

COPY

**Washington County Emergency Management**  
3931 SE Adams Rd  
Bartlesville, OK 74006

Dear Washington County Emergency Management,

Paths to Independence is a school and job training program that serves students with autism in northeastern Oklahoma. PTI opened in 2012 with the mission of providing high quality support and educational services to children and adults with autism spectrum disorders and their families. At this time, we operate the only accredited Pre-Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade school in Oklahoma that accepts students with autism at all levels of functioning. In addition, PTI serves students who have graduated and are transitioning to adult roles, young adults with autism, and families of students.

Our services have been affected by challenges incurred as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We would like to be considered for a grant from the American Rescue Plan Act Funds to help us with those challenges.

We are including an overview of our school and programs, as well as a description of losses we have incurred due to COVID, and needs we would like to meet. Please let us know if we can provide further information.

Sincerely,

Clair Bartley, PTI Executive Director  
918-337-6231  
Ptischool2012@gmail.com

**Paths to Independence COVID-Related Losses and Challenges**  
**(PTI is not requesting any replacement for COVID-related losses at this time.**  
**See the following pages for our Grant Request.)**

**Loss of tuition**

PTI closed in March 2020 when public schools shut down due to COVID-19. Because of concerns about regression and the stress on our families, we reopened in June and July 2020 with a half-day program. Due to the loss of instruction in March, April, and May, PTI offered our summer program at no cost to families, or as an alternative, a stipend to help with meeting past-due tuition. This caused us to lose approximately \$1,000 per child or \$38,000 for 2020.

During the 2020-21 school year, we lost eight days due to school-wide COVID quarantines in addition to 10 days for weather related closures. PTI offered 12 days of summer services to our families in the summer of 2021, or as an alternative, a \$1000 scholarship per child. The financial loss for PTI was approximately \$47,000.

So far, during the 2021-22 school year, due to COVID, PTI has closed elementary classes for half-days during a three-day period in August, and for a full day in January. Secondary classes were closed for a half-day in August, 2.5 days during September, and a full day in January. Adult classes were closed for two days in September and two days in January. We anticipate making up days for these shut-downs during the summer of 2022.

**School year operating costs**

Before 2020, we usually took in about \$55,000 at our fall Dancing with the Bartlesville Stars fundraiser. This past fall (2021) we took in more than \$100,000. In 2020, due to COVID, we switched to a virtual event, and only brought in \$33,000. The funds from the event help PTI with operating costs for the school year. We estimate we lost at least \$22,000 in school-year operating costs in 2020.

**Summer school operating costs**

Every April, PTI hosts a 5K race that typically brings in about \$15,000 to help with operating costs for summer school. In 2020, due to the pandemic, PTI raised \$8,000, a loss of \$7,000.

**Additional fundraising costs**

PTI is currently in the midst of a capital campaign which has gone on a year longer than planned due to a shift to virtual fundraising. Planning meetings and events were stalled, but we continued paying our fundraising consultant for his guidance and assistance throughout the pandemic. The consultant's fees for the year were \$5,160 per month, for a year's loss to PTI of \$61,920.

**Request #1**

**\$1,015,200 to provide a community safe space for protection and social distancing for staff, students, and community members during emergencies while minimizing the spread of illness.**

**Description**

**We have received a quote of \$45,335 for tornado/storm safe rooms that allow social distancing.**

Oklahoma is a high-risk area for tornadoes and destructive storms. As the number of our students has increased, we have outgrown the spaces set aside for them to shelter during storms and warnings. Social distancing has become impossible in those spaces, and even without social distancing, all our students and staff will not fit in the spaces. We have received a quote of \$45,335 for the purchase and installation of three 8-by-16 safe rooms spread throughout our building. **However, these may be inadequate for proper social distancing as we continue to grow, and will take up much needed space in our current building.**

**Alternative**

**\$1,015,200 for a larger, strategically-positioned community safe space that provides adequate protection and social distancing for staff, students, and community members during emergencies.**

PTI needs a new 2,880 square foot cafeteria/kitchen facility adjacent to the current school building. The architect who has drawn plans for such a facility has noted that, with modifications, the new building could be constructed to also serve as a tornado/storm/emergency safe area. The space would be able to accommodate the entire staff, pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup> grade students, and adult clients, while allowing social distancing and reducing the spread of disease during weather warnings and after a destructive event. The facility would even have space to accommodate members of the community who need a safe, socially distancing shelter in emergencies.

better air quality and reduce the chance of widespread infection from the COVID-19 virus and other illnesses.

