

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



U.S. Department of Education

Issued: April 21, 2021

OMB Number: 1810-0754
Expiration Date: October 31, 2021

Paperwork Burden Statement 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. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1810-0754. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 100 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 under Section 2001 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP Act). If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving this individual collection, or if you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual form, application or survey, please contact Britt Jung, Office of State and Grantee Relations, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-6450, email: SGR@ed.gov directly.

Introduction

The American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (“ARP ESSER”) Fund, authorized under the American Rescue Plan (“ARP”) Act of 2021, provides nearly \$122 billion to States to support the Nation’s schools in safely reopening and sustaining safe operations of schools while meeting the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students resulting from the coronavirus disease 2019 (“COVID-19”) pandemic. It is particularly important that ARP ESSER funding will enable States and local educational agencies (“LEAs”), and more directly schools, to support students who have been most severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and are likely to have suffered the most because of longstanding inequities in our communities and schools that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The U.S. Department of Education (“Department”) is committed to working in partnership with States so that these unprecedented resources are quickly put to work to ensure students have sustained access to in-person instruction and that the resources are used to provide the effective support students need as they persist through and recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. The thoughtful and timely use of these funds will have a lasting impact on our Nation’s schools and help to address the inequities in resources, services, and opportunities available to our students.

This template presents an opportunity for States to share their plans for the use of ARP ESSER funds with the public. The Department must approve a State educational agency’s (“SEA’s”) plan in order to make the State’s remaining ARP ESSER allocation available for use. Please note that the Department intends to issue ARP ESSER reporting requirements separately.

Instructions

Each SEA must provide descriptions and other information that address each requirement listed below. An SEA may use this template or another format as long as every item and element is addressed in the SEA’s response. Throughout this document, questions that refer to an SEA’s ARP ESSER funding are referencing the total allocation to be received by the SEA, including that which it allocates to its LEAs.

Each SEA must submit to the Department by **June 7, 2021**, either: (1) its ARP ESSER plan or (2) the State requirements that preclude submission of the plan by that date and a date by which it will be able to submit its complete ARP ESSER plan.

To submit the SEA’s plan, please email the plan to your Program Officer at [State].OESE@ed.gov (e.g., Alabama.OESE@ed.gov).

In order to ensure transparency, the Department will post each plan on the Department’s website when it is received and will indicate each plan’s approval status.

This template also allows States to fulfill the requirement of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (“CRRSA”) Act ESSER II 6-month reporting requirement in section 313(f) of the CRRSA Act.

Cover Page


Grantee and Contact Information

ARP ESSER PR Award Number (e.g., S425U210003):

SEA Contact: Quentina Timoll

Telephone: 225-342-9763

Email address: Quentina.timoll@la.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) Cade Brumley	
Signature of Authorized SEA Representative 	Date: 6/7/2021

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.

- Prioritizing in-person learning
- High-dosage tutoring
- Continued focus on school improvement best practices

The Louisiana Department of Education hosts monthly roundtable system leader meetings with Superintendents, Chief Academic Officers, and other System-level leadership roles. To build upon the round table experience, the Department will inform LEAs of the opportunity to submit lessons learned and best practices implemented through the Louisiana State Department of Education's [newsletter](#). During the 2020-2021 school year, LDOE also developed a Models of Excellence initiative that recognizes educational excellence in the state by honoring schools that serve as a state model in meeting one of the Louisiana Department of Education's [Believe to Achieve Education Priorities](#).

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.

- Unfinished learning
- Student engagement and attendance
- Infrastructure shortages (broadband, wifi, and connectivity)

**Data related to these top 3 priorities is accessible via the [Winter Strong Start Report](#).*

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).

Below are the three highest priority needs across all student groups based on an analysis of the [fall](#) and [winter](#) Strong Start Survey results.

- Unfinished learning
- Student engagement and attendance
- Infrastructure shortages (broadband, wifi, and connectivity)

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.

Table A1.

Student Group	Students Served
Students from low-income families	The Louisiana Department of Education has 665,467 total students enrolled in K-12 public schools. 52.48% of those students receive free and reduced lunch. As of February 2021, there were a total of 481,767 K-12 public 2 ED students. In the 2020-2021 school year, districts throughout the state opened for on-site instruction and hybrid instruction.
Students from each racial or ethnic background used by the State for reporting	There are a total of 282,287 black students within the state of Louisiana.

purposes – please add a row for each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race/ethnicity)	There are a total of 289,691 white students within the state of Louisiana.
	There are a total of 10,806 Asian students within the state of Louisiana.
	There are a total of 57,769 Hispanic students within the state of Louisiana.
Students by gender – please add a row for each gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender)	There are a total of 325,224 female students within the state of Louisiana.
	There are a total of 340,243 male students within the state of Louisiana.
English Learners	There are a total of 27,005 EL students within the state of Louisiana.
Children with disabilities	There are a total of 84,472 students with disabilities within the state of Louisiana.
Students experiencing homelessness	There are a total of 11,336 homeless students within the state of Louisiana.
Children and youth in foster care	There are a total of 3,115 children and youth students in foster care within the state of Louisiana.
Migratory students	There are a total of 10,954 migratory students within the state of Louisiana.
Other groups of students identified by the State (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, LGBTQ+ students)	Approximately 16,000 students were not engaged in the public school system based on enrollment counts from 2/1/20 to 10/1/21. A high percentage of those 16,000 students are from grades 3 and below.

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.

During the 2020-2021 school year, Louisiana remained committed to providing information on student academic progress to school systems and families.

The Louisiana Department of Education continued to collect CLASS® data through observations of all publicly funded infant, toddler, and pre-K classrooms statewide. While the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education provided flexibilities in the number of required observations as well as the annual publication of Performance Profiles for the 2020-2021 school year, this data will continue to be useful in identifying the impact of COVID-19 on students' experiences and identifying the groups of students most impacted by COVID-19. In 2020-2021, community network-led agencies were expected to complete at least one CLASS® observation of all publicly funded classrooms, providing teachers and site-level leaders with helpful feedback to ensure all children experience high-quality interactions. School system leaders, community network leaders, and state decision makers will be able to use this data to identify the impacts of COVID-19 and target interventions to ensure all children in Louisiana receive high-quality interactions in early childhood settings.

In grades K-3, school systems administered a literacy screener to each student within the first 30 days of the school year. This data allowed school systems to begin the year understanding the impact that spring 2020 closures may have had on individual students. Students' scores at each grade level are reported as either "On or Above Benchmark" or "Below Benchmark." Students who score "Below Benchmark" are considered "at risk" for reading difficulties according to the developers of the assessments. Fall 2020 results revealed that 40.4% of kindergarten students, 42.3% of first graders, 48.4% of second graders, and 49.5% of third graders scored "On or Above Benchmark" for the measured skills. Overall, literacy screening results over the past three years have declined. This means fewer children are reading on grade level and more children are identified as "at risk" for reading failure each year. The decline in scores from 2019 to 2020 is in part a result of the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in a loss of instruction in the spring of 2020. ([Fall 2020 Reading Report: School, District, and State Results for Kindergarten through Grade Three](#)).

LDOE will allocate ESSER III funds to provide literacy screeners to school systems. The Department will also allocate ESSER III funds on The Science of Reading initiative to improve literacy scores within the state and decrease the number of students "at risk" for reading difficulties.

In past years, the literacy screener results were mirrored in Louisiana's third-grade ELA LEAP outcomes. Though LEAP scores have increased slightly over the last three years, still fewer than half of all third graders achieved mastery in reading. In Spring 2019, 46% of third grade students achieved mastery. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the LEAP assessment was not administered in Spring 2020.

Louisiana administered LEAP assessments in grades 3-8 and high school during Spring 2021. These annual assessments in English Language Arts, mathematics,

social studies, and science will provide information on which students have met grade-level standards and which students are struggling to meet grade-level standards. LDOE will use this data to inform decisions on supporting school systems in the 2021-2022 school year.

Also of note is the large percentage of school systems that have adopted high-quality instructional materials. Throughout the 2020-2021 school year, high-quality instructional materials provided formative assessments that allowed teachers to monitor student progress throughout the year. Below is a table that contains the percentage of school systems implementing Tier 1 curriculum in at least one grade band for ELA or math during the 2020-2021 school year.

School Label	Percentage Implementing Tier 1 Curriculum
CIR/UIR-A	100%
Non-CIR/UIR/A	81.5%
All school systems	93.5%

As the 2021-2022 school year begins, continued administration of literacy screeners and LEAP 2025 assessments and continued use of high-quality instructional materials will help ensure that LEAs can identify the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning.

During the 2020-2021 school year, the Louisiana Department of Education also supported school systems in supporting the well-being of all students and educators by recommending social, emotional, and mental health supports, including mental health screenings upon return to school. The Department provided access to a [mental health screener](#) and additional supports for students who qualify for trauma support services.

In preparation for the 2020-2021 school year, the Louisiana Department of Education published guidance for school systems to assist in the development and utilization of Well-Being Leadership Teams (WBLT) at each site. WBLTs were primarily responsible for identifying and responding to needs of the school community, curating and distributing resources and supporting families in crisis. Specifically, this guidance outlined best practices in identifying and responding to needs as determined by the selection and administration of appropriate screeners, the implementation of evidence-based, culturally responsive social, emotional and behavioral interventions within a multi-tiered framework, determining a plan for checking on the general well-being of staff, and continually assessing the climate and well-being of students and staff using a survey to monitor school culture and climate.

To assist LEAs in the selection and administration of [appropriate screeners](#), the Department researched a variety of universal social, emotional, and behavioral

screeners. Each screener was evaluated against criteria in four key areas: the given student population and developmental appropriateness; personnel needed to administer the screener; feasibility and usability of the screener; and the time necessary to fully execute each step of the screening process from preparing to administer the screener to analyzing results and using those results to determine actionable next steps. Following this review, three screeners were recommended to LEAs: the Student Risk Screening Scale - Internalizing and Externalizing (SRSS-IE); the Social Academic and Emotional Behavior Risk Screener (SAEBRS); and the Behavior Assessment System for Children, Third Edition (BASC-3).

Additionally, the Department published the [Louisiana Student Well-Being Vendor Guide](#) to assist LEAs in supporting the well-being of students by focusing on three critical areas: prioritizing positive, intentional relationships between and among students, staff and families; attending to students' individual needs; and responding to student behavior with appropriate support.

