

**State Plan for the
American Rescue Plan
Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund**



Alaska Department of Education and Early Development

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Cover Page

Grantee and Contact Information


ARP ESSER PR Award Number: S425U210020

SEA Contact: Heidi Teshner, State of Alaska ARP State Director

Telephone: 907-465-2875

Email address: heidi.teshner@alaska.gov

By signing this document, I agree to each of the assurances listed in Appendix C and further assure that: To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information and data included in this plan are true and correct.

Chief State School Officer or Authorized Representative (Printed Name) Dr. Michael Johnson, Commissioner	
Signature of Authorized SEA Representative 	Date: 6/18/2021

A. Describing the State's Current Status and Needs

The Department recognizes the extraordinary efforts made by States, LEAs, and educators to support students during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this section, SEAs will describe the progress they have made, the priorities and student needs guiding their ARP ESSER funding decisions, and their current and projected operating status.

1. Progress and Promising Practices: Provide your assessment of the top 2-3 strategies that have been most effective in supporting the needs of students in your State during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for students most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please include, if applicable, how your State will submit and encourage its LEAs to submit lessons learned and best practices to the Department's [Safer Schools and Campuses Best Practices Clearinghouse](#) so that they can be shared with other States and LEAs.

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) evaluated areas where there would be the greatest struggle for districts. It was determined that building capacity in districts to move quickly to a virtual mode of instruction after school buildings were closed in the spring of 2020. The [Alaska Statewide Virtual System](#) (AKSVS) was created through a partnership with Florida Virtual School (FLVS). DEED was able to provide districts, schools, and parents with immediate access to a wide range of K-12 courses taught by certificated teachers almost immediately after school building closures. Professional development and specific training on the platform and the curriculum occurred over the summer of 2020. By the fall of 2020, more than 300 Alaskan educators from 42 of Alaska's 54 school districts were able to provide classes through AKSVS at no cost to the districts.

Additionally, DEED procured a statewide license for the widely-used Canvas Learning Management System (LMS). This relationship allowed districts, schools, educators, and DEED to create educational materials and professional development that could be shared statewide. The statewide license allows districts to provide online instruction in new ways and proved tremendously useful as districts and schools moved in and out of in-person, synchronous, hybrid, remote, and fully-online instructional delivery modes throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Quality resources continue to be created and shared statewide, and partnerships have been forged between districts to share resources in a way that was not previously possible.

In the spring and summer of 2020, DEED partnered with the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) to create guidance for districts regarding mitigation practices. A template and toolkit for creating plans were shaped in partnership with the Region 16 Comprehensive Center, DHSS, and DEED. Districts created plans that were posted on their websites outlining practices and policies based on COVID-19 pandemic factors in each local community. The [Alaska Smart Start 2020](#) project consisted of the creation of a toolkit, guidance, and the Smart Start 2020: Summer Summit that helped districts prepare for a return to school in the fall. Topics included instructional recommendations to ensure continuity of learning during the pandemic, as well as PPE guidelines and suppliers, medical release

forms, school mitigation checklists and resources, infographics and flyers for schools to use, and communications templates for schools and districts. This planning project provided educators and stakeholders from across the state with high-quality professional development that enabled districts to make decisions informed by criteria specific to their regional locations and local needs.

As DEED provides oversight to districts regarding the planning and utilization of the ARP ESSER funds, schools are encouraged to submit program models to the Safer Schools and Campuses Best Practices Clearinghouse as well as reference practices outlined by other schools across the country.

2. Overall Priorities: Provide your assessment of the top 2-3 issues currently facing students and schools across your State as a result of or in response to the COVID-19 pandemic including, to the extent possible, data illustrating why these are the most critical and/or most widespread issues facing schools and students.

Section C, Part 1: SEA Consultation of this plan outlines how DEED used ThoughtExchange to gather stakeholder input to determine the top issues facing students and schools in Alaska. Several themes emerged from this tool. Two separate groups were targeted- (1) all stakeholders and (2) stakeholders advocating for underserved populations.

All Stakeholders	Stakeholders advocating for underserved populations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing • Enrichment • Small Class Size and In-person learning • After/Summer School Programs • Social, Emotional, Mental Health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person school • Social, Emotional, Mental Health • Connectivity and Technology • Cultural/Community values • After/Summer School Programs

Based on the information gathered from the outreach, the most pressing needs for Alaska are supporting face-to-face instruction; social, emotional, and mental health supports; and strategies to reduce the learning loss that occurred during the pandemic.

Continued efforts to build capacity for districts and schools remain a key priority for DEED. Helping districts navigate the new normal through high-quality, targeted professional development, AKSVS, and Canvas remain key to helping students.

3. Identifying Needs of Underserved Students: Describe your State’s 2-3 highest priority academic, social, emotional, and/or mental health needs for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year (if applicable) and for the 2021-2022 school year related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on each of the following student groups:

- i. Students from low-income families,
- ii. Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity),
- iii. Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender),
- iv. English learners,
- v. Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”)),
- vi. Students experiencing homelessness,
- vii. Children and youth in foster care,
- viii. Migratory students, and
- ix. Other groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic that have been identified by the SEA (e.g., youth involved in the criminal justice system, students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures, and LGBTQ+ students).

To the extent possible, this description should include data on indicators such as estimates of the academic impact of lost instructional time,¹ chronic absenteeism, student engagement, and social-emotional well-being.

Complete the table below, adding rows as necessary, or provide a narrative description.

In addition to the information in the narrative below, DEED will use data from its annual statewide summative assessment (due from the vendor in early August), its annual complete year data collection (due from districts by July 15, 2021), and its complete year data collection of instructional modes to -

- 1) *examine achievement results for math and English Language arts (i.e., learning loss) across grades and student groups;*
- 2) *examine participation rates in the annual statewide summative assessment to determine where gaps in learning loss information exist and where information could be improved;*
- 3) *examine attendance, student mobility, graduation rate, and dropout rate across student groups; and,*
- 4) *examine which schools and districts had the longest or most frequent and significant interruptions to in-person learning.*

In DEED’s analysis of needs for individual student groups, a number of needs were recurring and identified as general needs. These needs included: supplies and tools to support learning (internet access, technology, etc.), summer learning and credit recovery options, and before and after school programs.

¹ For the purposes of the plan, “academic impact of lost instructional time” refers to “learning loss” experienced by students as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, as referenced in the ARP Act and the CRRSA Act.

Each program manager responsible for the groups noted in the table below consulted their advisory groups to gather both academic and support needs. Additional priorities from the tool used to gather stakeholder input, ThoughtExchange, were added to the table. Any additional data or survey information is noted in the Table A1.

Table A1.

Student Group	Highest Priority Needs
Students from low-income families	<p><u>Academic Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teen jobs, job shadowing, and internships • College and Career Prep • Transportation to/from school activities <p><u>Support Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Menstruation products and other hygiene needs • Food • Smartphones and service plans for secondary students <p><u>ThoughtExchange priorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruction • In-person learning • Student and Family needs
Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity)	<p>One of the highest priority needs is ensuring that students from all student groups are assessed consistently. Assessments will identify where, how, and for which students learning loss has occurred. When compared to the average level of participation across five prior timepoints, participation in a widely used, interim assessment was lower for all student groups in Winter 2021, but especially so for the American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, Black/African American, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander student groups.</p> <p><u>ThoughtExchange priorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person learning • Before/after/summer school programs • Social, emotional, and mental health
Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender)	DEED will use data described in the beginning of this section to identify gender disparities.

Student Group	Highest Priority Needs
English learners (EL)	<p><u>Academic Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summer learning and credit recovery options ● Professional development for teachers on remote learning for ELs ● Access to technology, software licenses, and networks ● Technology training for parents and families (translated/interpreted) <p><u>Support Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Personal interactions with school officials ● Assistance in connecting families to community resources, such as food and other assistance programs and information provided in their native language ● Childcare for family members too young for school <p><u>ThoughtExchange priorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In-Person learning ● Instruction ● Social, emotional, and mental health
Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”))	<p><u>Academic and Support Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Assessments of regression/social-emotional/mental status for students with a disability and supports for families ● Develop a service plan to implement into the student’s Individual Education Program (IEP) ● Implement any compensatory educational needs in accordance with the student’s IEP services and service hours as determined in an IEP meeting ● Identify services and supports available for the district and the individual locations of schools <p><u>ThoughtExchange priorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student and Family Needs ● Social, emotional, and mental health ● Instruction

Student Group	Highest Priority Needs
Students experiencing homelessness	<p><u>Academic Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutoring • Academic consultation - provide support to classroom teachers to help understand the unique challenges our students face • Post-secondary guidance <p><u>Support Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assistance and follow-up with referrals to various community agencies - housing applications, childcare assistance, food stamps, Medicaid or Denali Kid Care, food pantries, behavioral health providers, and other community programs • Parenting classes • Funds for food, laundry, transportation, cell phone, etc. • Social/emotional support and mental health resources
Migratory students	<p>In order to determine needs for migratory students, DEED conducted a survey of staff. A total of 613 Migrant Education Program (MEP) teachers, recruiters, paraprofessionals, records clerks, and administrators who had direct contact with migratory children responded to a survey about migratory children’s needs. The needs that a plurality of staff (over 35%) identified as the most pressing are identified below:</p> <p><u>Academic Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, writing, and math achievement • Dropout prevention • Education on career and postsecondary options • Study skills training <p><u>Support Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social, emotional, and mental health • College and career counseling • Water safety <p><u>Professional Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent and family engagement • Culturally relevant instruction • Helping parents work with their children <p><u>Parent Engagement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finding community resources • Opportunities to communicate with school staff

Student Group	Highest Priority Needs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology <p>DEED also conducted a survey of parents. A total of 1,684 parents of migratory children responded to a survey about migratory children’s needs. The needs that a plurality of parents (over 35%) identified as the most pressing are identified below:</p> <p><u>COVID-19 Impact</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not able to attend school • Lost wages <p><u>Academic Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, writing, and math achievement <p><u>Support Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School supplies • Water safety (due to migratory lifestyle) • First aid/CPR courses • Social/emotional health <p><u>Parent Engagement Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational materials/activities at home • Helping with homework • Opportunities to communicate with school staff <p><u>ThoughtExchange priorities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-person learning • Social, emotional, and mental health • Connectivity
Students and youth in foster care	<p><u>Academic Needs</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutoring (preferably in-person instead of virtual due to many foster care students with special needs) • Access to Office of Children’s services OCS Independent Living Classes for current and former foster youth ages 14-20 (not the content or instructors—just the computers, internet, support staff) • Post-secondary guidance

Student Group	Highest Priority Needs
	<p data-bbox="565 237 760 268"><u>Support Needs</u></p> <ul data-bbox="565 285 1433 552" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="565 285 1133 317">• Counseling and mental health resources <li data-bbox="565 323 1256 354">• Respite for foster families who are home full-time <li data-bbox="565 361 1398 432">• Staff to support virtual family visits in residential schools and facilities <li data-bbox="565 438 1433 552">• Flexible funding for phone cards, clothing vouchers, car repairs, phone bills, and other issues that create a barrier to school attendance <p data-bbox="565 600 922 632"><u>ThoughtExchange priorities</u></p> <ul data-bbox="565 638 1086 751" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="565 638 850 669">• In-person learning <li data-bbox="565 676 1086 707">• Social, emotional, and mental health <li data-bbox="565 714 753 745">• Instruction
<p data-bbox="155 800 529 947">Other groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic that have been identified by the SEA</p>	<p data-bbox="565 800 1398 905">DEED will use data described in the beginning of this section to identify disparities for other groups of students identified by the State.</p> <p data-bbox="565 953 922 984"><u>ThoughtExchange priorities</u></p> <p data-bbox="565 991 1068 1022"><i>Students with parents in active military</i></p> <ul data-bbox="565 1029 1086 1142" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="565 1029 1086 1060">• Social, emotional, and mental health <li data-bbox="565 1066 943 1098">• Student and family needs <li data-bbox="565 1104 997 1136">• Cultural/community supports <p data-bbox="565 1190 656 1222"><i>LGBTQ</i></p> <ul data-bbox="565 1228 1086 1341" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="565 1228 1086 1260">• Social, emotional, and mental health <li data-bbox="565 1266 753 1297">• Instruction <li data-bbox="565 1304 850 1335">• In-person learning <p data-bbox="565 1390 1019 1421"><i>Neglected and Delinquent Students</i></p> <ul data-bbox="565 1428 1086 1541" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="565 1428 1086 1459">• Social, emotional, and mental health <li data-bbox="565 1465 753 1497">• Instruction <li data-bbox="565 1503 951 1535">• Professional development

4. Understanding the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic: Describe how the SEA will support its LEAs in identifying the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning and student well-being, including identifying the groups of students most impacted by the pandemic. Where possible, please identify the data sources the SEA will suggest its LEAs use in thoughtfully diagnosing areas of need, including data on the academic, social, emotional, and mental health impacts of lost instructional time.

