

# November 3, 2021 and November 4, 2021 Fiscal/Data Summit Q & A

## Foundational Principles

### Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II Special Education Recovery Activities [main] Grant

#### Use of Funds:

The grant is intended to assist school districts with addressing delayed, interrupted, suspended, or inaccessible individualized education program (IEP) supports and services for students with IEPs. These funds can also be used to provide students with IEP supports and services to remediate skills and/or address lack of progress due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The local education agency (LEA) may use the bonus award for special populations that are identified as being significantly impacted by COVID-19. These funds may be used along with/as an extension to the ESSER II, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B or American Rescue Plan (ARP) IDEA funding.

### ESSER II Bonus Special Populations \$25K Recovery Grant

#### Use of Funds:

The grant is intended to add bonus funding to the main grant and assist school districts with addressing delayed, interrupted, suspended, or inaccessible IEP supports and services for students with IEPs. These funds can also be used to provide students with IEP supports and services to remediate skills and/or address lack of progress due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### ESSER II Bonus Specific Learning Disability (SLD)/Dyslexia Recovery Grant

#### Use of Funds:

The grant is intended to assist school districts with the instruction for students with dyslexia. **Note that this is for instruction itself, not instructional supplies.**

ESSER II one-time funding is available for spending and obligation from 7/1/21–6/30/23. Though the grant was posted to the e-Grants Management System (eGMS) November 3, 2021, you may apply spending that meets the use of funds criteria retroactively to 7/1/2021.

**\*Note for consortium members:** You and your fiscal agent will be able to see the number of students identified with dyslexia for each district and your own allocations on your dyslexia goals page but unless you are the fiscal agent, you will not complete a budget. The budget for the fiscal agent will include the allocations for all the members in the consortium.

### FY22 ARP IDEA Part B Section 611/Section 619

#### Use of Funds:

Section 2014(a) ARP Act of 2021 provided the following supplemental funding under the obligation of IDEA Part B for Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2021/Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 for the IDEA formula grant programs.

[FACT SHEET: Section 2014 of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act \(PDF\)](#)

### **Questions from November 3 and November 4, 2021 Fiscal Data Summit**

**Q1.** Can this funding be used specifically for teachers/related services to complete evaluations outside of the day, such as Saturday options?

A1. Yes.

**Q2.** Relative to Registered Behavior Technician's (RBTs) - Do any districts change the pay scale once this assessment is passed? We don't want to spend a bunch of time and money training and then not retain. Any suggestions for good practice around training of RBT's is appreciated.

A2. Increasing capacity in specialty areas such as an RBT is encouraged. You may want to consider using staff across your Regional Educational Service Center catchment area and between LEAs as a way to improve retention.

#### **SLD/Dyslexia Funding**

**Q3.** What are the parameters for this funding? Is it required to fund direct service? Can it fund existing IEP services or does it need to be extended day? Is it an individual entitlement for each and every student identified with SLD/Dyslexia? Dyslexia funding is small and some are not planning to fund human resources with that money, must it be used for tutoring or materials/supplies?

A3. The Dyslexia resources were made available through the ESSER II (through the Bureau of Special Education [BSE]) Special Education Recovery Activities for *tutoring only* (see budget details and limited line items/codes available). Please contact [Jay.Brown@ct.gov](mailto:Jay.Brown@ct.gov) for specifics of parameters for the funding.

Tutoring may be completed during existing IEP services and does not need to be used with "extended day" exclusively.

The \$650 per student identified with SLD/Dyslexia are from the LEA's, 10/1/20 Child Count data. These resources must be used for tutoring while other resources may be used for materials/supplies.

#### **General Questions**

**Q4.** It would be helpful to have a checklist of tasks that districts need to do for the use of the ARP funds. Is one available?

A4. ARP IDEA Part B Section 611/619 funds are under the obligation of IDEA Part B. All allowable costs under IDEA Part B may be used for ARP IDEA Part B (see the budget line-item definitions for activities).

**Q5.** Can we use these funds for special evaluations? For example, we have students who are transitioning to 18–22 programs and would benefit from an ecological evaluation from an outside consultant. Can we use ESSER/ARP funds for this or is it considered Child Find?

A5. ESSER II (through the BSE) Special Education Recovery Activities may be used for IEP supports that have been delayed, interrupted, suspended, or inaccessible and IEP supports. All allowable costs under IDEA Part B may be used for ARP IDEA Part B (see the budget line-item definitions for activities).

**Q6.** Can we possibly combine funding sources (i.e., 25k additional stipend grant and ESSER II IDEA grant) to fund an employee for two years like an additional school counselor/social worker?

A6. ESSER II (through the BSE) Special Education Recovery Activities has three separate funds/budgets in the application. The second funding award is the "bonus award," which

identifies a specific population that has been significantly impacted by COVID-19—braiding of funding sources with percentages of each award addressing the needs of students and services provided may be done. Questions related to this should be directed to [Jay.Brown@ct.gov](mailto:Jay.Brown@ct.gov).

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**Q7.** When can we expect ARP IDEA to be approved? Knowing if those plans are approved will impact how we plan for these funds?

A7. FY22 ARP IDEA Part B Section 611/619 allocations are already approved if the FY22 IDEA Part B Section 611/619 has been awarded. The separate budget and activities need to be developed and processed in the eGMS for tracking purposes.

