

**New Hampshire State Plan**  
***American Rescue Plan Act***  
**Elementary and Secondary School Emergency**  
**Relief Fund**



New Hampshire

**Department of Education**

**Published June 7, 2021**  
**as Submitted to the U.S. Department of**  
**Education**

**Grantee and Contact Information**

**ARP ESSER PR Award Number (e.g., S425U2100XX):**

**SEA Contact:** Angela Adams

**Telephone:** 603-271-3144

**Email address:** Angela.M.Adams@doe.nh.gov

By signing this document, I agree to each of the assurances listed in Appendix C and further assure that: To the best of my knowledge and belief, all information and data included in this plan are true and correct.	
<b>Chief State School Officer or Authorized Representative (Printed Name)</b> Frank Edelblut, Commissioner of Education	
<b>Signature of Authorized SEA Representative</b> 	<b>Date:</b> July 28, 2021

## Introduction:

The New Hampshire Department of Education welcomes the opportunity to both develop and present its plan for the use of the American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) funds. We are grateful for the many stakeholders from a wide array of backgrounds who took valuable time to weigh in with support and advice about how we can best help our families, students, and educators.

The extraordinary level of financial support that states have received to respond to and recover from COVID-19 creates a real opportunity to make a meaningful difference in the lives of students across New Hampshire. As well, this extraordinary funding also creates what some have described as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to allow the education system across the country to address and, hopefully, correct systemic disparity that has persisted in education for decades. We know that certain students have been disproportionately impacted by this pandemic and we are not willing to let any student fall behind.

New Hampshire has a deep and proud history of local control in education and this approach has served the state well. Local control has put important decision-making close to the needs on the ground. It has allowed New Hampshire education systems to be more resilient and responsive. This is part of the reason why, in September of 2020, over 40% of New Hampshire schools were able to open with 5-days of in-person instruction while another 55% of schools were offering between 2-4 days of in-person instruction for students through hybrid models. Only a handful of schools were unable to open for in-person instruction.

While this success is primarily attributable to hard-working local school leaders and educators, it also reflects the resources and guidance that were made available to schools. These resources were made possible through a whole-of-government response to the pandemic. In New Hampshire, state agencies work together toward a common goal, and throughout the pandemic, the Office of the Governor, the Department of Education (referred to the SEA henceforth), the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Department of Safety's Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management did just that. Beginning with cross-agency conference calls each morning for over a year to collaboratively develop guidance and web-resources, multiple agencies worked to support the needs of local school leaders, so they could safely operate their schools.

At the time of submission of this plan, **every student in New Hampshire has access to full-time in-person instruction.** Barring some unforeseeable development, this will remain true when school resumes in September 2021. From now through the fall and beyond, our goal is to position our SEA, schools, and educators to effectively meet students where they are on their individual learning pathways.

As was the intent of the federal legislation authorizing these funds, we view recovery as a multi-year process in which we will gradually shift our efforts from immediate relief to long term reform. We have carefully and deliberately considered what can be done right away, and what is better left to be implemented during the upcoming school year and beyond. We commit to

continuously engaging stakeholders and to being as transparent as possible by posting all relevant materials online. Throughout this document and consistent with our theory of change for education in New Hampshire, we demonstrate our unwavering commitment to individualized learning for students and empowering local school system leaders so they can in turn provide the most support for students' greatest needs, to engage meaningfully with parents and the public, and to address learning loss through the use of proven, evidence-based practices.

## A. Describing the State's Current Status and Needs

The Department recognizes the extraordinary efforts made by States, LEAs, and educators to support students during the COVID-19 pandemic. In this section, SEAs will describe the progress they have made, the priorities and student needs guiding their ARP ESSER funding decisions, and their current and projected operating status.

1. Progress and Promising Practices: Provide your assessment of the top 2-3 strategies that have been most effective in supporting the needs of students in your State during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially for students most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Please include, if applicable, how your State will submit and encourage its LEAs to submit lessons learned and best practices to the SEA's Safer Schools and Campuses Best Practices Clearinghouse so that they can be shared with other States and LEAs.

## SEA Response

The SEA views the **top three strategies** that have allowed the state to have an effective response to COVID-19 as:

1. **Nimble, flexible, and adaptable response that provided local education leaders broad discretion to address local circumstances**: Starting with the unprecedented shift to remote instruction in March 2020, school leaders, educators, families, students and state leaders have been flexible and responsive to changing circumstances on the ground. New Hampshire never “closed” school nor gave up on teaching and learning. Instead, it expeditiously transitioned to remote instruction and then to safe in-person instruction.