DEED will support LEAs in the use of data from their annual statewide summative assessment (due from the vendor in early August), its annual complete year data collection (due from districts by July 15, 2021), and its complete year data collection of instructional mode to:

- 1) examine achievement results for math and English Language arts (i.e., learning loss) across grades and student groups;*
- 2) examine participation rates in the annual statewide summative assessment to determine where gaps in learning loss information exist and where information could be improved;*
- 3) examine attendance, student mobility, graduation rate, and dropout rate across student groups; and,*
- 4) examine which schools and districts had the longest or most frequent or significant interruptions to in-person learning.*

To determine areas of need in the realm of social, emotional, and mental health impacts of the pandemic, DEED will support LEAs in the use of data from their School Climate and Connectedness Survey administered by the Association of Alaska School Boards and data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey administered by the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services.

5. School Operating Status: It is essential to have data on how students are learning in order to support the goals of access and equity, especially for student groups that have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Describe the current status of data collection on operational status and mode of instruction of all schools in your State. This description must include:
 - i. A description of to what extent, and how frequently, the State collects now and will collect in the future data for all schools in your State on:
 - a. Mode of instruction: The number of schools in your State that are offering fully remote or online-only instruction; both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid model); and/or full-time in-person instruction;
 - b. Enrollment: Student enrollment for all students and disaggregated for each of the student groups described in A.3.i-viii for each mode of instruction; and
 - c. Attendance: Student attendance for all students and disaggregated for each of the student groups described in A.3.i-viii for each mode of instruction.

DEED collected mode of instruction information at a number of timepoints during the 2020-2021 school year. This included a district-level data collection at the beginning of the school year, a school-level collection at the beginning of March 2021, a school-level collection anchored to the beginning of the testing window (March 29, 2021), a school-level collection forecasting summer mode, and a school-level collection forecasting school year 2021-2022 mode. In the future, DEED intends to collect this information on a regular basis in order to analyze the long-term effects of mode of instruction on student learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic

DEED collected enrollment information at two timepoints during the 2020-2021 school year. This included a student-level data collection in the fall of 2020 for foundation funding formula calculations and a student-level data collection in the spring of 2021 for participation rate calculations. The data from the spring 2021 data collection will be disaggregated by student group and primary mode of instruction at the school level on the date of the collection. DEED intends to collect enrollment data on a similar cycle in the future.

DEED collects attendance information on an annual basis in an end of the year data collection. For the 2020-2021 school year, this will wrap up in mid-July 2021. This data will allow for disaggregation of attendance data by student group. DEED is currently designing a data collection to collect primary mode of instruction at the school level for the 2020-2021 school year. If successful, this will allow for the pairing of attendance data and school level mode of instruction. This will provide for disaggregation of attendance data by student group and primary mode of instruction at the school level. DEED intends to collect attendance information at a similar time in school year 2021-2022.

- ii. The data described in A.5.i.a. and b. using the template in Appendix A (and to the extent available, the data described in A.5.i.c.) for the most recent time period available. Please note that this data can be submitted separately within 14 calendar days after a State submits this plan. The SEA must also make this data publicly available on its website as soon as possible but no later than June 21, 2021, and regularly provide updated available information on its website. The Department will periodically review data listed in A.5.i on SEA websites.

Mode of instruction: There are a total of 502 schools in Alaska. DEED has received information from 99% of these schools (498/502).

	All schools	Offered to All Students	Offered to Some Students	Not Offered
Remote/Online-Only	502	373	26	99
Hybrid	502	204	23	271
In-Person	502	382	10	106

Enrollment:

Student Group	Total Enrollment	Remote	Hybrid	In-Person
American Indian or Alaskan Native	27,228	4,662	9,291	13,218
Asian or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	10,604	1,065	4,367	5,165
Black or African American	3,095	484	1,482	1,128
Hispanic	9,151	1,656	4,124	3,371
White	59,225	18,632	22,088	18,503

Student Group	Total Enrollment	Remote	Hybrid	In-Person
Student from Low-Income Families	53,775	10,657	20,141	22,950
Two or More Races	15,953	3,377	6,684	5,887
Students Experiencing Homelessness	2,188	345	1,011	832
English Learners	15,155	1,553	6,519	7,083
Children with Disabilities	18,044	3,193	7,280	7,553
Children in Foster Care	1,448	167	644	637
Migratory Students	8,936	896	3,143	4,875

Two sources of data were used to calculate student counts- participation rate and mode of instruction. Not all districts had reported on mode of instruction at the time the report was run on 06/03/2021.

Attendance: *This data is not available at this time.*

- iii. To the extent available, a description of the planned operational status and mode of instruction for the State and its LEAs for Summer 2021 and for the 2021-2022 school year.

To answer this question, DEED surveyed LEAs and asked what their planned mode of instruction was for both summer 2021 and school year 2021-2022. A total of 498 schools submitted data regarding mode of instruction. Approximately 93% of schools (462/498) reported that if they were offering summer school, the plan would be for an in-person or hybrid mode of instruction. Approximately 96% of schools (476/498) reported that they were planning to offer an in-person or hybrid mode of instruction for school year 2021-2022. Importantly, these counts include correspondence schools where the mode of instruction does not vary as a function of the pandemic. Forty-five (45) schools reported that they were not planning to offer summer school.

B. Safely Reopening Schools and Sustaining their Safe Operations

The Department recognizes that safely reopening schools and sustaining their safe operations to maximize in-person instruction is essential for student learning and student well-being, and especially for being able to address the educational inequities that have been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this section, SEAs will describe how they will support their LEAs in this vital area.

1. Support for LEAs: Describe how the SEA will support its LEAs in safely returning to in-person instruction and sustaining the safe operation of schools. This description must include:
 - i. How the SEA will support its LEAs implementing, to the greatest extent practicable, prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (“CDC”) for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff;

DEED will provide LEAs current and updated guidance and support through a variety of methods. This will include providing current CDC guidance for all areas outlined in Table B1 in the State Plan Template including: masks; physical distancing; handwashing and respiratory etiquette; cleaning; contact tracing; diagnostic and screening testing; vaccination efforts; and appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities. DEED will work closely with the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) to provide statewide guidance and additional resources and supports on mitigation plans required under the ARP Act Plan. This will include the creation of a FAQ document regarding the mitigation plan, webinars to go over expectations of the mitigation plan and answer questions, one-pagers that include links to mitigation strategies from the CDC and other health related entities, sharing examples from other states to ensure LEAs understanding and successful implementation of prevention and mitigation policies. DEED will continue to partner with DHSS to update the Alaska Smart Start 2020 framework guidance to reflect new district requirements as we move toward recovery in 2021. Any statewide plans, policies, estimated timelines, and specific milestones related to reopening and operations of school facilities, including any mechanisms the SEA will use to track, monitor, or enforce their implementation.

Decisions around reopening will be made by individual LEAs based on the unique situations within each community. LEAs reserve the option to offer virtual or hybrid options for students if applicable. Data regarding the status of open schools is listed in Appendix A. Section E describes DEED's oversight plan for working with districts to ensure implementation of all aspects of LEAs plans.

- ii. Any Statewide plans, policies, estimated timelines, and specific milestones related to reopening and operation of school facilities, including any mechanisms the SEA will use to track, monitor, or enforce their implementation;

As stated earlier in this section, DEED is partnering with DHSS to create guidance regarding the safe reopening of schools in Alaska. Each community will have unique criteria that address their specific circumstances for opening buildings and facilities. The State of Alaska has not mandated any building closures for the 2021-2022 school year.

DEED collected mode of instruction data for the 2020-2021 school year and as described in G.1, is working to build capacity on all data collections when final requirements are available. Section E describes how DEED will provide oversight to districts regarding the requirements for the ARP ESSER Act funding.

- iii. To what extent the SEA and its LEAs consult with Federal, State, and local health officials. This description should include, if available, whether the SEA and its LEAs have received support for screening testing from their State or local health department based on funding awarded by the CDC; and

DEED has worked closely with DHSS since the start of the pandemic and has consulted with DHSS officials to develop and revise the Alaska Smart Start Guidance and provide LEAs with up-to-date information through weekly School Health ECHOs (Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes). School Health ECHOs are a forum available to all districts. This particular ECHO includes staff from DEED and DHSS. Districts have the opportunity to ask questions and share practices. This forum has been in place since the beginning of the pandemic. DEED will continue to work closely with DHSS to update guidance and provide information to ensure that LEAs are aware of the screening testing support and guidance available including testing materials, PPE, and personnel to administer tests and know how to access these resources.

- iv. Any guidance, professional learning, and technical assistance opportunities the SEA will make available to its LEAs.

DEED will provide ongoing support through written guidance regarding LEA requirements associated with the ARP Act and webinars such as the existing School Health ECHO as well as additional opportunities based on need and requests. DEED will also provide LEAs with information on updated guidance released by the CDC as well as updated state guidance for K-12 schools in Alaska as we move toward recovery in the 2021-2022 school year and beyond. Information is disseminated to districts through program specific newsletters, biweekly statewide meetings with district leaders, and direct emails. Through partnerships with the Alaska Council of School Administrators (ACSA), Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB), and the Region 16 Comprehensive Center DEED will work to build district capacity in the safe operations of in-person instruction, evidence-based strategies, and leadership.

- 2. Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plans: Describe how the SEA will ensure that its LEAs that receive ARP ESSER funds meet the requirements in section 2001(i) of the ARP Act and the requirements relating to the ARP ESSER funds published in the Federal Register and available at <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/american-rescue-plan/american-rescue-plan-elementary-and-secondary-school-emergency-relief/> (ARP ESSER requirements) to either: (a) within 30 days of receipt of the funds, develop and make publicly available on the LEA’s website a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services, or (b) have developed and made publicly available on the LEA’s website such a plan that meets statutory requirements before the enactment of the ARP Act, including:
 - i. How the SEA will ensure that each LEA plan includes, or will be modified to include, the extent to which it has adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the strategies listed in table B1;

On June 23, 2021, 30 days after the allocation of funds, DEED staff will verify that mitigation plans are published and available to the public on district websites. Districts are directed to complete Section A1 of the ARP ESSER III section of the FY2022 application in GMS and upload the link to their mitigation plans in Section A2. DEED staff will verify that each component listed in Table B-1 are included in the

plans. DEED will ensure that adequate descriptions of stakeholder input is included. If the plans are lacking any component listed in Table B-1 or stakeholder input, DEED staff will reach out to districts to gather the missing information, provide technical assistance if needed, and support the district in completing the plan. Guidance on effective stakeholder engagement is available to assist districts in this process.

All components of Table B-1 need to be present in the plan. If it is determined that one of the components is not required based on consultation with state and local health officials and based on local health mandates, districts need to indicate that in the plan. If the mandates or further consultation reverses this description, districts will need to update their plans in order to have the most current policy posted on their website. See section B.2.iii. for the process for updating the plan.

- ii. How the SEA will ensure that each LEA plan describes how it will ensure continuity of services including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff social, emotional, mental health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services;

DEED will provide on-going support and resources to LEAs to support staff and student's social, emotional, and mental health through webinars, eLearning, and training and support on [Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma Engaged Practice in Alaska](#). This nationally recognized tool is designed to help schools and communities integrate trauma-engaged policies and practices that improve academic outcomes and well-being for students. Plan review is covered in section E.1, however, updated LEA ARP ESSER plans will include school and/or district level practices to allow for creating a Trauma-Engaged learning environment and ensure staff wellness. Plans may also include guidelines on meeting the emotional and mental health needs by providing access to school counselors and or school social workers.

- iii. How the SEA will ensure that the LEA periodically reviews, no less frequently than every six months for the duration of the ARP ESSER grant period (i.e., through September 30, 2023),² and revises as appropriate, its plan, and how the SEA will ensure that the LEA seeks public input, and takes such input into account on (1) whether revisions are necessary and, if so, (2) the revisions to the plan; and

Each LEA Superintendent will sign an assurance packet that includes a provision that the plan will be reviewed at least every six months and will be revised as needed. Updated plans will include what stakeholder engagement was conducted and how the information was considered and incorporated

² ARP ESSER funds are subject to the Tydings amendment in section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act, 20 U.S.C. 1225(b), and are therefore available to SEAs and LEAs for obligation through September 30, 2024. Review and revisions of these plans, if necessary, are not required during the Tydings period.

into the plan. When plans are updated, LEAs will complete Sections B-G of the ARP ESSER III section of the FY2022 application in GMS. Districts will also notify DEED if their current plans still meet the needs of their unique areas and do not require updating at that time. This will also be conveyed through the dedicated COVID-19 email address.

- iv. Describe, to the extent the SEA collects it, information about LEA implementation, to the greatest extent practicable, of each element of the most up-to-date CDC guidance listed in table B1 and its LEAs' needs for support and technical assistance to implement strategies consistent, to the greatest extent practicable, with relevant CDC guidance.

DEED will work with DHSS to monitor the changing federal and state requirements, health mandates, and CDC guidance and keep LEAs informed of all changes through webinars and written guidance as needed. DEED and DHSS will utilize the School Health ECHO forum to provide information and provide stakeholders the opportunity to ask questions and share ideas and experiences. Oversight of implementation will consist of a semi-annual review of LEAs posted mitigation policies, periodic webinars, articles in program specific newsletters, and direct emails to each LEA. Section E describes the other oversight measures and data collection regarding intervention strategies.

C. Planning for the Use and Coordination of ARP ESSER Funds

The Department recognizes that seeking input from diverse stakeholders is essential to developing plans for the use of ARP ESSER funds that are responsive to the needs of students, families, and educators. In this section, SEAs will describe their plans for consultation and for coordinating the use of ARP ESSER funds with other resources to meet the needs of students.

