

Introduction

This school year has been especially trying for Louisiana students, families, and educators. In addition to the pandemic, Louisiana was at the center of a historically active hurricane season — which included landfall of the most powerful wind force on record for Louisiana. The Louisiana Department of Education has supported school system leaders as they worked to provide a safe, quality education to our children. Today, over 64% of our students benefit from in-person instruction and medical experts have called our schools among the safest environments in Louisiana. This is thanks in part to the work of our educators, community-wide support and the effectiveness of our mitigation efforts.

Student Modality			Devices	Connectivity	
In-Person	Hybrid	Virtual	Student-to-Device	Percent without home connectivity	Students receiving connectivity assistance from systems
64%	14%	22%	0.8:1	27%	38,992

Overview

Congress released the [Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 \(CAA\)](#) on December 21, 2020. This legislation includes COVID-19 relief specifying [appropriations provisions](#) to governors, state and local educational agencies (LEAs), and higher education institutions. The bill also provides for childcare funding for assistance to providers and families and \$3.2 billion for a new Federal Communications Commission broadband fund.

Louisiana’s Birth to 12th Grade Education Stabilization Funds Summary

- Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSERF II)- **\$1,160,119,378**
- Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEERF II) - **\$22,985,320**
- GEERF II funds for nonpublic schools - **\$55,566,230**
- CAA funds for childcare - **\$198,319,710**

ESSER II Funds Allocation and Period of Availability

The funds go to states in the same proportions that each state receives under Title I in the most recent fiscal year. States (SEAs) subgrant to districts (LEAs) in proportion to the amount of funds such LEAs received under Title I of the in the most recent fiscal year. The period of availability for the funds is through September 2023.

ESSER II Funds Maintenance of Effort (MOE)

A state that receives ESSER II funds must maintain support for elementary and secondary education and higher education in FY 2022 based on the proportional share of the state’s support for elementary and secondary education and higher education relative to the state’s overall spending averaged over FYs 2017, 2018, and 2019. This requirement is designed to keep states from substantially reducing their support for K-12 education.

Can SEAs use new funds to help close fiscal gaps due to state/local revenue loss?

State education departments can use the funds for COVID-related expenses that support the intent of the law. Of the \$1,160,119,378 allocated to Louisiana, 90% must go exclusively to school systems for their needs. The Department retains 10% with 0.5% for administration and 9.5% to provide additional support to school systems linked to COVID-related expenses.



Can LEAs use new funds to help close fiscal gaps due to state/local revenue loss?

LEAs receive 90% of the total allocation through a formula established by federal regulations. These funds are not intended to replace state and local revenue but are to be used to support additional costs incurred due to the pandemic. These can be new costs and costs normally supported within their own budgets that, due to the situation, have increased substantially.

ESSER II Funds Allowability

Funds may be used on a wide variety of activities as identified under the CARES Act and the [CAA](#).

1. Any activity authorized by the ESEA of 1965, IDEA, AEFLA, Perkins, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
2. Coordination of preparedness and response efforts.
3. Providing principals and other school leaders with resources necessary to address the needs of their individual schools.
4. Activities to address the unique needs of low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities.
5. Developing and implementing procedures and systems to improve the preparedness and response efforts of LEAs.
6. Training and professional development for LEA staff on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.
7. Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of an LEA, including buildings operated by such agencies.
8. Planning, coordinating and implementing activities during long-term closures.
9. Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity) for students who are served by the LEA 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.
10. Providing mental health services and supports.
11. Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental after school programs.
12. Addressing learning loss 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, of the local educational agency, including:
 - a. Administering and using high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable, to accurately assess academic progress and assist educators in meeting students' academic needs, including differentiating instruction.
 - b. Implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students.
 - c. Providing information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support students, including in a distance learning environment.
 - d. Tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education.
13. School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce the risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs.



14. Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities.
15. Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation and continuity of services in LEAs and continuing to employ existing staff of the LEA. Any entity that receives funds under the Education Stabilization Fund shall, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to COVID-19.

