



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

June 16, 2020

Dear LEA Leaders and Federal Grant Managers,

The federal grant funding you receive can play an important role in how you serve students and families in the District of Columbia. We are writing to inform you of new and existing federal grants that can be leveraged to support your efforts in serving students and families as you continue working to educate students during the coronavirus (COVID-19) public health emergency. We are also writing to update you on the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE's) efforts to make additional supports available in the coming months as you respond to needs that emerge during the 2020-21 school year.

We know many local education agencies (LEAs) are planning for changes in school design to meet student needs in the current moment. Whether updates to your facilities for building readiness, technology infrastructure for distance learning, or professional development for instructional staff, LEAs can blend and braid federal grant funds to support this work.

The following federal formula grant applications will be released in OSSE's Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS) between June 15, 2020 and July 1, 2020:

- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund
- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Titles I-A, II-A, III-A and IV-A
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B
- Scholarships for Opportunities and Results (SOAR) Academic Quality/Early Childhood

OSSE is also working to leverage additional supports for the 2020-21 school year, by applying to the United States Department of Education (USED) to amend the SOAR grant program to provide the following:

- CARES equivalent allocations for LEAs not eligible for Title I funding, including adult and early childhood charter LEAs,
- Additional flexible formula funding for facilities, including virtual school infrastructure, and
- Additional support for third parties to support the work of LEAs.

The following program-specific sections outline the purpose of each program, how to access allocations and allowable uses for funds, and application training and technical assistance for all grants available by July 1, 2020. Additional details are also provided on OSSE's application to USED to restructure existing federal grant resources through SOAR to better meet LEAs' current needs.

CARES Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund

On March 27, 2020, the CARES Act was signed into law and provides funding to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19. The CARES Act includes an [Educational Stabilization Fund](#) with

several programs to support states, schools, and institutions of higher education in their response to COVID-19. OSSE applied for and was approved for funding under the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund, which includes formula funding for LEAs.

The period of availability for CARES-ESSER funds is March 13, 2020 through Sept. 30, 2022. This means your LEA will be able to request reimbursement for allowable costs incurred back to the date the president declared a national emergency, March 13, 2020. Additionally, it means any funds not spent in fiscal year 2020 (FY20) or FY21 will remain available to you in FY22.

Allocations and Allowable Uses

Under the CARES Act, ESSER allocations to LEAs are based on the proportion of Title I, Part A (Title I-A) funds each LEA received in the most recent fiscal year. CARES-ESSER allocations can be accessed [here](#).

The purpose of CARES-ESSER is to provide LEAs with emergency relief funds to address the impact COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools. This includes both providing distance learning and developing plans for return and recovery. The allowable uses of funding are broad and include activities allowable under the following federal programs: ESEA, IDEA, McKinney Vento Homeless Education Act, Carl D. Perkins Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA), as well as additional costs prompted by COVID-19 (e.g., sanitation supplies). CARES-ESSER allowable uses can be accessed [here](#).

Although ESSER funds are distributed to LEAs based on Title I-A allocations, they are not Title I-A funds. ESSER is its own, separate, flexible program intended to support schools' COVID-19 response. Therefore, Title I-A requirements such as supplement not supplant do not apply to ESSER.

Application, Training, and Technical Assistance

Applications for the CARES ESSER program are available in the EGMS as of June 15, 2020. In order to request reimbursement for allowable costs between March 13, 2020 to Sept. 30, 2020, an application must be submitted to OSSE by Sept. 30, 2020. OSSE will review and approve applications on a rolling basis as they are submitted. The following table provides information on training and technical assistance to complete the CARES ESSER application.

Date	Content	Recommended Attendees	Register
June 22, 2020, 3-4 p.m.	Application Overview	Eligible charter LEA staff responsible for CARES grant planning and submission	https://bit.ly/3cOVGNz

If you have any questions or need support on the CARES-ESSER grant, please contact OSSE.CARES@dc.gov.

ESEA Titles I-A, II-A, III-A and IV-A

The ESEA is a key federal civil rights law, providing federal funding to states, LEAs, and schools to serve disadvantaged students, with accountability requirements.

The period of availability for FY21 ESEA Title I-A, II-A, III-A, and IV-A funds is July 1, 2020 through September 30, 2022. This means your LEA will be able to request reimbursement for allowable

costs incurred back to July 1, 2020, if your LEA has a Phase I Consolidated Application submitted and approved by that date. Additionally, it means up to 15% of Title I-A funds and any remaining funds in other Title programs not spent in FY21 may remain available to you in FY22.

Allocations and Allowable Uses

The Consolidated Application (ConApp) allows LEAs to apply for all Titles for which they are eligible through a single application. The purposes of each of the Title grant funds is as follows:

Title I-A: To provide all children “significant opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps.”

