

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



**U.S. Department of Education**

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**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](mailto: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](mailto: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., S425U2100XX): S425U210008**

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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.	
<b>Chief State School Officer or Authorized Representative (Printed Name)</b>  <b><a href="#">James F. Lane</a></b>	
<b>Signature of Authorized SEA Representative</b>  	<b>Date:</b>  8/26/21

## 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.

There have been a variety of strategies deployed by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and local educational agencies (LEAs) that have effectively supported the needs of our students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Those that have been most effective are:

- Prioritizing students most impacted by the pandemic in reopening guidance and decisions for in-person learning. Since June 2020, Virginia's guidance on reopening has centered on serving certain learners in-person, including dual language learners, students with disabilities and young learners. Recognizing the disproportionate impact school building closures and the pandemic have had on these learners, Virginia has prioritized the safe return of these students to the classroom. We have also sought to support these students in particular with instructional resources for teachers and staff. Further, when state and federal parameters have allowed, VDOE has directed additional pandemic funding to school communities with larger populations of vulnerable learners or initiatives focused on mitigating or addressing the impact of the pandemic on these students and families.
- VDOE has been particularly thoughtful in its development and communication of policy and timely resources that respond to the needs and actual concerns of LEAs. This work has been in collaboration with diverse practitioners and stakeholders throughout the state. These efforts included the creation of resources and comprehensive planning documents for division leaders and teachers such as the [Continuity for Learning Taskforce \(C4L - spring 2020\)](#); [Recover, Redesign Restart 2020 \(RRR - Summer 2020\)](#); and the [Virginia LEARNS \(Virginia Leading, Engaging, Assessing, Recovering, Nurturing and Succeeding\) Workgroup \(spring 2021\)](#). Additionally, VDOE fostered this communication and collaboration with weekly calls with Superintendents, and regular calls with special education leaders, McKinney-Vento liaisons, school nurses, and others.
- Finally, VDOE has sought to provide robust mental health and social emotional learning (SEL) supports and services for students via the provision of universal SEL screener for all divisions, [SEL Quick Guides](#) for specific student groups, and professional supports for school based leaders. Mental health and SEL supports

are also highlighted in the other guidance documents referenced above to guide schools in their approach to and considerations for reopening.

VDOE submitted a number of lessons learned to the Best Practices Clearinghouse in April, and the state Superintendent invited and encouraged divisions to do likewise in weekly calls with division superintendents. VDOE's submissions included:

- [Supporting Virtual Teaching](#)
- School Nutrition (6 artifacts)
- [Just in Time Mathematics Quick Checks](#)
- SEL Quick Guides
- [School Reopening FAQs](#)
- Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Virginia PreK-12 Schools

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.

The greatest concern across the state is those students who are struggling to make academic progress due to the pandemic conditions over the last year. Addressing this unfinished or lost learning is a top priority of VDOE and LEAs. The final results from the end of year student assessments administered by LEAs will inform strategies and priorities in the deployment of federal resources. Additionally, Virginia has invested in a new statewide growth assessment that will be administered to students in grades 3 - 8 in math and reading in the fall of the 2021 school year in order to closely monitor student progress.

We are also very concerned about the physical and mental health of our students and the ways in which that has been impacted by the pandemic. Virginia pediatricians reported to the Virginia chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics that among patients their providers have served over the last year, they have seen:

Significant increases in:

- child and adolescent anxiety;
- increases in depression;
- changes in suicidal ideation;
- child behavior problems; and
- parental stress.

Smaller increases in:

- adolescent drug, alcohol, or marijuana use;
- eating disorders; and
- child abuse.

Decreases in:

- child and adolescent physical activity;
- quality sleep;

- social and behavioral progress in children and adolescents with autism.
3. Identifying Needs of Underserved Students: Describe your State’s 2-3 highest priority academic, social, emotional, and/or mental health needs for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year (if applicable) and for the 2021-2022 school year related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on each of the following student groups:
- i. Students from low-income families,
  - ii. Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity),
  - iii. Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender),
  - iv. English learners,
  - v. Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”)),
  - vi. Students experiencing homelessness,
  - vii. Children and youth in foster care,
  - viii. Migratory students, and
  - ix. Other groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic that have been identified by the SEA (e.g., youth involved in the criminal justice system, students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures, and LGBTQ+ students).

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

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

**Table A1.**

<b>Student group</b>	<b>Highest priority needs</b>
Students from low-income families	<p><b>Academic.</b> Identifying and addressing learning loss, especially among young learners in math, reading, and science; professional development specific to working with students with learning gaps.</p> <p><b>Social-emotional well-being.</b> Social/emotional learning deficits that emerged or were exacerbated by the pandemic; professional development specific to</p>

<sup>1</sup> 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.

	<p>addressing social emotional deficits and mental health issues; shortage of professional staff to address these issues.</p>
<p>Students from each racial or ethnic background used by the State for reporting purposes – please add a row for each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race/ethnicity)</p>	<p><b>Academic.</b> Current Enrollment Data: <a href="#">Virginia’s School Quality Profile</a> data reflects 2020-21 school year enrollment of racial and ethnic groups: Asian 7.4% Black: 22%, Hispanic: 17.5%, Multiple Races 6.2%, White 46.3%</p> <p>The Virginia Board of Education has called on fellow education leaders across the Commonwealth to examine policies, procedures, and funding through the lens of racial inequity to implement necessary reform to ensure children of every race have equal access to educational opportunity. Virginia’s leaders have a shared responsibility to deliver on the promise of a high-quality education for every child and eliminate achievement gaps. Some students will be on target with grade level achievement, whereas others may have been adversely impacted by school closures. LEA have be charged with addressing unfinished learning via summer learning opportunities based on student need and achievement data using equity as a decision point when determining learning focus areas, remediation activities, expanded opportunities for credit recovery, and development and administration of new statewide growth assessments that can measure academic growth and learning loss to inform instructional practice. VDOE customizes the type and intensity of technical assistance and resources provided to districts based on the level of need among the districts’ schools.</p> <p>Revisions to the Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers added a standard on culturally responsive teaching and equitable practices in compliance with 2021 General Assembly action, effective in the 2022-23 school year. This addition will support the fostering of classroom environments that create opportunities for access and achievement by acknowledging, valuing, advocating, and affirming cultural and social diversity in all aspects of the learning process. It will include the analysis, selection, and integration of texts, materials, and classroom resources that reflect cultural inclusivity and represent and validate diversity from all rings of culture. In support of these efforts, VDOE <a href="#">Navigating EdEquityVA</a> - Virginia’s Road Map to Equity, provides tools and resources on</p>

	<p>cultural proficiency, equity, and high expectations for all students.</p> <p><b>Social-emotional well-being.</b> Guidance from VDOE has a focus on prioritizing the social-emotional development of all students and utilizing trauma-sensitive teaching practices to support students and families in learning environments and meetings. Relief funding has also been directed to support SEL and mental health in school based initiatives.</p>
<p>Students by gender – please add a row for each gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender)</p>	<p><b>Academic.</b>  Current Enrollment Data: <a href="#">Virginia’s School Quality Profile</a> data reflects 2020-21 school year enrollment of gender: Female: 49% Male: 51%</p> <p>VDOE is committed to ensuring that educational equity is a reality for each Virginia student. EdEquityVA is defined by our commitment to eliminating the predictability of student outcomes based on race, gender, zip code, ability, socio-economic status, and/or languages spoken at home. A systematic deployment of data from the state using the School Quality Profile as well as local assessment data can be used to meet the educational needs of every learner and combat gender disparities. Examples of instructional strategies include encouraging students at every level to challenge stereotypes; mitigate any power imbalances based on gender or other forms of intolerance and oppression. Resources from VDOE including the <a href="#">Navigating EdEquityVA - Virginia’s Road Map</a>, <a href="#">Virginia L.E.A.R.N.S</a> and the <a href="#">Gender Diversity</a> resource page, provides support to the LEA on how to lead gender equity work in their school communities.</p> <p><b>Social-emotional well-being.</b> Guidance from VDOE has a focus on prioritizing the social-emotional development of all students and utilizing trauma-sensitive teaching practices to support students and families in learning environments and meetings. Relief funding has also been directed to support SEL and mental health in school based initiatives.</p>
<p>English learners</p>	<p><b>Academic.</b> Some English Learners (EL) may be on target with goals and objectives depending on their level of English proficiency, access to formal education prior to joining a Virginia school, and access to ELD instruction during school closures. Others may have been adversely impacted by</p>

