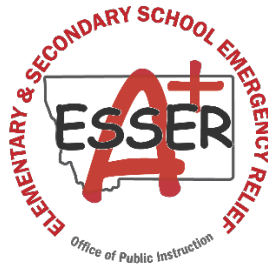




# ESSER Bulletin

## April 2023 ESSER Compass Update

### ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief)



#### Looking Ahead:

##### ESSER Grant Compliance and Grant Management:

- [Annual Federal Data Collection](#) (how funds were used, amounts, etc) – March – April 2023
- 2 Plans: [Safe Return and ARP ESSER Plan](#) reviewed at least every 6 months, posted on District website after [public/meaningful stakeholder engagement](#)
- [Final Expenditure Report](#) (FER) due at end of each grant cycle
  - **Deadlines for the ESSER is September 30, 2023**
  - Amendments due by July 1, 2023
  - Cash Requests due by September 25, 2023
  - Deadline for ESSER III September 30, 2024
    - Amendments due by July 1, 2024
    - Cash Requests due by September 25, 2024

At this time, there will be **no extensions** for the ESSER II or ESSER III grants. The OPI ESSER Team encourages your district to **review all budget descriptions and allocated amounts** in E-Grants, to determine whether any changes are needed.

The **ESSER Data Collection/Annual Report** Process takes place in March/April. The process will include:

- District review of previously submitted data (excel),
- District input data (excel), and
- District portal submission of excel file (google form).

**April's Virtual ESSER Guidance Sessions** will be Annual Federal Data Reporting Work Sessions scheduled with each district. Schools should be on the lookout for more Data Collection information coming soon.



File name: an ESSER Compass ALL JB 2023

**OPI Review Process:** OPI is assisting LEAs in mitigating risks to avoid audit findings by **reviewing requests for funding** and providing **assistance with compliances**. Projects/items over the threshold purchased with ESSER funds must meet Federal and State capital asset requirements and Grant allowable/reasonable guidelines. Board approval and OPI review assist in meeting these compliances. OPI Guidance is available on the ESSER Website [here](#). Contact Wendi Fawns, ESSER Director for assistance ([wendi.fawns@mt.gov](mailto:wendi.fawns@mt.gov))

**Additional Allocations:** Some allocations have been updated in E-Grants for ESSER II and III. (More information can be found [here](#))

Schools must **create an E-Grants Amendment in ESSER II and ESSER III** so that the updated allocation will populate in the corresponding E-Grants budget pages.

In the amendment description you may use this template language:

- (if the budget description already exists) **BUDGET AMOUNT CHANGE ONLY – additional allocation of \$xx to Object Code xx**
- (if adding a new budget item) **Additional Allocation of \$xx to Object Code xx [for the purpose of xxxxx to prepare, prevent, respond]**

To view the additional funds, scroll down to view **Allocation Remaining** at the bottom-right of each E-Grants budget page.

Determining Maximum Indirect Cost allowed

(A) Total Allocation Available for Budgeting	9,832,962	(F) Total budgeted above	\$9,470,796
(B) Budgeted Property and Equipment Cost (Object 700)	\$545,738	(G) Budgeted Indirect Cost	350000
(C) Allowable Direct Costs (A-B)	\$9,287,224	(H) Total Budget (F+G)	\$9,820,796
(D) Indirect Cost Rate %	3.3400	Allocation Remaining (A-H)	\$12,166
(E) Maximum Indirect Cost (C*(D/1+D))	\$300,168		

A major ESSER requirement is **Meaningful Stakeholder/Community Support**. If the community has a partnership and a vested interest in your district, then the ESSER funding “cliff” won’t pose a threat. When the federal funding ends, the community partnership will continue.

- Be very public with everything ESSER allows you to accomplish - show **student gains/benefits**.
- Publish your ESSER plan, and take progress pictures.
- Host events and give tours, so the public has a chance to come in and **see** your success.
- Bring in the local newspaper, radio station, or TV news station, and show them all that is being achieved.
- Partner with Booster clubs, Parent/Family Committees, Local Guilds or Unions, Mayor’s Office, Chamber of Commerce, Local Churches, Restaurants, Post Offices, Community Centers, Community Bulletin Boards, etc...
- Anywhere people **gather**, visually present ESSER student gains.

