
Learning and Transparency Technical Assistance Program Grant

COLORADO SCHOOL FINANCE PROJECT

Support Children - Support The Future

April 22, 2022

Today...

What is the grant
and why is it needed?



Who are we?



What is our plan?



Where to get more
information?



What is the Learning and Transparency Technical Assistance Grant ?

Awarded by the Colorado Department of Education

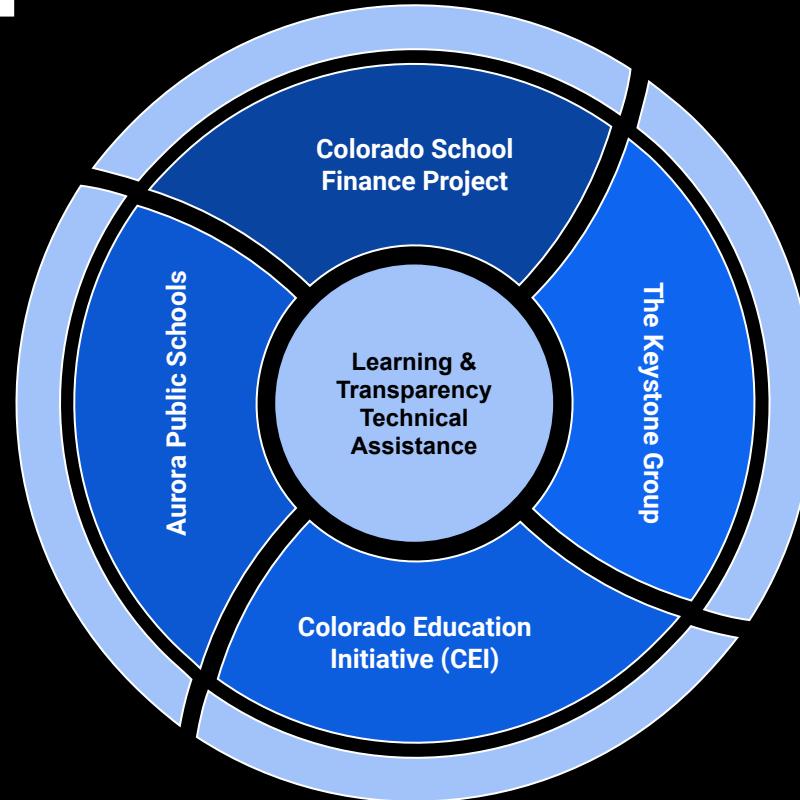
Began March 1, 2022 and will conclude on September 30, 2024

Help school districts offer their families and communities transparency into the COVID relief funding made available to them, how the funds were used, the programs available for students, and how to access them, and the impacts of these programs on COVID-related needs of their students.

Allowable uses of funds include:

- Building upon the **stakeholder engagement and posting requirements** for the LEA ESSER plans by effectively communicating the needs identified for the LEA and how the LEA is using ESSER funds to address them;
- Ensuring that students and their families -- **particularly low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth -- are aware of and know how to access the programs** that will best support their students in accelerating and completing interrupted learning;
- **Continued engagement** around the LEA's ESSER plan, progress being made, and adjustments to meet the evolving needs of their students and communities;
- **Sharing best practices and lessons learned** across their schools, communities and other Colorado LEAs to leverage what is working in one school or community to others; and
- **Communicating the spending and impact of the strategies implemented** through the LEA's ESSER plan

4 award recipients



Why is there a need for this grant?



The federal stimulus dollars represent an unprecedented influx of funding that have **transparency and accountability requirements.**



School districts and BOCES are doing the hard work of deploying federal pandemic recovery funds to improve the lives of students they serve. Under resourced schools need **help in telling their story.**



We are **stronger together** and by sharing stories, lessons learned, and best practices, we emerge better equipped to help students.



TELLING YOUR STORY



Creating safe and healthy learning environments



Addressing lost instructional time



Supporting educators and staff stability and well-being

— Poll Question...

How important do you think it is that WE are the ones telling our story?

Meet Our Team



Tracie Rainey
CSFP, Executive Director



Susan Meek
Project Manager



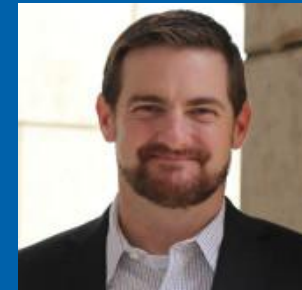
Frank Reeves
Field Manager



Glenn McClain
Field Manager



George Welsh
Field Manager

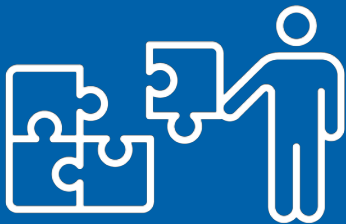


Justin Silverstein
CEO, Augenblick, Palaich & Associates

What will CSFP do?



