



Funding State Education Priorities with ESSER III (FIN160 & FIN161)

The local educational agency (LEA) ESSER III funding plan must address identified needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting impacts on student experience, access, representation, participation, and outcomes.

LEAs implementing one or more of the following priority activities with ESSER III will receive rapid approval for these activities and will receive priority-specific implementation support and technical assistance.

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Full-Service Community Schools

Why: In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and its disproportionate impacts on families already struggling with basic needs, the full-service community school model is likely to be a beneficial strategy for students and families.

What: The full-service community school model is an evidence-based school improvement strategy designed to help schools support students and their families so that they can fully engage in high-quality learning opportunities. The purpose of a full-service community school is to coordinate resources to mitigate non-academic challenges for children, students, families and communities. Services could include primary health and dental care, mental health, childcare, career counseling, and enriched learning experiences outside of the school day.

How: Funding can be used to create a plan to implement or expand a full-service community schools model, including hiring a community school coordinator to implement the model.

MDE contact: [Dennis Duffy](#)

Informational webinar: [June 21, 2021 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.](#)

Community Partnerships

Why: As schools serve students across the state in the wake of the pandemic, in order to engage students, developing partnerships with community organizations is critical.

What: Community programs and partnerships may take many forms. The community organization may cover time when the academic program is not in session (before, after, or in providing additional days). They may operate alongside the academic programs offered by schools to help with capacity issues.

How: Funding can be used to for meaningful partnerships with community organizations – including culturally-specific organizations - aimed at meeting the academic, social-emotional, and health needs of students and families.

MDE contact: [Sheila Oehrlein](#)

Informational webinar: [June 21, 2021 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.](#)

Neighborhood Programs

Why: While schools have structures in place to support students in the traditional school setting, there are also students that need services but cannot access them for a variety of reasons. For example, they may need to provide care for younger siblings or would not feel comfortable entering a school building. When students cannot come to the school, access to supports needs to be provided in other settings.

What: Supports and programs can be provided by taking the school to them by bringing academic enrichment and mental health support to places like: apartment buildings, neighborhood parks, and community centers.

How: Funding can be used to collaborate and, if appropriate, contract with community-based organizations, libraries, parks and recreation departments, Tribes and tribal organizations, faith-based organizations, and other similar learning providers to bring learning out of the school and into the neighborhood.

MDE Contact: [Jackie Blagsvedt](#)

Informational webinar: [June 16, 2021 from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m.](#)

Expand Access to Tutoring

Why: Focus on learning recovery to support students who have faced significant challenges during this pandemic and need varied supports to ensure that their academic needs are met.

What: Partner with youth serving program providers who offer research-validated tutoring services as well as mental, social, emotional and physical health supports.

How: Establish and expand community resources and partnerships with youth serving program providers who offer needed services to maintain the operation of and continuity of supports in youth development and education prioritizing the needs of historically underserved groups.

MDE contact: [Sheila Oehrlein](#)

Informational webinar: [June 22, 2021 from 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.](#)

MTSS – academic; behavior; social-emotional

Why: MTSS provides a framework for providing high-quality, research-based promotion, prevention and intervention supports to meet the needs of all students, using data to guide educational decisions to improve academic, social, emotional, and behavioral outcomes (Burns et al., 2016).

What: Systemic approaches to meet the needs of individual students and ensure all schools effectively implement research-validated additional academic, social, emotional, and physical health services based on targeted, individual needs of students.

How: Expand the capacity to support your schools in the area of MTSS and student supports by partnering with MDE to implement MnMTSS Framework by choosing one of the evidence-based models listed below. Additional information and guidance will be provided by MDE.

- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Early Childhood Pyramid Model
- Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) Training
- Building Assets, Reducing Risks (BARR),
- Non-exclusionary discipline practices and professional development

- Progress Monitoring tools and resources
- Trauma-informed Instruction professional development
- Anti-bias/Anti-racist Instructional practices professional development
- Data literacy professional development

MDE contact: [Bobbie Burnham](#)

Informational webinar: [06/30/2021 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.](#)

Student Support Personnel

Why: Address the issue of inadequate access to support personnel for students which has only been magnified due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For years, Minnesota has had one of the lowest student-to-counselor ratios in the country.

What: Support schools in addressing students' social, emotional, and physical health by addressing shortages of student support services personnel within Minnesota schools and to mitigate the effects of COVID-19.

How: Fund additional school-based student support personnel (counselors, social workers, school psychologists, school nurses, and chemical dependency).

MDE contact: [Craig Wethington](#)

Informational webinar: [06/28/2021 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.](#)

Expand or Add Vocational or Life Skills programming for Students Receiving Special Education Services

Why: The teaching of vocational skills is intended to set up the student for success after secondary education. Through vocational skills training, students will learn how to prepare for a job, find a job, apply for a job and excel at a job

What: Support schools in addressing the needs of students receiving special education services who are preparing to graduate and transition into the workforce or community who currently do not have access and whose services have been limited due to COVID-19.

How: Fund schools in developing and/or expanding vocational and life skills programs in their schools.

MDE contact: [Lindsey Horowitz](#)

Informational webinar: [July 1, 2021 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.](#)

Expand Access to Voluntary Prekindergarten and School Readiness

Why: Many three and four year old children, and children who were eligible for kindergarten in the 2020-21 school year, but whose families made the choice to not enroll in kindergarten are likely to need support before enrolling in kindergarten.

What: Use ARP funds to increase access to high-quality preschool or pre-kindergarten programs for children who have not attended or had a prekindergarten experience or had interruptions in their prekindergarten experience.

How: Prioritize 4-year-olds and 5-year-olds not yet enrolled in kindergarten who qualify for Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRL) or who have experienced life circumstances that may have prevented them from being able to attend a high-quality early childhood program by adding Voluntary PreKindergarten or School Readiness Classrooms/seats; increase duration of services; partner with community-based early learning providers and Head Start to increase access/slots.

MDE contact: [Lisa Barnidge](#)

Informational webinar: [June 29, 2021 from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.](#)

Grow Your Own Expansion

Why: The 2019 Biennial Minnesota Teacher Supply and Demand Report identified Minnesota's struggle to recruit and retain teachers of color and American Indian teachers (TOCAIT). Nationally, TOCAIT represent approximately 20 percent of the teaching workforce, in Minnesota that number is closer to 4 percent.

What: Recruit teachers of color and Indigenous teachers (TOCAIT) into the education profession.

How: Fund school districts and charter schools in implementing and/or expanding one of three pathways through GYO programs.

MDE contact: [Tyler Livingston](#)

Informational webinar: [June 15, 2021 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.](#)

Teacher Mentoring Program

Why: According to Ingersoll's (2018) comprehensive review of national teacher workforce trends, the turnover rate is very high for new teachers in general and even higher for teachers of color, in particular. This is a significant contributing factor to widespread teacher shortages in our state, and stronger supports for new teachers will lead to reduced teacher turnover and mobility.

What: Stronger supports for new teachers will lead to reduced teacher turnover and mobility. Induction and mentoring programs could include mentor professional development, criteria for assigning mentors to beginning

educators, release time for mentors, observation and instructional feedback opportunities for new teachers, peer networks, standards and ongoing evaluation for an induction and mentoring program.

Culturally responsive and sustaining practices must be foundational to the program to systematically disrupt the higher rates of TOCAIT leaving the profession in early career as compared with their white colleagues.

How: Funding can be used to create, strengthen, or expand teacher mentoring. This could include partnerships with entities such as institutes of higher education, regional district or charter networks, state or national content experts or research collaboratives.

