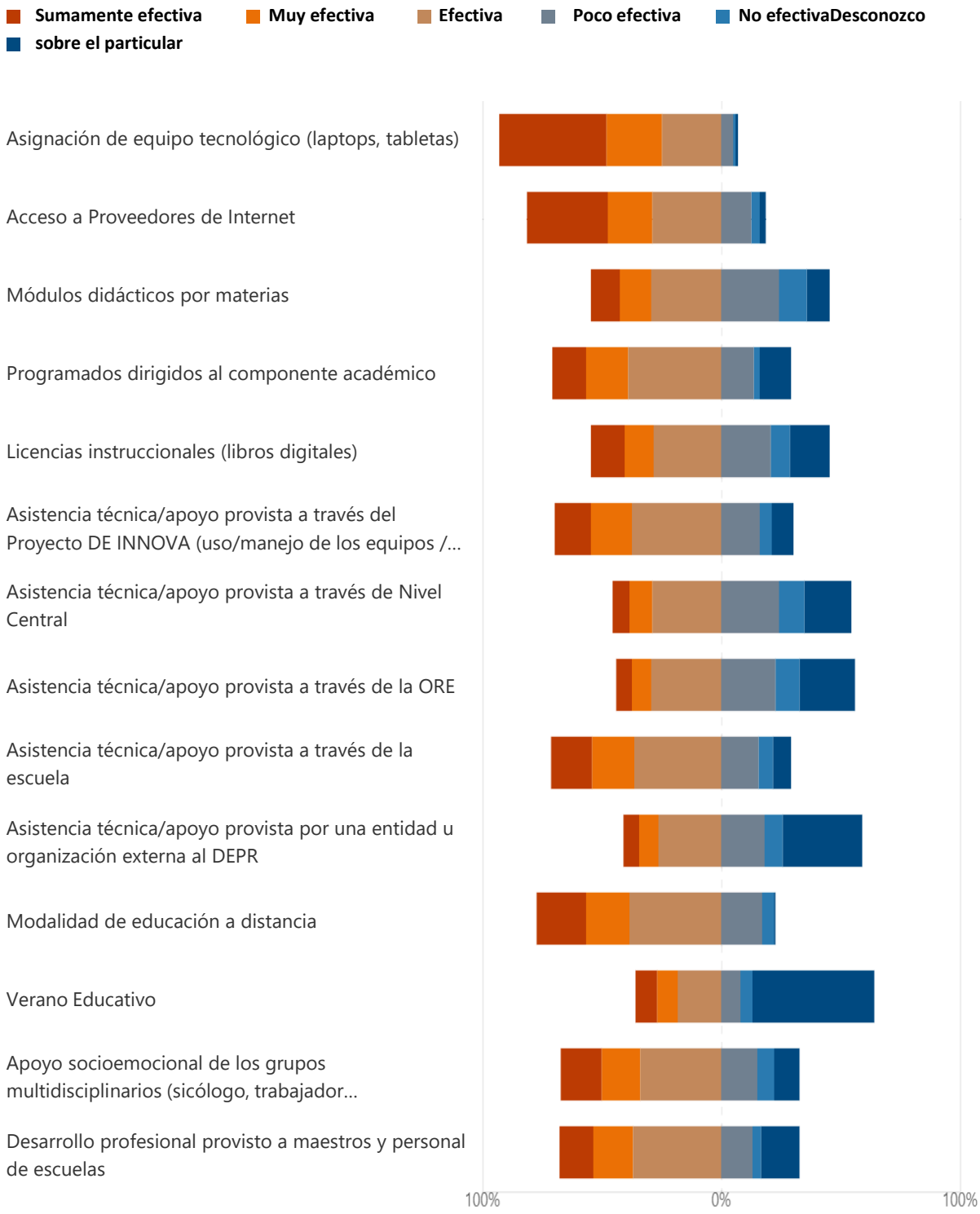


3. **Coloque en orden de prioridad las siguientes premisas desde la más importante hasta la menos importante, en relación con su condición laboral**

Rank	Options
1	Salario
2	Bonificación/Compensación
3	Equipo/herramientas de trabajo
4	Beneficios marginales
5	Planta fisica
6	Desarrollo profesional
7	Otros



4. **Según su experiencia, indique la EFECTIVIDAD de las siguientes estrategias para apoyar las necesidades de los estudiantes durante lapandemia de CoVID-19 según aplique**



5. Referente a la pregunta anterior, presente alguna estrategia que entiendadeba ser considerada (1)

2240

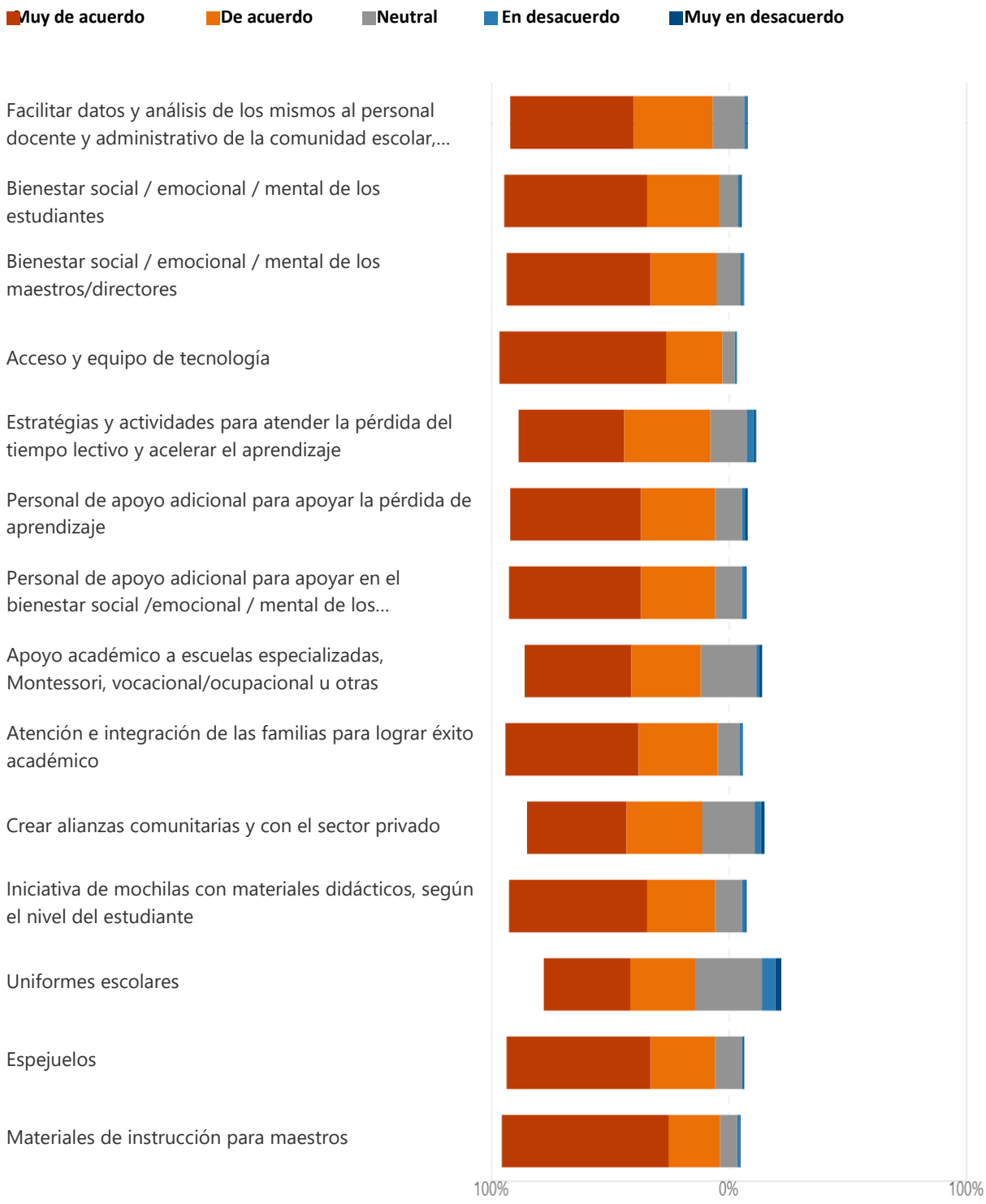
Responses

Latest Responses

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6. A continuación, encontrará una lista de necesidades para el año escolar2021-2022, en términos del impacto que ha causado la pandemia de CoVID-19.

   Para cada una, indique si está muy deacuerdo, deacuerdo, es neutral, en desacuerdo o muy en desacuerdo.



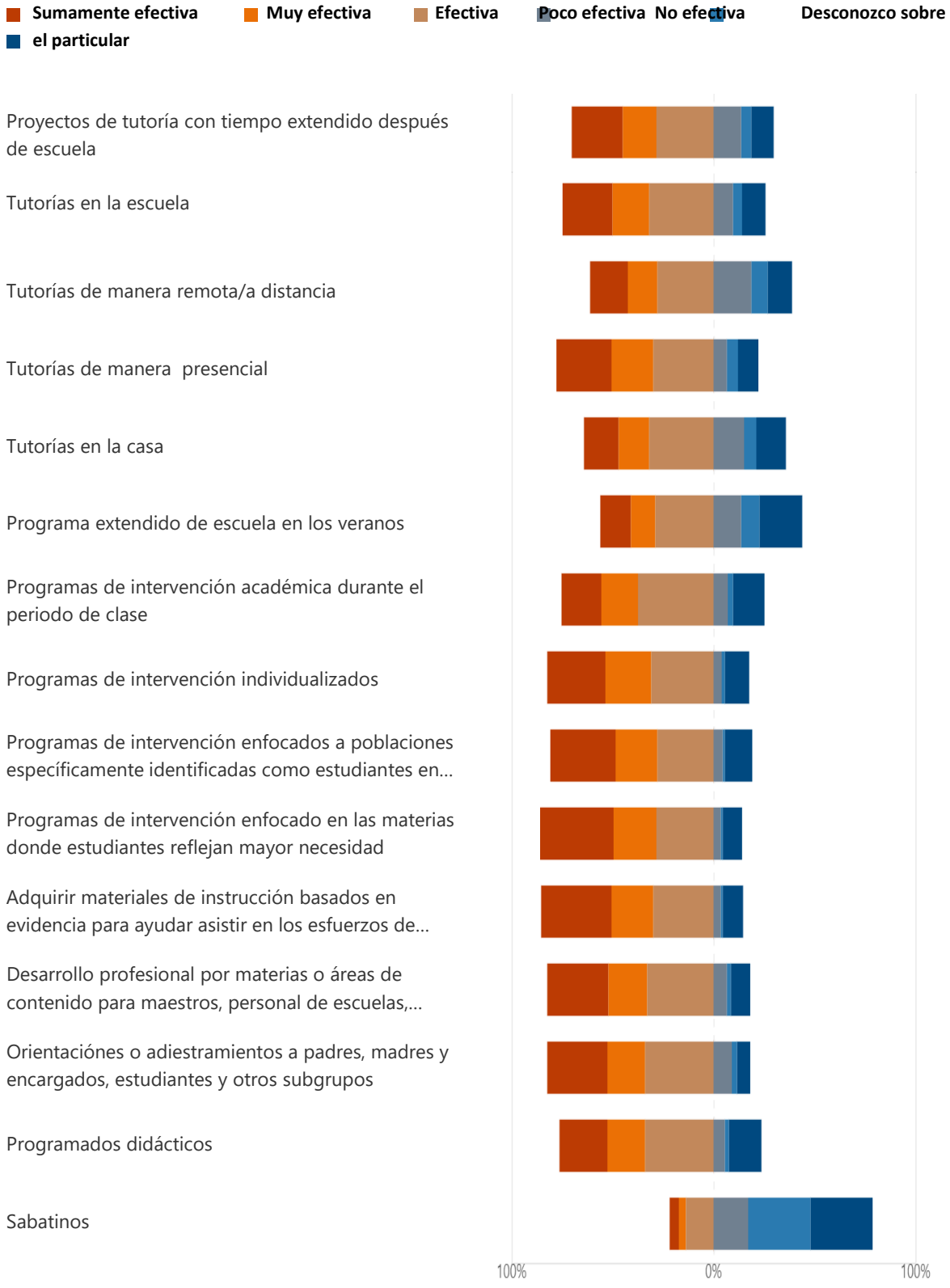
7. Referente a la pregunta anterior, presente alguna estrategia que entiendadeba ser considerada (2)

1922

Responses Latest Responses

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8. **Según su experiencia, indique la EFECTIVIDAD de las siguientesestrategias para atender la pérdida de aprendizaje**



9. Referente a la pregunta anterior, presente alguna estrategia que entiendadeba ser considerada (3)

1574

Responses

Latest Responses

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10. ¿Que temas considera se deben cubrir durante actividades de desarrollo profesional por materias, por programa o áreas de contenido para maestros, personal de escuelas o personal no docente?

