

May 5, 2022



COVID Relief Funds

An Overview for FY23

This webinar is being recorded

Agenda

1. Overview of COVID Funds
2. Spending Trends
3. Required Documents, Compliance, and Reporting
4. FY23 Application Updates
5. Important Resources
6. Questions, Contact Us
7. Optional Discussions (Not Recorded)



Mentimeter Instructions

Later we'll have interactive questions using Mentimeter

Website: www.menti.com

Code: 7799 9144



Please enter the code

Submit

The code is found on the screen in front of you

Overview of COVID Relief Funds

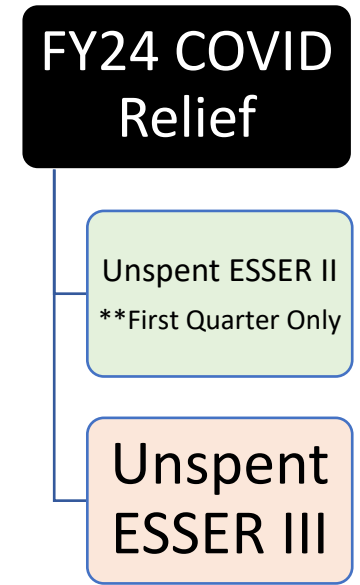
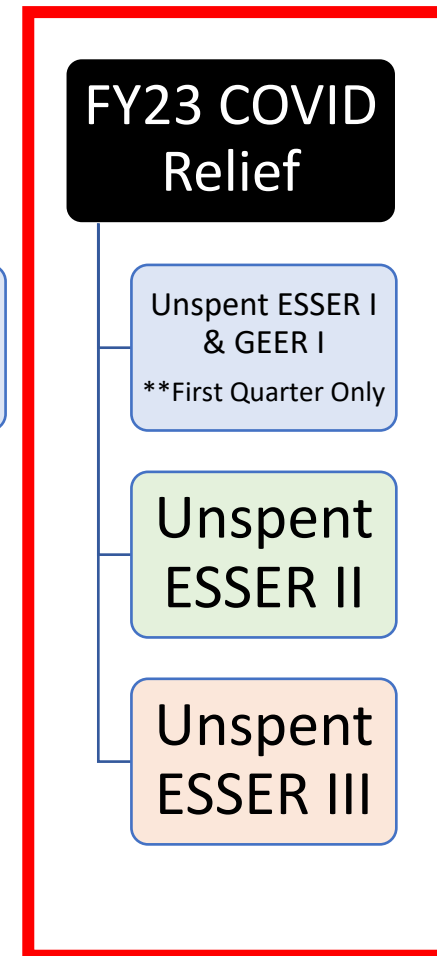
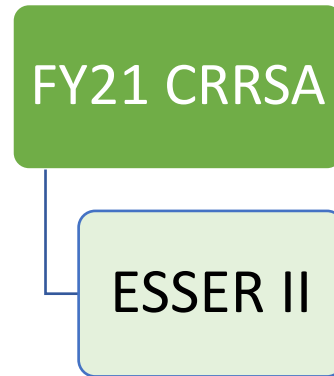
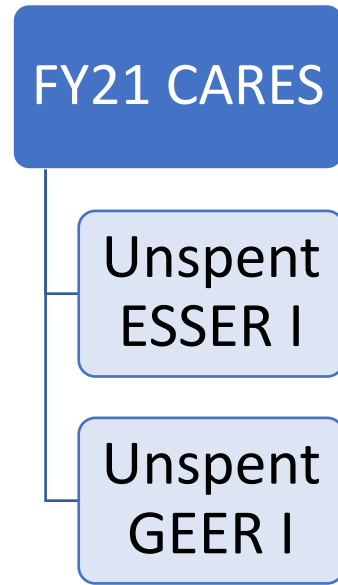
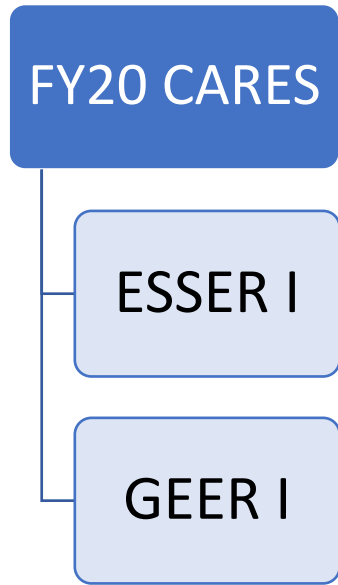
Deadlines to Spend