This is not to say that the New Hampshire response was without challenge. However, when those challenging circumstances were presented, every educator prioritized meeting students' needs and took carefully planned actions that allowed for the continuity of instruction and minimized overall disruption. We could not be prouder of the strong and collaborative approach exemplified throughout the pandemic.

Another example of flexibility is in the area of instructional models. Some schools began the school year with a plan to support students remotely or with hybrid models, but quickly discovered that the models they had designed were limited in their effectiveness and required change. By being nimble, districts could pivot when necessary, which ultimately allowed most districts to effectively serve all students. Where districts were unable to change nor adapt quickly, families and students were not as well-supported.

2. **Clear and transparent communication with stakeholders**: A variety of new communications channels were established as a result of the pandemic. These new channels began even before the pandemic fully manifested, when the SEA had its first support call with LEAs in early February 2020. These evolved into 3x-per week support calls among all

school leaders (LEAs, non-public and private providers) as well as weekly updates by state public health officials specific to the instructional environment. In addition, individual LEA group specific calls, including public district, public charter, and nonpublic schools, were held by the SEA to address needs specific to their school type. Several new web sites were deployed, including some specifically for COVID-19 educational resources for schools, students, and parents.

At times during the pandemic, there was pressure to mandate statewide policies. Throughout the pandemic, the SEA and the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) preferred to issue guidance that enabled each community to craft a response that would meet the needs of their individual communities and avoided the use of “one-size-fits-all” mandates. This reflected the fact that conditions varied significantly from one community to another, from urban centers to rural communities.

Going forward, some of these additional communication channels will remain in place in support of SEA/LEA communications, although on a less intensive schedule.

### **3. Supportive, research-based guidance and resources:**

Through its newly established channels of communication, both the SEA and DHHS published a number of resources throughout the pandemic to communicate guidance and policies to LEAs. These ranged from very narrowly crafted guidance to address very specific information to broad resources for the schools to communicate with their communities about the process that would take place when a COVID-19 event occurred in the instructional setting. As an example, the SEA developed, in coordination with DHHS, very specific research-based guidance about how to provide in-person services to students with disabilities in a safe manner.

Specific technical resources were set up for LEAs as well as families, including an on-line knowledge center through which individuals were able to post questions and receive answers. This knowledge center was searchable so that anyone could review previous questions in to find answers. The Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM) was fully operationalized including use of its Joint Information Center (JIC) and 211 hotline to assist all New Hampshire residents in accessing necessary resources.

The SEA also plans to publish lessons learned and best practices, especially related to its ReKINDling Curiosity: Every Kid Goes to Camp program and its Recovering Bright Futures program to the [\*Safer Schools and Campuses Best Practices Clearinghouse\*](#) once these programs are implemented during the summer and fall 2021. The SEA will also share information about the *Safer Schools and Campuses Best Practices Clearinghouse* and encourage LEA submission of lessons learned and best practices in the areas of safely reopening, student support, and educator support on a webinar disseminating New Hampshire’s ARP ESSER State Plan and on monthly calls with all district superintendents.

2. [Overall Priorities](#): Provide your assessment of the top 2-3 issues currently facing students and schools across your State as a result of or in response to the COVID-19 pandemic including, to the extent possible, data illustrating why these are the most critical and/or most widespread issues facing schools and students.

## SEA Response

The SEA views the top three issues currently facing students and schools as:

### 1. Individualized Instruction to Recover Any Learning Loss.

As a result of the pandemic and indications from assessment data (see discussion below for assessment during the pandemic), the SEA anticipates that the student performance curve across the state will look different this year. Our belief is that the middle will have flattened and the ends of the performance curve will have grown, with more students at the top end of the curve and more students at the bottom end, with a larger standard deviation. In other words, some students are performing better than they were pre-pandemic and some students are performing worse than they were performing pre-pandemic.

Some students thrived in pandemic learning, either through strong home supports or the exercise of greater individual agency that allowed them to flourish. Alternatively, more students had difficulty accessing their education, either because of lack of appropriate resources or an instructional model that was not conducive to their learning style, among other reasons. Given these dynamics, it will be important for all students to be engaged based on where they are on their learning curve, whether accelerated or having fallen behind, in a way that challenges them, is not stigmatizing, and allows them to be successful.

