

ESSER I, II and III At-a-Glance

Since March 2020, the federal government has passed three relief packages in response to the COVID-19 pandemic providing extensive financial support for K–12 schools. Together the legislation provides approximately \$194 billion in aid to states which must sub-award approximately 90% of the funding to school districts. The majority of relief funds will be disbursed based on the proportion of Title I funds a state or district received in the most recent fiscal year.

The stream of federal funds provided to states and local school districts is intended to address disruptions in learning caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and keep students and staff safe in school. There are few parameters on how districts must use this money. To assure money is not being squandered, used to fill budget gaps, or for outsider vendors, assessment firms or other unnecessary contractors, concerned educators and union leaders should educate themselves on the basics of ESSER funds, stay abreast of changes, and engage in local conversations with administration about fund allocations.

The Wisconsin State Legislature has made repeated and blatant attempts to control federal funds and is signaling its intent to take credit for increased funding for public education. There is also a danger that the legislature will attempt to freeze or supplant funding for public education justifying its actions with the infusion of federal dollars. Also of note, no Wisconsin Republican member of the House of Representatives voted in support of the American Rescue Act, yet they promote the benefits of the law in their own self-interest.

Side-by-Side Comparison of the Three Acts

	ESSER I Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act)	ESSER II Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA)	ESSER III American Rescue Plan Act (ARP ESSA)
Time Period to Spend Funds	3/13/2020 - 9/30/2022	3/13/2020 - 9/30/2023	3/13/2020 - 9/30/2024
Total Allocation to Wisconsin	\$174M	\$686M	\$1.5B (20% must be used for disrupted learning)
Equitable Service Requirement	Yes	N/A	N/A

<p>Allowable Activities</p>	<p>Any activities authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, IDEA, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and McKinney-Vento</p>	<p>Any activities authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, IDEA, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and McKinney-Vento.</p>	<p>Any activities authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, IDEA, Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, and McKinney-Vento.</p>
<p>Addressing Equity</p>	<p>Activities that address unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youths, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.</p>	<p>Activities that address unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youths, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.</p>	<p>Activities that address unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youths, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.</p>
<p>Addressing Physical Safety</p>	<p>Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean facilities operated by an employer. Training and professional development for staff on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.</p>	<p>Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean facilities operated by an employer. Training and professional development for staff on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.</p>	<p>Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean facilities operated by an employer. Training and professional development for staff on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.</p>

Addressing Mental Health	Providing mental health services and supports.	Providing mental health services and supports.	Providing mental health services and supports.
Supplementing the Regular School Day, I	Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs. Consider advocating for enrichment.	Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs. Consider advocating for enrichment.	Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs. Consider advocating for enrichment.
Supplementing the Regular School Day, II	N/A	Addressing disrupted learning among students, including low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care.	Addressing disrupted learning among students, including low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care (must reserve 20%).
Wisconsin Appropriation by School District	https://weac.org/cares-lea-allocations/	https://weac.org/esser-ii-allocations-by-district/	Not available as of 5/11/21 ESSER III grants will be awarded to school districts in the proportion received funds under Part A of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in fiscal year 2020.

States and school districts are already actively developing their plans for the use of ARP ESSER funds. As this planning continues, consultation with and input from stakeholders and the public, including students, families, civil rights organizations including disability rights organizations, school administrators, superintendents, and educators and their unions, should be an essential component of the process.

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What Can My Local Do? (adapted recommendations from the NEA)

Target Funds. Advocate that COVID-19 funds be used to meet the unique academic and social and emotional needs of students attending under resourced schools, students with disabilities, English learners, students of color, foster care youth, students experiencing homelessness, and students engaged in the juvenile justice system to ensure that they have the resources they need to thrive and succeed.

Make a Plan. Demand a seat at the table during the development and implementation of plans related to COVID-19. Educators are the most familiar with student needs and must be involved in plans to close and reopen schools.

Demand Transparency. Ensure that all local educational agencies receiving funds distribute them equitably and share publicly how schools within their boundaries are spending their funding allocations.

Increase Opportunity. Advocate that all students have equitable access to learning opportunities during and after school closures, such as high-quality instructional materials, compensatory services for students with disabilities, and access to technology and broadband.

Guarantee Equity. Address structural racism and inequality issues that have long existed in the public education system; and ensure that the full range of student needs are met, particularly students with disabilities, students of color, and English language learners. Student services should include social and emotional supports and nutrition.