1. **SEA Consultation:** Consistent with the ARP ESSER requirements, describe how the SEA engaged in meaningful consultation with stakeholders, and incorporated input into its plan, including, but not limited to:
 - i. students;
 - ii. families;
 - iii. Tribes (if applicable);
 - iv. civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations);
 - v. school and district administrators (including special education administrators);
 - vi. superintendents;
 - vii. charter school leaders (if applicable);
 - viii. teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; and
 - ix. stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

The description must include how the SEA provided the public the opportunity to provide input in the development of the plan, a summary of the input (including any letters of support), and how the SEA took such input into account.

DEED provided multiple webinars and informational calls to communicate availability of ARP funds, the LEA application process, and the consultation requirements. All webinars were recorded and copies of all presentations are available on the [website](#). A variety of webinars were delivered for general audiences, targeted to specific LEA and stakeholder functional roles, specifically targeted to family and community participation, and directed toward representatives of tribes, civil rights organizations, and other subgroups. The list below notes the variety of audiences targeted in outreach webinars:

- *ARP State Plan Overview: Engaging Stakeholders – 5/3/2021 2:00pm*
- *ARP State Plan Overview: District Requirements – 5/4/2021 2:00pm*
- *ARP State Plan Overview: District Data Collection – 5/5/2021 2:00pm*
- *ARP State Plan: What are the state’s needs? – 5/7/2021 2:00pm*
- *ARP State Plan: What are the priorities for state funds? – 5/14/2021 2:00 pm*
- *ARP State Plan: How can DEED support schools, districts, and educators? – 5/21/2021 2:00 pm*
- *Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities – May 10-12, 6:00pm, and May 18-19, noon*

Each of the webinars on 5/7/2021, 5/14/2021 and 5/21/2021 reviewed the stakeholder input that had been received by the time of the webinar and discussed how that information was being incorporated into the plan.

Targeted presentations:

- *After School Alliance 5/13/2021*
- *Alaska Council of School Administrators 5/21/2021*

Invitations to the Stakeholder Engagement webinars were sent to advocates for the underserved student populations noted in the application. A list of advertisements and communication can be found in Attachment A.

In partnership with the Region 16 Comprehensive Center, DEED used the online collaboration platform ThoughtExchange to gather feedback on priorities for ARP funded interventions through an essential question soliciting response that were unique and authentic.

ThoughtExchange makes it possible for large, diverse groups to contribute ideas and surface priorities among those ideas to help inform and improve the decisions made by an organization.

Each participant also had the option to react to existing comments by rating them on a scale of one to five. The comments and ratings were ranked by the number of responses and the rating(s) they received. While this feedback was gathered through the state level platform, stakeholders were asked to identify their “home” LEA such that all feedback was sorted and provided to all LEAs as a record of local LEA feedback and consultation for consideration in development of the LEA Plan.

Two separate ThoughtExchange opportunities were made available, and two separate essential questions were posed to two different audiences:

1. *Essential Question 1: What are the biggest needs in Alaska given the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on teaching and learning?*
 - a. *Target audience: all stakeholders*
 - b. *Time frame: opened 5/3/2021 and closed 5/30/2021*
 - c. *Goal: to gather information on a statewide level about the overall challenges posed to teaching and learning.*
 - d. *Identified needs by highest ranked themes:*
 - i. *Staffing that includes more counselors, paraprofessionals, and a focus on retaining high quality teachers;*
 - ii. *Support more enrichment and extracurricular activities (arts, sports, etc.);*
 - iii. *Small class sizes and a return to in-person learning as the mode of instruction;*
 - iv. *More before/after school activities;*
 - v. *Support efforts to help with the effects of COVID-19 on the mental health of students and educators;*
 - vi. *Professional development for educators on social and emotional learning (SEL) and teaching in a virtual environment; and,*
 - vii. *Addressing connectivity and technology challenges.*

2. *Essential Question 2: Moving forward, what do you see as the biggest academic, safety, social, emotional and/or mental health needs for your children or the children you advocate for that are related to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic?*
 - a. *Target audience: parent and advocates for underserved populations listed above*
 - b. *Time frame: opened 5/10/2021 and closed 5/30/2021*
 - c. *Goal: to gather information from families, community members, Tribal organizations, schools, and advocates for the underserved populations listed above.*
 - d. *Identified needs by highest ranked themes:*
 - i. *Returning to in-person as the mode of instruction;*
 - ii. *Supporting the social and emotional health of students and educators;*
 - iii. *Addressing connectivity and technology challenges;*
 - iv. *Support strong cultural and community values;*

- v. *More before/after school opportunities; and*
- vi. *Support more extracurricular and enrichment activities (arts, sports, etc.).*

These stakeholder engagement opportunities gathered over 5,000 individual thoughts from over 2,100 participants. Each thought was available for participations to rate on a scale of 1 to 5. Over 46,000 ratings were captured on the thoughts or ideas entered into ThoughtExchange.

The two ThoughtExchange surveys were also posted on DEED’s ARP State Plan webpage.

The following resources were made available to LEA leadership for use in local LEA outreach to stakeholders.

- *All presentation materials prepared and used as the SEA level for statewide outreach were made available to LEAs and they were encouraged to adjust any materials to better serve their local context. These resources are available to LEAs and other stakeholders at [DEED’s ARP website](#).*
- *Disaggregated (LEA) stakeholder feedback gathered through the online collaboration platform ThoughtExchange is provided to LEAs based on the source of the feedback as identified when submitted.*

2. Coordinating Funds: Describe to what extent the SEA has and will coordinate Federal COVID-19 pandemic funding and other Federal funding. This description must include:
 - i. How the SEA and its LEAs 1) are using or have used prior to the submission of this plan and 2) plan to use following submission of this plan, Federal COVID-19 funding under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (“CARES”) Act and the CRRSA Act to support a safe return to and safely maximize in-person instruction, sustain these operations safely, and address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individual student groups (including students from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial or ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students);

The table below outlines how LEAs budgeted their ESSER I, GEER I, ESSER II, and GEER II funds. These amounts are based on the last approved COVID-19 relief fund applications as of May 21, 2021. The categories are based on the allowable uses of funds outlined in the CARES Act and CRRSA Act guidance. When LEAs created their budgets in DEED’s Grants Management System (GMS), districts could choose a “tag” to identify how funds were going to be used. The “tag” was a required element of the budget and was available to help the LEA and DEED track proposed expenditures. More information regarding the approval process for budgets, applications, and reimbursements for funding can be found in Section G.2.

Unused funds from federal FY2019 for each LEA are carried over for use in the next year. The ESSER I funds had a carryover amount of \$27,966,747 and GEER I funds had a carryover amount of \$2,685,901. Unused funds will carryover until the period of availability is over.

The 2021-2022 application includes CARES, CRRSA, and ARP funds as separate funds, similar to the ESEA Consolidated Applications housed within GMS. The ARP application was made available in GMS on May 24, 2021. When the final expenditure amounts are available for the state FY2020 CARES and CRRSA funds, these carryover amounts will be loaded into GMS and be available for planning and budgeting for state FY2022.

Table C1.

LEA Budgets by Tag- All Approved District Applications as of 5/21/2021	CARES Act			CRRSA Act	
	ESSER I* (2019-2020)	ESSER I* (2020-2021)	GEER I (2019-2020)	ESSER II** (2020-2021)	GEER II (2020-2021)
Addressing needs of special populations	\$43,486.49	\$521,425.25		\$1,712,872.70	
Coordination with other agencies	\$69,336.01	\$375,813.34		\$30,989.50	
Developing procedures to improve district preparedness	\$376,640.12	\$1,066,374.81		\$268,872.98	
Elementary and Secondary Education Act	\$2,243,401.68	\$5,702,185.21	\$142,040.39	\$1,115,016.20	\$276,362.66
Individuals with Disabilities Education Act	\$87,786.14	\$17,312.31	\$173,728.49	\$479,060.20	\$223,169.75
Other activities to ensure continuity	\$1,686,577.23	\$7,875,472.85		\$8,909,802.74	
Planning for long-term closures	\$384,522.42	\$829,754.04		\$336,526.10	
Providing mental health services and supports	\$357,074.13	\$939,474.47		\$900,315.67	
Purchasing educational technology	\$3,115,968.26	\$6,127,963.91		\$4,865,394.02	
Purchasing supplies to sanitize facilities	\$695,592.10	\$3,189,764.03		\$1,356,655.75	
Summer programming for special populations	\$146,962.03	\$1,106,642.17		\$830,166.04	
Supporting principals and other school leaders	\$722,455.02	\$1,408,934.84		\$743,764.42	
Training on minimizing spread of COVID-19	\$96,871.05	\$742,884.23		\$49,907.33	
Addressing digital divide and related issues in distance learning			\$459,944.51		\$703,817.99
Carrying out emergency educational services			\$425,019.02		\$397,755.44

LEA Budgets by Tag- All Approved District Applications as of 5/21/2021	CARES Act			CRRSA Act	
	ESSER I* (2019-2020)	ESSER I* (2020-2021)	GEER I (2019-2020)	ESSER II** (2020-2021)	GEER II (2020-2021)
Childcare and early childhood education			\$900.00		\$16,150.00
Continued staffing during period of disruption			\$277,740.06		\$169,343.48
Social and emotional support			\$81,073.56		\$66,553.96
Supporting on-going functionality of the LEA			\$736,358.13		\$1,115,686.10
Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act				\$151,975.00	
Improving the indoor air quality in school facilities				\$1,438,940.20	
School facility repairs and improvement to reduce risk of virus transmission				\$623,050.49	
Adult Education and Family Literacy Act					\$10,327.35
Addressing learning loss among students				\$7,077,071.64	
Total	\$10,026,672.68	\$29,904,001.46	\$2,296,804.16	\$ 30,890,380.98	\$2,979,166.73

Information from approved district COVID-19 Relief fund applications (GMS) as of May 21, 2021.

*ESSER I funds that were not expended in FY2020, were carried forward and budgeted in FY2021.

**Carry forward amounts will not be available until grants close out.

To meet the needs of schools, students, and educators in Alaska, DEED spent the state portion of the ESSER I funds to build capacity. These projects included upgrading technology within DEED to enable staff to interact more effectively with districts and each other; updating to paperless processes for teacher certification; and working to support teacher retention and COVID-19 related challenges. In addition, DEED procured a statewide license to a learning management system to support districts in building their virtual instructional programs and professional development. The Alaska Statewide Virtual System (AKSVS) was developed to provide districts with educator training and seats for students to participate in an established virtual education program where school and district capacity was low. Some of the ESSER Administration funds supported DEED by upgrading many of the grant applications in GMS to accommodate the new COVID-19 Relief Fund applications and associated requirements. The remaining funds for ESSER I Administration were carried over to FY2021.

Table C2.

Project	ESSER I	ESSER I-Admin	ESSER II	ESSER II-Admin
Digital Badging project	\$50,000.00			
Grants to non-Title I, Part A districts	\$14,789.00		\$317,598.00	
Teacher retention support	\$30,940.00		\$9,060.00	
Alaska Statewide Virtual System development and implementation	\$318,912.00			
Tools to improve DEED's ability to operate virtually	\$37,000.00			
Grant to build capacity of districts- ALASBO	\$50,000.00			
Connectivity and internet infrastructure	\$243,832.00			
Contract to evaluate student data to evaluate student achievement	\$48,000.00			
Upgrade grant management software to support additional COVID-19 relief funds		\$20,000.00		
Upgrade teacher certification process to enable a paperless system and emergency certifications	\$1,250,000.00			
Statewide license to a learning management system	\$1,605,278.00			
Department-level legal services fees		\$104,315.00		
Miscellaneous materials and supplies to support teleworking of DEED staff		\$2,000.00		
Total Allocated	\$3,648,751.00	\$126,315.00	\$326,658.00	\$0.00
Total Award	\$3,648,751.00	\$192,040.00	\$15,173,345.00	\$789,597.00
Balance	\$0.00	\$65,725.00	\$14,846,687.00	\$789,597

DEED has provided guidance to LEAs regarding district plan requirements, uses of funds, as well as guidance on stakeholder engagement. Information regarding support for LEA stakeholder engagement is available in Section E.3. This information will be used by districts to create their funding application.

Each LEA will create a budget using the same tags listed in Table C1 above for CARES, CRRSA, and ARP funds, and answer the following questions regarding their planned uses of ARP funds:

Section A: District Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services

A.1. Describe how the district developed the plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. Provide how the district sought public comment on the plan and took such comments into account in the development of the plan. Include which stakeholders were involved in the development of the plan.

A.2. Provide the link to district’s Mitigation Plan.

Section B: Stakeholder Consultation

- B.1. Describe how, in the planning for the use of ESSER III funds, the district provided opportunities for input and engaged in meaningful consultation with stakeholders including, but not limited to: students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; Tribes; and other stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory children, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

Section C: Identifying Needs

- C.1. Describe the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 on student learning and student well-being, including identifying the groups of students most impacted by the pandemic.

Section D: Coordination of Funds

- D.1. Describe how the district will coordinate with other federal education funding (i.e., other COVID-19 Relief funding, ESEA, IDEA, CTE, child nutrition).

