



## ESSER III Application for FIN 161

The American Rescue Plan (ARP) act included money for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER). This third round of stimulus and stabilization funds is known as ESSER III, as the dollars can be used in the same ways as the ESSER funds in both the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act (ESSER I) and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation (CRRSA, ESSER II). There is no nonpublic equitable share connected to either FIN160 or FIN161.

At least 20 percent of the LEA's ESSER III award must be used for activities that address lost learning opportunities. MDE has separated the total ESSER III award into two components to ensure this minimum is met. FIN161 represents 20 percent of the total ESSER III award and must be used only for activities that address the academic impact of lost instructional time. FIN160 is the balance of the award (80 percent) and can be used to support FIN161-specific activities or used for other COVID-19 pandemic response purposes.

**The LEA ESSER III funding plan using both FIN160 and FIN161 must address identified needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting impacts on student experience, access, representation, participation, and outcomes.** Review the [ESSER III FIN160 & FIN161 Overview](#) for more information.

To apply for ESSER III funds, LEAs must

1. Complete the components of this FIN161 application:
  - a. [Part A: Contact Information](#)
  - b. [Part B: Identifying Assets and Needs](#)
  - c. [Part C: Funding the Learning Recovery Plan and State Education Priorities](#)
  - d. [Part D: Award Assurances and Certifications](#)
2. Upload this FIN161 application document to the Grant Management area of SERVS.
3. Sign and submit the application in SERVS.
4. Complete and submit the proposed budget in SERVS. The budget in SERVS must match the plan as outlined in this application.
5. Submit the FIN160 application and budget in SERVS. LEAs are encouraged to use FIN160 to support more robust activities in FIN161 than would be possible if using the required minimum.

**Applications are due no later than October 1, 2021.** MDE will begin reviewing and approving submitted applications and budgets after June 21, 2021. Reviews can be conducted prior to this date if an LEA has an immediate need and has drawn down 100% of their ESSER I (FIN151) and ESSER II (FIN155 or FIN156) awards. To request immediate review, email [MDE.FederalCOVIDFunds@state.mn.us](mailto:MDE.FederalCOVIDFunds@state.mn.us) with the request, the reason an immediate review is needed, and how the LEA will conduct meaningful stakeholder engagement in a shorter period of time.

## Part A: Local Educational Agency (LEA) Program Contact Information

District Name: Saint Paul City Schools

District Number: 4029-07

Primary Contact Name: Meg Cavalier

Primary Contact Email Address: mcavalier@stpaulcityschool.org

Primary Contact Phone Number: [651-225-9177](tel:651-225-9177)

Additional Contact Name: Mike Pocrnich

Additional Contact Email Address: mpocrnich@theag.org

Additional Contact Phone Number: [651-225-9177](tel:651-225-9177)

## Part B: Identifying Assets and Needs

The ARP Act requires districts and charter schools receiving ESSER III awards to **measure and address** the academic, social, emotional, and mental health impacts on students of lost instructional time. Districts and charter schools must use evidence-based interventions ensure that those interventions address the needs student groups disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic (each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, gender, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care).

### Section 1: Asset Mapping

To the extent possible, districts and charter schools should coordinate each of its Learning Recovery projects with local community organizations that serve similar purposes [34 CRF 76 § 76.580]. Tips for conducting an Asset Mapping may be found on this [Asset Mapping tool](#).

*This section is required for all district and charter schools to complete.*

- a. The **activities or actions** the district or charter school leadership team has taken to map community assets, including how parents, students, community partners and other stakeholders were involved.

