



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

# DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: November 22, 2023  
To: Local Educational Agency Leads  
Route To: School Business Administrators, ARP ESSER Project Directors, Grant Directors, Curriculum Directors  
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner  
Division of Educational Services

## Supports for American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER)

### Background: What is ARP ESSER?

The Federal American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) Fund, also referred to as ESSER III, is the last of the federal relief funds meant to assist with COVID-19 recovery. The goal of ARP ESSER is to support local educational agencies (LEAs) in preparing for and responding to the impact of COVID-19 on educators, students, and families. ARP ESSER funds must be obligated by September 30, 2024 and completely expended by October 13, 2024.



### Resources to Support LEAs Spending of ESSER Funds

The ARP ESSER funding provided opportunities for LEAs to spend funds on what LEAs determined the greatest need. However, since LEAs submitted their first ARP ESSER plan in 2021, student and LEA needs may have changed. Therefore, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has created resources for LEAs and school staff who are involved in the reporting, filing, and spending of ESSER funding. In the coming months, as part of NJDOE's ongoing efforts to help LEAs expend all ARP ESSER funding, the NJDOE will highlight key resources connected to the three steps of: "Review. Amend. Spend." See below for the currently available resources:

- **[ARP ESSER Quick Reference Guide](#)**: This resource is most useful to LEA staff new to ESSER funding and can be used to guide LEAs on the ways to spend funds that will best support students. This two-page reference guide includes a brief background, timelines, useful links, and a list of requirements and allowable ways to spend these funds.
- Review.Amend.Spend. **[Webpage](#)**: The website is a step-by-step guide to assist LEAs in the expenditure of ARP ESSER dollars to best support students.
- **ARP ESSER Round Table Series**: The next in the series is **[November 29, 2023](#)**, "Making the Most of Your ARP ESSER Dollars: Mental Health Supports."
- **ARP ESSER "Review" Training Module and Office Hours**: LEAs completed an ARP ESSER plan in 2021. LEA staff may now revisit the plan to determine: does this plan prioritize current needs? To find the answer, LEAs can access local and state data sources to identify key areas of improvement. The NJDOE Office of Fiscal and Data Services will be hosting two "Review" training sessions with office hours following immediately after: **[December 14, 2023](#)** and **[January 4, 2024](#)**. Attend this session to learn more!
- **ARP ESSER "Amend" Training Module and Office Hours**: Revisit the ARP ESSER plan created in 2021. Review key local and state data sources and reprioritize students' needs. The NJDOE Office of Grants Management will be hosting three "Amend" training sessions with office hours following immediately after: **[December 4, 2023](#)**, **[December 13, 2023](#)**, and **[January 9, 2024](#)**. This training is an opportunity for LEAs

to receive real-time assistance with the ARP-ESSER III Amendment process. Attend this session to learn more!

- **ARP ESSER “Spend” Training Module and Office Hours:** Join this training session on [December 11, 2023](#) for information on how emergency federal funds may be used to best support students and how LEAs can combine ARP ESSER with sustainable federal funding streams. More information can be found online: [NJDOE Maximizing Federal Funds website](#).

#### **Contact information**

For general ESSER information and resources, please see the [ESSER webpage](#), and for questions please contact [esser@doe.nj.gov](mailto:esser@doe.nj.gov).

c: Members, State Board of Education  
NJDOE Staff  
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Garden State Coalition of Schools  
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