**Q8.** In the ESSER II Special Education Recovery grant, can we combine the three areas for a one-time purchase that will cost more than one individual section?

A8. The grant funds may be combined but each individual section and budget of the grant must still be completed. The respective budgets must reflect the amounts from that portion of the grant contributing to the total amount. **If combining, please keep in mind that the Bonus Dyslexia funds may ONLY be used for the salaries and benefits for staff to provide direct instruction to students related to dyslexia.**

**Q9.** At the district level, funds are not great enough to transform practices. How can the state leverage additional funding to guide long term improvements?

A9. Continued examination of practices (data-driven decision making) with the distribution of resources with careful planning is the start for reimagining how to transform the delivery of services for both general education and special education. Consideration of regional partnerships may be helpful with sustaining efforts.

**Q10.** Please confirm dates for ARP ESSR – September 2024? Or June 2023?

A10. The FY 22 ARP IDEA Part B and ESSER II Special Education Recovery Activities awards: Check grant award letters and adhere to the grant period (top of the letter) and dates shown in the body of the letter for submitting budget revisions. ESSER grants are all federally funded—grantees have 60 days from the end of the grant period (30 days for state funds) to liquidate any obligations outstanding on the last day of the grant period.

**Q11.** Any Option for Carryover beyond June 2023?

A11. Check grant award letters and adhere to the grant period located at the top of the letter and the dates shown in the body of the letter for submitting budget revisions. ESSER grants are all federally funded, grantees have 60 days from the end of the grant period (30 days for state funds) to liquidate any obligations outstanding on the last day of the grant period.

**Q12.** Question for clarification: Is ESSER II not specific to special education and can be spent entirely for general education, except for the BSE earmarked?

A12. Be aware, there are multiple awards in the eGMS with similar titles. The ESSER II (through the BSE) Special Education Recovery Activities are part of the ESSER II State set-aside award. The ESSER II Special Education Recovery Activities three funding awards are to be used for the purposes defined above under "Foundational Principles" and use the budget shell aligned to the award.

**Q13.** Is there a guidance document that distinguishes between ESSER II and ARP, so that it is easier to create goals that are aligned with each funding source?

A13. See the "[Foundational Principles](#)" of ESSER II (through the BSE) Special Education Recovery Activities and FY22 ARP IDEA Part B delineated above.

**Q14.** Does Maintenance of Effort (MOE) apply to the additional ARP IDEA funds?

A14. LEA MOE was addressed (Met/Met with Exceptions/Not Met) with the FY22 IDEA Part B application – thus there is no LEA MOE section as part of the FY22 ARP IDEA application.

**Note:** LEA MOE is required for the FY23 IDEA Part B Subgrantee LEA application.

**Q15.** If these funds are used for staffing and we want to maintain the staff past the life of the grant, what is the best way to do that given the conditions for MOE (without major impact on MOE)?

A15. LEA MOE under IDEA Part B has two standards (eligibility standard and compliance standard) that need to be met in one of the comparisons of four methods: local to local; combination of local and state to combination of local and state; per capita of local to per capita of local; and per capita of combination of local and state to per capita of combination of local and state. No federal dollars are used for the comparisons. Therefore, the best way to maintain staffing is through continuous examination of funding sources and management of expenditures with continuance of local and state effort (excluding federal dollars).

**Q16.** Is there advice for the use of the 15 percent set-aside for mandated comprehensive coordinated early intervening services (CCEIS) or the use for voluntary set-aside (up to 15 percent) for coordinated early intervening services (CEIS)?

A16. The U.S. Department of Education requires all LEAs that are identified as having significant disproportionality in accordance with 34 Code of Federal Regulations Section 300.646 to use CCEIS. Those LEAs who were required to complete CCEIS for FY22 IDEA Part B are required to calculate and set aside 15 percent of their FY22 ARP IDEA Part B Section 611 and Section 619 funds for CCEIS.

LEAs can use the funds for students without disabilities ages 3 through Grade 12 who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education environment. LEAs also can use the funds for children ages 3 through Grade 12 currently identified as needing special education or related services (funds can be used primarily, but not exclusively, for this group) and must publicly report on the revision of policies, practices, and procedures. As well as, the number of children who received CCEIS in the reference school year and if they received special education or related services in the preceding two years.

Suggested use of these mandated 15 percent set-aside CCEIS funds can be used on professional development and educational and behavioral evaluations, services, and supports. The activities must address factors and the policy, practice, or procedure contributing to significant disproportionality.

Voluntary set-aside for CEIS may be used by LEAs up to 15 percent of their FY22 ARP IDEA Part B IDEA Part B award. LEAs can use the funds for students without disabilities in Kindergarten through Grade 12 who need additional academic and behavioral support to succeed in a general education environment.

Suggested activities of up to 15 percent of set-aside funds can be used on professional development to enable school staff to deliver scientifically-based academic and behavioral interventions, including scientifically-based literacy instruction and, where appropriate, instruction on the use of adaptive and instructional software. Educational and behavioral evaluations, services, and supports, including scientifically-based literacy instruction

The reporting requirements for both CCEIS and CEIS are the number of children who received the set-aside funds in the reference school year—the number of children who received CCEIS/CEIS during the preceding two-year period and if they received special education and related services under Part B of IDEA in the reference school year.