Speaker 0   00:00:00   Welcome and thank you for joining the Grantee Learning Series for Technical Assistance, Communications, and Resources. This meeting is being recorded and all audio lines are currently muted. Before we get started, please just make sure you've opened the chat panel by clicking the chat bubble icon at the bottom right corner of your screen. If you require technical assistance, you can please send a chat message to the event producer. When we get to the Q&A portion of the call, you can send chat questions to all panelists or enter the verbal queue by pressing the raise hand icon at the bottom of your screen. With that, I'll turn the call over to Sandra Deysson, Group Leader in the Office of State and Grantee Relations. Please go ahead.

Speaker 1   00:00:58   Thank you, Silas. Good afternoon everyone, and thank you for joining us today for our third webinar within the Grantee Learning Series. Today's topic is Technical Assistance, communications, and resources. And again, I'm Sandy Deysson, a group leader within the Office of State and Grantee relations. The Grantee Learning Series includes five webinars each Wednesday afternoon through August 23rd. These webinars have been designed to provide an opportunity for our office to share important information and resources to support the implementation of the ESSER, GEER and E'S programs. They were also designed primarily to support new grantees while refreshing the knowledge of grantees that have been working on these programs for the last few years. This afternoon, I'm joined by my colleagues, we have malicious Schrader on the line with us. She is a program officer that leads technical assistance within our office. We have Diane Rentner, a program officer who is our policy lead.

Speaker 1   00:02:00   we will have di Diane Orelli joining us, a program officer who leads communications and Eve Allen, a program officer that supports aspects of policy and leads the design and organization of the SGR website. Today's presentation has been prerecorded, so we will be playing it shortly, but while it is playing, if you have any questions that come up, we'd ask you to enter those into the chat. We'll be monitoring the chat and at the end we will take those questions first and then we're going to invite everyone to come off mute if you have any additional questions. And we will, we will answer those questions as well. So, without further delay, we're going to begin viewing the recording of technical assistance, communications and resources Silas, go ahead and play for us. Good afternoon. I am Melissa Schroeder, the Technical Assistance lead in the Office of State

Speaker 2   00:02:58   And Grantee relations. And I'm joined today by my colleagues Diane Rentner, our policy lead Dyanne Ornelas, our strategic communications lead and Eve Allen, our policy and communications support. Our focus today is on technical assistance, communication, and resources available to grantees for ESSER, GEER, and E'S grants. This technical assistance, communication and resources session is designed to ensure that our grantees are equipped with timely, relevant, and meaningful technical assistance and resources to feel confident in the implementation, evaluation, and improvement of the ESSER, GEER, and EANS programs for positive outcomes for all students. This recorded webinar and PowerPoint will be posted on the department, state and Grantee relations webpage.

Speaker 2   00:03:49   Our objectives for today are for participants to be able to identify how to request technical assistance and also to learn about key resources available to help administer the means ESSER and GEER program. In this session, you'll hear how the Office of State and Grantee relations provides individual and ongoing support to our grantees by answering individual unique Grantee questions and by holding ongoing monthly meetings with each Grantee. SGR also provides group-based technical

assistance through scheduled webinars and office hours sending messages through the G five grants management system, and by sending weekly information through our SGR newsflash Universal technical Assistance, or a one-time offering would include guidance, frequently asked questions, and the SGR website that includes deadlines, announcements, guidance documents, and recorded webinars. Our team is going to walk you through the resources, the technical assistance provided, and we'll take you through a tour of the Office of State and Grantee relations website.

Speaker 2   00:04:54   So in this first section, we're going to share how each state can receive individualized ongoing support from our SGR team. And we'll start off by talking about the state of mailboxes. And so, each state has a unique email address that can be used when your state has a question regarding one of the seven emergency relief programs. And you'll see on the screen a sample of a state mailbox name. It's state name dot OESE at ed.gov. The state, the Office of State and Grantee Relations has a program officer assigned to each state that checks the state mailbox daily. You can reach out through your state assigned mailbox to receive answers to your inquiries and program officers will respond within 24 hours. I'm going to hand it over to my colleague, Diane Rentner to talk a little bit about some of our unique Grantee questions. Diane. Thanks, Melissa. So, what is a unique Grantee question?

Speaker 2   00:05:54   Let me start by explaining what it is not. We often receive questions from grantees that are easily answerable using existing information such as our frequently asked questions, documents, and other information on our website. Unique Grantee questions are those that we have not been asked before, and so we don't have a ready answer or guidance to draw on to craft a response. These types of questions need to be discussed by a work group. The Office of State and Grantee Relations have has established four cross-agency work groups. There's one for the ESSER program, one for the GEER program, one for the S program, where we also discuss equitable services questions that came up under the Caress Act. And then finally, there's a work group for maintenance of effort and maintenance of equity. questions that you know are related to this, the Covid Relief Programs.