Always keep in mind, this is for our **students**. Everything you’re doing with ESSER will benefit the students and give them a better future. Make sure you’re helping your community see that as well.

(More information on Meaningful Stakeholder Input can be found here: <https://youtu.be/cwvzvj4l8MI>)

**We want your feedback!** Please fill out this short [Google Form](#) to tell us what YOU want to see in our monthly Compass communication. It takes just a minute, and we appreciate your input!

Many **resources** are available on the [OPI ESSER webpage](#) including but not limited to:



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- [Quick Start Guide](#) for new Superintendents and Clerks
- Department of Education [ESSER FAQ](#)
- All previous Compass newsletters ([2021-22](#))
- Department of Education [Labor Shortages and ESSER](#) funding allocations
- [CCSSO ESSER Construction Funds](#) guide
- [Department of Education ESSER ARP and IDEA Section 2014](#) Fact Sheet
- Montana [District list of ESSER Plans](#)
- Montana [District list of fund allocations](#)



**Looking Back and viewing updates:**

The thermometer image showing Montana ESSER/EANS spend down can be viewed on the [OPI ESSER webpage](#). Let’s keep up the great work as we finish out ESSER CRRSA II and ESSER ARP III! **District Monthly Status Reports** view of allocated and expended funds can be found on the OPI ESSER webpage [here](#). Thank you to the Department of Education for releasing an [Updated FAQs Guidance Document](#) which is posted on the OPI ESSER Webpage. The **Broadband Modernization** project information can be found here: <https://opi.mt.gov/COVID-19-Information/ESSER/Broadband>

OPI is committed to a **system of support** for school districts, students, and parents throughout Montana that provides an array of services. Individual district consultation on ESSER funding is available upon request. Please reach out to Wendi Fawns at [wendi.fawns@mt.gov](mailto:wendi.fawns@mt.gov) to schedule a time for your district.

**For further information please contact:**

Wendi Fawns, ESSER/EANS Director at [wendi.fawns@mt.gov](mailto:wendi.fawns@mt.gov)  
 Rebecca Brown, ESSER Program Manager at [rebecca.brown@mt.gov](mailto:rebecca.brown@mt.gov)

## March 2023 ESSER Compass Update

### ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief)





## Looking Ahead:

### ESSER Grant Compliance:

- [Safe Return Plan](#) reviewed at least every 6 months, posted on District website after [public/meaningful stakeholder engagement](#)
- [ARP ESSER Plan](#) reviewed at least every 6 months, posted on District website after [public/meaningful stakeholder engagement](#)
- [Final Expenditure Report](#) (FER) due at end of each grant cycle
- [Annual Federal Data Collection](#) (how funds were used, amounts, etc) – February – March 2023

The **ESSER Data Collection/Annual Report** Process will begin the first week in March, with Email reminders going to superintendents and clerks the last week in February. The process will include:

- District review of previously submitted data (excel),
- District input data (excel), and
- District portal submission of excel file (google form).

**OPI Review Process:** OPI is assisting LEAs in mitigating risks to avoid audit findings by **reviewing requests for funding** and providing **assistance with compliances**. Projects/items over the threshold purchased with ESSER funds must meet Federal and State capital asset requirements and Grant allowable/reasonable guidelines. Board approval and OPI review assist in meeting these compliances. OPI Guidance is available on the ESSER Website [here](#). Contact Wendi Fawns, ESSER Director for assistance ([wendi.fawns@mt.gov](mailto:wendi.fawns@mt.gov))

**Additional Allocations:** Some allocations have been updated in E-Grants for ESSER II and III. (More information can be found [here](#))

Schools must **create an E-Grants Amendment in ESSER II and ESSER III** so that the updated allocation will populate in the corresponding E-Grants budget pages.