5935

Responses

Latest Responses

"No se"

"Como tener más psicología con los estudiantes"

"Actividades para trabajar en linea "

11. ¿Que temas considera se deben cubrir durante orientaciones o adiestramientos a padres, madres, encargados, estudiantes y otros subgrupos?

5937

Responses

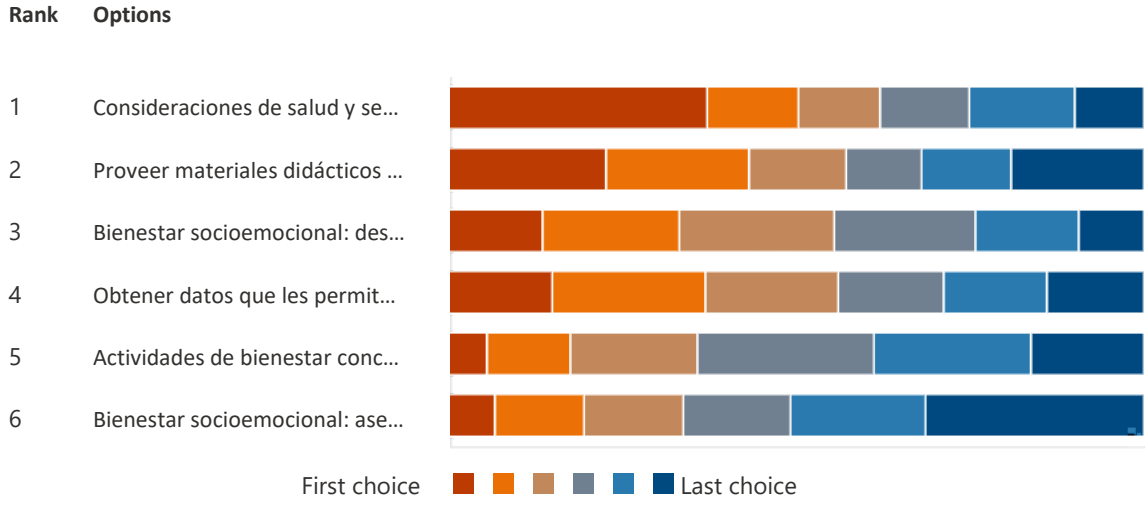
Latest Responses

"No se"

"Dar talleres de computadora" "Habitos de estudio, administracion del tiempo. "

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12. **Coloca en orden las siguientes premisas desde la más importante hasta la menos importante en términos de su apoyo a las necesidadesde nuestra comunidad escolar**



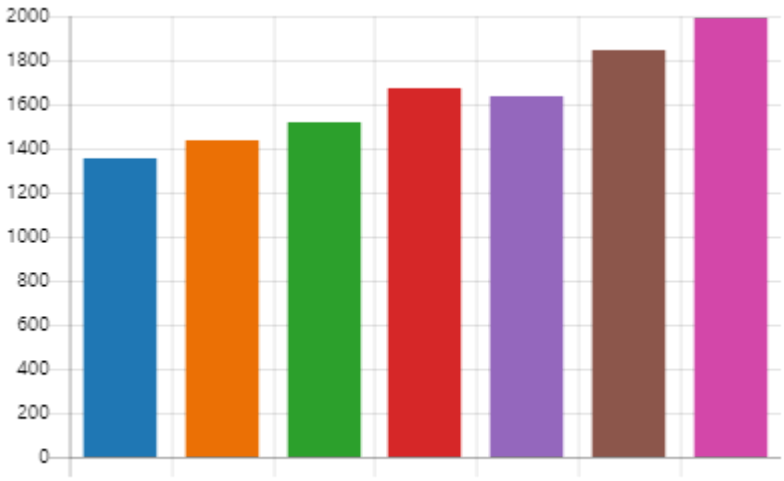
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Encuesta para estudiantes de nivel primario 1ero a 7mo

11442	02:31	Closed
Responses	Average time to complete	Status

1. Indica el **grado** que cursarás este año

1ro	1352
2do	1436
3ro	1516
4to	1669
5to	1638
6to	1842
7mo	1989



2. Durante la pandemia por COVID-19, ¿cuánto sientes que aprendiste?

Mucho	4834
Regular	4967
Poco	1641



3. ¿En qué clase aprendiste menos?

Español (adquisición de la len...	1351
Matemáticas	2685
Inglés	4881
Ciencias	876
Estudios sociales	1649



4. ¿En qué lugar te gusta recibir tus **clases**?

En casa	6521
En la escuela	4921



5. ¿En qué lugar te gusta recibir **tutorías**?

En casa	7298
En la escuela	4144



6. ¿Participaste del Verano Educativo?

Sí	937
No	10505



7. ¿Sientes que aprendiste en Verano Educativo?

Sí	856
No	81



8. ¿Quieres regresar a la escuela?

Sí	5776
No	5666



9. ¿Por qué no quieres regresar?

Tengo miedo de contagiarme	5362
No quiero estar lejos de mi fa...	492
Me preocupa estar cerca de p...	811



10. Marca las actividades que mejor te ayudaron durante la pandemia

Me entregaron iPad, laptop, c...	8215
Buscar los materiales en la esc...	2399
Clases por la computadora co...	8212
Ver los videos de la clase	3558



11. ¿Qué actividades te gustaría que se dieran durante el próximo año para ayudarte a mejorar tus notas?

Recibir tutorías	3481
Recibir Verano Educativo	238
Estudiar desde casa	4620
Recibir en la escuela las activi...	2635
Other	468



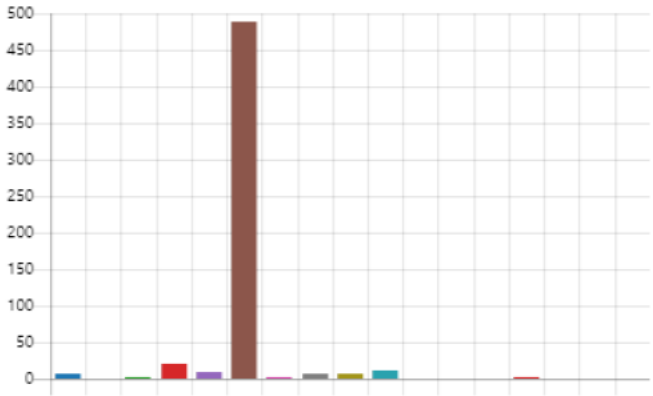
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ENCUESTA DE PERCEPCIÓN PARA LA INVERSIÓN DE LOS FONDOS DEL DEPARTAMENTO DE EDUCACIÓN DE PR

559	21:08	Closed
Responses	Average time to complete	Status

1. **Elija el grupo de interés que mejor le representa**

Estudiante	6
Padre o tutor	1
Miembro de la comunidad	3
Maestro/a	21
Personal Escolar	8
Director Escolar	489
Director o Representante de E...	3
Superintendente Regional	7
Superintendente Auxiliar	7
Facilitador Docente	11
Miembro de una Organizació...	0
Miembro de una Organizació...	0
Miembro de Unión	0
Persona que representa los int...	2
Persona que representa los int...	0
Persona que representa los int...	0
Persona que representa los int...	1



2. **¿Está satisfecho con sus condiciones laborales?**

Sí	175
No	371



3. **Especifique porqué no está satisfecho**

371

Responses

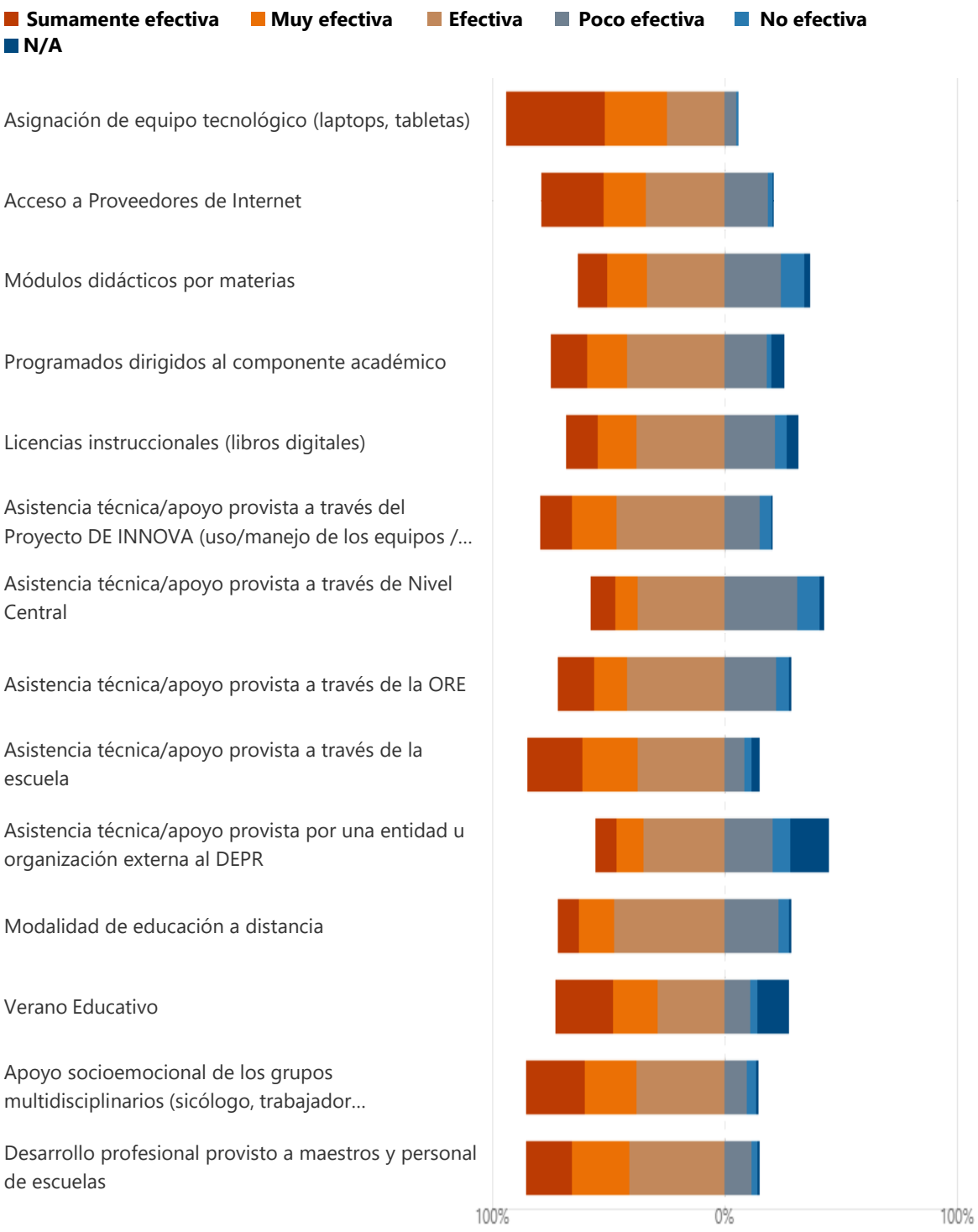
Latest Responses

"Necesidad de personal en la oficina"

"Mejoras de plantel escolar, necesidad de ayuda admin...