In terms of prioritizing positive, intentional relationships, the Student Well-Being Vendor Guide serves to provide LEAs with a vetted list of vendors and resources to build strong, sustaining, and authentic relationships across a variety of educational communities (e.g. student to student, staff to staff, staff to student, and staff to families). Regarding increased attention on individual student needs, the guide provides access to vendors and training in the areas of Tier II and Tier III evidence-based interventions, universal mental health screeners, and external service providers. Lastly, the Student Well-Being Vendor Guide prioritizes appropriate responses to student behavior, including training and materials related to trauma-informed practices, establishing culturally responsive leadership practices, implementing de-escalation practices, and ensuring that the proper policies and protocols are in place at school sites to effectively determine when student behavior should be addressed through increased support versus disciplinary referrals and/or action.

At the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, the Louisiana Department of Education collected data from LEAs on the resources or strategies that would be used to support student well-being, as well as the mental health screeners that would be administered. During the winter, Louisiana also collected data from various stakeholders on the successes, challenges, and recommendations related to student well-being and mental health.

The Department is continuing to prioritize the well-being of students and staff through several key initiatives, including a one-million-dollar initiative with Louisiana's largest healthcare provider (Ochsner Health) to provide all birth through 12th (B-12) grade public school educators with access to free virtual teletherapy sessions conducted by qualified mental health practitioners. Additionally, the Department plans to continue supporting communities of care in Louisiana's schools with a renewed focus on, and increased funding support to, expanding access to qualified school social workers and mental health professionals in LEAs statewide. As an example, the LDOE is currently

working to operationalize an innovative funding “match” in which the Department will cover 50% of salaries and benefits for school social workers in LEAs that agree to fund the remaining portion of salaries and benefits for these individuals over the course of the next three years. Furthermore, in partnership with Louisiana State University, the Department has offered intensive professional development to a subset of schools and systems with a history of exclusionary disciplinary practices focused on the integration of academic instruction and social-emotional learning (SELA). With the use of ESSER funding, the Department looks forward to expanding these professional development opportunities and building upon lessons learned in the 2020-2021 school year to implement a tailored, evidence-based statewide strategy to enhance the social and emotional learning of students and the overall well-being of Louisiana’s educational communities.

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.

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.

The Louisiana Department of Education collects various data to support school systems, students, and families impacted by COVID-19. On an ongoing basis, the Department collects information from school systems on the modes of instruction being implemented by each school. This information is collected as often as the modes of instruction change and school systems submit the changes. Beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, information on modes of instruction will be regularly collected at the student level and aggregated by student group. The Department collects student enrollment data from LEAs three times a year; the first collection is October 1, the second collection is February 1, and the third collection is End of Year. The Department also collects absence data for each student and student group three times a year. Beginning in the 2021-2022 school year, daily attendance will be collected by LDOE at the student level. During the 2020-2021 school year, LDOE consistently collected data from school systems regarding the digital learning models being offered. This data is accessible through the [Digital Learning Model Schools Dashboard](#).

The Department is also developing an [Emergency Preparedness and Recovery Dashboard](#), which will be released prior to the start of the 2021-2022 school year. This dashboard will be updated with information submitted by each school system's Emergency Preparedness and Recovery point of contact. This form will collect information around cybersecurity issues, as well as disaster recovery. Emergency Preparedness and Recovery points of contact will be asked to provide specific information based on the event.

- 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.

The Louisiana Department of Education has provided data within Table 1 under Appendix A. This data is updated frequently based on data received from school systems and is accessible via the [Louisiana Believes website](#). The data within Table 2 under Appendix A will be gathered in the 2021-2022 school year.

- 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.

During the 2020-2021 school year, LDOE consistently collected data from school systems regarding the digital learning models being offered. This data is accessible through the [Digital Learning Model Schools Dashboard](#).

According to a survey disseminated in the spring, 95 out of 191 traditional public /public charter LEAs indicated they are implementing summer learning programs in 2021. Based on data collected from school systems, 51% of these programs will be offered full day, and 79% will be offered in person.

The SEA will collect this data for the 2021-2022 school year through the Strong Start Survey responses being collected through August 2021.

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;

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

The Louisiana Department of Education provided reopening guidance to LEAs through [Strong Start 2020](#). The Department is currently updating the reopening guidance to reflect the most recent CDC updates and will release updated reopening information. The Louisiana Department of Education is continuing to work with our partners at the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) and Children’s Hospital of New Orleans (CHNOLA) to review the latest CDC guidelines surrounding school operations. The [Strong Start 2020](#) will sunset on **June 30**. LDOE is developing *Ready to Achieve!*, a new set of operational guidance for K-12 school systems to use in the 2021-2022 school year. *Ready to Achieve!* will be provided to school systems and go into effect on **July 1**.

The information within the table below is from [Strong Start 2020](#) guidance and reflects some updates based on the CDC guidance since the original release of [Start Strong 2020](#).

Table B1.

Mitigation strategy	SEA response
Universal and correct wearing of masks	Guidance to LEAs includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While inside the school facility, all adults and students in grades 3 through 12 must wear a face covering to the greatest extent possible and practical within the local community context. • While inside the school facility, students in grades pre-K through 2 may wear a face covering.
Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)	Guidance to LEAs includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Younger students who are unable to wear face coverings or maintain a physical distance from other students or adults should be assigned static groups. This must include, at a minimum, students in grade 2 or lower.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The static group composition should be maintained for as long as possible. • The composition of a group may change if students are able to maintain a physical distance of at least three feet from other students and six feet from adults in a classroom or indoor setting, to the greatest extent possible. • If groups convene outdoors, a physical barrier is not required, but each group must remain separated. • To the greatest extent possible, schools must limit crowding at entry and exit points and adhere to maximum group sizes and physical distance recommendations.
<p>Handwashing and respiratory etiquette</p>	<p>Guidance to LEAs includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students must wash or sanitize hands upon arrival at the school at least every two hours, before and after eating, before and after using outdoor play equipment, and before exiting the school facility. • Establish <u>hand hygiene</u> stations at the entrance to the facility so students can clean their hands before they enter. If a sink with soap and water is not available, provide hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol and supervise its use.
<p>Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation</p>	<p>Guidance to LEAs includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Ensure ventilation systems operate properly</u> and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible, for example, by opening windows and doors. • Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety or health risk (e.g., risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms) to children using the facility. If a school's ventilation system fails, consult with local health officials about the possible need for school closure. • Frequently touched surfaces should undergo cleaning with a commercially available cleaning solution, including <u>EPA-approved disinfectants</u> or a dilute bleach solution, multiple times throughout the day at least twice per day. This includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Light switches, doors, benches, banisters and bathroom fixtures

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Surfaces and objects in libraries, labs, and other settings where “hands-on” materials and equipment are used ○ Student desks, which should be cleaned before and after each student’s use ● Minimize sharing of materials between students. ● Playground equipment and athletic equipment should be cleaned daily or as necessary, depending on frequency of use.
<p>Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments</p>	<p>Guidance to LEAs includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Students who have COVID-19 should stay home and remain isolated until they have recovered and have been determined to no longer be infectious by their doctor according to CDC’s end of isolation criteria [AS1]. ● Individuals who were in close contact with the student may be identified and contacted as part of the Office of Public Health (OPH) contact tracing process. ● Close contact with a case is defined as a person who was less than within six feet away from the individual with the student with COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, as determined by the OPH contact tracing process. ● Close contacts will be asked to stay home and monitor symptoms for 14 days. Options to shorten the duration of quarantine if contacts remain asymptomatic include: ● If no symptoms develop during quarantine AND they have a negative antigen or PCR/molecular test collected no earlier than day 5 after their last exposure: they may quarantine for 7 days from their last contact with a COVID-19 case OR ● If no symptoms develop during quarantine and no testing is done: they may quarantine for 10 days from their last contact with a COVID-19 case.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If quarantine is shortened, daily symptom monitoring and strict adherence to prevention measures, including social distancing, hand washing, and especially wearing masks/face coverings should continue until the full 14 days from the last contact with a COVID-19 case. • Because there is an increased risk of post-quarantine transmission associated with options to shorten quarantine, the 14-day quarantine period should be used in school settings where masking among children is not maintained. • Close contacts who were previously diagnosed with COVID-19 within the last 90 days and remain asymptomatic do not need to quarantine. • Close contacts who are fully vaccinated (i.e., ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or ≥ 2 weeks following receipt of one dose in a single-dose vaccine) at the time of exposure and remain asymptomatic do not need to quarantine.
<p>Diagnostic and screening testing</p>	<p>Guidance to LEAs includes the following:</p> <p>SCREENING TESTING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDC funding is available to support the use of screening testing as a strategy to identify cases and prevent secondary transmission. • Screening testing is intended to identify infected people without symptoms (or before development of symptoms) who may be contagious so that measures can be taken to prevent further transmission. • Screening testing supplies or services are available for K-12 students and staff. For further information, please contact Diné Butler with the Louisiana Office of Public Health: K-12covidtesting@la.gov. • Make sure that staff and families know that they (staff) or their children (families) should not come to school and that they should notify school officials (e.g., the designated COVID-19 point of contact) if they (staff) or their child (families) become sick with COVID-19 <u>symptoms</u>, test positive for COVID-19, or have been

	<u>exposed to someone with COVID-19 symptoms</u> or a confirmed or suspected case
Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible	The LDOE first requested priority vaccine access for educators and staff in a December 12, 2020 letter to LDH Secretary Dr. Courtney Phillips, copied to Louisiana Governor Edwards. This request, one of the first official requests of its kind, drew national attention as it included priority access not just for K-12 teachers and staff but for early childcare center workers as well. This letter was followed by similar requests from advocates across the state of Louisiana. The Department worked with local school systems to develop vaccine distribution plans to help ensure equitable access to these voluntary vaccines and vaccine information. This guidance included identifying the total number of vaccinations needed for their school system as well as recommending that systems coordinate with vaccine partners such as a hospital, clinic, pharmacy, Public Health Office or other entity.
Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies	Guidance to LEAs includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with disabilities must continue to receive special education and related services in the least restrictive environment. • School systems must factor in any additional service providers who may need to enter the classroom, students who receive services outside the classroom (e.g. resource, APE), and/or students who receive services through alternate instructional methods.

