

Nonpublic Equitable Services

Note: This section applies only to the ESSER I funds. There is no requirement to provide equitable services with the ESSER II funds.

- 1. If a nonpublic school does not respond to the notification after trying to contact them through multiple measures should the district indicate in the ESSER Application that the nonpublic school is refusing equitable services? What happens if the nonpublic schools do not return the Affirmation of Consultation forms?**

If a nonpublic school does not respond to an LEA's good faith effort to make contact, the LEA has no further responsibility to provide equitable services to students or teachers in that nonpublic school. The LEA, however, must be able to demonstrate that it made a good faith effort to contact all nonpublic schools within the boundaries of the LEA.

- 2. Are nonpublic schools only those that are located within the borders of the town our school is in or are we also contacting nonpublic schools in neighboring districts (aid in lieu families)?**

Districts must consult with only nonpublic schools within the district's borders.

- 3. What is the email address to which to send nonpublic Affirmation of Consultation forms?**

Districts should email the completed and signed Affirmation of Consultation forms to CARESActConsultation@doe.nj.gov

Mental Health Services and Supports Grant

- 1. What is the purpose of the Mental Health Services and Supports Grant?**

The NJDOE has designated \$30 million from the State set-aside for the provision of mental health services and supports. These funds will support schools in building a continuum of school-based mental health services and supports for students and educators, in coordination with existing county and local services. Allocations for these funds were based upon total LEA enrollment with a minimum of \$45,000 per LEA. The allocations are also available on the [CRRSA Fund Allocations PDF](#). Each LEA will spend at least 10% of the allocation on professional development that supports the provision of school-based mental health supports and services. The remaining amount can be invested in the further development of mental health supports and services within the school district and/or partnerships with community agencies to ensure that additional programming and

supports can be provided to students, educators, and families. [Examples of ways to use funds for mental health supports and services](#) and [planning considerations for mental health supports and services](#) have been developed to assist LEAs with determining the best use of their allocation.

2. How do districts build sustainability of mental health supports and services implemented using CRRSA/ESSER II funds after the life of the grant?

Mental health supports and services are allowable uses of both ESSER I and ESSER II for use over the grant periods. The goal of the dedicated mental health allocation provided through ESSER II is for LEAs to develop or enhance a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework to provide school-based mental health supports and services to students, educators, and families. Depending on what supports a district determines are needed at a particular tier or tiers, it will be important to consider the timeline for use of the various funds and how costs can be built into a district's budget or redirected within the LEA's base budget after the life of the grant. One example could be to contract with a community-based mental health agency to provide an in-district Tier 3 intensive therapeutic support program, which could include individual, group and family therapy aimed at supporting students' ability to attend their local school rather being placed in a therapeutic out of district placement. A well developed in-district therapeutic program could allow for students currently attending costly out of district therapeutic placements to return to their in-district school setting with intensive mental health supports and services. Those monies could then be re-directed to pay for the contractor once the ESSER II grant period ends.

3. Can the Mental Health Services and Supports grant funds be used to provide mental health supports and services, other than professional development, for staff as well as students?

Yes. Funds from the mental health allocation can be used for staff to support general mental health and wellness. One example could be contracting with a community-based mental health agency to offer educator wellness support groups for staff. However, if individual staff are demonstrating significant mental health challenges, they should be referred to your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for support.

Learning Acceleration Grant

1. Can districts use the Supporting the Learning Ecosystem funds for analyzing student data?

Yes. Using data to understand student learning needs is critical to selecting evidence-based strategies for accelerating learning.

2. Can any portion of the Learning Acceleration grant be used for enrichment for non-struggling students?

The Learning Acceleration grant may be used to meet the needs of all students. However, the NJDOE encourages districts to review and analyze data and identified needs and engage stakeholders throughout the process to collectively prioritize the necessary resources to support learning acceleration.

3. Can all of the Academic Enrichment allocation be used for STEM, or does there have to include ELA and the Arts?

No, the Academic Enrichment allocation has sub-allocation requirements on the activities and experiences. The sub-allocations are 75% of the Academic Enrichment allocation is for STEM, and the remaining 25% is for ELA and the Arts.

4. Can we use funds to pay staff to provide PD or attend PD outside of contractual time?

Stipends for additional work related to the allowable uses are allowable when they exceed work/planning done outside the contract scope. As always, we encourage the judicious use of the funds to cover mission-critical professional development and reasonable expenses around learning acceleration.

5. Can you move money from Learning Acceleration and Mental Health to the ESSR II section?

No. The funds set aside for Learning Acceleration and Mental Health must be used for those purposes.

6. Can ESSER I funds be used for Learning Acceleration projects as required by ESSER II?

The additional allowable uses of funds under the CRRSA Act are also permitted under the CARES Act. ESSER I and ESSER II funds need to be tracked separately.