



# Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act – Elementary and Secondary Emergency School Relief Fund

## Introduction

On December 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, 2021 was signed into law. As with the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the purpose of this supplemental relief is to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus. While the CRRSA Act contains a number of provisions, this guidance focuses on the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF II) provision as it has the most direct impact on students, school districts, and schools in Iowa.

## Education Stabilization Fund II (CRRSA)

The CRRSA Act authorized nearly \$82 billion in supplemental coronavirus aid to support the educational needs of states, school districts, and institutions of higher education under the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF II; see Table 1). As with the ESF I under the CARES Act, the ESF II includes two reservations for outlying areas and the Bureau of Indian Education and allocates emergency relief funds to the following programs:

- Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund II (5%),
- Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund II (67%), and
- Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (28%).

Table 1. Appropriations of Emergency Relief Funds and Required Reservations of Funds Under the Education Stabilization Fund II

Program	Appropriation
Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund II	\$4,053,060,000
Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II	\$54,311,004,000
Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II	\$22,697,136,000
<b>Subtotal for Emergency Relief Funds II</b>	<b>\$81,061,200,000</b>
Reservation for Outlying Areas	\$409,400,000
Reservation for Bureau of Indian Education	\$409,400,000
<b>Total Education Stabilization Fund II Appropriation</b>	<b>\$81,880,000,000</b>

Note: All dollar amounts represented herein were taken directly from the [final statute](#).

## Overview of ESF II Changes for PK-12 Programs

While the content and requirements of ESF II remains largely the same as those under ESF I, there are a few changes to note for the two pre-kindergarten to 12th grade (PK-12) programs. This overview is expanded on in the following sections.

### GEER Fund II\*

Changes include:

- A new \$2.75 billion reservation for the Emergency Assistance to Nonpublic Schools grants and
- New language prohibiting states from using any funds to support vouchers or tax credit scholarship programs.

\*Additional guidance on this fund will be provided at a later date.

### ESSER Fund II

Changes include:

- Period of funds availability.
- New allowable uses of funds for:
  - Repairing and improving school facilities, including heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems projects to improve indoor air quality in school facilities; and
  - 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.
- No equitable services to nonpublic schools but, instead, the Emergency Assistance for Nonpublic Schools program was created under the GEER Fund II. Eligible nonpublic schools may apply to the Department for these services.
- A state report on efforts to measure and address learning loss.

For additional information regarding the differences in ESSER I (CARES Act) and ESSER II (CRRSA), see the U.S. Department of Education's [fact sheet](#).

## ESF II: PK-12 Programs

### GEER Fund II (Approximately \$4.1 Billion)

The GEER Fund II allocates supplemental emergency education relief grants to the governor of each state with an approved application. This is a broad discretionary fund for higher education and/or PK-12 supports to local education agencies (LEAs) that the state education agency (SEA) has deemed most significantly impacted by COVID-19. Again, additional guidance and allocations for this fund are forthcoming.

### ESSER Fund II (Approximately \$54.3 Billion)

The ESSER Fund II provides supplemental elementary and secondary school emergency relief grants to each SEA with an approved ESSER I application. The law requires that 67% of the ESF II be distributed to SEAs through formula grants. Of the allocation, SEAs:

- May reserve up to 10% for grants and statewide emergency needs,
- May use up to 0.5% of the state reservation for administrative costs at the state level, and
- Must distribute at least 90% to LEAs using the Title I, Part A formula.

### IOWA'S ALLOCATION AND RESERVATIONS

Iowa will receive approximately \$344,864,294 from this fund, with at least \$310,377,865 going to LEAs. This information is detailed in Table 2.

Table 2. Iowa's ESSER Fund Allocation and Reservations Compared to the Total National Allocation and Reservations

State	ESSER Fund II Allocation	Minimum LEA Distribution	Maximum SEA Reservation	Maximum for SEA Administration
Iowa	\$344,864,294	\$310,377,865	\$34,486,429	\$1,724,321
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$54,311,004,000</b>	<b>\$48,879,903,600</b>	<b>\$5,431,100,400</b>	<b>\$271,555,020</b>

Source: Adapted from U.S. Department of Education's (2020) [ESSER II Methodology for Calculating Allocations](#).

### Allowable Uses of Funds

The ESSER Fund II, like the original ESSER Fund program, may be used by K-12 schools for a broad set of possible purposes, with substantial local authority and discretion in prioritizing relief spending. Although the uses between ESSER Fund II and ESSER Fund are similar, there are a few new allowable activities. These new allowable activities are italicized.