	<p>extended school closures, especially those who were joining Virginia schools with possibly years of interruptions or lack of access to formal education. Guidance from VDOE includes a focus on EL to assist teams in their formative evaluation of language skills using WIDA rubrics and proficiency level descriptors, and providing the appropriate Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) services. Instruction for EL will need to be both culturally and linguistically responsive in order to accelerate their academic progress.</p> <p><b>Social-emotional well-being.</b> Guidance from VDOE has a focus on prioritizing the social-emotional development of all students and utilizing trauma-sensitive teaching practices to support students and families in learning environments and meetings. Relief funding has also been directed to support SEL and mental health in school based initiatives.</p> <p>Additionally, VDOE has provided pandemic related academic and mental health resources in multiple languages for families.</p>
Children with disabilities	<p><b>Academic.</b> Some students with disabilities (SWD) will be on target with goals and objectives, whereas others may have been adversely impacted by extended school closures. Guidance from VDOE includes a focus on SWD to assist teams in their review of individual student data to document recoupment of skills or persisting skill deficits. Guidance titled; <i>Special Education Students After COVID-19 Key Considerations</i> urges school staff to consider student’s progress compared to the progress of all students during the extended school closures to determine needed interventions or COVID recovery services.</p> <p><b>Social-emotional well-being.</b> Guidance from VDOE has a focus on prioritizing the social-emotional development of all students and utilizing trauma-sensitive teaching practices to support students and families in learning environments and meetings. Relief funding has also been directed to support SEL and mental health in school based initiatives.</p>
Students experiencing homelessness	<p><b>Ensuring identification and support to specialized student populations who may have experienced disproportionately negative impacts from the pandemic and impact on schools.</b> The pandemic’s</p>

	<p>impact on local school divisions had a direct academic, social, and emotional impact on youth in foster care and students experiencing homelessness, and the systems that support these students have also been tested in unprecedented ways. The demands of resourcing and providing meaningful support in different learning environments (virtual, remote, etc.) is compounded by the difficulty of identifying students in need of such support. Remote learning changed the ways schools and students engage with one another, and in some cases, this disguised some of the tell-tale signs that students are struggling with more than just changes to instructional modalities and classroom environments. Virginia has experienced a dramatic 85 percent decline in referrals of incidents of child abuse and neglect, a corresponding drop in the number of children entering foster care, as well as a 14 percent decrease in student homelessness despite evidence to the contrary from local partners, pediatricians, and others.</p> <p><b>Parent and family engagement and support.</b> The ongoing impact of the pandemic also exacerbated conditions for families already under immense stress and pressure. Foster parents, foster-to-adopt families, and kinship caregivers, also referred to as resource families, are critical partners in child welfare and reunification processes but have been strained by the transition to remote learning for their foster care placements. Resource families, like many others, have struggled to secure and sustain childcare for their remote learners. Some have been reluctant to take on additional placements out of COVID-related health concerns. The stress, trauma, and logistical constraints of the pandemic have also increased the instances of conflict, sometimes requiring a child or family to leave a host home without other options in place. VDOE continues to work with agencies and localities to ensure guidance, support and resources are made available with a focus on support of families and parents as students return to in-person learning. This specialized support is also focused on finding specific and individualized support for families and they work to address the impact on them and the students they support.</p>
Children and youth in foster care	<p><b>Ensuring identification and support to specialized student populations who may have experienced disproportionately negative impacts from the pandemic and impact on schools.</b> The pandemic's</p>

	<p>impact on local school divisions had a direct academic, social, and emotional impact on youth in foster care and students experiencing homelessness, and the systems that support these students have also been tested in unprecedented ways. The demands of resourcing and providing meaningful support in different learning environments (virtual, remote, etc.) is compounded by the difficulty of identifying students in need of such support. Remote learning changed the ways schools and students engage with one another, and in some cases, this disguised some of the tell-tale signs that students are struggling with more than just changes to instructional modalities and classroom environments. Virginia has experienced a dramatic 85 percent decline in referrals of incidents of child abuse and neglect, a corresponding drop in the number of children entering foster care, as well as a 14 percent decrease in student homelessness despite evidence to the contrary from local partners, pediatricians, and others.</p> <p><b>Parent and family engagement and support.</b> The ongoing impact of the pandemic also exacerbated conditions for families already under immense stress and pressure. Foster parents, foster-to-adopt families, and kinship caregivers, also referred to as resource families, are critical partners in child welfare and reunification processes but have been strained by the transition to remote learning for their foster care placements. Resource families, like many others, have struggled to secure and sustain childcare for their remote learners. Some have been reluctant to take on additional placements out of COVID-related health concerns. The stress, trauma, and logistical constraints of the pandemic have also increased the instances of conflict, sometimes requiring a child or family to leave a host home without other options in place. VDOE continues to work with agencies and localities to ensure guidance, support and resources are made available with a focus on support of families and parents as students return to in-person learning. This specialized support is also focused on finding specific and individualized support for families and they work to address the impact on them and the students they support.</p>
Migratory students	<p><b>Academic.</b> Supplementary instructional support in reading (i.e. phonemic awareness, comprehension, vocabulary), math (i.e. algebra readiness,</p>

	<p>computation, number sense, and process goals and standards), and writing.</p> <p><b>Training</b> for staff on supporting migrant students with credit accrual and records transfer to achieve on-time graduation.</p>
<p>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)</p>	<p><b>Social-emotional well-being.</b> VDOE is committed to working with school divisions to ensure Virginia schools are welcoming, affirming, and safe learning environments for all students. Every Virginia student, regardless of their gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation, has a right to learn free from discrimination and harassment. Virginia’s Education Equity Framework, <i>Navigating EdEquityVA</i>, outlines VDOE’s commitment to dismantle any and all forms of inequity in Virginia’s public education system and includes strategies to support LGBTQ+ students. The Roadmap is guided by the EdEquityVA Compass, which articulates the essential competencies necessary to advance equity in the Commonwealth.</p> <p>Pursuant to the Code of Virginia, local school divisions should adopt policies, procedures, and practices for an inclusive school environment that are consistent with <i>Model Policies for the Treatment of Transgender Students in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools</i>. Schools are encouraged to conduct a comprehensive equity audit to help facilitate this process, which can be found on the Virginia is for Learners website.</p> <p><b>Student Engagement.</b> For students who may not have consistently participated in virtual learning, VDOE has provided guidance to school divisions as well as funding supports and resources to ensure a focus on student well-being for the 2021-2022 school year. This includes a focus on ensuring nurturing relationships and strong teacher-child interactions. Providing a structured environment with a consistent schedule and routines. Prioritizing young children’s social emotional skills (e.g., positive self-concept, emotional literacy, social problem solving, and friendship skills).</p> <p><b>Supports LEA implementation of the Virginia Tiered Systems of Supports (VTSS), Virginia’s multi-tiered systems of supports (MTSS) initiative, to enhance Tier 1 supports.</b> This work will be greatly aided with the partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) funded technical assistance center State</p>

	<p>Implementation and Scaling Up of Evidence Based Practices (SISEP). Virginia has entered into an agreement with SISEP to focus on using the science and practice of implementation to strengthen equity within the public school system, support educators and improve outcomes for children, family and communities.</p>
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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.

VDOE supports LEAs in identifying the extent of the impact of the pandemic on students' learning and well-being via multiple statewide and local data sources.

### **Statewide Data Sources**

#### **Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) Tests**

Virginia SOL grade level and end of course assessments were administered during the 2020-2021 school year. Though participation in SOL assessments were much lower than in previous years, the results of the SOL tests administered in 2020-2021 will provide valuable information regarding student strengths and instructional needs as the 2021-2022 school year commences.

#### **Virginia Remote Student Progress Test**

In addition to state and federally-mandated grade-level or specific course assessments that were administered statewide in Spring 2021, VDOE leveraged CARES Act funding to support the development of the Virginia Remote Student Progress Test (VRSPT). The VRSPT is an online set of assessments offered to students in grades 3-8 who, due to the pandemic, received all of their instruction in a virtual environment and were not able to go to their school to take the SOL tests in person. The VRSPT is a grade-level assessment intended to help parents, teachers, and students better understand areas that are strengths and those where the student could benefit from additional instruction going forward. Student test results are made available to schools/teachers and provided to parents. The information is intended to be helpful and useful for parents, teachers, and students as they collaborate to address areas of academic challenge or unfinished learning.

#### **Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)**

Statewide screening for early signs of reading difficulties has occurred in the Commonwealth of Virginia since 1997 and is guided under the legislative mandate called the Early Intervention Reading Initiative. EIRI requires that students attending public school in Virginia are screened for signs of reading difficulty at four mandatory points in time across K-2 (fall and spring of kindergarten, spring of first grade, and spring of second grade for

students who are not exempt because of high performance). Additionally, testing in the fall of third grade is mandatory for students who fail to meet the screening threshold (i.e., "PALS benchmark") in the spring of second grade. PALS has been tremendously helpful in identifying areas of challenge in early literacy and impacts on specific groups of students.

### **Growth Assessments**

For the 2021-2022 school year and beyond, Virginia will use ESSER funds to invest in a new statewide growth assessment that will be administered to students in grades 3 - 8 in math and reading in the fall of the 2021 school year in order to closely monitor student progress. In subsequent years, the growth assessment will be administered not only in the fall, but also in the winter. The results of the growth assessments will be compared to the spring end-of-year assessments to measure growth.