*Saint Paul City Schools has strong partnerships with the families and parents in our community. We have an engaged group of families who we often survey for feedback on school initiatives, a school board with parents, teachers, and a community member, and a staff who are part of the decision-making process through feedback and strong participation in committee work. Below are some of the actions that we used to see input before and after our school board voted on how to utilize the ESSER III funds and consider our assets. Below are some of the meetings where we considered our assets.*

- *School Leadership Team Meetings used to assess need and determine priorities for intervention, transportation, and student engagement.*
  - *Family surveys seeking input for needs and feedback on priorities*
  - *Weekly Family Team meetings through the pandemic*
  - *Monthly open board meetings – all year*
- b. Provide a **description of the assets available** in the community and identify key partners.
    - Community Skills & expertise – Utilizing existing relationships, connections, and understanding between our family support team, educators, and families to connect best with students
    - Community Resources – Utilizing our current partnerships with community organizations to support family and student wellness.
    - Staff skills & expertise – Focusing on the knowledge our educators hold to address learning loss and academic engagement with our students
    - Potential partners – collaborating with other community organizations that serve our family needs.
    - Potential funding sources – planning to put current funds to use in synergy with state and federal funds to best meet the needs of our students engaging with school and growing their academic achievement.

## Section 2: Needs Assessment

Tips for conducting a comprehensive community needs assessment may be found on the [Conducting a Needs Assessment tool](#).

*This section is required for all district and charter schools to complete.*

Please describe:

- a. The **activities or actions** the district or charter school leadership team has taken to measure the academic, social, emotional, and mental health impacts on students of lost instructional time.

*We met with our School Administrative Team, our COVID Leadership Team, and tapped into various school-level committees and generated a list of our greatest needs due to the pandemic. These are the activities and meetings our team used to gather key findings:*

- *Staff Meeting Conversations and feedback*
- *Staff Email Updates & feedback*
- *Meetings and follow-up meetings with EL department and school counselors to focus our attention on groups of students more disproportionately hit by the pandemic*
- *Weekly Response Team meetings (Student Concerns and Needs)*
- *School Board feedback*
- *MCA testing spring 2021*
- *Student Support Services individual testing in spring of 2021*
- *Community Letter & public comment request including [SPCS Survey](#) – June 2021*
  - *Notes:*
    - *This survey was distributed widely, translated into 4 languages, and used as a starting point to connect with \*every\* family in the community*
    - *Our most meaningful feedback and connections with families have come through the one-to-one phone calls, meetings, and conversations between families and our Family Team. (These are liaisons, social workers, interventionists, and staff focused on connecting with and understanding family needs.) In particular, individual relationships and connections have proven essential to connect with historically underserved populations – including ESL families, families living in poverty, families from Indigenous, Black, and/or immigrant populations.*
  - *In particular groups, here are the ways we connected with our community, and the actions we took in response:*

<i>Group</i>	<i>Method(s) of contact</i>	<i>Actions/consequences of input gathered</i>
<i>Families across major</i>	<i>SPCS utilized our digital survey, translated in 4 major languages (Spanish, Hmong, Somali,</i>	<i>Families voiced wide desire for options for students to continue both in-person learning,</i>

racial and ethnic groups	<i>English). We also called each family through our liaisons and social work team to make connections directly with families to gather feedback across major demographic groups.</i>	<i>and flexibility to stay connected to school work when they may have to stay home due to family quarantine, medical needs, or other reasons. This request for continued virtual options was surprising, and came from a wide variety of families.</i>
Your American Indian Parent Advisory Committee	<i>We currently do not have enough American Indian identifying students to qualify for forming an AIPAC. Informally, we do have a network of indigenous identifying families who connect with our family team, and form a network of advocacy that informs our work with students.</i>	<i>We have a formal protocol to connect with American Indian parents (and grandparents, and extended family involved as guardians) to keep an ongoing conversation on if and when forming an AIPAC makes best sense for SPCS families.</i>
Economically disadvantaged families	<i>Our family team made a priority point of connecting with families who qualify for FRL in order to identify what needs are top priority.</i>	<i>Transportation, the availability of virtual learning, devices, and ongoing increased support and connection with social services are highlighted by our families as needs to address.</i>
Families whose primary language is not English	<i>Using translators and native speakers of the many languages at SPCS, we gathered feedback both through translated surveys and direct phone calls and meetings with these families.</i>	<i>The need for increased small group experiences, re-instruction, and academic intervention is a need that was highlighted in this subgroup.</i>
Families with students receiving special education services	<i>We held our SEAC meeting on March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. We will hold our 2022 SEAC meeting on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. We have a priority to integrate communication and Special Education services across our pre-k through 12<sup>th</sup> grade program across the district. We used case manager and ongoing feedback conversations with Special Education families to gather and highlight student needs.</i>	<i>Specific flexibility regarding in-person and continued options for intermittent virtual learning were highlighted. We also heard a clear and pointed request for increased availability of onsite support for students re-integrating into in-person learning.</i>

