New Jersey Department of Education

CARES, CRRSA, and ARP ESSER Allowable Uses

Division of Educational Services

February 15, 2022





Goals for Today's Presentation



- Provide an overview of the CARES (ESSER I), CRRSA (ESSER II), and ARP ESSER (ESSER III) Funds;
- Review the allowable uses of ESSER Funds; and
- •Discuss effective practices for using federal funds, such as braiding and blending.





ESSER Funds Received by New Jersey



• New Jersey received over \$4.3 billion in ESSER funds including:

CARES (ESSER I)	\$310,371,213
CRRSA (ESSER II)	\$1,230,971,757
ARP ESSER III	\$2,766,529,533*

^{*}At least 20% must be spent on activities to address learning loss/academic impact of COVID.



ESSER Overview



"These Federal emergency resources are available for a wide range of activities to address diverse needs arising from or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, or to emerge stronger post-pandemic, including responding to students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs and continuing to provide educational services as States, LEAs, and schools respond to and recover from the pandemic."





ESSER I (CARES Act)



- •Coronavirus Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES)
 - Passed in March 2020;
 - Created the "Education Stabilization Fund";
 - Funded the Elementary & Secondary Schools Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER); and
 - New Jersey received \$310,371,213 in ESSER Funds.



ESSER II (CRRSA Act)

- Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA)
 - Passed in December 2020;
 - Further funded the Elementary & Secondary Schools Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER);
 - New Jersey received \$1,230,971,757 in ESSER II Funds; and
 - Created the Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) Program.



ESSER III (ARP)



- American Rescue Plan Act (ARP)
 - Passed in March 2021;
 - NJ received \$2,766,529,533 in ARP ESSER Funds;
 - •\$2.75 billion nationwide for Emergency Assistance to Nonpublic Schools (EANS) program; and
 - Required States to submit a plan to the United States Department of Education for approval.



State Set-Aside Grants





State Set-Aside Grants



- ESSER II State Set-aside Grants (\$105 million)
 - Learning Acceleration Grant
 - Mental Health Grant

- ESSER III State Set-aside Grants (\$238.6 million)
 - NJTSS Mental Health Support Staffing Grant
 - Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant
 - Evidence-based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant
 - Evidence-based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities Grant





ARP ESSER Grants Supporting Teaching and Learning



Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant

• For professional learning on the State's Learning Acceleration Guide.

Evidence-based Comprehensive Beyond School Day Activities Grant

• For comprehensive out-of-school time activities extending school-day learning.

Evidence-based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant

• For activities extending learning during the Summer.



Teaching and Learning Grant Uses



At least \$50,000 for staff coaching on topics including:

- Teaching and learning that that fosters the social and emotional well-being of students, families, and educators.
- Improving equitable access to grade-level content and high-quality resources for each student.
- Prioritizing the depth of instruction rather than the pace.
- Implementing an accelerated learning cycle to identify and address gaps.

Evidence-based Comprehensive Beyond School Day Activities Grant

At least \$40,000 for afterschool time activities including:

- Extending school-day learning opportunities for students (credit and non-credit bearing coursework).
- Tutoring and homework support.
- Re-socializing activities.
- Training programs for staff and families supporting student's extended school-day.

Evidence-based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant

At least \$40,000 for summer time learning activities including:

- Extending learning opportunities for students in the Summer (credit and non-credit bearing coursework).
- Project-based and experiential Learning.
- Re-socializing activities.
- Training programs for staff and families supporting student's extended school-day.



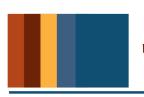
ARP ESSER Teaching and Learning State Set-Aside Grants: Distribution Based on Need



\$\$\$	Grades K-5	Enrollment Weight: 1.16
\$\$	Grades: 6-8	Enrollment Weight: 1.04
\$	Grades 9-12	Enrollment Weight: 1.00

LEA's state aid amount prioritizes lower grade bands, limited English proficient students, and students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (nearly identical to weighted enrollment under SFRA, with the exception that SFRA assigns more weight to higher grade bands than lower grade bands)



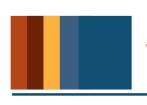


Towards Education Reimagination



- How can grant money be used to propel students to greater levels of achievement emerging from the pandemic?
- What do beyond traditional in-school, afterschool and summer activities look and feel like for all stakeholders?
- How can we promote an interdisciplinary approach to learning, and deepen project-based and experiential learning?
- What partnerships need expansion to realize enhanced teaching and learning experiences in and outside of the classroom?