Section E: Use of Funds

- E.1. Describe how the funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, in line with the most recent CDC guidance, in order to continuously and safely operate schools for in-person learning.
- E.2. Describe how the district will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 20 percent of the LEA's total allocation of ESSER III funds) to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs.
- E.3. Describe how the district will use funds to meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs, including through summer enrichment programming and other evidence-based interventions, and how they advance equity for underserved students.
- E.4. Describe how the district will use funds to sustain and support access to evidence-based reading instruction and early childhood education programs.

Section F: Evaluation

- F.1. Describe how the district will evaluate the level of implementation and effectiveness of programs funded.

Section G: General Education Provision Act (GEPA)

G.1. Describe how the district will comply with the requirements of Section 427 of GEPA, 20 U.S.C 1228a. The description must include information on the steps the district 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 access to, or participation in, the program.

- ii. To what extent ESSER I and ESSER II funds have been awarded to LEAs and, if funds have not yet been made available to LEAs, when they will be. In addition, please provide any available information on the total dollar amounts of ESSER I and ESSER II funds that have been obligated but not expended by the SEA and its LEAs, including whether the SEA is able to track LEA obligations.

All ESSER I and ESSER II funds allocated to districts have been made available. ESSER I funds that were not expended by districts were carried over to the next fiscal year after the grants were closed out. The same process will occur for ESSER II funds. Carry over will continue during the availability of each unique fund. A list of [CARES Act ESSER I District allocations](#), [CCRSA ESSER II District allocations](#), and [ARP ESSER III District allocations](#) can be found on the DEED COVID-19 Relief webpage.

DEED is not able to track fund obligation at a district level.

The table below indicates the budgeted amount for each of the ESSER I and ESSER II administrative and reserve funds allocated for statewide use.

Program	Budget/allocation	Obligated	Balance
ESSER I ADMIN	\$192,039	\$126,315	\$65,725
ESSER II ADMIN	\$789,597	\$0	\$789,597
ESSER I RESERVE	\$3,648,674	\$3,648,751	\$0
ESSER II RESERVE	\$15,173,345	\$326,658	\$14,846,687

- iii. In supporting LEAs as they plan for the safe return to and continuity of in-person instruction and for meeting the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the extent to which the SEA is also using other Federal funding sources including but not limited to under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (“ESEA”), IDEA, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (“WIOA”), funding for child nutrition services, and McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance

Act, and the funds to support the needs of students experiencing homelessness provided by section 2001(b)(1) of the ARP Act.³

DEED coordinates with the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) to provide guidance regarding the safe return to schools. DEED's Health and Safety team also works with other agencies to coordinate counseling and resources for working with the social and emotional needs of students and educators.

DEED utilized federally funded staff to support districts with COVID-19 relief funds. Program managers for ESEA, Education of Migratory Children Program, 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Career and Technical Education (Carl D. Perkins), IDEA, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistant Act, School Improvement 1003a, and Title III, Part A Language Instruction for English Learners and Immigrant Students have worked to support LEAs in all aspects of utilizing funds to support their individual programs. This includes, but is not limited to:

- *providing guidance as to how to maximize funds by braiding and blending existing federal dollars with COVID-19 relief funds;*
- *researching evidence-based strategies that support statewide initiatives and program goals;*
- *program development to incorporate COVID-19 relief fund priorities;*
- *promoting networking with other districts with similar programs;*
- *contributing to the creation of the ARP State Plan for Alaska;*
- *creating guidance documents; and,*
- *working with program advisory committees to support stakeholder engagement.*

DEED is in the process of maximizing all funding sources to support LEAs to provide support to underserved student populations.

D. Maximizing State-Level Funds to Support Students

The Department recognizes that States have an extraordinary opportunity to address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on underserved students through the ARP Act's required State set-asides to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, provide summer learning and enrichment programs, and provide comprehensive afterschool programs. In this section, SEAs will describe their evidence-based strategies for these resources.

1. Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time: Describe how the SEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(f)(1) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 5 percent of the State's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) on evidence-based interventions to address the academic impact of lost instructional time by supporting the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that such

³ Please note that the needs of students experiencing homelessness must be addressed (along with the other groups disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic) through the use of the ARP ESSER SEA reservations and the required LEA reservation for the academic impact of lost instructional time; the funding provided to support the needs of students experiencing homelessness by section 2001(b)(1) of the ARP Act is in addition to the supports and services provided with ARP ESSER funds.

interventions respond to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The description must include:

- i. A description of the evidence-based interventions (e.g., providing intensive or high-dosage tutoring, accelerating learning) the SEA has selected, and the extent to which the SEA will evaluate the impact of those interventions on an ongoing basis to understand if they are working;

Utilizing the Region 16 Comprehensive Center, DEED will focus on evidence-based strategies that support two key priorities stated in the [Alaska's Education Challenge](#): reading and career and technical education.

Reading has been identified by stakeholders, statewide surveys, and assessment data as a key area of need. The COVID-19 pandemic has only created a larger gap in achievement in this area. Alaska's Education Challenge primarily focuses on reading on grade level by third grade, however, reading inequities exist in all grades and will be addressed by the ARP ESSER funds.

The other area of focus is career and technical education (CTE), career readiness, and building partnerships between districts and industry partners. This K-12 tactic provides an integrated approach to all subjects, including literacy skill development.

DEED will encourage districts to engage in continuing school improvement models to educate, track, and adjust instruction to improve teaching and learning in schools. Guidance will provide the following:

- *Reading in grades K-3;*
- *Small group instruction;*
- *Effective curriculum;*
- *Effective instructional strategies;*
- *Tutoring practices;*
- *Leadership support; and*
- *90-minute reading block five days a week.*

The plan will create three categories to support these initiatives:

- *Competitive grants available to LEAs, community-based organizations, tribal organizations, students, and other non-profit entities to:*
 - *Support evidence-based reading instruction, interdisciplinary reading strategies, and creating a culture that ALL educators are reading teachers (including science, social studies, CTE, health, etc.).*
 - *Tier I instruction in reading for grades K-5*

- *Support projects that incorporate academic/technical knowledge and employability skills, are aligned to industry needs, have multiple entry and exit points, and culminate in the attainment of a recognized postsecondary or industry credential(s).*
- *Contracts*
 - *Focus on single projects to meet specific needs outlined by DEED, for example:*
 - *Create CTE statewide programs of study that span elementary to postsecondary.*
 - *Professional development in the science of reading and foundational reading skills.*
 - *Sustainable resources, courses, and learning activities that will be housed on Canvas, the learning management system available to all students and educators in Alaska.*
 - *Researching and organizing high-quality instructional resources.*
- *Matching grants*
 - *DEED will match funds on innovative projects, such as (but not limited to):*
 - *Academic tutoring;*
 - *Effective instructional programs;*
 - *Work-based learning; and,*
 - *Programs with strong ties to school improvement efforts.*

Competitive applications will address:

- *The disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on specific groups of students.*
- *Evidence-based strategies that support DEED outlined initiatives for these funds.*
- *Strong measurable program outcomes and a strategy to effectively measure progress and effectiveness of the program.*
- *Strategies to reengage students most likely to have experienced the impact of lost instructional time.*
- *The development of partnerships.*
- *Parent, family, and community engagement.*
- *Sustainability.*

- ii. How the evidence-based interventions will specifically address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii. When possible, please indicate which data sources the SEA will use to determine the impact of lost instructional time; and

DEED will work with the Region 16 Comprehensive Center to create supports for LEAs to address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19.

- *Identifying key areas of impact will require educators to compare data.*
 - *DEED will continue encouraging districts to analyze universal screening data and spring summative assessment data from 2019 and 2021 as this will be vital to identifying*

instructional needs. Guidance on utilizing a balanced assessment system will provide a framework for districts to use to create plans for identifying the unique needs of their students.

- *Support will be provided in analyzing school/district attendance to both identify how attendance affected student performance, as well as determining processes that may need to be updated in order to provide effective and clear data. Many schools that had remote or hybrid formats had students that struggled with connectivity and access to internet. Prioritizing student engagement will keep students in school and/or draw students back to schools.*
 - *Continuing work on teacher retention projects and providing support for all teachers are critical steps to maximizing student achievement.*
 - *One strong body of evidence shows that the quality of teaching has the largest school-based impact on student outcomes.*
- iii. The extent to which the SEA will use funds it reserves to identify and engage 1) students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and 2) students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.

Based on Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS) frameworks, schools and districts should have systems in place for early identification of students chronically absent or who may be under resourced. The local educators are encouraged to analyze student data to look for root causes of absenteeism and/or barriers to attendance or learning and then implement and monitor tiered interventions. As stated earlier, many remote/rural districts struggle with connectivity and internet issues making virtual or a hybrid model difficult for students to remain engaged. With this in mind, schools and districts are encouraged to apply innovative approaches to accelerate learning for those students who did not consistently participate in remote learning during building closures.

DEED will continue to use funding to develop resources for districts to help with effective standards-based instruction, assessment literacy, and interventions to support student learning. This may include (but not limited to):

- *Professional development;*
- *Utilize AKSVS to enhance student learning*
- *Additional eLearning courses for social emotional learning and student wellness;*
- *Evidence-based instructional strategies; and,*
- *Parent engagement strategies.*

DEED may use LEA student participation data to target certain districts for early literacy support and professional learning in the areas of the science of reading and foundational reading skills.

2. Evidence-Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Programs: Describe how the SEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(f)(2) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 1 percent of the State’s total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) for evidence-based summer learning and enrichment programs, including those that begin in Summer 2021, and ensure such programs respond to students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The description must include:

- i. A description of the evidence-based programs that address the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students (e.g., providing intensive or high-dosage tutoring, accelerating learning) the SEA has selected, and the extent to which the SEA will evaluate the impact of those programs;

In order to expedite the delivery of the 1% of funds reserved for Evidence-Based Summer and Enrichment Programs and the 1% of funds reserved for Evidence-Based Comprehensive Afterschool Programs, DEED plans to distribute both pots of funds through a single competitive grant opportunity that solicits applications that propose to offer summer only, or afterschool only, or both summer and afterschool programs. Requiring just one application will simplify the burden for applicants, particularly those who would like to offer both afterschool and summer programming. DEED, therefore, will address both section D.2. and D.3. of the ARP State Plan simultaneously in the following description.

Through strategic planning that happened prior to COVID-19, DEED identified five Positive Trajectories or goals which were articulated as Alaska’s Education Challenge. To the greatest extent possible, DEED intends to use these five areas to focus all state-level ARP-funded initiatives with the hopes of simultaneously addressing COVID-19 related needs, addressing pre-existing areas of challenge, and sustaining the gains beyond the availability of this temporary ARP funding. Most specifically for the out-of-school time summer and afterschool funding, DEED will ask any recipients to provide evidence-based programming that intentionally supports at least one of the following areas:

- *Support ALL students to read at grade level by the end of third grade; and,*
- *Increase career, technical, and culturally relevant education to meet student and workforce needs.*

Out-of-School Time (OST) and Expanded Learning Time (ELT) programs have been researched extensively, particularly Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLC) programs. According to Neild et al⁴ “numerous studies of afterschool programs meet Cause-and-Effect and Improved Outcome criteria for Tiers I and II but do not meet the minimum sample sizes or site numbers that programs should have as recommended by the US Department of Education’s evidence guidance.” For this reason, to identify an evidence-based foundation upon which to build state Summer and Afterschool OST programs, we heavily depend upon the Rand “The Value of Out-of-School Time

⁴ Neild, R.C., Wilson, S.J., & McClanahan, W. (2019). Afterschool programs: A review of evidence under the Every Student Succeeds Act. Philadelphia: Research for Action.

Programs” summary of OST research⁵. This 2017 report by McCombs et al examines “programs through the lenses of content, dosage (the hours of content provided), and outcomes measured, focusing on rigorous (i.e., experimental or quasi-experimental) large-scale evaluations and meta-analyses.” Through this research review, the authors identify some general and reproducible evidence-based elements of effective summer and afterschool OST programs that can be used to structure our State ESSER-funded OST programming, namely:

- *Targeted instruction that is focused on academic and/or social and emotional skills;*
- *A climate that is intentionally positive and warm;*
- *Consistent and frequent participation by students; and*
- *Staffing by a stable group of trained, dedicated instructors who work effectively with youth.*

DEED will use the four criteria above as the evidence-based framework that will structure the application for our ARP OST funds, thus ensuring any funded program is rooted in evidence-based strategies. DEED plans to allow both LEAs and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to compete for funding for summer and comprehensive afterschool programs that best meet the following criteria:

- *Programming is scheduled to allow for frequent, consistent, and on-going participation by students.*
- *Focus students, including those most impacted by the disruptions of COVID-19, are identified, recruited, and encouraged to attend regularly.*
- *All programs offer some programming in at least one of the following two areas: Literacy or Career Readiness. Such programming will utilize evidence-based curriculum or strategies.*
- *A significant portion of programming, which may include high impact tutoring, is focused on academic skill development.*
- *Program structure focuses on a positive program environment, small staff-to-student ratios, and developing strong relationships between staff and students.*
- *Programming develops student social emotional skills such as by explicitly teaching social emotional learning curriculum and/or intentionally embedding practices in the structure of the program.*
- *Programming supports student mental health needs, such as by developing student and staff self-regulation skills, providing access to a counselor, and/or intentionally incorporating Trauma-Engaged Practices.*
- *Additional educational enrichment activities such as art, STEM, music, and structured physical activities may be offered.*
- *Programming is provided by skilled staff such as certified teachers, paraprofessionals, experienced OST specialists, and trained tutors.*

⁵ McCombs, J.S, Whitaker, A.A., & Yoo, P.Y. (2017), The value of out-of-school-time programs. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation.

