

American Rescue Plan (ARP) - Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER III)



American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act, ESSER III

- ▶ The intent and purpose of ARP of 2021, ESSER III funding is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on students.
 - ▶ SEISD Allocation: \$15,635,846
 - ▶ ADA hold harmless offset will not apply
 - ▶ Grant application available on April 29, 2021
 - ▶ Grant application due date is July 27, 2021
 - ▶ Grant period
 - ▶ 2020-2021, including summer 2021
 - ▶ 2021-2022, including summer 2022
 - ▶ 2022-2023, including summer 2023
 - ▶ 2023-2024, including summer 2024 (carryover period)

Statutory Requirements

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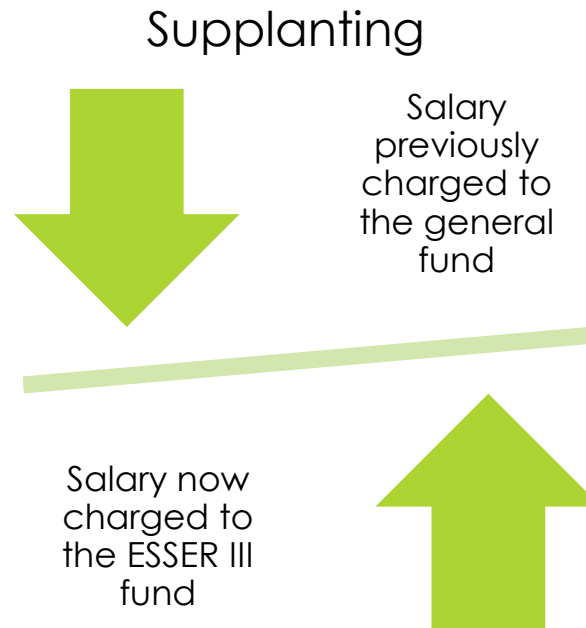
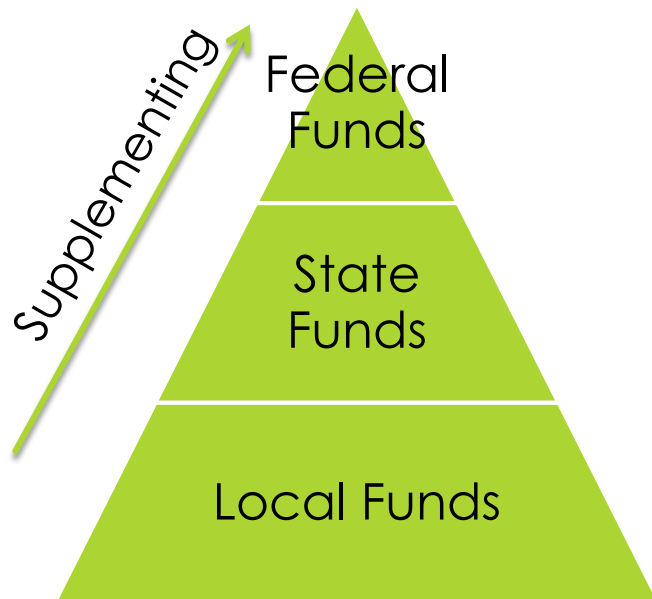
20% minimum set-aside for learning loss mitigation, including through afterschool, summer school, extended day/year programs, targeted to students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children in foster care, and migratory students

'Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan' must be posted online and must be reviewed at least every 6 months and updated as appropriate. Requires public notice and comment before being finalized.

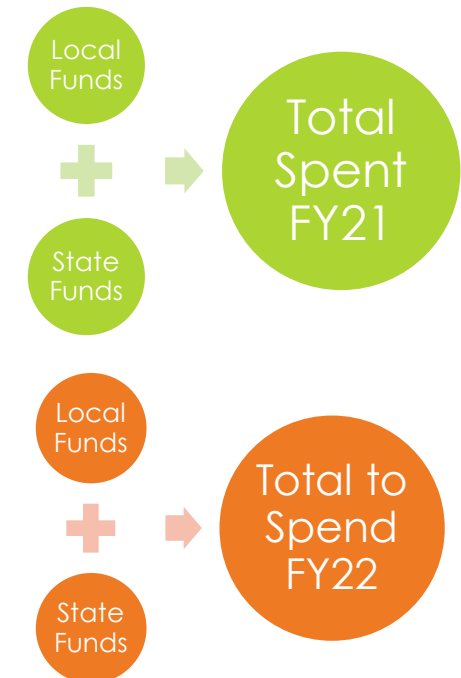
Plan for the uses of ARP ESSER III funds must be posted online and must be reviewed at least every 6 months and updated as appropriate. Requires public notice and comment before being finalized.

