Q1. Can we use the funds to renew our current intervention's subscription?

Based on identified needs, funds may be used for subscription costs that are associated with the implementation of evidence-based interventions.

Q2. When will the application be available in EWEG?

The Addressing Student Learning Loss application is available in the EWEG system; accessible via [NJ Homeroom](https://homeroom.state.nj.us/).

​

Q3. Is the DOE using a specific site or guide to determine if an intervention is considered Strong?

The NJDOE follows [ESEA section 8101(21)(A)](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/legislation/title-viii.html) regarding the four (4) tiers, or levels, of evidence-based interventions.

Q4. Can well-designed studies and results be cited to support interventions?

Well-designed studies and results may be cited to support interventions as long as the studies demonstrate a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluations that such intervention(s) is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes.

Q5. Can funds be used to pay staff to provide these evidence-based interventions in an after-school program?

Yes. Funds may be used to pay staff to provide evidence-based interventions in an after-school program.

Q6. Can funds be used to train staff with new interventions?

Yes. Funds may be used to train staff on the use of new evidence-based interventions.

Q7. Can grant recipients use the funds to pay for staff PD?

Yes. Funds may be used to provide staff with identified professional development related to the implementation of the proposed evidence-based interventions.

​​Q8. Does the statement of need definition imply that students participating need to be identified prior to the submission of the grant application or can the identification process be part of the plan described?

LEAs do not need to identify individual participating students. At the time of submission, LEAs must identify the needs of the schools, student grade levels and student sub-groups, as applicable, that will be addressed.

​Q9. The grant guidelines mention how "the implemented evidence-based interventions will focus on nurturing the whole child and embed social-emotional competencies in the project – including projects designed to address mathematics and/or ELA instruction." Does that mean, there must be an evidence-based SEL program no matter what?

No. LEAs are not required to include an evidence-based SEL program. LEAs, however, are encouraged to consider the social-emotional learning needs of students when developing and implementing mathematics and/or ELA programs and services.

​

Q10. Is it possible to get a copy of the PowerPoint?

Yes, the PowerPoint is posted on the Office of Grants Management website under Addressing Student Learning Loss.

​

Q11. With no State testing and no way to administer standardized testing to hybrid groups of students, what do you suggest we do for data?

LEAs should utilize the most current data available, to include, but not limited to benchmark assessments, formative assessment data, and/or universal screening data reviewed by the MTSS or intervention and referral services team, teacher-generated assessments, and teacher recommendations.

Q12. Can the project be done with the students in the summer or does it need to be monthly?

The proposed project can be implemented during the summer, after-school, week-ends or during the school year.

​

Q13. Can an outside evaluator be hired? If so, how much funding can be included in the budget?

Yes. Based on identified needs, an LEA may contract with a third-party to provide allowable services as articulated in the NGO. The LEA must determine that all costs are necessary, reasonable and allocable.

Q14. Are charter schools eligible to apply?

Yes, Charter schools are eligible to apply for funding under this opportunity.

​

Q15. Is there a % of what is allowed in the budget? For example, staff salary should not exceed 30%, etc....

The LEA must determine that all costs are necessary, reasonable and allocable.

​

Q16. Is there a specific percentage permitted for administrative costs?

​Administrative costs may not exceed 2% of the total grant award.

Q17. What is the upper limited of funds requested?

Successful LEAs will be awarded approximately $156,425.

Q18. Will the application be in the 2021 FY in EWEG - and when will it be available?

The application is available in the EWEG system under the FY 2021 Discretionary Grant section. EWEG is accessible via [NJ Homeroom](https://homeroom.state.nj.us/).

Q19. What is the maximum funding amount allowed to request?

Successful LEAs will be awarded approximately $156,425.

Q20. Is our eligibility limited by the amount of COVID-related funding (CARES/ESSER) we have received thus far? While there are areas of instructional support we would like to refine further with the potential acquisition of additional funding, we want to make sure we establish clear expectations.

No. The LEA’s eligibility is not limited by the amount of COVID-19 related funding (CARES/ESSER) the LEA has received to date.

Q21. We did not administer standardized testing last year so are we able to provide support for the academic need using teacher observations and functional classroom performance from September 2020?

LEAs should utilize the most current data available, to include, but not limited to benchmark assessments, formative assessment data, and/or universal screening data reviewed by the MTSS or intervention and referral services team, teacher-generated assessments, and teacher recommendations.

Q22. Also, if we wish to give a preference to special education students, students with a 504, free and reduced lunch eligible students or students qualified for ELL, could we run a lottery for seats in a summer program and describe how students in these groups would get a double chance of getting one of a limited number of seats before moving to the general population of students?

We encourage the use of data-based decision making for determining which students in any group would participate in extended learning opportunities.

Q23. I am submitting this question regarding an aspect of the application.  In regard to the process that identifies the students that would receive the proposed interventions, the application states:  *Applicants must provide specific information regarding: 1) the achievement, performance, and/or non-academic data used to identify the specific schools, grade levels, and/or student subgroups that will benefit most from programs and services funded under this NGO.*

We are currently collecting that data and will be collecting that data into the new year.  I am concerned about the statement *used to identify.* Does the identification of the students need to be complete prior to submission of the application or should I read that as "provide information on how students will be identified"?  We won't be done the identification process by the submission date, so this is an important clarification for us.

LEAs do not need to identify individual participating students prior to submission of the application. At the time of submission, LEAs must provide information on how students will be identified based on the needs of the schools, student grade levels and student sub-groups to be served.

Q24. Can we use the grant funds to pay for staff (as an honorarium)?

LEAs may use the funds to pay staff salaries and benefits or staff stipends to provide evidence-based interventions.

Q25. Will we lose points if we focus on one area of this grant (e.g. Literacy only)?

No. LEAs will not lose points by focusing solely on one (1) area of the grant (e.g., English Language Arts Literacy).

Q26. Given this is a Title I grant, are we able to use the funds in all our schools? Or, for Title I students only?

The Addressing Student Learning Loss NGO does not represent a Title I, Part A grant. The funding associated with the NGO is not Title I, Part A funding; therefore, the Title I, Part A rules and regulations do not apply to this NGO.

Q27. How does DOE foresee districts being able to use the funds?

Districts may propose projects that implement evidence-based interventions or quality instructional strategies to address student learning loss through additional:

* + Mathematics; and/or
  + English language arts literacy (ELA) instruction; and/or
  + Social-emotional learning (SEL) support.

The goal is to significantly address students’ learning loss resulting from school closures due to COVID-19 through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.

Q28. Are there any upcoming information sessions for districts on the grant overview and application?

The technical assistance session was held Thursday, December 17, 2020. The PowerPoint presentation can be found on the Office of Grants Management website under Addressing Student Learning Loss.

Q29. What level of collaboration is embedded into the process? Does the Association have a voice in local planning and the application?

LEAs are encouraged to involve relevant stakeholders (e.g., district/school staff, parents, service providers, etc.) in the analysis of data and selection of the evidence-based intervention(s). Additionally, LEAs may choose to collaborate with other entities in the planning of their application.

Q30. What limitations are there to how the funds can be used?

Funds provided under this grant program are NOT Title I, Part A funds and thus, NOT subject to the federal [*Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) section 1118*](https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/snsfinalguidance06192019.pdf) “supplement, not supplant” rule. *ESSER* is its own, separate, flexible program intended to assist with the COVID-19 response. Guidance on the allowable uses of ESSER funds can be found on the NJDOE website (<https://www.nj.gov/education/covid19/boardops/caresact.shtml>).