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(D) Indirect Cost Rate %	3.3400		
(E) Maximum Indirect Cost (C*(D/1+D))	\$300,168	Allocation Remaining (A-H)	\$12,166

### Deadlines for the ESSER Grants:

- ESSER II expires September 30, 2023 - 7 months to spent down the grant
- ESSER III expires September 30, 2024 - 19 months to spent down the grant

### Introducing Jessika Bol – ESSER Administrative Specialist



- Jessika joined the ESSER team in December 2022
- Jessika moved to Montana with the goal of expanding her career through helping others. Her mom has worked for a school district for 20+ years, thus inspiring Jessika to share her passion of helping others through this field. Jessika brings with her a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice. In her free time, you can find Jessika enjoying the great outdoors hunting, fishing, and spending time with her dogs and family.

**March's Virtual ESSER Guidance Sessions** will focus on the Annual Federal Data Reporting process, with both walkthrough guidance sessions as well as regular office hours. Schools should be on the lookout for more Data Collection information coming soon.

The **Afterschool** and **Summer Enrichment grants** for School Year 2022-23 reopened under the updated name **ESSER Consolidated Special ELO**. These grants will focus on **Math** and **Reading** programming efforts, combined with best practices promoting Social/Emotional Learning. View our site [HERE](#) for more information.

Please make sure your schools' **contact information** is up to date in the [OPI Contacts database](#). For instructions for making this update please click [here](#).

**We want your feedback!** Please fill out this short [Google Form](#) to tell us what YOU want to see in our monthly Compass communication. It takes just a minute, and we appreciate your input!

Many **resources** are available on the [OPI ESSER webpage](#) including but not limited to:

- [Quick Start Guide](#) for new Superintendents and Clerks
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- All previous Compass newsletters ([2021-22](#))
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- [CCSSO ESSER Construction Funds](#) guide
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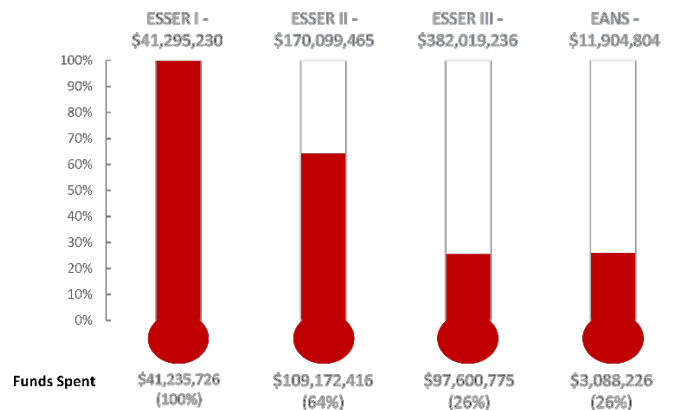
The **Broadband Modernization** project information can be found here: <https://opi.mt.gov/COVID-19-Information/ESSER/Broadband>

OPI is committed to a **system of support** for school districts, students, and parents throughout Montana that provides an array of services. Individual district consultation on ESSER funding is available upon request. Please reach out to Wendi Fawns at [wendi.fawns@mt.gov](mailto:wendi.fawns@mt.gov) to schedule a time for your district.



**Looking Back:**

The thermometer image to the right shows how effective Montana schools have been at spending down the ESSER funds. (This visual is updated on a monthly basis and can be found on the [OPI ESSER webpage](#).)



Let’s keep up the great work as we finish out ESSER CRRSA II and ESSER ARP III!

**District Monthly Status Reports** view of allocated and expended funds can be found on the OPI ESSER webpage [here](#).

Thank you to the Department of Education for releasing an [Updated FAQs Guidance Document](#) which is posted on the OPI ESSER Webpage.



**THANK YOU** to all who registered and attended the **February ESSER Virtual Guidance Sessions** on **February 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>**! Videos and slides from all past guidance sessions are posted on the OPI [ESSER Webpage](#) and [YouTube channel](#).

**For further information please contact:**

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Rebecca Brown, ESSER Program Manager at [rebecca.brown@mt.gov](mailto:rebecca.brown@mt.gov)

## February 2023 ESSER Compass Update

### ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief)



#### Looking Ahead:

##### ESSER Grant Compliance:

- [Safe Return Plan](#) reviewed at least every 6 months, posted on District website after [public/meaningful stakeholder engagement](#)
- [ARP ESSER Plan](#) reviewed at least every 6 months, posted on District website after [public/meaningful stakeholder engagement](#)
- [Final Expenditure Report](#) (FER) due at end of each grant cycle
- [Annual Federal Data Collection](#) (how funds were used, amounts, etc) – February – March 2023

The **Annual Federal Data Collection process** will begin on February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 and data will be due to the OPI by March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Be on the lookout for information from OPI regarding your districts' data reporting.