### **Just In Time Mathematics Quick Checks**

Just in Time Mathematics Quick Checks are formative assessments that align to the 2016 Mathematics Standards of Learning (SOL). These resources, developed by Virginia teachers and mathematics leaders, are designed to help teachers identify students with unfinished learning and assist in planning instruction to fill potential gaps “just in time.” As new content is introduced throughout the school year, teachers can use these Quick Checks to identify and diagnose unfinished learning at grade level and/or to assess understanding of prerequisite knowledge that may be needed to access grade level content. Student gaps in mathematics understanding exist for a variety of reasons and these resources can be used to help get student mathematical learning back on track.

### **LEA Data Sources**

LEAs in Virginia utilize a variety of student assessments to monitor student growth, inform instructional decisions, and monitor student well-being. Virginia’s teacher evaluation system requires teachers to set goals related to the academic progress of students. LEAs develop and/or select assessments to monitor students academically, support the teacher evaluation student growth component, and assess and monitor student well-being. VDOE provided grant funding to support the purchase of assessments for monitoring and determining the social-emotional needs and their well-being. Additional grant funding has been provided to LEAs in support of mental health programs

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.

On March 13, 2020, the Governor of Virginia closed school buildings in Virginia as a preventative measure to combat the spread of COVID-19 and in conjunction with the statewide stay at home order. School buildings remained closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. From mid-March 2020 through the end of the school year, school divisions were asked to provide continuity in learning. School divisions provided instruction in different ways. Subsequently, VDOE collected data on computing devices to student ratios and instructional methodologies. VDOE also provided guidance and waivers addressing instruction, awarding of credits, promotion/retention, and graduation. In anticipation of the 2020-2021 school year, healthy and safety guidance was provided in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) regarding reopening schools in Virginia. This included a requirement for LEAs to submit and post their health and instructional plans to their websites prior to the reopening of schools. LEAs were also expected to provide updates to the department when there were substantive changes to their health or instructional plans, especially if instructional modality was changing in excess of 4 weeks. As VDOE collected data on LEA modes of instruction, a visualized summary was posted on the VDOE website as the [State Snapshot: Virginia School Operational Status](#) and updated at regular intervals throughout the 2020-2021 school year. Included on this webpage is a summary of schools' instructional modality in Virginia based on the federally-established categories.

During the 2021 legislative session the Virginia General Assembly passed bipartisan legislation requiring all school divisions to offer in-person instruction to any enrolled student for the duration of the 2021-2022 school year. ([SB1303](#))

The bill requires each school board to provide such in-person instruction in a manner which adheres, to the maximum extent practicable, to any currently applicable mitigation strategies for early childhood care and education programs and elementary and secondary schools to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 that have been provided by the CDC. The bill requires the Department of Education to establish benchmarks for successful virtual learning and guidelines for providing interventions to students who fail to meet such benchmarks and for transitioning such students back to in-person instruction. The bill also requires that all teachers and school staff be offered access to receive an approved COVID-19 vaccination through their relevant local health district. The bill has an expiration date of August 1, 2022.

VDOE collects enrollment and attendance data through the [Student Record Collection](#) (SRC) three times each school year: Fall, Spring, and End-of-Year (EOY). Prior to the start of the

2020-2021 school year, VDOE provided guidance and expectations to school divisions on attendance through [Superintendent's Memo 188-20](#).

### **Enrollment**

On the SRC, VDOE collected the following for each student at three points during the year (Fall, Spring, and EOY):

- Entry and exit codes and dates to determine student entries and exits to and from K-12 public education and transfers within schools and divisions
- Responsible, Serving, and Resident Division (used to identify where the student is zoned to attend school when they are enrolled in another school division)
- Non-public student FTE to indicate a non-public school student taking courses in a K-12 public education setting

On the Master Schedule Collection (MSC), VDOE collected course enrollment for each student at two points during the year (Fall and EOY).

### **Attendance**

On the SRC, VDOE collected the following for each student at three points during the year (Fall, Spring, and EOY):

- Total number of days present, absent, unscheduled and unexcused absences
- Attendance Plan Code to indicate whether a plan was jointly developed to resolve the student's nonattendance after 5 unexcused absences
- Attendance Conference Code to indicate whether a conference was held, with or without a parent, within ten school days from the date of the tenth unexcused absence

### **Mode of Instruction**

On the SRC, VDOE collected the following for each student at three points during the year (Fall, Spring, and EOY):

- Active status indicator (student coded as a "V" if they are only receiving educational services via virtual mode)
- Cumulative percentage of time spent in a virtual setting
- Full time virtual program code to indicate how the student is participating virtually (from home, from a public school, from a private school, etc.)

### **Internet Access for Remote Learning**

VDOE required for the first time in the Fall of 2020 that schools report internet and computing device access for students. The following data elements were used:

- Internet access for remote learning (access from home, public access, no access, etc.)
- Device access for remote learning (school provided, personal, etc.)
- Parental remote learning decision to indicate if the student's virtual placement is due to parent choice

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

Mode of instruction data are posted on the [State Snapshot: Virginia School Operational Status webpage](#). Disaggregated student enrollment and attendance (chronic absenteeism) data by mode of instruction are posted at [https://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics\\_reports/enrollment/modes-instruction-attendance/2020-2021-mode-of-instruction.xlsx](https://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/enrollment/modes-instruction-attendance/2020-2021-mode-of-instruction.xlsx).

- 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.

Both in-person and virtual instruction are being offered during the summer of 2021. New Virginia legislation now requires all Virginia public schools to open for all students in-person for the 2021-2022 school year. The only exceptions will be temporary building level closures required by the local health department to contain an outbreak. Many Virginia public schools will continue to offer a virtual instruction model for those parents that choose that modality for their child. VDOE will continue to require all schools to report students that are attending virtually through the SRC collections.

## **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.*

Per the Constitution of Virginia ([Article VII, Section 7](#)), the supervision of schools in each school division shall be vested in a school board and therefore, many of the decisions related to operations and reopening fall under the purview of the LEA. However, throughout the pandemic, VDOE, the VDH, and the Governor’s Office have worked collaboratively to address school reopening and health and safety of students through Executive Orders, Public Health Orders of the Commissioner of Health, and through comprehensive guidance documents. The first edition of a comprehensive reopening guidance document was issued in June 2020 in conjunction with an Order of the Commissioner of Public Health which required divisions to submit reopening plans, mitigation strategies, and school policies to the Department before opening in the summer of 2020 or the 2020-2021 school year. The Virginia Guidance was updated numerous times to account for updated strategies from the CDC and changing conditions. The most recent version, titled [Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Virginia PreK-12 Schools](#), is available on our website.

During the 2021 legislative session the Virginia General Assembly passed bipartisan legislation requiring all school divisions to offer in-person instruction to any enrolled student for the duration of the 2021-2022 school year. ([SB1303](#))

The bill requires each school board to provide such in-person instruction in a manner which adheres, to the maximum extent practicable, to any currently applicable mitigation strategies for early childhood care and education programs and elementary and secondary schools to reduce the transmission of COVID-19 that have been provided by the CDC. The bill requires the Department of Education to establish benchmarks for successful virtual learning and guidelines for providing interventions to students who fail to meet such benchmarks and for transitioning such students back to in-person instruction. The bill also requires that all teachers and school staff be offered access to receive an approved COVID-19 vaccination through their relevant local health district. The bill has an expiration date of August 1, 2022.

It should be noted that since the initial building closures, Virginia guidance has placed a strong emphasis and priority on safely returning children most disproportionately impacted by building closures for in-person instruction. This included English learners, students with disabilities, young learners, and others.

In addition, VDOE and VDH provided many other supplemental resources to school leaders on specific activities or populations. FAQs, resource webpages, and weekly calls - sometimes conducted jointly with division leaders and local health departments - have supported timely and consistent communication to the field.

Additionally, VDOE maintains a [Frequently Asked Question page](#) to provide information to divisions on other relevant information

**Table B1.**

Mitigation strategy	SEA response
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<p>Universal and correct wearing of masks</p>	<p>All versions of Virginia School Reopening Guidance documents have prioritized proper mask wearing, including but not limited to the most recent <a href="#"><i>Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Virginia PreK-12 Schools</i></a>.</p> <p>As of July 1, 2021 state law requires school boards to offer in person instruction during the 2021-22 school year in accordance with CDC school guidance, to the maximum extent practicable. This includes mask guidance from the CDC.</p> <p>Additionally, as of August 12, 2021 an order of the State Health Commissioner requires all individuals age 2 and older to wear masks indoors in PreK-12 settings in accordance with CDC guidance.</p>
<p>Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)</p>	<p>All versions of Virginia School Reopening Guidance documents have prioritized distancing and use of cohorting/podding within schools, including but not limited to the most recent <a href="#"><i>Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Virginia PreK-12 Schools</i></a>.</p> <p>As of July 1, 2021 state law requires school boards to offer in person instruction during the 2021-22 school year in accordance with CDC school guidance, to the maximum extent practicable.</p>
<p>Handwashing and respiratory etiquette</p>	<p>All versions of Virginia School Reopening Guidance documents have prioritized hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, including but not limited to the most recent <a href="#"><i>Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Virginia PreK-12 Schools</i></a>.</p>
<p>Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation</p>	<p>All versions of Virginia School Reopening Guidance documents have prioritized healthy facilities, including but not limited to the most recent <a href="#"><i>Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Virginia PreK-12 Schools</i></a>.</p> <p>As of July 1, 2021 state law requires school boards to offer in person instruction during the 2021-22 school year in accordance with CDC school guidance, to the maximum extent practicable.</p> <p>Additionally, the Commonwealth has appropriated \$250M in ARP funding for HVAC improvements to school buildings.</p>
<p>Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health departments</p>	<p>All versions of Virginia School Reopening Guidance documents have prioritized contact tracing partnerships with local health departments, including but not limited to the most recent <a href="#"><i>Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Virginia PreK-12 Schools</i></a>.</p>