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4. **Según su experiencia, indique la EFECTIVIDAD de las siguientes estrategias para apoyar las necesidades de los estudiantes durante la pandemia de CoVID-19 según aplique**



5. Referente a la pregunta anterior, presente alguna estrategia que entienda deba ser considerada

324

Responses

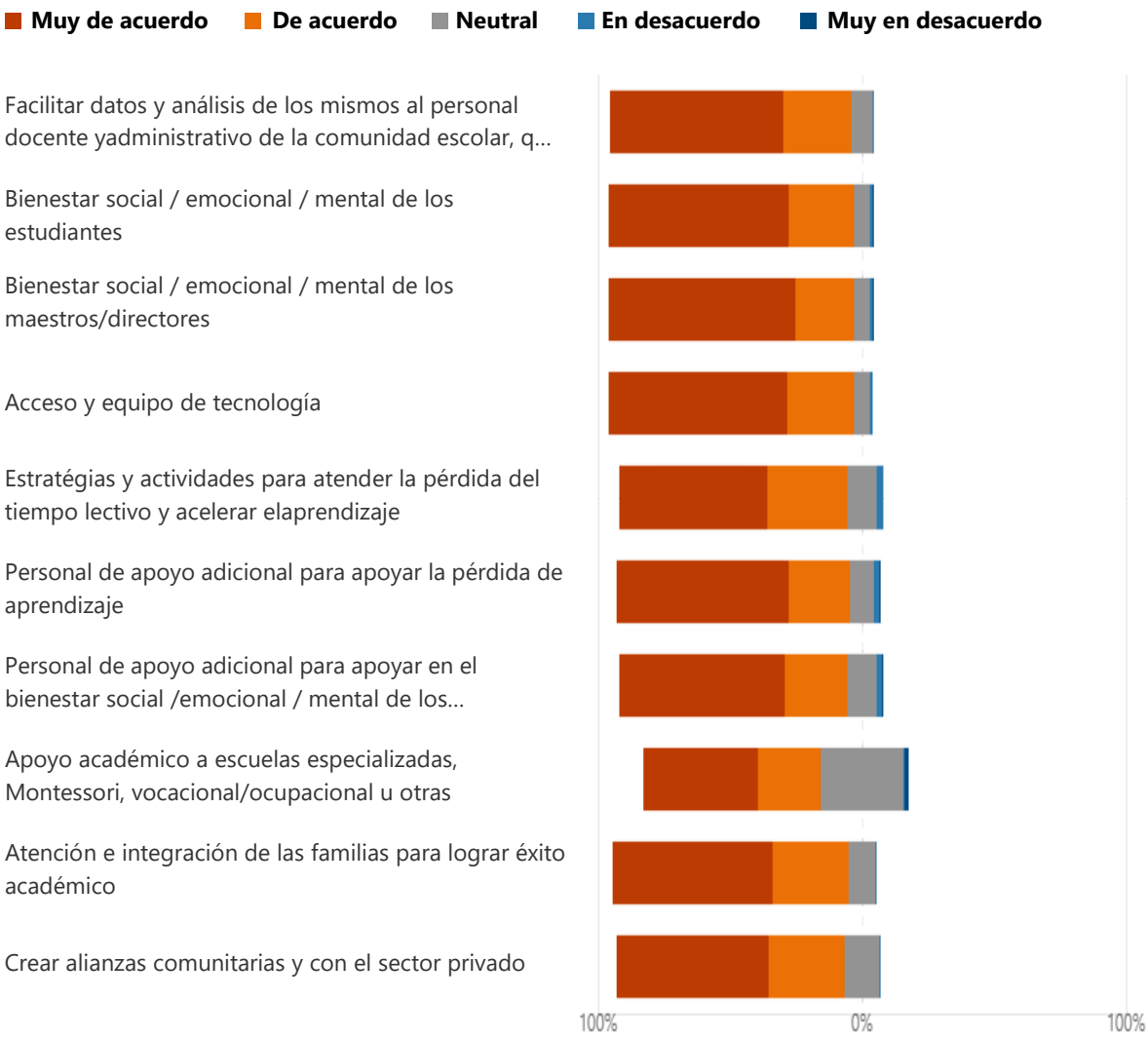
Latest Responses

"*Coaching apoyo a la docencia en la materia durante …*

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6. A continuación, encontrará una lista de necesidades para el año escolar 2021-2022, en términos del impacto que ha causado la pandemia de CoVID-19.

   Para cada una, indique si está muy deacuerdo, deacuerdo, es neutral, en desacuerdo o muy en desacuerdo.



7. Referente a la pregunta anterior, presente alguna estrategia que entienda deba ser considerada

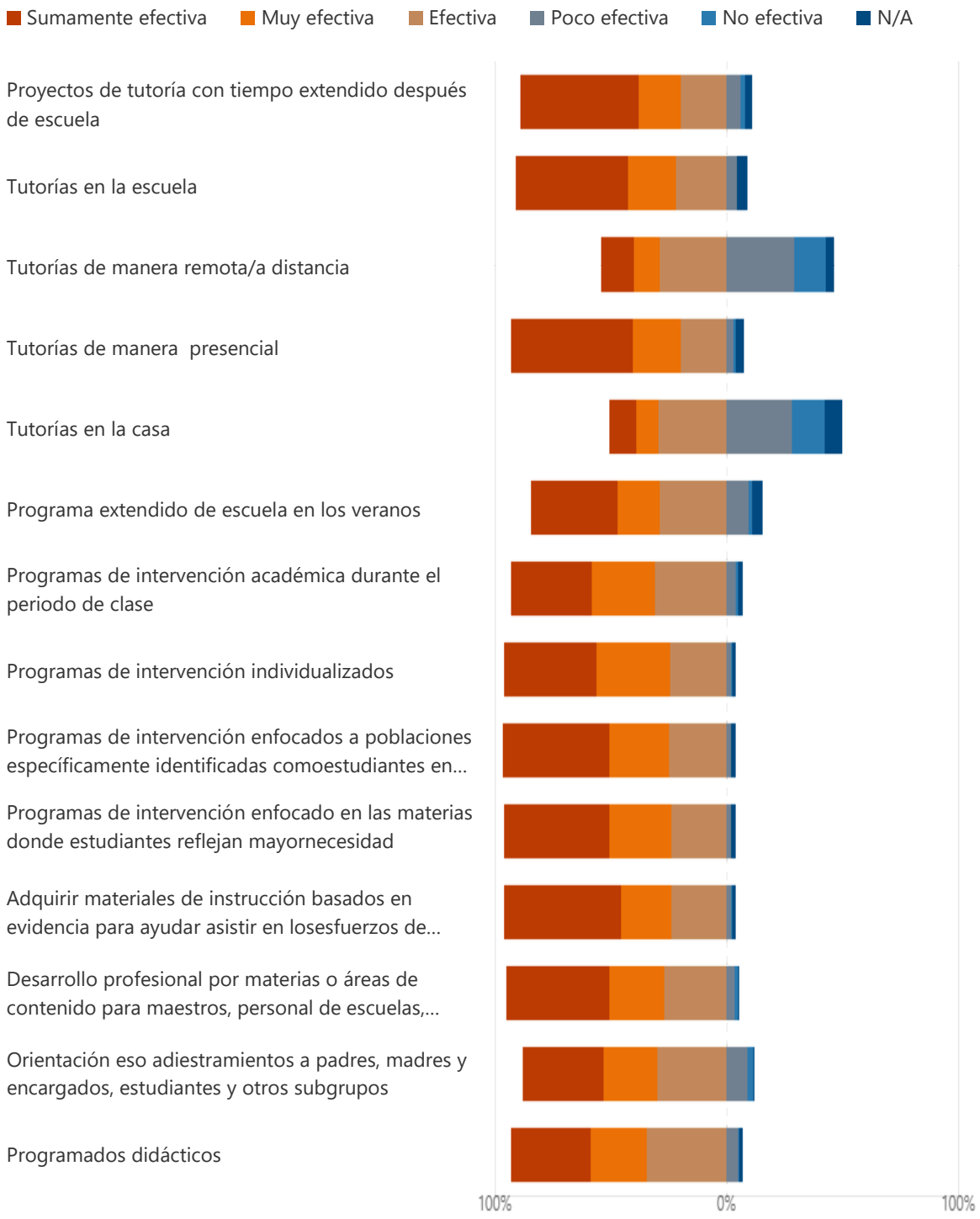
255

Responses

Latest Responses

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8. **Según su experiencia, indique la EFECTIVIDAD de las siguientes estrategias para atender la pérdida de aprendizaje**



9. Referente a la pregunta anterior, presente alguna estrategia que entienda deba ser considerada

245

Responses

Latest Responses

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10. ¿Que temas considera se deben cubrir durante actividades de desarrollo profesional por materias o áreas de contenido para maestros, personal de escuelas o personal no docente?

558

Responses

Latest Responses

"*Estrategias innovadoras dirigidas a la utilización de e...*

"*Colaboración académica entre pares de una misma m...*

"*Evaluacion del aprendizaje de manera diferenciada Pl...*

11. ¿Que temas considera se deben cubrir durante orientaciones o adiestramientos a padres, madres, encargados, estudiantes y otros subgrupos?

559

Responses

Latest Responses

"*Tecnología para apoyo a los hijos*"

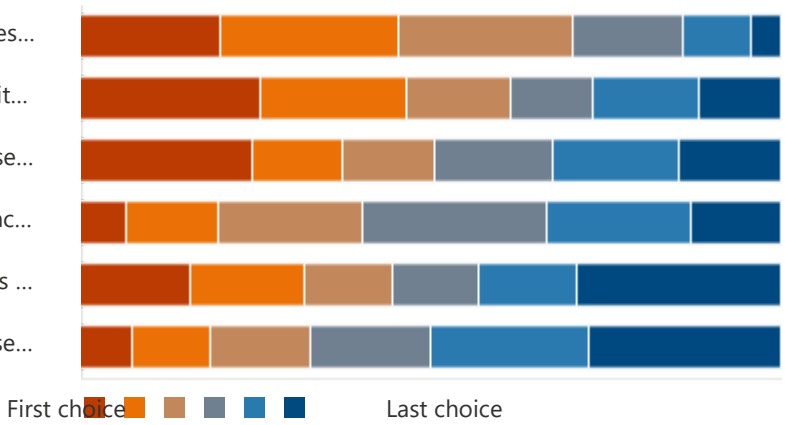
"*Impacto de las Comunidades de aprendizaje en el apr...*

"*Uso de la tecnologia para ayudar a mi hojo en la sala ...*

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12. **Coloca en orden las siguientes premisas desde la más importante hasta la menos importante en términos de su apoyo a las necesidadesde nuestra comunidad escolar**

Rank	Options
1	Bienestar socioemocional: des...
2	Obtener datos que les permit...
3	Consideraciones de salud y se...
4	Actividades de bienestar conc...
5	Proveer materiales didácticos ...
6	Bienestar socioemocional: ase...