Assist Colorado school districts and BOCES in carrying out the critical role of **transparency and communication** with families and communities, continued community engagement, the use of COVID relief funds, and the impact of those funds on addressing the COVID related needs.



Provide **technical assistance** program to help school districts inform their families and communities about the programs being offered and how those programs are accelerating learning and recovery for their students.

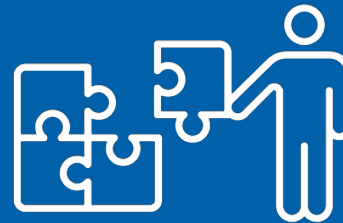
Supports Include



**Field
Managers for
personalized
support**



**Communication
resources and
toolkits**



**Technical
assistance on
impact analysis**



**In-person and
virtual workshops
and trainings**

CSFP Will Assist With

- ✓ Understanding and meeting federal requirements with ESSER-related funds
- ✓ Communicating how school districts and BOCES are using federal pandemic recovery funds
- ✓ Communicating how to engage communities in decision-making
- ✓ Communicating how to ensure transparency and accountability



PRIMARY GOAL

Help school districts communicate with students, families, and their communities the opportunities available because of ESSER \$s

— Poll Question...

Do you feel you have the resources and tools to meet the ESSER requirements on your own?

Timeline

March-June 2022

Grant Kickoff
 Initial reach out to all school districts
 CSFP publishes interactive map with ESSER I data

October 2022 - September 2023

CSFP publishes interactive map with ESSER II data
 Field Service support and technical assistance given to school districts
 Monthly communications
 Trainings

September 2024

Final report due and work completed

2022

2023

2024

July-September 2022

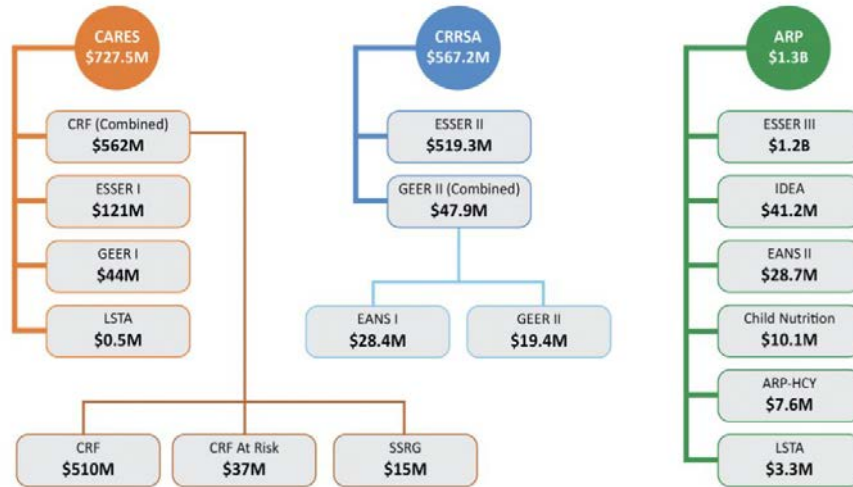
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October 2023-August 2024

CSFP publishes interactive map with ESSER III data
 Field Service support and technical assistance given to school districts
 Monthly communications
 Trainings

Federal Stimulus Funding for Colorado

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress passed three stimulus bills that include funding for education: the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (**CARES**) Act (March 2020); the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (**CRRSA**) Act (December 2020); and the American Rescue Plan (**ARP**) Act (March 2021). View full list of acronyms used [here](#).



Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF)

The CARES Act established the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) to support states with expenses due to the public health emergency with respect to the COVID-19 incurred from March 1, 2020, to Dec. 30, 2020. In May 2020, Gov. Polis directed the transfer of \$510 million from the State of Colorado's CARES Act CRF to CDE to be awarded to school districts, the Charter School Institute, the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind and facility schools on a per pupil basis. Additionally, each BOCES in the state received \$25,000.

Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER)

The CARES Act included \$3 billion for a Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund. Colorado was allocated more than \$44 million from the GEER fund. The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act of 2020 added \$4.05 billion for the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund. GEER II included \$2.75 billion for emergency assistance to nonpublic schools through the Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) grants of which \$28,433,931 has been allocated to Colorado.

ESSER FACT SHEETS

✓ Help districts meet **transparency and communication** requirements

✓ **Build understanding** of ESSER and federal stimulus funds with basic information

How much funding went to East Grand 2?	ESSER I Additional Information Expenditures allowed through Sept. 30, 2022
CRF: \$683,800	ESSER I funds provided vital resources to districts to address the social and economic disruption caused by the coronavirus outbreak that impacted all school districts starting in March 2020. The decision on how to spend federal pandemic recovery resources is inherently and intentionally local as school communities are best equipped to identify and address their most urgent local needs. The top uses of ESSER I funds for our district are provided in the explanation below.
*ESSER I (CARES Act): \$94,148 Addressing the immediate crisis Expenditures allowed through Sept. 30, 2022	
ESSER II (CRRS Act): \$395,412 Providing stability and managing the health crisis Expenditures allowed through Sept. 30, 2023	
ESSER III (ARP Act): \$888,668 Recovery and acceleration Expenditures allowed through Sept. 30, 2024 Use of Funds Plan	

*Includes ESSER supplemental funds provided to districts

How are students being supported through the use of federal stimulus dollars?