- b. The **key findings** that supports your determination of the identified needs. Include a description of student groups disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

*As a small charter school in the city of Saint Paul, who pulls students from all over the metro area, our needs were varied during the pandemic. However, one key finding from teachers and staff was the need to address **family engagement** through a family team that includes outreach and social work support; a robust staffing need for our **MTSS program**; additional **student support personnel** to addressing learning needs through education assistants; and addressing our family needs by providing transportation specific to operating school during the ongoing pandemic, including providing educational options for students who need to engage from home for a variety of reasons.*

*We find that students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic include those whose families are experiencing transitions in housing and/or income due to changes as a consequence of the pandemic. Also disproportionately impacted are those students who are English language learners; and students who may have struggled to meet grade-level standards prior to the pandemic*

## Part C: Funding the Learning Recovery Plan and State Education Priorities

Districts and charter schools must develop a **Learning Recovery Plan** that addresses the impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions such as summer learning or enrichment, comprehensive afterschool, extended day, or extended school year programs. **Learning Recovery Plans that use one or more of the State Education Priorities will receive rapid approval for related allowable activities.** More information about the priorities and their implementation can be found in the [Funding State Education Priorities with ESSER III \(FIN160 & FIN161\)](#) document.

### Section 1: Learning Recovery Plan

- c. Describe the **Learning Recovery Plan** the district or charter school leadership team proposes to address the impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions such as summer learning or enrichment, comprehensive afterschool, extended day, or extended school year programs. The overall plan may include activities not funded by ESSER III (FIN160 or FIN161) funds.

The plan we are following to address learning recovery is built on a foundation of Family engagement and MTSS supports. We focus on engaging students in strong relationships, utilizing specific small group and 1:1 strategies; determining the resources a student needs to engage successfully again in the learning environment and school community. Resources needed may be interpersonal, technological, or geographic during this ongoing pandemic. Engaging students successfully in the learning recovery plan means supporting consistent attendance, work engagement, and a habit of growth in academic achievement. This includes specific work in our planning and program staffing:

- *Additional MTSS personnel to support student engagement including academic interventionists & social workers*
  - *Family Team of liaisons to connect directly with families and to understand how to address any barriers that stand between students and learning recovery*
  - *Student support staffing to allow differentiated and small group instruction*
  - *Summer programming for extending the learning experience into summer for students. Utilizing community partnerships to do this.*
- d. Complete the chart below to describe specific interventions, their relation to the related State Education Priorities, and the specific activities.

Evidence-based Interventions	Related State Education Priorities	Brief description of activities related to the evidence-based intervention and the priority area  These activities must match budget line items entered in SERVS.
Systemic approaches to meet the needs of individual students by effective implementation of research-validated additional academic, social, emotional, and physical health services based on targeted, individual needs of students.	<i>MTSS – academic; behavior; social-emotional</i>  Family engagement model	Family team (2 liaisons) that engages directly in family conversation, dialogue, and finding solutions to address the needs of families and students.  Social work (4 personnel) planning team that collaborates to engage with the needs of students.  Director of community Services to provide leadership, coordination, recruitment, initiation and ongoing management for after school and summer programs that engage academic needs as identified through a continuity of communication of MTSS needs for students participating in programs outside of the school day.
<i>Address student social, emotional and physical health</i>	<i>Student Support Personnel</i>	General Education staffing to work in after school and enrichment programs to support continuity of instruction and learning growth toward goals for students participating in programs outside of the school day. Includes general education paraprofessionals and additional expert staff to support programs outside of the school day.
<i>Extended school learning opportunities</i>	<i>Out of School Time Learning Opportunities</i>	After school and summer programming that engages students to continue to build academic and personal skills. We are planning to partner with community organizations to deepen a mentor and tutoring model that provides enrichment programming. We plan on creating solutions such as transportation and meals to increase student participation.  Specific partnerships likely with Science Museum of MN, and other experiential learning organizations (Urban Boat Builders as one example).