Examples In Practice



Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant

Hamilton Township School

District has implemented a home visit program. School administrators, counselors, and teachers make home visits and have positive interactions with students throughout the year. Evidence-based Comprehensive Beyond School Day Activities Grant

Elizabeth Public School:

Extended day activities supporting students and families via small group gathering, individualized supports, and used a virtual personalized learning platform.

Evidence-based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant

New Brunswick Public
Schools developed inquirybase summer programs for
all learners with a focus on
accelerating learning via
exploring new ideas and
developing solutions to
real-world problems.



Other District Examples

"Developed the SEL Impact Program that partners with caregivers and staff to identify and address the unique mental health needs of each student."

"Summer Bridge
Program that review
of content from the
current grade level
and a preview of
content from the next
grade level."

"Established a research collaboration aimed at addressing learning gaps, providing gradelevel content, and promoting positive school climate."

"Data-integrated instructional coaching where each building has its own coach that meets regularly with staff."





NJTSS Mental Health Support Staffing Grant



Why Increase Resources Towards Student Mental Health?



Survey Data:

75% of educators strongly agree that social and emotional and mental health support is critical for students.



Public Health Statistics:

24% increase in mental health related ER visits for ages 5-11. 31% increase for ages 12-17.

(May – Oct 2020)



Sustained impact: 40% increase in ER visits for ages 12-17 in February-March 2021.



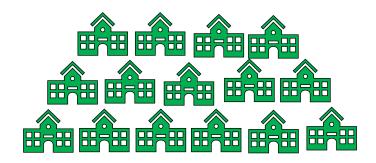
Increased need for social, emotional, or mental health supports for students (e.g., counseling services).



Statewide Distribution of Funds: Based on Need

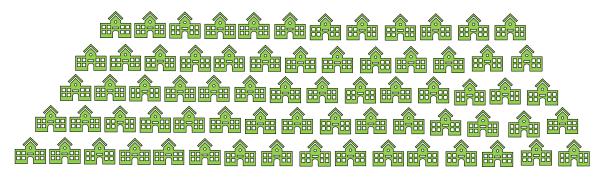






\$45,000+\$

15% of districts demonstrating more significant needs



\$45,000

80% of districts demonstrating lesser needs





NJTSS Mental Health Support Staffing Grant Uses

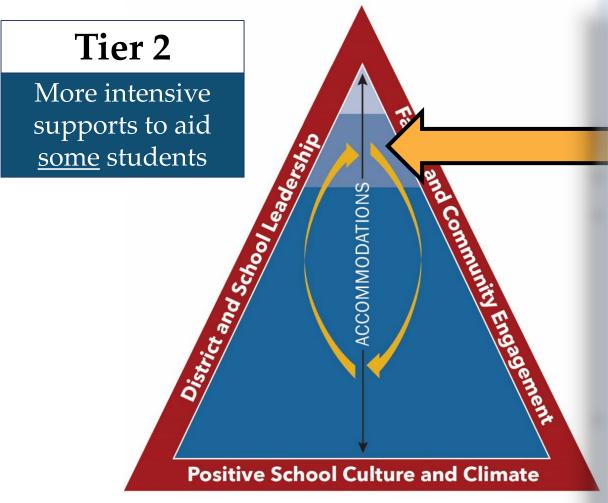


At least \$45,000 to implement at least one of the following strategies:

- Hire staff to implement Tier 2 and Tier 3 evidencebased mental health interventions.
- Contract with a provider to implement Tier 2 and Tier 3 evidence-based mental health interventions.
- Provide professional development in effective implementation of Tier 2 and Tier 3 services.



