



MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents
Business Managers

FROM: Dr. Michael Johnson, Commissioner 

DATE: January 29, 2021

SUBJECT: Guidance on the ESSER II Fund under the CRRSA Act

CRRSA Act: Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021

The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act was signed into law on December 27, 2020 and provides another round of funding for States to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in K-12 schools. The CRRSA Act provides an additional \$54.3 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER II) Fund to support fully reopening K-12 schools, facilitate continuity of learning, and measure and address the learning loss caused by a lack of in-person learning opportunities. The State of Alaska's ESSER II Fund allocation is \$159.7 million. These funds are in addition to the \$38.4 million that State of Alaska received for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER I) Fund under the CARES Act.

Similar to the ESSER I Fund under the CARES Act, the ESSER II Fund awards will be distributed to school districts in the same proportion as each school district received funds under Title I-A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, in fiscal year 2021 (2020-2021 school year). Please note that this funding is not Title I-A funding; however, the Title I-A funding formula is the mechanism used to determine district funding levels.

ESSER II Fund allocations for districts can be found on the Department of Education and Early Development's (DEED) COVID-19 [webpage](#).

Districts will budget for the ESSER II funding in the [Grants Management System](#) (GMS). This will be a separate application from its predecessor, the CARES Act. This application will be called "CRRSA Act". This application has three additional tags in the budget to account for the new allowable costs. The CRRSA Act application will not have a program details page but will still

require a budget and narrative. Initial awards will have a period of availability through 6/30/2021. Any balance will be carried over to FY2022 and available through 6/30/2022. Any remaining balance at that point will be carried over to FY2023 and available through 6/30/2023. Carry forward will continue until the entire grant is spent, or until 9/30/2023, when the grant period ends.

ESSER II funding is very flexible. Under the law, funds may be used for any activity authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Perkins Career and Technical Education (CTE) Act, or McKinney-Vento Homeless Act, in addition to other activities to help with the response to COVID-19, including mitigating learning loss, preparedness and response efforts, sanitation, professional development, distance learning, and other activities. As with all federal funds, 2 CFR Part 200 applies. For a complete list of allowable uses of funds, please reference DEED's [CRRSA Information Document](#).

Though ESSER II does not give DEED any authority over how districts spend these funds, our staff will be supporting districts with information and resources to aid in their choices for how to use this money for students. Ultimately, administrators, teachers, parents, and communities must come together and work with district officials to spend this money wisely.

As part of this effort to support districts, DEED will be hosting webinars and publishing documents to assist communities and districts in finding the most accountable and student-centered uses for this substantial amount of funding.

Resources

- [DEED's COVID Relief Webpage](#)
- [CRRSA Informational Document](#)
- [ESSER II District Allocations](#)
- [US ED Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund Webpage](#)

Please email DEED.CARES@alaska.gov with questions regarding the CRRSA Act and CARES Act.