	Additionally, VDH has issued supplemental contact tracing guidance specific to schools, <i>VDH Case Investigation and Contact Tracing for K-12 Schools</i> .
Diagnostic and screening testing	Testing is prioritized in the <i>Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Virginia PreK-12 Schools</i> .  VDH and VDOE are partnering to use federal ELC grant funding to support additional testing efforts via local school divisions.
Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible	The Commonwealth prioritized teacher and administrator access to vaccines in the spring of 2021; and tracked progress on a weekly basis by division in order to target vaccine distribution.  VDOE and VDH have encouraged all schools to partner with local providers to make vaccines available to students, as appropriate, on school sites.
Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies	All versions of Virginia School Reopening Guidance documents have prioritized serving students with disabilities, and included health and safety protocols, including but not limited to the most recent <i>Interim Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in Virginia PreK-12 Schools</i> .

- 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;

In June of 2020, the Governor announced guidance to support a safe reopening of Virginia schools, following the March closures. This included a phased reopening that prioritized bringing back young learners, English learners, students with disabilities and others disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. All divisions were required to submit health and safety plans to VDOE outlining their adherence to Virginia and CDC guidance.

Virginia school guidance was updated regularly throughout the year, most significantly in October 2020 and January 2021. Following the January update to the guidance, the Governor called on all schools in the Commonwealth to reopen for at least some students by mid-March. This call to action resulted in a number of additional offerings and all divisions in the Commonwealth offered an in person experience for at least some of their students by the end of April.

Additionally, during the 2021 legislative session the Virginia General Assembly passed bipartisan legislation requiring all school divisions to offer in-person instruction to any enrolled student for the duration of the 2021-2022 school year. ([SB1303](#))

The bill requires each school board to provide such in-person instruction in a manner which adheres, to the maximum extent practicable, to any currently applicable mitigation strategies for early childhood care and education programs and elementary and secondary schools to

reduce the transmission of COVID-19 that have been provided by the CDC. The bill requires the Department of Education to establish benchmarks for successful virtual learning and guidelines for providing interventions to students who fail to meet such benchmarks and for transitioning such students back to in-person instruction. The bill also requires that all teachers and school staff be offered access to receive an approved COVID-19 vaccination through their relevant local health district. The bill has an expiration date of August 1, 2022.

Over the last year, Virginia has tracked the reopening status of divisions via a public, online map available [here](#). VDOE has also required that divisions submit periodic reports throughout the year as a condition of receiving a waiver for statutory requirements for length of school terms when unable to serve all students for the full term in-person.

- 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

Throughout the pandemic, VDOE has worked very closely with the VDH to develop joint health and safety guidance for schools that is aligned to CDC guidance. Similarly, school leaders and local health directors have worked collaboratively to assess local community conditions and adjustments necessary to school mitigation strategies as a result.

Additionally, VDOE and VDH have worked closely with the Virginia Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics, as we strive to support the health and well-being of all children in the Commonwealth.

Most recently, VDH and VDOE have partnered to develop a shared vision for maximizing the federal ELC grant resources for testing in Virginia schools. To date, very few Virginia school divisions have adopted screening testing programs, and VDH and VDOE are working diligently with both school leaders and local health departments to communicate the necessity and value of standing up such programs for the 2021-2022 school year. Participating in such programs will be optional for divisions, and programs can be tailored to their particular community needs.

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

With regard to guidance and technical assistance specific to health and mitigation strategies for schools, VDOE intends to continue its collaborative work with VDH to provide timely, relevant and high quality resources for schools. This will include:

- Updating Virginia’s operational guidance for schools for the 2021-2022 school year;
- Standing calls with school leaders and local health department directors;
- Issuance of additional resources on best practices and mitigation measures; and
- Timely communications on any changes to Executive Orders relevant to school staff and students.

VDOE will continue to provide high quality instructional resources and guidance for schools. Notably, VDOE has recently published the following for schools to consider when reopening in 2021-2022.

- [Virginia LEARNS](#)
- [Virtual Learning benchmarks and guidelines pursuant to SB1303](#)
- [Unscheduled Remote Learning Day guidance pursuant to HB1790](#)

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),<sup>2</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

VDOE provided training on the requirements for LEA Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services plans on May 13, 2021. The training included an overview of the LEA plan requirements as stated in the interim final rule. VDOE also provided a template for LEAs that includes the required elements of the interim final rule, such as: 1) the extent to which the LEA has adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the strategies listed in table B1 of this document; 2) a description of how the LEA 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; 3) a description of how the LEA solicited and took into account public input in the development of the plan; and 4) a statement assuring that the LEA will periodically review, no less frequently than every six months for the duration of the ARP ESSER grant period, and revise its plan as appropriate, taking into account public input during each review period.

Within 30 days of the receipt of grant funds, LEAs must post their plans for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services on their local websites. VDOE will review each LEA's plan for compliance with the interim final rule requirements as a part of the ARP ESSER federal fund application review process. This compliance element will also be included in the federal program monitoring protocol for ARP ESSER funds.

VDOE will collect information about subsequent LEA plan reviews and revisions, to include the link to the most recently updated plan, a description of the LEA's public input process, and a description of revisions made, using a periodic data collection process every six months until the end of the grant period.

VDOE does not currently collect and disaggregate information about LEA implementation of each element of the most up-to-date CDC guidance listed in table B1. VDOE conducts frequent meetings with LEAs highlighting the most recent health and safety guidance and has aligned its reopening guidance with the CDC.

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

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

1. SEA Consultation: Consistent with the ARP ESSER requirements, describe how the SEA engaged in meaningful consultation with stakeholders, and incorporated input into its plan, including, but not limited to:

- i. \_\_\_\_\_ students;
- ii. \_\_\_\_\_ families;
- iii. \_\_\_\_\_ Tribes (if applicable);
- iv. \_\_\_\_\_ civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations);
- v. \_\_\_\_\_ school and district administrators (including special education administrators);
- vi. \_\_\_\_\_ superintendents;

- vii. charter school leaders (if applicable);
- viii. teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; and
- ix. stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

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

Since the spring of 2020, VDOE has consulted with numerous school and community stakeholders on how best to support students, families, and communities during the pandemic. [Virginia Learns](#) is one notable product of this consultation. VDOE convened the VA LEARNS workgroup to develop a guidance document for LEAs that focused on equity, wellbeing, and instructional issues including curriculum, assessment and remediation, recovery and interventions. The workgroup members included stakeholders representing students, families, student groups disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, administrators, principals, school leaders, district equity directors, school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, and institutes of higher education.

VDOE has sought input and feedback specific to the ARP ESSER state plan and resource allocation from a wide variety of constituents, advocates and practitioners throughout the Commonwealth. Consultation meetings were held with representatives from all required stakeholder groups specified above, including the Virginia Tribes, Virginia NAACP leaders, Virginia’s Committee of Practitioners, the Virginia Latino Advisory Board, the Fund Our Schools Coalition, the Superintendent’s African American Advisory Committee, and a community of practice of Equity Leaders from around the state. During these meetings, VDOE staff provided information about ESSER I and II initiatives and potential uses of ARP ESSER funds, and invited feedback from stakeholders. Public comment was announced in Superintendent’s Memo 148-21 and the announcement was shared widely with stakeholder groups. The themes that emerged during consultation and public comment are summarized below.

Summary of Stakeholder Consultation and Public Comment

VDOE should support LEAs by:	VDOE Response
Providing support for LEAs in addressing mental health issues, including wraparound services	The agency will use ARP ESSER funds to provide evidence-based instructional support, summer programming and after school enrichment programs that include interventions that respond to students’ social-emotional and mental health needs.
Providing resources for families, particularly for caregivers supporting	The agency will consider this in its provision of instructional remediation

virtual academic instruction of students	supports and ongoing provision of Virtual Virginia options for students.
Assisting LEAs in addressing student attendance and re-engagement in school	The LASER (Learning Analytics to Support Education and Reporting) tool will be a suite of reporting tools and dashboards which will allow teachers, school leaders, and division administrators to better understand the performance of their students and make data-informed decisions. The tool functions as an early warning system and will assist school divisions in identifying attendance and engagement issues so that supports are provided to students in a timely manner.
Supporting the Equity Fund, a proposal from the Board of Education to incentivize highly-qualified teachers to serve students and schools with the greatest needs	During its August 2021 Special Session, the Virginia General Assembly appropriated \$11.5M of ARP ESSER state set-aside funds for teacher recruitment and retention incentives. Incentives in this program are increased for those teachers in hard to staff positions.
Providing more resources for ELs	Providing targeted support for ELs will be a focus of all remediation and instructional programs. In particular, ELs will receive targeted support through greater statewide literacy initiatives funded by ARP ESSER.
Providing resources to assist with student transportation (in particular for students experiencing homelessness)	Although ARP ESSER funds are not proposed for this purpose at this time, consideration will be given to ARP McKinney-Vento funds as well as continued collaboration with Title I, Part A, which can be used to support transportation for students experiencing homelessness.
Addressing teacher shortage/recruitment/retention challenges	During its August 2021 Special Session, the Virginia General Assembly appropriated \$11.5M of ARP ESSER to go to teacher recruitment and retention incentives.