NJ Tiered System of Support



Tier 2: Secondary Interventions for Mental Health

Tier 1 plus:

- Rapid process for reviewing referral
- Available menu of brief interventions
 - o Teach Problem Solving Skills
 - Goal Setting and Tracking
 - o Group Interventions
 - Mentoring Programs
 - o Check-in Systems
- Progress monitoring
 - o Fidelity of implementation
 - o Response to intervention



Example Use of Funds

Hire Staff to Support Tier 2 Interventions





Staff Training in:
Mental Health Literacy
Recognizing Early Warning Signs
Strategies to Support Students
Check-in Programs
Mentoring



Students Receive Brief/Group Interventions:

Skill-building Groups (i.e., Social Skills, Problem Solving, Self-Regulation)

Mentoring Program

Check-in Check-out



Parents receive training in:
Mental Health Literacy
Recognizing Early Warning Signs

Recognizing Early Warning Sigr Brief Strategies at Home



Planning Considerations for Tier 2

- Invest in a system, district-wide and within school buildings, to track students in need of referral to community-based mental health supports.
- Develop a system, district-wide and within school buildings, to assist school-based personnel with follow-up activities and services.
- Provide certificated staff for home visits to follow-up on students who are identified through early-warning systems.
- Contract with a mental health provider to provide brief individual and group therapeutic services to identified students.



Planning Considerations for Tier 2

- Provide staff to:
 - Develop and implement mentoring programs.
 - o Provide group interventions.
 - Develop and implement check-in/check-out systems.
 - o Provide regularly scheduled school skill building groups (i.e.: social skills, problem solving skills, goal setting).
 - o Link students who are identified as needing additional social-emotional mental health supports.
- Create partnerships with appropriate mental health providers to perform risk assessments for students in crisis to reduce or eliminate the use of emergency room visits for students with mental health needs and to directly link the student(s) to appropriate community-based services.

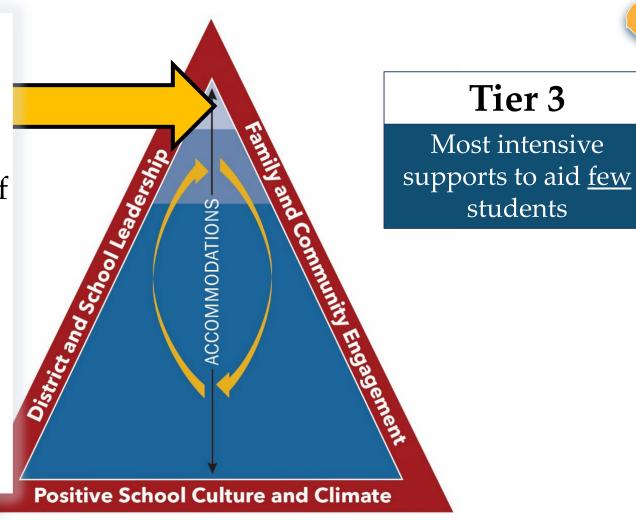


NJ Tiered System of Support

Tier 3: Intensive Interventions to Address Significant Needs

Tiers 1 and 2 plus:

- Individualized assessment of mental health needs
- Coordination with outside resources (as needed)
- Progress monitoring
 - Fidelity of implementation
 - ■Response to intervention





Example Use of Funds

Contracting with a Community Provider to Deliver Tier 3 Interventions



Staff Receive Training in:
Mental Health Literacy
Recognizing Early Warning Signs
Strategies to Support Students



Students Receive Intensive Interventions:

Individual Counseling
Individual Behavior Assessment and Plan
Home Visits and/or Family Counseling



Parents receive training in:

Mental Health Literacy Recognizing Early Warning Signs Individualized, Home-based Strategies Family Counseling



Planning Considerations for Tier 3

- Fund staff to individually assess students who are identified as having significant behavioral needs, develop behavior plans, and consult with teachers and support staff responsible for implementing the plans.
- Contract with a mental health provider to provide individual and group therapeutic services to identified students.
- Contract with community agencies to provide family therapy and support to identified students.
- Fund district mental health staff to provide summer gap services (e.g., individual, group, and/or family therapy).