- 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;

The Louisiana Department of Education released school reopening guidance, titled [Strong Start 2020](#), and the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education passed minimum health standards in the summer of 2020 that required all school systems to develop comprehensive plans that operationalize health guidelines and allow a quick pivot when the presence of the virus changes in their communities. Not only did all Louisiana school systems reopen in the fall, but the [LDOE’s School Reopening Dashboard](#) shows that 70% of Louisiana students are benefitting from daily in-person instruction. Louisiana is among the states leading the way in once again providing

in-person instruction to students. The American Enterprise Institute's [Return to Learn Tracker](#) currently ranks Louisiana [No. 7 in the nation](#) for the highest number of students participating in face-to-face learning. The Return to Learn Tracker (R2L) is a tool developed by the American Enterprise Institute's Education Policy Studies department, in partnership with The College Crisis Initiative (C2i) of Davidson College, that captures how U.S. public school districts' instructional models change during the COVID-19 pandemic. The tracker conducts original data collection that examines which schools are offering fully in-person, hybrid, and fully remote instruction and analyzes instructional status across various district and county demographics. It categorizes instructional models for about 8,500 school districts nationwide and regularly monitors how each district changes between categories.

The LDOE provided technical assistance for school systems statewide as they developed reopening plans based on CDC guidance and Louisiana's phased reopening guidance. The LDOE will release updated guidance, titled *Ready to Achieve!*, for the 2021-2022 school year with a goal of a safe return to in-person learning to the maximum extent possible. The Louisiana Department of Education is continuing to work with our partners at the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) and Children's Hospital of New Orleans (CHNOLA) to review the latest CDC guidelines surrounding school operations. The current BESE school reopening policy, Strong Start, will sunset on **June 30**. *Ready to Achieve!*, a set of operational guidance for K-12 school systems to use in the 2021-2022 school year will be provided to school systems and go into effect on **July 1**.

- 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

The Louisiana Department of Education works closely with the Louisiana Department of Health to develop guidelines for a safe return to school through the *Ready to Achieve!* guidance document for LEAs. These guidelines are being developed by the Louisiana Department of Health and are based upon current CDC recommendations for safe practices in returning to in-person learning. LDOE is currently advising LDH on best practices for developing a screening program for students and faculty members of K-12 campuses. This includes weekly meetings, a larger workgroup, and communication support. Additionally, the Louisiana Department of Education has established and maintained a partnership with ThriveKids of Children's Hospital of New Orleans (CHNOLA) beginning in May 2020 and continuing

throughout the 2021 school year. The LDOE, with assistance from LDH, provided school systems access to BinaxNOW Rapid test kits to aid in mitigation efforts within school communities. To date, over 83,000 testing kits have been provided free of charge to school systems.

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

LDOE conducts monthly Town Hall webinars through an established partnership with The Children’s Hospital of New Orleans. These webinars cover topics related to best practices for a return to safe in-person learning and are available for parents, educators, administrators, school nurses, and other community stakeholders. Additionally, the SEA hosts weekly School Reopening calls for LEAs to have the opportunity to ask questions of medical experts and receive the most up-to-date guidance on a safe return to in-person learning from the CDC and other medical entities.

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;
 - 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;
 - 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
 - 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.

An LEA that receives ARP ESSER funds must, **within 30 days of receiving the funds**, make publicly available on its website a plan for safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. School systems can meet this requirement by seeking public comment and updating the school reopening plans submitted to LDOE in the fall of 2020. In light of the [Governor’s Roadmap to Resilient Louisiana](#), the Department has issued guidance pertaining to opening and maintaining public and nonpublic school facilities to serve students in the 2020-2021 school year. This guidance is relative to operating and maintaining schools in Phases 1, 2 and 3 of reopening. Since Louisiana’s school facilities first closed in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, school systems and the Department have worked to ensure the safety of students and staff was of utmost priority. The Louisiana Department of Education compiled links to

existing system and school reopening plans. **The original plans submitted to LDOE can be accessed [here](#).**

Original plans were submitted to LDOE in the fall of 2020 and were reviewed using a rubric that required systems to identify virtual, hybrid, and in-person student learning plans. These plans were based on phases related to COVID-19 spread within the state and local community context, transportation plans based upon minimum health standards for each learning plan, communication plans for communicating with community stakeholders, and detailed environmental hygiene plans informed by the most up-to-date CDC guidance.

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.

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.

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.

To support school systems in preparing for the 2020-2021 school year in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Louisiana Department of Education released the [*Strong Start 2020*](#) plan. This plan supported school systems by ensuring a strong start for every student and having a continuous education plan that was aligned to the school system plan submitted via Super App. The Strong Start Plan provided systems with Strong Start Planning Priorities designed to support school systems as they planned for a strong start to the 2020-2021 academic year. The priorities within the plan focus on actions that address unfinished learning from the 2019-2020 school year, set the foundation for continuous learning in 2020-2021, and prepare for school facility closures and modified operations.

Within the Strong Start plan, the Department also released the *Strong Start 2020* Implementation Survey. Data collected from the surveys is used to capture school system plans aligned to *Strong Start 2020*, understand the experiences of Louisiana students and educators, inform decisions about supports needed for school systems, and enable the Department to share this information with various stakeholders.

Surveys were completed by school system leadership or early childhood agencies, but several school system leaders of the following work streams were involved in the survey completion:

- Early Childhood
- Assessment
- Special Education
- English Learners
- Operations
- Academics

- Professional Development
- High School
- Counseling
- Human Resources
- Finance or Grants Management
- Technology

The initial survey was released in the summer of 2020 and data was collected and developed into the [Fall Strong Start Implementation Report](#). A second survey was released in the winter and data was collected and developed into the [Strong Start Implementation Winter 2021 Update Report](#). LDOE is currently releasing Phase 1 of the Spring Strong Start Survey and will be releasing Phase 2 in June 2021. Data from the Spring Strong Start Survey will be developed into a report and will be released in August 2021.

In addition to the Strong Start Survey series, the Louisiana Department of Education, in partnership with the Region 14 Comprehensive Center Network, conducted focus groups as a portion of the Winter Strong Start Survey. The focus groups included various stakeholders such as educators, parents, and students across public, charter, and nonpublic school systems within the state. Stakeholders within the focus groups provided input on five key issues identified by the Department through the Fall Strong Start Survey as well as other collaborative opportunities with school systems. The five issues identified were: Core Academics – Learning Gaps, Mental Health and Well-being, Virtual Learning, Transition Between Different Learning Modes, and Communication. Through the focus groups, the Department was able to gather feedback to address these five issues in planning for the highest impact uses of ARP ESSER funds.

The Louisiana Department of Education invited superintendents and charter leaders to participate in a monthly Reopening Roundtable virtual series for the 2020-2021 school year and will continue the series for the 2021-2022 school year. Every month, a panel of superintendents and school leaders shared their experiences reopening and operating schools during the health crisis. Along with the panel discussion, each session included a Q&A. This series helped to facilitate discussions of best practices and served as a support agency during these uncertain times.

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);

Complete the table below or provide a narrative description.

Table C1.

Funding source	Prior/current SEA and LEA uses (including funding amounts, if applicable)	Planned SEA and LEA uses (including funding amounts, if applicable)
ESSER I (CARES Act)	<p>LDOE released ESSER I formula allocations May 1 through the Strong Start 2020 in eGMS application. All school systems completed continuous education plans that provided standards-aligned instruction using high-quality curriculum during modified operations, including provisions for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:1 device and internet access, including assistive technology for students with disabilities. • A strategic communications plan to connect with every student on a daily basis, provide weekly feedback on students’ work, and communicate the family’s role in supporting their child’s continuous learning. • Versatile delivery methods for instruction, related services, and professional development. • Adaptive staffing models that enable feedback on students’ work and frequent communication with students and families. • Flexible and opportunistic calendars and school schedules that maximize learning opportunities in a dynamic public health context. <p>LEAs were eligible to use ESSER incentive funds to support key Strong Start 2020 academic planning priorities to address anticipated challenges to delivering instruction remotely. The below information summarizes eligible expenditures for Strong Start 2020 ESSER incentive funds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Curriculum - Funded requests at up to \$36 per student • Non-Core Curriculum - Funded software licenses required for curriculum for individual students and funded subscriptions to online course and content providers for CTE and non- 	See the ESSER I Formula LEA Uses of Funds table below.

	<p>core curriculum materials required for the transition to virtual learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduation Preparation Providers - Eligible requests funded from \$2,500 - \$10,000 based on size of school system • Assistive Technology - Funded 25% of eligible requests • Direct Service Providers - Funded a flat rate of \$3,000 for eligible requests • Core Curriculum Professional Development Partners - Funded \$5,000 - \$15,000 based on size of school system • Staffing Plan Partners - Funded eligible requests according to guidance 	
GEER I (CARES Act)	<p>LDOE released school systems’ individual GEER allocations on Friday, July 10, 2020. The award amounts were provided in advance of the release of the allocation amounts through eGMS to facilitate quick access for ordering devices and internet connectivity. The GEER application was released through eGMS Friday, July 17, 2020. The governor determined the \$50 million in funds will be allocated between postsecondary and K-12 education to include \$35 million for K-12 education with \$32.3 million for devices and internet connectivity and \$2.7 million for a social and emotional learning curriculum available to both public and nonpublic schools. The \$32 million for K -12 education advanced the goal of attaining a 1:1 device ratio and meeting internet connectivity needs of school systems. School systems and schools will be blending their local, state, and federal revenues with the new ESSER – Formula grant, ESSER – Competitive grant, and GEER grant funds to support remaining needs.</p>	
ESSER II (CRRSA Act)	<p>LDOE released 50% of ESSER II formula allocations in March 2021. The Department is still accepting applications from school systems for these funds. LDOE released the <i>Achieve! Planning Guidance</i>. The Department is reviewing applications from school systems based on the allowabilities as well as the high-impact investment initiatives released within the guidance.</p>	<p>LDOE will release 50% of ESSER II formula and ESSER II incentive allocations in September 2021.</p> <p>See the Planned SEA Uses for ESSER II State-Level Funds table below.</p>

<p>GEER II (CRRSA Act)</p>	<p>LDOE released the GEER II (GEER EANS) program application on March 5, 2021 via the linked webinar with additional guidance resources for non-public schools. Generally, allowable uses under EANS relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Safely reopening schools ● Continuing instruction ● Addressing learning loss ● Supporting educational technology ● Reimbursing for certain COVID-19-related costs. <p>The Department is reviewing applications from non-public school based on the allowabilities as well as the high-impact investment initiatives released within the guidance.</p> <p>SEA Use - The CRRSA Act provided \$22,985,320 to supplement the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER II Fund). The Governor approved a \$22 million joint budget for K-12 and Higher Ed. K-12 funding will support: increasing access to ACT vouchers, reengaging chronically absent students, addressing learning loss through literacy PD, providing Educator tele-therapy for adult mental well-being, and investing in the establishment and sustainability of the Office of Broadband.</p> <p>ACT Vouchers: \$2,000,000 - To allow present year sophomores & seniors an additional opportunity to test, qualify for Dual Enrollment & TOPS;</p> <p>Student Re-engagement: \$1,000,000 - To staff coordinators to re-engage absent students in the educational system;</p> <p>Literacy Loss Professional Development: \$1,000,000 - Training for educators across the state (open to Pre-K-12 & higher ed) to support best practices in academic recovery, phonics, and intervention;</p> <p>Educator Health Coaches: \$1,000,000 - To staff health coaches for B-12 staff for mental, emotional, wellness needs;</p> <p>Dual Enrollment Portal, Fast Forward Program Evaluation, and LOSFA & FASFA Campaign: \$850,000 - To support efforts to expand college credits earned by high school students and outreach regarding federal and state financial aid and academic preparation. (Board of Regents as Fiscal Agents/ LDOE as collaborating partners)</p>	

Prior/Current Uses of ESSER I and GEER I Funds

The chart below represents the ESSER I Formula funding allocated to the LEAs. Column A represents the categories in which funding was budgeted by the LEAs in the Prior Year (PY) and Current Year (CY). Column C represents the amounts expended/obligated by the LEAs as indicated on the LEAs' last submitted Periodic Expenditure Report.