Allowable Activities

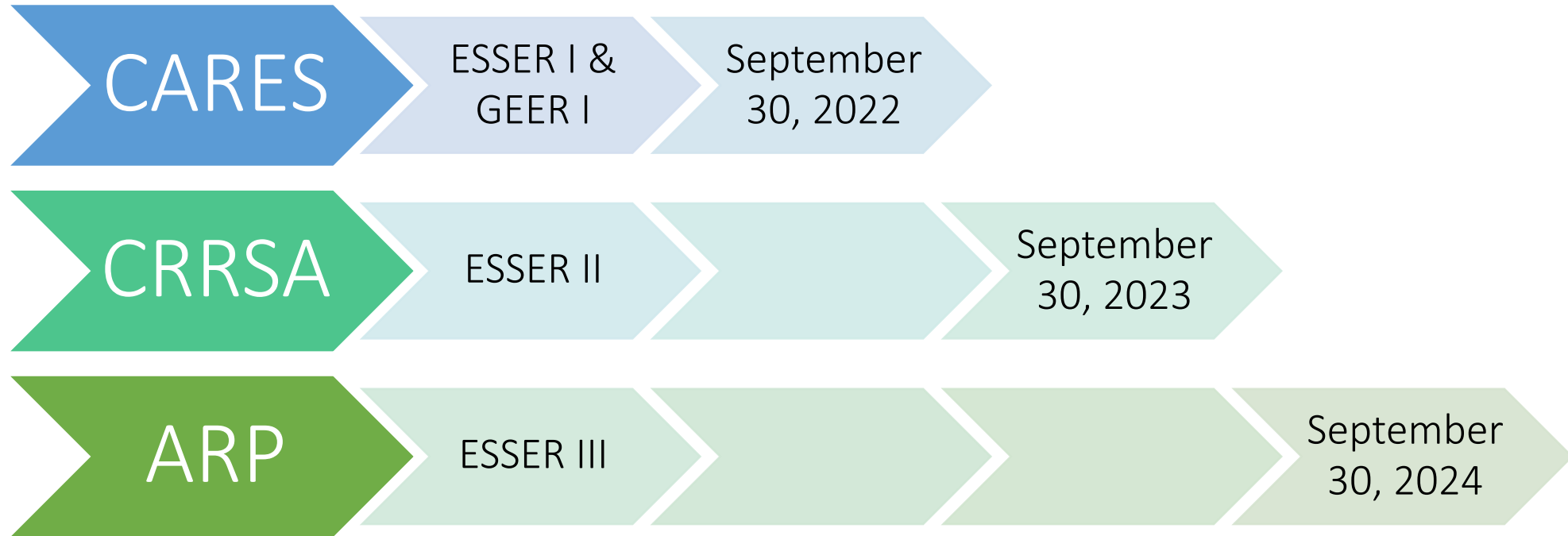
Flexibility in Spending



Applications for Funds



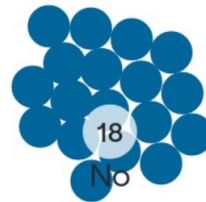
Deadlines for Spending



Mentimeter

- Are you concerned that your district won't spend all of the ESSER III funds by the deadline?