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Appendix F: PRDE's Academic recovery plan

DEPARTAMENTO DE EDUCACIÓN

mayo 2021



NOTIFICACIÓN DE POLÍTICA PÚBLICA

El Departamento de Educación no discrimina de ninguna manera por razón de edad, raza, color, sexo, nacimiento, condición de veterano, ideología política o religiosa, origen o condición social, orientación sexual o identidad de género, discapacidad o impedimento físico o mental; ni por ser víctima de violencia doméstica, agresión sexual o acecho.

NOTA ACLARATORIA

Para propósito de carácter legal en relación con el Título VII de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964; la Ley Pública 88-352, 42 USC. 2000 et seq; la Constitución del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico y el principio de economía gramatical y género no marcado de la ortografía española, el uso de términos facilitador docente, director, estudiante, tutor, encargado y cualquier uso que pueda hacer referencia a ambos géneros, incluye tanto al masculino como al femenino.

CONTENIDO

JUNTA EDITORA iii

COLABORADORES iii

INTRODUCCIÓN 1

SOBRE LAS BRECHAS Y EL REZAGO ACADÉMICO 2

Clarifiquemos conceptos 2

Causas de las brechas en el aprendizaje que incrementan el rezago académico 2

Poblaciones vulnerables 3

Importancia de cerrar las brechas en el aprendizaje y disminuir el rezago académico 3

PANORAMA DEL REZAGO ACADÉMICO EN EL DEPARTAMENTO DE EDUCACIÓN 4

ANÁLISIS DE LAS FORTALEZAS, DEBILIDADES, OPORTUNIDADES Y AMENAZAS DEL DEPR ANTE LAS BRECHAS DE APRENDIZAJE Y EL REZAGO ACADÉMICO 11

ÁREAS DE ENFOQUE 12

MONITOREO Y CONTROL DEL PROGRESO DE LOS PROYECTOS, LAS INICIATIVAS Y LAS INTERVENCIONES 20

REFERENCIAS 23

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INTRODUCCIÓN

El Departamento de Educación de Puerto Rico (DEPR) reconoce que "la educación es la piedra angular de nuestra sociedad y un factor vital en el desarrollo del ser humano como futuro ciudadano"[1]. Además, está comprometido en proveer a los estudiantes el conocimiento y las destrezas necesarias para que adquieran las competencias y el nivel de desempeño óptimo para "atender las exigencias de un mundo cambiante y en constante evolución"[2].

El DEPR enfrenta nuevos retos por la pandemia del COVID-19. Esta crisis mundial ha creado una impactante alteración de los sistemas educativos en todo el mundo. El cierre de los espacios de aprendizaje formales (escuelas, instituciones postsecundarias y universidades) y las normas de distanciamiento social han afectado a más del 94% de la población estudiantil del mundo y han traído cambios de gran alcance en todos los aspectos de nuestras vidas (Pokhrel & Roshan, 2021). Estas normas, que son esenciales para prevenir el contagio y la propagación del virus del COVID-19, han trastocado significativamente las prácticas educativas tradicionales, como consecuencia, se crean brechas en el aprendizaje, se agrava el rezago académico en nuestros estudiantes y provoca "un impacto emocional desconocido en millones de estudiantes y educadores [...]"[3].

Al presente, el DEPR enfrenta las consecuencias de la pandemia del COVID-19 y de los eventos sísmicos del 2020 que afectaron significativamente el área sur, además de la crisis fiscal y económica que atraviesa el país. Sin embargo, ha estado trabajando desde el inicio para desarrollar, implementar y mejorar planes, proyectos, iniciativas, estrategias e intervenciones de recuperación que aborden las importantes necesidades académicas y no académicas de los estudiantes, las familias y los empleados.

No obstante, ha llegado el momento de dejar de mitigar el impacto de la emergencia del COVID-19 en el sistema educativo y comenzar a reevaluar las acciones en cada nivel operacional del DEPR (nivel central, oficinas regionales educativas (ORE) y escuelas) para pasar a un proceso de planificación estratégica en aras de cerrar las brechas en el aprendizaje, disminuir el rezago académico y favorecer el éxito de cada estudiante del sistema.

Este documento representa el marco de trabajo para la elaboración de planes de acciones, proyectos, iniciativas, estrategias e intervenciones para la recuperación académica de todos los estudiantes del sistema educativo de Puerto Rico. Este, además, propicia el cumplimiento de las metas del DEPR:



Mejorar el aprovechamiento académico de todos los estudiantes.



Promover la salud física, mental, emocional y social por medio de los servicios, basado en el modelo biopsicosocial.



Integrar la participación activa de las madres, los padres y los encargados en el proceso de formación holística del estudiante.



Apoderar a los directores de escuela y a los maestros para lograr cambios significativos en sus comunidades.

[1] Exposición de Motivo de la Ley núm. 85-2018, según enmendada, p. 2
[2] Ibidem.
[3] Council of Chief State School Officers & National Governors Association (April 21, 2021), p. 1

SOBRE LAS BRECHAS Y EL REZAGO ACADÉMICO

Clarifiquemos conceptos



BRECHA EN EL APRENDIZAJE

Es la discrepancia entre lo que los estudiantes han aprendido realmente y lo que se esperaba que aprendieran a una edad, nivel o grado determinado.[4]

BRECHA EN EL RENDIMIENTO ACADÉMICO

Es la discrepancia significativa y persistente en el rendimiento académico o el logro educativo entre diferentes grupos de estudiantes, como, por ejemplo, los estudiantes de hogares con mayores y menores ingresos.[5]



REZAGO ACADÉMICO

Es cuando el rendimiento escolar del estudiante está por debajo de lo esperado, de acuerdo con su edad, grado cursado y nivel de desarrollo cognitivo determinado[6].

Causas de las brechas en el aprendizaje que incrementan el rezago académico

Las causas de las brechas se pueden agrupar en tres áreas[7]:

FACTORES DEL NEURODESARROLLO O DE SALUD	FACTORES EMOCIONALES	FACTORES AMBIENTALES
▪ Trastornos específicos del aprendizaje ▪ TDAH ▪ Trastornos del espectro autista ▪ Trastornos del habla y del lenguaje ▪ Parálisis cerebral ▪ Discapacidad intelectual ▪ Enfermedades crónicas	▪ Ansiedad ▪ Depresión ▪ Trastornos del estado de ánimo ▪ Trastorno de estrés postraumático ▪ Otros trastornos psiquiátricos	▪ Falta de apoyo y modelo intrafamiliar para el aprendizaje ▪ Ambiente escolar ▪ Planes de estudio poco interesantes ▪ Método de enseñanza ▪ Deficientes hábitos de estudio ▪ Barreras lingüísticas ▪ Nivel socioeconómico bajo ▪ Situaciones de emergencia por fuerza mayor

[4] Glossary of Education Reform Online. (2021). "learning gap". Recuperado de https://www.edglossary.org/learning-gap/
[5] Glossary of Education Reform Online. (2021). "achievement gap". Recuperado de https://www.edglossary.org/achievement-gap/
[6] http://childrehab.in/disorders/scholastic-backwardness/
[7] Ibidem.

Poblaciones vulnerables

Debido a la pandemia de COVID-19, todos los estudiantes necesitarán apoyos específicos para la recuperación académica, es decir, cerrar brechas en el aprendizaje y el rendimiento para disminuir el rezago académico. Las poblaciones más vulnerables son los estudiantes:

- bajo nivel de pobreza,
- con diversidad funcional,
- aprendices del español e inmigrantes,
- sin hogar fijo (*homeless*),
- en riesgo de fracaso o deserción escolar (por falta de apoyo familiar).

Importancia de cerrar las brechas en el aprendizaje y disminuir el rezago académico

Las brechas y el rezago académicos son problemas que afectan el progreso académico y social de los estudiantes (Beniwal & Et al. 2018). Según la UNESCO (2021), es necesario "evitar una catástrofe generacional"[8]. Además, señala que un año después del inicio de la pandemia del COVID-19, "cerca de mitad de los estudiantes del mundo siguen afectados por el cierre parcial o total de las escuelas"[9]. También afirman que "más de 100 millones de niños quedarán por debajo del nivel mínimo de competencia en lectura como resultado de la crisis sanitaria"[10].

Concertar acciones para cerrar las brechas en el aprendizaje y el rendimiento para disminuir el rezago académico son muy importantes para los niños y jóvenes de hoy, ya que propician la equidad y la justicia. Asimismo, es medular para que el DEPR garantice el derecho constitucional a la educación. Este "trasciende los factores de enseñanza y aprendizaje e incide sobre otros derechos de igual naturaleza, tales como la vida, la libertad y la propiedad. Además, dota a los seres humanos de destrezas imprescindibles para una mejor calidad de vida, acceso a recursos y oportunidades laborales"[11].

[8] UNESCO. (2021). Education: From disruption to recovery. Recuperado de https://en.unesco.org/covid19/educationresponse
[9] Ibidem.
[10] Ibidem.
[11] Exposición de Motivo de la Ley núm. 85-2018, según enmendada, p. 2

PANORAMA DEL REZAGO ACADÉMICO EN EL DEPARTAMENTO DE EDUCACIÓN

A continuación, se presenta el panorama del rezago académico del DEPR sustentado por los datos que describen la realidad del sistema. Los mismos incluyen información sobre los Promovidos condicionales (P/c) del pasado año, los estudiantes que no aprobaron el grado y los que necesitan la intervención del programa de verano para poder ser promovidos.

Tabla 1. Por ciento de estudiantes por grado y materia, a nivel isla, que continúan con un P/c del año escolar 2019-2020 al cierre del año escolar 2020-2021

Grados/ Materias	1ro	2do	3ro	4to	5to	6to	7mo	8vo	9no	10mo	11mo	12mo
Español	4.2 %	2.7 %	1.8 %	1.0 %	1.3 %	1.5 %	1.9 %	0.0 %	2.5 %	1.3 %	0.9 %	0.0 %
Inglés	2.1 %	1.8 %	1.5 %	1.9 %	1.8 %	2.4 %	2.6 %	0.0 %	3.0 %	1.6 %	0.7 %	0.0 %
Matemáticas	3.8 %	2.0 %	1.5 %	1.3 %	1.6 %	1.7 %	2.8 %	0.0 %	2.7 %	2.3 %	0.9 %	0.0 %
Ciencias	1.6 %	1.3 %	1.0 %	0.8 %	0.9 %	1.2 %	1.7 %	0.0 %	2.6 %	1.4 %	0.8 %	0.0 %
Estudios Sociales	---	---	---	0.8 %	1.0 %	1.2 %	1.8 %	0.0 %	1.8 %	1.2 %	0.5 %	0.0 %

En la **Tabla 1** se muestra el por ciento de estudiantes, desglosados por materia y grado, a quienes se les adjudicó un P/c durante el año académico 2019-2020 y que, al presente, continúan activos en el sistema sin haberles sustituido su P/c. En términos generales, 11,204 estudiantes de 243,618 entre los grados de primero a duodécimo grado para las materias básicas (español, inglés, matemáticas, ciencias y estudios sociales) tiene una o más calificación de P/c sin sustituir, lo que representa un 4.6 % de la matrícula del DEPR. Dado que un estudiante puede tener más de un P/c por materia, los por cientos mostrados incluyen un conteo repetido.

