

Questions and Answers: ESSER Fund 3.0 Office Hours

[Updated January 25, 2022]

This document contains the questions and answers addressed in the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund 3.0 office hours held by the division of federal programs and oversight. New questions will be added after each meeting. For additional questions beyond what is covered in this document, please join the next office hours meeting or contact the appropriate [divisional coordinator](#) for ESSER Fund 3.0.

Helpful Links

Tennessee All Corp

- **TN ALL Corps PPT:** <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/education/esser-planning-resources/TN%20ALL%20Corps%20Brief%20Overview%20-%20May%202021.pdf>
- **TN ALL Corps Webinar:** <https://tngov.webex.com/recording-service/sites/tngov/recording/20956b429afb1039b2fe0050568c61dd/playback>

ESSER District Planning Resources

- <https://www.tn.gov/education/top-links/esser.html>

Davis-Bacon Act

1. **05.06.21** I just learned last week that ESSER funds are under the Davis-Bacon Act concerning labor costs on bids. I have learned a bit about this over the last few days but have some specific questions that concern me.
 - A. We have already put out a few bids that we intended to submit through ESSER. One is still open, and I think that we can modify it with all necessary requirements. What must be included in the specs when a bid is for a project that will under the Davis-Bacon Act?
 - B. We have some small projects that are already completed that we had planned on using ESSER for reimbursement. We did not issue these bids with information letting the contractor know that it was a project under the Davis-Bacon Act. Is there something that can be done at this point to make these completed projects eligible for reimbursement through ESSER?

Davis Bacon Act is complicated, and the answers are most often situation-specific – and is not an act that is typically used in education (as capital projects have not historically been allowable in education grants prior to CARES Act). We have discussed this with our General Counsel, and because these are so frequently situation-specific, it is an issue that is best addressed by the local board attorney. The department will be sharing some good resources from the department of labor, but again, this is not something on which the department can or will advise.

We would recommend connecting with your board attorney and utilizing the US Department of Labor's website noted below. It is comprehensive and has the guides/tools/fact sheets to address most questions. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/government-contracts/construction>

ESSER Planning Requirements

2. **06.22.21 I am trying to determine when to close our Community Stakeholder Survey. We have received responses from all stakeholders listed in the State checklist except for one group on the list. As I disaggregate the data, I want to ensure that I have good backup documentation for monitoring. Can you provide some guidance regarding how to best structure a data analysis that will meet the requirements?**

The LEA can work with the data that they have sent out, for example, noting the groups that were reached out to, noting the evidence of the modes of communication, and also noting how data perhaps was grouped and utilized for the development of the plan. Since the LEA has the evidence of outreach and has responses, this helps meet the level of compliance. The SEA has not given a deadline for feedback. The LEA can continue to collect data until Aug. 27, since that is when all templates need to be submitted. If the LEA has a good feel about the stakeholder involvement already, and the feedback has helped support the needs of the LEA for a solid plan or plans, then the LEA can submit the checklist. The SEA recommendation was for the LEA to leave the comment period open for 30 days at a minimum. As the LEA updates their Public ESSER plan at six months, it may be that more feedback may be collected by the LEA to make updates or add to the LEA plans.

3. **06.22.21 If we use something like Class Dojo, would we list the number engaged as the number of students/families that use the app?**

Yes.

4. **01.25.22 On grades served—do we include pre-K as well?**

Yes; pre-K is included.

5. **06.22.21 Is the Economically Disadvantaged percentage on the Public Plan to include all who qualify for Free and Reduced or use the new definition for identifying students that we were given for summer school identification?**

You would be able to use the numbers you have in your LEA for economically disadvantaged students.

6. **05.06.21 Do we meet the requirement for gathering stakeholder feedback by providing a survey for our different stakeholder groups? Does this meet the requirement for having meaningful consultation?**

This would be a good start, but the process will need to be more in-depth than a survey. Consider virtual town-halls, using already scheduled meetings with stakeholders, or office hours to collect feedback.

7. **05.06.21 Safe return plan---If this information was addressed in our CLP for reopening 2020-21 school year, is that sufficient? Do we have to write a new plan?**

LEAs will be required to craft a new plan, but it may be a lot of the same information that you were required from the CLP. Please note the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan must be developed in consultation with the specified stakeholders, and meet the requirements specified in the instructions and on the ESSER Fund 3.0 Assurances page. Once approved this plan must be made public on the LEA's website.