Fiscal Considerations

- Supplement, not supplant provision is not in ESSER III, so supplanting is allowed; however, the use of funds must still meet the intent of the program statute.



- If supplanting, must still meet maintenance of effort spending requirements for ESSA and IDEA federal grants, plus ESSER maintenance of equity requirement.



Select FAQs from TEA Website

- ▶ The application contains an assurance about assuring the governing board makes no assumptions that the state will provide replacement funds for ESSER in future years. Does the board need to be made aware of this statement?
 - ▶ Yes. Since the large influx of ESSER funding into LEAs can result in funding deficits when it ends, the LEA must plan for how to effectively and efficiently use the ESSER funds. It is recommended to use the ESSER grant funds for one-time or short-term types of expenditures to address the identified needs caused by the pandemic. Although long-term uses of the ESSER funds are also allowable, these types of uses may cause the LEA to not have funding to continue these activities after the ESSER period of availability ends, thus creating fiscal deficits. Also remember that federal regulations require the LEA to provide public notice of its intent to submit the application for the ESSER funds and how it will use these funds. Many LEAs provide this public notice at the local board meeting.

Select FAQs from TEA Website

- ▶ Are there recommended uses of ESSER III funds that will assist LEAs address the impact of the COVID pandemic and disruptions leading to learning loss?
 - ▶ The LEA should use their local data and comprehensive needs assessment process to determine the best uses of funds for their students and staff. TEA has focused on this issue over the last year and can recommend several potential uses of funds for consideration. While keeping in mind the purpose and requirements under ESSER III related to accelerating student learning, TEA strongly encourages school systems to plan for how to use these one-time federal funds expeditiously over the entire covered period to facilitate a more comprehensive long-term approach to learning acceleration. This may include aligned strategies that are currently part of a districts' current plans and strategies. A qualitative review of draft local learning acceleration plans revealed the following trends and suggestions, which is not meant to be exhaustive. This list includes and is not limited to the following:
 - ▶ Professional Development: comprehensive Reading Academies, high-quality instructional materials, dyslexia training, professional development stipends, technology integration training
 - ▶ Extended Instructional Time: extended day, extended year, high-dosage tutoring, summer learning
 - ▶ Staffing: tutors, reduced class sizes, small group instruction, staff retention and recruitment incentive pay, after school enrichment programs, instructional coaching and leadership
 - ▶ Facilities: ventilation, cleaning, HVAC systems, specialized instructional spaces
 - ▶ Technology: devices, infrastructure upgrades, learning management systems, digital tools, educational application
 - ▶ Mental Health and Behavioral Supports: social workers, at-risk coordinators, additional counseling services, teacher training and programming, wrap-around and community partnerships

Major Areas Identified ✓



Loss of learning



Technology integration



Professional development



Family & Community Engagement



Safe to return in person and continuity of services



Mental health and behavioral supports



Grant administration and retention of employees

Loss of learning

- ▶ Increase in campus funding to target identified needs by allocating an extra \$1M over three years in compensatory education program funds to schools.
 - ▶ *Will be allocated to campuses by using their general fund SCE campus discretion budget as a benchmark and multiplying that budget by 50% of which the result will be ESSER funds to supplement their SCE program.*
- ▶ Addition of 12 professional campus based FTEs and 7 paraprofessional campus based FTEs to target those students most disproportionately affected by the coronavirus pandemic by allocating \$3.4M over three years.
 - ▶ *Signed acknowledgement of the grant funding period will be required of the successful applicant.*
- ▶ Increase in instructional department funding to support identified needs by allocating \$165K over three years.
- ▶ Increase in summer school funding to provide for additional staffing and smaller class ratios for summer school programs by allocating \$525K over three years.