ESSER I Formula LEA Uses of Funds			
	CY + PY Total Budgeted	CY + PY Expended	CY + PY Remaining
Indirect cost	\$35,795,572.00	\$24,552,407.00	\$11,243,165.00
Compensatory education for students with disabilities	\$1,045,000.00	\$610,528.00	\$434,472.00
Core subject curricular supplements/materials for continuous learning	\$25,473,014.00	\$20,798,964.00	\$4,674,050.00
Early childhood - expanding seats and related costs	\$365,190.00	\$317,869.00	\$47,321.00
English learner supports	\$482,211.00	\$356,092.00	\$126,119.00
Expanded learning time - summer school, early start	\$4,228,646.00	\$3,452,486.00	\$776,160.00
Feeding	\$2,370,537.00	\$2,057,877.00	\$312,660.00
High school supports - IGPs and graduate transitions	\$184,833.00	\$48,600.00	\$136,233.00
Individual student supports - diagnostics, learning plans, tutoring	\$5,927,734.00	\$3,552,960.00	\$2,374,774.00
Non-core/CTE supplements/materials for continuous learning	\$1,199,931.00	\$781,883.00	\$418,048.00
Nonpublic administration cost	\$272,495.00	\$3,722.00	\$268,773.00
Nonpublic student devices for nonpublic school students	\$3,291,566.00	\$2,860,238.00	\$431,328.00
Other nonpublic school equitable services	\$5,834,343.00	\$4,134,142.00	\$1,700,201.00
Nonpublic student connectivity - internet access, phone access	\$1,899,544.00	\$390,070.00	\$1,509,474.00

Operations - response and preparedness activities	\$8,007,631.00	\$3,812,475.00	\$4,195,156.00
Other allowable expense	\$18,495,884.00	\$8,739,953.00	\$9,755,931.00
Professional development for workforce talent	\$6,104,545.00	\$2,902,156.00	\$3,202,389.00
Sanitation - training and supplies	\$17,422,464.00	\$11,717,601.00	\$5,704,863.00
Social, emotional, and mental health screeners and supports	\$4,188,192.00	\$2,364,304.00	\$1,823,888.00
SWDs - access to curriculum, related services, assistive technology	\$4,897,485.00	\$2,033,231.00	\$2,864,254.00
Adaptive staffing plans	\$18,153,716.00	\$9,512,541.00	\$8,641,175.00
Student devices - hardware (laptops, tablets), software, tech support	\$77,928,450.00	\$63,614,032.00	\$14,314,418.00
Other subgroup supports - homeless, foster care, etc.	\$434,338.00	\$52,859.00	\$381,479.00
Student connectivity - internet access, phone access	\$13,916,318.00	\$9,226,267.00	\$4,690,051.00
	\$257,919,639.00*	\$177,893,257.00	\$80,026,382.00

*The information is pulled from eGMS based on the last approved budget detail and last approved PER. If an application is in review that has additional funding in the budget detail, that amount will not be reflected until the application receives final approval.

The chart below represents the ESSER I State Level funding allocated to the LEAs. Column A represents the categories in which funding was budgeted by the LEAs. Column C represents the amounts expended/obligated by the LEAs as indicated on the LEAs' last submitted Periodic Expenditure Report.

ESSER I State-Level Uses of Funds Allocated to LEAs			
Report Totals	Total Budgeted	Expended	Remaining Funding
Indirect cost	\$3,614,227.00	\$2,202,167.00	\$1,412,060.00
Compensatory education for students with disabilities	\$157,061.00	\$23,200.00	\$133,861.00
Core subject curricular supplements/materials for continuous learning	\$11,840,879.00	\$7,329,450.00	\$4,511,429.00

Early childhood - expanding seats and related costs	\$115,297.00	\$84,926.00	\$30,371.00
English learner supports	\$98,867.00	\$37,986.00	\$60,881.00
High school supports - IGPs and graduate transitions	\$1,003,186.00	\$667,555.00	\$335,631.00
Non-core/CTE supplements/materials for continuous learning	\$2,534,514.00	\$1,271,976.00	\$1,262,538.00
Nonpublic administration cost	\$14,430.00	\$26,443.00	(\$12,013.00)
Other nonpublic school equitable services	\$812,693.00	\$433,820.00	\$378,873.00
Professional development for workforce talent	\$2,381,805.00	\$1,101,531.00	\$1,280,274.00
SWDs - access to curriculum, related services, assistive technology	\$2,536,513.00	\$1,675,368.00	\$861,145.00
Adaptive staffing plan supports	\$318,951.00	\$129,919.00	\$189,032.00
Strong Start tutoring	\$608,551.00	\$5,153.00	\$603,398.00
	\$26,036,974.00	\$14,989,494.00	\$11,047,480.00

The chart below represents the GEER I funding allocated to the LEAs. Column A represents the categories in which funding was budgeted by the LEAs. Column C represents the amounts expended/obligated by the LEAs as indicated on the LEAs' last submitted Periodic Expenditure Report.

GEER I LEA Uses of Funds			
	Total Budgeted	Expended	Remaining Funding
Indirect cost	\$4,533,483.00	\$2,784,845.00	\$1,748,638.00
Nonpublic administration cost	\$6,469.00	\$0.00	\$6,469.00
Nonpublic student devices for nonpublic school students	\$715,838.00	\$480,964.00	\$234,874.00

Nonpublic student connectivity - internet access, phone access	\$166,021.00	\$4,631.00	\$161,390.00
Student devices - hardware (laptops, tablets), software, tech support	\$19,984,607.00	\$13,531,476.00	\$6,453,131.00
Student connectivity - internet access, phone access	\$6,831,780.00	\$4,574,087.00	\$2,257,693.00
	\$32,238,198.00	\$21,376,003.00	\$10,862,195.00

Planned SEA Uses for ESSER II State-Level Funds

Of the total 9.5% state-level portion of ESSER II, the LDOE is planning to spend the funds in alignment with our *Believe to Achieve Educational Priorities* to support both state-level activities and incentive allocations to LEAs. Below is a high-level summary of the proposed plans.

<u><i>Believe to Achieve Educational Priorities</i></u>	Proposed Priority Work*	ESSER II
Career, College, Service Ready	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Engagement & Attendance • Dropout Prevention • Electronic Individual Graduation Plan • ACT and Pre-ACT • Redesign High School 	\$4,600,000
Equitable, Inclusive Learning Experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New School Choice Pandemic Response Funding • Alternative Ed Curriculum Support • School Social Work Expansion • Diverse Learners Leadership Development • Learning Recovery for English Learners • Special Education Redesign • Educator Mental/Behavioral Health 	\$11,600,000
Quality Teaching & Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Studies Standards and Curriculum PD • ELA Guidebook Accessibility • Accelerate • Summer Enrichment • After School Programming • Arts • High-Quality Tutoring Vouchers • Quality Assessments • Literacy Screeners • Statewide Data Systems 	\$9,700,000

Effective Educator Workforce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and Retention Models • New Teacher Supports • Pre-Educator Pathway • Intersession PD Models • PD on Instructional Strategies • PD Platform (LMS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content Leader Growth • Science of Reading • Regional Literacy Coordinators • English Learner Teacher Certification • Special Education Certification • CLASS Certification 	\$39,400,000
Strong Systems and Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing and Scheduling Guidance • Reimagine School Systems • Balanced Calendar Pilots • Parent and Family Engagement • Strategic Planning • Strategic Budget Planning and Management • Human Capital Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medicaid Utilization • LEA Technical Assistance • Broadband • Communications Improvements • PPE and Sanitization • Board Member PD 	\$27,700,000
		TOTAL	\$93,500,000

*LDOE is still engaging with stakeholders to get input and feedback on the initiatives and the specific work the funds will support.

- 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.

LDOE released ESSER I Funds in Spring 2020. LDOE will release estimated ESSER II allocations to school systems in two action periods in order to:

- Support strategic and coordinated response efforts through 2024, and
- Ensure school systems are spending their ESSER I *first*.

	ESSER I Funds		ESSER II Funds	
	Formula	Incentive	Formula Action 1 (50%)	Formula Action 2 (50%)
Released in eGMS	April 2020	June 2020	March 2021	September 2021

LEA

	Allocations			Unallocated	
	Date Allocated	Amount	Expended/ Obligated	Amount	Date to be Allocated
ESSER I Formula	May 1, 2020	\$258,797,539	\$177,893,257		
ESSER I State Level	June 19, 2020	\$26,316,773			
GEER I	July 16, 2020	\$32,308,003	\$21,376,003		
ESSER II Formula	March 31, 2021	\$469,848,403	-	\$574,258,697	September 2021

SEA

	State Reservation	Allocated to LEAs	State-Level Activities	Expended/ Obligated
ESSER I State Level	\$27,263,116	\$26,316,773	\$ 946,343	\$ 946,343
ESSER II State Level*	\$110,211,341	TBD	TBD	

*Proposed activities outlined in table above.

LDOE is forming a stakeholder engagement group of federal program directors, business managers, and CFOs to outline the funding and budgeting timelines for the remaining ESSER II and III allocation and planning cycles.