- 8. 05.06.21 Will charter schools be required to provide anything separate for returning to in-person?**
No, the plan requirements are only for LEAs, but charter school stakeholders should be involved in the development of the plan.
- 9. 05.06.21 From what I am hearing you all say, we can take the work on the CLP as a beginning place and can help mold that to our safety plan. Am I hearing that right?**
A great place to start is the CLP from last summer, numerous components are the same. The LEA will need to build upon that information and work with your stakeholder group to get feedback to create the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan.
- 10. 05.06.21 Tribes are a part of the required group. If we don't have tribes does that just need to be documented?**
Yes, please document there are no tribes in the LEA's boundaries.
- 11. 05.06.21 How do we find a list of all of the civil rights organizations in our area?**
LEAs are encouraged to seek civil rights organizations in their community. Reaching out to the local chambers of commerce, organizations that support the schools, and local government websites may be a strong starting point.
- 12. 05.11.21 In surveying our community, we found that our community wanted a virtual school going forward. We have applied and been approved to have a virtual school. Would the start-up costs and cost of the virtual school be allowable in ESSER 3.0? Furniture, equipment needed, space rental, etc.?**
No, the intent and purpose of ESSER 3.0 is to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operations of schools and address the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the nation's students. The LEA may be able to use ESSER 1.0 or ESSER 2.0 funds for these costs.
- 13. 05.06.21 Will there be an overview of the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan Template?**
Yes, the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plan template is in the related documents folder in the ESSER 3.0 funding application. Once approved this plan must be made public on the LEA's website.
- 14. 06.14.21 If we have a school opening in FY23, must we/can we allocate ESSER 3.0 funds to that school?**
The LEA receives the ESSER 3.0 money. The LEA can support the school once established for needed support.

ESSER Spending Allowability

15. 07.13.21 *Due to the continuity of being able to provide meal services, we have endured some maintenance issues with some food equipment. Is this allowable under ESSER 3.0 and what account line would we use?*

Yes, this is an allowable expense with the needs being tied to running an overall healthy environment, so students have their basic nutritional needs met as many return to school campuses after COVID. The expense would go in the account line 73100, under equipment for things like freezers, burners, steamers, etc.

16. 07.13.21 *If we want to keep students attending the "summer camp" we need to be able to give the parents and students an incentive to do so. Our attendance is falling off and if we can't get them to the school, we can't teach them!*

I would argue that supplementing pay is fundamentally different than providing a stipend or other form of payment. In the case of supplemental pay, the students are receiving compensation for personal services, which is an allowable category of expenses under the UGG.

In the case of stipends to students for participating in a program, they are not performing a personal service or receiving a base level of compensation for it. That puts them more in the gifts or donations category, which makes them strictly unallowable.

17. 06.22.21 *In the ePlan application, what does it mean in LEA Program Details when it talks about the remaining funds and ensuring statutory requirements?*

Those are the requirement conditions that you have with any grant, making sure that what you put in the grant is what you are spending the funds on and making sure you are spending it properly.

18. 06.22.21 *Under personnel for summer school in the application. We funded for four weeks some cafeteria workers; will they go under Summer School Personnel?*

Yes, if they are for the summer, they can be placed in the "other" section.

19. 06.22.21 *Does "infrastructure" include only technology (e.g.: access points, etc.) or does it include facilities (e.g.: ventilation), too?*

For the possibly new ESSER 4.0, this is referring to any projects and plans an LEA may have for facilities. At this time this bill has not been placed into law.

20. 06.22.21 *Would replacement of gym bleachers be an allowable expenditure?*

This expense depends on the nature of the expense. If the expense is for physical education, classes, assemblies, and appropriate social distancing, this may be allowable based on the explanation provided linked to COVID-19.

21. 06.22.21 In ESSER 2.0 we did some reroofing and boiler work for some of our schools, the amounts for the work have been underbudgeted, do we go into the application and make a revision?

Yes, please go into the ESSER 2.0 and make the adjustments as necessary, then please submit the application for approval by the department.

22. 06.22.21 Since Summer Camp is mandated for next summer, will there be grants available for that or will we need to budget for that in ESSER 3.0?

Summer camps are funded for two years. Every LEA will get another round of funding for summer from the state. An LEA has the option to place summer camp expenses in ESSER 3.0. If funding streams change, the ESSER 3.0 application can be revised.

23. 06.22.21 We are planning to update the venting for the heating and air in our Tech center. There will not be students in this building, however our teachers will be assessing the center for training, etc. Would this be allowable?

Yes, if it is a reasonable cost regarding your ESSER funding.

24. 06.22.21 Several of our schools need upgrades to their phones and communication system. Would this be allowable?

If it to ensure safety if there is an emergency and contact parents that could be allowable.

25. 06.22.21 When putting in ePlan application, we may have a reduction of about 380 students. If we keep all our staff, can we move staff to ESSER to keep staff to student ratios down and not let teachers go due to a reduction in students?

Yes. As you stated, I would use that information in your application about keeping ratios low for the safety of your staff and students.