0
Yes



2
Somewhat



Purpose of Funds

- Allowable uses of funds may be used to implement actionable strategies to meet the urgent needs of students and educators as LEAs and schools work to return to and safely sustain in-person instruction, address the **educational inequities** that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, **or to emerge stronger post-pandemic**, and address **students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs**

16 Allowable Activity Categories: An Evolution

Initial Response to the Pandemic

- Preparedness & Response
- Coordinating with Other Organizations
- Sanitizing Supplies
- Developing Health & Safety Protocols
- Professional Development for Minimizing Infectious Disease

Adjusting to the Pandemic

- Preparing for Closures
- Continuity of Services
- Purchasing Education Technology
- Supporting Principals

One-Time Responses

- Facility Repairs
- Air Quality

Emerging Stronger, Post-Pandemic

- Providing Mental Health Services & Support
- Providing Afterschool & Summer Programs
- Addressing Learning Loss
- Supporting Special Populations
- Supporting Other Federal Programs

Flexibility in Spending

- In December of 2021 the U.S. Department of Education released a [supplemental FAQ](#) indicating flexibility in interpretation of "prepare for or respond to COVID-19"
 - "In response to the pandemic, ESSER and GEER funds offer the opportunity to [make educational systems better](#) for students, educators, staff, schools, and their communities [post-pandemic](#)"
 - "The Department encourages SEAs and LEAs to think holistically about their response to COVID-19 in order to address the impact of lost instructional time from the pandemic on all students and to [address pre-existing challenges that, if left unaddressed, will impede recovery from the pandemic](#)"

Spending Trends

Trends: ESSER I vs ESSER II & III
District Examples



Spending Trends: ESSER I

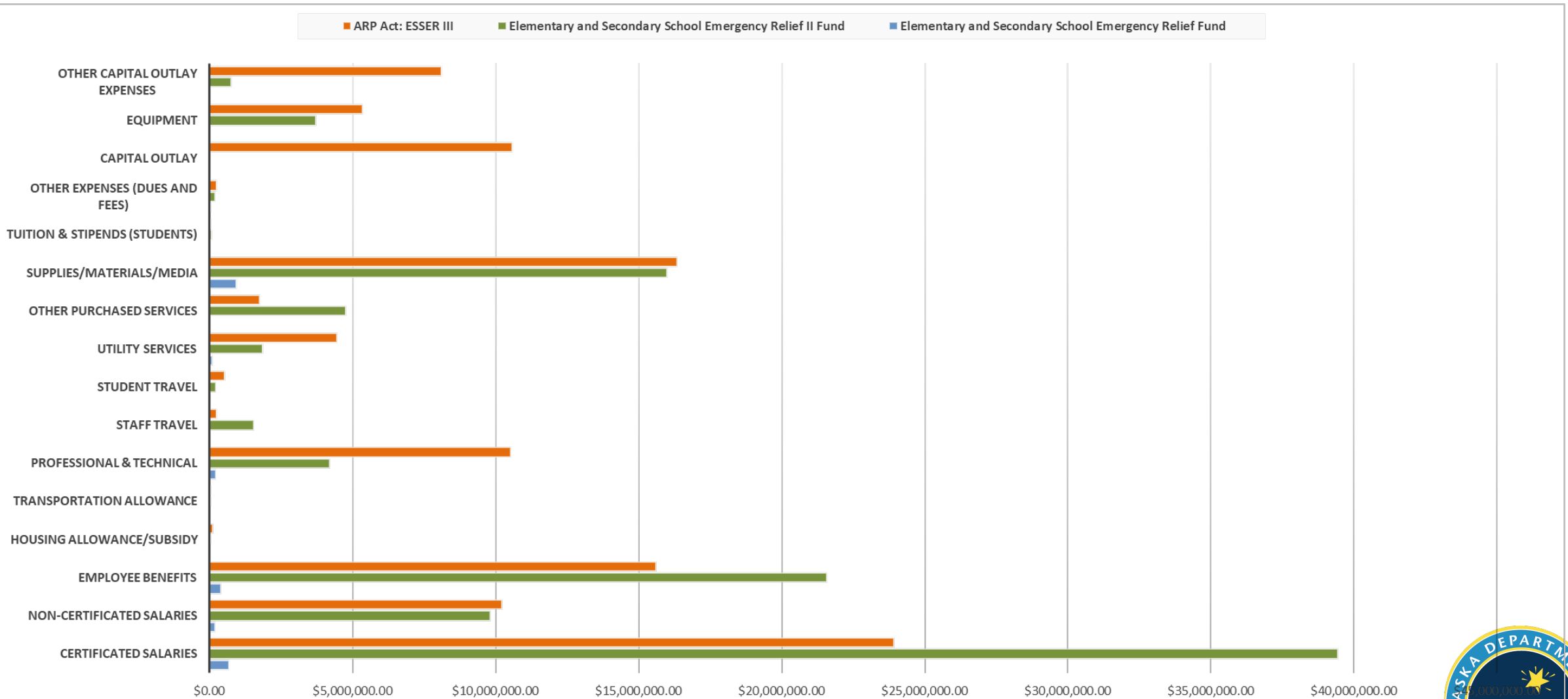
- Much of the funds were spent on supplies
 - Safety
 - Cleaning
 - eLearning
- Benefits and salaries were directed towards
 - Cleaning
 - IT Support
 - Substitutes
 - Instructional Support



