

New Jersey ARP ESSER State Plan Highlights

Total ARP ESSER allocation for New Jersey: \$2,766,529,533

ARP ESSER funding released to New Jersey on March 24, 2021: \$1,843,058,469

ARP ESSER funding released to New Jersey on August 12, 2021: \$923,471,064

2020-2021 Preliminary Statewide Enrollment: 1,373,960

On December 27, 2023, the United States Department of Education (USED) approved the New Jersey Department of Education's (NJDOE's) request to expand the allowable uses of existing set-aside grants allocated to local educational agencies (LEAs). These extended allowable uses enhance ongoing LEA efforts to use ARP ESSER funds to address learning loss. New allowable uses include high-impact tutoring and mental health services.

Top Priorities within New Jersey's Plan:

- Addressing the impact of reduced access to in-person learning including unfinished learning
- Meeting the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students and staff

Highlights of New Jersey's Plan:

- **Returning to In Person Learning in 2021:** The NJDOE worked closely with the New Jersey Department of Health in its development of COVID-19 public health recommendations for local health departments for K–12 schools. That support has helped LEAs implement mitigation policies such as proper distancing, face mask requirements, and handwashing etiquette.
- **Using ARP ESSER to Help Students Most Impacted:** The NJDOE continues to provide guidance and technical assistance on the use of ARP ESSER funds that highlight how allowable activities may be used to advance educational equity. As part of their ARP ESSER Use of Funds application, LEAs are required to provide information on their plans to use ARP ESSER funds to support student needs.
- **Addressing the Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time:** New Jersey's "Learning Acceleration Student and Educator Supports Grant" for LEAs uses a weighted enrollment allocation formula that assigns additional weight to lower grade bands, Multilingual Learners, and students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. LEAs will use the grant funds to implement professional learning for staff to help better understand their students' needs with regards to learning acceleration and interventions. Funds will also be used in developing positive school climate, implementing social and emotional learning supports, supporting culturally responsive teaching practices, increasing digital and data literacy, engaging educators and parents in the community to personalize students' learning, identifying disproportionate impacts of COVID-19, and other services to support educators meeting needs of their students. Since December 27, 2023, the list of allowable activities under this set-aside was expanded to include direct student supports, high quality instructional materials, and high-impact tutoring.
- **Investing in Summer Learning:** The State's "Summer Learning and Enrichment Activities Grant" supports summer learning academies and tutoring, professional learning

for educators, and education and training programs for parents and caregivers. LEAs must target funds to content areas most impacted by COVID-19 at that LEA, such as STEM, early elementary grades, or performing arts. Since December 27, 2023, the list of allowable activities under this set-aside was expanded to include asynchronous and flexible learning modules, summer bridge and course preview programs, opportunities for high-impact tutoring, as well as other innovative summer learning activities.

- **Expanding Afterschool Programs:** The State’s “Comprehensive Beyond the School Day Activities Grant” supports the implementation of research-based programs such as tutoring and broader learning supports to families and educators. Since December 27, 2023, the list of allowable activities under this set-aside was expanded to include support for high-impact tutoring, service-learning experiences, structured learning experiences, and/or advanced coursework opportunities for students to earn credit toward a college degree or industry-valued credential.
- **Staffing to Support Students’ Needs:** The “New Jersey Tiered System of Supports (NJTSS) Mental Health Support Staffing Grant” supports the hiring of staff, including counselors, to address students’ and educators’ mental health and social emotional needs. Since December 27, 2023, the list of allowable activities under this set-aside was expanded to include services to support the biological, psychological, and social well-being of students in efforts to improve overall student mental health in accordance with a multi-tiered system of supports framework.