



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: February 7, 2024
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

Background: What is ARP ESSER?

The Federal American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) Fund, also referred to as ARP ESSER, 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 2024 and completely expended by October 2024.

Resources to Support LEAs Spending of ESSER Funds

In December 2023, the United States Department of Education (USED) approved New Jersey's request to expand the allowable uses for the ARP ESSER set-aside or "subgrants." The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) recognizes that, due in part to the expansion of allowable uses and the evolving needs of students and communities, LEAs may need to amend ARP ESSER spending plans. Additional information regarding expanded uses can be found in the January 2024 [broadcast](#) memorandum.

To support LEAs and school staff involved in reporting, filing, and spending ARP ESSER funding the NJDOE has created additional trainings and resources. Please see the information below for additional information.

- **ARP ESSER "Amend & Spend" Training Module and Office Hours:** Join this training session to learn about allowable uses and recent updates, the four State set-asides, the 20% reserved funding to address learning loss, the amendment process on electronic web enabled grant system, and the Maximizing Federal Funds website. The NJDOE will be hosting two February training sessions with office hours following immediately after: [February 13, 2024](#) and [February 26, 2024](#).
- **ARP ESSER Round Table Series:** Join the next session on [March 20, 2024](#), "Making the Most of Your ARP ESSER Dollars: Ensuring Fiscal Responsibility." This session is part of the series that features LEA leaders who share best practices and lessons learned.
- **[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.
- **[Review. Amend. Spend. Webpage](#):** The website is a step-by-step guide to help LEAs spend ARP ESSER dollars in ways that best support students.
- **[Review. Amend. Spend. 5-minute Overview Video](#):** Hear about the NJDOE's initiative designed to support LEAs in spending down their federal ARP ESSER funds.
- **[Maximizing Federal Funds website](#):** This resource provides educators, LEA leaders, grant administrators, and other stakeholders information about how different Federal funds may be used to meet their students' specific, identified needs. The website also includes examples and scenarios which can provide ideas and inspiration about how to best use ESSER funding and how to pair it with more sustainable funding streams beyond 2024.

Contact Information

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

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