Spending Trends: ESSER II & III

- 267% Increase for certified salaries from FY 20 to FY 21
- Shift towards retaining staff and teachers from ESSER I to ESSER II & III
 - Moving costs
 - Professional development
- Capital outlay spending grows \$19.3 Million (total for FY21 and FY22)

Spending Trends by Object Code



Staff Shortages: District Examples

Examples of things districts are doing to help with labor shortages during COVID:

- Recruitment & retention incentive pay
- Provide additional pay for added duties during COVID (extra cleaning, working during prep time, providing afterschool tutoring)
- Pay for moving expenses, housing expenses, travel expenses
- Hire a designated substitute teacher for the building
- Pay for gym memberships and mental health subscriptions
- Provide professional development subscriptions/trainings
- Pay for access to Teachers Pay Teachers, Newsela and other online resources
- Purchase robotic vacuums for every classroom
- Pay for tuition, books, housing, and stipend for a "grow your own" teacher program



Mentimeter: What recruitment and retention efforts does your district offer?

We offered pay raises to sub/temps and bonuses for the number of consecutive days worked. We're also looking at J-1 visa employees.

contract signing bonus

PD

None at this time.

not much

proposed signing /returning bonus

Quality PD, collaboration time, extra duty days,

very little

Raising sub rate, increased Classified pay across the board

not much

None but we want to

Signing bonus

Covid pay

retention bonuses, signing bonuses

subsidized teacher housing in some communities

Annual contract signing bonus

Wage scale increases, hiring incentives

I'm using Indeed.com to fill my position. I'm giving new teachers that I had to bring in a \$1,500 flight allowance.

Staff Shortages: Ideas



Ideas for districts to help with labor shortages:

- Money:
 - Pay for testing fees and certification fees for teachers to become certified or renew certification (including CEU credit fees required to renew certificates)
 - Provide incentives and help pay for people to become substitute teachers, bus drivers, or other hard-to-fill jobs (licensing fees, fingerprinting fees, etc)
 - Offer tuition reimbursement for district initiatives (such as EL certification, counselor certification, certification in a different content area, national board certification, etc)
 - Pay hiring incentives for high-need areas, people who sign early contracts, people who commit to teaching for multiple years
 - Provide non-monetary support to retain teachers (see [this study](#) for ideas)
- Recruitment
 - Find new ways of reaching potential hires—COVID funds could potentially be used for recruitment (fees for websites and forums, career fairs, etc)



