



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

April 8, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to provide an update on the Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE) policy regarding OSSE's annual monitoring reviews for fiscal year 2021 (FY21) grants.

Between 2020 and 2021, the United States Department of Education awarded the District of Columbia several Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) grants from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES); Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA); and the American Rescue Plan (ARP). These grants, collectively referred to as the ESSER grants, included \$540 million in funding that was passed through directly to local educational agencies (LEAs) to support them to address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, including learning loss, and support the safe return and sustained operations of schools. ESSER grants were awarded in addition to the \$125 million in grants already awarded to LEAs annually.

Given the significant, additional number of grants awarded this year, OSSE will take a more focused approach to monitoring for FY21 grants. To balance coverage of the inherent increase in fiscal risk, fiscal monitoring will be strongly prioritized. However, OSSE is also aware of and acknowledges both the increase in administrative burden resulting from the increased number of grants and overall additional work LEAs have had this year as a result of the pandemic. As such, the amount of programmatic monitoring will be reduced, and the timeline of monitoring will be adjusted to account for PARCC testing and other grant deadlines.

The purpose of this letter is to provide LEAs an update on the key changes that will be implemented this year for fiscal and programmatic monitoring to assist LEAs in planning and preparation.

Overview

OSSE published the original [Sub-Recipient Monitoring Policy](#) in 2016, which outlines the monitoring approach and processes of the agency. In this policy, OSSE states that the selection of LEAs for monitoring is based on a minimum of 11 monitoring criteria. Through this assessment, OSSE has historically monitored approximately 20 LEAs each year. To address the substantive increase in fiscal risk arising from the influx of recovery funding, OSSE will not use the 11 criteria for the identifying which LEAs to monitor during the 2021-22 school year as stated in the policy.

Changes to Program Monitoring

Programmatic monitoring will occur on a highly limited basis this year. LEAs will only be considered for programmatic monitoring if the LEAs has:

- IDEA determinations,
- State Complaints which have turned into a finding, or
- One or more programmatic findings on an FY20 grant which they did not close in a timely manner

Changes to Fiscal Monitoring

All LEAs will be fiscally monitored this year. To differentiate between LEAs that have been recently monitored and those that have not, a different level of monitoring will occur at different LEAs on the following basis:

- LEAs that have single audit findings on their FY19 financials or fiscal monitoring findings on their FY19 or FY20 grants will receive comprehensive fiscal monitoring.
- LEAs that have not been monitored on their FY19 nor FY20 grants will receive an intermediate level of fiscal monitoring.
- LEAs which have been monitored in the past two years and have not received any findings on their FY19 and/or FY20 grants and also do not have single audit findings on their FY19 financials will receive a basic level of monitoring.

Timeline

In prior years, OSSE conducted monitoring of LEAs in the spring of each year. OSSE has already requested that LEAs report ESSER data in early spring and has set a May 31, 2022, deadline for the FY22 ESSER applications. Additionally, LEAs will be administering PARCC for the first time in two years in April and May. To avoid additional burden on LEAs in the same time frame, OSSE has pushed back monitoring to this summer and will provide LEAs with their initial notification in April. LEAs will have at least six weeks to gather and provide the required evidence for monitoring.

Scope of Grants

The following grants may be included in the monitoring reviews:

- Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended (ESEA), Title I, Part A: Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Education Agencies
- ESEA, Title I: 1003 School Improvement IIS
- ESEA, Title I: 1003(g) School Improvement Grants (SIG)
- ESEA, Title I, Part D: Neglected, Delinquent, and At-Risk Youth
- ESEA, Title II, Part A: Teacher and Principal Training and Recruiting High Quality Teachers, Principals and Other School Leaders
- ESEA Title III, Part A: Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students
- ESEA Title IV, Part A: Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants
- ESEA Title IV, Part B: 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- ESEA, Title V, Part B: Charter Schools Program
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B
- Scholarships for Opportunity and Results (SOAR) Act, Formula
- Scholarships for Opportunity and Results (SOAR) Act, Facilities
- Scholarships for Opportunity and Results (SOAR) Act, Teacher Pipeline
- Special Education Enhancement Fund (SEEF)
- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER)
- Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSA), Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II).
- Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSA), Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II Equivalent).
- American Rescue Plan, Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER III)

Next Steps

- *Identify an LEA Point of Contact (POC)*
 - Once you receive your monitoring notification from your OSSE monitoring lead, you will be asked to provide the name, email and phone number of the primary point of contact at your LEA for monitoring.
- *Notify Third Party Vendors (if applicable)*
 - We encourage you to reach out to any third-party vendors to alert them that their assistance may be needed in providing fiscal documents available.

We will continue to share general updates through the K12 grants newsletter and you will receive details specific to your LEA in April via email. We look forward to a successful and productive monitoring review.

For questions or additional information, please reach out to OSSE.Monitoring@dc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nikki Stewart', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nikki Stewart

Assistant Superintendent of Systems & Supports, K-12