MDE contact: [Tyler Livingston](#)

Informational webinar: [June 15, 2021 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.](#)

Educator Career Pathways

Why: Minnesota is experiencing a critical shortage of educators. Minnesota also has one of the lowest percentage of teachers of color represented in the teaching force in the nation. Data from the 2019 Biennial Minnesota Teacher Supply and Demand report prepared by the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board demonstrates that there is a particular shortage of teachers of color and teachers in general in Greater Minnesota.

What: Educator career pathway programs will address teacher recruitment priorities by strengthening the teaching pathway by linking high school programs onto postsecondary teacher preparation or state-approved educator programs and licensure.

How: Funding can be used for learning opportunities for high school students to explore the teaching profession, high school courses that lead to college coursework necessary to become a teacher, or other efforts to create pathways to the teaching profession, particularly to increase teachers of color and Indigenous teachers.

MDE contact: [Tyler Livingston](#)

Informational webinar: [June 15, 2021 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.](#)

Family Engagement Model

Why: Research has shown that engaging families in education increases student achievement and decreases dropout rates. Effective family engagement is a set of day-to-day practices, attitudes, beliefs and interactions that support learning at home, at school, after school, and during the summer.

What: Meaningful family engagement models include communication between home and school that is regular and two-way, promotion of parenting skills, assistance with student learning, support and partnership through welcoming parents to school, making decisions with families, and leveraging community resources to strengthen schools, families, and student learning.

How: Funding can be used for creation and implementation of systems and strategies to improve family engagement efforts, including ongoing, embedded professional development for staff.

MDE contact: [Lee Her](#)

Informational webinar: [06/23/2021 from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.](#)

Expand Language Access

Why: Throughout the pandemic, MDE has heard from families, community members, and advocates that their families who do not speak English as a first language are struggling to get needed materials translated in their spoken and read language. This makes it difficult for all families to engage with their child's education on the same level.

What: Translation services, cultural liaisons, and culturally-specific public engagement efforts are important to ensure all families can meaningfully engage in educational programming, especially families and students whose first language is not English.

How: Funding can be used for translating communication materials, student portals, webpages or for staffing needs related to expanding language access.

MDE contact: [Leigh Schleicher](#)

Informational webinar: [June 28, 2021 from 11 a.m. to noon](#)

Expand Rigorous Coursework by demographics and geography

Why: There is a disparity in the percentages of students in poverty, students of color, English learner students, and students with disabilities that participate in CTE, as well as AP and concurrent enrollment courses compared to their peers.

What: Expand rigorous coursework, such as Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate Career Program (IBCP), Career and Technical Education (CTE), and Concurrent Enrollment courses to foster opportunities for underserved and under-represented students both demographically and geographically, including students receiving special education services to prepare and train for career and college

How: Fund school districts and charter schools to form regional partnerships and statewide programs in order to support professional development and incentives for high school teachers to develop and expand offerings for CTE, AP, IBCP, and concurrent enrollment. Funds could also be used to compensate teachers to teach courses beyond their contract day or year. Grant recipients could supplement and braid, but not supplant, program funds with current state and federal funding sources such as AP, IB, CE, and CTE Perkins funds, as appropriate under those initiatives.

MDE contact: [Paula Palmer](#) and [Doug Paulson](#)

Informational webinar: [June 17, 2021 from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.](#)

Staffing for smaller class sizes and/or staff for interventions or enrichment

Districts and charter schools can use their funds to hire staff in order to reduce class sizes or for staff to support student interventions or enrichment.

MDE contact: TBD

Informational webinar: TBD

Ethnic Studies

Why: We know that culturally competent education has been identified as a key factor in helping students succeed in school (Diller & Moule, 2005; Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). As a state we need to deepen the knowledge base and experiences in ethnic studies. "Ethnic studies" means the critical and interdisciplinary study of race, ethnicity, and indigeneity with a focus on the experiences and perspectives of people of color within and beyond the United States. Ethnic studies analyzes the ways in which race and racism have been and continue to be powerful social, cultural, and political forces, and race and racism's connections to the stratification of other groups, including stratification based on gender, class, sexual orientation, gender identity and legal status.