- 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

The table below specifies how the SEA is utilizing other federal funding sources to support the needs of students across the state.

Funds	How they are being used
Education Stabilization Fund Rethinking Education Models (ESF-REM).	<p>Real-time Early Access to Literacy (REAL) provides individualized support for students in grades pre-K through 3 to make progress in their literacy development. REAL provides devices, connectivity, and tutoring services to eligible students in these grades.</p> <p>The REAL Program is funded by a federal grant, Education Stabilization Fund Rethinking Education Models (ESF-REM). The grant provides approximately \$17 million total to Louisiana over the course of three years to improve early literacy outcomes across the state.</p> <p>School systems receive funding to establish literacy tutoring micro grant accounts for eligible students. Families can browse services in the LDOE Tutoring Service Provider Guide.</p>
IDEA (state-level)	<p>Strong Start Compensatory Services are services offered to students to address lack of progress or skills lost due to extended school facility closures. Strong Start compensatory services address the impact school closures had on students’ progress towards goals outlined in the students’ IEPs or</p>

	<p>IAPs. These services are in addition to the special education and related services necessary to provide students FAPE as documented in their IEP or IAP.</p> <p>The Louisiana Department of Education awarded \$1.2 million in competitive funding to school systems to support the cost of providing compensatory services to students with disabilities.</p>
--	---

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.

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.

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 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;

In Summer 2021, 95 out of 165 school systems indicated they were implementing summer learning programs. Based on data collected from school systems, 51% of these programs will be offered full day, and 79% will be offered in person. Within the summer learning programs, school systems have access to [Accelerate](#), a K-12 just-in-time tutoring initiative released by LDOE. To support school systems with summer learning, LDOE released [ELA](#) and [Math](#) Summer Learning Accelerate guidance. The purpose of Accelerate is to provide an equal-access, just-in-time tutoring model that is focused on identifying, celebrating, and building upon the assets students bring to the learning experience. An acceleration approach addresses unfinished learning in an equitable way. Acceleration means connecting unfinished learning in the context of new learning, integrating new information and the needed prior knowledge. The model has three pillars: intentional structures, effective instruction, and high-quality materials. In addition to the guidance released, LDOE will continue to release tutoring lessons in ELA and math and implementation support such as webinars.

The LDOE has identified a cohort of eight school systems that will implement Accelerate as intended. This cohort will be tracked through various measurements to show progress and impact on student learning. This cohort will receive additional support and funding to help implement the strategy effectively. Based on the impact of Accelerate within the cohort, LDOE will continue to improve the Accelerate resources and support based on feedback from school systems within the cohort.

- 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

The Louisiana Department of Education has provided [EB Guidance](#) to school systems on selecting evidence-based interventions to support the academic and mental health of students who were disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. The Louisiana Department of Education will analyze summative assessment data from Spring 2021, as well as historical data for student groups to gather more information on students who have been most impacted. School systems will use diagnostic assessments and high-quality, curriculum-embedded assessments to determine areas of unfinished learning that need to be addressed in tutoring groups. Furthermore, school systems will use high-quality instructional materials to intervene and address student needs.

- 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.**

The Louisiana Department of Education is creating a Child Welfare and Attendance position to serve within the Office of College and Career Readiness. The agency staff member within this position will be responsible for leading, managing, and implementing various elements of the Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) programs across the state. This position will also serve as the subject matter authority on matters of Child Welfare and Attendance, developing programs that include multi-agency and multi-level coordination and direction.

LDOE is supporting school systems in implementing the evidence-based practice of a Dropout Early Warning System. School systems within the state of Louisiana will have the opportunity to install the Dropout Early Warning System for the 2022-2023 school year to address problems with student attendance, discipline, achievement scores, and dropout rates. By allowing school systems the opportunity to implement an effective system, LDOE will support systems in increasing overall student performance. The timeline for planning and implementation is as follows:

- Planning year – 2021-2022
- Newsletter entries – June/July 2022
- Informational webinar – July 2022
- Release request for funds – August 2022
- Reconcile all funding requests – August 2022
- Release funding – September 2022

Furthermore, the Louisiana Department of Education is partnering with Louisiana State University to re-engage students who have missed in-person instruction or have been disengaged in remote instruction. This partnership will create a statewide cross-sector partnership with the LSU-Social Research and Evaluation Center to address the approximately 16,731 students dropping from school enrollments. The purpose of this partnership is to locate LDOE students who have not been attending school during the 2020-2021 school year and re-enroll and track Pre-K-12 students for the 2021-2022 school year. Specific goals and objectives include the following:

- LSU Social Research and Evaluation Center will establish a statewide cross sector partnership to promote good school attendance practices for Pre-K-12 students and schools.
- Assist in validating and assisting local school systems in identifying students in the February 1, 2021 student count but not in the October 1, 2020 student count.
- Hire 16 attendance specialists (contracted through LSU SREC).
- Each specialist is to be responsible for locating approximately 1,000 students and assisting in the re-enrollment of eligible students in their local school systems.
- Among students who have not exited the LDOE system, re-enroll students that are not attending school (not moved out of state, not enrolled in other schools, or not enrolled in a home study program).
- Re-introduce students and families that are currently enrolled in other school models (e.g., virtual, private schools, home study) to their local neighborhood school as an option to return.

LSU-Social Research and Evaluation Center will provide LDOE with various key deliverables, including:

- Monthly membership rolls of the Louisiana Attendance Alliance Initiative and schedule monthly/quarterly meetings.
- Student tracking program in compliance with all Louisiana student data privacy laws. The data will be stored in a real time data system monitored by LSU for specialists to update and track efforts.
- Monthly aggregate status report that will be in compliance with student data privacy laws.
- Summary of practices and local contacts that promoted student re-engagement.
- Summary of challenges students and families faced while engaging with their local LEAs.

At the conclusion of this partnership, LSU-Social Research and Evaluation Center will develop a comprehensive final report that includes:

- List of student Louisiana Secure IDs by school system with validated exit codes.
- List of student Louisiana Secure IDs who are eligible to re-enroll in their LEA schools by school and grade.
- List of student Louisiana Secure IDs RE-ENROLLED by LEA, school, and grade by December 1, 2021.
- Summary of practices and local contacts that promoted student re-engagement.
- Summary of challenges students and families faced while engaging with their local LEAs.

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;

To support school systems with planning and budgeting for the use of ESSER III Evidence-Based funds, the Louisiana Department of Education developed [EB Guidance](#), which includes general information regarding U.S. Department of Education (ED) requirements relevant to the ESSER III funds for evidence-based interventions, as well as resources to support school systems with determining interventions that would support their students.

Louisiana released approved Clearinghouses with Initiatives to support school systems with budgeting evidence-based funds. School systems can fund initiatives released by the Louisiana Department of Education through the *Achieve! Priorities-Based Planning Guide for School Systems* and therefore are not required to provide research to LDOE relevant to the level of evidence of the intervention. Additionally, a school system can select an evidence-based educational intervention or social-emotional intervention accessible through the following clearinghouses: What Works Clearinghouse, Promising Practices Network, Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development, and Social Programs That Work. If a school system plans to budget ESSER III evidence-based funds for interventions not from the clearinghouse websites or the initiatives listed within the

Achieve! Priorities-Based Planning Guide for School Systems, the school system is required to upload research evidence to the Louisiana Department of Education.

It is important for school systems to strategically plan for the implementation of evidence-based interventions. School system plans should address communication of the intervention to stakeholders, professional development for teachers and leaders, guidance for implementation of the intervention at the school level, and progress monitoring expectations to determine the impact on student outcomes. The Department will gather information from school systems on the implementation and impact of the evidence-based interventions through future surveys and focus groups.

- 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

Of the total amount allocated to an LEA from the State’s ARP ESSER III award, LEAs must reserve at least 20% of funds to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions for:

- Meeting students’ social, emotional, mental, and physical health and academic needs, including through meeting basic student needs, reengaging students, and providing access to a safe and inclusive learning environment;
- Addressing the impact of COVID-19 on students’ opportunity to learn, including closing the digital divide, implementing strategies for accelerating learning, effectively using data, and addressing resource inequities.
- Supporting educator and staff well-being and stability, including by stabilizing a diverse and qualified educator workforce.

School systems should implement evidence-based and practitioner-informed strategies to respond to students’ social, emotional, and academic needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student subgroups (each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care). The Louisiana Department of Education will analyze summative assessment data from Spring 2021 as well as historical data for student groups to identify which students are most in need of intervention or enrichment programs.

- 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.**

Approximately 16,000 students have not attended school from the end of the 2019-2020 academic year to the 2020-2021 academic year. The SEA has established a partnership with the Social Research and Evaluation Center (SREC) at Louisiana State University to establish a statewide cross-sector partnership to promote good school attendance practices for Pre-K-12 students and schools. This partnership will also assist LEAs with identifying students who were enrolled in school on February 1, 2020, but not enrolled on October 1, 2020. A cadre of SREC attendance specialists will assist the LEAs who opt-in to this

program with re-enrollment of eligible students (those who have not exited the LDOE system) in the LEA.

The Louisiana Department of Education is creating a Child Welfare and Attendance position to serve within the Office of College and Career Readiness. The agency staff member in this position will be responsible for leading, managing, and implementing various elements of the Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) programs across the state. This staff member will also serve as the subject matter authority on matters of Child Welfare and Attendance, developing programs that include multi-agency and multi-level coordination and direction.

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;

In order for ARP ESSER funding to be allocated to after school programs, school systems must identify the evidence-based intervention that will be implemented in the after school program. School systems are submitting research evidence to support their selected evidence-based interventions through the budget application system. LEAs are required to progress monitor data from the evidence-based intervention in order to evaluate its impact on students. The Department will gather information from school systems on the implementation and impact of the evidence-based interventions through future surveys and focus groups. From the feedback received from the focus groups and surveys, LDOE will analyze evidence-based implementation data of successful programs and school systems to highlight the programs and systems as Models of Excellence.

- 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

The Louisiana Department of Education is guiding school systems to select evidence-based interventions that address the student groups most impacted by COVID-19. To support school systems with determining which groups of students are disproportionately impacted, LDOE will continue to collect data through focus groups and surveys that are targeted at a variety of stakeholders. The Department will also update the current Learning Model Dashboard to collect data by student groups within each school system.

- 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.

The Louisiana Department of Education is creating a Child Welfare and Attendance position to serve within the Office of College and Career Readiness. The agency staff member within this position will be responsible for leading, managing, and implementing various elements of the Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) programs across the state. This position will also serve as the subject matter authority on matters of Child Welfare and Attendance, developing programs that include multi-agency and multi-level coordination and direction.

