

Answers to Questions Asked During How to Access Funds for Afterschool and Summer Webinar

Q. Knowing that 2/3rds of ESSER III funds have been released, does that mean that 2/3rds of each of these set-asides has been released, or are some pots filled before others?

- A. Our understanding is that 2/3rds of the total the state is expected to receive through ESSER III has been provided. The SEA has flexibility on how they use the funds they have so far, within the parameters of the 10% state and 90% local set asides.

Q. What are your thoughts about a one-time stipend to parents for summer enrichment programs?

- A. A one-time stipend to parents for summer enrichment could be provided by SEAs using the summer enrichment set aside although there would need to be parameters to what parents could use the funds to cover - given the language in the law around evidence-based interventions; the academic, social and emotional support for students; and the targeting of funds to key priority populations of students. New Hampshire has pursued this using separate federal covid relief Governor's funds. Example [here](#).

Q. Is there specific criteria that will be used to determine if a program you are suggesting meets standards of evidence-based? Will that be a deciding factor for funding local agencies?

- A. The deciding factors for funding as well as evidenced based criteria will depend on the state and local school district to some extent. The federal Dept. of Education, however, in their [Handbook on School Reopening Volume 2](#), included the following with regard to out-of-school programs and evidenced-based practices:
"To best accelerate learning, out-of-school time programs should include evidence-based approaches. Programs ideally:
- Target students needing additional support (including using information provided by diagnostic assessments);
 - Have certified teachers deliver the academic instruction; and
 - Engage the students in using experiential instruction that incorporates hands-on activities, project-based learning, enrichment, and field trips."
- They go on to say "Elementary students in particular might need supervision for independent academic work to improve their academic achievement. Strong out-of-school time programs have been found to have a positive effect on skills for both elementary and secondary students.²⁶ Aligning instructional curriculum in out-of-school time or summer school programs with in-school material is important. Consistent attendance in high-quality programs is also needed for students to benefit.²⁷" From <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/reopening-2.pdf>

Q. What might a typical budget look like?

- A. In the Wallace Foundation publication "[The Cost of Out of Quality School Time Programs](#)" - a discussion of an appropriate afterschool and summer learning program budget is discussed and samples are provided.

Q. Can any portion of the funds be used to purchase transportation vehicles to pick up and transport students to the afterschool program?

- A. The federal Dept. of Education in their [Handbook on School Reopening Volume 2](#) clarifies that federal ARP ESSER III funds can be used to cover the cost of transportation for students to afterschool programs, although purchase of a vehicle is not discussed and would likely need to be approved by the state. From the Handbook: "Make programs free, inclusive, and supportive of families. Programs should not charge fees for families to participate, should include free transportation and meals, and be available to students with disabilities, English learners, and other underserved students"

Q. In our experience small organizations (one site) have a hard time accessing these kinds of programs, do you have any suggestions for smaller afterschool programs making the case for these programs?

- A. For smaller programs, consider partnering with a large provider in the community and/or schools to provide a component of a comprehensive program. A limited partnership can demonstrate the value and capabilities of the program and could lead to a larger partnership. Also connect with your statewide afterschool network for information about state level funding competitions that might support smaller community based providers in your state.

Q. Are local schools being held accountable to work with community-based afterschool programs. We cannot get our school principals to meet with us.

- A. The guidance that it is beginning to be released by the federal Department of Education including the Reopening Handbook Vol. 2 and the state ESSER III plan template indicate that both state and local education agencies are expected to partner with and utilize community based afterschool and summer providers.

Q. Historically, boots on the ground "organizations with leaders who represent the community and students" are overlooked and passed over. What efforts will be made to attract, recruit, and include community led organizations? Will there be technical assistance for those programs.

- A. A number of efforts are underway at the federal, state, and local level to ensure community-based organizations are able to access afterschool and summer learning/enrichment funds through the state and local level set asides included in the ARPA. The federal Dept. of Education in their [Handbook on School Reopening Volume 2](#) calls out the need for state community based partners for summer enrichment programs while the Department's state plan template asks state education agencies to explain how community based organization will be included in their afterschool program support. Websites like www.HelpKidsRecover.org also make the case that funding and assistance be provided to community based afterschool and summer learning providers.