What: Develop, implement and/or maintain Ethnic Studies in local curriculum and evaluation processes while implementing the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.

How: Funding may be used for strategies to offer courses in Ethic Studies or offering professional learning to staff in these areas as well as on diversity, inclusion and race.

MDE contact: [Doug Paulson](#) and [Jane Harstad](#)

Informational webinar: [June 24, 2021 from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.](#)

Indigenous Education

Why: Our history *is* your history. Knowledge of Indigenous peoples brings greater depth and understanding to the long-misinterpreted and often absent history of Indigenous cultures. We know that culturally competent education has been identified as a key factor in helping students succeed in school (Diller & Moule, 2005; Castagno & Brayboy, 2008). As a state we need to deepen the knowledge base of our students in the thoughtful and accurate education in American Indian history and contemporary culture of Minnesota's first inhabitants.

What: Develop, implement and/or maintain Indigenous Education in local curriculum and evaluation processes while implementing the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards.

How: Funding may be used for strategies to offer courses in Indigenous Education or offering professional learning to staff in these areas as well as on diversity, inclusion and race.

MDE contact: [Doug Paulson](#) and [Jane Harstad](#)

Informational webinar: [06/24/2021 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.](#)

Hands-on Learning Opportunities, including Field Trips

Why: During the past year, students have missed out on a number of learning opportunities, including class field trips. Field trips play an integral part in education. They provide access to common experiences for our students, engage their thinking, reinforce their learning, and expose them to opportunities they may not otherwise have in their lifetimes. This is particularly true for historically underserved students.

What: Field trips and hands-on learning opportunities include activities such as trips to nature centers, state parks, zoos, museums or theaters. These activities will incentivize student attendance, participation and engagement through learning and enrichment.

How: Funding could be used by schools and districts to cover costs for field trips and hands-on learning opportunities as part of summer programming, out-of-school time, or within school learning.

MDE contact: [Mary Barrie](#)

Informational webinar: [June 14, 2021 from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.](#)

Out of School Time Learning Opportunities

Why: In order to accelerate learning recovery for students of all ages, additional learning and enrichment opportunities must be offered by partnering with culturally specific organizations, Ignite as well as expanding and enhancing Community Education programming.

What: Schools partner with community businesses and organizations to develop a mentor and/or tutoring model that covers enrichment programming and other costs such as transportation and meals to increase student participation.

How: Extended Learning programs can be offered throughout the school community by partnering with culturally specific organizations, Ignite, as well as expanding and enhancing Community Education programming.

MDE contact: [Sheila Oehrlein](#)

Informational webinar: [June 23, 2021 from 11 a.m. to noon](#)

Kindergarten Entry Profile (KEP)

Why: Measuring and monitoring learning recovery is more important than ever as children transitioned between learning models this past year due to COVID-19. By implementing the KEP, which is aligned with the [Early Childhood Indicators of Progress \(ECIP\)](#) and [Kindergarten Academic Standards](#), you will get data that will be representative of a whole-child view of development and education; provide real-time formative data that can be used to individualize instruction; and, rely on authentic assessment.

What: The KEP offers districts/charter schools a menu of comprehensive, developmentally appropriate assessments that help teachers and administrators understand what students know and are able to do during the prekindergarten year and/or at the start of kindergarten (as well as throughout the entire kindergarten year) to support their success in kindergarten and beyond.

How: MDE staff will support schools implementing the KEP through providing training and ongoing support for implementation and data literacy practices. A teacher using one of the KEP-approved assessments will typically record their observations one to four times a year. Collecting information on children's learning at multiple points during the year allows teachers to use data to inform their instruction throughout the year. MDE will support data collection and analysis and teachers will receive detailed summary reports from the selected tool.

MDE contact: [Lisa Barnidge](#)

Informational webinar: [June 30, 2021 from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m.](#)