Staff Shortages: Ideas Cont'd

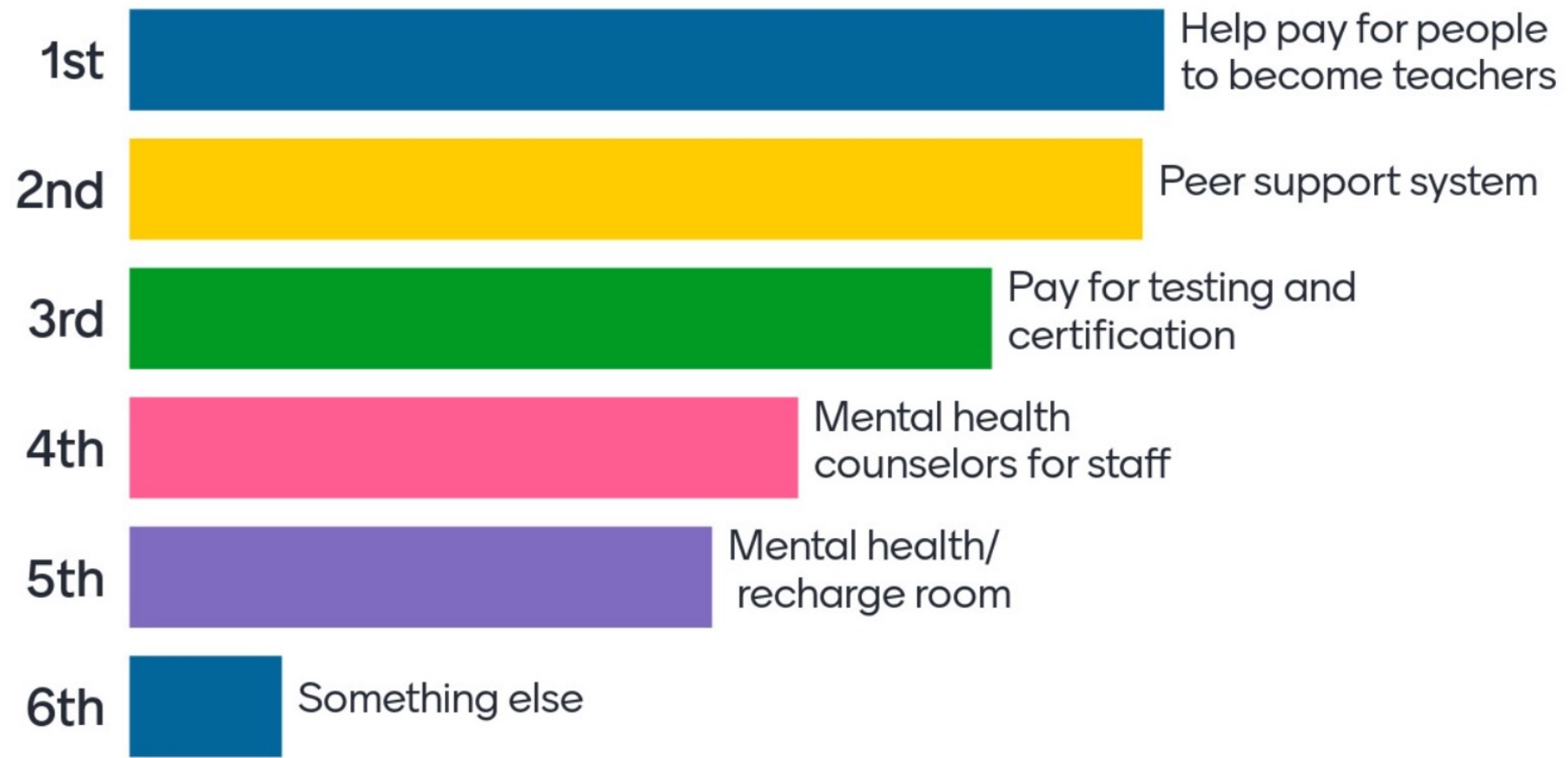


Ideas for districts to help with labor shortages:

- Mental Health:
 - Establish a peer support system, particularly for new teachers (virtual instructional coaches are popular nationally) and pay participants
 - Provide a mental health/recharge room (calming items, snacks, resources)
 - Provide mental health counselors for staff (even virtual contracts)
- Partnerships:
 - Recruit college students to substitute teach
 - Partner or contract with local entities to provide tutoring, cleaning services, substitutes, lunchroom duty, recess duty, etc.
 - Contract with virtual staff for tutoring



Mentimeter: What initiatives would you like to see your district fund to recruit and retain staff?



Construction, Renovation, & Repair: District Examples

Examples of things districts are doing to help with construction, renovation, and repair during COVID:

- Hire engineers to examine/inspect HVAC systems
- Replace/update HVAC systems (UV)
- Upgrade/replace playground equipment, student lockers
- Replace windows, doors, roofs, flooring, furnaces, water heaters
- Install touchless sinks, vape sensors, new cameras, new intercom systems
- Upgrade phone systems
- Fix leaky water lines



Mentimeter: What is your district currently doing to help improve facilities for staff and students?