Speaker 2   00:06:45   All of these work groups include staff from the office of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Office of General Counsel, the Office of Planning Evaluation and Policy Development, and the Budget Service. By bringing these unique questions to the cross-agency work groups, we ensure that we provide thoughtful and consistent responses that also take into account the policies of other department administered programs. Each of these work groups meet meets weekly to discuss questions. And during that discussion, often we find that we need more information sometimes from, others within the Department of Education, and often more information from grantees so that we can provide, an accurate and helpful response. So, while we always aim to provide timely responses to grantees, these unique Grantee questions often take a little bit more time for us to sort through and get back to you. I also thought it might be helpful to know that, when we update an F a Q or, or send out a general communication to grantees on program implementation issues, it was often prompted by a unique Grantee question, and then we've made a determination that all grantees would find this response helpful, so we share it out.

Speaker 2   00:07:56   But in other instances, the question asked by a state was so, fact specific and the circumstances outlined in the question were so unique that the response really isn't generalizable and, is not helpful to share with other grantees. So just know that when we come across something that we think is helpful, we're going to share it with you. So, in summary, what we suggest, if you have a

question, you should first look at our resources on our website, and Eva's going to walk through those resources later in this presentation and see if you can determine the answer on your own. And if after you've done that, you can't find the answer or you're not sure about an answer that you found, please reach out to us using the state mailbox, and we will, get back to you with response as soon as we can.

Speaker 2   00:08:42   Thanks. So now I'm going to turn it back over to Melissa. Thanks, Diane. Another source of technical assistance we offer our grantees is through our monthly meetings. Each month, our states meet with their assigned program officer to discuss standing items. In addition to other topics determined by ed, some of the standing items that we review in each meeting are things like FFATA data analysis of drawdown data, and other outstanding action items, maybe some questions the states had that we need to follow up on, things of that nature. But this is a time for states to touch base with their program officer to get additional technical assistance and questions answered, on an ongoing basis. The secondary, kind of result of these monthly meetings is that information that we get shared through our grantees during these meetings is used to help us inform future technical assistance opportunities. And so, if we notice a pattern of, types of questions or topics of questions being asked in these monthly meetings, we can design technical assistance opportunities to assist a broader array of our grantees, as we move forward through the implementation of these grants. So next we're going to talk about targeted technical assistance. In this section, we'll share how all states are provided with information. And I'm going to turn it over to my colleague, Dyanne Ornelas to talk about G five emails and our SGR news Flash Diane.

Speaker 3   00:10:12   Thanks Melissa G five email is one of the ways that SGR sends communications to grantees. The state director and the authorizing official that are listed in G five for each grant will receive the emails, which can then be shared with other Grantee team members. The emails often include an attachment, which can be a letter to a doc, a guidance document, an important reminder or general information for grantees. If you miss a G five email, you can go to our deadlines and announcements webpage to find links to all the G five communications sent to grantees. You'll be learning more about the deadlines and announcements webpage in the next few slides.

Speaker 3   00:11:10   Another way SGR shares communications is through the news flash sent every Monday by regular email. In the news flash, you'll find lots of information tailored to grantees such as webinar announcements, reporting information, and upcoming deadlines. If you miss an issue, you can go to the S C R SGR News Flash Archive linked here, and on the deadlines and announcements page. If you would like to subscribe to the SGR news slash send us an email through this subscription email link. Let's take a look at a recent issue of the news flash. The first section shows you recent communications that were sent to grantees through G five email. You'll see the sent date, the subject, a brief summary, and a link to the email. The next section shows upcoming webinars along with registration information. Next, the reporting update section provides important dates and guidance for annual reporting and FFATA sub-award reporting. Important deadlines and announcements are next, followed by links to Grantee resources such as FAQs request templates, guidance documents, and informative websites. And finally, the subscription link and the archive link are included. If you have questions about the news, newsflash or other grant information, you can send us an email through your state's mailbox.

Speaker 2   00:13:05   Thanks Diane. In this next section, we're going to share how all states are provided with universal technical assistance. That includes one-time offerings such as webinars, office hours, guidance, and information. And our team will also provide you with a tour of the SGR website.