Providing resources to support culturally responsive practices	During the regular 2021 session, the Virginia General Assembly passed a new law and appropriated new state funding to support culturally competent educators and responsive practices.
Investing in literacy	The VDOE has proposed using \$12M in ARP ESSER for a statewide literacy and numeracy initiative to support foundational skills in students.
Providing support for community level internet connectivity in homes and increasing teacher proficiency in technology	During its August 2021 Special Session, the Virginia General Assembly appropriated ARP funding to achieve universal broadband in Virginia by 2024.
Supporting early childhood education and childcare	Federal pandemic funds to support early childhood education and childcare include \$70 million in Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) funding under the CARES Act; ~\$206 million in CCDBG funding under CRRSA; ~\$305 million in CCDBG funding under ARPA; \$488 million for Child Care Stabilization Grants under ARPA; and \$10 million in GEER I funding.
Investing in school construction	During its August 2021 Special Session, the Virginia General Assembly appropriated ARP funding to upgrade HVAC in PreK-12 schools.

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.*

### LEA Funds

ESSER I and II formula funds, GEER funds, and funds awarded from the ESSER state set-aside have been obligated and utilized for a wide range of allowable uses to meet their most pressing needs in addressing the impacts of COVID-19. This includes maintaining operations and continuing to pay existing staff, hiring additional staff to address learning loss and to provide mental health and social-emotional supports (especially for students and student groups disproportionately impacted by COVID-19), addressing unfinished learning/learning loss, supporting early childhood education, increasing access to technology devices and internet accessibility for students and families who do not have access to the internet, purchasing sanitization supplies and PPE to promote a healthy school environment, and utilizing various strategies to increase school capacity for social distancing.

ESSER I set-aside and GEER I funds have been obligated and the planned uses of ESSER II set-aside funds have been approved following a Governor's approval process. When applicable, these funds have been awarded to LEAs following an application approval process. ESSER I and II set-aside and GEER funds have been targeted for specific purposes and priorities as determined by the SEA and Governor's office.

ESSER I formula grants to LEAs - \$214,739,273

ESSER I set aside initiatives (completed or in process)

- Special education services and supports - \$5,000,000 (awards to LEAs)
- Summer academic academies - \$1,237,311 (awards to LEAs)
- Social emotional universal screener - \$750,566 (awards to LEAs)
- Cleaning and sanitization supplies - \$2,000,000 (awards to LEAs)
- Facilities upgrades - \$3,000,000 (awards to LEAs)
- School-based mental health - \$1,000,000 (awards to LEAs)
- Instructional delivery supports - \$2,088,946 (awards to LEAs)
- Grants to regional programs - \$450,000 (awards to LEAs)
- Growth assessment alignment study - \$1,691,871 (awards to LEAs)
- Virtual Virginia Expansion - \$2,810,000
- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Professional Development - \$250,000
- Continuity of Operations - \$225,000
- Instructional Access - \$200,000
- Technology Training for Teachers - \$223,000

GEER I initiatives (completed or in process)

- School Nutrition - \$3,000,000 (awards to LEAs)
- VISION technology - \$26,860,322 (awards to LEAs)
- Early Childhood - \$10,000,000
- Virtual Virginia Expansion - \$3,450,000

ESSER II formula grants to LEAs - \$845,352,520

ESSER II set-aside initiatives (planned)

- Virtual Virginia Expansion - \$3,200,000
- SEL screeners, curriculum development, and LEA grants - \$500,000
- Statewide literacy initiative - \$13,731,655
- LASER data analytics application development - \$300,000
- Digital tools for instruction - \$250,000
- Statewide teacher/staff recruitment strategies - \$1,000,000
- Expanded learning time/unfinished learning time - \$53,496,000 (awards to LEAs)
- Extended School Year/Year Round Schools - \$1,504,000 (awards to LEAs)
- Post-secondary Special Education Support - \$6,500,000 (awards to LEAs)
- Growth Assessment Development - \$8,750,000

GEER II initiative (planned)

- Virtual Virginia Expansion - \$7,000,000

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.

ESSER I and II formula funds have been awarded to LEAs. Superintendent's Memos announcing the awards are available on the [federal pandemic relief programs webpage](#). Expenditure information is below. Virginia does not have the capability to track LEA funds that have been obligated but for which reimbursement has not yet been requested; the amounts and percentages below reflect LEA reimbursements where applicable.

- ESSER I formula – all formula funds awarded to LEAs; \$103,146,115 unexpended
- ESSER I set aside – all set-aside funds obligated;
- ESSER II formula – all formula funds awarded to LEAs; \$838,565,220 unexpended
- ESSER II set aside – obligation process for set-aside funds has recently begun and funds are beginning to be expended

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.<sup>3</sup>

### **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**

VDOE continues to develop plans for IDEA funding that are aligned with the U.S. Department of Education's OSEP guidance. VDOE recently received preliminary IDEA funding under the ARP Act. Preliminary allocations were shared with LEAs on June 21, 2021. The funding allocations for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2021 from OSEP were made available to VDOE on July 1, 2021 and will be shared with LEAs following an internal review of the calculations.

### **McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act and Students Experiencing Homelessness**

Virginia has received \$3,545,572 from the U.S. Department of Education under the ARP Act for the purposes of identifying homeless children and youth, providing wraparound services in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and providing assistance needed to enable homeless children and youth to attend school and participate fully in school activities, including in-person instruction this spring and summer learning and enrichment programs that begin in the coming months.

This first disbursement (25% of the total ARP-HCY funding) is designed to provide funding to states immediately as a supplement to their McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) funds, so that states can address urgent needs of homeless children and youth - including academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs - and so states and LEAs can increase capacity by hiring staff, dedicating resources, and planning partnerships with community-based organizations, among other strategies. Funds must be administered by the Office of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, consistent with the requirements for EHCY funds. VDOE has designated the William & Mary School of Education as the institution responsible for effective coordination of the Virginia Homeless Education Program.

Virginia's ARP Homeless I funds will supplement the EHCY program, and all allowable EHCY uses will apply to these funds. These activities will include any expenses necessary to facilitate the identification, enrollment, retention, and educational success of homeless children and youth, such as:

- providing wraparound services (which could be provided in collaboration with and/or through contracts with community-based organizations, and could include academic supports, trauma-informed care, social-emotional support, and mental health services);
- purchasing needed supplies (e.g., PPE, eyeglasses, school supplies, personal care items);

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

- providing transportation to enable children and youth to attend classes and participate fully in school activities;
- purchasing cell phones or other technological devices for unaccompanied youth to enable the youth to attend and fully participate in school activities;
- providing access to reliable, high-speed internet for students through the purchase of internet-connected devices/equipment, mobile hotspots, wireless service plans, or installation of Community Wi-Fi Hotspots (e.g., at homeless shelters), especially in underserved communities;
- paying for short-term, temporary housing (e.g., a few days in a motel) when such emergency housing is the only reasonable option for COVID-safe temporary housing and, when necessary, to enable the homeless child or youth to attend school and participate fully in school activities (including summer school); and
- providing store cards/prepaid debit cards to purchase materials necessary for students to participate in school activities.

## ESEA

State set-aside funds under ESEA are being used to support multiple initiatives to assist LEAs in addressing issues that have emerged or been exacerbated by COVID-19, including:

- support for GoOpenVA, an open education resource repository;
- resources and support for SEL;
- Just In Time mathematics resource development to address unfinished learning;
- teacher education and recruitment platform; and
- professional development for teachers of ELs.

### D. Maximizing State-Level Funds to Support Students

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

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

[See description below](#)

- 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  
[See description below](#)
- 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.  
[See description below](#)

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;  
[See description below](#)
- 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  
[See description below](#)
- 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.  
[See description below](#)

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;  
[See description below](#)
  - 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  
[See description below](#)
  - 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.  
[See description below](#)
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.

VDOE recognized the necessity of supporting instructional infrastructure to support instruction. This included allocating state and federal funding (ESSER I and II) to support lost instructional time, summer and afterschool learning and enrichment programs, quality instruction, and virtual and hybrid learning. Efforts to support these areas are outlined below and address the content of questions D.1-4.