Individualized instruction will also be a challenge facing our schools. Educators returning to the classroom will need new tools and instructional approaches that enable them to be effective with a broader range of students and a system flexible enough to allow teachers room to help students succeed. This issue will provide fertile ground for investment of relief funds.

### 2. Educator Fatigue

Many of our educators in New Hampshire were compelled by the pandemic to work in instructional models for which they had not been trained. Before the pandemic, educator preparation and professional development focused on in-person, in-classroom instruction. While most of our educators performed admirably in the new instructional model, it added to stress and anxiety levels for educators across the state. This may affect their perspective and performance upon return to the classroom that can be supported with additional skill preparation and support. We will utilize our [critical shortage survey](#) results that will be collected in October 2021 to evaluate if higher than normal levels of retirement and attrition

exist. This will inform strategies to support our teacher workforce and, if necessary, to recruit new, motivated teachers.

### **3. Family Engagement**

The third area of focus for the SEA will be around family engagement. Even before the pandemic, family engagement played an important role in student success. During the pandemic, one of the bright spots was increased family engagement in student learning. One example of this is a family survey that was conducted in May and June of 2020. More than 56,000 parents and educators responded, which far exceeded any previous record of response. They provided invaluable input into the design of instruction. This survey will be given again in June 2021. Although family engagement itself is not a problem, the heightened levels of engagement of families is an opportunity that we want to capitalize on and continue, to the benefit of students.

3. Identifying Needs of Underserved Students: Describe your State’s 2-3 highest priority academic, social, emotional, and/or mental health needs for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year (if applicable) and for the 2021-2022 school year related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on each of the following student groups:
  - a. Students from low-income families,
  - b. Students from each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race or ethnicity),
  - c. Gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by gender),
  - d. English learners,
  - e. Children with disabilities (including infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”)),
  - f. Students experiencing homelessness,
  - g. Children and youth in foster care,
  - h. Migratory students, and
  - i. Other groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic that have
  - j. been identified by the SEA (e.g., youth involved in the criminal justice system, students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures, and LGBTQ+ students).

To the extent possible, this description should include data on indicators such as estimates of the academic impact of lost instructional time, chronic absenteeism, student engagement, and social-emotional well-being.

## SEA Response

Given the pandemic's disproportionate effects on students from low-income families, ESL students, students with disabilities, and racial and ethnic minority students, we recognize the need to help those students who are most at risk of falling behind. In addition, even before the pandemic, we recognized disparities in performance and across other indicators between student subgroups. Our strategy for providing support to students in the wake of the pandemic is consistent with our broader theory of change for education in New Hampshire: providing individualized support to *all* students by empowering local school leaders with the resources and tools they need, and holding ourselves accountable to the progress of students. This is consistent with the approach described in our ESSA state plan that focused on underperforming student subgroups by introducing a specific indicator to our statewide accountability to ensure schools successfully supported those students with the greatest need.

Looking ahead, we foresee comparable needs across the array of student subgroups listed below. Please note that many students belong to more than one subgroup listed, which further amalgamates need. Because the level of need is comparable, and because the groups are not exclusive, and given our theory that local leaders are best equipped to solve local educational problems, we do not intend to require specific interventions be matched to specific gender, racial, ethnic, or family income subgroups. Rather, the SEA expects to invest in holistic interventions and programs that are accessible for all students (with a priority given to high-needs students, like those described in the groups below) to ensure no one is left behind. Our assessment of the top needs for children in the state is individualized instruction, access to technology, and out-of-school learning opportunities, such as summer enrichment camps.

These priorities were further developed through stakeholder consultation and individual LEA responses to a data collection based on the U.S. Department of Education's State Plan template received on or before June 1, 2021.

In this special data collection to inform the State Plan, LEA narratives reported increased absenteeism and learning loss during remote learning and hybrid learning periods compared to pre-pandemic in-person learning, but did not provide information specific to student groups. Specifically, LEAs reported the greatest increase in learning loss was in mathematics for students across all student demographics. As described in Section A(4) of this plan, the SEA will collect data on the impact of lost instructional time by student group, as well as student engagement and social-emotional well-being data through the 603 Bright Futures Survey, a new statewide school climate survey. The SEA will also collect chronic absenteeism rates in its EOY data collection.