Add additional rows as needed.



## Section 2: Funding the Learning Recovery Plan

*This section is required for all district and charter schools to complete.*

LEAs are encouraged to spend more than the minimum twenty percent (FIN161) for activities that support learning recovery. LEAs may use FIN160 funds for FIN161-specific activities. Review the [ESSER III FIN160 & FIN161 Overview](#) for more information.

Please describe how ESSER III funds will be used to fill gaps using FIN160 and allow for full implementation of the **Learning Recovery Plan**.

*Our focus of the ESSER III funds is to address Learning recovery.*

*Primarily FIN161 is being used to address the out-of-school day programs and staffing we need to expand and deepen our after school and summer programs. The focus of these programs is that they address the need for continuity between school day strategies for learning recovery, with structured experiences that build learning habits and growth for our students. Specifically, FIN161 will fund continued Family engagement; continuity between MTSS supports during the school day and connecting to the structure of afterschool/summer programs; and staffing for the successful implementation of these outside of the school-day programs.*

*FIN160 will be primarily used to support the programs during the school day that provide additional small group instruction, additional MTSS programming and Student Support Personnel to support school-day operations and services for students. The plan to address recovery includes a strategy for increased transportation as a path to consistent attendance, as well as additional materials for students who are engaging in continued intermittent digital learning while at home intermittently for family health or pandemic related reasons. Primarily the ESSER funds from FIN 160 fulfill the need for the school day staffing related to our FIN 161 priorities, as well as using FIN 160 for transportation and technology needs to address the ongoing impacts of the pandemic and learning recovery needs.*

## Part D: Assurances and Certifications

As a condition of accepting federal awards, LEAs must assure the rules, regulations, and reporting requirements of the applicable laws are met. LEAs are responsible for all of the assurances and failure to implement or meet them could result in a reduction, repayment, or other consequence from the U.S. Department of Education, the Minnesota Department of Education, or other oversight body. LEA officials should read assurances carefully and document the ways in which they are meeting them.

*Check each box as confirmation that the LEA assures these statements are true and accurate.*

### **PROGRAMMATIC, FISCAL, AND REPORTING ASSURANCES**

- In accepting the funds made available under this GAN, the local educational agency (LEA) assures it will submit a plan to the Minnesota Department of Education that contains such information the Minnesota Department of Education may reasonably require, including all information required by the U.S. Department of Education's (ED) Interim Final Requirements on ARP ESSER. The local educational agency will submit the plan by October 1, 2021.
- The LEA will use ARP ESSER funds for activities allowable under section 2001(e) of the ARP and will reserve at least 20% of its ARP ESSER funds to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.
- The LEA will comply with the maintenance of equity provision in section 2004(c) of the ARP.
- The LEA assures either:
  - (a) It will, within 30 days of receiving ARP ESSER funds, develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website a plan for the safe return of in-person instruction and continuity of services as required in section 2001(i)(1) of the ARP and in ED's Interim Final Requirements, or
  - (b) It developed and made publicly available on the LEA's website such a plan that meets statutory requirements before the enactment of the ARP that meets ARP requirements. (ARP was enacted March 11, 2021).
- Before making the plan publicly available, the LEA must seek public comment on the plan and take such comments into account in the development of the plan.
- The LEA will comply with all reporting requirements at such time and in such manner and containing such information as the Minnesota Department of Education or U.S. Department of Education may reasonably require including on matters such as:
  - How the LEA is developing strategies and implementing public health protocols including, to the greatest extent practicable, policies and plans in line with the CDC guidance related to addressing COVID-19 in schools;
  - Overall plans and policies related to State support for return to in-person instruction and maximizing in-person instruction time, including how funds will support a return to and maximize in-person instruction time, and advance equity and inclusivity in participation in in-person instruction;
  - Data on each school's mode of instruction (remote, hybrid, in-person) and conditions;
  - LEA uses of funds to meet students' social, emotional, and academic needs, including through summer enrichment programming and other evidence-based interventions, and how they advance equity for underserved students;
  - LEA uses of funds to sustain and support access to early childhood education programs;
  - Impacts and outcomes (disaggregated by student subgroup) through use of ARP ESSER funding (e.g., quantitative and qualitative results of ARP ESSER funding, including on personnel, student learning, and budgeting at the school and district level);
  - Student data (disaggregated by student subgroup) related to how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected instruction and learning;

