



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION  
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

March 24, 2021

Dear [Commissioner] XXXXX:

I am pleased to inform you that today you will receive a Grant Award Notification (GAN) through the Federal grants management system (G5) providing immediate access to two-thirds of your State's allocation under the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) fund.

This action makes good on the U.S. Department of Education's (Department's) commitment to get these vital resources to you quickly. It is with this same sense of urgency that State educational agencies (SEAs) and school districts should plan to expend these funds to safely return to and maximize in-person instruction as expeditiously as possible this spring, sustain the safe operation of schools, and address the significant needs of students.

As I described last week, ARP ESSER funds will enable SEAs to enact appropriate measures to help schools implement mitigation strategies consistent with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's \(CDC\) Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools](#) to the greatest extent practicable; address the many impacts of COVID-19 on students, including from interrupted instruction; implement strategies to meet students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs; offer crucial evidence-based summer, afterschool, and other extended learning and enrichment programs; support early childhood education; invest in staff capacity; and avoid devastating layoffs at this critical moment, ensuring that all students have access to teachers, counselors, and other school personnel to support their needs. It is particularly important that ARP ESSER funding will enable States and school districts, as well as schools, to support students who have been most severely impacted by the pandemic and are likely to have suffered the most because of longstanding inequities in our communities and schools.

Your GAN will make available \$XXX,XXX,XXX to [State] and explain the terms and conditions for their use. The remaining funds (\$XXX,XXX,XXX) will become available after submission of a State application with a plan that describes, for example, how ARP ESSER funds will be used to safely return students to in-person instruction, maximize in-person instruction time, operate schools, and meet the needs of students, and that addresses other requirements of the ARP ESSER Fund. We intend to make this application available next month, and States and school districts are already actively developing their plans for the use of ARP ESSER funds. As this planning continues, consultation with and input from stakeholders and the public, including students, families, civil rights organizations including disability rights organizations, school administrators, superintendents, and educators and their unions, should be an essential component of the process.

On behalf of the Department, I am committed to working in partnership with you to help ensure that these unprecedented resources are quickly put to work to ensure students have access to in-person instruction, and to provide the support they need as they persist through and recover from the impacts of the pandemic. Your

thoughtful and timely use of these funds will have a lasting impact on our Nation's schools and address the inequities in resources, services, and opportunities available to our students.

If you or your staff have questions, please reach out to us directly or submit questions to your State's program officer using your State's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) Mailbox: [\[State\].oese@ed.gov](mailto:[State].oese@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

Miguel A. Cardona, EdD  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Education