



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: October 4, 2023
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: ESEA Directors, Directors of Special Education, School Business Administrators, Staff Involved with ESSER Funds
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services
Jorden Schiff, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Teaching and Learning Services
Deadline: October 18, 2023

New Jersey Department of Education Invites Public Comment on Amendments to the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) State Plan

As part of the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE) commitment to providing regular ARP ESSER updates to local educational agencies (LEAs), today, NJDOE is inviting public comment on proposed amendments to the ARP ESSER State Plan. If approved by the United States Department of Education (USED), the proposed amendments would expand the allowable uses of existing set-aside grants that have been allocated to LEAs.

Background

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act provided \$122 billion in Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds to States and LEAs to help safely reopen, sustain the safe operation of schools, and address the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nation's students. New Jersey's [ARP ESSER plan was approved](#) by the USED in August 2021.

In addition to its total ARP ESSER allocation to LEAs, in fall 2021, the NJDOE released additional ARP ESSER subgrants, which include:

- Accelerated Learning Coaching and Educator Support Grant;
- Evidence-Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant;
- Evidence-Based Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities Grant; and,
- New Jersey Tiered System of Supports (NJTSS) Mental Health Support Staffing Grant.

Proposed Changes

In order for LEAs to better meet the needs of students, the NJDOE is proposing to expand the list of allowable activities under each set-aside. These extended allowable uses will complement existing LEA efforts to support high-impact tutoring and mental health supports using general ARP ESSER funds. Proposed changes include:

- Replacing the name "Accelerated Learning Coach and Educator Support" with "Learning Acceleration Student and Educator Supports" Grant to apply allowable uses to include direct student supports.
- Add high-impact tutoring as an allowable use of the Learning Acceleration, Summer Learning, and Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Grants so that LEAs can use the set-aside grant funding to scale effective high-impact tutoring.
- Replace the name multi-tiered support system (MTSS) "Mental Health Support Staffing Grant" with "NJTSS Mental Health Support Staffing Grant" to align to existing programs.
- As part of the "NJTSS Mental Health Support Staffing Grant," include 'services to support biological, psychological, and social needs of students' as allowable uses in addition to the 'hiring of staff or contracting with service providers.'

Public Comment Process

The ARP ESSER Amendments are available for review on the [NJDOE ARP ESSER webpage](#). The NJDOE invites all members of the public to review the proposal and submit comments to ESSER@doe.nj.gov by **October 18, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.**

c: Members, State Board of Education
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group