Title II-A: To provide supplemental activities that strengthen the quality and effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders.

Title III-A: To support English learners, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency and develop high levels of academic achievement in English, including through support to teachers and coordination with families.

Title IV-A: To improve students’ academic achievement by increasing the capacity of states, LEAs and local communities to: 1. Provide all students with access to a well-rounded education; 2. Improve school conditions for student learning; and 3. Improve the use of technology to improve the academic achievement and digital literacy of all students.

Preliminary 2020-21 school year ESEA Titles I-A, II-A, III-A, and IV-A allocations can be accessed [here](#) and final allocations will be released by Oct. 31, 2020. LEAs have the option to transfer all or a portion of their Title II-A and/or Title IV-A allocations to a different Title program. Additionally, LEAs receiving Title I-A funds may consolidate all or part of their Title II-A, Title III-A and Title IV-A allocations into a consolidated Title I school-wide program.

Information on acceptable uses for ESEA grant programs can be accessed [here](#) and will also be discussed in application training sessions.

Application, Training, and Technical Assistance

Applications for Phase I of the ConApp were released in the EGMS on June 1, 2020 and are due by June 30, 2020. Applications for Phase II of the ConApp will be available in the EGMS on July 1, 2020 and are due by Sept. 30, 2020. The following table provides information on training and technical assistance opportunities to complete the ConApp. When multiple dates are listed, the same content is repeated at each session.

Date	Content	Recommended Attendees	Register
July 6, 2020, 2-2:30 p.m. Aug. 3, 2020, 10:30-11 a.m. Aug. 31, 2020, 2-2:30 p.m.	FY21 ConApp: Title I Application Training	Eligible LEA grant managers, academic program officers and fiscal leads	https://bit.ly/2ApqGq5
July 13, 2020, 2-2:30 p.m. Aug. 10, 2020, 11-11:30 a.m. Sept. 3, 2020, 2-2:30 p.m.	FY21 ConApp: Title II Application Training	Eligible LEA grant managers, academic program officers and fiscal leads	https://bit.ly/2YoVFdN

July 20, 2020, 2-2:30 p.m. Aug. 17, 2020, 11-11:30 a.m. Sept. 10, 2020, 11-11:30 a.m.	FY21 ConApp: Title III Application Training	Eligible LEA grant managers, academic program officers and fiscal leads	https://bit.ly/2MlgThl
July 27, 2020, 2-2:30 p.m. Aug. 24, 2020, 11-11:30 a.m. Sept. 14, 2020, 11-11:30 a.m.	FY21 ConApp: Title IV Application Training	Eligible LEA grant managers, academic program officers and fiscal leads	https://bit.ly/2AeAraR

If you have any questions or need support on ESEA grants, please contact Con.App@dc.gov.

IDEA, Part B

The IDEA is a federal law that makes a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to eligible children with disabilities throughout the nation and ensures special education and related services to those children. IDEA Part B is a federal grant program that provides funds to states and LEAs to ensure students with disabilities ages three through 21 have access to a FAPE to meet each student's unique needs and are prepared for further education, employment, and independent living.

The period of availability for FY21 IDEA funds is July 1, 2020 through Sept. 30, 2022. This means your LEA will be able to request reimbursement for allowable costs incurred back to July 1, 2020, if your LEA has a Phase I Consolidated Application submitted and approved by that date. Additionally, it means any funds not spent in FY21 will remain available to you in FY22.

Allocations and Allowable Uses

IDEA, Part B is comprised of two grant programs:

IDEA, Part B- Section 611: Grants to States: Funding for the provision of supplemental special education and related services to students with qualifying disabilities ages 3-21.

IDEA, Part B- Section 619: Preschool Grants to States: Funding for the provision of supplemental special education and related services to children with qualifying disabilities ages 3-5.

Preliminary IDEA 611 and 619 2020-21 school year allocations can be accessed [here](#) and final allocations will be released by Oct. 31, 2020.

Information on acceptable uses for IDEA grant programs can be accessed [here](#) and will also be discussed in application training sessions.

Application, Training, and Technical Assistance

Applications for Phase I of the IDEA application were released in the EGMS on June 1, 2020 and are due by June 30, 2020. Applications for Phase II of the IDEA application will be available in the EGMS on July 1, 2020 and are due by September 30, 2020. The following table provides information on training and technical assistance opportunities to complete the IDEA application. When multiple dates are listed, the same content is repeated at each session.

Date	Content	Recommended Attendees	Register
July 14, 2020, 11-1 p.m. July 30, 2020, 11-1 p.m. Aug. 11, 2020, 11-1 p.m.	Application and Reporting Overview	LEA staff responsible for IDEA planning, application and reporting	https://bit.ly/2UxU04P

If you have any questions or need support on IDEA grants, please contact Kieran.Bowen@dc.gov.