**2022 Grant Request from Paths to Independence  
Requesting funds from the American Rescue Plan Act Funds  
For COVID-Related Needs**

**Request 3 of 4**

**Request #3**

**\$76,400 for one-time teacher premium pay for June 1, 2020 through December 1, 2021 to retain valued employees now experienced in the prevention and spread of COVID and other illnesses.**

**Related ARPA regulations:**

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59bba641cd39c38913f702a0/t/618c354803d3085a3c651831/1636578633617/SLFRPFAO.pdf>

*Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds Frequently Asked Questions Assistance to small business and non-profits includes, but is not limited to: .... costs to retain employees....*

*....To respond to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency by providing premium pay to eligible workers;*

*Premium Pay – Recipients may provide premium pay retrospectively for work performed at any time since the start of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Such premium pay must be “in addition to” wages and remuneration already received.*

*Treasury encourages recipients to consider providing premium pay retroactively for work performed during the pandemic, recognizing that many essential workers have not yet received additional compensation for their service during the pandemic.*

*The Interim Final Rule emphasizes the need for recipients to prioritize premium pay for lower income workers. Premium pay that would increase a worker’s total pay above 150% of the greater of the state or county average annual wage requires specific justification for how it responds to the needs of these workers. [Note: All PTI employees qualify based on this rule.]*

**BELOW IS FROM <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Final-Rule-Overview.pdf>**

*Coronavirus State & Local Fiscal Recovery Funds: Overview of the Final Rule  
Department of the Treasury*

*Premium Pay: The Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds may be used to provide premium pay to eligible workers performing essential work during the pandemic. [Workers may include:] Educational, school nutrition, and other work required to operate a school facility*

**2022 Grant Request from Paths to Independence  
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For COVID-Related Needs**

**Request 4 of 4**

**Request #4**

**\$12,000 to update restrooms and \$10,000 to replace water fountains to slow the spread of COVID and other illnesses.**

**Related ARPA regulations:**

*From the Oklahoma Municipal League*

*Frequently Asked Questions On Permissible Uses*

*<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59bba641cd39c38913f702a0/t/618c354803d3085a3c651831/1636578633617/SLFRPFAQ.pdf>*

*A broad range of services are needed to contain COVID-19 and are eligible uses, including ... support for prevention, mitigation, or other services in congregate living facilities .... and other key settings like schools; ....*

*Loans, grants, or in-kind assistance to implement COVID-19 prevention or mitigation tactics, such as physical plant changes to enable social distancing, enhanced cleaning efforts, ... Programs or services that address or mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 public health emergency on education, childhood health and welfare.*

*<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Final-Rule-Overview.pdf>*

*The pandemic has broadly impacted Americans and recipients can provide services to prevent and mitigate COVID-19 to the general public or to small businesses, nonprofits, and impacted industries in general. Enumerated eligible uses include: Support for prevention, mitigation, or other services in congregate living facilities, public facilities, and schools....*

**Request #4**

**\$12,000 to update restrooms and \$10,000 to replace water fountains to slow the spread of COVID and other illnesses.**

**Description**

\*Two of our restrooms have no sinks. Updating these restrooms will help reduce the spread of illness by allowing students and staff to wash hands immediately after using the facilities.

\*We would like to update our restrooms to provide handicap accessible facilities to accommodate all students so they can easily access appropriate sanitation measures to stay healthy.

\*The water fountains and restrooms are frequently in need of repair. Installing water bottle filling stations and replacing outdated equipment will make our building safer and cleaner for staff and students.