- *Transportation home is provided so that it is not a barrier to attendance unless all students typically walk to school.*

In order to evaluate the impact of the programming, grantees will be required to take daily program attendance, tracked by student. DEED will cross-reference frequency of OST program attendance with student regular-day attendance and statewide assessment performance for evidence of impact and individual student growth that will also be comparable across the state.

- ii. How the evidence-based programs will specifically address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3. i.--viii. When possible, please indicate which data sources the SEA will use to identify students most in need of summer learning and enrichment programs; and

In order to receive funds, grantees will be required to use student demographic data to identify all traditionally underserved students included in section A.3.i-viii. This information will be cross-referenced with individual student statewide assessment data and 2020-2021 school day attendance to identify the students disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and in greatest need of summer and/or afterschool programming. These students will be the focus students prioritized for recruitment and retention in the summer and/or afterschool program. In order to ensure CBOs will be able to identify these students, a data-sharing agreement between CBO and LEA will be a required component of any application for funds. To the extent possible, grantees will also be asked to justify how the programming offered is designed to address the needs of this focus population.

- iii. The extent to which the SEA will use funds it reserves to identify and engage 1) students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and 2) students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.

DEED has surveyed LEAs to identify the degree to which each school has been able to offer students in-person learning during the 2020-2021 school year. (For the 2019-2020 school year, all LEAs were ordered to cease in-person instruction beginning on March 16, 2020 through the end of the 2019-2020 school year.) DEED will be able to use this data to identify and prioritize summer and afterschool funding to schools whose students had the least opportunity to attend in-person during the 2020-2021 school year. Additionally, grantees will be asked to use individual student attendance data to identify and prioritize for service students whose attendance was most greatly impacted during COVID-19 disruptions. The social-emotional and mental health supports required in the evidence-based program framework described above will help to re-engage these students in both the summer and/or afterschool intervention, as well as the regular school day programming.

3. Evidence-Based Comprehensive Afterschool Programs: Describe how the SEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(f)(3) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 1 percent of the State’s total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) for evidence-based comprehensive afterschool programs (including, for example, before-school programming), and ensure such programs respond to students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The description must include:
 - i. A description of the evidence-based programs (e.g., including partnerships with community-based organizations) the SEA has selected, and the extent to which the SEA will evaluate the impact of those programs;
 - ii. How the evidence-based programs will specifically address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii. When possible, please indicate which data sources the SEA will use to identify students most in need of comprehensive afterschool programming; and
 - iii. the extent to which the SEA will use funds it reserves to identify and engage 1) students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and 2) students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.

As stated in D.2., DEED plans to distribute both allocations (summer program 1% and after school program 1%) in a single competitive grant opportunity that solicits applications that propose summer programs only, or afterschool programs only, or both summer and afterschool programs. The rationale, requirements, and evidence-base are the same for this section.

4. Emergency Needs: If the SEA plans to reserve funds for emergency needs under section 2001(f)(4) of the ARP Act to address issues responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, describe the anticipated use of those funds, including the extent to which these funds will build SEA and LEA capacity to ensure students’ and staff’s health and safety; to meet students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs; and to use ARP ESSER funds to implement evidence-based interventions.

Other agencies within the State of Alaska offer funds to meet these needs.

E. Supporting LEAs in Planning for and Meeting Students’ Needs

The Department recognizes that the safe return to in-person instruction must be accompanied by a focus on meeting students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, and by addressing the opportunity gaps that existed before – and were exacerbated by – the pandemic. In this section, SEAs will describe how they will support their LEAs in developing high-quality plans for LEAs’ use of ARP ESSER funds to achieve these objectives.

1. LEA Plans for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds: Describe what the SEA will require its LEAs to include in LEA plans consistent with the ARP ESSER requirements for the use of ARP ESSER funds, how the SEA will require such plans to be made available to the public, and

the deadline by which the LEA must submit its ARP ESSER plan (which must be a reasonable timeline and should be within no later than 90 days after receiving its ARP ESSER allocation). The LEA plans must include, at a minimum:

- i. The extent to which and how the funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, in line with the most recent CDC guidance, in order to continuously and safely operate schools for in-person learning;

Each LEA's application will require a detailed description of how the LEA developed the plan for safely returning to in-person instruction and continuity of services, and how the LEA solicited public comment and utilized stakeholder feedback to develop the plan. The LEA will include the stakeholders involved in developing the plan and the link to the publicly posted plan. Additionally, each LEA will describe how the funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are practicable to the greatest extent, in line with the most recent Alaska DHSS guidance and local health officials to operate schools continuously and safely for in-person learning. DEED will review each LEA's budget and ensure it aligns with the descriptions provided in the application.

To support LEAs in developing and implementing the plan for safely returning to in-person learning and continuity of services, DEED provided LEAs with several resources including, but not limited to: the most recent CDC guidance; [template for the plan](#); webinars; and [guidance document](#) addressing each allowable use of funds that included what LEAs should consider, possible activities, and links to additional resources.

- ii. How the LEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 20 percent of the LEA's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs;

Each LEA's application will require the LEA to budget for and expend at least 20% of their funds to a specific purpose code called "Addressing Learning Loss Among Students." The LEA will receive a validation error if they try to submit the application to DEED without having at least 20% budgeted under the purpose code. This will also require the LEA to separately track expenses under this purpose code to submit reimbursement requests. In addition to budgeting and reimbursing separately, LEAs will describe how the funds under the "Addressing Learning Loss Among Students" purpose code address the academic impact of lost instructional time. For example, the plan will include implementing evidence-based interventions, summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs. Program and fiscal staff at DEED will review

each LEA's application (budgets and narratives) and work with them to ensure all requirements are met before approving the application.

To support LEAs in using the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act, DEED provided LEAs with several resources including, but not limited to: webinars; written guidance; and one-pagers that included evidence-based resources for them to consider and possible allowable activities to address the academic impact of lost instructional time.

- iii. How the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act; and

Each LEA's application will require a completed budget. When budgeting an item, the LEA will select all appropriate tags for each budgeted item. Unlike purpose codes, tags do not require separate reimbursement requests. Tags are strictly for organizing and grouping items in budgets. There will be a tag for each allowable use of funds from section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act. In addition to tagging each budgeted item to permissible use of funds from the ARP Act, the LEA will describe how the funds will meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs. The description will include summer enrichment programming and other evidence-based interventions, after school programming, evidence-based interventions, and equity solutions for underserved students. DEED program and fiscal staff will review each LEA's application (budgets and narratives) and work with them to ensure all requirements are met before approving the application.

- iv. How the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements, including but not limited to the interventions under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, will respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students.

In addition to the processes described above, within each LEA's application, they will be required to describe:

- *How, in the planning for the use of ESSER III funds, the LEA provided opportunities for input and engaged in meaningful consultation with stakeholders including, but not limited to: students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; Tribes; and other stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory children, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.*

- *The extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning and student well-being, including identifying the groups of students most impacted by the pandemic.*
- *How the LEA will coordinate with other federal education funding (i.e., other federal COVID-19 Relief funding, ESEA, IDEA, CTE, and Child Nutrition).*
- *How the LEA will use funds to meet students' academic, social, and emotional needs, including through summer enrichment programming and other evidence-based interventions, and how they advance equity for underserved students.*
- *Describe how the LEA will use funds to sustain and support access to evidence-based and early childhood education programs.*
- *How the LEA will evaluate the level of implementation and effectiveness of programs funded.*

DEED program and fiscal staff review each LEA's application (budgets and narratives) and work together to ensure all requirements are met before approving the application. Each application goes through several levels of review before receiving final approval. After an LEA submits an application, program and fiscal staff schedule a meeting to review the submitted application. Feedback and requested edits are provided to the LEA when the application is returned, as needed. Once all requested edits are made by the LEA, the application is reviewed again by DEED program staff before receiving final approval from a DEED Administrator. Program and fiscal staff consult with the DEED COVID-19 fiscal team, which consists of DEED Leadership from multiple divisions, as needed throughout the review process.

See the [FY2022 COVID-19 Relief Application GMS Handbook](#) for application guidance provided to LEAs. In addition to the application process described above, DEED will provide LEAs with several resources including, but not limited to: webinars; written guidance; and one-pagers that include evidence-based resources for them to consider and possible allowable activities that can address the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students and underserved students.

2. LEA Consultation: Describe how the SEA will, in planning for the use of ARP ESSER funds, ensure that, consistent with the ARP ESSER requirements], its LEAs engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders, including, but not limited to:
 - i. students;
 - ii. families;
 - iii. school and district administrators (including special education administrators); and
 - iv. teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions.

The LEA must also engage in meaningful consultation with each of the following to the extent present in or served by the LEA:

- i. Tribes;
- ii. civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and

- iii. stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

The description must also include how the SEA will ensure that LEAs provide the public the opportunity to provide input in the development of the LEA's plan for the use of ARP ESSER funds and take such input into account.

DEED provided multiple webinars and informational calls to communicate availability of ARP funds, the LEA application process, and the consultation requirements. A variety of webinars were delivered for general audiences, targeted to specific LEA and stakeholder functional roles, specifically targeted to family and community stakeholders, and directed toward representatives of tribes, civil rights organizations, and other subgroups. The list below notes the variety of audiences targeted in outreach webinars:

- *ARP State Plan Overview: Engaging Stakeholders – 5/3/2021 2:00pm*
- *ARP State Plan Overview: District Requirements – 5/4/2021 2:00pm*
- *ARP State Plan Overview: District Data Collection – 5/5/2021 2:00pm*
- *ARP State Plan: What are the state's needs? – 5/7/2021 2:00pm*
- *ARP State Plan: What are the priorities for state funds? – 5/14/2021 2:00 pm*
- *ARP State Plan: How can DEED support schools, districts, and educators? – 5/21/2021 2:00 pm*
- *Stakeholder Engagement Opportunities – May 10-12, 6:00pm, and May 18-19, noon*

In partnership with the Region 16 Comprehensive Center, DEED used the online collaboration platform ThoughtExchange to gather feedback on priorities for ARP funded interventions through an essential question soliciting response that were unique and authentic. Each participant also had the option to react to existing comments by rating them on a scale of one to five. The comments and ratings were ranked by the number of responses and the rating(s) they received. While this feedback was gathered through the state level platform, stakeholders were asked to identify their "home" LEA such that all feedback was sorted and provided to all LEAs as a record of local LEA feedback and consultation for consideration in development of the LEA Plan.

The following resources were made available to LEA leadership for use in local LEA outreach to stakeholders.

- *All presentation materials prepared and used at the SEA level for statewide outreach were made available to LEAs and they were encouraged to adjust any materials to better serve their local context. These resources are available to LEAs and other stakeholders at [DEED's ARP website](#).*
- *Disaggregated (LEA) stakeholder feedback gathered through the online collaboration platform ThoughtExchange is provided to LEAs based on the source of the feedback as identified when submitted.*

ARP grants to LEAs are managed through DEED’s well established grant management processes housed in the online Grants Management System (GMS). LEA program details are submitted through the GMS system by August 23, 2021 and include reporting of LEA consultation conducted in building the local ARP plan. LEA applications include the following elements:

- LEAs provide responses to the following to establish how the stakeholder consultation has been accomplished:
 - Program Details completed in GMS (Section B: Stakeholder Consultation):
 - Describe how, in the planning for the use of ESSER III funds, the district provided opportunities for input and engaged in meaningful consultation with stakeholders including, but not limited to: students; families; school and district administrators (including special education administrators); teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; Tribes; and other stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory children, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.
 - Assurances that districts are implementing the requirements of ARP funding are signed as part of the LEA application for funds.
- LEA applications are reviewed by DEED staff to ensure local consultation has occurred and missing elements will be clarified with specific LEAs as needed. See Section G.2 for additional information regarding the LEA application approval process.

3. Describe how the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs in using ARP ESSER funds. The description must include:
 - i. How the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs’ implementation of evidence-based interventions that respond to students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, such as through summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs – including the extent to which the SEA will collect evidence of the effectiveness of interventions employed;

DEED will have LEAs submit an annual report which will require a description of the evidence-based strategies used. In this annual report, LEAs will describe their Measurable Program Outcomes (MPOs) and describe their progress towards meeting such goals. The LEA will provide narrative about how they will adjust programming, if necessary, based on the results of this annual evaluation.

To support LEAs in developing and implementing evidence-based interventions, DEED provided LEAs with several resources including, but not limited to, webinars; [evidence-based guidance](#) posted on

[DEED's ARP State Plan website](#); and one-pagers for each allowable use of funds that included what LEAs should consider, possible activities, and links to additional resources.

- ii. How the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs in specifically addressing the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii; and

DEED will have LEAs submit an annual report which will require the LEA to describe how services and programming were focused on each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii. Additionally, each LEA's application for funds will require the LEA to describe the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning and school climate, including identifying the groups of students most impacted by the pandemic. LEA Application Program Details (LEA narrative descriptions) can be located in the [COVID-19 Relief GMS Handbook](#).

