CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE AND RELIEF SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT EXPENDITURES

ESSER II OVERVIEW

The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSA), was signed into law on December 27, 2020, and provides additional funding for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II Fund). ESSER II funds awarded to SEAs are based on the Fiscal Year 2020 Title I, Part A formula, **but these are not Title I funds**. Mississippi has been allocated $724 million of ESSER II funds.

Same as the ESSER fund, LEAs may use ESSER II fund for pre-award costs dating back to **March 13, 2020**, when the national emergency was declared. ESSER funds must be obligated prior to **September 30, 2022**, and **ESSER II funds must be obligated prior to September 30, 2023**. The uses of funds are the same as ESSER I with the additional allowable uses under CRRSA:

- Addressing learning loss among students, including low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care;
- School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health needs;
- 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.

The MDE and school districts will have **extensive reporting requirements** for CRRSA funds, and ESSER II funds must be tracked separately from ESSER funds.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DISTRICT EXPENDITURES

The MDE recommends that school districts consider local need as well as short-term availability of the one-time funding in the prioritization of expenditures. While funds may be used broadly to conduct activities covered by Title programs, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act programs, and Perkins Act programs, the MDE has identified key statewide priorities to have a long-term impact on student achievement and teacher capacity.

Statewide priorities for the use of CRRSA funds including the following:

ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING
- **State-adopted high-quality instructional materials and aligned professional learning opportunities including:**
  - Materials identified on www.msinstructionalmaterials.org
  - Virtual Literacy Instruction Guide for K-5 Teachers, located in the section titled "Updates for the 2020-21 School Year"
- Advanced learning opportunities, including Advanced Placement, dual credit, International Baccalaureate, and Cambridge coursework or exams
- **Technology to support implementation of digital learning opportunities**, including devices, network equipment, and digital content
  - Digital Learning District Guidance
  - Questionnaire & Budget Form
- E-books, audiobooks. and other digital resources to support Mississippi standards and to promote student reading and summer learning
  - E-Book Guidance
- **Professional development (PD), training, and support to enhance effective daily use of instructional technology** by general education teachers, special education teachers, and career and technical education (CTE) teachers, including online or electronic professional development (ePD)
  - ePD Guidelines
  - Rubric for ePD
- **Tutoring** (individual tutoring, virtual tutoring, small-group tutoring) to accelerate individual students' learning outcomes
- **CTE equipment** to accelerate learning opportunities for students in programs leading to high-wage, in-demand jobs aligned with local industry
- CTE mobile labs/equipment simulators and interactive video to ensure equal access to CTE programs
- **Summer learning, summer enrichment, remote tutoring, and supplemental afterschool program planning and implementation** (staff costs and materials to address needs of low-income students, students with disabilities, English learners, Migrants, Homeless students, and Foster Care students)
- **Assistive technology** to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities
- **Social Emotional Learning** (SEL) curriculum and learning materials
- **Virtual Therapy Options** to meet the individual needs of students with disabilities
- **MTSS PD** including MTSS overview, Tiered supports, Documentation completion, Implementation of Intervention through distance learning, Individual Reading Plans, and dyslexia training
- **Transition supports** to expedite continued learning and facilitate students moving from grade to grade, from school to school, or from K-12 to postsecondary

In addition to the local comprehensive needs assessment conducted annually by districts for Title programs, the MDE recommends that districts consider the following data in planning for the use of CRRSA funds:
- Student benchmark performance (overall and by subgroup)
- Pre-K performance (Brigance, CLASS)

- Prior screener data from the beginning and middle of the 2020-21 school year (overall and by subgroup)
- Intervention performance (progress monitoring data)
- Dyslexia Screener Data (Kindergarten and First Grade Students)
- Teacher data
  - Professional Growth System results
  - Student grades as compared to outcomes on assessments (screeners)
- School culture survey data
- Curriculum use / implementation survey

OPERATIONS
- Allow for one person to serve as the inter-office mail manager from campuses to district offices to cut down on traffic in offices and central offices from multiple persons
- Create copy centers at larger campuses that have one or two paraeducators who make copies for the building using a copy order system; eliminates multiple users and excess movement of personnel throughout the building

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT
- Information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support students, including in a distance learning environment
- PD for district and school personnel regarding parent and family engagement strategies
- Programs that reach parents and family members at home, in the community and at school
- Information on best practices focused on parent and family engagement
- Collaboration between schools, community-based organizations, businesses, or employers
- Literacy or math trainings to share practices with families that support student academic achievement
- Transportation and childcare costs to enable parents to participate in school-related meetings and training sessions associated with family involvement activities
- In-home conferences between teachers or other educators to maximize parental involvement and participation
- Adoption and implementation of model approaches to improving parental involvement
- [Family engagement toolkits](#) with instructions and training on creative ways for parents to engage in their child's educational program
- Information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support mental health concerns and identify signs of crisis

HEALTH AND SAFETY
- Mental health or telehealth supports such as contracting with a mental health therapist, and PD to equip teachers in the identification of students who are struggling with mental health
- Touchless water bottle stations
- Additional PPE Equipment for all personnel
- HVAC filtration systems upgrades
- Temperature bracelets, free-standing temperature-taking technology, hand sanitizer stations, plexiglass, plumbing and electrical touchless sensors

TECHNOLOGY / LEARNING MANAGMENT SYSTEMS

- Training for attendance clerks and district data entry personnel on attendance changes and expectations in COVID and any subsequent changes in attendance coding
- PD for teachers related to classroom technology integration and use:
  - NCCE Virtual Conference (March 17-20, 2021)
  - CUE Virtual Conference (March 18-27, 2021)
  - ISTELive 2021 (June 26-30, 2021)
- PD for instructional staff (e.g., digital content, digital instruction, use of technology, student readiness and digital citizenship)
- PD for technical staff (e.g., cloud, active directory, mobile device management, content filters, approving/securing instructional apps, security and privacy)
- Technical / professional services (contractors/staff augmentation) to support new infrastructure, devices, cloud migration, end-user support for students and teachers, etc.
- Additional devices for students and teachers
- Instructional software (e.g., monitoring software, classroom management, digital content management, mobile device management, learning management systems)
- Technology upgrades to classrooms (e.g., devices, interactive white boards, document cameras)
- Technology upgrades to district systems (e.g., wi-fi capacity, network security, enhancements to student information systems to include COVID-related data needs)
- Internet connectivity supports for families (e.g., hotspots with data plans, mobile LTE towers)
- "Digital Learning Plan" strategic planning and implementation support
- Digital Learning District Guidance