HVAC

Bathroom projects--- Flooring projects---

bathroom improvements for cleanliness

HVAC evaluations

filters and increased air quality equipment in classrooms and offices

HVAC Replacing 50 year old carpet new alarm systems new doors new locks

Network capacity due to increased number of student devices on our network.

Boiler replacement

touchless everything

AHERA inspections

Keyless entry to increase security

Improvements to separate district owned library to allow for more space for social distancing

- Time to Share:
 - What questions do you have about using COVID funds to help repair facilities?



Mental Health Support for Students: District Examples

Examples of things districts **are doing** to provide mental health support for **students**:

- Hire mental health counselors (above and beyond academic counselors) and career counselors
- Contract with local behavioral health agencies or telehealth organizations to provide mental health counseling for students
- Provide additional extracurricular field trips and/or commit additional funds to ensure athletic and band trips occur (with COVID restrictions)
- Purchase outdoor recreational equipment such as picnic tables, skis, snowshoes, paintball equipment, scuba gear, outdoor basketball hoops, roller skates, etc.
- Purchase music instruments and cultural activity supplies (beading, carving, etc.)
- Purchase games for student engagement (Apples to Apples, Exploding Kittens, etc.)
- Purchase Athletic equipment (volleyball, track & field supplies, new athlete uniforms)
- Provide motivational speakers for student assemblies



Mental Health Support for Staff: District Examples

Examples of things districts **are doing** to provide mental health support for **staff**:

- Provide fitness & activity supplies
- Provide wellness apps for employees to include meditation apps, weight loss apps, fitness tracking apps
- Provide telehealth mental health counseling services
- Hire an SEL/behavior interventionist teacher
- Provide additional nurses, counselors, & janitors
- Provide staff support specialist (contractor to assist teachers in areas of need)
- Provide trauma informed professional development opportunities



Afterschool Programs: District Examples

Examples of things districts are doing to provide afterschool programs for students:

- Fund new reading programs for K-8
- Provide credit recovery for secondary students
- Provide one-on-one or small group tutoring
- Provide snacks for students and staff
- Provide cultural activities to supplement academic learning (drum making supplies, sewing machines, sewing supplies, beading supplies, carving supplies)
- Provide engaging activities to accompany afterschool programs (battle of the books, science Olympiad, physical activities/contests, math Olympiad, etc.)
- Partner with local entities to provide engaging and culturally relevant lessons, such as subsistence moose hunting
- Hire new staff or pay stipends to existing staff: coordinators, teachers, tutors, and paraprofessionals
- Provide transportation





Ideas for districts to provide afterschool programs:

- Provide Saturday programs
- Provide academic labs for elementary students that occur after school at the middle school or high school and are accelerated in pace
- Use community-based organizations to provide additional afterschool programs
 - Seek new partnerships, or look for statewide or national organizations (check out [Alaska Children's Trust](#))



Afterschool Programs: DEED's RFA

DEED is pleased to announce a competitive grant for evidence-based, comprehensive afterschool programs

- This grant is open to school districts and community-based organizations
 - Partnerships between school districts and community-based organizations are encouraged
- Grants will range from \$250,000 to \$750,000, distributed over two years
- Grant applications are due by May 31, 2022
- Applications are available on [DEED's forms page](#)

A competitive grant for evidence-based summer programs will be available this fall for summer programs occurring in the summer of 2023



Summer Programs: District Examples

Examples of things districts **are doing** to provide summer programs for students:

- Hire local trades people to teach CTE courses
- Provide cultural summer camps, with elders teaching skills courses
- Provide reading focused summer program
- Purchase leveled reading sets for summer reading program
- Use COVID funds to provide meals and snacks for all students in summer programs (supplementing Child Nutrition programs)
- Provide comprehensive transportation
- Provide field trips and other enrichment opportunities such as art, music, yoga, hiking, photography, robotics
- Provide summer program for incoming special education kindergartners
- Hire new staff/pay stipends to existing staff: coordinators, administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals, kitchen staff, janitorial staff, secretarial staff, etc.
- Provide virtual summer school/credit recovery