DEED surveyed stakeholders from across the state representing various roles and subgroups to help determine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting needs. In support of LEAs, DEED will provide LEA-level results from the statewide surveys for LEAs to analyze and appropriately adjust programming. DEED will review each LEA's application and provide feedback. DEED issues weekly newsletters with pertinent information, updates webpage(s) with up-to-date resources and guidance, and hosts webinars to provide information to LEAs and stakeholders.

- iii. How the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs in using ARP ESSER funds to identify, reengage, and support students most likely to have experienced the impact of lost instructional time on student learning, such as:
 - a. Students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years;
 - b. Students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures; and
 - c. Students most at-risk of dropping out of school.

DEED has hosted, and will continue to host, webinars on how to analyze data, appropriate use of funds, and application requirements. DEED will review each LEA's application and provide feedback. DEED will help guide LEAs in thoughtfully diagnosing areas of need, including data on the academic, social, emotional, and mental health impacts of lost instructional time.

DEED will analyze student dropout rates, chronic absenteeism, and retention rates, and will provide targeted outreach and support to those LEAs identified as having the highest rates. The Report Card to the Public, which is mainly populated by DEED's Summer OASIS Data Collection, will be a tool used to analyze student dropout rates, chronic absenteeism, and retention rates. DEED will review each LEA

application and provide feedback on proposed use of funds to ensure LEAs are identifying disparities and using funds to address lost instructional time.

4. Describe the extent to which the SEA will support its LEAs in implementing additional strategies for taking educational equity into account in expending ARP ESSER funds, including but not limited to:
 - i. Allocating funding both to schools and for districtwide activities based on student need, and

LEA decisions regarding the implementation of evidence-base practices and funding must be based on data driven decisions. Each LEAs application will require the LEA to describe the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning and school climate, including identifying the groups of students most impacted by the pandemic. DEED program and fiscal staff will review each LEA's application (budgets and narratives) and work with them to ensure the activities budgeted align with the identified needs described.

As described in E.1.iii., each LEA's application will require a completed budget. When budgeting an item, the LEA will select all appropriate tags for each budgeted item. There will be a tag for each allowable use of funds from section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act. In addition to tagging each budgeted item to permissible use of funds from the ARP Act, the LEA has the option to tag if the expense is going to a particular school or is for a district level activity.

DEED supports LEAs and individual school sites by making available reported data including suspension and expulsion rates, assessment, and demographics including number and percentage of low-income students. Information concerning the use of Positive Behavior Intervening Strategies (PBIS) will also be provided by the Special Education Service Agency (SESA), a statewide service provider sponsored by DEED. District partnerships with the Alaska Association of School Boards provides school climate information for sites and districts to use in decision making.

In addition to the supports listed above, DEED provided LEAs with several resources regarding expending ARP ESSER funds including, but not limited to: webinars; written guidance; and one-pagers that included evidence-based resources for them to consider and possible allowable activities.

- ii. Implementing an equitable and inclusive return to in-person instruction. An inclusive return to in-person instruction includes, but is not limited to, establishing policies and practices that avoid the over-use of exclusionary discipline measures (including in- and out-of-school suspensions) and creating a positive and supportive learning environment for all students.

DEED has a dedicated School Health and Safety team that is available to support schools and districts. Creating and maintaining safe, supportive, and successful schools is a priority in Alaska, and the School Health and Safety team has created many resources and frameworks for schools and districts to utilize. DEED will provide ongoing support and resources to LEAs to support staff and students social, emotional, and mental health through webinars, eLearning, and training and support on [Transforming Schools: A Framework for Trauma Engaged Practice in Alaska](#). Below are some examples of the supports and resources available to districts, schools, and educators:

- [Transforming Schools Framework](#): This nationally recognized tool is designed to help schools and communities integrate trauma-engaged policies and practices that improve academic outcomes and well-being for students.
 - [Transforming Schools Toolkit](#): The vision of this toolkit is to help Alaska schools and communities integrate trauma-engaged practices and policies into their everyday activities in order to improve academic outcomes and well-being for all students. Improving student outcomes requires us to support the whole child, and to understand how trauma impacts a child's ability to learn and thrive.
- [eLearning Modules](#): DEED has a growing catalog of eLearning courses available for educators in Alaska. Full list of courses can be found [here](#).
 - [Equity Training for Educators](#)
 - [School Crisis Response Planning](#)
 - [Trauma-Engaged and Practicing Schools](#)
 - [Trauma-Engaged Educators Guide](#)
 - [Trauma-Engaged Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health](#)
 - [Trauma-Sensitive Schools](#)
 - [Overcoming ACEs in Alaskan Schools](#)
 - [Overcoming Anxiety and Stress in Alaskan Schools](#)
 - [Childhood Traumatic Grief](#)
 - [Classroom Practices](#)
 - [Emotional Intelligence](#)
 - [Family Partnerships](#)
 - [Mind-Body Connections](#)
 - [Self-Regulation](#)
 - [Self-Care](#)

Alaska Statutes 14.33.125 and 14.33.127 states that a school district shall provide crisis intervention training to a sufficient number of its employees to meet the needs of the school population. This

required crisis intervention training must be part of a crisis intervention program that has been approved by DEED.

F. Supporting the Educator Workforce

The Department recognizes the toll that the COVID-19 pandemic has taken on the Nation’s educators as well as students. In this section, SEAs will describe strategies for supporting and stabilizing the educator workforce and for making staffing decisions that will support students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

1. Supporting and Stabilizing the Educator Workforce:

- i. Describe the extent to which the State is facing shortages of educators, education administration personnel, and other school personnel involved in safely reopening schools, and the extent to which they vary by region/type of school district and/or groups of educators (e.g., special educators and related services personnel and paraprofessionals; bilingual or English as a second language educators; science, technology, engineering, and math (“STEM”) educators; career and technical education (“CTE”) educators; early childhood educators). Cite specific data on shortages and needs where available.

Complete the table below, changing or adding additional rows as needed, or provide a narrative description.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Governor of Alaska suspended several statutory and regulatory requirements for educator certification and allowed for the issuing of emergency certification. Of Alaska’s 54 LEAs, 43 used the emergency certificate option to fill vacant positions during the 2020-2021 school year.

The table below itemizes the area that emergency certificates (EC) were issued for the 2020-2021 school year. For reference, Alaska employs approximately 7,000 educators annually.

Table F1.

Area	Data on shortages and needs	Narrative description
Special educators and related service personnel and paraprofessionals	63 EC	Special education educators and related service personnel are historically in high demand in Alaska. Through regulations, Alaska has an alternative route to special education that allow general education teachers to enroll in a special education advanced program and concurrently serve as a special education teacher.
Bilingual educators	7 EC	

Area	Data on shortages and needs	Narrative description
English as a second language educators	15 EC	
STEM educators	53 EC	Relative to other areas, there is a significant need in the area of STEM that will need to be supported.
CTE educators	10 EC	
Elementary Education	137 EC	In comparison to the number of other types of emergency certificates, the number of elementary education emergency certificates issued is unexpectedly high.
Early childhood educators	13 EC	
School counselors	28 EC	Many of Alaska rural schools and districts do not have the student enrollment to employ a full-time school counselor. Districts that have multiple school sites spread over large areas often employ itinerate school counselors to travel from school site to school site.
Social workers	5 EC	Most of Alaska rural schools and districts do not have the student enrollment to employ a full-time social worker. Districts enter into memorandums of agreement with various social service providers to make this service available to students in our small rural schools. DEED is piloting a School Social worker for our rural and remote districts to help with addressing COVID-19.
Nurses	1 EC	Most of Alaska rural schools do not have the student enrollment to employ a school nurse. Identified during the COVID-19 pandemic as a critical need, an on-call school nurse was made available through the Alaska Department of Health & Social Service. This resource will continue to be available to schools in the 2021-2022 school year.
School psychologists	1 EC	Most of Alaska rural schools and districts do not have the student enrollment to employ a full-time school psychologist. This need has been historically filled by contracting with a regional resource center or through inter-district cooperation.

Data Source: Teacher Certification Database, May 13, 2021

- ii. Describe how the SEA will assist its LEAs in identifying the most urgent areas of shortages or potential shortages, with particular plans for individual LEAs facing the most significant needs (e.g., by avoiding layoffs, providing high-quality professional learning opportunities, and addressing the impact of stress or trauma on educators). Include a description of how other Federal COVID-19 funding (e.g., ESSER and GEER funds under the CARES Act and CRRSA Act) have already been used to avoid layoffs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

DEED uses emergency certification data and first day vacancy reports to identify the most urgent areas of shortages. Using the results of this data and report, DEED will follow-up with LEAs facing the most significant needs. Working together, department and LEA staff will come up with plans to address the situation. DEED will continue to offer technical assistance on emergency certification options, retire rehire provisions and the certification process in general.

Moving forward, DEED's Teacher Certification Office will work closely with LEAs to support educators as they transition from emergency certification to standard certification. DEED will provide resources and technical assistance directly to educators holding emergency certificates issued during the COVID-19 pandemic as they satisfy the missing requirements and gain standard certificates as described in statutes and regulations.

In reviewing other Federal COVID-19 funding, most of the funds were used for other purposes than avoiding layoffs, see Chart C1 on pages 20-21. Within their ESSER I and ESSER II applications some LEAs indicated that they would use these funds to hire additional teachers to help with reduction of class size. In line with what LEAs reported on ESSER I and ESSER II applications, when comparing the October counts from 2019-2020 and from 2020-2021, the total number of teachers increased from 7662 to 7735 and the total FTE increased from 7465 to 7559. These funds were also used for extra duty per diem for work outside contract hours. Many LEAs are using these funds to hire teachers for summer school or additional after school tutoring.

- iii. Describe the actions the SEA will take to fill anticipated gaps in certified teachers for the start of the 2021-2022 school year and to what extent the SEA will further support its LEAs in expanding the educator pipeline and educator diversity while addressing the immediate needs of students disproportionately impacted by the pandemic (e.g., recruiting teaching candidates to provide high dosage tutoring or implementing residencies for teacher candidates).

DEED will continue to assist LEAs' human resource managers with utilizing various certification options to bring more educators into our system. Alaska teacher certification regulations allow for an alternative route into Special Education, an initial certification for individuals enrolled in a teacher preparation program, and emergency certification. Additionally, a recent law was enacted that allows for LEAs to rehire retired educators to fill shortage areas.

DEED will share the recommendations of the Governor's Teacher Retention and Recruitment Working Group with stakeholders, LEAs, and policy makers, focusing on the suggested action items specific to DEED. In this coming year, DEED will continue to focus on the modernization of its certification system. Regulations are already in the process of being revised to include a certification pathway for paraprofessionals to gain teacher certification. In cooperation with the legislature, DEED will continue

to support bills that would allow for a greater degree of certification reciprocity. In preparation to move the teacher certification process online, DEED has started working with a contractor on the design phase. The Governor's Teacher Retention and Recruitment Action Plan is available at https://education.alaska.gov/Media/Default/trr-images/TRR_Action_Plan_April2021.pdf.

DEED will continue to support Educators Rising Alaska, a program designed to support Alaska students in middle and high school who are interested in becoming educators. While the goal of this program is to encourage Alaska students to take the steps necessary to become licensed teachers, it also prepares students to take on the responsibilities of paraprofessionals. Additional information concerning this program is available at <https://www.alaska.edu/educatorsrising/index.php>.

2. **Staffing to Support Student Needs:** Describe the extent to which the SEA has developed or will develop strategies and will support its LEAs in increasing student access to key support staff within school buildings, including school counselors, special education personnel, nurses, social workers, and psychologists (e.g., hiring additional personnel or freeing up these staff to focus on providing services to students).

DEED has the following strategies that support its LEAs increased student access to key support staff for schools. These strategies will be considered for continuation and expansion based on their results.

DEED is piloting a School Social Worker for our rural and remote LEAs to help with addressing COVID-19. This position is available to provide professional development on trauma engaged practices, virtual self-care, training on reducing student stress and depression, respond to escalating anxiety of staff and students, social emotional learning, and to distribute school mental health related resources. The state has also employed a school nurse consultant to help with addressing COVID-19.

DEED has developed a [framework](#) for trauma engaged practices which has been distributed to LEAs in the state. It has one section that specifically addresses how to consider staff assignments and duties of these positions.

G. Monitoring and Measuring Progress

The Department recognizes that transparency on how ARP ESSER funds are used and their impact on the Nation's education system is a fundamental responsibility of Federal, State, and local government. In this section, SEAs will describe how they are building capacity at the SEA and LEA levels to ensure high-quality data collection and reporting and to safeguard funds for their intended purposes.

1. **Capacity for Data Collection and Reporting:** It is important for an SEA to continuously monitor progress and make adjustments to its strategies, as well as to support its LEAs in making adjustments to LEA strategies, based on impact. Describe how the SEA will ensure its capacity and the capacity of its LEAs to collect data on reporting requirements, including but not limited to the examples of reporting requirements described in the SEA's Grant

Award Notification (listed in Appendix B). Describe the SEA’s capacity and strategy to collect data from its LEAs (disaggregated by student group, where applicable), to the greatest extent practicable, including any steps the SEA will take to build its capacity in the future (which may include the use of ARP ESSER and other Federal COVID-19 pandemic funds at the SEA and LEA levels), on issues that may include the following:

- i. Student learning, including the academic impact of lost instructional time during the COVID-19 pandemic;

DEED has contracted with an assessment vendor that provides interim assessments to examine learning loss during the COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 realities have proven challenging for this work, but DEED is hopeful that the fall 2021 administration will provide the data necessary to pinpoint where, how, and for whom learning loss has occurred so that teachers, schools, and LEAs can implement the necessary interventions.