Tabla 2. Por ciento de estudiantes por grado y subgrupo, a nivel isla, que continúan con un P/c del año escolar 2019-2020 al cierre del año escolar 2020-2021

Grados / Subgrupo	1ro	2do	3ro	4to	5to	6to	7mo	8vo	9no	10mo	11mo	12mo
Masculino	2.9 %	1.9 %	1.5 %	1.2 %	1.3 %	1.6 %	2.2 %	0.0 %	2.5 %	1.6 %	0.8 %	0.0 %
Femenino	3.4 %	2.1 %	1.7 %	1.5 %	1.6 %	1.9 %	2.7 %	0.0 %	3.3 %	2.1 %	1.1 %	0.0 %
Con impedimentos	2.4 %	1.7 %	1.2 %	0.9 %	1.1 %	1.3 %	1.7 %	0.0 %	1.8 %	1.1 %	0.6 %	0.0 %
Con desventaja económica	5.8 %	3.3 %	2.7 %	2.0 %	2.2 %	2.4 %	3.3 %	0.0 %	4.1 %	2.1 %	1.5 %	0.0 %
Aprendices del español	3.3 %	2.2 %	1.7 %	1.4 %	1.6 %	1.9 %	2.6 %	0.0 %	3.1 %	2.0 %	1.0 %	0.0 %
Sin hogar	0.0 %	3.1 %	5.6 %	2.2 %	2.4 %	1.3 %	3.0 %	0.0 %	2.8 %	0.6 %	1.0 %	0.0 %

Los datos contenidos en la Tabla 1, se muestran desglosados por subgrupo en la **Tabla 2**. El subgrupo de estudiantes Sin hogar (*Homeless),* al igual que el subgrupo Femenino, fueron los

más afectados en términos de los P/c sin remover. Dado que un estudiante puede tener más de un P/c por materia, los por cientos mostrados incluyen un conteo repetido.

Tabla 3. Total de estudiantes con P/c del año escolar 2019-2020 que obtuvieron nota de F al cierre del año escolar 2020-2021

Grados/ Materias	1ro	2do	3ro	4to	5to	6to	7mo	8vo	9no	10mo	11mo	12mo
Español	45	277	186	140	87	116	187	160	12	273	141	47
Inglés	18	166	151	129	178	179	268	250	6	284	155	31
Matemáticas	38	213	120	101	121	107	202	249	10	299	189	55
Ciencias	27	135	83	82	89	78	137	169	4	300	125	53
Estudios Sociales	---	---	---	4	78	72	142	154	10	220	82	20

En la **Tabla 3** se desglosa el total de estudiantes con P/c en el año escolar 2019-2020 y que obtuvieron una nota de F al cierre del año escolar 2020-2021. Esto representa un total de 4,672 estudiantes (1.92 %) que, además de tener un P/c el año anterior, fracasaron la materia en el año actual. Dado que un estudiante puede tener más de un P/c por materia, los totales mostrados incluyen un conteo repetido.

Las **tablas 4.1 a la 4.3** presentadas a continuación, muestran el por ciento de estudiantes por grado y materia, a nivel isla, que obtuvieron C, D o F en las 40 semanas del año escolar 2020-2021.

Tabla 4.1. Estudiantes con nota C

Grado	Español	Inglés	Matemáticas	Ciencias	Est. Sociales
1.º	7. 9 %	7.2 %	6.5 %	7.3 %	---
2.º	8.1 %	7.9 %	6.7 %	7.5 %	---
3.º	9.5 %	9.6 %	8.4 %	8.7 %	---
4.º	10.2 %	10.7 %	10.9 %	9.5 %	9.1 %
5.º	12.3 %	11.6 %	12.7 %	12.1 %	11.0 %
6.º	14.0 %	13.4 %	14.7 %	13.8 %	12.3 %
7.º	15.6 %	14.7 %	16.8 %	15.6 %	13.4 %
8.º	16.3 %	15.5 %	17.9 %	17.5 %	14.7 %
9.º	14.8 %	13.5 %	14.9 %	14.3 %	13.2 %
10.º	14.5 %	13.2 %	16.2 %	16.3 %	13.3 %
11.º	14.7 %	12.7 %	14.5 %	15.4 %	7.5 %
12.º	13.5 %	13.0 %	13.8 %	13.3 %	6.5 %

Tabla 4.2. Estudiantes con nota D

Grado	Español	Inglés	Matemáticas	Ciencias	Est. Sociales
1.º	5.3 %	5.5 %	4.4 %	5.1 %	---
2.º	5.3 %	6.1 %	4.3 %	5.1 %	---
3.º	6.6 %	6.6 %	5.2 %	6.0 %	---
4.º	6.7 %	7.3 %	6.8 %	6.8 %	6.1 %
5.º	8.6 %	9.1 %	9.1 %	8.1 %	7.7 %
6.º	10.5 %	11.2 %	11.9 %	10.4 %	9.3 %
7.º	13.2 %	13.4 %	14.7 %	13.1 %	11.8 %
8.º	13.8 %	13.7 %	16.2 %	15.1 %	12.3 %
9.º	11.7 %	12.2 %	13.6 %	11.7 %	10.1 %
10.º	11.4 %	11.3 %	13.1 %	11.9 %	11.2 %
11.º	11.2 %	9.5 %	11.3 %	12.2 %	5.8 %
12.º	9.5 %	9.5 %	9.9 %	9.2 %	4.8 %

Tabla 4.3. Estudiantes con nota F

Grado	Español	Inglés	Matemáticas	Ciencias	Est. Sociales
1.º	13.6 %	15.2 %	12.7 %	12.7 %	---
2.º	10.5 %	13.5 %	9.7 %	10.3 %	---
3.º	9.3 %	12.1 %	8.2 %	8.7 %	---
4.º	9.3 %	11.3 %	9.1 %	9.4 %	9.0 %
5.º	8.7 %	10.9 %	9.0 %	8.7 %	8.2 %
6.º	9.8 %	11.3 %	10.6 %	9.6 %	8.4 %
7.º	11.9 %	13.1 %	12.5 %	11.5 %	11.4 %
8.º	9.7 %	11.1 %	10.8 %	9.9 %	8.8 %
9.º	11.7 %	12.7 %	13.0 %	11.8 %	9.8 %
10.º	10.4 %	11.0 %	11.9 %	11.0 %	10.1 %
11.º	8.1 %	8.7 %	8.6 %	8.5 %	4.7 %
12.º	2.8 %	3.1 %	3.2 %	2.8 %	2.0 %

De los grados de nivel primario, el primer grado presenta el mayor por ciento de rezago académico (F), mientras que en nivel secundario el grado de prioridad fue el noveno.

Las **tablas 5.1 a la 5.3**, presentadas a continuación, muestran el por ciento de estudiantes por subgrupo y materia, a nivel isla, que obtuvieron C, D o F en las 40 semanas del año escolar 2020-2021.

Tabla 5.1. Estudiantes con nota C

Subgrupo / materia	Español	Inglés	Matemáticas	Ciencias	Estudios Sociales
Masculino	6.8 %	6.4 %	6.8 %	6.8 %	4.7 %
Femenino	6.0 %	5.7 %	6.3 %	6.1 %	4.1 %
Con impedimentos	4.2 %	4.0 %	4.2 %	4.2 %	2.9 %
Con desventaja económica	11.0 %	10.5 %	11.2 %	11.0 %	7.6 %
Aprendices del español	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Sin hogar	0.1 %	0.1 %	0.1 %	0.1 %	0.1 %

Tabla 5.2. Estudiantes con nota D

Subgrupo / materia	Español	Inglés	Matemáticas	Ciencias	Estudios Sociales
Masculino	5.3 %	5.4 %	5.5 %	5.3 %	3.8 %
Femenino	4.3 %	4.4 %	4.8 %	4.5 %	3.1 %
Con impedimentos	3.4 %	3.6 %	3.6 %	3.5 %	2.5 %
Con desventaja económica	8.5 %	8.7 %	9.1 %	8.6 %	6.1 %
Aprendices del español	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Sin hogar	0.1 %	0.1 %	0.1 %	0.1 %	0.1 %

Tabla 5.3. Estudiantes con nota F

Subgrupo / materia	Español	Inglés	Matemáticas	Ciencias	Estudios Sociales
Masculino	5.4 %	6.1 %	5.5 %	5.4 %	3.5 %
Femenino	4.3 %	5.1 %	4.5 %	4.3 %	2.8 %
Con impedimentos	3.4 %	4.0 %	3.5 %	3.4 %	2.3 %
Con desventaja económica	8.8 %	10.2 %	9.1 %	8.7 %	5.7 %
Aprendices del español	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %
Sin hogar	0.1 %	0.1 %	0.1 %	0.1 %	0.1 %

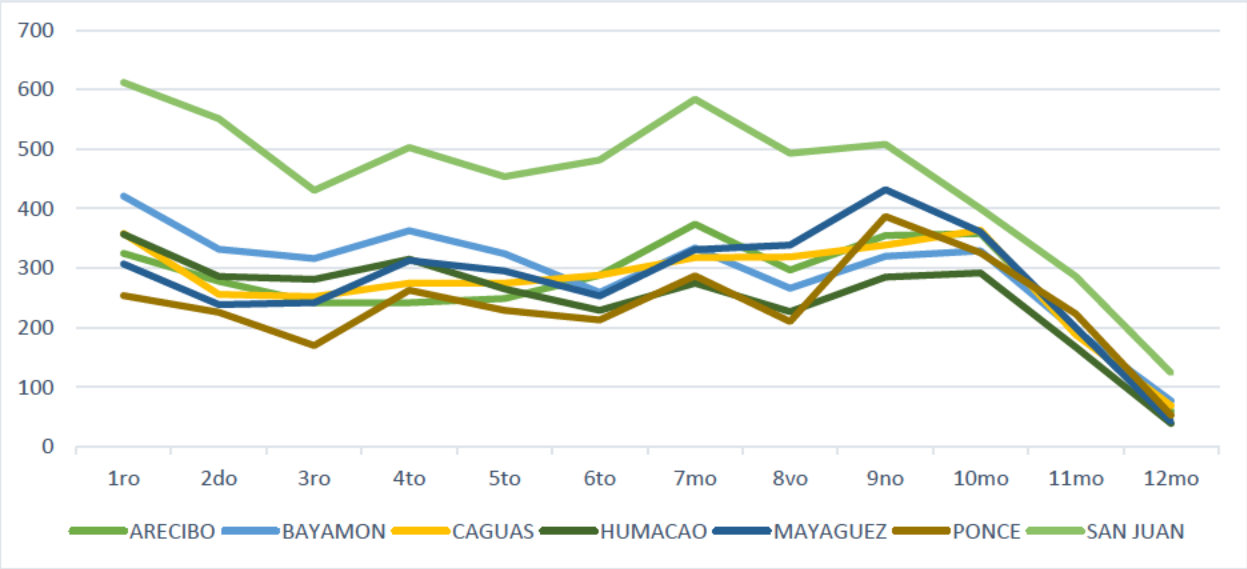
El subgrupo con mayor rezago académico (D y F) es el Con desventaja económica, particularmente en las materias de inglés y matemáticas.

En esta sección, se presentan los estudiantes no promovidos, de acuerdo con las reglas establecidas en el Reglamento núm. 9193, titulado: *Reglamento de las escuelas primarias y secundarias del Departamento de Educación de Puerto Rico*. El reglamento considera que los estudiantes de primer a quinto grado con dos o más F en cualquier asignatura deberán repetir el grado. De igual forma, establece que los estudiantes de sexto a duodécimo grado que no aprueben 3.0 o más unidades de crédito en cualquier asignatura, no podrán ser promovidos al próximo grado.

