



**Montana**

**Office of Public Instruction**

ESSER Guidance Sessions - September  
**Allowable Use of ESSER Funds**

*Prepare, Prevent, and Respond*

September 20, 2022

# PRESENTERS

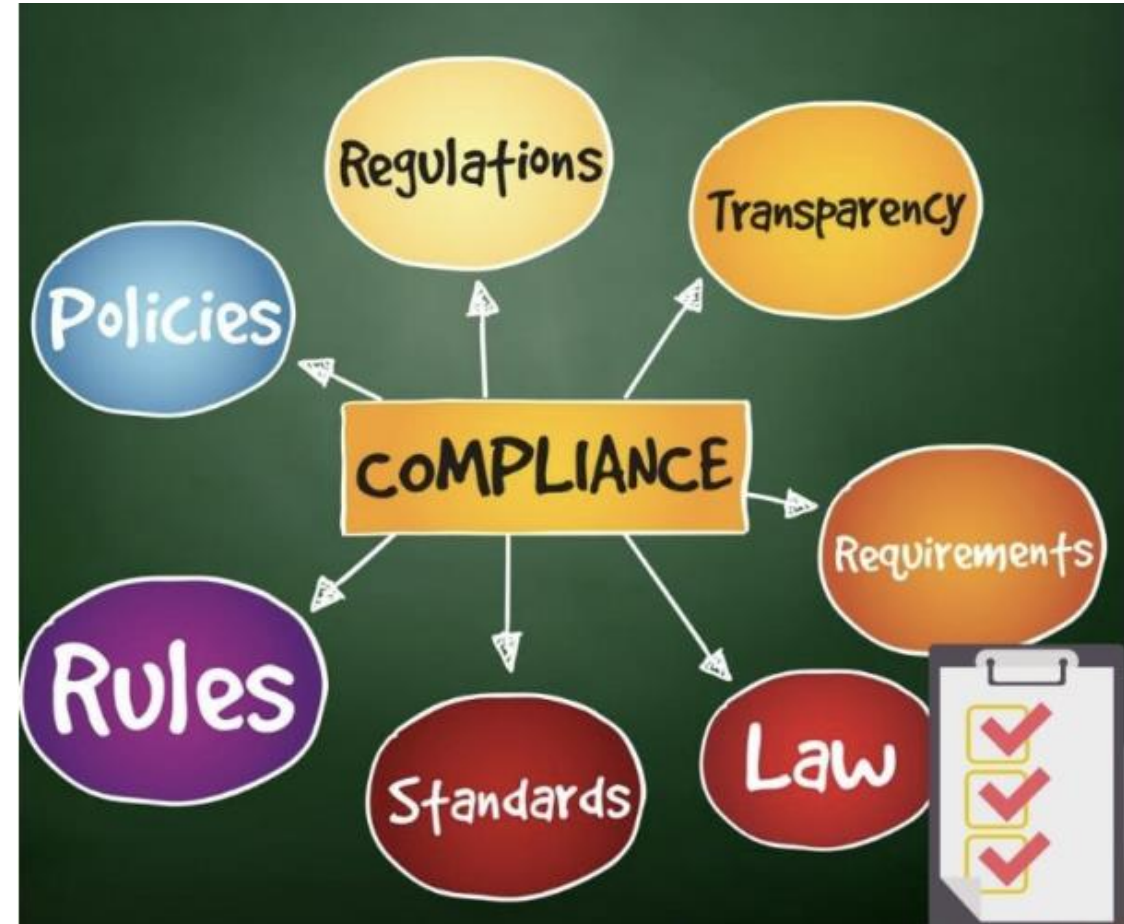
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# Goals For This Session



- Allowable
  - Rules
  - Requirements
  - Laws
- Reasonable
  - Setting
  - Practices
  - Standards
  - Transparency



# Where do I start?



- Historical Context at your District Level
  - What are ESSER Funds/Grants?
    - National & State Overview
  - Review your school's Plans
  - Review your school's Allocations
    - Board of Trustees Report – Updated Monthly
    - Allocation Report – Updated Monthly
  - Review the existing Budget within the grants (E-Grants)
- Processing (ongoing)
  - Update School Plans
  - Submit Amendments
  - Submit Cash Requests





# Focus on Student Gains – Demonstrated Reasonableness

- Very few items are disallowed
- Many allowable items must be **demonstrated** reasonable
  - Highlight how **students** benefit
  - Document alternatives considered AND reason for rejection option
- Prepare for, Prevent, and Respond to the effects of Covid-19 including circumstances exacerbated by Covid
  - Need for good ventilation, healthy drinking water, internet connectivity, one-to-one student devices, mental health support, math and reading support/remediation, etc...