DEED is also currently collecting data on instructional modes across the entire 2020-2021 school year to identify which schools lost the most in-person instructional time during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- ii. Opportunity to learn measures (e.g., chronic absenteeism; student engagement; use of exclusionary discipline; access to and participation in advanced coursework; access to technology, including educator access to professional development on the effective use of technology; access to high-quality educators; access to school counselors, social workers, nurses, and school psychologists; and results from student, parent, and/or educator surveys);

DEED currently collects data relevant to calculating and reporting on chronic absenteeism, use of exclusionary discipline (suspensions and expulsions), access to high-speed internet at the school level, access to high-quality educators (in-field), results from participation in student, parent, and/or educator surveys, and access to school counselors, social workers, nurses, and school psychologists.

DEED will build capacity to collect information on student engagement, access to and participation in advanced coursework, and access to technology, including educator access to professional development on the effective use of technology. DEED will work with internal stakeholders and LEAs to define and collect relevant, consistent, and timely measures for these domains.

- iii. Fiscal data that is comparable across the State (e.g., per-pupil expenditures at the LEA and school levels);

DEED began reporting fiscal data that is comparable across the State in the 2019-2020 school year. DEED currently reports per-pupil expenditures at the state, LEA, and school levels. DEED will continue to work with LEAs to provide support in reporting per-pupil expenditures. This includes regularly updating

relevant documentation, answering questions, and hosting webinars to discuss reporting changes and expectations.

When budgeting ESSER III funds, all LEAs will identify what percentage of funds are being used to address learning loss among students. This information can be compared across the state. Similarly, in their budgets, LEAs will identify which of the many allowable and diverse uses of ESSER III funds their proposed expenditures and activities fall under. This can be aggregated at the state level to identify what allowable areas of spending were most targeted by LEAs.

- iv. Jobs created and retained (by position type);

DEED will build capacity to collect information on jobs created and retained (by position type). Currently, DEED collects information on the full-time equivalent (FTE) basis for certified staff that are federally funded through Title I-A, Title II-A, Title III-A, Title I-C, Title IV-A, and Consolidated Administration. DEED is exploring the possibility of adding codes to this data collection element to track FTE that is created or retained through ARP ESSER funding.

- v. Participation in programs funded by ARP ESSER resources (e.g., summer and afterschool programs); and

DEED will build capacity to collect information on participation in programs funded by ARP ESSER resources (e.g., summer and afterschool programs). This will be accomplished by working with LEAs to track students that participate in ARP ESSER programs. This information will then be reported – potentially as part of the final report described in Section E – by LEA and collected by DEED in order to provide transparency around which students participated in ARP ESSER funded programs and to analyze improvement in outcomes for students that participated in ARP ESSER funded programs across time.

- vi. Other reporting requirements reasonably required by the Secretary (please refer to Appendix B of this template; final requirements will be issued separately).

When the final requirements are issued, DEED will evaluate whether or not current capacity will accommodate the requirements. If current capacity will not accommodate the requirements, then DEED will work with internal stakeholders and LEAs to define and collect relevant, consistent, and timely measures for the domains related to the requirements.

2. Monitoring and Internal Controls: Describe how the SEA will implement appropriate fiscal monitoring of and internal controls for the ARP ESSER funds (e.g., by updating the SEA’s plan for monitoring funds and internal controls under the CARES and CRRSA Acts; addressing potential sources of waste, fraud, and abuse; conducting random audits; or other

tools). In this response, please describe the SEA's current capacity to monitor ARP ESSER; steps, if needed, to increase capacity; and any foreseeable gaps in capacity, including how the SEA will provide its LEAs with technical assistance in the anticipated areas of greatest need.

A team of staff with varied skill sets work to oversee the implementation of all COVID-19 relief funding and activities. The team consists of program managers, program administrators, DEED executive leadership, operations managers, and internal auditors. DEED hired one long-term, non-permanent position to assist with managing the EANS program, reviewing COVID-19 relief fund applications, providing technical assistance, outreach, drafting guidance, etc. Additional department staff have assisted as necessary to fill in where needed for tasks such as drafting the state plan, reviewing LEA applications, providing support for stakeholder engagement, creating materials to support LEAs, etc.

DEED program managers review each budget to ensure the proposed expenditures are allowable and in line with the proposed activities outlined in the application. Each application is reviewed by at least two DEED staff before final approval. The program manager will send the application back to the LEA for revisions if the criteria are not met, or a proposed expenditure is not allowable. Once the program manager approves the application/budget, the program administrator reviews the application and provides final approval. DEED's Grants Administrators review budgets prior to reimbursements and reimbursement requests are checked to verify they match the approved budget. DEED continues to work with LEAs who request or are otherwise indicating they need technical assistance. Technical assistance is provided by DEED's COVID-19 team. A detailed report outlining district expenditures of ARP ESSER III funds will be posted on the web.

Oversight activities include informational webinars, technical assistance, and guidance documents. The application and budgets for COVID-19 relief funds are housed in DEED's Grants Management System (GMS). A comprehensive review of the application at the beginning of the process, as outlined above, provides the framework for the LEAs and fiscal team at DEED to review the information needed to ensure that planned activities and expenses are allowable and meet the specific needs of the ARP Act. Technical assistance to LEAs while developing the application and budget not only helps the LEAs with their planning, but it also allows DEED staff to provide information as needed for the LEA to plan effectively for these funds. In addition, each year LEAs are required to submit an independent audit to DEED. This audit is reviewed by DEED staff to ensure consistency with previously submitted documents. DEED will continue to use the ESEA risk assessment for CARES Act, CRRSA Act, and ARP Act funds to determine if additional oversight is necessary.

Appendix A: School Operating Status and Instructional Mode Data Template

Indicate the date or time period represented by the following data.

Table 1

In the most recent time period available, how many schools in your State offered each mode of instruction or learning model described below? Each row should account for all schools in your State, so that, for each row, the sum of the numbers in the “offered to all students,” “offered to some students,” and “not offered” columns is equal to the number in the “all schools” column.

Number of schools	All schools	Offered to all students	Offered to some students	Not offered
Remote or online only	502*	373	26	99
School buildings open with both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid)	502*	204	23	271
School buildings open with full-time in-person instruction	502*	382	10	106

**Note: 4 schools have not yet responded. Row totals will sum to 498 which does not match the “All Schools” value.*

To the extent data are available, please complete the above table for 1) all schools in the State, and 2) separately for each instructional level (e.g., pre-kindergarten/elementary schools, middle schools, high schools).

Table 2

In the most recent time period available, what was the enrollment and mode of instruction for the schools in your State?

Number of students	Total enrollment	Remote or online only	Both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid)	Full-time in-person instruction
Students from low-income families	53,775	10,657	20,141	22,950

Number of students	Total enrollment	Remote or online only	Both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid)	Full-time in-person instruction
White, not Hispanic	59,225	18,632	22,088	18,503
Black or African American, not Hispanic	3,095	484	1,482	1,128
Hispanic, of any race	9,151	1,656	4,124	3,371
Asian or Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, not Hispanic	10,604	1,065	4,367	5,165
American Indian or Alaskan Native, not Hispanic	27,228	4,662	9,291	13,218
Two or more races, not Hispanic	15,953	3,377	6,684	5,887
Race/Ethnicity information not available				
English learners	15,155	1,553	6,519	7,083
Children with disabilities	18,044	3,193	7,280	7,553
Students experiencing homelessness	2,188	345	1,011	832
Children and youth in foster care	1,448	167	644	637
Migratory students	8,936	896	3,143	4,875

Appendix B: Reporting Language Included in the Grant Award Notification (“GAN”)

As described in the Grant Award Notification (“GAN”), the SEA will comply with, and ensure that its LEAs comply with, all reporting requirements at such time and in such manner and containing such information as the Secretary may reasonably require, including on matters such as:

- How the State 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 mitigating 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 (fully in-person, hybrid, and fully remote) and conditions;
- SEA and 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;
- SEA and 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.

Appendix C: Assurances

By signing this document, the SEA assures all of the following:

- The SEA will conduct all its operations so that no person shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under the ARP ESSER program or activity based on race, color, national origin, which includes a person's limited English proficiency or English learner status and a person's actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics; sex; age; or disability. These non-discrimination obligations arise under Federal civil rights laws, including but not limited to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Age Discrimination Act of 1975. In addition, the SEA must comply with all regulations, guidelines, and standards issued by the Department under any of these statutes;
- The SEA will comply with all ARP Act and other ARP ESSER requirements and all requirements of its Grant Award Notification, including but not limited to:
 - Complying with the maintenance of effort provision in section 2004(a)(1) of the ARP Act, absent a waiver by the Secretary pursuant to section 2004(a)(2) of the ARP Act; and
 - Complying with the maintenance of equity provisions in section 2004(b) of the ARP Act, and ensuring its LEAs comply with the maintenance of equity provision in section 2004(c) of the ARP Act (please note that the Department will provide additional guidance on maintenance of equity shortly);
- The SEA will allocate ARP ESSER funds to LEAs in an expedited and timely manner and, to the extent practicable, not later than 60 days after the SEA receives ARP ESSER funds (i.e., 60 days from the date the SEA receives each portion of its ARP ESSER funds). An SEA that is not able to allocate such funds within 60 days because it is not practicable (e.g., because of pre-existing State board approval requirements) will provide an explanation to the Department within 30 days of receiving each portion of its ARP ESSER funds (submitted via email to your Program Officer at [State].OESE@ed.gov (e.g., Alabama.OESE@ed.gov)), including a description of specific actions the SEA is taking to provide ARP ESSER funds to LEAs in an expedited and timely manner and the SEA's expected timeline for doing so;
- The SEA will implement evidence-based interventions as required under section 2001(f) of the ARP Act and ensure its LEAs implement evidence-based interventions, as required by section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act;
- The SEA will address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on underserved students (i.e., students from low-income families, students from racial or ethnic groups (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity), gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender), English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students), as required under section 2001(f) of the ARP Act, and ensure its LEAs address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on underserved students (i.e., students from low-income families, students from racial or ethnic groups, gender, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students), as required by section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act; and
- The SEA will provide to the Department: (1) the URL(s) where the public can readily find data on school operating status and (2) the URL(s) for the SEA and/or LEA websites where the public can find the LEA plans for a) the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services required under section 2001(i) of the ARP Act, and b) use of ARP ESSER funds. SEAs should consider ensuring a standardized URL format in all cases (e.g., xxx.gov/COVID plan).

Appendix D

OMB Control No. 1894-0005 (Exp. 06/30/2023)

NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act ("GEPA") that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P.L.) 103-382).

To Whom Does This Provision Apply?

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

What Does This Provision Require?

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access to, or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

(1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.

(2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.

(3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

(4) An applicant that proposes a project to increase school safety might describe the special efforts it will take to address concerns of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students, and efforts to reach out to and involve the families of LGBT students.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

DEED will ensure equitable access to, and participation in, this federally assisted program. Alaska Education Laws (Sec. 14.18.010) and Regulations (4AAC 06.500) specifically prohibit discrimination based on race and gender in public education, provide for equity-related staff development for all certificated staff, including school counselors, and provide for grievances and penalties for non-compliance.

The Alaska Department of Education & Early Development (DEED) specifically prohibits any discrimination in public education delivery and hiring on the basis of gender, race, national origin, color or age.

Alaska's diverse population and geographical extremes has always posed unique challenges in education. Strategies for overcoming the barriers listed below influenced the strategies of the DEED in creating this proposal. The state's accomplished history in overcoming these barriers must be taken into account when designing or implementing any plan that expects to improve educational opportunities for all students.

Gender

DEED has created gender equity publications and nontraditional occupations emphasis in a number of its programs.

Race, National Origin and Color

Alaska is a multicultural community. Its large Alaskan Native community and growing population, many of whom are immigrants, ensure that Alaska's multicultural nature will continue.

To overcome barriers caused by ethnic differences, a class in both Alaska history and multicultural education is required of all certified teachers in the state. Many local districts have programs to actively seek out Alaska Native and other minority staff. The University of Alaska has a rural outreach program to train Native and minority teachers in their villages.

Students with Disabilities

All Alaska schools must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Maintaining facilities compliant with ADA is a challenge in Alaska, with hundreds of tiny school sites spread over thousands of square miles. Alaska's schools are compliant and accredited; likewise, charter schools will comply with ADA and will not discriminate in enrollment or admission.

Language

Alaska's bilingual programs feature over 85 languages. The top ten languages in rank order are: Central Yup'ik 42%, Inupiaq 20%, Spanish 6%, Korean 5%, Filipino 4%, and Koyukon Athabascan 2%, Gwichin Athabascan 1.7%, and Russian 1.6%. The other 14% of the bilingual enrollment represents small numbers of speakers of 75 other languages. Enrollment in bilingual programs has increased at a rate of 5-8% annually for the past five years. This increase is the result of a higher level of immigration primarily in urban districts, and a higher birthrate among Alaska Natives. Almost 70% of bilingual students consist of elementary students.