26. 06.22.21 Can you talk about the best method for a federal programs director who uses consolidated admin to pay the salary for working part of the time on ESSER? I know a PAR would be involved since all of the salary can't come from consolidated admin- but if the duties are very similar - what does that involve if a portion comes from ESSER funds? Would the regular certificate of employment work if the breakdown is included - or is the PAR with details necessary?

The PAR would be appropriate since the work within Con Admin and ESSER may not be the same job duties. Some days may be longer spent on Con Admin or some days it may be ESSER, depending on the need. As the LEA structures the position, the FTE will add up to 1. Since an FTE cannot go above 100%. Please note, if the LEA is providing the pay as a stipend, an FTE is not needed, and neither is a PAR.

27. 06.22.21 What line item is most appropriate for stipends for teachers? 71100-189?

Yes, 71100-189 would be an appropriate line for teacher stipends.

28. 06.22.21 Can you explain the difference between Addressing Facility Needs / Deferred Maintenance vs School Facility Repairs from the spending plan in ESSER 3.0?

These may include purchases that fall within more than one area. The extended description is to ensure LEAs have a category to budget repairs, facility needs, or maintenance.

29. 06.22.21 We are paying for mental health therapists in 72120 130 in Title IV---we plan to expand this support in ESSER 3.0, however, this line item is not available in ESSER 3.0. Do you recommend using 72120-189 or another line item?

Yes, the LEA can use the line 72120-189, and add specifics about the allocation being in place for a mental health therapist.

30. 06.14.21 How do we enter interventionists and technology if the activity possibly fits in multiple areas?

Under the academics section, enter interventionists. Technology may fit under academics or academics depending on how the LEA is using the technology. The templates allow for LEAs to allocate in a manner that makes sense to the district and their stakeholders.

31. 06.14.21 Our Title I allocations were cut, and we had been paying interventionist personnel from this fund. Can we now pay for them from ESSER 3.0? Also, can we pay for personnel that we previously paid for from GP?

Yes, ESSER 3.0 funds can be used for personnel. Since there is no SNS provision with ESSER 3, the expense is allowable.

32. 05.11.21 Buildings are allowable expenses if current buildings are overcrowded. Is building a NEW middle school an allowable expense under ESSER 3.0?

The LEA will need to demonstrate that this is a more practical solution. For example, if the school is 100 years old and the renovations are less cost-effective than building a new structure. The LEA will be required to craft a price analysis to support the rationale.

33. We have a student in a wheelchair that is attending school on a hybrid plan. At the academy where she attends there is no covered area for her parents to park so when she arrives, if it's raining, she and her parents are soaking wet by the time she gets into the building. Can we cover part of the parking area and sidewalk entrance to ensure her safety getting into the building?

As described, this is an allowable use of ESSER 2.0 and ESSER 3.0 funds.

34. Can an LEA purchase Math/ELA materials that could be used during the school day but also be used after school and in the Summer?

Yes, an LEA may purchase Math/ELA Materials for Tier I instruction that can be used for during school and after school and summer programming. These materials will not qualify for the requirement of 20 percent to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.

35. 05.06.21 Can an LEA purchase math textbooks out of ESSER 3.0?

Yes, an LEA may purchase Math/ELA Materials for Tier I instruction that can be used for during school and after school and summer programming. These materials **will not** qualify for the requirement of 20% to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.

Typically, textbooks and other curriculum are purchased with state and local funds. With the resurgence of federal relief dollars districts are receiving, they may be purchasing textbooks with federal funds. While there is no requirement for districts to seek a new or separate contract when using federal funds, there is a requirement that a district follows its established procurement procedures (2 CFR 200.318). Districts should, however, ensure that their local procurement procedures comply with 2 CFR 200.319 and 2 CFR 200.320, which detail the rules on competition and methods of procurement, respectively.

In instances where districts are adding to existing district contracts, they should first ensure that the contract was initially procured in compliance with required policies and regulations (federal, state, and local). Further, districts should also ensure that they are complying with 2 CFR 200.302 which requires districts to maintain records as to the source and application of funds. In other words, districts may have to revise the contract funding to reflect federal funding – as all federal funding must be tracked separately and records should be maintained separately. Those records should also typically be maintained for at least three years from the end of the grant (2 CFR 200.334).

36. 06.14.21 In Commissioner's Schwinn's Update for Directors today, a section by Judy Spencer said we could put students who are quarantined on homebound. Can we pay for a homebound teacher from ESSER 3.0 and if so, would they count for the 20%?

Yes, that is part of what can be supported through ESSER. As far as counting towards 20% -- if receiving interventions, check-in /check-out for mental health reports – that might be allowable if the learning loss is being addressed and is written into the ESSER plan that way.

37. Can an LEA use ESSER 3.0 funds for high school state and institutional remediation?

Yes, an LEA must reserve not less than 20 percent of its total ESSER III allocation to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. ESSER-funded activities can benefit any or all students, staff, and schools (i.e., traditional or charter public) within a district not just elementary or Title funded schools.