### **Instructional Infrastructure**

- Provision of a statewide learning management system
- Development of content in grades K-5 to support virtual learning
- Provision of all K-5 grade-level content and over 100 middle and high school course content to support virtual course creation
- Provision of GoOpenVA, an open educational resources repository
- Collaboration with public media in the development and provision of television-based instruction in grades K-7

- Provision of funding to LEA to support the purchase of computers and hot spots

### **Instruction and Assessment Tools and Resources**

- Development and implementation of content tracking tools to assist LEA in monitoring instruction and areas of unfinished learning to inform the review and revision of local curricula
- Development of “Just in Time” mathematics quick checks which leverage short formative assessments to inform classroom-based instructional decisions to maximize instructional time
- Development of fall growth assessments that will assist in determining unfinished learning and monitor growth for measurement with subsequent assessments
- Development of professional development resources to support virtual and hybrid instruction

### **Grant Funding**

- Support individual LEA or regional approaches to summer success, instructional delivery, social-emotional and mental health supports, professional development, and technology needs to support virtual learning
- Support LEA efforts to address unfinished learning and extended/year-round school year programs.

### **Waivers and Flexibilities**

- Provision of the ability to administer local assessments in lieu of state-required testing
- Development of remote assessment tools in lieu of state testing when parents/students opt-out of federally-mandated state testing
- Provision of flexibilities regarding class-size
- Hold harmless for enrollment (state funding)

### **Provision of Funding to Support Unfinished learning**

VDOE assembled a team of stakeholders from LEA and professional organizations to develop foci to address unfinished learning. As a result, VDOE published Virginia LEARNS, which provides recommendations and identifies resources and best practices related to equity, curricula - especially in literacy and mathematics - remediation and intervention strategies, assessments, data analysis, student and staff wellness, and technology to support instruction and learning. The Virginia LEARNS stakeholder workgroup identified the priorities to address unfinished learning related to the impact of COVID-19, including:

- Increased Face-to-Face Instruction and/or Small Group Learning;
- Targeted Remediation, Extension, and Enrichment;
- Strategic Virtual Learning/Technology and Training;
- Social/Emotional/Behavioral/Mental Health Supports;
- Extended Learning Time; and
- Student Progress Monitoring and Assessment.

A specific focus on the student groups listed in question A.3.i-viii are supported through VA LEARNS’ equity focus, defined by our commitment to eliminating the predictability of student outcomes based on race, gender, zip code, ability, socio-economic status, and/or

languages spoken at home. The document provides benchmarks and strategies for addressing social-emotional as well as academic impacts of COVID-19 and lost instructional time. VDOE will use statewide data on interventions through state literacy (K-12) and numeracy (3-12) assessments and annual data collections (Master Schedule Collection and Student Record Collection).

**Virginia’s initial plans to allocate ARP ESSER funding support:**

- The academic impact of lost instructional time. VDOE will award subgrants and contracts that support the implementation of various evidence-based interventions, including summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, and extended school year programs, which provide intensive or high-dosage tutoring and accelerated learning, among other supports. Selection criteria will include that such interventions respond to students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, as well as how certain student groups most in need of services will be identified to address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on such student groups, such as missing the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years or not consistently participating in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.
- Summer enrichment programs. VDOE will award subgrants and contracts that support the implementation of evidence-based summer learning and enrichment programs, including those that begin in Summer 2021, which provide intensive or high-dosage tutoring and accelerated learning, among other supports. Selection criteria will include that such interventions respond to students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, as well as how certain student groups most in need of services will be identified to address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on such student groups, such as missing the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years or not consistently participating in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.
- Comprehensive afterschool programs. VDOE will award subgrants and contracts that support the implementation of comprehensive afterschool programs, including alternative models such as before-school programming and partnerships with community-based organizations. Selection criteria will include that such interventions respond to students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, as well as how certain student groups most in need of services will be identified to address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on such student groups, such as missing the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years or not consistently participating in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.
- Emergency Needs. VDOE’s initial plans to address statewide needs include:
  - o developing statewide growth assessments;
  - o implementing statewide literacy and numeracy projects awarded as competitive grants and contracts to LEAs, IHEs, etc.;
  - o developing and implementing statewide teacher recruitment and retention initiatives, including support for scholarships to rising juniors to major in education-related majors; teaching fellows pilot (residencies/apprenticeships);

- o TeachVA statewide recruitment, job application, and licensure points tracking portal; and bonuses for hard to staff positions and school assignments;
- o supporting the provision of Virtual Virginia’s statewide learning management system to all LEA; and
- o developing and implementing the LASER data analytics application.

**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.

VDOE provided training on the requirements for the LEA Use of ARP ESSER Funds plan on May 13, 2021. The training included an overview of the LEA plan requirements as stated in the interim final rule. The SEA also provided a template for LEAs that includes the required elements of the interim final rule, such as: 1) 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; 2) how the LEA will use at least 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; 3) how the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds; and 4) how the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements will respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students.

Within 90 days of the receipt of grant funds, LEAs must post their plans for the LEA Use of ARP ESSER Funds on their local websites. The SEA will review each LEA's plan for compliance with the interim final rule requirements as a part of the ARP ESSER federal fund application review process. This compliance element will also be included in the federal program monitoring protocol for ARP ESSER funds. In addition, the application for federal funds includes the identification of funds reserved to support learning loss and calculates the percentage of funding identified in this area to ensure that the minimum requirement is met by the LEA.

The SEA will continue to provide frequent support for LEAs on the safe return to in-person instruction; meeting students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs; and addressing learning gaps. The state superintendent of public instruction conducts meetings with district leaders to ensure that they are aware of the myriad of resources and opportunities that have been made available. VDOE leaders also conduct regional meetings with district leaders to provide support and gather input on the most pressing needs and priorities facing districts.

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.

VDOE training for LEAs on the requirements of the LEA Use of ARP ESSER Funds plan addressed the stakeholder consultation requirements as stated in the interim final rule. The template for LEAs includes a description of how the LEA engaged in meaningful consultation with the required stakeholder groups, and how stakeholder input was taken into account in the development of the LEA plan.

VDOE will review each LEA's plan for compliance with the stakeholder engagement requirements as a part of the ARP ESSER federal fund application review process. This compliance element will also be included in the federal program monitoring protocol 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;

VDOE will support LEAs by providing resources, webinars, conference calls, Superintendent's Memos and Emails, and through state set-aside grants that direct funds specific to evidence-based interventions. Evidence of effectiveness of interventions employed will be a required element of the grant award process for state set-aside funds. For formula grants, evidence of effectiveness of interventions employed will be a component of program monitoring.

- 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

As noted in Section 4 in much greater detail, Virginia will use the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening, Virginia Assessment Program, Virginia's Remote Student Progress Test, Growth Assessments, Just In Time Math Quick Checks, and local data sources to assist school divisions in measuring and making decisions on how to combat COVID-19 learning loss. Additionally, Virginia is developing a data analytics system that provides an early

warning system (EWS), for extensive analysis and visualizations for student coursework, grades, absenteeism, behavior, and state accreditation. The system will contain a student group comparison application with pre-populated reports to help school divisions drive their equity efforts. A prototype of the system is nearing completion with Orange County, Virginia where other divisions will have the opportunity to join in the fall. There will be a rolling enrollment schedule for all divisions throughout the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.

Virginia is fortunate to have a solid foundation for its longitudinal data system that includes a State Testing Id, Virginia's unique identifier for all students, and elements to account for each student's current demographics. Data collections from the LEAs are collected at the student-level allowing all student-based metrics to be disaggregated at the school, division/district, and state level by any reporting group defined within the LDS. Many opportunity to learn metrics can be analyzed including attendance (chronic absenteeism), behavior and administrative responses (exclusionary discipline), transcript-like data (advanced coursework), and device and internet access (access to technology).

This element will be reviewed with LEAs during ESSER program monitoring, which is described in detail in Section G.

- 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.

Support for school division in identifying students in these areas will included the EWS and longitudinal data described above. VDOE will continue to provide tools and resources for LEAs to reengage students who have experienced lost instructional time and/or most at-risk of dropping out of schools. Tools include a universal SEL screener and SEL Quick Guides, as well as curriculum supports.

This element will be reviewed with LEAs during ESSER program monitoring, which is described in detail in Section G.

- 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.

Virginia guidance documents have attempted to support all the needs (academic, social emotional and mental well-being) of children, and to guide LEAs in evaluating and aligning resources to meet identified needs in the wake of the pandemic. For example, using CARES funds, VDOE has made a universal SEL screener available to all divisions to inform their local strategies as well as incentivizing the use of relief funding to augment positions focused on school-based mental health support in local school divisions.

Additionally, a year into the COVID-19 pandemic VDOE brought together a variety of stakeholders – the Virginia LEARNS workgroup – to use information collected and compiled from many sources to create a guidance document for school divisions. The workgroup focused on equity, wellbeing, and instructional issues including curriculum, assessment and remediation, recovery and interventions. The group also weighed in on funding allocations recommendations for state and federal appropriations, with a clear desire and emphasis on equitable distribution of those resources to meet the needs of our most impacted students.