- Allowable and Reasonable per Federal guidelines
  - FAQ May 2021
  - Charts comparing grant cycles from DOE and OPI

## Department of Education Fact Sheets

- DOE Construction and Late Liquidation Letter May 2022
- CCSSO memo on ESSER Funds for Construction December 2021
- DOE Construction Slides September 2, 2021
- DOE Staffing Labor Shortages April 14, 2021





# ESSER funds for renovation, teachers, technology, curriculum

## **Includes examples of allowable projects from ED (with citations):**

- Improving school security,
- Improving drinking water including lead remediation,
- Servicing or upgrading HVAC systems,
- Stipends for teachers
- Laptops, internet routers
- Repairing windows and/or doors so they can open to let fresh air in,
- Fencing and playground equipment
- Professional Development
- Curriculum, textbooks/online, remote learning
- Field trips



Addressing challenges that existed *before* the pandemic can be a reasonable *response to the pandemic*.

- ESSER and GEER FAQs May 2021
- diverse needs **arising from or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, or to emerge stronger post-pandemic**, including responding to students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs .... p. 9
- Implementing or expanding art programs, sports programs, or clubs. C-3
- Improving existing data systems. C-12
- Sustaining and maximizing enrollment in existing summer programs. C-25
- Continuing to pay existing employees and contractors. D-3
- ED says SEAs and LEAs can use ESSER funds for mental health services and supports for students that were experiencing trauma before the pandemic. C-14
- Curriculum, including related professional development. (ARP Public Safety Guidance, pp.5-6)





# Reasonable Compliance Supplement Addendum

ED has clarified that SEAs, LEAs and schools may use funding under ESSER CARES I, ESSER CRRSA II, and ESSER ARP III to support **a very wide range of activities, including activities indirectly linked to the impact of COVID-19**, as outlined in the ED Volume 2 COVID Handbook, available at <https://www2.ed.gov/documents/coronavirus/reopening-2.pdf>, provided such uses are consistent with statutory requirements and the Uniform Guidance in 2 CFR Part 200.





# Allowable vs REASONABLE

- Expenditures must be Allowable AND Reasonable
- Under what circumstances are the items below Allowable? Reasonable?
  - Outdoor shed for storing 'extra' covid items
  - Tent or gazebo for outdoor presentations, fresh air
  - iPads with barcode readers for internship skill and knowledge documentation
  - Provide workshops for 4-H and other community partners to develop mentoring fall programming around animal care
  - Establish mentoring and/or tutoring programs for students
  - Establish a collaborative team of district personnel and stakeholders to create, implement, and review action plans around system preparedness and innovative learning
  - Hiring professional coach to manage a pilot team tasked with developing proficiency-based assessment for hospital and restaurant interns to gain out of seat time credit for math, health, and accounting

# Short vs Long Term Compliance

- **Transparency is required**
- **Tips for long-term compliance**
  - Don't hide behind the computer
  - Manage and document spending
  - Document and measure outcomes
  - Write down your logic for making a decision





