

The Charter Institute at

# Erskine



## ESSER II Overview



# What is ESSER II?



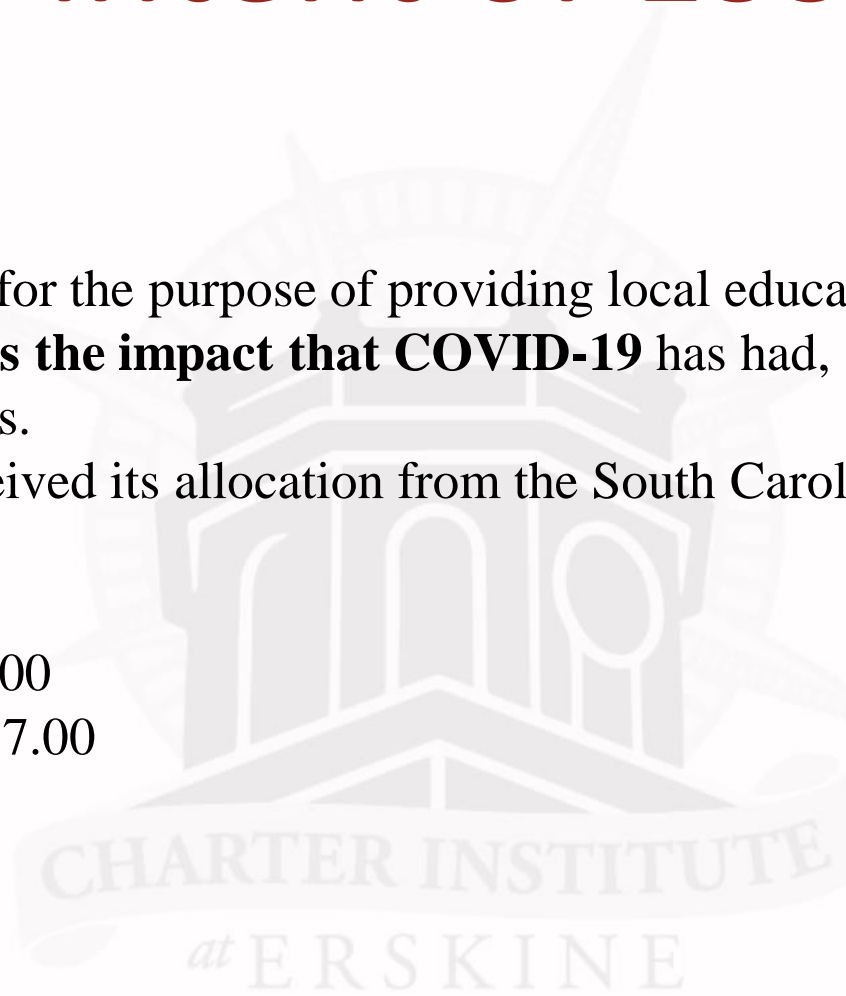
- On December 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) was signed into law.
- The US Department of Education is providing an additional \$54.3 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II Fund).
- The South Carolina Department of Education was appropriated approximately \$940 million in ESSER II funds, of which approximately \$846 million is required to flow through to LEAs as subgrants.

# Is ESSER II different than ESSER I?

- Yes, ESSER II is a separate grant/allocation.
- ESSER I is completely independent and separate from ESSER II and must be tracked separately.
- ESSER I and ESSER II will be handled separately and will consist of separate budgets.
  - These allocations **will not** be combined into one budget.

# What is the intent of ESSER II funds?

- These funds have been allocated for the purpose of providing local educational agencies (LEAs) with emergency relief funds to **address the impact that COVID-19** has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools.
- At this time, the Institute has received its allocation from the South Carolina Department of Education.
- ESSER I Allocation: \$1,730,637.00
- ESSER II Allocation: \$12,025,257.00



# What is allowable in ESSER II?

- Initial 12 categories from the ESSER I grant are still allowable, plus three new categories.
- All ESSER-funded activities must be necessary to prevent, prepare for, or respond to COVID-19.