As schools reopen and develop plans for summer programs and the 2021-22 school year, keen attention needs to be given to addressing learning gaps exacerbated by the pandemic and to the mental health needs of students and staff. Understanding that all of our programs need to ensure equity, the checkpoints and resources in the Virginia LEARNS document will assist leaders and staff as they consider guiding questions, assess and allocate available resources, and deploy plans to meet the needs of all students. This will be greatly aided by the guidance from VDOE titled; the Model Guidance for Positive, Preventive Code of Student Conduct Policy and Alternatives to Suspension, a blueprint for school boards in revising local policies, systems, and practices related to student conduct and school climate. The Model Guidance focuses on ensuring equity and establishing prevention and intervention in a MTSS model. The Model Guidance also provides references to relevant Code of Virginia statutes and includes resources for developing alternatives to suspension.

## **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.*

**Table F1. The data in the table below are from the most recently completed LEA “Supply and Demand” report. We believe these data are an underestimate of current shortages.**

Area	Data on shortages and needs	Narrative description
Special educators and related service personnel and paraprofessionals	284 FTE	The following areas are included: Emotional Disturbance; Hearing Impairment; Learning Disabilities; Intellectual Disabilities; Severely Profound Disabilities; Visual Impairments; Special Education - Other
Bilingual educators	Data not collected	
English as a second language educators	42 FTE	42 FTE
STEM educators	The following areas are included: English as a Second Language	The following areas are included: English as a Second Language
CTE educators	171 FTE	171 FTE
Early childhood educators	The following areas are included: Computer Science; Science- Physics; Science- Middle; Science - Earth Science; Science - Chemistry; Science - Biology; Math - Algebra 1; Math - Middle; Math - Secondary	The following areas are included: Computer Science; Science- Physics; Science- Middle; Science - Earth Science; Science - Chemistry; Science - Biology; Math - Algebra 1; Math - Middle; Math - Secondary
School counselors	90 FTE	90 FTE
Social workers	The following areas are included: Trade and Industrial;	The following areas are included: Trade and Industrial;

	Vocational Special Needs; Technology Education; Marketing Education; Industrial Cooperative Training; Health and Medical Services; Family and Consumer Sciences; Business and Information Technology; Agriculture Education; CTE - Other	Vocational Special Needs; Technology Education; Marketing Education; Industrial Cooperative Training; Health and Medical Services; Family and Consumer Sciences; Business and Information Technology; Agriculture Education; CTE - Other
Nurses	12 FTE	12 FTE
School psychologists	The following areas are included: Early/Primary or Elementary PreK-6	The following areas are included: Early/Primary or Elementary PreK-6

- 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.

The SEA has encouraged LEA’s to use ESSER and GEER funds to stabilize and support the educator workforce and to support the conditions that will allow schools to return to in-person instruction. This includes using funds to pay teacher salaries and avoid layoffs and addressing educator shortages exacerbated by the pandemic by hiring new teachers and expanding student access to a well-prepared and diverse educator workforce. Examples of strategies that may be employed to stabilize and support the educator workforce include:

- Supporting partnerships with educator preparation programs to expand opportunities for extensive clinical experience to teaching candidates, including leveraging candidates to provide additional support to students and address the impact of lost instructional time as students return to in-person instruction;
- Providing ongoing support to recruit, hire, and retain a diverse school staff, including through high-quality induction and mentoring programs;
- Offering supplemental financial support for educators who commit to working in a high-need field or school for a minimum number of years (e.g., four years);
- Providing teachers professional learning opportunities on strategies for the effective use of technology for remote, hybrid, and accelerating learning; or

- Creating and/or supporting educational assistance programs that pay off student loans on behalf of staff as a component of recruitment and retention efforts in response to the pandemic.

LEAs have used ESSER formula funds to maintain operations and avoid teacher layoffs as needed.

- 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).

During the August 2021 Special Session, the Virginia General Assembly appropriated \$11.5 million in ARP ESSER funding to support recruitment efforts for LEAs hiring to fill instructional positions between August 15, 2021, and November 15, 2021. School divisions will submit data to the Virginia Department of Education including the number of hard-to-staff vacancies defined by the Critical Teaching Shortage Areas list and non-hard-to-staff vacancies for the 2021-2022 school year by school. Priority for distribution will be to school divisions experiencing the most acute difficulties in recruiting qualified teachers, defined for this initiative as the overall free and reduced lunch rate of greater than 40 percent (2019-2020 eligibility data will be used). An eligible teacher will receive a \$2,500 incentive award for filling a non-hard-to-staff position, or an incentive award of \$5,000 for a hard-to-staff position. LEAs will provide half of the incentive payment to the individual no later than January 1, 2022 and provide the balance of the full amount to the individual no earlier than May 1, 2022, provided the individual receive a satisfactory performance evaluation and provides a written commitment to return to the same school for the 2022-2023 school year.

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).

VDOE has developed numerous strategies and resources to assist LEAs in increasing access to key support staff with a focus on special education services and support and staff who support school-based mental health services and supports (i.e., school counselors, special education staff, school social workers, school psychologists and school nurses). LEA needs were identified through multiple stakeholder convenings (Secretary of Education (SOE) listening sessions, SOE COVID-19 Education, VDOE Recovery task force) and focused on the following areas; enhancement of supports at the universal level: implementation of social-emotional learning and trauma -informed strategies, increasing staffing levels of

school-based mental health providers (school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, community mental health providers), supporting the delivery of virtual services (training needs / equipment needs), focusing on strengthening partnerships with community providers, the high level of coordination needed for service provision when virtual/hybrid and a focus on the provision of mental wellness supports to the adults: school staff and parents.

VDOE has utilized relief funding to support partnerships with institutes of higher education to provide professional development and training for school staff on providing online instruction, remote support services, as well as addressing students' social-emotional learning needs impacted by the pandemic. This funding has also specifically supported development of specialized instructional support personnel resources and professional development. For example, the Center for Implementation and Evaluation of Education Systems (CIEES) at Old Dominion University has partnered with VDOE's Department of Special Education and Student Services in the creation of asynchronous modules for the professional development of school instructional support personnel (SISP). This professional development has included; creation of asynchronous professional development activities, illustrated video modules and additional development materials to support implementation of VDOE Social Emotional Wellness Quick Guides. Radford University has also partnered with VDOE to develop, implement and evaluate the provision of training focused on school building administrators to implement effective social emotional development, learning and support.

VDOE has also utilized federal funding to support specific initiatives related to the recruitment, preparation and retention of special education teachers and specialized instructional support personnel. For example, state set-aside special education funding has been used to support programs for training teachers of students with severe disabilities, endorsement programs for special education teachers and the endorsement of teachers for students with sensory based disabilities. Funded by a multi-year grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the Virginia Career and Learning Center (CLC) for school mental health professionals supports efforts to recruit and retain school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers in Virginia school divisions. The CLC website provides links to job openings throughout Virginia, guidance on state licensing requirements, information on school-based mental health careers, as well as professional development modules for school mental health professionals. The Learning and Resource Center pages of the CLC currently provide over 50 free on-demand learning modules and webinars designed for school-based mental health providers. The Virginia Partnership for School Mental Health (the *Partnership*) is a U. S. Department of Education grant-funded initiative that seeks to increase the number of qualified school mental health (SMH) professionals employed by high need school divisions. In partnership with Institutions of Higher Learning, training is provided in the provision of evidence-based school mental health interventions to graduate students, while also building capacity of current SMH professionals to provide evidence-based services and supervise trainees. The Partnership currently includes seven participating school divisions and partner universities.

Needs assessments done in partnership and collaboration with local school divisions ensured that application priority from VDOE reflected the current needs of schools during and after

the pandemic. VDOE’s application priorities are as follows; low levels of current staffing for school-based mental health providers (as evidenced by higher than state median student to provider ratio and free and reduced lunch percent eligible students (2019-20) over 60%). Additional support to school divisions on an application basis has focused on resourcing additional staffing, programs and supports for students. Each LEA submitted their own plan. Most common examples of use of funds: additional staffing of school-based mental health personnel (e.g. partially funding an additional counselor; stipends for after hours work; contracting with community provider for licensed personnel to provides school-based services), school-based mental health intervention materials purchase (e.g. Kognito for peer to peer suicide prevention; Zones of regulation; SEL curriculum) and professional development for staff (youth mental health first aid; training on specific interventions).

### **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).

As noted in Section 4 in much greater detail, Virginia will use the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening, Virginia Assessment Program, Virginia's Remote Student Progress Test, Growth Assessments, Just In Time Math Quick Checks, and local data sources to assist school divisions in measuring and making decisions on how to combat COVID-19 learning loss. Additionally, Virginia is one of the only states that is developing a data analytics system that provides an early warning system (EWS), for extensive analysis and visualizations for student coursework, grades, absenteeism, behavior, and state accreditation. Moreover, the system will contain a student group comparison application with pre-populated reports to help school divisions drive their equity efforts. A prototype of the system is nearing completion with Orange County, Virginia where other divisions will have the opportunity to join in the fall. There will be a rolling enrollment schedule for all divisions throughout the 2021-22 and 2022-23 school years.

