

ESSER Planning Grants

District Overview

Purpose

The COVID-19 pandemic has been unlike any other time in our lives and has shifted the way we educate students in the state of Tennessee. It has elevated known gaps and created tremendous urgency for a child-centered strategy. Tennessee public schools have received more than \$4.5 billion in federal relief to address the impact of the pandemic on students and staff. With this significant infusion of funds comes the responsibility to ensure that we address the needs of all students and accelerate learning across our state.

To do that, it will be critical that districts engage their communities and other stakeholders in identifying student needs, plan intentionally and strategically for the use of these funds, consider the role of state initiatives in planning, and launch many new programs simultaneously and successfully. To support districts in this effort, the department is offering grants to allow districts to partner with third-party service providers to add additional capacity and assist with strategy and execution across this work.

Grant Overview

The ESSER planning grant is:

- Non-competitive and available to all interested districts
- Available for the period beginning June 7, 2021 and ending June 30, 2023
- For use in procuring third-party services to support ESSER planning and implementation

District allocations will be based on enrollment at the amounts below. A bonus grant of an additional \$50,000 will be available to districts that commit to participate in the TN ALL Corps by the 2022-23 school year to support additional planning, data collection, and implementation.

District Enrollment	Base Planning Grant	Bonus Grant for TN ALL Corps Participation*	Total Possible Award
0 – 3,000 Students	\$75,000	\$50,000	\$125,000
3,001 – 5,000 Students	\$100,000	\$50,000	\$150,000
5,001 – 10,000 Students	\$125,000	\$50,000	\$175,000
More than 10,000 Students	\$150,000	\$50,000	\$200,000

***Note:** The commitment to TN ALL Corps participation would require districts to join the program and begin tutoring no later than the 2022-23 school year. Making this commitment through the intent to apply for this planning grant is non-binding. Districts will have the option to decline participation at a later date. However, if the district elects not to participate in TN ALL Corps by the 2022-23 school year, the \$50,000 bonus grant funds will need to be returned to the department.

Service Providers and Supports

To assist districts with identifying potential providers, the department is compiling a vendor guide to serve as a resource. Any vendor that voluntarily submitted information about their services will be included in the guide. The department will not vet these providers, and inclusion in the guide does not constitute endorsement from the department. Districts may partner with vendors on this list but are not limited to those on this list. The vendor list will be released to LEAs on June 16. If a district knows who they want to work with, they can apply prior to the release of this resources.

Services a district may procure with these grant funds include:

1. Execution of stakeholder engagement activities with or on behalf of the district
2. Facilitation of on site (or virtual) planning session(s) for district teams and/or stakeholders, and/or drafting district ESSER plans and completing required plan updates
3. Assistance drafting and implementing a data collection and monitoring plan
4. District-wide programmatic planning and implementation support for programs funded by district and state ESSER funds
5. Planning and implementation support for the TN All Corps tutoring program
6. Other supports as requested by the district

As part of the vendor guide, service providers will indicate if they provide each of the above services and will briefly describe their experience with similar types of work. Districts may contract with up to two service providers with this grant.

Funds are solely for the purpose of procuring third-party services. However, if a district agrees to participate in TN ALL Corps by the 2022-23 school year it will receive additional flexibility to use these funds for personnel to support data collection, monitoring, and implementation of ESSER programs, including TN ALL Corps.

District Commitments

In addition to the standard state and federal assurances, districts accepting funds through this grant will:

1. Commit to allocating at least 50% of its total ESSER allocation on activities to support the academic and mental health needs of students and staff to ensure student readiness for learning
2. Use funds to procure third-party services to support planning and implementation of ESSER funded projects (or personnel if the district commits to participation in TN ALL Corps)
3. Require third-party service providers to:
 - a. Successfully complete two required trainings with the department during the grant period
 - b. Report information on the supports provided and progress in implementation to the department as requested to highlight district work
 - c. Demonstrate a documented history with similar types of work
 - d. Agree to receive their first payment after July 1, 2021 (this is an FY22 grant, so while services may be provided in June, the first payment to the vendor may not be made until after July 1, 2021)

4. If a district accepts the bonus grant to increase their allocation or elects to hire personnel with these funds, the district is also committing to participate in the TN ALL Corps program by the 2022-23 school year

Timeline

June 1, 2021	Grant information and intent to apply released
June 7, 2021	Intent to apply due <i>A district must submit the intent to apply to be eligible for this grant.</i>
June 16, 2021	Vendor guide released <i>If districts already know who they want to work with they may apply prior to the release of this guide. Districts may also apply listing a "potential" vendor and budget estimate and amend their application once contracts are finalized.</i>
July 12, 2021	Grant application opens in ePlan for districts who submit intent to apply
August 31, 2021 <i>*This deadline has been extended from previously released dates.</i>	Deadline to submit applications in ePlan <i>Applications will be reviewed and approved as they are submitted</i>

**This grant opportunity is pending approvals by our state procurement office and office of the comptroller and is subject to change based on their approval. This notification shall not create rights, interests, or claims of entitlement.*