The federal stimulus dollars are a once-in-a-generation opportunity to support our students and to address the multi-year effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the pandemic, the shortfall in state funding to Colorado schools during the 2020-21 school year doubled and the one-time federal stimulus funds helped to temporarily mitigate the significant loss in funding to school districts. As Colorado spends less on education per student than most other states, a teacher shortage existed before the pandemic making it difficult for school districts to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers. **While all the one-time federal stimulus dollars will expire by September 30, 2024, they have supported local students and communities weather the effects of the pandemic.**

ESSER I — Addressing the immediate crisis

Expenditures allowed through Sept. 30, 2022

In March 2020, the CARES Act established the Education Stabilization Fund, which initially provided funding for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) I Fund. **ESSER I Fund dollars were appropriated to states based on the 2019-20 Title I shares with 90% allocated to local education agencies (LEAs) that received a Title I allocation in the most recent fiscal year and the remaining 10% for a state reserve fund.** ESSER I funding for **East Grand 2** was based on its [Title I allocation](#) and an [ESSER I supplemental](#) made by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). View CDE's [Federal COVID Education Funding website](#) for additional details.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, CDE administered the district and charter needs inventory

ESSER FACT SHEETS

Provide transparency in funds received through ESSER I, ESSER II, and ESSER III allocations

Points that are emphasized:

- Funds are one-time
- Funding cliff exists
- Funds are to address COVID-related issues or challenges
- Decisions on how to spend federal pandemic recovery resources are inherently and intentionally local

priorities across all regions of the state were: student emotional support; technical support for delivering remote learning; online instructional support for teachers; and family engagement practices. While there was variability in the top community need identified across regions, **internet connectivity** and **food access** were the two community needs that commonly appeared as a top need in most regions across the state.¹

It is also important to recognize that the decision on how to spend federal pandemic recovery resources is inherently and intentionally local as school communities are best equipped to identify and address their most urgent local needs. The following information demonstrates the top ESSER I investment priorities for East Grand 2 based on March 2022 CDE data and is subject to change as local priorities evolve to meet student needs:

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 1: Meeting basic needs: providing school meals regardless of educational setting

Healthy eating is important for child and adolescent growth, development, well-being, and academic performance. According to the April 2020 Colorado District Needs Inventory, while there was variability in the top community needs identified across regions, food access was rated as one of the highest rated community needs across the state.

Our district prioritized the following as one of our top investments made with ESSER I funding: **Nutritional services personnel (\$25,000)**. Due to COVID 19 we have the need to use our funds on nutritional services personnel from March 13 until the end of school as it was important for the continuity of providing our students with a nutritional lunch for the days we were providing distance learning. Due to changes in the students' family financial and job losses, we found students and families faced with food insecurities.

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 2: Meeting the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students

During the pandemic, many students were exposed to trauma, disruptions in learning, physical isolation, and disengagement from school and peers, which could negatively affect their mental health. Students learn, take academic risks, and achieve at higher levels in safe and supportive learning environments and in the care of responsive adults they can trust. According to the April 2020 Colorado District Needs Inventory, both family engagement practices and student social emotional support were named as top priorities by all regions of the state.

Our district prioritized the following as one of our top investments made with ESSER I funding: **Support Program (\$18,188)**. Due to COVID 19 we have the need to use our funds on counselor salaries from March 13 until the end of school as it was important for the continuity of mental health support services to our students. Due to the change in the students' learning environment as well as for many, the change in their personal home life, we found students and families faced with many stressors that only our trained counselors could support. This cost is to cover current levels of FTEs.

INVESTMENT PRIORITY 3: Meeting the social, emotional, and mental health needs of students

ESSER FACT SHEETS

Top 3 Investment Priorities are highlighted

Investment Priorities include:

- Generic description related to one of 3 categories:
 - Creating safe & healthy learning environments
 - Addressing lost instructional time
 - Supporting educator and staff stability & well-being
- District specific detail pulled from CDE reports



NEXT STEPS?

- ✓ Reaching out to all school districts in early May

Want more information: Visit cosfp.org and fill out the information form or [click here](#).

— Poll Question...

How important is it to you to collaborate with other districts and to know how they have prioritized their ESSER investments?



QUESTIONS?

- **Tracie Rainey**
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- **Susan Meek**
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Who is CSFP?

- ✓ Non-profit, non-partisan
- ✓ Supported by school district contributions
- ✓ School finance analysis for local and state policy makers since 1995
- ✓ Governed by a board comprised of national and state experts on school finance

Our Mission: *To compile, collect and distribute research-based, non-partisan information and data on topics related to school finance for state and local policymakers.*

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