

American Rescue Plan Act ESSER Funds: A Short Explainer

Background

In the 2021 Legislative Session, the Washington State Legislature prioritized and directed most of the federal funds through Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, P.L. 116-260 of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (referred to as ESSER II) and through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, P.L. 117-2 of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (referred to as ESSER III) to support preK–12 students' academic and well-being needs.

Breakdown of Funds

The breakdown of these federal stimulus funds that Washington state received for preK–12 education falls into four main categories: allocations, reserves, learning recovery reserve, and administration.

Allocations

These funds are awarded directly to local education agencies (LEAs), which include public school districts, state-tribal education compact schools, and charter schools. The majority of ESSER II and III funds (90%) are allocated directly to LEAs via a federal funding formula. Through ESSER III, funds for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, known as IDEA, are also allocated for K–12 schools and preschools to meet the academic and well-being needs of students with disabilities.

Reserves

These funds are directed by the Legislature for specific education supports (listed in the table below), and will go to LEAs, nonprofits, and other community-based organizations as grants and contracts.

Reserve Category	Amounts
Summer programs	\$18,525,000
Before and after school programs	\$18,525,000
Community-based organizations serving students	\$12,885,000
Students experiencing homelessness	\$12,000,000
Dual language grants	\$10,000,000
Transition services for students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) ages 21+	\$7,000,000
Summer meals	\$4,000,000



Reserve Category	Amounts
Career and technical education (CTE) graduation pathways	\$4,000,000
Institutional education stabilization	\$3,000,000
Teacher residency study	\$60,000

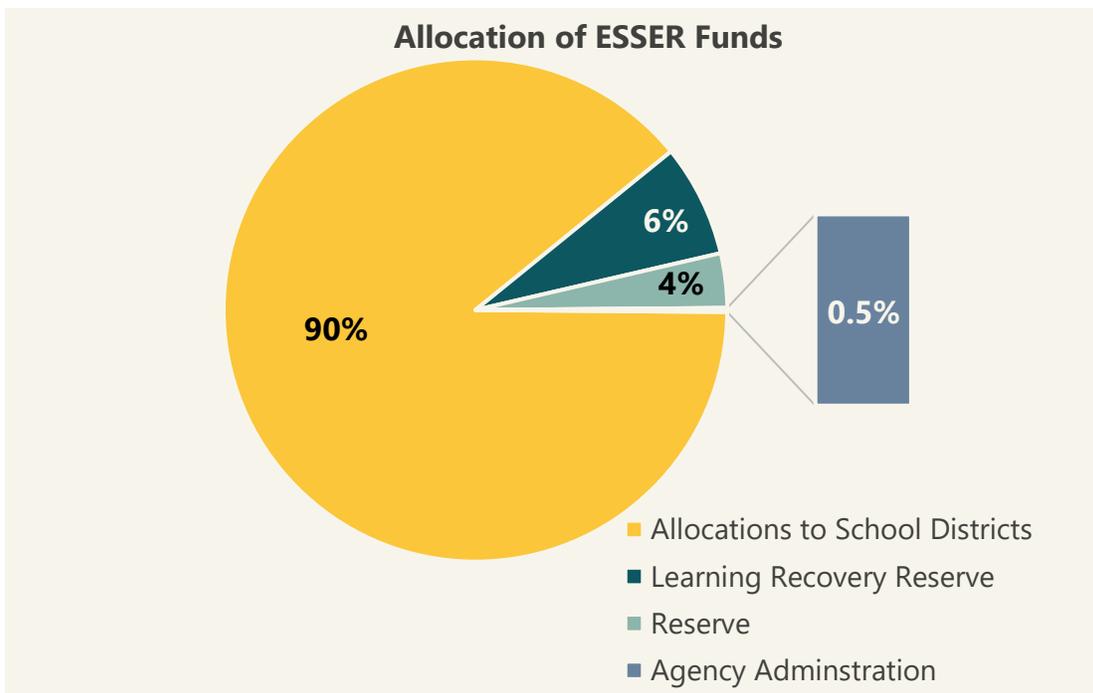
Learning Recovery Reserve

The Legislature also directed three different fund sources to support student learning recovery and acceleration totaling \$200 million, which equals about \$200 per student. This is broken down by the three rounds of ESSER funds as follows:

- ESSER II: \$79,485,000
- ESSER III: \$93,140,000
- State funds: \$27,375,000

Administration

These funds, capped at 0.5% of total ESSER funds (about \$7 million), are intended to support the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) in the management, oversight, and operation of the many federal grants and programs that will run over the next 2–3 years utilizing this significant investment of funds.



Learning Recovery Reserve – Stakeholder Survey

What are Your Priorities?

OSPI seeks information from stakeholders on potential uses for the Learning Recovery Reserve funds, which total \$200 million (about \$200 per student).

The purpose of this survey is to collect priorities from stakeholders for the Learning Recovery Reserve (\$200 million) that may inform the direction in which these funds are allocated to support student academic and well-being needs.

[Through an online survey](#), OSPI is interested in hearing from stakeholders about the priorities they feel best support students' learning recovery and acceleration. This survey, available in English and Spanish, will be open through August 31, 2021.