Allowable activities include but are not limited to:

- Any activity authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), including the:
  - Native Hawaiian Education Act and the Alaska Native Educational Equity, Support, and Assistance Act;
  - Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
  - Perkins Act;
  - Subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; and/or
  - Adult Education and Family Literacy Act.
- Supporting equitable access to core instruction for students with disabilities.
- Providing activities that address the unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and youth in foster care.
- Supporting school leaders with resources to address the needs of their individual schools.
- Ensuring preparedness and coordination to improve coordinated responses to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus.
- Ensuring continuity of learning for all students.
- Purchasing cleaning supplies.
- Training and professional development for LEA staff on sanitization and minimizing spread of infectious diseases.
- Purchasing education technology, including hardware, software, and connectivity “that aids in regular and substantive educational interaction between students and their classroom instructors.”
- Supporting the mental health services and supports.
- Summer learning programs.
- Planning for long-term closures.
- *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 LEA, 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.*
- *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.*

- *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.*
- Other activities necessary for operational continuity and continuity of services.

## Allocations, Applications, and Reimbursement Claims

### District Allocations

All Iowa districts with an approved ESSER Fund I application will receive an allocation under the ESSER Fund II. Allocations are available in the ESSER/GEER – Quarterly Report and Claim for Reimbursement, which is found in the COVID-19 folder in the Consolidated Accountability and Support Application (CASA) and are posted publicly on the Department’s [COVID-19 webpage](#).

### Equitable Services: Emergency Assistance for Nonpublic Schools

The CRRSA Act includes a separate program of Emergency Assistance for Nonpublic Schools for which eligible nonpublic schools may apply for services or assistance under the GEER Fund II. Consequently, ESSER II does not include an equitable services provision. Additional information on the GEER Fund II will be provided at a later date.

### District Applications in the CASA System

Since CRSSA’s ESSER II is a supplement to ESSER I, districts with an approved ESSER I application do not need to submit an application for ESSER II. However, they must complete assurances in the CASA system about the use of CRRSA Act funds. Assurances are included with second quarter claims which are now open and will close on January 31.

### Reimbursement Claims

In order to receive the ESSER II funds, districts must submit a claim for reimbursement in the CASA. Please refer to the following Reporting and Accounting section for more information.

## Reporting and Accounting

### Required Reporting

Districts will need to provide year-end reports to the Department documenting the amount of ESSER II funds they have spent in each of the allowable categories. Districts should account for their ESSER II expenditures on an ongoing basis, as the CRRSA Act allows the Secretary of Education to require additional reports from states on a more frequent basis at her discretion. In that case, the Department will ask districts to provide spending information more frequently.

### Accounting and Applicable Laws

#### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

CRRSA Act funds, including the ESSER Fund II, are subject to all applicable provisions of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) and Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG) of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). Districts should be particularly aware of the cash management (2 CFR § 200.305) and other post federal award requirements in [2 CFR part 200, subpart D](#).

Also, please be advised that due to the amount of funding provided, additional districts may fall within the single audit threshold (i.e., expending \$750,000 or more of federal funds during the fiscal year).

## SUPPLEMENT NOT SUPPLANT

ESSER II funds are not subject to a supplement not supplant requirement. These are emergency relief funds and may be used to supplant state and local funds.

## PERIOD OF AVAILABILITY

The spending window for the ESSER II funds begins retroactively on March 13, 2020 and will close on September 30, 2023.

## NEW FUNDING CODES

Although the ESSER II uses of funds are similar to those for ESSER I, there are several important distinctions (e.g., no equitable services) between the programs. Therefore, ESSER II funding must be tracked separately from ESSER I funding. In addition, given their shorter period of availability, all ESSER I funds must be expended before using ESSER II funds. Once all funds have been spent, the ESSER II source and project code must be used. The following new source and project code has been added to the Iowa Chart of Account Coding for federal funding provided through ESSER II.

**4055 Education Stabilization Fund (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund II) (ESSER II Fund) (CFDA 84.425) (Jan21)**

This revenue, which is miscellaneous income in the year expended, is recorded in the General Fund. Transfers to other funds may occur based on actual expenditures, provided the expenditure is more appropriate to another fund. The project number will be used in all parts of the transaction. If it is unclear whether an expenditure is allowable under the ESSER Fund II, continue to track this expenditure in project 0019 (as described in earlier [guidance on school finance](#)).

## Questions and Additional Guidance

If you have questions, please contact your [school improvement consultant](#). If they are unable to assist you, they will connect you with the appropriate person. For additional COVID-19 guidance and information, please visit the Department's [COVID-19 webpage](#).