Webinars and office hours are planned, dependent upon Grantee need and oftentimes are as a result of what we learned through our monthly meetings. Earlier in this presentation, some of our most recent webinars and office hours include our Davis-Bacon webinar and Office Hour, our late liquidation and closeout webinar, ESSER, GEER Liquidation Extension Webinar, and our FFATA webinar. And as you can see on this slide, we have links to those and these are, these are all listed on our, on our website, and E will walk you through where to find those in just a few moments. But again, these are based on Grantee need and are available for review. After the webinar is over and once it's posted online, we also post our guidance and FAQs on our website. And here for your convenience, we've listed a number of some of the, the most important guidance and FAQs that we have. So, you can check out these links, the ESSER and GEER FAQs Maintenance of Disposition, FAQs Addendum, liquidation Extension, and we also have our Davis-Bacon overview.

Speaker 2   00:14:43   Now I'm going to turn it over to Eve for a tour of our website where she'll show you where you can find a lot of these great resources.

Speaker 4   00:14:51   Thank you, Melissa. Now I'll take us through a tour of our website and the different resources that you can find on it. Starting with the deadlines and announcements page, which Diane mentioned earlier, you can find a list of important dates and deadlines that may be coming up for you, as well as an overview of announcements that we have been sending out over the past several years. To pause for a second, please just note that many of our webpages have this accordion style folder on it. So, if you're looking at a webpage and it looks a little sparse and you're having trouble finding information, just remind yourself to click around a little bit and you might accidentally expand a folder which has the information you're looking for. So, to take a look at the dates and deadlines for a second, these are sorted by year. And then within the year blocks, we have the deadlines sorted by date.

Speaker 4   00:15:44   On the far left, we say which award this deadline pertains to. And then we have the actual event or deadline in this column here. Sometimes we also have more resources in this far right column that are related to the deadline. So, we might give you a little more information about the deadline. We might give you a link to guidance we have sent out about the deadline, or we might have a template for you to use to complete the information required on the deadline. Scroll back up. You can always click on this to minimize it. And then going down to the announcements section, we have our announcements broken down by Grant, so by ESSER, GEER and E. And then we have a general section and the SGR news flash section. So, the announcements that we store on our webpage are all of those G five emails that you may have received from us over time.

Speaker 4   00:16:39   When we send out a G five email that is generally applicable to all of our grantees, we will also post it on our website. We'll put G five email, we'll put the date we sent it out, and then we will put the general topic of the email here. As you can see, because it's underlined, that means it's hyperlinked. So, if you click on this, you'll see a P D F of the actual email we sent out or the guidance that was in the email. We also include many emails sent out at the E S F reporting help desk here. E S F Reporting Help Desk sends out information on the annual performance report. So, they might be reminding you about the data collection starting soon, or other updates and guidance that will be useful for you. So, if you find yourself looking for a piece of information that you think you saw in an email recently or that came up on a call, this is always a good place to look when we have information that pertains to multiple grants.

Speaker 4   00:17:30   So say we sent out F A Q updates that pertain to SSR and GEER, we'll put them in both sections. We really try and duplicate things as much as possible so that it's easy as possible for you to find. If you're not sure where to look, just click around a little and you might find it. Additionally, we have this general section here which pertains to the guidance or information that we've sent out that isn't specific to one or two grants, but applies to everything. And then finally, as mentioned earlier, we store all of our SGR News flashes here. So, while they're sent out once a week, we also update this webpage once a week, the most recent news flash, and you can always click on it and get a P D F of the news flash here. Now I'm going to take us on a quick tour of the other SGR websites that we have.

Speaker 4   00:18:15   Starting with the ESSER page. We have three program specific pages on our website. We have ESSER, GEER, and EAMs, and they're all arranged in the very same way. So, we, on every page, we have this top amount of information that is just the grant award number and things like that. And then on the left here, we will always have implementation resources. So this will be resources that are like our FAQs or used to funds guidance. And we have a couple subpages here that I'll get to in a second. On the right, we will always have award resources. As you can see here, we have these accordion style folders again, and when you expand them, you can find information specific to each award. You can find your allocation table here. You can find a fact sheet, or you can see specific letters that we sent out when the A R P ACT was passed.

Speaker 4   00:19:10   Further down on each page, you'll find a little information about that grant. So, this is probably only useful if you are just getting started with this work and you're new to these grants, but definitely still useful to take a look at and read through. We give a little background on when this act was passed, the amount of funding in total and the general purpose of it. Now, before we turn to looking at the year and S pages, I want to show us a couple other subpages that we have for ESSER. So, all of our pages have an extra resources page. So, we have ESSER resources, we have GEER resources, and we have SS resources. The ESSER resources page is by far the biggest just because we have shared much resources and guidance on this page. And as you can see, it is again stored in these accordion style folders that help you get to what you're looking for a little bit faster. So, we have a whole section here on FAQs and use of funds. these FAQs were also stored back on the top of the SSR page here. We try and put those in as many places as possible, so they're easy to find. But we also have other fact sheets here. We have use of funds guidance, and we have a lot of FAQs or fact sheets related to specific topics.