The **ESSER CRRSA II funding cycle** closes on September 30, 2023. You have about 8 months to spend down this grant. Cash Requests should be submitted no later than September 25, 2023. The Final Expenditure Report (FER) should be submitted no later than October 25, 2023.

The **ESSER ARP III funding cycle** closes on September 30, 2024. You have about 20 months to spend down this grant. Cash Requests should be submitted no later than September 25, 2024. The Final Expenditure Report (FER) should be submitted no later than October 25, 2024.

February's **Virtual ESSER Guidance Sessions** will take place on February 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>.

All sessions will be recorded and posted on the [OPI ESSER Webpage](#). More information and updates will be sent out as we get closer to those sessions.



File name: an ESSER Compass ALL JB 2023

The **Afterschool** and **Summer Enrichment grants** for School Year 2022-23 reopened under the updated name **ESSER Consolidated Special ELO**. These grants will focus on **Math** and **Reading** programming efforts, combined with best practices promoting Social/Emotional Learning. View our site [HERE](#) for more information.

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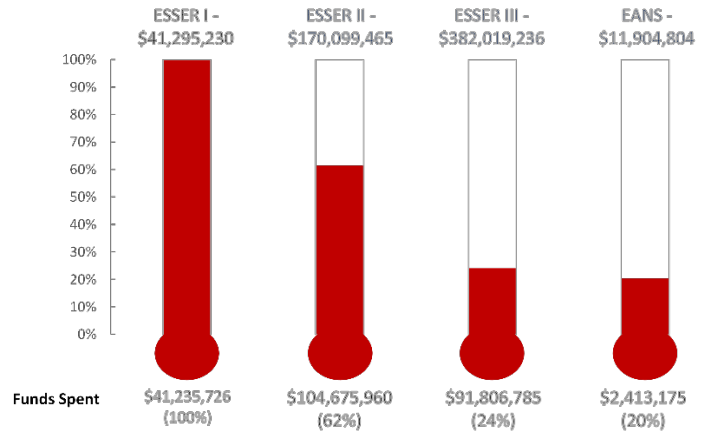


### Looking Back:

The thermometer image to the right shows how effective Montana schools have been at spending down the ESSER funds. (This visual is updated on a monthly basis and can be found on the [OPI ESSER webpage](#).)







Let’s keep up the great work as we finish out ESSER CRRSA II and ESSER ARP III!

District Monthly Status Reports view of allocated and expended funds can be found on the OPI ESSER webpage [here](#).

Thank you to the Department of Education for releasing an [Updated FAQs Guidance Document](#) which is posted on the OPI ESSER Webpage.

**THANK YOU** to all who registered and attended the **January ESSER Virtual Guidance Sessions** during the week of January 16<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>! Videos and slides from all past guidance sessions are posted on the OPI [ESSER Webpage](#) and [YouTube channel](#).

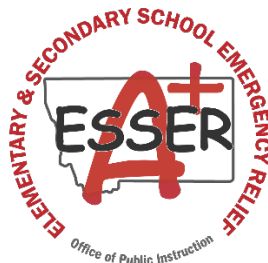
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## January 2023 ESSER Compass Update

### ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief)



#### Looking Ahead:



File name: an ESSER Compass ALL JB 2023

On January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, OPI will host a **virtual discussion on the investment in Montana education of the ESSER funds**. The session will be from 11:45am – 12:45pm. You can join the session virtually via this [Zoom link](#).

Topics will include:

- Overview from the Federal Department of Education
- Testimony from key Montana educational leaders

#### ESSER Grant Compliance:

- [Safe Return Plan](#) reviewed at least every 6 months, posted on District website after [public/meaningful stakeholder engagement](#)
- [ARP ESSER Plan](#) reviewed at least every 6 months, posted on District website after [public/meaningful stakeholder engagement](#)
- [Final Expenditure Report](#) (FER) due at end of each grant cycle
- [Annual Federal Data Collection](#) (how funds were used, amounts, etc) - date to be determined

The **ESSER CRRSA II funding cycle** closes on September 30, 2023. **You have about 9 months to spend down this grant.** Cash Requests should be submitted no later than September 25, 2023. The Final Expenditure Report (FER) should be submitted no later than October 25, 2023.