Also, school systems within the state of Louisiana will have the opportunity to install a Dropout Early Warning System that addresses problems with student attendance, discipline, achievement scores, and dropout rates. By allowing school systems the opportunity to implement an effective system, LDOE will support systems in increasing overall student performance.

Furthermore, the Louisiana Department of Education is partnering with Louisiana State University to re-engage students who have missed in-person instruction or have been disengaged in remote instruction. This partnership will create a statewide cross-sector partnership with the LSU-Social Research and Evaluation Center to address the approximately 16,731 students dropping from school enrollments. The purpose of this partnership is to locate LDOE students who have not been attending school during the 2020-2021 school year and re-enroll and track Pre-K-12 students for the 2021-2022 school year. Specific goals and objectives include the following:

- LSU Social Research and Evaluation Center will establish a statewide cross sector partnership to promote good school attendance practices for Pre-K-12 students and schools.

- Assist in validating and assisting local school systems in identifying students in the February 1, 2021 student count but not in the October 1, 2020 student count.
- Hire 16 attendance specialists (contracted through LSU SREC).
- Each specialist is to be responsible for locating approximately 1,000 students and assisting in the re-enrollment of eligible students in their local school systems.
- Among students who have not exited the LDOE system, re-enroll students that are not attending school (not moved out of state, not enrolled in other schools, or not enrolled in a home study program).
- Re-introduce students and families that are currently enrolled in other school models (e.g., virtual, private schools, home study) to their local neighborhood school as an option to return.

LSU-Social Research and Evaluation Center will provide LDOE with various key deliverables, including:

- Monthly membership rolls of the Louisiana Attendance Alliance Initiative and schedule monthly/quarterly meetings.
- Student tracking program in compliance with all Louisiana student data privacy laws. The data will be stored in a real time data system monitored by LSU for specialists to update and track efforts.
- Monthly aggregate status report that will be in compliance with student data privacy laws.
- Summary of practices and local contacts that promoted student re-engagement.
- Summary of challenges students and families faced while engaging with their local LEAs.

At the conclusion of this partnership, LSU-Social Research and Evaluation Center will develop a comprehensive final report that includes:

- List of student Louisiana Secure IDs by school system with validated exit codes.
- List of student Louisiana Secure IDs who are eligible to re-enroll in their LEA schools by school and grade.
- List of student Louisiana Secure IDs RE-ENROLLED by LEA, school, and grade by December 1, 2021.
- Summary of practices and local contacts that promoted student re-engagement.
- Summary of challenges students and families faced while engaging with their local LEAs.

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.

The Louisiana Department of Education will not reserve funds for emergency needs under section 2001(f)(4) of the ARP Act to address issues responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

The Louisiana Department of Education developed updated [guidance](#) to provide school systems with school reopening guidance and resources. This resource includes the most recent recommendations and guidance from the CDC in order to safely reopen and operate schools.

Of the total amount allocated to an LEA from the State's ARP ESSER III award, LEAs must reserve at least 20% of funds to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions for:

- Meeting students' social, emotional, mental, and physical health and academic needs, including through meeting basic student needs, reengaging students, and providing access to a safe and inclusive learning environment;
- Addressing the impact of COVID-19 on students' opportunity to learn, including closing the digital divide, implementing strategies for accelerating learning, effectively using data, and addressing resource inequities.
- Supporting educator and staff well-being and stability, including by stabilizing a diverse and qualified educator workforce.

School systems will implement evidence-based and practitioner-informed strategies to respond to students' social, emotional, and academic needs and to address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student subgroups (each major racial and ethnic group, children from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care). Schools and systems will monitor the implementation of the evidence-based interventions for students.

Furthermore, school systems were required to sign ESSER I and ESSER II assurances as part of the application process.

Assurances for ESSER I applications:

PROGRAMMATIC, FISCAL, AND REPORTING ASSURANCES

1. The LEA will use ESSER Formula funds for activities allowable under section 18003(d) of Division B of the CARES Act. (See Appendix A.) Note: The U.S. Department of Education generally does not consider the following to be an allowable use of ESSER funds, under any part of 18003: 1) subsidizing or offsetting executive salaries and benefits of individuals who are not employees of the LEAs or 2) expenditures related to state or local teacher or faculty unions or associations.
2. The LEA will provide equitable services to students and teachers in non-public schools as required under 18005 of Division B of the CARES Act. The LEA will maintain control of funds for the services and assistance provided to a non-public school under the ESSER Fund and have title to materials, equipment, and property purchased with ESSER funds. Services provided to a non-public school with ESSER funds will be provided by the LEA directly, or through contract with another public or private entity.
3. The LEA will, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to compensate its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to COVID-19 in compliance with Section 18006 of Division B of the CARES Act. In addition, the LEA will continue to pay employees and contractors to the greatest extent practicable based on the unique financial circumstances of the entity. CARES Act funds generally will not be used for bonuses, merit pay, or similar expenditures, unless related to disruptions or closures resulting from COVID-19.

4. The LEA will comply with all reporting requirements, including those in Section 15011(b)(2) of Division B of the CARES Act, and any others required by the Louisiana Department of Education in order to comply with federal reporting requirements. Note: The U.S. Department of Education notified States that it may require additional reporting in the future, which may include: the methodology LEAs will use to provide services or assistance to students and staff in both public and non-public schools and the uses of funds by the LEAs or other entities and demonstration of their compliance with Section 18003(d), such as any use of funds addressing the digital divide, including securing access to home-based connectivity and remote-use devices, related issues in supporting remote learning for all students, including disadvantaged populations.
5. The LEA will cooperate with any examination of records with respect to such funds by making records available for inspection, production, and examination, and authorized individuals available for interview and examination, upon the request of (i) the U.S. Department of Education and/or its Inspector General; (ii) any other federal agency, commission, or department in the lawful exercise of its jurisdiction and authority; and (iii) the Louisiana Department of Education.

OTHER ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

1. The LEA will comply with all applicable assurances in OMB Standard Forms 424B and D (Assurances for Non-Construction and Construction Programs), including the assurances relating to the legal authority to apply for assistance; access to records; conflict of interest; merit systems; nondiscrimination; Hatch Act provisions; labor standards; flood hazards; historic preservation; protection of human subjects; animal welfare; lead-based paint; Single Audit Act; and the general agreement to comply with all applicable Federal laws, executive orders and regulations.
2. The LEA certifies, to the best of its knowledge and belief, that:
 - No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
 - If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the LEA will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.

- The LEA will include the language of this certification in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and ensure that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.
3. The LEA will comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) requirements in Subpart D-Post Federal Award Requirements (2 CFR §§200.300-345) and Subpart E-Cost Principles (2 CFR §§200.400-475) to ensure that LEAs, including charter schools that are LEAs, are using ESSER funds for purposes that are reasonable, necessary, and allocable under the CARES Act.
 4. The LEA will comply with the provisions of all applicable acts, regulations and assurances; the following provisions of Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 81, 82, 84, 97, 98, and 99; the OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government wide Debarment and Suspension (Non procurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485; and the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.

Assurances for ESSER II applications:

PROGRAMMATIC, FISCAL, AND REPORTING ASSURANCES

1. The LEA will use ESSER II Formula funds for activities allowable under section 313(d) of Division M of the CRRSA Act. The U.S. Department of Education generally does not consider the following to be an allowable use of ESSER II funds, under any part of section 313: Subsidizing or offsetting executive salaries and benefits of individuals who are not employees of the LEAs or Expenditures related to state or local teacher or faculty unions or associations.
2. An LEA that receives ESSER II funds under this grant is not required to provide equitable services to non-public school students and teachers with the ESSER II funding.
3. The LEA will, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to compensate its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to COVID-19 in compliance with section 315 of Division M or the CRRSA Act. In addition, the LEA will continue to pay employees and contractors to the greatest extent practicable based on the unique financial circumstances of the entity. ESSER II funds generally will not be used for bonuses, merit pay, or similar expenditures, unless related to disruptions or closures resulting from COVID-19.
4. The LEA will comply with all reporting requirements, including those in section 15011 of the CARES Act and section 313(f) of Division M of the CRRSA Act and any others required by the Louisiana Department of Education in order to comply with federal reporting requirements. Note: The U.S. Department of Education notified States that the report must provide a detailed accounting of the use of funds, including how funds are used to measure and address learning loss among students disproportionately affected by

coronavirus and school closures, including low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care. The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education may require additional reporting in the future. (See also 2 CFR 200.328-200.329).

5. Records pertaining to the ESSER II award under 2 C.F.R § 200.334 and 34 C.F.R. § 76.730, including financial records related to use of grant funds, will be retained separately from the LEA's ESSER I funds. Every subrecipient of ESSER II funds will cooperate with any examination of records with respect to such funds by making records available for inspection, production, and examination, and authorized individuals available for interview and examination, upon the request of (i) the U.S. Department of Education and/or its Inspector General; or (ii) any other federal agency, commission, or department in the lawful exercise of its jurisdiction and authority; and (iii) the Louisiana Department of Education.

OTHER ASSURANCES AND CERTIFICATIONS

1. The LEA will comply with all applicable assurances in OMB Standard Forms 424B and D (Assurances for Non-Construction and Construction Programs), including the assurances relating to the legal authority to apply for assistance; access to records; conflict of interest; merit systems; nondiscrimination; Hatch Act provisions; labor standards; flood hazards; historic preservation; protection of human subjects; animal welfare; lead-based paint; Single Audit Act; and the general agreement to comply with all applicable Federal laws, executive orders and regulations.
2. The LEA certifies, to the best of its knowledge and belief, that: No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.
 - o If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the LEA will complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure Form to Report Lobbying," in accordance with its instructions.
 - o The LEA will include the language of this certification in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and ensure that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

3. The LEA will comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) requirements in Subpart 0.-Post Federal Award Requirements (2 CFR §§200.300-345) and Subpart E--Cost Principles (2 CFR §§200.400-475) to ensure that LEAs, including charter schools that are LEAs, are using ESSER II funds for purposes that are reasonable, necessary, and allocable under the CARES Act.
 4. The LEA will comply with the provisions of all applicable acts, regulations and assurances; the following provisions of Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) 34 CFR parts 76, 77, 81,82, 84, 97, 98, and 99;the OMB Guidelines to Agencies on Government wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement) in 2 CFR part 180, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3485; and the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR part 200, as adopted and amended as regulations of the Department in 2 CFR part 3474.
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.