Technology Integration

- ▶ New portable computing devices plus peripherals and accessories for all students in incoming cohorts at all campuses in preparation for any additional unforeseen school closures that will also help address the digital divide by allocating \$1.9M over three years.
- ▶ Replacement of computers in labs to facilitate extended instructional time to address the loss of learning by allocating \$400K.

Professional development

- ▶ Increase in campus funding to target identified needs by allocating an extra \$105K over three years in professional development funds available for school to use.
 - ▶ *Will be allocated to campuses by using their ESSER III SCE funds as a benchmark and multiplying that budget by 10%*
- ▶ Increase in instructional department funding to provide extra duty pay to teachers and staff to attend trainings on days outside of their regular contract to support identified professional development needs by allocating \$226K over three years.
- ▶ Increase in instructional department funding to support identified professional development needs by allocating \$150K over three years.

Family & Community Engagement

- ▶ Increase in campus funding to target identified needs and increase family engagement by allocating an extra \$105K over three years for schools to use.
 - ▶ *Will be allocated to campuses by using their ESSER III SCE funds as a benchmark and multiplying that budget by 10%*
- ▶ Addition of 4 paraprofessional campus based FTEs to help with providing parental involvement activities by allocating \$415K over three years.
 - ▶ *Signed acknowledgement of the grant funding period will be required of the successful applicant*
- ▶ Increase in instructional support department funding to support identified needs and to provide technology device instructional sessions to guardians of students by allocating \$90K over three years.

Safe to return in person and continuity of services

- ▶ To improve indoor air quality by purchasing air purification devices for school buses, portable HEPA air scrubbers and by increasing the frequency of HVAC filter changes by allocating \$568K.
- ▶ Increase in support service department budgets to sustain PPE replenishment levels, to replenish cleaning and disinfecting supplies, and to provide training to staff on sanitation to minimize the spread of infectious diseases by allocating \$135K over three years.
- ▶ Allocation of \$662K over three years to purchase additional thermometers, thermal scanners, teacher & student desk shields, packing and delivery equipment for cafeterias, serving modalities and food service production equipment to continue providing services in a safe environment.

Mental health and behavioral supports

- ▶ Increase in campus funding to target identified needs and increase social, emotional and mental health supports by allocating an extra \$263K over three years for schools to use.
 - ▶ *Will be allocated to campuses by using their ESSER III SCE funds as a benchmark and multiplying that budget by 25%*
- ▶ Addition of 1 professional FTE to provide additional evaluation services and to help provide counseling support to students with disabilities by allocating \$348K over three years.
 - ▶ *Signed acknowledgement of the grant funding period will be required of the successful applicant.*
- ▶ Increase in counseling department funding to provide extra duty pay to teachers and staff to attend trainings on days outside of their regular contract to support identified mental health professional development needs and to provide additional funding support to campuses by allocating \$198K over three years.

Grant administration and retention of employees

- ▶ In an effort to address the impact of the pandemic and disruptions leading to learning loss and district operations, \$3.3M* is being allocated over the next three years to retain existing staff by paying stipends in order to minimize employee turnover across the district.
 - ▶ **One year will be funded with ESSER III (\$1.1M) funds and two years will be funded with ESSER II (\$2.2M) funds*
- ▶ \$1.2M is being earmarked to supplant costs and free up resources in the general fund in order to address identified needs that may not be allowable under ESSER III or that may be more cost effectively procured through local funds.
- ▶ The grant allows charging an unrestricted indirect cost which is recorded as revenue in the general fund and \$2.5M in being allocated for that purpose over the next three years which will also fund an ESSER Program Coordinator
 - ▶ *Signed acknowledgement of the grant funding period will be required of the successful applicant.*

Summary of Funds by Areas Identified

Areas Identified	Amount	% of Total
Loss of learning	\$ 5,142,109	33%
Technology integration	\$ 2,306,920	15%
Professional development	\$ 481,525	3%
Family/Community Engagement	\$ 610,731	4%
Safe to return in person and continuity of services	\$ 1,365,000	9%
Mental health and behavioral supports	\$ 809,851	5%
Grant administration & retention of employees	\$ 4,919,711	31%
Total	\$ 15,635,846	100%