# Resources at OPI.MT.GOV

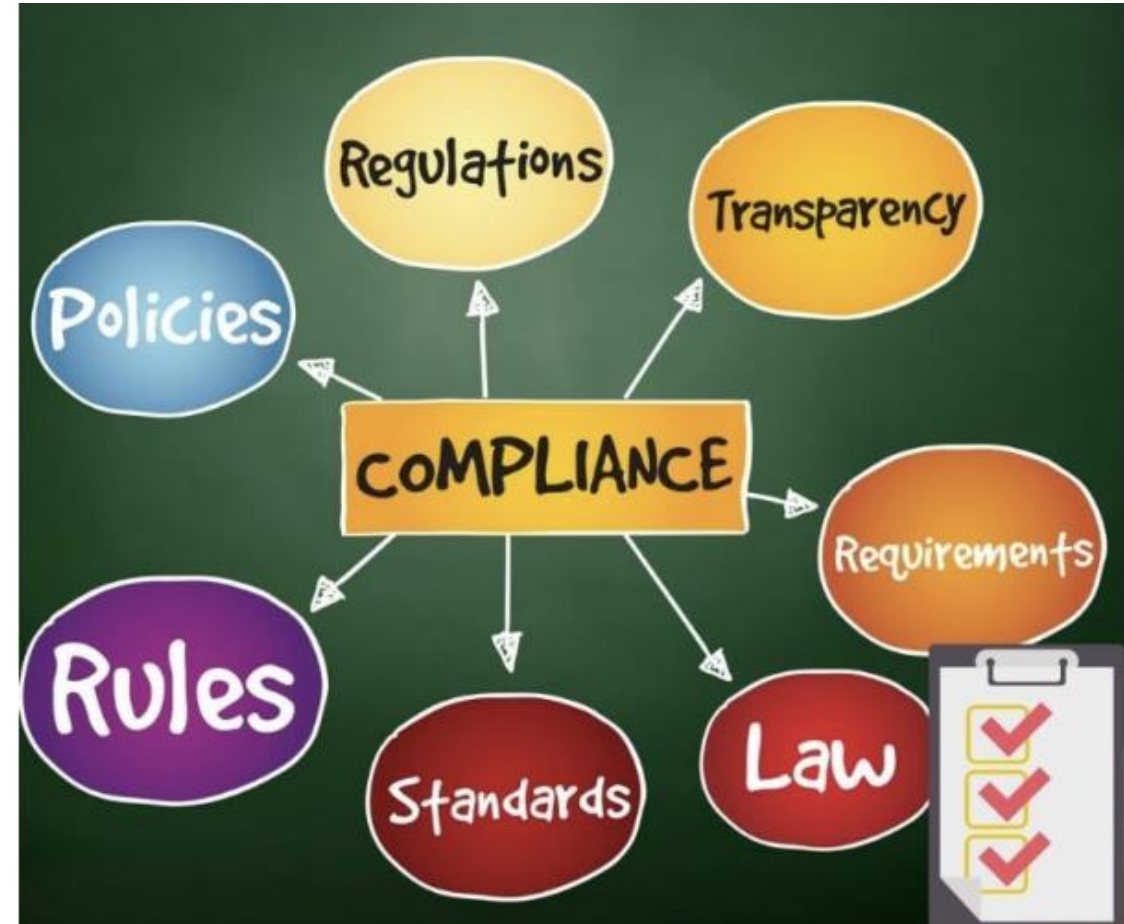
- **OPI Staff**
  - **Wendi Fawns**
    - Projects/large purchases/collaborative uses
    - Reporting and locating data
    - Compliance
  - **Rebecca Brown**
    - E-Grant management
    - Training support
  - **Steve Morgan**
    - Cash Requests
- **OPI Website**