The Project is conducted within these rigorous standards for equitable access to and participation in all state and federally assisted programs for students, educators, and any participants with special needs.

Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit (Public Law 103-382). Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.

Attachment A

Date	Communication Type	Audience	Content
4/5/2021	Newsletter	District CTE Directors and other statewide CTE stakeholders	ARP State Plan Information & Updates including upcoming webinars, recordings of past webinars, links to the ThoughtExchange, and timeline reminders about LEA ARP applications
4/29/2021	Email	Title I Committee of Practitioners	Invitation to upcoming ARP Act State Plan stakeholder input webinar.
4/29/2021	Email	Migrant State Parent Advisory Council	Invitation to upcoming ARP Act State Plan stakeholder input webinar.
4/29/2021	Social Media	All stakeholders	Webinar notice, link (Facebook & Twitter & Instagram)
4/29/2021	Newsletter	All stakeholders	Notice of upcoming stakeholder input opportunities
4/29/2021	Email	Superintendents	Invitation to our first 3 webinars, May 3, 4, 5
4/29/2021	Email	Federal Programs Directors and COVID-19 contacts in GMS, SERRC	Invitation to our first 3 webinars, May 3, 4, 5
4/29/2021	Email	NEA Leaders	Asked to forward information about our May 3 stakeholder webinar
4/29/2021	Email (Internal)	DEED Administrators & Program Managers	Asked to forward information about our May 3 stakeholder webinar
4/29/2021	Email (Internal)	DEED Information Officer	Asked to forward information about our May 3 stakeholder webinar
4/29/2021	Newsletter	ESEA Newsletter Audience	COVID-19 Special Edition Newsletter--information about May 3, 4, 5 webinars and ThoughtExchange Link
4/29/2021	Email	Human Resource Managers	Invitation to Stakeholder Webinars
4/29/2021	Email	Alaska Afterschool Network	Invitation to webinar with ARP Overview
4/29/2021	Email	21st CCLC Directors	Invitation to webinar with ARP Overview
4/30/2021	Email	District Data Collection Contacts	Invitation to Webinar
4/30/2021	Webinar	Migrant State Parent Advisory Council	Overview of the ARP Act, state plan, and opportunities for stakeholder feedback.
4/30/2021	Email	Tribal Leaders	Asked them to forward information about our May 3 stakeholder webinar
5/3/2021	Email	Federal Programs Directors and COVID-19 contacts in GMS, SERRC	Reminded them about the webinars on May 4 and 5

Date	Communication Type	Audience	Content
5/3/2021	Other	Website Update	ARP State Plan webpage created with links to webinars on 5/3, 5/4, 5/5, 5/7, 5/10, 5/11, 5/12, 5/14, 5/21. Resources for districts added: District ARP plan requirements, Evidence based guidance, FY22 Assurances packet
5/3/2021	Webinar	All stakeholders	Gave an overview of ARP, explained what is expected of the state and districts, and provided an opportunity to give feedback on what they perceive the needs are
5/4/2021	Email	Migrant Education Program Staff at Districts	Invitation to upcoming ARP Act State Plan stakeholder input webinars and request for them to spread the word to migratory families.
5/4/2021	Email	Migrant State Parent Advisory Council	Invitation to upcoming ARP Act State Plan stakeholder input webinars and request for them to spread the word to other migratory families.
5/4/2021	Email	English learner district contacts	Invitation to specific stakeholder webinar sessions.
5/4/2021	Webinar	District Staff	Discussed district level requirements for creating ARP plans
5/4/2021	Email (Internal)	DEED Information Officer	Asked to blast info about May 10, 11, 12 webinars
5/5/2021	Webinar	Superintendents, data collection contacts, federal program managers	Immediate and anticipated data collection needs
5/5/2021	Email	Superintendents, data collection contacts	Distribution of slides and data collection tool
5/5/2021	Newsletter	Migrant Education Program Staff at Districts	Article in Title I-C Section of the weekly ESEA Newsletter inviting staff to upcoming ARP Act State Plan stakeholder input webinars and requesting for them to spread the word to migratory families.
5/5/2021	Newsletter	Title III/EL District Program Managers	Invitation to specific stakeholder webinar sessions.
5/5/2021	Email (Internal)	DEED Information Officer	Asked to blast info on May 7, 14, 21 webinars
5/5/2021	Email	Tribal Leaders	Asked them to forward information about our upcoming stakeholder webinars in the evening on May 10, 11, and 12. Link to ThoughtExchange

Date	Communication Type	Audience	Content
5/5/2021	Newsletter	ESEA Newsletter Audience	Information about ARP, upcoming webinars on May 10, 11, 12, ThoughtExchange link
5/5/2021	Other	Website Update	Information about webinars on 5/7, 5/14, 5/21 added, webinars on 5/10, 5/11, 5/12 added
5/5/2021	Other	Website Update	CDC prevention strategies and ED Roadmap resources added to ARP webpage. ARP state plan webpage finally linked.
5/5/2021	Webinar	District Staff	Discussed data collection processes that would change with ARP requirements
5/5/2021	Email	Alaska Afterschool Network	Invitation to webinars collecting stakeholder input on ARP
5/5/2021	Email	21st CCLC Directors	Invitation to webinars collecting stakeholder input on ARP
5/5/2021	Email	District Foster Care Liaisons	Invitation to webinars collecting stakeholder input on ARP
5/6/2021	Social Media	All stakeholders	Webinar notice, link (Facebook & Twitter)
5/6/2021	Email	Superintendents, Federal Programs Directors, COVID-19 contacts in GMS, SERRC	Invited them to webinars on May 7, 14, 21. Asking them to forward stakeholder webinar info on May 10, 11, 12. Provide resources. Link to Thought Exchange
5/6/2021	Newsletter	District CTE Directors and other statewide CTE stakeholders	ARP State Plan Information & Updates including upcoming webinars, recordings of past webinars, links to the ThoughtExchange, and timeline reminders about LEA ARP applications
5/7/2021	Social Media	Families and advocates of children: migratory, English learners, Alaska native, with disabilities, experiencing homelessness, in foster care	Webinar notice, link (Facebook & Twitter)
5/7/2021	Newsletter	All stakeholders	Notice of upcoming stakeholder input opportunities
5/7/2021	Email	Parents of Students with Disabilities	Flyer notice for survey link and webinars
5/7/2021	Webinar	All stakeholders	Overview of ARP, provided basic requirements for an ARP State plan, information on District ARP plans,

Date	Communication Type	Audience	Content
			looked at ThoughtExchange survey data received to date.
5/7/2021	Email	Office of Children's Services/Foster Care Staff	Invitation to webinars collecting stakeholder input on ARP
5/10/2021	Email	Migrant State Parent Advisory Council	Reminder of upcoming ARP State Plan stakeholder input webinars.
5/10/2021	Email	Migrant Education Program Staff at Districts	Reminder of upcoming ARP State Plan stakeholder input webinars.
5/10/2021	Social Media	Families and advocates of children: migratory, English learners, Alaska native, with disabilities, experiencing homelessness, in foster care	Webinar notice, link (Facebook & Twitter)
5/10/2021	Social Media	All stakeholders	ThoughtExchange link (Facebook & Twitter)
5/10/2021	Email	Parents of Students with Disabilities	Flyer notice for survey link and webinars
5/10/2021	Email	Governor's Council on Special Ed and Disabilities	Flyer notice for survey link and webinars
5/10/2021	Email	Special Education Service Agency	Flyer notice for survey link and webinars
5/10/2021	Email	All State Special Education Directors	Flyer notice for survey link and webinars
5/10/2021	Webinar	All stakeholders	Gave an overview of ARP, explained what is expected of the state and districts, and provided an opportunity to give feedback on what they perceive the needs are
5/11/2021	Other	Website Update	Slides for webinars on 5/3, 5/4, 5/5 were posted
5/11/2021	Webinar	All stakeholders	Gave an overview of ARP, explained what is expected of the state and districts, and provided an opportunity to give feedback on what they perceive the needs are
5/12/2021	Email	Non-responding superintendents and data collection contacts	Reminder to submit data collection tool
5/12/2021	Social Media	All stakeholders	ThoughtExchange link (Facebook & Twitter)
5/12/2021	Webinar	All State Special Education Directors	Flyer notice for survey link and webinars and discussion

Date	Communication Type	Audience	Content
5/12/2021	Newsletter	ESEA Newsletter Audience	Links to recorded webinars, Reminders about upcoming webinars, thought exchange links, reminder about commissioner's letter, reminder about GMS going live on May 24
5/12/2021	Webinar	All stakeholders	Gave an overview of ARP, explained what is expected of the state and districts, and provided an opportunity to give feedback on what they perceive the needs are
5/13/2021	Email	Parents/Guardians of Migratory Children	Invitation to take Targeted Stakeholder ThoughtExchange survey and invitation to upcoming ARP Act State Plan stakeholder input webinars.
5/13/2021	Social Media	All stakeholders	Webinar notice, link (Facebook & Twitter)
5/13/2021	Other	Website Update	Information about webinars on 5/18 and 5/19, Updated district resources
5/13/2021	Newsletter	District CTE Directors and other statewide CTE stakeholders	ARP State Plan Information & Updates including upcoming webinars, recordings of past webinars, links to the ThoughtExchange, and timeline reminders about LEA ARP applications
5/14/2021	Email	Alaska Tribes and Tribal Organizations	Invitation to take Targeted Stakeholder ThoughtExchange survey and invitation to upcoming ARP Act State Plan stakeholder input webinars.
5/14/2021	Social Media	All stakeholders	Webinar notice, link (Facebook & Twitter)
5/14/2021	Newsletter	All stakeholders	Notice of additional stakeholder input opportunities
5/14/2021	Email	Tribal Leaders	ThoughtExchange for Student Groups & info about May 18 and 19 webinars
5/14/2021	Webinar	All stakeholders	Overview of ARP, provided basic requirements for an ARP State plan, information on District ARP plans, explained ThoughtExchange survey process, discussed state set asides.
5/14/2021	Webinar	21st CCLC Directors	Information on and link to "Thought Exchange" input survey

Date	Communication Type	Audience	Content
5/17/2021	Email	All certified teachers in the state	Information about ARP, State Plan, and invite them to participate in the ThoughtExchange
5/18/2021	Email	Non-responding superintendents and data collection contacts	Reminder to submit data collection tool
5/18/2021	Webinar	All stakeholders	Gave an overview of ARP, explained what is expected of the state and districts, and provided an opportunity to give feedback on what they perceive the needs are
5/19/2021	Webinar	All State Special Education Directors	Flyer notice for survey link and webinars and discussion
5/19/2021	Email	All State Special Education Directors	Flyer notice for survey link and webinar and discussion
5/19/2021	Email	All CSI and TSI Schools	Links to website and thought exchange
5/19/2021	Email	All CLSD Schools	Links to website and thought exchange
5/19/2021	Newsletter	ESEA Newsletter Audience	Information about 5/21 Webinar, 2 ThoughtExchange links, links to recorded webinars, reminder about Commissioner's letter to spend funds wisely, reminder about GMS going live on May 24
5/19/2021	Webinar	All stakeholders	Gave an overview of ARP, explained what is expected of the state and districts, and provided an opportunity to give feedback on what they perceive the needs are
5/20/2021	Social Media	All stakeholders	Webinar notice, link (Facebook & Twitter)
5/20/2021	Other	Advocate for Students with Disabilities	Information on and link to ThoughtExchange input survey
5/20/2021	Newsletter	District CTE Directors and other statewide CTE stakeholders	ARP State Plan Information & Updates including upcoming webinars, recordings of past webinars, links to the ThoughtExchange, and timeline reminders about LEA ARP applications
5/21/2021	Social Media	All stakeholders	Webinar notice, link (Facebook & Twitter)
5/21/2021	Other	Website Update	District resources: District Milestones & Checklist, District Mitigation Plan Template

Date	Communication Type	Audience	Content
5/21/2021	Webinar	Superintendents	10am webinar with superintendents. Gave resources that were recently updated online: District Milestones & Checklist, District Mitigation Plan Template, Information about district ARP Plan in GMS.
5/21/2021	Webinar	All stakeholders	Gave an overview of all resources published to date and gave information on both surveys
5/24/2021	Email	All State Special Education Directors	Flyer notice for survey link and discussion
5/24/2021	Other	Website Update	ARP Allocations posted. All COVID-19 allocations to date posted
5/24/2021	Other	Website Update	Resource for spending your COVID-19 funds posted
5/24/2021	Other	Superintendents and Business Managers	ARP ESSER III allocations, resource for spending funds wisely.
5/24/2021	Email	AK Counselors list serv	New Resource Available—COVID-19 Relief Funding Guidelines
5/26/2021	Webinar	All State Special Education Directors	Flyer notice for survey link and discussion
5/26/2021	Newsletter	ESEA Newsletter Audience	New Resource Available – COVID-19 Relief Funding Guidelines, All COVID-19 allocations to date posted, reminders about COVID-19 Relief Application, webinar recordings and links to ThoughtExchange
5/27/2021	Webinar	Migrant State Parent Advisory Council	Discussion of ARP Act and needs of migratory children.
5/27/2021	Newsletter	District CTE Directors and other statewide CTE stakeholders	ARP State Plan Information & Updates including upcoming webinars, recordings of past webinars, links to the ThoughtExchange, and timeline reminders about LEA ARP applications