38. Can school buses be purchased with ESSER 3.0?

Yes, the LEA could purchase buses with the remaining 80 percent of their ESSER 3.0 allocation or use ESSER 1.0 or ESSER 2.0 funds to promote social distancing.

39. Can you utilize ESSER 3.0 to repair/replace a leaking school building roof?

Replacing a roof would be an allowable use, especially if the LEA can support that replacing the roof would improve the environmental health of the building and improve air quality in the building. School facility repairs and improvements should enable the operation of schools to reduce the risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards and to support student health needs. Please budget the capital outlay, 76100 account series.

40. 05.11.21 Could the field trip possibly count towards the extended programming if added to the summer program?

The LEA will need to provide a solid justification and correlation to the purpose of the Learning Camp. For example, the LEA could use ESSER funds to take students to the Science Museum or Library.

41. 05.11.21 We have a school that has a gym that only holds about 200+ students in a school with over 600 students. Can we do a reconstruction to make the gym larger to allow for social distancing? This would not be for the court but for the seating. We would like to expand the gym to hold more parents for parent engagement and to allow programs for our children where their families can attend.

Ensure in the budget narrative, the LEA mentions that the additional space will ensure social distancing for events as well as provide additional classroom space.

42. What about new buildings or any type of reconstruction?

LEAS may consider an addition to an existing building to ensure safe social distancing to implement public health protocols, including guidelines and recommendations from the CDC. These purchases will require additional discussion with department staff and context in the funding application.

43. If we need a new coating on the roof, is that allowable?

If the roof is needed for the health and safety of students to allow for reopening, that would be allowed.

44. 05.11.21 Additional SROs, is that allowable?

Yes, as described this is an allowable expense.

45. If GP school fund 141 currently pays for nurses' salaries, can a district move the expenditures to ESSER 3.0 for the next three years?

As described, this is an allowable expense, the relief funding grants (ESSER 1.0, ESSER 2.0, and ESSER 3.0) do not have supplement not supplant provisions.

46. What is a reasonable percent of ESSER to allocate for bonuses?

LEAs may use ESSER funds for bonuses or additional pay, such as hazard pay, only when such expenses are related to disruptions or closures resulting from COVID-19. There is no set percentage for LEAs.

47. Is repainting a building allowable?

When making renovations painting would be allowable as part of the project, if you are painting the outside of the school for maintenance that is not allowable.

48. Our district is thinking about constructing a building at each high school to socially distance CTE students and another to provide social distancing for students that participate in physical education classes. Would this be allowable?

LEAS may consider an addition to an existing building to ensure safe social distancing to implement public health protocols, including guidelines and recommendations from the CDC. These purchases will require additional discussion with department staff and context in the funding application. The LEA may also consider leasing sites or spaces to implement public health protocols as an alternative.

- 49. 06.14.21 We'd like to use ESSER 3.0 to purchase CKLA. I'm assuming I can use the Early Literacy Materials code for K-2, but how will I code it for grades 4-5? Which focus area do I select?**
Academics. For the ones that don't quite fit, go with the "other" category
- 50. 06.14.21 I have a few questions: (1) If a system decides to use ESSER funds for class size reduction, will the same restrictions apply that were utilized in the CFA. For instance, if the system wanted to use a CSR teacher in grade 5, would there have to be research to support this? (2) Can a system use ESSER funds to alleviate overcrowding or expanding course offerings for CTE by building additional classrooms? (3). The community engagement checklist, is page 2 what is required to be completed and posted online?**
(1) The CSR guidelines would still apply regarding the evidence (tiers 1-4) since ESSER funds are still federal funds. Is it that the district is trying to hire more educators to appropriately socially distance? If this is the case, this may not be CSR but practices to appropriately socially distance.
(2) LEAs can use ESSER funds to address overcrowding in CTE courses. For example, adding more courses to appropriately socially distance.
(3) Yes, page 2 of the community engagement checklist is what is required to be completed and posted online.
- 51. 06.14.21 Due to COVID-19, physical activity by students was significantly reduced. Could ESSER fund either restoration of current outdoor physical activity equipment or provide new outdoor physical activity equipment to help encourage a more active, healthy lifestyle and promote social and emotional wellbeing (and I could probably throw in social distancing...)?**
ESSER funds can be used to restore physical space for appropriate social distancing for P.E. and student recess time (social skills building) while learning since the purpose of the funds is to keep students physically in school.
- 52. 06.14.21 Would ESSER funds be allowable to restore a band/music program? Parents have asked about this in stakeholder meetings since they have found strong evidence to the link of increasing learning.**
This would depend on the purchases that the district may have in mind. Is the program targeting learning loss? The LEA may need to conduct a needs analysis.
- 53. 06.14.21 I've previously asked about security camera upgrades for student safety and to improve our ability to contact trace within cafeterias, gyms, etc. What line item should I list this under?**
The line item for security cameras would be in 72610-715 operation of plant or it can also fit in 72250 (tech).
- 54. 06.14.21 On page 11, academic spaces, does this refer to new builds or additions? Or is it also for roofs? Would windows and doors that are being replaced go in this area as well?**
Roof repairs, roof replacement, door and window replacements can be included in this section since they improve and support the academic space needed for a safe and healthy environment for students.