SOAR Academic Quality/Early Childhood (AQ/EC)

The SOAR Act is a federal law that authorizes funding for District of Columbia public charter schools to improve and expand quality public charter schools in the District of Columbia. OSSE's fulfills this objective through funding projects designed to increase the achievement and academic growth of DC public charter school students, support the improvement and expansion of high-quality public charter schools, and support DC families by making it easier to take advantage of their school choice options. All projects must be research-based, evidence-based, or logic-based, supported by data, and tailored to meet the specific needs of the LEA.

The period of availability for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2019 SOAR AQ/EC funds is July 13, 2020 through July 12, 2021. Pre-award costs are available. This means your LEA will be able to request reimbursement for allowable costs incurred back to June 1, 2020, if your LEA's budget includes pre-award costs back to that date. Additionally, it means any funds not spent in FY20 will remain available to you in FY21.

Allocations and Allowable Uses

On June 15, OSSE released two SOAR program grants:

Academic Quality Grants to Public Charter Schools: Eligible applicants for formula funds are DC charter LEAs that were open and serving students during the 2018-19 school year. SOAR Academic Quality funding supports projects designed to directly impact student achievement, either school-wide or for specific groups of students.

Early Childhood Grants to Public Charter Schools: Eligible applicants for formula funds are DC charter LEAs that were open and serving 3- and 4-year-olds during the 2019-20 school year, meet Title I-A eligibility requirements, and have an overall student population that is at least 40 percent 3- and 4-year-olds. Formula-based funding will be available to support projects that reinforce school readiness for 3- and 4-year-olds, including the development of literacy and mathematics skills, with emphasis on supports to students to increase academic achievement.

FFY19 SOAR Academic Quality and Early Childhood allocations can be accessed [here](#). **Any funds allocated to an LEA that does not submit an application by July 13, 2020 will be reallocated to LEAs that apply.**

Information on acceptable uses for SOAR grant programs can be accessed [here](#) and will also be discussed in the application training session.

Application, Training, and Technical Assistance

Applications for the SOAR AQ/EC programs are available in the EGMS as of June 15, 2020 and are due on July 13, 2020. OSSE will review applications on a rolling basis and expects to complete reviews by July 27, 2020. The following table provides information on training and technical assistance to complete the SOAR AQ/EC application.

Date	Content	Recommended Attendees	Register
June 18, 2020, 2-3p.m.	Application Overview	Eligible charter LEA staff responsible for SOAR AQ/EC grant planning and submission	https://bit.ly/2YpHu8F

If you have any questions or need support on SOAR grants, please contact Ronda.Lasko@dc.gov.

Additional Supports

OSSE is working to leverage additional supports for the 2020-21 school year through the following applications to the United States Department of Education (USED):

SOAR Grant Program Amendment

OSSE has applied to USED to amend its SOAR grant to address the current needs of LEAs. This includes using funds to provide the following:

CARES equivalent allocations for LEAs not eligible for Title I funding, including adult and early childhood charter LEAs: This formula funding would be allocated using total enrollment as its basis and would allow OSSE to support all schools in their response to coronavirus. Funding to support this need would be repurposed from SOAR Teacher Pipeline, which focuses on impacting the quality and quantity of the teacher supply for DC charter schools. Currently, OSSE has a cohort of pipeline grantees with two-year grants that started in Jan. 2020 and will end in Jan. 2022.

Additional flexible formula funding for facilities, including virtual school infrastructure: OSSE has requested to repurpose FFY19 and FFY20 Facilities competitive grant funding to provide formula funding to LEAs to support physical and digital facilities to support continuous learning. This funding would accompany a second round (FFY20) of AQ/EC funding.

Additional support for third parties to support the work of LEAs: OSSE intends to increase the amount of funding available for the FFY20 Third-Party grant competition. This additional funding would also come from repurposing Teacher Pipeline funds.

To lessen the administrative burden for eligible LEAs, OSSE hopes to combine FFY20 SOAR AQ/EC, Facilities, and CARES equivalent grants into one consolidated application for eligible LEAs. This application would also include any applicable carryover from FFY19 AQ/EC.

OSSE will provide you with updates as we learn more from USED on the status of this application and, if approved, will notify LEAs of allocation amounts and next steps to apply and access these funds.

Next Steps and Technical Assistance

To access all formula federal funding available by July 1, 2020, you will need to complete applications in the [EGMS](#). Our team is also available to support as you complete applications and plan for potential blending and braiding of federal funds to support your efforts.

If you have any questions or need technical assistance, please contact your grant managers or OSSE.Grants@dc.gov. For questions specific to the CARES Act, please contact OSSE.CARES@dc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nikki Stewart', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nikki Stewart
Assistant Superintendent for Systems and Supports, K-12

CC: LEA Fiscal Leads