



What You Need to Know About ESSER Funds

August 19, 2021

Federal COVID-Relief Funding

CARES Act (\$625 million)

- ESSER I (school districts and charter schools)
- GEER I (some to CTCs)

CRRSA Act (\$2.2 billion)

- ESSER II (school districts and charter schools)
- GEER II (some to CTCs)

ARP Act (\$5 billion)

- ARP ESSER (90%) (school districts and charter schools)
- ARP ESSER (set-asides) (some to CTCs)

ARP ESSER Set-aside

- ARP Act reserved 10% of total state allocation for certain programs
- Act 24 of 2021 allocated >2.5% of the total allocations to LEAs/entities not receiving a portion of the 90% ARP ESSER funding
- ARP ESSER set-aside for CTCs: \$43.5 million
- March 13, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2024

▶ Planning for Use: Step 1

Is the use of funds intended to prevent, prepare for, or respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including its impact on the social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs of students?

▶ Planning for Use: Step 2

Does the use of funds fall under one of the authorized uses of ARP ESSER funds?

▶ ARP Act Eligible Uses

- Any activity authorized by ESEA
- Any activity authorized by IDEA
- Any activity authorized by the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.
- Any activity authorized by Perkins
- Coordination of preparedness and response efforts of local educational agencies with State, local, Tribal, and territorial public health departments, and other relevant agencies, to improve coordinated responses among such entities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.

▶ ARP Act Eligible Uses

- Activities to address the unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.

▶ ARP Act Eligible Uses

- Developing and implementing procedures and systems to improve the preparedness and response efforts of local educational agencies.
- Training and professional development for staff of the local educational agency on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.
- Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of a local educational agency, including buildings operated by such agency.

▶ ARP Act Eligible Uses

- Planning for, coordinating, and implementing activities during long-term closures, including providing meals to eligible students, providing technology for online learning to all students, providing guidance for carrying out requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and ensuring other educational services can continue to be provided consistent with all Federal, State, and local requirements.
- Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity) for students who are served by the local educational agency that aids in regular and substantive educational interaction between students and their classroom instructors, including low-income students and children with disabilities, which may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.

▶ ARP Act Eligible Uses

- Providing mental health services and supports, including through the implementation of evidence-based full-service community schools.
- Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care.

▶ ARP Act Eligible Uses

- Addressing learning loss among students, including low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care, of the local educational agency, including by—
 - administering and using high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable, to accurately assess students' academic progress and assist educators in meeting students' academic needs, including through differentiating instruction;
 - implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students;
 - providing information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support students, including in a distance learning environment; and
 - tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education.

▶ ARP Act Eligible Uses

- School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs.
- Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement.

▶ ARP Act Eligible Uses

- Developing strategies and implementing public health protocols including, to the greatest extent practicable, policies in line with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff.
- Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation of and continuity of services in local educational agencies and continuing to employ existing staff of the local educational agency.

▶ Planning for Use: Step 3

Is the use of funds permissible under the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance, 2 CFR Part 200)?

Is it ***necessary and reasonable*** for the performance of the ESSER or GEER award?

▶ Application Process

- The ARP ESSER application is now available in eGrants
- Look for more information from PDE's Division of Federal Programs

➤ Health and Safety Plans

ARP Act requires LEAs to develop Health and Safety Plans

- CTC plan must be developed and posted on the CTC website by August 30 or the start of school (whichever is earlier)
- When the CTC submits the ARP ESSER application, they will need to submit the plan to PDE

Reminders

- These are one-time federal funds that can be used over multiple fiscal years
- Engage your staff, students, boards, communities in decision-making
- Supplement not supplant rule does not apply
- Uniform Guidance requirements do apply

▶ Prior Approval

Prior Approval from PDE is needed for:

- Construction/renovation
- Capital expenditures
- Equipment in excess of \$5,000
- Other expenditures (see 2 CFR 200.407)

Forms available on PDE website

ESSER/GEER Resources

- [Health and Safety Plan](#)
- [ARP ESSER FAQs](#)
- [USDE ESSER/GEER FAQs](#)
- [Evidence Resource Center](#)

- Bookmark [PDE's What's New](#) page!

Contact/Mission

For more information on ESSER and GEER, please visit PDE's website at www.education.pa.gov

The mission of the department is to academically prepare children and adults to succeed as productive citizens. The department seeks to ensure that the technical support, resources and opportunities are in place for all students, whether children or adults, to receive a high quality education.