55. 06.14.21 Regarding the band issues we are also getting lots of feedback regarding band. We have a request for remediation staffing for students who need to catch up so that they can participate in band. Can we apply that funding toward learning loss? We have data that shows a 24% drop in band enrollment and a 58% drop in finance, as well as a 27% drop in Leadership hours.

More information would be needed here regarding learning loss and remediation. If it is true remediation or intervention for core subject areas and skill acquisition, this would be justified as learning loss. A root cause analysis would be helpful to identify what is causing the drop in the three areas mentioned.

56. 06.14.21 Would mulch for an outside activity area also be allowable to help promote the safety of students during physical activity?

Yes, mulch would be allowable if there is a tie to COVID-19 and a need to promote safety for students. A detailed justification would be needed for the need of the purchase.

ESSER 3.0 Learning Loss Requirements

57. 06.22.21 With the fiscal year closing, we have some renovations, but all these expenses will not be paid out, how do we go about this?

Please reach out to your fiscal consultant for the steps needed in this process. It is more than likely, the LEA will need to close out, complete a Final Expenditure Report (FER), and the flow-over money will carry over into the new application for the new fiscal year. Please also know the LEA can use journal entries to post back to the expenses since ESSER allows going back to the day the pandemic was declared.

58. 06.22.21 Counting towards 20%, transportation for afterschool/summer school attendance. If we look at the mileage and cost for this transportation. Would that include purchasing buses if needed?

It would not be allowable under the 20%; however, it could be an allowable cost for the 80%.

59. 06.14.21 We are looking at hiring a math coach, can this count towards our 20%? This position will be working with teachers with learning loss of our students.

Yes, the math coach would be part of the LEAs effort for learning loss since the job duties would be geared toward helping students recover from regression.

60. 06.14.21 Are you able to explain the difference between how you determine learning loss versus academics. For example, funds used specifically for learning loss, or specifically for academics. Are these words being used interchangeably?

We do have a guide in TDOE Resources for this. Keep in mind with learning loss, think of Academics as Tier 1, Learning loss is going to be considered as Tier 2 and 3.

61. 05.06.21 Does the 20% for learning loss include efforts put in place in the regular school day or is it only to support after school/ before school and summer efforts?

An LEA must reserve not less than 20 percent of its total ESSER 3.0 allocation to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. These evidence-based interventions may be during the regular school day and are not limited to after or summer school offerings.

62. 05.06.21 Does the 20% for learning loss include efforts put in place in the regular school day or is it only to support after school/ before school and summer efforts?

An LEA must reserve not less than 20 percent of its total ESSER 3.0 allocation to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. These evidence-based interventions may be during the regular school day and are not limited to after or summer school offerings.

63. The LEA needs to use the 20 percent to address issues during the school day, so we are providing equitable opportunities for our kids.

Yes, an LEA must reserve not less than 20 percent of its total ESSER 3.0 allocation to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. These evidence-based interventions may be during the regular school day and are not limited to after or summer school offerings.

64. For the 20 percent set aside for Learning Loss, can we purchase activity buses for Summer school/After-School transportation?

No, bus purchases for Summer School/After-School transportation do not count as part of the required 20 percent reservation. An LEA must reserve not less than 20 percent of its total ESSER 3.0 allocation to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. The district could purchase buses with the remaining 80 percent of the ESSER 3.0 allocation or use ESSER 1.0 or 2.0 funds.

65. The LEA annually receives a LEAPs grant to provide after-school, summer school, and intersession learning opportunities (Spring/Fall break). Is there any flexibility with the 20 percent set aside so we don't lose LEAPs funds, or do we have to use 20 percent for After-School?

No, the federal statute states LEA must reserve not less than 20 percent of its total ESSER 3.0 allocation to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.

66. 05.06.21 Can art teachers be considered part of learning loss? We would like to add 3 art teachers.

Yes, an art teacher would be allowable as a learning loss expense.

67. 05.11.21 If we want to plan for learning loss over multiple years, that is ok, correct?

