



To the Administrator Addressed

Commissioner Mike Morath

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DATE:	June 3, 2021
SUBJECT:	Release of ESSER II Formula Funds to Texas LEAs
CATEGORY:	Federal Grant Funding
NEXT STEPS:	Review grant guidance

Effective tomorrow, eligible local educational agencies (LEAs—public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools) in Texas may apply to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to receive their allocation of the \$5.5 billion appropriated to the State of Texas for public education purposes under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief II (ESSER II) Fund. Funds are being provided per federal statutory formula as federal grants to eligible LEAs. School systems should use these new funds for allowable activities to respond to the pandemic and to address student learning loss as a result of COVID-19. Please note that ESSER II formula funding levels are being examined in the calculation of the 2020-2021 hold harmless, which is described in more detail in the COVID-19 Attendance and Enrollment FAQ found [here](#).

The eGrants electronic grant application will be available on the [TEA Grant Opportunities web page](#) on Friday, June 4, 2021. You may search for “2020-2022 CRRSA ESSER II Federal Grant Application” to locate the ESSER II application, but you will actually submit the application through the agency’s online eGrants system. Most, but not all school systems, are eligible to receive funds under required federal funding formulas. Specific allocations by LEA can be found [here](#).

Along with today’s announcement of funds availability, TEA has updated its ESSER guidance and frequently asked questions regarding how these funds can be used, including local compliance requirements schools must follow given federal rules known at this time. Guidance resources are available [here](#) and can be also accessed from TEA’s Coronavirus webpage at <https://tea.texas.gov/coronavirus>.

While keeping in mind the purpose and requirements under ESSER II related to accelerating student learning, TEA strongly encourages school systems to plan for how to use these one-time federal funds expeditiously over the entire covered period. ESSER II funds must be spent by September 30, 2023.

If activity that is allowable under federal law is paid for by federal funds when that activity was previously paid for by local funds, then unspent local funds are freed up for the purpose of extending intervention support for students into future years. This strategy would seem especially wise for school systems with large allocations of ESSER II dollars to facilitate a more comprehensive long-term approach to learning acceleration that will be necessary to support all Texas students affected by COVID-19, while also avoiding a local fiscal cliff caused by the expiration of federal funds in September 2023. As part of the ESSER II application process, and much like ESSER III process, superintendents must brief their boards on the one-time nature of these federal funds. School systems should not anticipate that ongoing, replacement funds will be provided at either the federal or state level.

Contact

For support or additional information, please contact the Department of Grant Compliance and Administration at GrantSupport@tea.texas.gov.