Tabla 6.1. Distribución de estudiantes no promovidos por ORE y grado

Grado	Arecibo	Bayamón	Caguas	Humacao	Mayagüez	Ponce	San Juan	Total Isla
1.º	325	421	358	357	307	254	612	**2,634**
2.º	278	332	256	286	239	226	551	**2,168**
3.º	242	316	252	281	242	170	431	**1,934**
4.º	242	363	275	315	313	263	503	**2,274**
5.º	249	324	275	265	295	229	454	**2,091**
6.º	288	259	288	229	253	213	482	**2,012**
7.º	374	334	318	275	331	287	584	**2,503**
8.º	297	266	319	227	339	210	493	**2,151**
9.º	355	320	339	285	432	387	508	**2,626**
10.º	358	329	364	292	361	326	400	**2,430**
11.º	194	195	188	167	200	223	286	**1,453**
12.º	60	77	69	39	42	53	124	**464**
Total Isla	**3,262**	**3,536**	**3,301**	**3,018**	**3,354**	**2,841**	**5,428**	**24,740**

Gráfica 1. Tendencia de estudiantes no promovidos por ORE y grado



De la gráfica se percibe que la ORE con la mayor cantidad de estudiantes no promovidos es San Juan, mientras que los grados de prioridad son: primero, séptimo y noveno.

Tabla 6.2. Distribución de estudiantes no promovidos por materia y grado

Grados/ Materias	1ro	2do	3ro	4to	5to	6to	7mo	8vo	9no	10mo	11mo	12mo
Español	2,306	1,803	1,675	1,709	1,617	1,631	2,054	1,738	2,056	1,901	1,190	386
Inglés	2,050	1,767	1,559	1,741	1,643	1,646	2,047	1,798	2,023	1,845	1,161	404
Matemáticas	2,215	1,707	1,536	1,643	1,573	1,645	2,021	1,802	2,093	1,938	1,215	417
Ciencias	2,182	1,763	1,605	1,690	1,594	1,570	1,981	1,808	2,044	1,887	1,198	380
Estudios Sociales	---	---	---	1,630	1,528	1,447	1,929	1,647	1,759	1,814	809	297

En la **Tabla 6.2** se desglosan los 24,740 estudiantes no promovidos por grado, según las materias no aprobadas. Dado que un estudiante puede fracasar más de una materia, los totales mostrados incluyen un conteo repetido. Se puede observar que la materia de prioridad es Español, seguido de Matemáticas.

En esta última sección, se presentan los estudiantes candidatos a escuela de verano[12], de acuerdo con las reglas establecidas en el Reglamento núm. 9193, titulado: *Reglamento de las escuelas primarias y secundarias del Departamento de Educación de Puerto Rico*. El reglamento considera que los estudiantes de primer a quinto grado con una F en cualquier asignatura podrán repetir la materia no aprobada durante el verano para ser promovidos al próximo grado. De igual forma, establece que los estudiantes de sexto a duodécimo grado que no aprueben hasta 2.5 unidades de crédito en cualquier asignatura, podrán repetirlas durante el verano para poder promoverse al próximo grado.

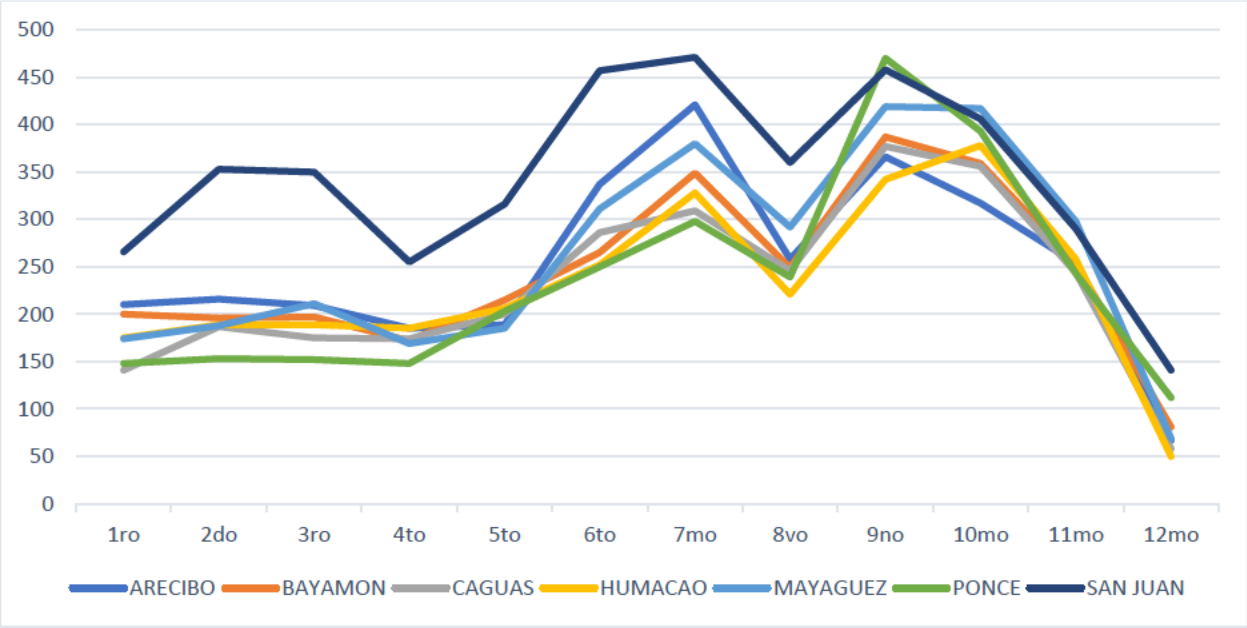
Tabla 7.1. Distribución de estudiantes candidatos a verano por ORE y grado

Grado	Arecibo	Bayamón	Caguas	Humacao	Mayagüez	Ponce	San Juan	Total Isla
1.º	210	200	141	175	174	148	266	**1,314**
2.º	216	196	187	189	188	153	353	**1,482**
3.º	209	197	175	189	211	152	350	**1,483**
4.º	185	172	174	185	169	148	255	**1,288**
5.º	189	215	200	206	185	203	316	**1,514**
6.º	337	265	286	252	311	250	457	**2,158**
7.º	421	349	309	328	380	298	471	**2,556**
8.º	258	249	246	221	292	239	360	**1,865**
9.º	366	387	377	342	419	470	458	**2,819**
10.º	317	359	356	378	417	393	406	**2,626**

12

Grado	Arecibo	Bayamón	Caguas	Humacao	Mayagüez	Ponce	San Juan	Total Isla
11.º	254	253	244	258	298	243	290	**1,840**
12.º	67	81	58	50	69	112	141	**578**
Total Isla	**3,029**	**2,923**	**2,753**	**2,773**	**3,113**	**2,809**	**4,123**	**21,523**

Gráfica 2. Tendencia de estudiantes candidatos a verano por ORE y grado



De la gráfica se percibe que la ORE con la mayor cantidad de estudiantes candidatos a tomar verano es San Juan, mientras que los grados de prioridad son: séptimo, noveno y décimo.

Tabla 7.2. Distribución de estudiantes candidatos a verano por materia y grado

Grados/ Materias	1ro	2do	3ro	4to	5to	6to	7mo	8vo	9no	10mo	11mo	12mo
Español	2,306	1,803	1,675	1,709	1,617	1,631	2,054	1,738	2,056	1,901	1,190	386
Inglés	2,050	1,767	1,559	1,741	1,643	1,646	2,047	1,798	2,023	1,845	1,161	404
Matemáticas	2,215	1,707	1,536	1,643	1,573	1,645	2,021	1,802	2,093	1,938	1,215	417
Ciencias	2,182	1,763	1,605	1,690	1,594	1,570	1,981	1,808	2,044	1,887	1,198	380
Estudios Sociales	---	---	---	1,630	1,528	1,447	1,929	1,647	1,759	1,814	809	297

En la **Tabla 7.2** se desglosan los 21,523 estudiantes candidatos a tomar verano por grado, según las materias no aprobadas. Dado que un estudiante puede fracasar más de una materia, los totales mostrados incluyen un conteo repetido para los grados de sexto a duodécimo. Se puede observar que la materia de prioridad es Inglés.

ANÁLISIS DE LAS FORTALEZAS, DEBILIDADES, OPORTUNIDADES Y AMENAZAS DEL DEPR ANTE LAS BRECHAS DE APRENDIZAJE Y EL REZAGO ACADÉMICO

FORTALEZAS

El DEPR tiene:

- afluencia de fondos federales para la educación debido a la emergencia del COVID-19.
- líderes educativos, en cada nivel operacional, que están trabajando y reflexionando sobre las lecciones aprendidas sobre el COVID-19 para mejorar las ayudas específicas a los estudiantes en áreas académicas y no académicas.

DEBILIDADES

El DEPR necesita:

- cerrar las brechas de aprendizaje y de rendimiento en todos los estudiantes.
- preparar a todos los estudiantes para el éxito académico.
- reforzar los sistemas de apoyo para los estudiantes y sus familias.
- mejorar la comunicación con los grupos de interés en cada ORE y en cada comunidad escolar para generar planes e intervenciones pertinentes.

OPORTUNIDADES

El DEPR tiene el potencial y la capacidad para:

- atender las necesidades académicas específicas que incluyen asegurar más tiempo de aprendizaje durante o después de la escuela.
- crear planes, proyectos, iniciativas, estrategias en intervenciones para acelerar el aprendizaje, reducir las brechas del aprendizaje y del rendimiento académico, disminuir el rezago académico y proveer apoyo socioemocional.
- diseñar las estructuras para las intervenciones específicas por medio de la diferenciación de la enseñanza y la elaboración de planes individuales de recuperación académica para preparar a todos los estudiantes para el éxito académico.

AMENAZAS

El DEPR enfrenta y enfrentará retos o cambios procedentes de:

- las emergencias por fuerza mayor que afectan o afectarán a Puerto Rico (pandemia del COVID-19, fenómenos atmosféricos, sismos, entre otras).
- modificaciones o enmiendas a las leyes o estatutos estatales y federales aplicables, tales como:
  - *Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act* (PROMESA) de 1 de julio de 2016.
  - Ley núm. 66 de 17 de junio de 2014, según enmendada, conocida como: Ley Especial de Sostenibilidad Fiscal y Operacional del Gobierno del Estado Libre Asociado de Puerto Rico
  - Ley núm. 26 de 29 de abril de 2017, según enmendada, conocida como: Ley de Cumplimiento con el Plan Fiscal
  - Condiciones Específicas del Departamento de Educación de Estados Unidos 2019 y 2020.

ÁREAS DE ENFOQUE

La pandemia del COVID-19, así como otras emergencias de fuerza mayor, son, sin duda, un gran dilema para el sistema educativo de Puerto Rico. Como consecuencia, los maestros y los estudiantes han sustituido la enseñanza, el aprendizaje y la evaluación presencial por la educación a distancia. Además, se han enfrentado al reto de depender de los dispositivos tecnológicos para mantener el aprendizaje previo y continuar con los requisitos del currículo, según el grado. Sin embargo, a un año del inicio de la pandemia, nos enfrentamos al impacto que ha tenido en el aprovechamiento académico de los estudiantes. Su mayor secuela radica en el aumento del rezago académico debido a las brechas de aprendizaje y de rendimiento académico. Estas brechas, si bien afectan a todos los estudiantes, son más significativas en los subgrupos de estudiantes de: bajo el nivel de pobreza, aprendices del español, inmigrantes, participantes del Programa de Educación Especial y sin hogar fijo (*Homeless*).