Planning Considerations for Professional Development

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- Identify relevant professional development opportunities for I & RS team members to increase the team's ability to develop plans for Tier 2 and Tier 3 behavior interventions.
- Support CST implementation of individualized interventions with additional training or certifications.
- Provide more intensive training to counselors and/or CST in methods to identify students exhibiting signs of depression or suicidality.
- Provide training to establish or enhance the skills of a crisis intervention team.
- Provide training and technical assistance to educators in order to support students transitioning back from out-of-school settings for Tier 3 interventions as they return to in-person learning.
- Pay for coverage in order to provide for release time so educators could receive training on mental health topics.

District Examples

"We expanded upon relationship with a Medicaid provider to provide services to non-Medicaid eligible students." "In order to improve upon our tracking of both academic and behavioral interventions, we purchased a Response to Intervention software package."

"To support staff wellness, we contracted with a part-time licensed social worker to provide confidential assistance to our personnel."

"To provide equitable access to mental health services, we contracted with a regional service provider that specializes in working with refugee and migrant families."

"To address students in crisis, we contracted with a local service provider to do individual risk assessments for referred students instead of sending students to the ER."





Allowable Uses of Funds



Allowable Uses



Allowable under ESSER I, ESSER II, and ARP ESSER:

Anything authorized by ESSA, IDEA, AEFLA, Perkins, and McKinney-Vento

Coordination of COVID preparedness and response efforts

Activities for low-income, SWD, EL, racial and ethnic minorities, homeless, and foster

Developing and implementing procedures and systems

Training and PD on minimizing spread of infectious diseases

Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean

Planning for, coordinating, and implementing activities, incl. meals

Technology for students and staff

Mental health services and supports

Summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs

Providing principals with resources necessary to address individual needs of schools

Implementing public health protocols

Addressing learning loss (assessments, evidence-based activities, parents, attendance)

School facility repairs to reduce risk of virus transmission

Air quality improvements

Other activities that are necessary to maintain operation and keep staff employed



Coordinating ESSER Funds for Academic and SEL Needs

Priority Areas	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III	ESSER II State Set-aside Grants	ESSER III State Set-aside Grants
Learning Acceleration Professional Learning	Yes*	Yes	Yes	Learning Acceleration Grant	Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant
Out-Of-School Time Activities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Learning Acceleration Grant	Evidence-based Comprehensive Beyond School Day Activities Grant
Summer Time Activities	Yes	Yes	Yes	Learning Acceleration Grant	Evidence-based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant
Mental Health Professional Learning	Yes	Yes	Yes	Mental Health Support and Services Grant	NJTSS Mental Health Support Staffing Grant & Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant
Mental Health Programs	Yes	Yes	Yes	Mental Health Support and Services Grant	NJTSS Mental Health Support Staffing Grant
General Use Responding to COVID-19	Yes	Yes	Yes	See Allowable Uses	See Allowable Uses
THE STATE PLAN			·		*Not explicit in statute, but still allowable



Allowability Considerations

- Generally, in determining whether an activity is an allowable use of funds, a State or LEA must determine:
 - 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?
 - Does the use of funds fall under one of the authorized uses of ESSER funds?
 - 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)? In particular, is it necessary and reasonable for the performance of the ESSER award?





ARP ESSER Use of Funds Requirements



LEAs must reserve at least 20% of funds to address learning loss through implementation of evidence-based interventions and ensure that those interventions respond to students' social, emotional, and academic needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented students subgroups:

- Each major racial and ethnic group
- Children from low-income families
- Children with disabilities
- Children and youth in foster care

- English learners
- Gender
- Migrant students
- Students experiencing homelessness





Effective Practices for Using Federal Funds



Goals of Effective Practices for Using Federal Funds

- Identify short- and long-term goals that align with LEA priorities
- Use data to drive your decision-making
- Identify up front how you will know if this expenditure was effective
 - o What data do you need to collect at the beginning, along the way, at the end?
- Involve stakeholders
- Balance and vary spending
 - o People; programs/trainings; materials



Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)



The CNA:

- Is a process, not a one-time event
- Is the foundation for use of ALL ESSER funds (ESSER I, ESSER II, & ARP ESSER)
- Determines needs, examine root causes, and set priorities for future action
- Expenditures not supported by comprehensive needs assessment are not "necessary, reasonable, and allocable" [Uniform Grant Guidance 2 C.F.R. Part 200]



Needs Assessment and Continuous Improvement Cycle

Considerations:

- Based on analysis of data and the experiences of those involved, was the intervention successful and should the intervention continue as is, be modified, or be abandoned?
- How can experience with the intervention inform future decision making?

