



ESSER III Application for FIN 160

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 access ESSER III funds, LEAs must:

1. Complete the components of the FIN160 application:
 - a. [Part A: Contact Information](#)
 - b. [Part B: Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan & Community Engagement](#)
 - c. [Part C: Funding State Education Priorities](#)
 - d. [Part D: Funding Other Local Needs](#)
 - e. [Part E: Award Assurances and Certifications](#)
2. Upload this FIN160 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 FIN161 application and budget in SERVS. LEAs are encouraged to use FIN160 to support more robust activities 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 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:

District Number:

Primary Contact Name:

Primary Contact Email Address:

Primary Contact Phone Number:

Additional Contact Name:

Additional Contact Email Address:

Additional Contact Phone Number:

Part B: Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan & Community Engagement

Section 1: Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan – Required Public Comment

As a condition of accepting the ESSER III award (FIN160 & FIN161), the LEA must develop, with community input, a Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan and post it for public comment within 30 days of receiving the ESSER III award. LEAs received the award in SERVS Financial on May 20, 2021, so the deadline for posting the Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan and related public comment summary is June 19, 2021 (with June 21, 2021 being the next business day).

The Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan *is not* the plan for spending ESSER III funds. The requirements for the Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan can be found in the [Interim Final Rule](#) and must describe *how [the LEA] will maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff and the extent to which it has adopted policies, and a description of any such policies, on each of the following safety recommendations established by the CDC.*

The Safe Return to In-Person Learning Plan must be reviewed regularly, at least every six months, and the LEA must seek additional public comment on revisions. LEAs must retain documentation of the plan development, plan review, public comment, and summary of public comment.

This section is required for all district and charter schools to complete. Note: this requirement applies to both FIN160 and FIN161 and is reported only on this FIN160 application.

Respond to either a or b below.

- a. **If the district or charter school's most current existing plan for a safe return to in-person instruction received public comment before being made publicly available, provide the link to that plan and a summary of the public comment received.**

Enter the link here.

Enter the summary of the public comment here.

OR

- b. Provide a **description of the process and timeline the district or charter school will use** to seek public comment, create the plan and make the plan available within 30 days of receiving funding (i.e. having an approved ESSER III application in Grant Management in SERVS).

Enter your answer here.

Section 2: ESSER III Spending Plan Community Engagement

All Local Educational Agencies are required to engage with the community, including families, students, and staff, when developing the ESSER III spending plan for FIN160 & FIN161.

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 engage student, family, staff and community about the use of ESSER III (FIN160, FIN161) funds.

Enter your answer here.

- b. The **key findings** of those activities or actions.

Enter your answer here.

Section 3: ESSER III Spending Plan Tribal consultation

Local Educational Agencies that were required to complete Tribal Consultation under the ESEA Title programs in SY2020-2021 are required to conduct Tribal Consultation when developing the ESSER III spending plan for FIN160 & FIN161.

This section is required only for districts and charter schools that had tribal consultation requirements for Title programs under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in the 2020-21 school year.

Please describe:

- a. The **activities or actions** the district or charter school leadership team has taken to engage student, family, staff and community about the use of ESSER III (FIN160, FIN161) funds.

Enter your answer here.

- b. The **key findings** of those activities or actions.

Enter your answer here.

Part C: Funding State Education Priorities

The 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. **LEA ESSER III spending 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.

LEAs are encouraged to spend more than the minimum 20 percent (FIN161) for activities that support learning recovery. LEAs are able to use FIN160 funds for FIN161 activities; review the [ESSER III FIN160 & FIN161 Overview](#) for more information.

Will the LEA use ESSER III funds in FIN160 to support implementation of one or more of the State Education Priorities?