The Louisiana Department of Education informed LEAs that they must allow for public comment and feedback on the school reopening plan. LDOE has specified that school systems should allow for more than one way in which school systems allow for the public to provide comments. For example, a school system may include an opportunity for public comment during a school board meeting; however, the Department recommends school systems also provide another means through which the public can submit feedback. This may include capturing feedback through a collection form on the LEA website.

Furthermore, LDOE has engaged with various stakeholders, including students, parents, teachers, system leaders, and school leaders. These engagements hosted by LDOE include the following:

- Stakeholder calls in January 2021 and February 2021
- System leader calls throughout the 2020-2021 school year
- Roundtable discussions with school superintendents and Chief Academic Officers
- Newsletters released throughout the 2020-2021 school year
- Surveys collected and focus group conducted

LDOE plans to continue engaging with various stakeholders during the summer and 2021-2022 school year. The Department will continue to require LEAs to engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders and will include this requirement within the assurances signed by each LEA in completing the application for ARP ESSER funds.

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;

To support school systems with selecting evidence-based interventions that respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students, the Louisiana Department of Education has released approved Clearinghouses with Initiatives to support school systems with budgeting evidence-based funds. School systems can fund initiatives released by the Louisiana Department of Education through the [*Achieve! Priorities-Based Planning Guide for School Systems*](#) and therefore are not required to provide research to LDOE relevant to the level of evidence of the intervention. Additionally, a school system can select an evidence-based educational intervention or social-emotional intervention through the following clearinghouses: What Works Clearinghouse, Promising Practices Network, Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development, and Social Programs That Work. If a school system plans to budget ESSER III evidence-based funds for interventions not from the clearinghouse websites or the initiatives listed within the *Achieve! Priorities-Based Planning Guide for School Systems*, the school system is required to submit research evidence to the Louisiana Department of Education. LDOE is reviewing all submitted research and determining approval of the ESSER III EB funds based on the research evidence uploaded within the school system's application. Also, the Louisiana Department of Education is requiring LEAs to track and monitor the impact of the evidence-based interventions on students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health. This data will be maintained at the LEA level and provided to the Department when requested. The Department will gather information from school systems on the implementation and impact of the evidence-based interventions through future surveys and focus groups. From the feedback received from the focus groups and surveys, LDOE will analyze evidence-based implementation data of successful programs and school systems to highlight the programs and systems as Models of Excellence.

- 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

To support school systems with planning for and budgeting for ESSER funds, the Louisiana Department of Education released the [*Strong Start 2020*](#) and [*Achieve! Priorities-Based Planning Guide for School Systems*](#). This guidance includes initiatives and resources for

school systems to implement to support various student groups. Once school system applications are received, all applications are reviewed by LDOE to ensure they are aligned to the Department's [Educational Priorities](#) as well as the ESSER allowabilities.

- 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.

Based on data received from school systems, approximately 16,000 students have not attended school from the end of the 2019-2020 academic year to the 2020-2021 academic year. The Louisiana Department of Education is partnering with Louisiana State University to form the LSU Attendance Alliance. This alliance was developed as a result of COVID-19 and the difficulties school systems faced with addressing students dropping from school enrollments, which is proving to be a continuous challenge for many school systems throughout the state. Through this partnership, LSU-SREC will provide systems attendance specialists that promote good attendance practices to address attendance concerns for all students.

The Department is also employing an agency specific lead within a new Child Welfare and Attendance position to serve within the Office of College and Career Readiness. The agency staff member within this position will be responsible for leading, managing, and implementing various elements of the Child Welfare and Attendance (CWA) programs across the state. This staff member will support and monitor school systems throughout the state of Louisiana.

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
 - 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.

Louisiana school systems are supported by the Department to develop multi-year plans that prioritize equity and accelerate opportunities for students with the greatest needs, specifically students and families living in deep poverty, students with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care. The Department has provided guidance to school systems on analyzing data to determine current needs at individual schools as well as across the district. School systems have updated reopening plans in preparation for the 2021-2022 school year that are focused on in-person instruction.

The Louisiana Department of Education has also provided guidance to school systems to support [student behavior and discipline](#).

Research shows that students with chronic behavior problems face significant challenges in the classroom. To support school systems with ensuring their students are academically successful, LDOE has provided guidance to school systems on supporting the social and emotional well-being of students. This guidance includes:

- **Multi-Tiered System of Supports:** Effective behavior systems should be a critical component of every school system and school. The Department is focused on providing the support and resources needed to implement a tiered system of responses for student behavior and supports.
- **Behavioral Intervention:** The Department is committed to enhancing school climate and improving behavioral intervention practices in schools. School systems and schools should prioritize utilization of evidence-based behavioral interventions to ensure students have access to Tier 2 and/or Tier 3 supports to manage behavioral challenges.
- **Social-Emotional Learning:** School systems should implement and prioritize evidence-based social-emotional learning to support individual student growth and promote a healthy school climate and culture.

The Department labels schools as struggling with a UIR-D (Urgent Intervention Required for Discipline) label if the out-of-school suspension rate is more than two times the national average for the past three years (Two times the national average equals 5.2% for grades Pre-K-4 and 20.2% for grades 5-12). In order to shed this status, a school system must have an out-of-school suspension rate that is less than twice the national average for two consecutive years.

To support school systems in creating and maintaining a positive and supportive learning environment for all students, the Department released resources within the [Achieve! Priorities-Based Planning Guide for School Systems](#) specific to [hiring social workers](#) to support students' mental health, [Compensatory Services Guidance for Students with Disabilities](#), [Louisiana Student Well-Being Vendor Guide](#), and [Employee Assistance Programs](#). These resources, amongst others within the [Achieve! Priorities-Based Planning Guide for School Systems](#), serve as informational references and tools for school systems to utilize in creating a positive and supportive learning environment.

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.

The table below contains two data points from LDOE:

1. The number and percent of classes taught by out-of-field and uncertified teachers over the last three years (2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021) for each subgroup.

2. The number of educators in each subgroup reported in PEP over the last three years (2018-2019, 2019-2020, 2020-2021) and the rate of change.

Table F1.

Area	Data on shortages and needs
Special educators and related service personnel and paraprofessionals	<p>Percent of special education classes in the 2020-2021 academic year taught by out-of-field and uncertified teachers: 17%</p> <p>Percent of special education classes in the 2020-2021 academic year taught by out-of-field teachers: 11%</p> <p>Average rate of change (from 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 academic years) of special educators and related service personnel and paraprofessionals: +10.9%</p>
Bilingual educators	<p>Percent of world language classes in the 2020-2021 academic year taught by out-of-field and uncertified teachers: 40%</p> <p>Percent of world language classes in the 2020-2021 academic year taught by out-of-field teachers: 12%</p> <p>Average rate of change (from 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 academic years) of bilingual educators: -0.7%</p>
English as a second language educators	<p>Percent of English as a second language classes in the 2020-2021 academic year taught by out-of-field and uncertified teachers: 43%</p> <p>Percent of English as a second language classes in the 2020-2021 academic year taught by out-of-field teachers: 9%</p> <p>Average rate of change (from 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 academic years) of English as a second language educators: -5.5%</p>
STEM educators	<p>Percent of STEM classes in the 2020-2021 academic year taught by out-of-field and uncertified teachers: 23%</p> <p>Percent of STEM classes in the 2020-2021 academic year taught by out-of-field teachers: 11%</p> <p>Average rate of change (from 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 academic years) of STEM educators: +5.4%</p>
CTE educators	<p>Percent of CTE classes in the 2020-2021 academic year taught by out-of-field and uncertified teachers: 35%</p> <p>Percent of CTE classes in the 2020-2021 academic year taught by out-of-field teachers: 13%</p> <p>Average rate of change (from 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 academic years) of CTE educators: 41.5%</p>

Early childhood educators	School Year	# of Teachers with “Yes” Certification	# of Teachers with “No” Certification	# of Teachers with re-certification	Total # Teachers
	2020	3431	2163	123	5594
	2019	4111	2550	163	6661
	2018	3946	2463	170	6409
School counselors	Average rate of change (from 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 academic years) of school counselors: -5.3%				
Social workers	Average rate of change (from 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 academic years) of social workers:-2.4%				
Nurses	Average rate of change (from 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 academic years) of nurses: -20%				
School psychologists	Average rate of change (from 2018-2019 through 2020-2021 academic years) of school psychologists: -6.5%				

- 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.

To support LEAs with avoiding layoffs and potential shortages in the most urgent areas, the Louisiana Department of Education developed [Achieve! Compensation Guidance](#). This guidance provides school systems with role- and demand-based compensation examples to guide school system planning when addressing students', faculties', and staffs' educational and well-being needs that were triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. It also includes a list of potential teacher leader roles and types of models, descriptions, and examples to consider when implementing additional compensation models, including career pathways for teachers, demand-based compensation, and one-time stipends.

- 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).

The SEA plans to use ESSER set-aside to invest in strengthening the educator pipeline while addressing the academic, social, and emotional needs of students. Those investments include launching new work and expanding current work as follows:

- *New teacher supports:* Provide monthly mentoring for all first year teachers.
- *Pre-educator pathways:* The ultimate mission of the [Louisiana Pre-Educator Pathway](#) is to cultivate highly skilled educators by guiding young people on a path to becoming accomplished teachers, beginning in high school and extending through college and into the profession. Through high-quality curriculum focusing on anti-bias instruction, classroom culture, professional collaboration, understanding assessments, and authentic

engagement, the pathway aims to address workforce needs related to the recruitment and retention of teachers of color while expanding Grow Your Own initiatives across the state of Louisiana.

- *Content Leader Expansion:* The teaching profession remains relatively flat with a dearth of leadership opportunities between classroom teaching and principalships. For some educators who want to remain in the classroom, this can mean limited options to grow and take on additional responsibility. In turn, educators who do wish to become principals don't always have the opportunity to build the necessary knowledge and skill in a scaffolded way over time. The [Content Leader role](#) is an important step in the leadership pipeline for talented local educators. Content Leaders are local educators who have the knowledge, skills, and concrete resources to provide high-quality, content-rich, and curriculum-specific professional development to new and current teachers in their districts.
- *Mentor Teacher:* LDOE policy requires that all candidates pursuing teacher certification complete a year-long residency supported by a credentialed [mentor teacher](#). This year-long residency allows pre-service teachers to be ready day one upon completion of their teacher preparation program. All year-long residents are supported by credentialed mentors. Mentors must complete a rigorous training and assessment series in order to qualify as a certified mentor. This mentor credentialing process ensures that those serving in the role of a mentor have the skills and knowledge needed to effectively support and develop beginning teachers.