Virginia is fortunate to have a solid foundation for its longitudinal data system that includes a State Testing Id, Virginia's unique identifier for all students, and elements to account for each student's current demographics. Data collections from the LEAs are collected at the student-level allowing all student-based metrics to be disaggregated at the school, division/district, and state level by any reporting group defined within the LDS. Many opportunities to learn metrics can be analyzed including attendance (chronic absenteeism), behavior and administrative responses (exclusionary discipline), transcript-like data (advanced coursework), and device and internet access (access to technology).

VDOE will utilize its existing annual financial data collection of Virginia LEAs (i.e., Annual School Report-Financial Section) to provide fiscal data that is comparable statewide. This data collection is used to meet the annual ESSA Per Pupil Expenditures reporting requirement at the LEA and school levels.

VDOE will develop and implement an online data collection form for use by LEAs to report data on jobs created and retained with ARP ESSER funds, based on data specifications issued by USED. Parameters will be set on data fields to increase data quality. LEAs will submit their data to a central data set at VDOE.

VDOE will develop and implement an online data collection form for use by LEAs to report participation in programs funded by ARP ESSER funds, based on data specifications issued by USED. Parameters will be set on data fields to increase data quality. LEAs will submit their data to a central data set at VDOE.

Based on the final reporting requirements and data specifications issued by USED, VDOE will utilize both existing state-level data elements currently collected from LEAs, as applicable, and develop and implement an online data collection form to collect other

required data not currently available.

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.

VDOE has a well-established and effective internal control plan in place for implementing ESEA grants, and this structure will be used to implement the ESSER grants. A high-level summary of VDOE's internal control plan is below.

- The **control environment** includes the agency's system of oversight, organizational structure, and performance evaluation. Documentation of the control environment is evidenced by the agency's Administrative Manual, Human Resources Policy Manual, and Agency Risk Management Internal Controls Standards (ARMICS) program plan.
- The ARMICS program plan includes the implementation of an annual agency-wide **risk assessment**. The risk assessment process is managed by VDOE's Director of Risk Management. The process includes identification, analysis, and response to risks, identification of change, and response to change.
- VDOE's **control activities** for managing federal grants include implementation of the performance review system, segregation of duties, and accurate and timely recording of and documentation of transactions. The agency's Online Management of Education Grant Awards (OMEGA) grants management system provides built-in controls for the subgrantee application approval and reimbursement processes. The system is designed to control user rights and access by assigned duty/permissions. Details about the grant management structure and process are below.
  - Upon receipt of each award from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal Pandemic Relief Programs staff applied allowable set-asides and calculated LEA allocations. Calculations were reviewed and approved by the Office of Budget prior to making awards to LEAs.
  - For each program's state set-aside budget, proposed activities to be funded must be approved by staff at both VDOE and at the Governor's Office. This process was implemented to maximize the impact of the programs and activities funded with the state set-aside budgets.
  - To receive formula funds, each LEA must submit an application for funds through OMEGA. The application includes a detailed budget breakdown identifying each expense by allowable category aligned with the allowable uses of ESSER funds. Applications are reviewed in the OMEGA system by two program staff prior to approval. Following initial approval of an application, all budget changes must be justified in an application amendment.
  - Following application approval, the LEA must submit a budget transfer request aligned with the approved application. The budget transfer request places funds in

the correct object codes for reimbursement, and is reviewed by two levels of program staff prior to approval. The OMEGA system will not allow an LEA to transfer more funds than have been allocated.

- o Following budget transfer approval, each LEA must submit reimbursement requests to receive reimbursement for funds expended. Reimbursement requests include a description of each program and activity by object code. They are reviewed by program staff to ensure alignment with the application. They are then reviewed by fiscal staff to ensure that they comply with laws, guidelines, and cash management principles regarding allowable expenses. The OMEGA system will not allow the LEA to request reimbursement for more funds than have been transferred into each object code.
- o Documentation for LEA grants (applications, budget transfers, and reimbursements) is maintained in the OMEGA system. For state set-aside activities, primary documentation to support fiscal reviews and audits for grants and contracts that are not awarded to LEAs is maintained in the Office of Finance.
- VDOE maintains a consistent focus on **information and communication** with internal and external stakeholders. Program staff and other agency staff attend meetings with the U.S. Department of Education (USED) and other national educational organizations that feature USED presentations. VDOE Office of Finance conducts periodic training for agency staff, and program staff attend these trainings. VDOE Leadership Team meets regularly and receives updates on agency policy changes and the required ARMICS process. Program staff provided training in conjunction with the annual ESEA programs virtual coordinators academy and will continue to provide grants management training, as well as targeted training on areas of need, throughout the period of performance. The current area of greatest need appears to be uses of funds for construction and renovation. VDOE provided training on this topic recently and is providing one-on-one technical assistance to LEAs that wish to use their funds in this manner.
- VDOE's system for internal and external **monitoring** includes an annual focus on agency-wide ARMICS testing and evaluation facilitated by the Director of Business and Risk Management as well as federal program monitoring of subgrantees (described below).

### **Subrecipient Monitoring Plan**

VDOE has a well-established and effective subrecipient monitoring plan in place for implementing ESEA grants, and this structure will be modified to implement the ESSER grants. The Office of Federal Pandemic Relief Programs employs four full time and two wage staff who can conduct monitoring. Additional staff may be hired on a part time basis to conduct monitoring if needed. The monitoring process is summarized below.

- Develop monitoring protocol
  - o Programmatic and fiscal indicators will be identified to determine the degree of implementation of ESSER programs and activities administered by subrecipients. ESEA program subrecipient protocols will serve as a model for the ESSER fund protocols.

- o Guiding questions and interview questions will be developed to assist subrecipients in self-assessing their compliance with each indicator and in preparing for the monitoring visit.
- Identify subrecipients to receive monitoring
  - o The use of ESSER funds will be continuously monitored for all subrecipients using the OMEGA application, budget transfer, and reimbursement approval process outlined above; certain subrecipients will be identified to receive formal monitoring using the monitoring protocol based on a risk assessment.
  - o Factors including funding amount, uses of funds as outlined in the program application, timeliness in submitting the program application and reimbursement requests, and program coordinator experience will be considered in identifying subrecipients for monitoring.
- Schedule monitoring
  - o Subrecipient monitoring will be scheduled beginning in 2021 and will continue throughout the period of performance.
  - o Subrecipients identified as having higher risk will be monitored first.
- Provide technical assistance
  - o Prior to the subrecipient monitoring visit, training will be conducted to assist subrecipients as they prepare for monitoring. The monitoring protocol will be reviewed. An overview of the fiscal and programmatic documentation to be reviewed during the monitoring process will be provided.
- Conduct monitoring
  - o Monitoring will take place primarily through virtual reviews; onsite reviews may also be scheduled.
  - o During the monitoring visit, VDOE staff will review documentation and subrecipients will be interviewed.
- Notification of findings
  - o After the monitoring visit, a letter regarding the results of the visit will be prepared. The letter will indicate whether the subrecipient was fully in compliance or whether there are areas of noncompliance.
  - o If a subrecipient receives a letter of noncompliance, action steps and a timeline for completion will be indicated.
  - o VDOE staff will monitor the completion of action steps.

## Appendix A: School Operating Status and Instructional Mode Data Template

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

[Click here to enter text.](#)

**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.

*Add or change rows as needed*

Number of schools	All schools	Offered to all students	Offered to some students	Not offered
Remote or online only	74	74		
School buildings open with both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid)	1,748	1,748		
School buildings open with full-time in-person instruction	2	2		

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).

Number of schools	Elementary	Middle	High	Combined
Remote or online only	44	13	14	3
School buildings open with both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid)	1,112	294	291	51

School buildings open with full-time in-person instruction	1			1
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**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*

<b>Number of students</b>	<b>Total enrollment</b>	<b>Remote or online only</b>	<b>Both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid)</b>	<b>Full-time in-person instruction</b>
Students from low-income families	538,610	272,866	241,917	23,827
White, not Hispanic	563,735	204,313	322,692	36,730
Black or African American, not Hispanic	267,021	174,351	83,885	8,785
Hispanic, of any race	212,635	104,693	99,966	7,976
Asian, not Hispanic	92,005	66,868	23,922	1,215
American Indian or Alaskan Native, not Hispanic	3,130	1,642	1,375	113
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, not Hispanic	2,000	1,103	836	61

Two or more races, not Hispanic	75,662	37,161	35,687	2,814
English learners	162,024	80,500	75,829	5,695
Children with disabilities	163,795	69,757	84,223	9,815
Students experiencing homelessness	10,848	4,934	5,461	453
Children and youth in foster care	2,930	918	1,708	304
Migratory students	282	56	181	45

### **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.

In accordance with provisions in Section 427 of GEPA, Virginia requires applicants for federal ESSER funds to include in the individual or consolidated program application the steps that the applicant will take to ensure equitable access

to, and participation in, ESSER funded programs for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. Information about this requirement is provided in the program application, in the application Guidelines, Instructions, and Assurances document. A review of the steps to remove barriers under Section 427 of GEPA will be incorporated into the federal program monitoring process for ESSER programs. If during the monitoring process barriers to access are identified, the applicant will be required to develop and implement a plan to remove the barrier.

### **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](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) and reference the OMB Control Number 1894-0005.**