Yes, this is allowable. The ESSER funds (1.0, 2.0, and 3.0) are non-recurring relief funds intended to assist local education agencies (LEAs) in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This could include addressing health and safety issues, learning loss remediation, and capital outlay expenditures for building improvement along with a number of other allowable expenditures. The grant funds will be available through September 30, 2022 (ESSER 1.0) and September 30, 2023 (ESSER 2.0). Because these funds are non-recurring beyond the above-mentioned dates, and because the use of funds may extend beyond one fiscal year, the department will allow districts to budget for multi-year expenditures in the ESSER budgets. This is an exception to the usual guidance and is not applicable to the other ESEA grants

(Title I, Part A; Title II, etc.). This exception is being made due to the relief nature of the funds, and the limited period of availability

68. 05.11.21 I know you said we could use the learning loss during the day, but we cannot purchase materials for that correct?

LEAs may purchase materials to address learning loss throughout the day, but not materials for Tier I instruction.

69. Instructional materials – if we are buying materials for summer learning, can we not count that for learning loss?

An LEA may purchase instructional materials to support Summer Learning Camps as a support to address learning loss.

70. 05.11.21 We are interested in having some "learning labs" in each of our districts around our county. They will be STEM centers with a variety of enrichment and remediation opportunities offered after school for students of all ages. Could we pay to renovate or build these labs with ESSER 3.0 funds and that be counted toward our learning loss 20%?

STEM labs should be allowable in ESSER 3.0. The construction cost of the STEM labs would not count toward the 20 percent learning loss set aside.

71. 05.11.21 Professional Development on Foundation Literacy? To pay our teachers for the training... Will this work as part of the 20%?

Yes, as described this is allowable and would count as part of the 20% set-aside.

72. 06.14.21 Does credit recovery at the high school level fall under "spending for summer school" if we did not have an actual summer school? We have a modified day of credit recovery.

This would be part of learning loss and can be allocated in the learning loss funding of ESSER 3.0.

Grant Management and Fiscal Requirements

73. 06.22.21 Adding, administrative salary cost to manage ESSER 3.0, do we add the three-year salary cost or one year at time.

Yes, you can budget for three years of salary.

74. 06.14.21 Is there a link to the Uniform Grants Guidance on ePlan?

Yes, here is the link: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html>.

75. 06.14.21 What precautions do you recommend if considering using ESSER 3.0 funds to pay for personnel above and beyond BEP formula?

Things to consider include meeting MOE with your general purpose funds and Title I comparability. If you are going above and beyond there is normally nothing to worry about. Keep sustainability in mind as well.

76. Are there sample Journal Entries on ePlan yet?

Prior period expense journal entries are now in ePlan.

77. If the grant ends 9/30/24 is that the cut-off date for reimbursements?

The last day for LEAs to obligate is 06/30/24. The deadline for encumbrances is 90 days after the grant period ends.

78. 05.11.21 What are the requirements around reimbursing back-dated expenses from the prior fiscal year? For example, can we have expenses from FY21 reimbursed in FY22 or FY23?

You can request reimbursement for items or services that align with the intend and purpose of the grant dating back to March 13, 2020.

79. If one of our schools wanted to get reimbursed back to April 2020 in FY23, this would be allowable?

As described, this is an allowable expense.

80. 05.06.21 Do positions added from ESSER 3.0, need to be included in comparability?

The comparability provision in Title I of ESEA requires school districts to provide services in Title I schools from state and local funds that are at least comparable to services in non-Title I schools. As long as GP funding is leveled and the amounts that are generated to schools are not decreased due to ESSER funds, the impact should not be negative.

81. HR has made a few requests in 3.0 to address feedback from employees and want to confirm we are on track ... are hazard and retention bonuses following a pre-identified set of business rules and resolving comp-time for employees that has resulted from addressing COVID this year.

The fiscal side of that will need to be worked out with your fiscal consultant. In the application, you will put that in a 188-bonus line in the account series where your employees are getting paid. For example, teachers would be in the 72100 series whereas transportation would be in a 72710 account series.

82. 06.14.21 I understand that we can now budget for multiple years, can we also pay for multiple years?

No, employees must complete the work prior to being paid.

Planning Template Questions

83. 06.22.21 The templates that are provided, are they required to be posted on LEA websites?

All four templates must be posted to the LEA website once approved.

84. 06.22.21 Community Engagement Checklist—I am not sure how accurate my numbers will be.

We would suggest that you make your best effort to include the most accurate numbers you have. Be sure to note all mediums of engagement used for feedback.

85. On the ESSER plan, page 4, in the Academics section where you are filling on all the high dosage low ratio tutoring information. If we choose NOT to opt into the TN ALL Corps, do we still fill out this page?

Yes, you still fill out that section. The template is for if you have at least 3 sections a week. You will put what you are going to do for tutoring in the overall box and then notice that this part will only be if you are doing to high dose low ratio tutoring.

86. On the second page of the Needs assessment template, where you are typing in the interpretation of data and identified needs, when we start typing you can see the other text unless you scroll. Can we upload the information for our website for parents to access in a more meaningful manner, like a Slide deck?