Considerations:

- Are implementation timelines being followed? Do they need to be adjusted?
- What are barriers (anticipated and unforeseen) to successful implementation? How can these be addressed?



Considerations:

- What evidence do you have of the need? Is there any data?
- What tools, programs or processes are in place that you could build upon to meet the need?

Considerations:

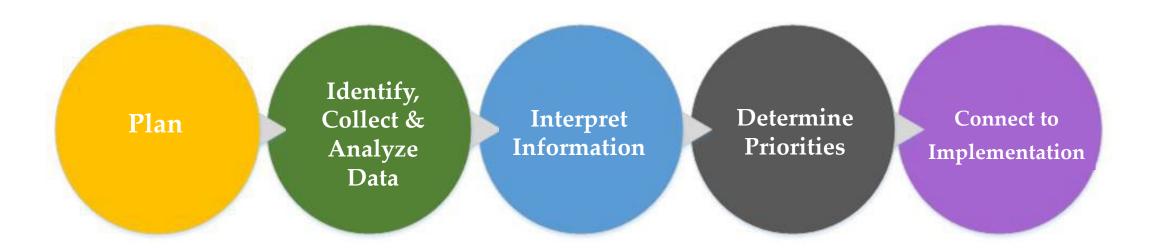
- Local capacity, cost, and sustainability
- Impact (focus on interventions with highest impact in your setting)

Considerations:

- What are the measurable goals associated with the intervention?
- How will implementation and performance be monitored?



Phases of Needs Assessment Implementation





Identify Data Sources

Types of Data

- Student Demographics
- Academic Achievement
- School Climate & Culture
- Student Attendance
- College & Career Readiness
- o Parent & Family Engagement
- School Operations & Management
- Instructional Data
- o Professional Development
- o Personnel (Teacher Readiness & Qualifications)
- School Schedules/Course Offerings
- o Perceptions/Expectations
- Fiscal (Resource Allocation)



- o Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Questionnaires
- o Anecdotal Records

Qualitative Sources of Data

- State Assessments
- Benchmark Assessments
- Teacher Generated Assessments
- Classroom Grades & Report Cards
- Lesson Plans & Student Work
- Curriculum & Assessment Materials

