



# COVID Relief Funding for Schools: All Three Funding Sources Explained



## FAQs About the new Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (ESSR II)

**PURPOSE:** To measure student progress, help schools facilitate continuity of learning, expand access to technology, aid in providing differentiated instruction and learning resources to bring students to grade level and to recover learning loss.

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First round of stimulus funds—CARES Act was generally used for hardware (chromebooks), wifi hotspots, PPE, Teacher Training, software like LMS, many states used it to cover budget shortfalls. These were first steps in response to the pandemic and school closures.

With the second round of funding passed in Dec. 2020, which totaled \$54 Billion, we've begun looking to the next steps: how do we address the last year while trying to fund solutions to help educators and students.

So the purpose of this money is to primarily help schools figure out where students are academically by measuring the progress they've made over the last year.

# FAQs About the new Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 (ESSR II)

ESSR II Uses:

Expand Access to Technology: There is still a wide and widening gap in technology access. So, additional hardware and more wifi access is still necessary.

Providing differentiated instruction: Should be addressed in schools' ***emergency management plans*** with regards to providing a continuity of learning.

No one would have ever planned on schools being closed this long. Emergency management plans may not have been adequate to provide continuity of learning or been able to provide the differentiation needed in these new learning models. This funding is being provided so that schools can fulfill those needs.

And of course, funds are being made available to help schools purchase whatever resources they need to provide students access to the curriculum or support they need to recover learning loss.

# FAQs About the American Rescue Plan

**PURPOSE:** American Rescue Plan funds can be used by SEAs and school districts to equitably expand opportunities for students who need the funds most, including students from low-income backgrounds, students of color, students with disabilities, English learners, students experiencing homelessness, and students with inadequate access to technology.

# FAQs About the new CRRSA Act (ESSR II) AND The American Rescue Plan (ESSR III)

**HOW MUCH Funding is available for my district/organization?**

CRRSA Act ESSER II FUNDS: Approximately four times the amount available per year for Title I funding

American Rescue Plan (ESSER III): Approximately eight times the amount available per year for Title I funding

# FAQs About the new CRRSA Act (ESSR II) AND The American Rescue Plan (ESSR III)

## WHAT can it be used for?

Schools will have the same flexibility as under the CARES Act for use of both funds: any activity authorized by IDEA, ESSA, AEFLA, Title VII-B, Perkins Act and for any other purpose related to coordination, professional development, purchasing technology, buying sanitation supplies and other activities

# Aligning with all COVID Relief Funding Use of Funds Mandates

## WHAT can it be used for?

- **Purchasing of educational technology**
  - hardware, software, and connectivity
  - for students served, ***“that aids in regular and substantive educational interaction between students and their classroom instructors including low-income students and children with disabilities, which may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.”***
- Providing technology for online learning to all students
- Addressing learning loss
- Implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students

# How the latest pandemic relief stacks up

Typical federal K-12 spending (2018)



First coronavirus relief package



Second coronavirus relief package



Third coronavirus relief package





# Funding Bills Explained

Using the structure created by the CARES Act, and maintained by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) passed in late December 2020, the American Rescue Plan Act provides roughly \$165B through a modified Education Stabilization Fund that includes two main funding streams: the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER III) and the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEER III). Roughly \$125B has been allocated for K-12 Education.

# Spending and Use Explained

**Distribution to districts:** Once states receive the money, they must distribute at least 90% of those funds to districts based on how much the district receives from Title I of ESSA

Within 30 days of receiving funds, districts must release a plan that includes information about returning to in-person instruction. Districts are not required to reopen as a condition of receiving funds

**CARES Act (ESSR) Funds must be used by Sept. 30, 2021**

**CRRSA Act (ESSR II) Funds must be used by Sept. 30, 2022**

**American Rescue Plan (ESSR III) Funds must be used by Sept. 30, 2023**

# American Rescue Plan Spending and Use Explained

Funds can be used flexibly and can be used to address the impact of significant interrupted instruction; to prepare schools for physical reopening; to improve air quality in school buildings; to purchase education technology; to provide mental health supports; as well as other activities authorized by existing law.

The use of funds remains largely the same as under prior COVID-19 relief packages, but the bill contains minimum set-asides for state educational agencies (SEAs): 5% to address interrupted learning for underserved students, 1% (\$1.25B) for evidence-based summer programs, 1% (\$1.25B) for after-school programs, and \$800M for supporting students experiencing homelessness.

**LEAs must also set aside at least 20% of their funds to address interrupted learning for underserved students and students with disabilities.**

# CARES ESSR and ESSR II Funds: Still Available!

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Billions in CARES Funding has gone unused and unrequested.

If it is not requested to fill the needs **YOU** need met, it will be allocated for other purposes.  
**Ask now** to purchase materials to assist teachers and students who have the greatest need.

[U.S. Department of Education Fact Sheet](#)  
[American Rescue Plan of 2021](#)