1. Activities authorized by the ESEA of 1965, as reauthorized by the ESSA

*a. Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)*

*b. Adult Education and Family Literacy Act*

*c. Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (The Perkins Act)*

*d. McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (subtitle B of title VII)*

2. Coordination of Preparedness and Response Efforts

3. Provisions for Principals and other School Leaders

4. Activities to Address the Unique Needs of Students

5. Development and Implementation of Procedures

6. Training and Professional Development

7. Sanitation Services and Supplies

8. Planning and Coordination during Long-term Closures

9. Purchase of Educational Technology

10. Provision of Mental Health Services and Supports

11. Summer Learning and Supplemental Afterschool Programs

12. Other Activities for Operation and Continuity of Services



# What are the 3 new categories?

- ESSER II has three new categories that were not in ESSER I.
- New Category 1:
  - Addressing learning loss among students
- New Category 2:
  - Facility **repairs and improvements** to reduce the risk of virus transmission and exposure
- New Category 3:
  - **Improvement** of in-door air quality in school facilities

# New Category – Learning Loss

- **New Category 1 – Addressing learning loss among students**
- 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, of the local educational agency, including by—
  - Administering and using high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable, to accurately assess students' academic progress and assist educators in meeting students' academic needs, including through differentiating instruction.
  - Implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students.
  - Providing information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support students, including in a distance learning environment.
  - Tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education

# New Category – Facilities

- **New Category 2 - Facility repairs and improvements to reduce the risk of virus transmission and exposure**
- School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs.
- **New Category 3 - Improvement of in-door air quality in school facilities**
- 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.



# New Category – Facilities

- Under ESSER II, there is a new allowable use of funds that permits facility repairs. Specifically, the allowable category states that funds from ESSER II may be used for:
  - *School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs.*
- It is important to note that this category discusses facility repairs and improvements, which is indicative of a repair or an improvement to an existing system or structure. It does not allow for new construction.
- Schools should be able to document that the repairs or improvements will permit operation of schools to reduce the risk of virus transmission. As such, general, planned, or routine repairs would not be allowable.
- Schools must follow their procurement processes in any repairs or improvements.

# Emergency COVID-19 Leave



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

MOLLY M. SPEARMAN  
STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MEMORANDUM

**TO:** District Superintendents  
District Personnel Administrators  
Chief Financial Officers

**FROM:** Molly M. Spearman  
State Superintendent of Education

**DATE:** January 8, 2021

**RE:** Emergency COVID-19 Leave

On December 31, 2020 the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act \(FFCRA\)](#) and the federally required paid sick leave requirements expired as a result of Congress failing to reauthorize the Act. While school districts are no longer federally required to provide these COVID-19 related leave rights, there is adequate federal funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act's Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund to cover leave for school district employees in 2021.

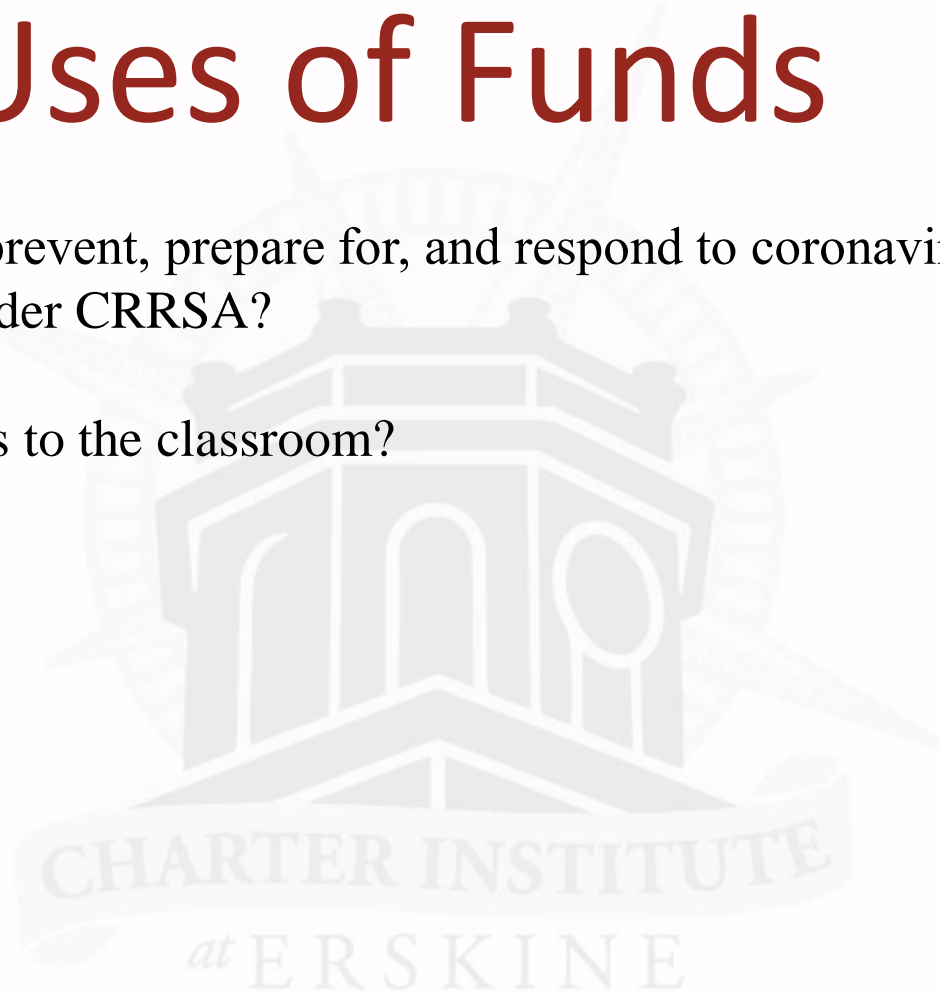
The ESSER includes a provision which enables districts to use the funds for activities necessary to maintain the operation and continuity of services by continuing to employ existing staff of the local educational agency. This allowable provision will ensure that districts can cover costs associated with personnel pay and leave should there be a deficit in other existing funds. Similarly, an additional emergency relief bill recently passed by Congress and signed by the President provides further funding to states and school districts to address the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on public education. This funding, which amounts to over \$940 million for South Carolina K-12 schools, too contains a provision for the use of funds for continuity of services.