- ☐ YES – Complete the chart below and go to [Part D](#)
☐ NO – Go to [Part D](#)

State Education Priority Funding State Education Priorities with ESSER III	Brief description of activities related to priority area These activities must match budget line items entered in SERVS.	LEA Pandemic Response and Related Need Explain how the activity addresses locally identified needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting impacts on student experience, access, representation, participation, and/or outcomes.
<i>Enter State Education Priority</i>	<i>Describe activities here.</i>	<i>Enter response here if indicated YES to using ESSER III Funds for this activity.</i>
<i>Enter State Education Priority</i>	<i>Describe activities here.</i>	<i>Enter response here if indicated YES to using ESSER III Funds for this activity.</i>
<i>Enter State Education Priority</i>	<i>Describe activities here.</i>	<i>Enter response here if indicated YES to using ESSER III Funds for this activity.</i>

Add additional rows as needed.

Part D: Funding Other Needs

The LEA ESSER III spending plan must address identified needs related to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting impacts on student experience, access, representation, participation, and/or outcomes. If an LEA is using ESSER III funds for activities *instead of or in addition to* the State Education Priorities in Part C, the LEA should complete Part D for MDE review.

Note: requests for construction projects must include a [Construction and Equipment Purchases in ESSER and GEER request](#), submitted to mde.federalCOVIDfunds@state.mn.us.

Will the LEA use ESSER III funds for activities instead of or in addition to the State Education Priorities in Part C?

- ☐ YES – Complete [Sections 1-4](#) below and then [go to Part E](#)
- ☐ NO – all ESSER III funds will be used for one or more of the State Education Priorities in Part C. There is no need to complete Part D. [Go to Part E](#).

Section 1: Health needs

Please describe:

- a. The COVID-19-related health needs students, families and staff are experiencing. Consider **physical, mental, social and emotional health**.

Enter your answer here. If no needs have been identified, please write, "No needs identified."

- b. How ESSER III funds will be used to meet these health needs.

Enter your answer here. If FIN 160 funds will not be used to meet any health needs, please write, "FIN 160 funds will not be used to meet health needs." Note: These activities must match budget line items entered in SERVS.

Section 2: Connection needs

Please describe:

- a. The COVID-19-related needs surrounding connection to school that students, families and staff are experiencing. Consider **physical, digital, social and emotional connection**, as well as needs specific to one or more **historically underserved populations**.

Connection needs could include, among other possibilities:

- transportation
- student devices for distance or hybrid learning; internet access
- student, family and/or community (re-)engagement work
- language access
- relevant culturally responsive services

Enter your answer here. If no needs have been identified, please write, "No needs identified."

- b. How ESSER III funds will be used to meet these connection needs.

Enter your answer here. If FIN 160 funds will not be used to meet any connection needs, please write, "FIN 160 funds will not be used to meet connection needs." Note: These activities must match budget line items entered in SERVS.

Section 3: Academic needs

Please describe:

- a. The COVID-19-related **academic needs** students are experiencing.

Enter your answer here. If no needs have been identified, please write, "No needs identified."

- b. How ESSER III funds will be used to meet these **general academic needs**.

Enter your answer here. If FIN 160 funds will not be used to meet any general academic needs, please write, "FIN 160 funds will not be used to meet general academic needs." Note: These activities must match budget line items entered in SERVS.

- c. The COVID-19-related academic needs **students from historically underserved populations** are experiencing. Consider populations in terms of race, ethnicity, income, language, disability, immigrant status, gender identity, sexual orientation, homeless status, migratory status, placement in foster care, and any other populations historically underserved in the community.

Enter your answer here. If no needs have been identified, please write, "No needs identified."

- d. How ESSER III funds will be used to meet these **specific academic needs**.

Enter your answer here. If FIN 160 funds will not be used to meet any academic needs specific to students from historically underserved populations, please write, "FIN 160 funds will not be used to meet academic needs specific to students from historically underserved populations." Note: These activities must match budget line items entered in SERVS.

Section 4: Other local needs

Please describe:

- a. Any other local COVID-19-related needs.

Enter your answer here. If no needs have been identified, please write, "No needs identified."

- b. How ESSER III funds will be used to meet these other local needs.

Enter your answer here. If FIN 160 funds will not be used to meet any other local needs, please write, "FIN 160 funds will not be used to meet other local needs." Note: These activities must match budget line items entered in SERVS.

Part E: Award 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—
 - o the project is not inconsistent with overall State plans for the construction of school facilities, and

- o 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