Yes. You still need to complete these documents, but you should make sure that when uploading for your families, you want to make sure it is understandable and user-friendly manner for your community and parents.

87. Looking at the district needs assessment on page 2, looking at the kindergarten question, does this refer to students for whom it will be there first time on a campus?

For this field, the LEA can report the students for whom this year will be the first time in a school setting. The LEA might look at the number of (new or current) kindergarteners for whom perhaps as they enter the new school year, this will be there first time on an official school campus.

88. 06.22.21 On the Needs Assessment - using a survey, can we have needs for constituents to rank instead of being totally open-ended?

We do not have a specific format for LEAs; however, this would be a good strategy for your LEA.

89. If we get the safe return report and budget finished, can we submit those while we work on the other templates?

Yes, you can submit those templates as you finish them.

90. On the district plan, where it says amount spent on some of the items. Should that be amount budgeted?

Yes, you should list the amount of funds you intend to spend per category as well as what has been spent thus far.

91. On the percentage on Public ESSER plan for all ESSER grants, do we include the total allocation?

Yes, please include the ESSER dollars received from ESSER 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0. If you receive other grants like the ELC Grant or Students Experiencing Homelessness, these can be added on the page as well.

92. 06.22.21 Do we need to offer paper copies of public plan, spending plan, etc. or is electronic posting sufficient?

The LEA can choose to offer paper copies as an alternative option. Please keep the LEA must post the plan as outlined in federal guidance to be in compliance.

93. 06.22.21 On the percentage on Public ESSER plan for all ESSER grants, do we include the total allocation?

Yes, please include the ESSER dollars received from ESSER 1.0, 2.0, and 3.0. If you receive other grants like the ELC Grant or Students Experiencing Homelessness, these can be added on the page as well.

94. **06.14.21** This question is regarding page 4 of the public-facing ESSER plan. We are planning to hire an interventionist with ESSER 3.0 funds as a strategy for supporting academics. Do we complete the low ratio, high dosage chart for the number of groups that interventionist will serve that meet the ratio criteria? Or is this chart for tutoring opportunities outside of the regular school day?

The LEA would complete the chart based on learning through tutoring that would take place outside the regular school day for this portion of the plan. On page 4 of the public plan, the chart only applies to tutoring that takes place outside of the regular school day.

95. **06.14.21** On the district plan, under the student readiness special pops, the chart on page 8 is a little confusing. Please explain what needs to be on each item.

That is any other ways you are spending your money under special populations. Any special programs could go there. There may be parts of the chart that are blank and that is fine.

96. **06.14.21** Federal relief spending on page 3, where it says amount and percent spent. Is this on things we have already spent?

Yes- culminating spending. All three funds together. They can be revised as you look at your data and it can change. If you have other things such as infrastructure you put it under "Other".

97. **06.14.21** Should the Percentage of Total on the Summary pages, etc., (District Public Plan) be for all the ESSER allocations (1.0, 2.0, 3.0) combined and all amounts spent for the combined ESSER grants?

That is the combined amount when it comes to the district public summary page

98. **06.14.21** On Page 5 of the spending plan, In the summer programming it says the difference between learning loss student acceleration and additional resources. We are doing the elementary and middle school summer. High school is using different funds for summer school. Am I writing funds from another grant on this?

I would put it all on there and then state what else you have within that as well within the description. This is what we are doing to make sure we are meeting the law and then this is what we are doing additionally.

99. **12.20.21** On the front page of the district public plan it asks for grades served. For federal grants we put K-12, but if we serve pre-K should we put pre-K-12?

You can place you serve pre-K-12. Revised guidance from ED states you may serve pre-K or school aged children.

100. **06.14.21** If we finish the ESSER 3.0 application on ePlan do we need to submit all accompanying plans with it as well all at one time?

The district can submit all together at once or can submit in parts. The plans will have to be approved before the ESSER 3.0 funding application is approved.