Q. Our Library Systems are doing some impactful work in South Florida, serving youth impacted by homelessness, foster care and other issues. How do we find

financial support from our state and local schools/educational departments to work with our libraries?

- A. Libraries are eligible as partners for ESSER III funds at the local level and depending on the state could be eligible for afterschool, summer and/or learning recovery state set aside funds as well.

Q. Does this funding only apply to nonprofits? Or can any type of OST program (ex. for profits, individuals, etc) access this funding?

- A. Nothing in the federal law prevents any specific type of provider organization from accessing the state funds nor from partnering with school districts – however each state will determine their own eligibility and each school district may have their own guidelines for partners.

Q. What if local schools are doing their own summer and after school programs and not willing to "share" funds with other non-school affiliated programs? Is there a way to access funds from the state in this case?

- A. While we encourage providers to keep reaching out to school partners at the local school level, also keep an eye on the state for the state set-aside funding options. States like Connecticut, Wisconsin and Vermont just recently announced opportunities for providers to apply for funds. See more here: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/covid/American-Rescue-Plan.cfm> Additionally, the child care funding or local gov't funding in ARP may be a good option for local providers – we are scheduling webinars in this series to dive deeper into each of those opportunities as well.

Q. You mention that the funds are for expansion - is this separate from what has been stated as stabilization funds for child care?

- A. Yes the child care stabilization funds are a separate funding opportunity. We will be scheduling a webinar on those funds as well and you can learn more here as well: http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/afterschoolsnack/Largest-influx-of-Child-Care-Development-Funds-in-history_03-24-2021.cfm

Q. Someone just mentioned the cost associated with in-school programming - is this funding only for in-school, and doesn't support any virtual work?

- A. The law does not disqualify virtual programming from being funded with the afterschool or summer local or state funding.

Q. Are charter schools getting any funds?

- A. Nothing in the federal law prevents these kinds of providers from accessing the state funds nor from partnering with school districts – however each state will determine their own eligibility and each school district may have their own guidelines for partners

Q. Could you share those specific states that have set aside the summer funds (Wisconsin etc)?

- A. The states are actively working on their plans but as of now we have heard some specifics from WI, NH, CT and VT. More info here on these examples here: <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/covid/American-Rescue-Plan.cfm> We definitely encourage you to connect with your state network - networks are watching state conversations closely and shaping them as much as possible.

Q. How do we find out what our state is doing?

- A. We definitely encourage you to connect with your state network - networks are watching state conversations closely and shaping them as much as possible. Find your network here: <http://www.statewideafterschoolnetworks.net/>. More on the evidence base here: <http://www.helpkidsrecover.org/evidence-based-strategies/>

Here are the numbers that each state was allocated-
<http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/ARP-budget-chart.pdf>

A resource for education leaders on afterschool & summer: www.helpkidsrecover.org

Q. Seems like resources are more abundant in larger cities. I think it's more challenging in rural areas where there are limited resources.

- A. The state level set asides for afterschool and summer can be an opportunity for rural, non-urban communities to potentially access support.

Q. Does anyone know of a good survey to inquire with parents about what services/program they want for their children?

- A. Here is a sample community/parent needs assessment to review:
<https://education.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/linc/linc curriculummodule/Community%20Needs%20Assessment%20-%20ALL.pdf>

Q. Is there a way we can find where the funds went to in our state? Is it the Dept. of Education, etc? (Iowa)

- A. Funds went to state education agencies. They then send 90% of funds on to school districts. This chart, linked at www.3to6.co/rescue, allows you to find the ESSER funding for each district and the 20% that must be spent on learning loss strategies: <https://public.tableau.com/profile/ddeschryver#!/vizhome/HR133ESSERStimulusAllocations/ESSERIIII>

We have tools for reaching out to SEAs and LEAs, as well as data on the need for OST: Tools and resources to make the case: www.3to6.co/rescue