Ideas for districts to provide summer programs:

- Call it "Summer Camp" and integrate more than academic learning
- Integrate SEL activities into summer learning programs
- Partner with local entities, non-profits, statewide organizations, national organizations, Tribal Corporations, etc. to provide additional experiences for students (including virtual experiences)
- Check out [Alaska Children's Trust](#) to explore options
- Ask teachers for innovative ideas



Supplies: District Examples

Examples of supplies districts have purchased:

- Entire Math, English, Science curriculum sets
- SEL curriculum, CTE curriculum, STEM curriculum (TangoFlight)
- CTE supplies such as culinary supplies, wood shop supplies, digital cameras, CPR dummies, robotics sets, Cricut machines, 3D printers
- Leap pads for preschool aged-children in the district
- Scholastic books for all children
- Family engagement supplies, such as games, books, flashcards
- Commercial grade washer & dryer



Technology: District Examples

Examples of technology supplies districts have purchased:

- Subscriptions: Discovery Plus, Canvas, Gaggle.net, Screencastify, Plato, Turnitin, Learning A-Z, Newsela, Adobe, Kami, EdPuzzle, Go Guardian, Apptegy, SAVVAS, Northwest Textbooks, Seesaw, Apex, Lexia, Remind, etc.
- Network extenders, entire network and server upgrades
- Internet connectivity costs for the school (beyond what E-Rate reimburses), for students at home, for staff at home
- Stipends for staff to use personal internet/cell phones during virtual learning
- Live streaming cameras and subscriptions (to live stream assemblies, athletic events, etc.)
- Upgrades to 1-to-1 devices for all students and staff
- Protectors, cases, carrying bags for student and staff devices
- Additional chargers and cables
- Cameras and microphones, soundproofing materials (to provide distance-delivery lessons)



Required Documents, Compliance, and Reporting

Compliance Checklist

Mitigation & ARP Plan Requirements

Upcoming Reporting Requirements



Compliance Checklist

Mitigation Plan

- Has been updated within the last 6 months
- Took public comment and most recent CDC guidance into consideration
- Includes all 8 components from the template
- Is posted on district website
- Updated link was provided to DEED in GMS (ESSER III program details, section A)
- DEED collects a listing and [publishes it here](#)

District ARP Plan

- Updated annually, or as major financial need change
- Consulted with all stakeholders (listed in GMS, ESSER III program details, section B) for any updates
- Most recent copy posted on the district's website (or the instructions for how to access GMS)
- If the district chooses to develop its own plan, it must include the district responses to sections B, C, D, E, and F from the program details page

Reporting

- Accurately using tags and purpose codes in GMS
- Putting systems in place to track new data starting July 1, 2022

Sample Timeline

Now

- Examine all program details pages in GMS FY2022 and update/revise to ensure accuracy
- Examine authorized activity tags and update/revise to ensure accuracy
- Make a plan to spend any ESSER I & GEER I funds before June 30, 2022

Early Fall

- Consult with stakeholders to update the district's ARP plan (spending plan/program details page)
- Complete FY2023 application in GMS
- Post a copy of the updated ARP plan (or instructions to access GMS) to district website

July/August

- Update/revise mitigation plan taking into consideration public comment and most recent CDC guidance
- Hold public comment/meeting to discuss changes
- Post updated plan to district website (if the link changed, send updated link to DEED.CARES@Alaska.gov)
- Implement new data collection strategies, starting July 1

New Reporting Data Collections

- Effective July 1, 2022 (and continuing through FY23 and FY24), only for programs funded with **ESSER III** funds
- District needs to collect eligibility & participation by subgroup (listed on next slide) for:
 - Summer
 - After-school
 - Mandatory extended day
 - High dosage tutoring
 - Early childhood
- Also, report which subgroups received or were directly supported by any educational technology purchase (including laptops, iPads, smartboards, software subscriptions, etc.)