- 101. 06.14.21 In the charts, in the public-facing plan (LEA ESSER Plan), when it asks the total number of students served or percentages on page 5 for summer school, what does this apply to?**
The number applies to the total number of students by elementary, middle, and/or high school that are participating in Summer School.
- 102. 06.14.21 On page 12 of the contingency plan, if the additional infrastructure plan gets approved. The text states, if you have done a few things with infrastructure what would you add or change within ESSER 2.0 and 3.0?**
The contingency plan would include the total costs the district has invested already and has received approval for regarding the activity. The LEA would most likely look at capital outlay in 76100 for that activity that has already been approved and/or completely.
- 103. 06.14.21 What date can the stakeholder meetings date back to?**
The LEA can go back as far as when they had a solid ESSER 3.0 plan and began to engage the stakeholder's meetings.
- 104. 06.14.21 How in-depth does the information need to be for the needs assessment as we gather information from stakeholders?**
The plan must be detailed enough that the public would understand the purpose of the activity.
- 105. 06.14.21 Going back to the contingency plan page, if we are not listing additional things that we would like if we received more money, what would we list?**
Please list anything that is being done with ESSER 1.0, 2.0, or 3.0. Specifically, if it has already been approved or perhaps completed as a project.
- 106. 06.14.21 In the public-facing plan, do we add the ESSER funding to support teacher salaries to page 3 under "other" academics?**
Yes, the funding to support teacher salaries would go under "other" in the Academics section of page 3 in the public-facing plan.
- 107. 06.14.21 In the summary page of the public-facing plan, where would PPE be placed?**
PPE could be placed under "other" under student readiness.
- 108. 06.14.21 Do we use the 2020 report card for demographics on the needs assessment?**
Since the report is asking for the report card URL, the LEA can use the 2020 demographic data for that portion but in the planning such as instructional materials and/or services for students use the most current data.
- 109. 06.14.21 Question about the Community Engagement Checklist. Can you or other districts give examples of Disability Rights Organizations and "interest groups"....here in Blount County, I'm not sure how many of those exist? Does this have to be local, regional, statewide?**
It depends on where you gather your feedback regarding the organizations. As far as examples of the disabilities rights groups, we are talking about advocate groups that are local to the LEA, Vocational Rehab, and the local court system. There is also the ARC of Tennessee or STEP. Sometimes a community may have a local group of parents that advocate for the rights of students with disabilities.

110. 06.14.21 For reporting the engagement, how do we report this? We do have organizations we have reached out to. Surveys have been pushed out and we are still collecting responses.

You may have several responses from the same agency or organization, these can be reported as one. Best effort is encouraged when gathering feedback.

111. 06.14.21 In the public plan, how do we list small percentages for very small populations?

For the areas in which the LEA has a small percentage of subgroups, please include a percent. (e.g. 0.01 or 1%)

112. 06.14.21 On page 3 of the public plan, middle school is not mentioned but on page 7 it does mention middle and high school. On page 3, under "other" can I mention support and activity to grow CTE programs and credit recovery?

Yes, in the "other" category the growing of CTE programs and credit recovery can be included.

113. 06.14.21 On page 7, of the public plan, do we list funds per subgroup? We are spending money in areas that benefit all groups.

Yes, the LEA would include the amounts that are supporting the subgroups. The amounts can be separated.

114. 06.14.21 How detailed does feedback need to be when gathering feedback from stakeholders? We have gathered notes from calls, and meetings. We have a survey posted but have only had a few responses.

Gathering all feedback to the best intent possible is encouraged. Capture agendas and sign-ins, and then approximate the numbers the best you can.

115. 06.14.21 Is it "wrong" if some of the boxes on the engagement checklist are not "checked"? For example, our LEA does not have a migrant population.

There may be some wiggle room, some districts may not have some of the subgroups. Best effort is encouraged when gathering population data.

American Rescue Plan- Homeless 1.0 and 2.0

116. 06.22.21 Can you give an update on the American Rescue Plan- Homeless Grant?

Please contact Vanessa.Waters@tn.gov, State Homeless Coordinator, at this time we do not have an update.

117. 06.14.21 When will the second homeless grant be available on ePlan?

These will be available as soon as we receive news from the U.S. Department of Education. This will be a priority to get information to all LEAs.

118. 06.14.21 Does anyone know what the requirements will be for this additional homeless money?

The allocation will be based on the 2019-20 data (FY19 data) as well as Title I. All LEAs that identify homeless students will qualify.

119. 06.14.21 Where is the homeless allocation for the ESSER plan?

There will be two grants available to districts to support homeless students. The grants will be available for districts that already receive McKinney Vento sub-fund grants.

TN ALL Corps

120. 06.22.21 Can you explain TN ALL Corps process?

20% allocated for learning loss, you can use this to count towards your learning loss. Please reach out to Meghan McLeroy, Lisa Coons, or Robin McClellan.

121. 06.22.21 I signed up for TN ALL Corps for tomorrow. I have not received anything.

Confirmation typically comes within 24 hours of signing up. The contact for the confirmation email was Tess Yates.

122. 06.22.21 Please discuss the high dosage , low ration tutoring chart on the public facing plan page 5? Are these numbers projections? Is high school tutoring a component of TN ALL Corps?

Do contact Lisa Coons, Meghan McLeroy, or Robin McClellan. These professionals lead the work on TN All Corp.

123. 06.22.21 Can the LEA match required funds for TN ALL Corps include any funding we received from 21st Century Grants or Leaps Grants?

TN ALL Corps is holding office hours as well. Please see the Commissioner's Update for those hours. We will take this question for review and provide an answer through the FAQ document. You are also welcome to reach out to TN All Corps for a direct answer.