El DEPR, en este "Plan para la Recuperación Académica", identifica las áreas de enfoque que permitirán diseñar, elaborar e implementar las acciones conjuntas y pertinentes que proveerán el apoyo específico a cada grupo de interés del sistema educativo (estudiantes y sus familias, maestros, directores de escuela, facilitadores docentes y superintendentes: regionales, de escuelas y auxiliares). Esto ayudará a cerrar las brechas del aprendizaje y el rendimiento académico para así disminuir el rezago académico. Las áreas de enfoque aquí presentadas permitirán redirigir y focalizar los esfuerzos del DEPR con el propósito de organizar e implementar los procesos de instrucción enfocados en cerrar las brechas y minimizar el rezago académico, al maximizar los procesos de enseñanza-aprendizaje y de comunicación y apoyo con los estudiantes, sus familias, los docentes, entre otros líderes educativos.

En esta sección, se presentan las acciones académicas y administrativas que se llevarán a cabo a corto, mediano y largo plazo. Estas establecerán la ruta de acción para el desarrollo de proyectos, iniciativas, estrategias académicas e intervenciones basadas en evidencia para cerrar las brechas de aprendizaje y de rendimiento académico, y preparar a todos los estudiantes del país para tener el éxito académico esperado.

Esta sección se divide en los puntos esenciales para atender los efectos de la pandemia del COVID-19 y otros fenómenos que han sucedido en Puerto Rico:

1. **Mejoría en la calidad de los datos –** Enfoque en la recopilación y el análisis de datos que permitan entender la situación actual desde distintas perspectivas para establecer planes de trabajos alineados a estudios de necesidades actualizados.

2. **Estrategias de intervención para la aceleración del aprendizaje –** Planteamiento de una diversidad de iniciativas sobre intervenciones académicas, como:

a. uso del tiempo en el verano para crear proyectos educativos enfocados en atender las destrezas esenciales por materias y estudiantes que hayan fracasado,
b. establecimiento de programas de tutorías durante el verano y el año académico 2021-2022,
c. creación de campamentos enfocados en proyectos de aprendizaje y enriquecimiento académico,
d. desarrollo de contenido curricular esencial (*blueprints*) en diversas modalidades,
e. uso de medios de comunicación como herramientas para el aprendizaje con una estructura académica y de medición de resultados y
f. utilización de plataformas tecnológicas con contenido académico e interactividad para el aprendizaje auténtico.

3. **Desarrollo socioemocional y cuidado de la salud mental de los estudiantes –** Implementación de servicios educativos y de salud enfocados en presentar estrategias para la resiliencia y el desarrollo de destrezas y actitudes esenciales para el éxito académico, tales como: motivación, esfuerzo, persistencia, tomar riesgos intelectuales, colaboración, empatía y metacognición.

4. **Apoyo a la docencia –** Implementación de un proceso de desarrollo profesional enfocado en la praxis junto a un proceso de rendición de cuentas basados en el *mentoring-coaching*. Estos adiestramientos estarán enfocados en la práctica de enseñar, basados en las estrategias académicas identificadas para los procesos de atención del rezago académico, en las herramientas tecnológicas a utilizar para el proceso de enseñanza, en el uso de distintas modalidades de enseñanza y en prácticas educativas basadas en evidencia para la recuperación académica al considerar:
    a. La identificación y el desarrollo del contenido esencial por grado y materia.
    b. El fortalecimiento de las destrezas previas para el desarrollo del contenido esencial de cada grado y materia.
    c. El proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje enfocados en destrezas de pensamiento crítico y creativo.
    d. La integración de las Bellas Artes y la Educación Física como medios para potencial el aprendizaje del contenido esencial y el desarrollo socioemocional de los estudiantes (*Well-rounded education*).

5. **Atención e integración de las familias para el éxito académico –** Selección de distintos medios para atender las necesidades de las familias en función de los mejores intereses de sus hijos; nuestros estudiantes.

6. **Alianzas comunitarias y con el sector privado –** Creación de alianzas para promover el desarrollo de las competencias del siglo XXI para dotar a nuestros estudiantes de las

destrezas imprescindibles para el progreso académico, mejorar su calidad de vida, tener acceso a recursos y a oportunidades laborales.

ÁREA DE ENFOQUE 1. MEJORÍA EN LA CALIDAD DE LOS DATOS	
Para establecer un plan que atienda las necesidades específicas de nuestro sistema educativo, necesitamos desarrollar un plan de recopilación y análisis de datos cuantitativos y cualitativos. Este proceso de análisis permitirá presentar acciones específicas para distintos subgrupos basadas en sus necesidades.	
META 1.	Establecer una estructura de recopilación y análisis de datos con el fin de desarrollar planes de acciones para cada subgrupo identificado mediante este proceso.
OBJETIVO 1.1.	Construir instrumentos de recopilación de datos para distintos fenómenos educativos en el DEPR.
ACTIVIDADES.	**1.1.1.** Elaborar instrumentos de recopilación de datos sobre el dominio de destrezas académicas.
	1.1.2. Crear instrumentos de recopilación de datos sobre necesidades identificadas para el proceso de aprendizaje en distintas modalidades (presencial, híbrida o a distancia) por parte de los docentes, las familias y los estudiantes.
OBJETIVO 1.2.	Analizar los datos recopilados de los distintos instrumentos construidos.
ACTIVIDADES.	**1.2.1.** Procesar los datos recopilados mediante el uso de programados de análisis de datos.
	1.2.2. Construir diversos *dashboards* para las visualizaciones del resumen de los datos recopilados.
	1.2.3. Desarrollar modelos predictivos basados en procesos de *machine learning* para predecir eventos como éxito académico.

ÁREA DE ENFOQUE 2. ESTRATEGIAS DE INTERVENCIÓN PARA LA ACELERACIÓN DEL APRENDIZAJE	
El propósito principal de esta área es proveer el apoyo para cerrar las brechas y minimizar el rezago académico provocado por la pandemia del COVID-19 y otros fenómenos que se han experimentado en Puerto Rico. Permitirá proveer el apoyo específico a los estudiantes que recibieron un promovido condicional (P/c) y a los estudiantes que evidencian mayor rezago académico a base del análisis de la distribución de notas de las 30 semanas.	
META 2.	Implementar distintas iniciativas académicas para atender el rezago académico, atendiendo las necesidades de los distintos subgrupos.
OBJETIVO 2.1.	Desarrollar iniciativas basadas en el análisis de datos realizado para atender, a corto plazo, el rezago académico identificado mediante la distribución de notas de las 30 semanas.
ACTIVIDADES.	**2.1.1.** Elaborar e implementar un programa educativo de verano enfocado en atender las destrezas esenciales por materias y estudiantes que hayan fracasado. • **Alternativa 1.** Ofrecimiento de servicios educativos a grupos pequeños (de tres a cinco estudiantes) para atender necesidades académicas particulares con una duración de cuatro semanas. Estos servicios serán ofrecidos a estudiantes de 3.° a 9.° grado, en las modalidades presencial, híbrida y virtual.

ÁREA DE ENFOQUE 2. ESTRATEGIAS DE INTERVENCIÓN PARA LA ACELERACIÓN DEL APRENDIZAJE	
	• **Alternativa 2.** Campamento de verano enfocado en la mejoría, en el dominio de destrezas de lectura en Español e Inglés, en destrezas de Matemáticas y destrezas de programación como materia emergente para la integración de materias y para motivar a los estudiantes. Este campamento tendría una duración de 6 semanas. Estos servicios serán ofrecidos a estudiantes de 3.º a 12.º grado, en las modalidades presencial, híbrida y virtual. • **Alternativa 3.** Programa de tutorías enfocado en las materias en las cuales los estudiantes hayan fracasado. Los grupos por atender serán de tres a cinco estudiantes de 3.º a 12.º grado, en las modalidades presencial, híbrida y virtual. • **Alternativa 4.** Programa individualizado para atender las destrezas de las materias en las que haya fracasado el estudiante y las materias básicas utilizando distintas herramientas y basado en destrezas esenciales [Descriptores de los Niveles Generales de Ejecución Académica (PLD, por sus siglas en inglés) y *blueprints*. • **Alternativa 5.** Campamentos educativos enfocados en proyectos de aprendizaje y enriquecimiento académico. Estos servicios, ofrecidos a los estudiantes del nivel secundario, serán basados en alianzas con la comunidad y las empresas privadas.
	2.1.2. Establecer un de programa de tutorías durante el verano del 2021 y el año académico 2021-2022. • **Alternativa 1.** Programa de tutorías enfocado en las materias que los estudiantes hayan fracasado. Los grupos por atender serán de tres a cinco estudiantes de 3.º a 12.º grado, en las modalidades presencial, híbrida y virtual. • **Alternativa 2.** Programa individualizado para atender las destrezas de las materias en las que haya fracasado el estudiante y las materias básicas utilizando distintas herramientas y basado en las destrezas esenciales (Descriptores de los Niveles Generales de Ejecución Académica y *blueprints*). • **Alternativa 3.** Proyecto educativo enfocado en proyectos de aprendizaje y enriquecimiento académico. Estos servicios, ofrecidos a los estudiantes del nivel secundario, serán basados en alianzas con la comunidad y las empresas privadas.
	2.1.3. Desarrollar instrumentos de contenido curricular esencial (Descriptores de los Niveles Generales de Ejecución Académica y *blueprints*) para las distintas materias básicas y de otros programas en diversas modalidades.
	2.1.4. Utilizar distintos medios de comunicación como herramientas para el aprendizaje con una estructura académica y de medición de resultados. • **Alternativa 1.** Presentar, mediante la televisión y las redes sociales, el currículo basado en los Descriptores de los Niveles Generales de Ejecución Académica y *blueprints* con instrumentos de evaluación que deberán completar los estudiantes.
	2.1.5. Seleccionar plataformas tecnológicas con contenido académico, interactividad y accesibilidad para el aprendizaje auténtico, enfocadas en atender las destrezas esenciales basadas en los Descriptores de los Niveles Generales de Ejecución Académica y *blueprints*.

ÁREA DE ENFOQUE 2. ESTRATEGIAS DE INTERVENCIÓN PARA LA ACELERACIÓN DEL APRENDIZAJE	
	2.1.6. Desarrollar un proyecto sobre literacia tecnológica para el dominio de las habilidades de las Tecnológicas de la Información y la Comunicación (TIC) para que todos los estudiantes exitosos en la Sociedad del Conocimiento. • **Alternativa 1.** Creación de contenido enfocado en literacia tecnológica mediante vídeos cortos, trabajados con las herramientas tecnológicas del DEPR.

ÁREA DE ENFOQUE 3. DESARROLLO SOCIOEMOCIONAL Y CUIDADO DE LA SALUD MENTAL DE LOS ESTUDIANTES	
La comunidad escolar ha enfrentado una diversidad de fenómenos que han afectado los procesos educativos y de desarrollo socioemocional. Por tal razón, un plan para el rezago académico debe contar con actividades académicas enfocadas en el desarrollo de competencias conocidas como *soft skills*, en acercamientos al enfoque de *"The whole child"* y en actividades enfocadas en el desarrollo de destrezas socioemocionales. También el DEPR ofrecerá servicios para atender la salud mental de los estudiantes.	
META 3.	Establecer programas de servicios educativos y no educativos para el desarrollo de las destrezas socioemocionales, de las competencias conocidas como *soft skills* y de las actividades de atención a la salud mental de los estudiantes.
OBJETIVO 3.1.	Desarrollar un programa académico enfocado en destrezas socioemocionales para la recuperación en situaciones de reto.
ACTIVIDAD.	**3.1.1.** Implementación de servicios educativos y de salud enfocados en presentar estrategias para la resiliencia y el desarrollo de destrezas y actitudes esenciales para el éxito académico.
OBJETIVO 3.2.	Desarrollar un programa de atención a la salud mental de los estudiantes del DEPR.
ACTIVIDAD.	**3.2.1.** Crear un programa de atención a la salud mental de los estudiantes por parte de especialistas en el tema, como psicólogos y psiquiatras.

