

ARP ESSER July 15, 2021 Webinar Questions

Application and Reporting Requirements:

1. Will SAUs be asked to measure student outcomes?

- a. Yes, SAUs will describe the formative assessments they will use to gather information, or data, related to student outcomes in the ARP ESSER application. The Maine Department of Education anticipates that the US Department of Education will require data on student outcomes by identified groups. Likely student groups are: Students with one or more disabilities, Low-income students, English language learners, Students in foster care, Migratory students, Students experiencing homelessness, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Black, non-Hispanic, and White, non-Hispanic.

2. Can an SAU choose not to adopt specific state recommendations based on local factors? Would this impact an SAU's ability to access ARP funding?

- a. The ARP ESSER Application captures the requirements for the use of ARP ESSER funds as codified in the ARP Act and further defined in the [Interim Final Rule \(IFR\)](#). The Maine Department of Education must ensure that the State Education Agency is abiding by federal requirements pertinent to ARP ESSER funding. Additionally, as a pass-through agency awarding federal funds to SAUs, the Maine Department of Education must ensure that SAUs are abiding by federal requirements pertinent to ARP ESSER funding. The Office of Federal Emergency Relief Programs strongly encourages every SAU to review the terms, conditions and assurances that are identified within the ARP ESSER Application.

3. Would it make sense to align these goals (SAU Priorities) with District CNA work?

- a. Yes, as long as an SAU engages in meaningful consultation with stakeholders and gives the public an opportunity to provide input in the development of its ARP ESSER Application (Use of funds plan). And, all of the requirements for ARP ESSER are met (See [ARP ESSER IFR](#) and [USED ARP ESSER FAQs](#) documents for more information).

4. What is the expected turnaround time for approval, after our application is submitted?

- a. The Department will review applications daily during the work week. Turnaround time largely depends on the volume of applications that are submitted. The OFERP team anticipates that the applications submitted early on will take more time to review as we calibrate the review process, make minor adjustments as needed to the software, and possibly discover common areas of misunderstanding that may require additional webinars for specific groups such as business managers, school level leaders, and district level administrators. The OFERP team is aware that SAUs are eager to have applications approved in a timely manner and we aim to return approved applications to SAUs as quickly as possible.

Reservation Requirement:

5. Can the 20% reservation also be used to serve gifted and talented students?

- a. An SAU can determine how much funding they would like to use for the evidence-based interventions to address the academic impact of lost instructional time. As stated in [ARP ESSER IFR](#) and [USED ARP ESSER FAQs](#) documents, an SAU must engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders and give the public an opportunity to provide input in the

development of its plan.

6. On slide 21 "remaining ARP funds" lists 'addressing learning loss' wouldn't that be a project in the 20% reservation page?

- a. The list on the slide and in the application comes directly from the language in statute and Federal guidance. Conceivably, a project supported by the remaining funds might also address loss of learning. Keep in mind that more than 20% of the award may be used to address loss of learning opportunity.

7. Can the 20% Reservation Project have multiple components (boxes checked) such as summer instruction, tutoring, etc.?

- a. Yes, the program is set up to allow for multiple projects as long as the minimum 20% reservation is met for using evidence-based interventions to address the impact of lost instruction due to COVID 19. The 20% is a minimum and a district can determine how much funding they would like to use for the evidence-based interventions. As stated in [ARP ESSER IFR](#) and [USED ARP ESSER FAQs](#) documents, an SAU must engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders and give the public an opportunity to provide input in the development of its plan.

8. If an SAU clicks on multiple boxes in the 20% reservation page will they get separate/multiple follow up pages to complete per each "project" checked off?

- a. For each intervention checked, a project (whether reservation or remaining) page will need to be completed which includes follow up questions and a budget grid. Project descriptions should be related to the specific intervention or allowable use (for remaining funds after the 20% reservation) checked off in the application.

9. We provide after-school and summer school services using other funding... should we include that information in the ESSER III grant to show that those services are being provided?

- a. It is not required to include information about after-school and summer school services from other funding sources unless it provides more explanation for the ARP ESSER funded portion of the project(s). Keep in mind that the 20% reservation to address the academic impact of lost instructional time using evidence-based intervention is required for ARP ESSER funding regardless if other funds are used for the same project(s).

Stakeholder Engagement:

10. Do we need evidence for each stakeholder group? Will the ARP ESSER Application be returned if some stakeholder groups are not consulted with?

- a. The stakeholders that you engage in meaningful consultation will need to reflect your school community. As stated in [ARP ESSER IFR](#) and [USED ARP ESSER FAQs](#) documents, an SAU must engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders and give the public an opportunity to provide input in the development of its plan.

11. Can you give examples of civil rights and/or disability organizations that SAUs might connect with? For example: organizations in your city/town such as shelters, immigrant groups/agencies, etc.?

- a. Examples of civil rights groups and disability organizations might be homeless shelters and related agencies on housing, Maine Parent Federation (which may be providing support to students and families in SAUs around the state in regard to special education and 504 services), Disability Rights Center, Access Maine, Maine Children’s Alliance, Tree Street Youth (Lewiston), Learning Works (Greater Portland), Hope Acts (Greater Portland), Hardy Girls; Healthy Women (Waterville and statewide), Out Maine, Mano en Mano, Downeast Community Partners, Maine Inside Out, NAMI Maine, Aroostook County Community Action Project, Oxford County Mental Health Services, and/or York County Shelter Programs.

This list is provided as examples only. Each district should think of agencies and service organizations in their area that will have insight about what students and their families need based on the after-school care or programming, or services that the agencies provide to families.

Fiscal:

12. Can we go under contract now for improving our air quality, before being approved?

- a. APR ESSER is unusual in that SAUs are permitted to obligate upon completion of part 1 of the ARP ESSER application. SAUs take a risk, however, when they obligate funds without having an approved application. Please note that the SAU will only be reimbursed for approved projects and budgets that were deemed allowable, necessary, and reasonable within part 2 of the application. Allowable uses are discussed [here](#) (A.3 on page 10) and they are listed in the application.

The following is language from the list of allowable uses: *Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement*

13. Is there a specific invoice format that is different from other grants? (ESSER I & II)

- a. The invoicing format for additional documentation is similar to the other federal emergency relief funds.

14. Will projects need to be invoiced one at a time or can several projects be submitted on one reimbursement invoice for ease of business office workload?

- a. Invoices will be processed by project.

15. When will invoicing be allowed?

- a. Seeking reimbursement or invoicing will be allowed after the SAU has an approved ARP ESSER Application. The Office of Federal Emergency Relief Programs will review submitted ARP ESSER applications; however, final approval cannot be provided until the

Maine Department of Education's ARP State Plan has been approved by the U.S. Department of Education.