To this end, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) **strongly recommends** each district create an emergency leave plan using their ESSER funds to ensure those who need to take paid leave for a COVID-19 related issue may do so.

More information regarding the new relief law will soon be available on the SCDE's website. Information about the CARES Act, ESSER funds may be found at <https://ed.sc.gov/policy/federal-education-programs/esser-funding-information/>.

# Considerations for Determining Allowable Uses of Funds

- Will the proposed use of funds “prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus”?
- Is it an allowable use of funds under CRRSA?
- Is it reasonable and necessary?
- Does it support returning students to the classroom?



# Bonuses with ESSER Funds

According to federal ESSER requirements, “funds generally will **not** be used for bonuses, merit pay, or similar expenditures, unless related to disruptions or closures resulting from COVID-19.”

- The important requirement within this provision is a school’s ability to document that the bonus or merit pay is related to disruptions or closures resulting from COVID-19. Therefore, blanket, across-the-board bonuses are not allowable.
- Determinations for bonuses should be made on an individual basis, with documentation that the employee has undertaken hazardous work or has gone above and beyond their duties compared to their peers within the district.

# Award Amounts

## **How was the Institute's allocation amount determined?**

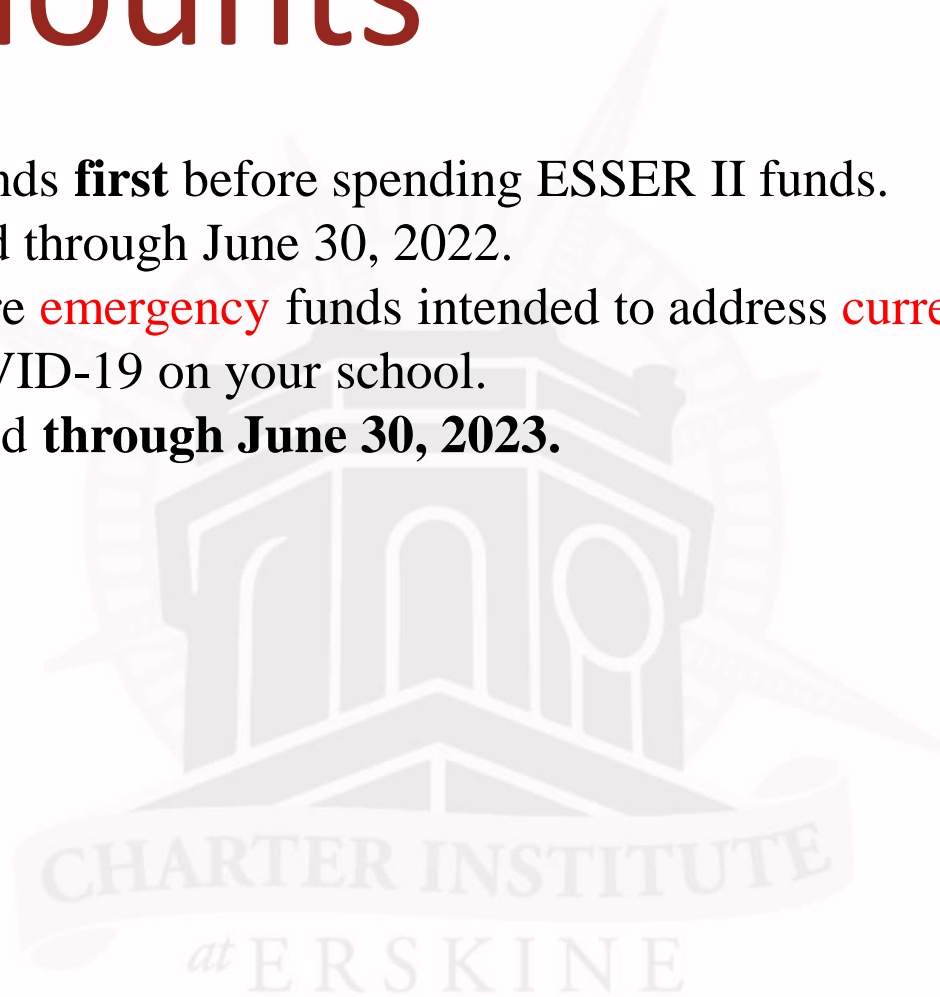
- SCDE allocated award amounts based on FY 21 (Summer 2020) Title I allocations
- South Carolina will receive \$940,420,782 in ESSER II funds from the Act of which 90 percent (\$846,378,704) will flow through to school districts with amounts determined in proportion to the amount of Title I, Part A funds received in Summer 2020 from funds under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