To ensure a cadre of highly trained mentors across the state LDOE offered state-wide mentor training for three years. There are now twenty-nine BESE approved mentor training programs operating across the state. LDOE currently provides funding to Comprehensive Intervention Required (CIR) and Urgent Intervention Required for Academics (UIR-A) schools to ensure these schools have a trained mentor on their campuses through Strong Start.

LDOE offers funding to support CIR and UIR-A schools in having trained Content Leaders. Content Leaders complete a rigorous training and complete an assessment series that signals that they are prepared to support other teachers with implementing high quality instruction. Content leaders provide professional development on high quality instructional materials and practices and assist with lesson and unit planning.

In 2020-2021, LDOE provided funding to support school systems in piloting Grow Your Own programs. These pilot programs will allow districts to offer aspiring educators high school courses that can earn

them college credit and a pre-educator pathway credential. Programs such as these are instrumental in encouraging high school students to choose a career in education.

LDOE provides feedback to teacher preparation programs through the preparation provider accountability system. This accountability system measures the extent to which preparation providers are meeting educator workforce needs, identifying how their graduates are impacting student achievement, and defining the strengths and areas for improvement in their program experience.

LDOE makes the results of the teacher preparation accountability system public through the publication of [performance profiles](#).

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).

LDOE released [Staffing and Scheduling Best Practices Guidance](#) that provides systems and school leaders best practices, staffing and scheduling models, cautions and tips for implementation, and information on ongoing implementation support. In addition, LDOE is providing implementation support for this initiative at no cost, which includes three Best Practice webinars; three Job Alike Support Sessions for counselors and counselor leadership, school leaders, diverse learner leadership, and system academic leadership; and six Q&A sessions. The Technical Support Series is provided to systems at a reduced cost and includes three half-day workshops and individual coaching support. This guidance and support will help systems strategically plan for staffing models and practices that will support literacy, acceleration, diverse learner support, and social-emotional learning.

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;
- 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);
- iii. Fiscal data that is comparable across the State (e.g., per-pupil expenditures at the LEA and school levels);
- iv. Jobs created and retained (by position type);
- v. Participation in programs funded by ARP ESSER resources (e.g., summer and afterschool programs); and
- vi. Other reporting requirements reasonably required by the Secretary (please refer to Appendix B of this template; final requirements will be issued separately).

The Louisiana Department of Education collects CLASS® data through observations of all publicly funded infant, toddler, and pre-K classrooms statewide. In grades K-3, school systems administer a literacy screener to each student within the first 30 days of the school year. Louisiana administers LEAP assessments in grades 3-8 and high school during spring semesters. These annual assessments in English Language Arts, mathematics, social studies, and science provide information on which students have met grade-level standards and which students are struggling to meet grade-level standards. The Department will continue to collect student learning data through initiatives such as Accelerate, which includes high-quality assessments aligned to high-quality instructional materials.

LDOE collects absentee and discipline data from each school system, as well as advanced placement data through the Student Transcript System. The Louisiana Department of Education will continue to collect the student absentee, discipline, and advanced placement data in the 2021-2022 school year. Furthermore, LDOE is supporting school systems in implementing the evidence-based practice of a Dropout

Early Warning System. School systems within the state of Louisiana will have the opportunity to install the Dropout Early Warning System for the 2022-2023 school year to address problems with student attendance, discipline, achievement scores, and dropout rates.

During the 2021-2022 school year, the Louisiana Department of Education will continue to gather data from school systems on educator jobs retained by type through the workforce data collection. LDOE will also collect participation data specific to programs funded with ARP ESSER funds, as well as any other indicators required by the Secretary of ED.

In August 2021, LDOE will release a fiscal dashboard that reports how school systems are budgeting and spending their money. The dashboard will include data at the SEA and LEA level:

- Total allocated, budgeted, spent, remaining (by fund source - GEER I, ESSER I, II, & III)
- Total budgeted and expended by EIC alpha codes (ex. CRCL) (by fund source - GEER I, GEER II & III EANS, ESSER I, II, & III)
- Total budgeted and expended by priority (by fund source - ESSER II & III, GEER II & III EANS)

Capacity to collect data on the reporting requirements will be ensured by continuing to use, develop, and refine existing data collection processes at the SEA and LEA levels. Through coordination with its vendor/developer for the electronic grants management system (eGMS), the LDOE had previously developed a data collection tool for LEAs to report ESSER I/CARES expenditures. As reporting requirements for ARPA are made available, the LDOE will refine this tool to capture LEA self-reported data. The LDOE will also coordinate internally with appropriate divisions to assure that required financial, accountability, demographic, and pandemic-response related data is made available to meet ARPA reporting requirements. Additionally, LDOE assigned staff will attend and participate in ED sponsored training and outreach activities related to the reporting requirements. The LDOE's strategy to collect data from its LEAs begins with LEA agreement to comply with all reporting requirements as part of the assurances associated with ESSER III/ARPA funding. Additionally, the reporting data collection tool within the eGMS application is a required component of the overall grant process. The data collection tool is released in a limited-time frame that requires timely response on the part of the LEA. LEA data is first reviewed via the system consistency check process that activates system process

halts, such as the completion of grant amendments and reimbursement requests, until all data is submitted. Comprehensive outreach about reporting requirements is accomplished through the Federal Support and Grantee Relations (FSGR) monthly call, announcements contained in the State Superintendent’s weekly newsletter, accurate and timely responses to LDOE Grants Help Desk inquiries, and coordination with the LDOE Equitable Inclusion and Opportunities (EIO) Office to assist in disseminating reporting information to LEA Charter School operators. All the described processes and actions are designed to ensure that high-quality data is collected and reported in compliance with ARPA 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.

ARP ESSER Monitoring Plan

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) will engage in the following procedures as it relates to fiscal and program monitoring of funds received from the ARP ESSER funds. From the date of receipt, any subrecipient of ARP ESSER funds will have an implementation period prior to being monitored by the state education agency. LDOE will implement an initial phase of ARP ESSER monitoring during year one of activity implementation until funds have been depleted.

A combination of fiscal and program risks will serve as part of LDOE’s ARP ESSER monitoring. The following risk factors will determine which school systems are selected for monitoring after the first year of implementation:

1. The LEA received and expended ARP ESSER funds.
2. The LEA was selected for monitoring in one or more other federally funded programs during the same fiscal year.
3. The LEA’s fiscal risk assessment according to the Internal Controls guide.

Subrecipients not targeted for monitoring through the above risk factors will be monitored on a cycle within 18 months of receipt of funds. In addition, each subrecipient must hire an independent firm to conduct a single audit after the first of implementation. The subrecipient will then have 30 days after the audit results are available to provide a copy of those results to the state internal auditor. The Department's audit resolution team will then initiate our standard audit resolution procedures, which will result in a closure or notice of action. Full resolution will occur within six months if a notice of action is issued.

Evidence of the following components will be evaluated during ESSER monitoring:

- Activities authorized by the ESEA, IDEA, and other federal programs;
- Results of the ARP ESSER funding needs assessment;
- Implementation of program expenditures, such as technology, materials and supplies, contracts for professional services, summer and after school programs, and other relevant expenditures;
- Allowable expenditures aligned to key priorities.

The Department will develop and utilize a standard monitoring protocol specifically for ARP ESSER. The monitoring protocol will:

- Identify key areas being monitored;
- List examples of supporting documentation the school system may provide as evidence of effective implementation;
- Confirm a determination of compliance on the part of the state monitor.
 - If a LEA has no findings of non-compliance, a notice of closure will be generated.
 - If there are findings of non-compliance, the LEA will be required to participate in the agency's corrective action process.

All ESSER monitoring will be conducted via a desk audit unless otherwise required.

The Louisiana Department of Education has an ongoing [internal controls process](#) for federal grant programs. This process includes pre-award controls, on-going controls, and post-award controls.

Appendix A: School Operating Status and Instructional Mode Data Template

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

Data as of 5/11/2021 as reported by school systems.

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.

The table below contains data on the number of schools throughout the state of Louisiana offering each mode of instruction.

Mode of Instruction	Number of Schools
Combination 100% In Person and 100% Virtual	909
100% In Person	157
Combination of 100% In Person, 100% Hybrid, and 100% Virtual	127
Combination 100% Virtual and 100% Hybrid	69
100% Virtual	61
100% Hybrid	2
Combination 100% In Person and 100% Hybrid	1

Note: Data is as of 5/11/2021 as reported by school systems. School systems reported one mode of instruction (from the options above) per school. Offerings were not collected - only the mode of instruction currently in use was reported. School systems that did not report modes of instruction are not included in these counts.

Grade Level	In Person Count	Hybrid Count	Virtual Count
Pre-K	27349	843	2875
K	45877	1593	6597
1	46118	1601	8222
2	44175	1545	8268

3	42987	1661	8313
4	42520	1661	8883
5	40799	2987	9557
6	39624	4914	11067
7	38473	5964	12425
8	37466	6905	12521
9	34890	9887	13366
10	31397	8833	14190
11	27989	8139	13973
12	25890	7705	12716

Note: Data is as of 5/11/2021 as reported by school systems. School systems reported student counts in aggregate for each of the three modes of instruction provided above. Offerings were not collected - only aggregate counts of mode of instruction currently in use by grade were reported. School systems that did not report modes of instruction by grade are not included in these counts.

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?

Add or change rows as needed

The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) has total enrollment data within the table below. LDOE is collecting the remote or online-only data, both remote/online and in-person instruction, and full-time in-person instruction in the 2021-2022 school year.

Add or change rows as needed

Number of students	Total enrollment
Students from low-income families	481,767
White, not Hispanic	289,691

Black or African American, not Hispanic	282,287
Hispanic, of any race	57,769
Asian, not Hispanic	10,806
American Indian or Alaskan Native, not Hispanic	4,000
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, not Hispanic	548
Two or more races, not Hispanic	20,366
Race/Ethnicity information not available	N/A
English learners	27,005
Children with disabilities	84,472
Students experiencing homelessness	11,336
Children and youth in foster care	3,115
Migratory students	10,954

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/COVIDplan).

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.

The Louisiana Department of Education is currently taking several steps to provide equitable access to high quality programs and instruction to all students. LDOE will comply with all provisions of Section 427 of the Improving America's Schools Act.

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.