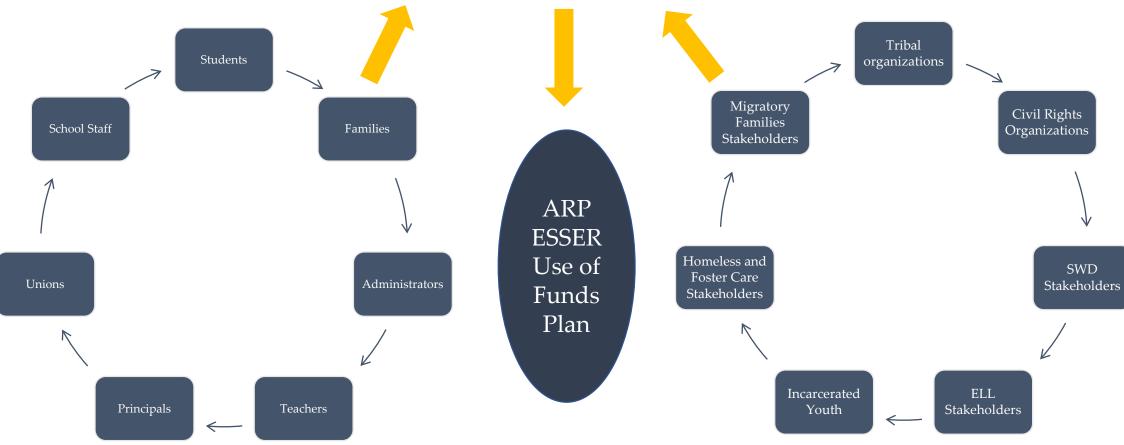




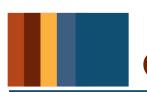
ARP ESSER Use of Funds Plan



Stakeholders must inform







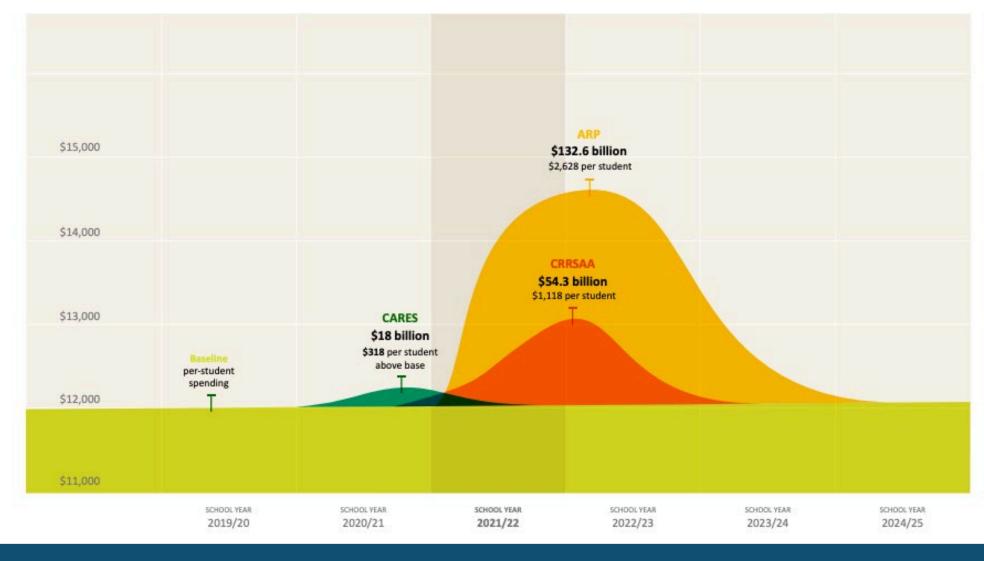
Coordinating ESSER Funds by Expiration Date

ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III
Use: Pivoting Education for Pandemic Pedagogy.	Use: ESSER I & Addressing Learning Loss, and Enhancing Air and Building Quality, with services to nonpublic schools, and	Use: ESSER I, II, and Safe Return to Schools. Federal Grants for LEAs (May 2021)
Federal Grants for LEAs (March 2020)	learning loss reporting. Federal Grants for LEAs (March 2021)	Note: At least 20% of an LEA's funds for addressing the academic impact of COVID19
Expiration Date (Including 12-Month Carryover via Tydings Amendments): September 30, 2022	State Grants For LEAs (Due June 1, 2021) 1. Learning Acceleration 2. Mental Health Support and Services Expiration Date (Including 12-Month Carryover via Tydings Amendments): September 30, 2023	 State Grants For LEAs (Due November 24, 2021) NJTSS Mental Health Support Staffing Accelerated Leaning Coaching and Educator Support Evidence-based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Evidence-based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day
	September 30, 2023	Activities Expiration Date (Including 12-Month Carryover via Tydings Amendments): September 30, 2024



WestEd: Ramping Fund Usage Strategy







WestEd: Considerations to Maximize the Impact

- 1. Plan for change.
- Think about the use of relief funding in phases.
- 3. Focus on moving the big boulders.
- 4. Direct resources to students with the greatest need.

- 5. Make intentional and innovative investments in staffing that do not create long term fiscal obligations.
- 6. Plan for sustainability while investing one-time funding.
- 7. Maximize investments through interagency collaboration.
- 8. Track, report, and disseminate fund use information to stakeholders.