## **How will school allocation amounts be determined?**

- The Institute has received its allocation from the South Carolina Department of Education.
- School allocations have been determined based on the 45<sup>th</sup> day ADM and calculated at a per-pupil amount.

# Award Amounts

- Schools must spend ESSER I funds **first** before spending ESSER II funds.
- ESSER I funds may be expended through June 30, 2022.
  - Please keep in mind these are **emergency** funds intended to address **current** needs directly related to the impact of COVID-19 on your school.
- ESSER II funds may be expended **through June 30, 2023.**



# Quarterly Reporting



**STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**MOLLY M. SPEARMAN**  
*STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION*

**CARES ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS EMERGENCY RELIEF  
FUNDS**

Category	INITIAL Budget	ADJUSTED BUDGET	Expenditures As of November 30, 2020
Aid to Districts	\$198,680,047	\$197,991,566	\$55,432,347
Aid to Special Schools	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$41,057
Personnel	\$1,259,894	\$1,259,894	\$30,116
Fringe	\$503,957	\$503,957	\$9,431
Contractual	\$11,406,498	\$12,094,979	\$3,718,345
Supplies	\$1,818,580	\$1,818,580	\$677,233
Fixed Assets	\$68,574	\$68,574	\$11,906
Indirect Costs	\$45,148	\$45,148	\$0
Professional Development	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$1,620
Personal Protective Equipment*	\$1,828,460	\$1,828,460	\$118,565
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$216,311,158</b>	<b>\$216,311,158</b>	<b>\$60,040,618</b>

# Helpful Information

- ESSER II funds are **federal** funds and will follow all federal guidelines and requirements.
- This includes all required financial documentation in order to receive reimbursement.
- The ESSER II funds will adhere to the Institute's requirement of quarterly reimbursement submissions for items that have been expended.



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# Helpful Information

**Please review the ESSER FAQ as well for helpful information.**

- Period of Allowability – July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2023
- Subfund and Revenue Code - Please track these funds under Revenue Code 4977 and Subfund 225.
- Overview of Allowable Categories - <https://ed.sc.gov/policy/federal-education-programs/esser-funding-information/esser-2-funding-information/esser-ii-spending-categories/>
- Plan Submission – Submit via Formstack and load PDF in LWS.

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# Next Steps

1. Begin work with your planning team to identify needs to prevent, prepare for, or respond to COVID-19.
2. Draft proposed activities based on your school's allocation.
3. Submit school plan for ESSER II funds.
4. Institute will review, provide feedback, and submit to SCDE for approval.
5. Upon approval, Institute will send school notification of approval via Approval Memo and Smart Fusion budget.
6. Reimbursement can be sought via Smart Fusion for approved activities.

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WHAT'S  
NEXT?



*The Charter Institute at*

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CREATIVE MINDS  
INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS  
EFFECTIVE RESULTS

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