The **ESSER ARP III funding cycle** closes on September 30, 2024. **You have about 21 months to spend down this grant.** Cash Requests should be submitted no later than September 25, 2024. The Final Expenditure Report (FER) should be submitted no later than October 25, 2024.

January's **Virtual ESSER Guidance Sessions** will take place during the week of January 16-20.

All sessions will be recorded and posted on the [OPI ESSER Webpage](#). More information and updates will be sent out as we get closer to those sessions.

The **Afterschool** and **Summer Enrichment grants** for School Year 2022-23 will be reopening under the updated name **ESSER Consolidated Special ELO**. These grants will focus on **Math** and **Reading** programming efforts, combined with best practices promoting Social/Emotional Learning. To help prepare for these grants, we encourage applicants to actively explore local partnerships to best leverage these funds and improve student outcomes. View our site [HERE](#) for more information.

**We want your feedback!** Please fill out this short [Google Form](#) to tell us what YOU want to see in our monthly Compass communication. It takes just a minute, and we appreciate your input!

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The **Broadband Modernization** website will be updated by January 1<sup>st</sup> with big changes and more detailed information. The funding available to Montana is significant. Check it out here: <https://opi.mt.gov/COVID-19-Information/ESSER/Broadband>

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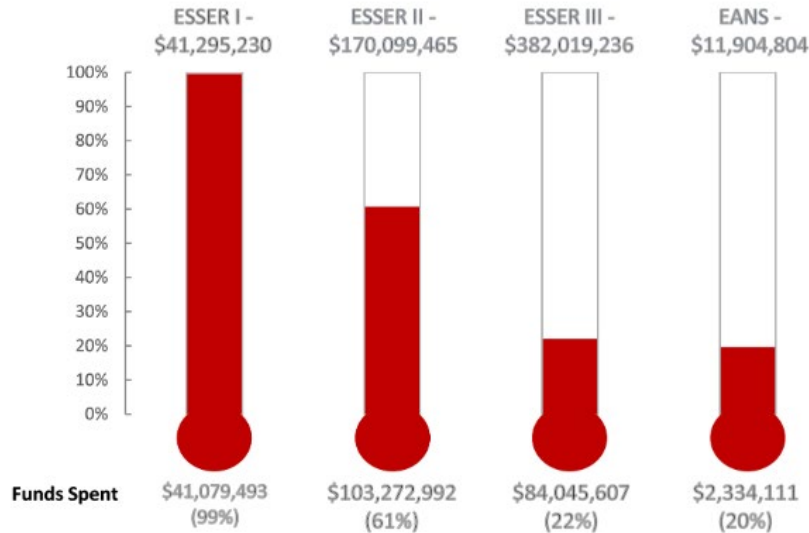


**Looking Back:**

The **ESSER CARES I funding cycle** closed on September 30, 2022.

**THANK YOU** to all of the schools who spent down the ESSER I grant. We’ve seen ESSER funds used to support students in so many ways – from ventilation and sanitation, to student technology access, and beyond.

The **thermometer** image below shows how effective Montana schools have been at spending down the ESSER funds. (This visual is updated on a monthly basis and can be found on the [OPI ESSER webpage](#).)



Let’s keep up the great work as we finish out ESSER CRRSA II and ESSER ARP III!

**District Monthly Status Reports** view of allocated and expended funds can be found on the OPI ESSER webpage [here](#).

Thank you to the Department of Education for releasing an [Updated FAQs Guidance Document](#) which is posted on the OPI ESSER Webpage.



**THANK YOU** to all who registered and attended the **December** ESSER Virtual Guidance Sessions during the week of **December 12-16**! Videos and slides from all past guidance sessions are posted on the OPI [ESSER Webpage](#) and [YouTube channel](#).

**For further information please contact:**

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