Maximizing Federal Funds to Accelerate Learning and Address Mental Health Needs	Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)								A)	Adult Education	Higher Education Act (HEA) Teacher	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act		Carl D. Perkins Career and	Other early childhood
	Title I-A	Title I SIF	Title I-C	Title T I-D II	itle I-A	B Title	Title Tit	le Title B IV-E	Title Title IV-F, IX, Sub. 2 Part A	and Family Literacy Act	Quality Partnerships (Title II-A)	Part B, Sec.611 & 619	Early Intervention	Technical Assistance Act	funding sources
Supporting student academic needs with a wide range of services that address disrupted learning.		•			İ		0		00	0					
Use multiple data sources to identify gaps in student knowledge and skills to quickly remediate and address needs.			•			0			0						
Supporting students' social and emotional needs in the time of COVID.							0		\circ						
Collaborate with extended/summer learning staff and community partners to meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs	•	•	•						00						
Partner and engage with community stakeholders, including parents and caregivers, to meet students' academic, social and emotional needs.) (00	0					
Acknowledge and support needs of specific populations of students, such as ELL, special education, homeless, migrant, etc.	•								0						
Provide high-quality evidence-based professional development to help all staff meet students' needs.				• (\bigcirc		0				
Develop/expand programs to grow the pipeline of diverse educators and staff.				()									
Invest in facilities improvements, particularly those that improve both the health and learning environments of classrooms and buildings.							\bigcirc								
Provide for COVID prevention and other public health needs.									\bigcirc \bigcirc	0					
Purchase/support technological infrastructure.															

Types of school funds



Universal Funds

Examples: General State and Local Funds

Supplemental Funds

Examples: Federal Funds and Restrictive State Funds

Specialized Funds

Examples: Restrictive Federal or State Grants and Funds Addressing Identified Needs





Braiding and Blending Funds



Braiding Funds

- Coordinated to meet one purpose.
- Individual funding streams maintains identity for eligibility and reporting.



Blending Funds

- Consolidated into one funding stream to meet one purpose.
- Individual funding streams loses its identity



ESSER funds may be "braided" or used in combination with, but not "blended" with, funding under ESEA, IDEA, AEFLA, Perkins V, and McKinney-Vento, or any other education funds.



Braiding Funds

- ESSER funds may be "braided" or used in combination with, but not "blended" with, funding under ESEA, IDEA, AEFLA, Perkins V, and McKinney-Vento, or any other education funds.
- "Blending" occurs when different funding streams are combined and lose their original identity. Funds can be used for any allowable activity.
- "Braiding" occurs when different funding streams are used together to leverage the support provided for different needs while maintaining documentation to support the charging and allocation of costs to multiple separate funding streams or programs.



Braiding Funds Example

A district plans to utilize ARP ESSER, IDEA, Title I-A, Title II and Title III funds to offer a summer academy to mitigate learning loss.

ARP ESSER	IDEA	Title I, Part A	Title II	Title III
Can be used for costs related to teacher salaries and benefits	Can be used for costs related to supplemental intervention programming for students with disabilities attending the academy or for modified curriculum costs	Can be used for costs related to supplemental materials and supplies for the summer academy	Can be used for costs related to professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals for the academy program	Can be used for costs related to supplemental programming to support English Learners for the academy program

The above is meant to be illustrative and is not an exhaustive list.



Braiding Funds Example

A district plans to utilize ARP ESSER and IDEA funds to purchase adaptive software and supplies for the summer academy. The total expense is \$50,000 which is allocated to IDEA and ARP ESSER based on the ratio of those programs' personnel costs (salaries and applicable benefits) to the total personnel cost.

Grant	Personnel Costs	Percentage	Amount Allocated
IDEA	\$100,000	67%	\$33,500
ARP ESSER	\$50,000	33%	\$16,500
Total	\$150,000	100%	\$50,000



A Few Cautions



- Be aware of "braiding" vs. "blending"
 - "Braiding" means combining funds but still tracking funding streams
 - "Blending" means consolidating funds into one funding stream (usually occurs in Title I, Part A schoolwide programs)
- Existing Federal laws still prevail for non-ESSER funding sources:
 - Remember "supplement, not supplant" and "maintenance of effort" provisions
 - If uncertain about allowable costs, check before using other Federal funds



Thank You!



New Jersey Department of Education Website nj.gov/education

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