



Opportunity to Provide Input on the Implementation of The American Rescue Plan Act in Your Community

The recently-passed American Rescue Plan Act provided substantial funding to each state for K–12 education through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER).¹ States are allowed to use ESSER funds in a variety of ways to support the safe reopening of schools and address the academic, social, emotional, and mental health impacts of the COVID–19 pandemic.²

State educational agencies across the country have already received two-thirds of this funding.³ In order to receive the final installment of funding, state educational agencies are required to develop a plan for using the funds and must submit their plan to the U.S. Department of Education by **June 7, 2021**.⁴ Similarly, local educational agencies are required to submit their own plans for using ESSER funds to their state educational agency.⁵ Local educational agencies are also required to develop a plan for reopening schools safely.

In developing these plans, your state and local educational agencies are required to listen to your perspective on how they should use these federal funds.

This is an opportunity for your PTA to have a voice in how this funding will be used, what will be prioritized, and what is most needed in your community.

In particular, your state educational agency is required to:

- Provide the public with an opportunity to give input on its plan for using funds;
- Take public input into account in developing its plan;
- Consult with families, teachers, and other key stakeholders in the state;⁶ and
- Make information publicly available on its website.⁷

Likewise, your local educational agency is required to:

- Provide the public with an opportunity to give input on its funding & reopening plans;
- Consult with families, teachers, and other key stakeholders on these plans;
- Publish its funding plan on its website in an understandable and uniform format and in a language that parents can understand;⁸
- Publish its reopening plan on its website within 30 days of receiving funds; and
- Review its reopening plan at least once every six months, taking public input into account in determining whether to revise the plan.



Many state and local educational agencies have already started developing their plans. If you would like to provide input on the use of ESSER funds in your community, you might consider:

- Hosting virtual events with your members & community to discuss the American Rescue Plan Act, the process for providing input, and your priorities for the use of these funds.
- Checking your state and local educational agency websites to see if they are already accepting input and, if unclear, reaching out to your state and local educational agency to understand the process and deadlines for providing input.⁹
- Reaching out to your state and your local educational agency to schedule a meeting and offer your PTA to serve as a representative of students and families in your community.¹⁰
- Providing written input on the use of these funds to your state and your local educational agency on the behalf of your PTA and drive your members to do the same.¹¹
- Holding your state and your local education agency accountable to their plans once they are in place.

Together we can ensure that this federal funding is used in a way that serves *all* children in our communities, enables the safe reopening of our nation's schools, addresses the impacts of the pandemic, and is directed toward making every child's potential a reality.

If you have any questions or would like assistance, please contact the National PTA Government Affairs Team at govtaffairs@pta.org.

¹ You can find the exact amount of funding allocated to your state [here](#).

² For a summary of restrictions around the use of these funds see [National PTA's ARPA Fact Sheet](#).

³ Your state educational agency is usually your State Department of Education. You can find yours [here](#).

⁴ Each SEA must submit to the Department by **June 7, 2021**, either: (1) its ARP ESSER plan or (2) the State requirements that preclude submission of the plan by that date and a date by which it will be able to submit its complete ARP ESSER plan. p. 2 of the [State Plan Template](#).

⁵ Your local educational agency is usually your school district. The timeline is determined by the state educational agency but must be reasonable and must be within 90 days of the LEA receiving ESSER funds.

⁶ Such consultation must be "meaningful," but [the requirements](#) are silent on what's considered meaningful.

⁷ Including modes of instruction (remote/in-person/hybrid) and disaggregated data on student enrollment and attendance, made available on the SEA's website as soon as possible but no later than June 21, 2021.

⁸ The plan must also be provided if requested by a parent who is an individual with a disability in an alternative format that is accessible to that parent.

⁹ You can find the contact information for your state educational agency [here](#).

¹⁰ You can find the contact information for your state educational agency [here](#).

¹¹ In developing your recommendations, you may want to review the following resources to understand the restrictions around the use of these funds: (1) [National PTA's ARPA Fact Sheet](#), (2) [ARPA Interim Requirements](#), especially p. 21200 – p. 21201, (3) [State Plan Template](#), and (4) [The U.S. Department of Education's COVID-19 Handbook](#).