Speaker 4   00:20:30   Additionally, we have all of our ESSA related webinars and office hours stored here. So, if you know there was a webinar and you're looking for the recording, this is always a good place to go. And then we have more information further down. As you can see in the different sections. Along with the SR resources page, we have an ESSER reporting page. Again, there's also a GEER reporting and EAMS reporting page. And this is broken into sections. So, we have ESSER FFATA reporting here. You can find information on what FFATA reporting is and what requirements there are. You can find our webinar here, and then you can scroll further down and read a little bit about annual reporting requirements and find websites that may be useful to you. And similarly for quarterly, quarterly reporting. Before I turn to the other pages, I just want to show you a few things that are also in this blue sidebar here.

Speaker 4   00:21:23   There are some more subpages that I think will be useful to take note of so that you know they exist. The first one I'm thinking of is our ARP ESSER Maintenance of Equity page. Some of you may not be working with maintenance of equity, but for those who are, this is a really useful page.

We have a lot of background information here. We have our FAQs on maintenance of equity stored here. Specifically, we have more information on dates and deadlines that may pertain to you and further down, we also have a template that may be useful for some of the maintenance of equity requirements. We also have this table that has a row for every state and shares some of the most recent S E A level data submissions from states. We have these de letters that our department, department correspondence to states, and we have other information that states have shared with us that we have published here.

Speaker 4   00:22:20   The most pertinent at this point may be looking at this department correspondence regarding S E A level compliance. I just want to highlight this for a second because if you are new to this, you may find that you're not sure whether a tolerance proposal has been submitted or whether it's been responded to. And this is always a good place to look for that. Anytime that we respond to a maintenance of equity tolerance proposal letter, we will post it here. So, you can always see what our response was. And additionally, when we send out letters to do with state compliance with maintenance of equity, we will post that letter here as well. So, if you're not sure where your state stands for this, this is always a good place to start taking a look for a second at another page that's stored under the ESSER page is our maintenance of effort page similar to maintenance of equity.

Speaker 4   00:23:06   This page has background information at the top, along with a maintenance of effort guidance document that may be useful to look at. And then further below, we have a template that may be useful and a table of our maintenance of effort waiver requests similar to maintenance of equity. If you're not sure of the status of your state's waiver request, whether it's been submitted, whether it's been accepted or not, this is a good place to look. As you can see, we just have states here who have submitted a waiver request. We have a P D F of their request in any accompanying documents. And then we have their status. Many of these requests have been withdrawn by states, some are still under review, and then there are some that have been approved. If they've been approved. We have hyperlinked the approval letter here, so you can take a look at it and see what we've said.

Speaker 4   00:23:52   The final ESSER page we'll look at today is our ARP ESSER state and L E A School District Plans. This is quite the long name for a page, but overall, this is an overview of the required state and use of funds plans that we have collected from you. There's a lot of background information that you can see here on the requirements for ARP ESSER. ARP ESSER specifically asked schools and school districts and state to submit plans for their use of ARP ESSER funds. And we've collected that into this table here. Similar to other tables we have state on the far left, we have the total ARP ESSER funds awarded here. You can also find those on the ESSER page under the award section, but sometimes it's easier to look in a place you already are. And then we have some approved PDFs here. So, this column may be the most useful to you as it is where we store the approved state plan and the approval letter from the state.

Speaker 4   00:24:53   So when a state sends in their ARP ESSER state plan and we approved it, we would put the PDF here, and then we would include the approval letter PDF here. There's also often this supplementary information also here in a PDF, just so that you can see everything that was submitted. There were some states that were approved with conditions on their state plan, so then they had to resubmit a state plan with those conditions addressed. In that case, you'll see multiple approval letters here that are dated. So, you'll see the initial approval letter and then a later date, which shows that they have resubmitted their state plan. We fully approved it, and here is the approval letter. With that in

mind, this top level state plan will always be the most recent state plan that we have taken a look at and approved.