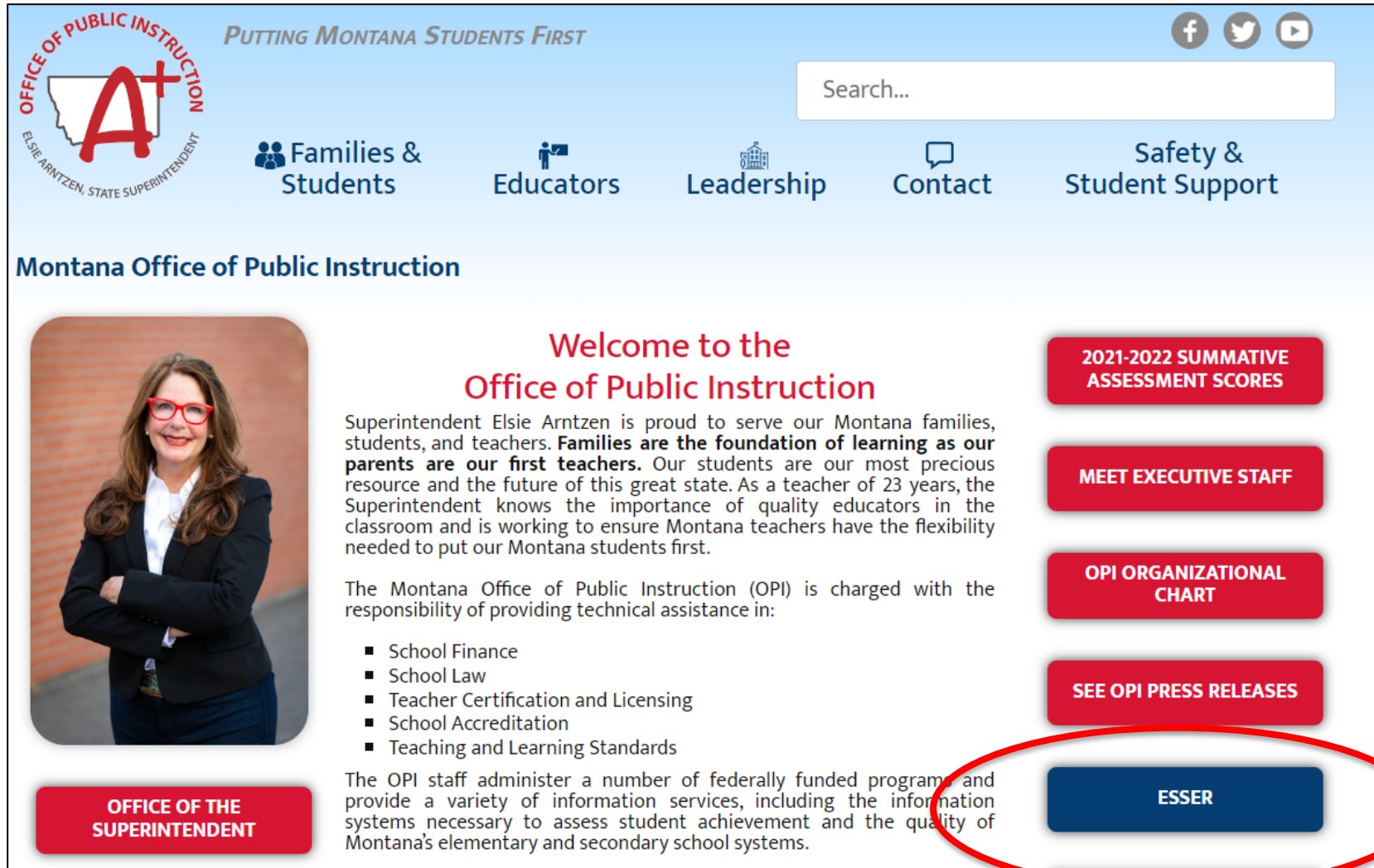


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A screenshot of the Montana Office of Public Instruction website. The page has a light blue header with the OPI logo on the left, the slogan 'PUTTING MONTANA STUDENTS FIRST' in the center, and social media icons (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) on the right. Below the header is a navigation menu with icons and text for 'Families & Students', 'Educators', 'Leadership', 'Contact', and 'Safety & Student Support'. A search bar is located in the top right. The main content area features a large photo of Superintendent Elsie Arntzen on the left, a red button labeled 'OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT' below it, and a central text block with the heading 'Welcome to the Office of Public Instruction'. To the right of the text are five red buttons: '2021-2022 SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT SCORES', 'MEET EXECUTIVE STAFF', 'OPI ORGANIZATIONAL CHART', 'SEE OPI PRESS RELEASES', and 'ESSER'. The 'ESSER' button is circled in red. The text block includes a paragraph about Superintendent Arntzen, a list of services provided by OPI, and a paragraph about federal funding programs.

PUTTING MONTANA STUDENTS FIRST



Families & Students

Educators

Leadership

Contact

Safety & Student Support

## Montana Office of Public Instruction



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

### Welcome to the Office of Public Instruction

Superintendent Elsie Arntzen is proud to serve our Montana families, students, and teachers. **Families are the foundation of learning as our parents are our first teachers.** Our students are our most precious resource and the future of this great state. As a teacher of 23 years, the Superintendent knows the importance of quality educators in the classroom and is working to ensure Montana teachers have the flexibility needed to put our Montana students first.

The Montana Office of Public Instruction (OPI) is charged with the responsibility of providing technical assistance in:

- School Finance
- School Law
- Teacher Certification and Licensing
- School Accreditation
- Teaching and Learning Standards

The OPI staff administer a number of federally funded programs and provide a variety of information services, including the information systems necessary to assess student achievement and the quality of Montana's elementary and secondary school systems.

2021-2022 SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT SCORES

MEET EXECUTIVE STAFF

OPI ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

SEE OPI PRESS RELEASES

ESSER

# Q & A

Feel free to ask questions!

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