ÁREA DE ENFOQUE 4. APOYO A LA DOCENCIA	
Atender el rezago académico requiere de destrezas y competencias pedagógicas que deben ser estudiadas, analizadas y estructuradas dependiendo de las necesidades identificadas. Por tal razón, los docentes deben ser adiestrados para mejorar sus prácticas de enseñanza: procesos pedagógicos, de recopilación y análisis de datos y de dominio de herramientas tecnológicas con fines educativos. Se considera importante este último punto debido a que las herramientas tecnológicas necesitan del establecimiento de procesos definidos de instrucción para atender tanto la planificación, el desarrollo de actividades de aprendizaje como la evaluación del aprendizaje.	
META 4.	Implementar un proceso de desarrollo profesional junto a un proceso de rendimiento de cuentas.
OBJETIVO 4.1.	Establecer un proceso de desarrollo profesional para docentes durante el verano del 2021 y el primer semestre del año académico 2021-2022 enfocado en las destrezas identificadas para atender el rezago académico de los estudiantes.
	4.1.1. Brindar desarrollo profesional para docentes sobre estrategias instruccionales.

ÁREA DE ENFOQUE 4. APOYO A LA DOCENCIA	
ACTIVIDADES.	• Temas: (1) Diferenciación del aprendizaje, (2) Aprendizaje basado en proyectos, (3) Comprensión lectora con enfoque en todas las materias, (4) *Blended learning*, (5) uso de los *Performance Level Descriptors* y *blueprints*, entre otros.
	4.1.2. Proveer desarrollo profesional para docentes sobre el uso de datos para establecer estrategias instruccionales efectivas.
	4.1.3. Ofrecer desarrollo profesional para docentes sobre el uso de la tecnología para llevar a cabo la instrucción en distintas modalidades (presencial, híbrida y virtual).

ÁREA DE ENFOQUE 5. ATENCIÓN E INTEGRACIÓN DE LA FAMILIA PARA EL ÉXITO ACADÉMICO	
Los efectos de la pandemia del COVID-19 ham presentado un panorama en el cual se reconoce la importancia de la integración de la familia en todos los procesos educativos. La familia ha formado parte de los procesos de enseñanza en la modalidad virtual. Por tal razón, deben ser atendidos, en función de los mejores intereses de sus hijos, mediante adiestramientos académicos, de literacia tecnológica y de servicios enfocados en salud mental. Se deben identificar los distintos medios para adiestrar continuamente a las familias de los estudiantes del DEPR.	
META 5.1.	Establecer un proceso de adiestramientos para las familias en cuanto al uso de plataformas educativas, uso de herramientas tecnológicas para el proceso de aprendizaje y sobre los programados de productividad.
OBJETIVO 5.1.	Crear un proyecto de adiestramientos sobre el uso de plataformas educativas, el uso de herramientas tecnológicas para el proceso de aprendizaje y sobre los programados de productividad durante el verano y el primer semestre del año académico 2021-2022.
ACTIVIDADES.	**5.1.1.** Seleccionar las plataformas educativas virtuales para continuar los procesos educativos en distintas modalidades.
	5.1.2. Brindar adiestramientos sobre el uso de plataformas educativas para los procesos de aprendizaje.
	5.1.3. Proveer adiestramientos sobre el uso de herramientas tecnológicas para la continuidad de los procesos educativos en distintas modalidades.
META 5.2.	Desarrollar un programa de atención a la salud mental de las familias.
ACTIVIDAD.	**5.2.1.** Dar servicios enfocados en la salud mental de las familias durante el verano de 2021 y comienzo del año escolar 2021-2022.

ÁREA DE ENFOQUE 6. ALIANZAS COMUNITARIAS Y CON EL SECTOR PRIVADO	
Establecimiento de alianzas con la comunidad y el sector privado con el propósito de desarrollar competencias del siglo XXI (comunicación, colaboración, pensamiento crítico y creatividad) para la recuperación académica, el otorgamiento de créditos académicos por funciones laborales y la atención de la salud mental y las destrezas socioemocionales.	
META 6.	Establecer un grupo de trabajo que sirva de asesor y que refleje el insumo de los diferentes sectores que colaborarán en el desarrollo y la implementación del plan.
OBJETIVO 6.1.	Constituir un grupo de trabajo o cuerpo asesor que recoja las perspectivas de diferentes sectores de la comunidad.
ACTIVIDADES.	**6.1.1.** Identificar y convocar a representantes de grupos de interés claves (comunidad, familias, docentes, colaboradores, expertos, etc.) para que formen parte del equipo de trabajo.
	6.1.2. Discutir con el equipo de trabajo las expectativas del plan.
	6.1.3. Establecer reuniones periódicas para recopilar recomendaciones e intereses de los diferentes sectores representados.
OBJETIVO 6.2.	Recopilar el insumo y las recomendaciones de diferentes sectores.
ACTIVIDADES.	**6.2.1.** Realizar sondeos o encuestas a grupos focales de miembros de la comunidad escolar (familias, maestros, directores de escuela, estudiantes, entre otros).
	6.2.2 Recopilar, mediante minutas, breves las recomendaciones de los colaboradores con pericia en el desarrollo académico y socioemocional de los estudiantes.
	6.2.3 Delinear proyectos innovadores cónsonos con las áreas de enfoque del plan.
OBJETIVO 6.3.	Adoptar las recomendaciones e identificar recursos y modalidades para el alcance comunitario.
ACTIVIDADES.	**6.3.1** Diseñar proyectos innovadores cónsonos con las áreas de enfoque y los objetivos del plan.
	6.3.2 Difundir a la comunidad los esfuerzos desarrollados y los logros alcanzados como resultado de la creación del grupo de trabajo o comité asesor.

MONITOREO Y CONTROL DEL PROGRESO DE LOS PROYECTOS, LAS INICIATIVAS Y LAS INTERVENCIONES

En la actualidad, no existe un concepto único de calidad, pues su definición cambia de acuerdo con el punto de vista teórico y valórico utilizado. El DEPR, ni por error involuntario, se atrevería a establecer una definición absoluta de calidad. Sin embargo, siguiendo la línea de pensamiento de la UNESCO (2008), podría establecer y "asumir una definición acotada y operacional"[13] de calidad, de acuerdo con la situación de evaluación que esté llevando a cabo. Estas definiciones situacionales de "calidad" estarían contextualizadas por indicadores que establezcan la:

PERTINENCIA Y RELEVANCIA	EFICACIA	SUFICIENCIA	EFICIENCIA
la pertinencia y la relevancia que expresan la coherencia entre la enseñanza, el logro de los estudiantes y las necesidades de la sociedad.	que refleja la coherencia entre los productos esperados —los objetivos institucionales y de los programas de estudio— y los realmente alcanzados.	de los recursos de toda índole para implementar de forma correcta, sustentable y sostenible las operaciones administrativas y académicas.	en el uso de los recursos, que resulta de la coherencia entre la capacidad de hacer algo y la planificación e implementación para hacerlo y los logros alcanzados con estos.

Sin embargo, el DEPR asume que la calidad "no es algo acabado ni un estado, sino una tendencia para la autoexigencia permanente y razonable de superación, la cual no puede provenir del exterior, sino solo surgir del interior mismo del sistema a mejorar" (Alcántara, 2007). Esta requiere de la evaluación como un mecanismo de aseguramiento de la calidad. Esta puede desarrollarse desde la autoevaluación, la coevaluación y la heteroevaluación. Además, requiere que el personal se responsabilice por los resultados. Esto implica el establecimiento de los objetivos y la definición responsables de los resultados (estudiante, directores, administradores y el propio sistema educativo), es decir, gestión de la calidad.

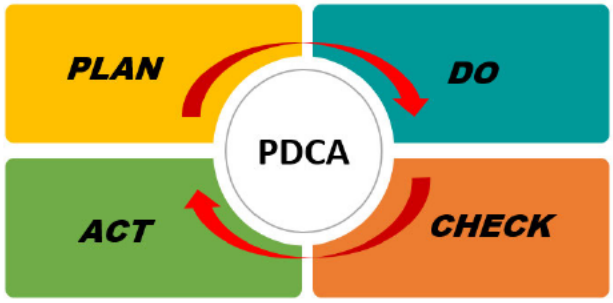
La gestión de la calidad es el camino hacia la excelencia que requiere un: cambio cultural profundo mediante valores y creencias que deben ser compartidas por todos; manejo integral de la institución o el programa y modelo de gestión para el mejoramiento continuo desde un enfoque de calidad total (excelencia). La calidad total puede definirse como una estrategia de gestión de la institución o programa que tiene como objetivo satisfacer, de una manera equilibrada, las necesidades y las expectativas de todos sus grupos de interés. Tres componentes claves del enfoque de calidad total son:

- **Liderazgo** – personal apto, creativo e innovador que dirige los proceso hacia el logro de la calidad por medio del modelaje y la acción

[13] UNESCO. (2008). Reflexiones en torno a la evaluación de la calidad en América Latina y el Caribe. PP. 27.

- **Sistema de gestión** – procedimientos y proceso que aseguren la continuidad en el tiempo de los resultados obtenidos, enfocado en el mejoramiento continuo.
- **Resultados obtenidos** – deben reflejar una alta calificación en la escala valorativa al cumplir con los estándares e indicadores de calidad en satisfacción plena y consistente de los grupos de interés.

El mejoramiento continuo implica una serie de actividades consecutivas y cíclicas orientadas a la resolución de los retos, las oportunidades, los problemas o las discrepancias que surgen en las instituciones, los programas o los servicios. La mejor forma de abordar el mejoramiento continuo es utilizando un marco conceptual o una combinación de varios (enfoque ecléctico) para operacionalizar la gestión de la mejora continua. Un excelente modelo es el de W. Edwards Deming, el cual se popularizó durante la segunda mitad del siglo XX. El ciclo de Deming o el ciclo PDCA (*Plan, Do, Check, Act*) ayuda a establecer en la institución, el programa o el servicio de una metodología de trabajo encaminada al mejoramiento continuo. El razonamiento del modelo es el siguiente:



PLAN	DO	CHECK	ACT
¿Qué hay que hacer? ¿Cómo hay que hacerlo? Establecer y documentar qué se quiere hacer y por qué. Requiere identificar las oportunidades de mejorar, priorizar, analizar, establecer posibles soluciones y determinar el plan a seguir.	Hacer lo planificado o diseñado. Desarrollar e implementar utilizando transiciones y mejoras. Se puede implementar a pequeña escala o en forma piloto.	¿Se realizaron las actividades según se planificaron? Se monitorea, controla y verifica (evalúa) a base de los indicadores establecidos.	¿Cómo puedo mejorarlo la próxima vez? Se quiere mejorar continuamente el desempeño.

EL DEPR invita al personal docente en las escuelas, las ORE y las oficinas centrales a utilizar este modelo para dirigir todos sus esfuerzos para el mejoramiento continuo de los procesos y las actividades que se llevarán a cabo para la recuperación académica para preparar a todos los estudiantes para el éxito académico.

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