Speaker 4   00:25:40   So if you're not sure what was most recent, this will always be it. Additionally, when states first submitted their state plans, they also submitted this highlights document that might be useful to take a look at. It's a bit shorter and just touches on the major points in their state plans. And then here we have linked the required state link to local plans. So, all states had to gather their school district for L E a <inaudible> funds plans on their state websites in one place, and we have them linked here. Those were all of the major SSR pages. So, let's take a quick look at the GEER and S pages. As you can see, the GEER page here is organized very similarly to the SSR page with the implementation resources on the left and the GEER award resources on the right. As you can see, we always put the GEER and SSR FAQs as top level as we can.

Speaker 4   00:26:34   We want to make those really easy for you to find. And then we have more information here as well. I also want to take a look at the GEER monitoring page as this is also a page that each page has. So, there's an SSR monitoring page, there's a GEER monitoring page, and there's an S monitoring page. So, as you can see, the GEER monitoring page is fairly short, but it does have useful information on it. If you're not sure what monitoring of your state may look like, this is a great place to go to take a look at what the Grantee self-assessment protocol would look like. This has all of the questions that we would ask you as well as the suggested documentation that we would ask you to submit. So, if you're not sure how to prepare for a potential monitoring practice, this is a great place to look.

Speaker 4   00:27:21   Additionally, our E Ns page looks very similar. As you can see, implementation resources are always on the left. Award resources are always on the right. And below that, we always have information about the program. Further down on the EANS page, we also have key differences between the source at E NSS and a E NSS programs. This is a great place to look if you work with E Ns because there are some key differences here that are very important that you understand and follow. So, if you're working with E NSS and you're new to this, definitely take a look here. The final two pages that I will be showing you today are not program specific. The first one is our promising practices page. This one has general guidance that we have shared with you all that does not pertain to a specific program, but might still be useful to take a look at.

Speaker 4   00:28:12   This is usually guidance that has been put together with another organization or agency and has information on suggestions for how to use funds, best practices and promising practices, examples that we have seen from other states or school districts. This is a great place to look if you just want to get a little more general learning in and see what has been talked about in this space. And then finally, this is the only non S D R page that I want to highlight today. This is the Education Stabilization Fund Transparency portal. This page has information on all of the funds awarded under ESSER, GEER, EAMs, and here, which we don't touch on, but it's still relevant and it's broken down by state by the amount that's awarded and spent and by ESSER, GEER and ens. So, you can sort through this and see general information on what's going on in your state, but you can also click on a specific state like South Dakota and see more information on the total summary of your state.

Speaker 4   00:29:18   You can find information on whether your state has submitted additional information in their annual performance report, which can be very useful. You can find information on maintenance of equity. As you see here, you can see that annual performance reports that I mentioned.

This is a lot of useful background information. And then finally, you can look at the sub-grantees of the state under each program, and you can see the amount of ESSER funds awarded by the S e I. So, this might be useful to check occasionally as we use this information. And sometimes when there are duplicates or there are errors in reporting, this is a great place to go to just double check that there isn't a duplicated sub-grantee here. For example, a lot of this information is pulled from USA spending.gov. As you can see, it's a little bit behind. It's usually a month or so behind. But it's a great way to see all of that information from USA spending.gov rolled up into one place. So, with that, I will turn it back to Melissa.

Speaker 2   00:30:16   Thanks Eve for sharing the tour of the website. And now we're going to close out and take questions from the audience. If you have questions, you can type them in the chat or you can come off mute and ask on your mic.

Speaker 1   00:30:40   I've been monitoring the chat. There are no questions in the chat. But again, we do want to invite all attendees. If you would like to unmute yourself, if you have any questions for our team, now would be a great time to ask. While the presentation was going on, Melissa typed in or she entered into the chat, the state mailbox information as well as all of the web webpage that Eve was sharing, in the presentation. but we'll just pause and if you have any questions regarding, our technical assistance, our communications, or any of our resources, please unmute yourself. And we are here to answer your questions. We'll just, we'll just give it a few minutes, but just remember if something comes to you after today, you can always contact your state mailbox as well.

Speaker 2   00:31:47   Nice. Also note, Sandy, that this presentation will be posted on our website

Speaker 1   00:32:07   And if there aren't any questions, we would just like to thank all of you for joining us today. And just to remind everybody that we have a maintenance of effort and maintenance of equity webinar that will be held live next week at the same time at two 30 on Wednesday, August 16th. I will put that in the chat if you'd like to register for the maintenance of effort, maintenance of equity webinar.

Speaker 2   00:32:40   Okay.

Speaker 1   00:32:41   Thank you everybody.

Speaker 0   00:32:44   That will conclude today's conference. Thank you for using event services. You may now disconnect.