- Requirements under the Federal Financial Accountability Transparency Act (FFATA); and
- Additional reporting requirements as may be necessary to ensure accountability and transparency of ARP ESSER funds.
- Records pertaining to the ARP ESSER award under 2 C.F.R. § 200.334 and 34 C.F.R. § 76.730, including financial records related to use of grant funds, will be retained separately from other grant funds, including funds an LEA receives under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSA Act). The LEA will cooperate with any examination of records with respect to such funds by making records available for inspection, production, and examination, and authorized individuals available for interview and examination, upon the request of (i) ED and/or its Inspector General; or (ii) any other federal agency, commission, or department in the lawful exercise of its jurisdiction and authority.

### **☒ GENERAL ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS**

- The LEA will comply with all applicable assurances in OMB Standard Forms 424B and D (Assurances for Non-Construction and Construction Programs), including the assurances relating to the legal authority to apply for assistance; access to records; conflict of interest; merit systems; nondiscrimination; Hatch Act provisions; labor standards; flood hazards; historic preservation; protection of human subjects; animal welfare; lead-based paint; Single Audit Act; and the general agreement to comply with all applicable Federal laws, executive orders and regulations.
- With respect to the certification regarding lobbying in Department Form 80-0013, no Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the making or renewal of Federal grants under this program; the SEA will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, “Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying,” when required (34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix B); and the SEA will require the full certification, as set forth in 34 C.F.R. Part 82, Appendix A, in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers.
- To the extent applicable, the LEA will include in its local application a description of how the LEA will comply with the requirements of section 427 of GEPA (20 U.S.C. 1228a). The description must include information on the steps the LEA proposes to take to permit students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries to overcome barriers (including barriers based on gender, race, color, national origin, disability, and age) that impede equal access to, or participation in, the program.
- The LEA will comply with all applicable requirements of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (sometimes referred to as the Uniform Guidance, or the Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG)).
- The LEA will comply with the provisions of all applicable acts, regulations and assurances; the following provisions of Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99; the OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Governmentwide Debarment and Suspension (Nonprocurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485; and the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

### **☒ GENERAL EDUCATION PROVISIONS ACT (GEPA) ASSURANCES**

- The LEA will administer each program covered by the application in accordance with all applicable statutes, regulations, program plans, and applications, including, but not limited to federal education program laws, the General Education Provisions Act, the Education Department General Administrative Regulations, and the Uniform Grant Guidance.
- Control of funds provided to the LEA, and title to property acquired with those funds, will be in a public agency and that a public agency will administer those funds and property.
- The local educational agency will use fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that will ensure proper disbursement of, and accounting for, Federal funds.

- The LEA will make reports to [insert name of SEA] and to ED as may reasonably be necessary to enable [insert name of SEA] and ED to perform their duties and that LEA will maintain such records, including the records required under 20 U.S.C. 1232f, and provide access to those records, as [insert name of SEA] or ED deem necessary to perform their duties.
- The LEA will provide reasonable opportunities for the participation by teachers, parents, and other interested agencies, organizations, and individuals in the planning for and operation of ED programs.
- Any application, evaluation, periodic program plan or report relating to an ED program will be made readily available to parents and other members of the general public.
- In the case of any project involving construction—
  - the project is not inconsistent with overall State plans for the construction of school facilities, and
  - In developing plans for construction, due consideration will be given to excellence of architecture and design and to compliance with standards prescribed by the Secretary of Education under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 in order to ensure that facilities constructed with the use of Federal funds are accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.
- The LEA has adopted effective procedures for acquiring and disseminating to teachers and administrators participating in an ED program significant information from educational research, demonstrations, and similar projects, and for adopting, where appropriate, promising educational practices developed through such projects.
- None of the funds expended will be used to acquire equipment (including computer software) in any instance in which such acquisition results in a direct financial benefit to any organization representing the interests of the purchasing entity or its employees or any affiliate of such an organization.