New Reporting Data Collections: Subgroups

- Districts will need to report the number of enrolled eligible students in the LEA & number that participated (for early childhood programs and mandatory extended day programs, the district will only need to provide the number that participated)
- Subgroups for data collection:
 - Students with one or more disabilities
 - Low-income students
 - English learners
 - Students in foster care
 - Migratory students
 - Students experiencing homelessness
 - American Indian/Alaska Native
 - Asian/Pacific Islander
 - Hispanic
 - Black, non-Hispanic
 - White, non-Hispanic
 - Other student subpopulation



FY23 Application Updates

GMS Budget Narrative Requirements

GMS Updates for FY23: Learning Loss

ESSER I & GEER I



GMS Budget Narratives Approval Process

1. Prepare for or Respond to COVID-19?

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

2. Allowable Activity?

- Does the use of funds fall under one of the authorized uses of ESSER or GEER funds?

3. Reasonable and Necessary?

- 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)?

GMS Budget Narratives Approval Process

4. Is it budgeted to the correct account code?

- Are items budgeted in accordance with the Uniform Chart of Accounts?
- Districts may budget for activities that have never been previously budgeted in a federal grant application (such as HVAC repair, window replacement, construction, etc). Please reach out to either your program manager or grant manager with activity coding questions.
- ***NEW- Construction costs should be coded to 500, not 540.**

5. Is sufficient narrative provided?

- Does the narrative indicate the item is in response to or to prepare for COVID?
- Do travel items contain # of trips, to/from location, number of lodging nights, purpose of travel?
- Do supply items indicate a general idea of anticipated supplies?
- Do contract items identify a vendor name?
- Do summer school events provide anticipated dates?

6. Are purpose codes and tags accurate?

- Tags are used for federal reporting purposes.
- The Learning Loss purpose code should be used exclusively for activities that respond to student learning loss.

Learning Loss

- Section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act requires an LEA to reserve not less than 20 percent of its ARP ESSER allocation to address the **academic impact of lost instructional time** through the implementation of **evidence-based interventions** (e.g., providing intensive or high-dosage tutoring or accelerating learning; see [FAQ A-10](#) for a definition of evidence-based), such as **summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after-school programs, or extended school year programs**, and ensure that the interventions implemented respond to students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on students from low-income families, students of color, children with disabilities, English learners, migratory students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care



Mentimeter: What is your district doing to address learning loss?

Intensive tutoring for at-risk students

Supplemental academic programs, additional staff support for pull out intensive interventions

Using Sylvan after school tutoring for Reading, Math, etc.

Offering credit recovery classes

offering reading training and materials for afterschool tutoring by staff

Skills specific, after school tutoring
Intensive interventions for reading skills

implementing place-based thematic instruction to support AK content and cultural standards

hired an interventionist for 4th- 8th grade,
Hired a math tutor to offer intervention during school time.

Learning Loss

- Districts are required to spend 20% of their total ESSER III funds on learning loss by the end of the grant (September 30, 2024)
 - \$14.6 million has been spent on learning loss (22% of required amount)
 - \$50 million to be spent in FY2023 and FY2024
- Learning loss activities must be budgeted in the learning loss purpose code
- The amount districts should spend on learning loss will be manually calculated for FY2023 applications
- Reports were emailed to the COVID application contact listed in GMS

ESSER I & GEER I

- ESSER I and GEER I funds expire September 30, 2022
 - ESSER I funds still unspent: \$912,714
 - GEER I funds still unspent: \$172,992
- Districts are encouraged to spend funds before June 30, 2022
- Please update/revise ESSER I and GEER I program details pages to reflect any changes in spending those funds down



Important Resources

- DEED
 - [COVID Relief Funding Application Handbook](#)
 - [COVID Relief Website](#)
 - [COVID Relief Funding Dashboards](#)
 - [Updated FAQs \(March 2022\)](#)
 - [Guidebook for Spending COVID Relief Funds](#)
 - Weekly ESEA Newsletter, sent on Wednesdays (email us at DEED.CARES@alaska.gov to be added to the list)
- U.S. Department of Education
 - [Supplemental FAQ \(indicating flexible spending options\)](#)
 - [ESSER FAQ \(May 2021\)](#)



Contact Us



DEED.CARES@Alaska.gov