**Table A1.**

Student group	Highest priority needs									
Students from low-income families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Intensive, high-dose tutoring, especially in math and ELA, provided by effective teachers receiving supplemental stipends;</li> <li>● Reinitiate and expand wraparound supports to ensure students can access learning; and</li> <li>● Individualized instruction and more dynamic instructional models that build individual agency.</li> </ul>									
Students from each racial or ethnic background used by the State for reporting purposes – please add a row for each racial or ethnic group (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing on underserved student groups by race/ethnicity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Based on the available data, the SEA considers each racial and ethnic student subgroup in the state as having demonstrable need. The SEA intends to target its support based on available performance data, including student assessment data, and does not assign interventions by race nor ethnicity, consistent with federal civil rights law. This also reflects NHDOE’s broader view that students should be treated as individuals and have their needs met accordingly, rather than seen as simply representatives of their racial or ethnic group.</li> </ul> <table border="1" data-bbox="737 1230 1425 1671"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="737 1230 1081 1266">Racial/ethnic subgroups</th> <th data-bbox="1081 1230 1425 1266">Supports</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="737 1266 1081 1339">American Indian or Alaska Native</td> <td data-bbox="1081 1266 1425 1671" rowspan="6">We will target interventions to meet the needs of each individual student and student group with an emphasis on core academic subjects, including English language arts and Mathematics.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="737 1339 1081 1413">Asian or Pacific Islander</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="737 1413 1081 1465">Hispanic</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="737 1465 1081 1518">Black</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="737 1518 1081 1581">White</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="737 1581 1081 1671">Multi-race</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Racial/ethnic subgroups	Supports	American Indian or Alaska Native	We will target interventions to meet the needs of each individual student and student group with an emphasis on core academic subjects, including English language arts and Mathematics.	Asian or Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Black	White	Multi-race
Racial/ethnic subgroups	Supports									
American Indian or Alaska Native	We will target interventions to meet the needs of each individual student and student group with an emphasis on core academic subjects, including English language arts and Mathematics.									
Asian or Pacific Islander										
Hispanic										
Black										
White										
Multi-race										
Students by gender – please add a row for each gender (e.g., identifying disparities and focusing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Based on the available data, the SEA considers both genders in the state as having demonstrable need. The SEA intends to target its support based on available performance</li> </ul>									

<p>on underserved student groups by gender)</p>	<p>data, including student assessment data, and does not assign interventions by gender, consistent with federal civil rights law. This also reflects NHDOE’s broader view that students should be treated as individuals and have their needs met accordingly, rather than seen as simply representatives of their gender group.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="737 520 1425 928"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="737 520 1081 562">Gender subgroup</th> <th data-bbox="1081 520 1425 562">Supports</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="737 562 1081 751">Female</td> <td data-bbox="1081 562 1425 928" rowspan="2">We will target interventions to meet the needs of each individual student and student group with an emphasis on core academic subjects, including English language arts and Mathematics.</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="737 751 1081 928">Male</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Gender subgroup	Supports	Female	We will target interventions to meet the needs of each individual student and student group with an emphasis on core academic subjects, including English language arts and Mathematics.	Male
Gender subgroup	Supports					
Female	We will target interventions to meet the needs of each individual student and student group with an emphasis on core academic subjects, including English language arts and Mathematics.					
Male						
<p>English learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Increased access to academic supports throughout the recovery period, including expanded in-school and after-school programming;</li> <li>● Professional development to support all NH educators working with EL students to ensure ELs can access grade-level academic content to accelerate content and language learning; and</li> <li>● Development of a comprehensive language assistance plan to bridge barriers between home and school and to support sustained culturally responsive two-way communication that will build a foundation for meaningful collaboration with EL families.</li> </ul>					
<p>Children with disabilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continued recovery services following the compensatory education services supported by the SEA in spring 2021, including those supporting students whose special education referrals experienced pandemic-related delays;</li> </ul>					

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Professional development to personalize instruction, including expansion of SEA’s UDL training, to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities, especially those arising from the pandemic and creation of competency based courses to better prepare paraprofessionals; and</li> <li>● Promotion of parent/caregiver engagement and parent/caregiver training.</li> </ul>
Students experiencing homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Outreach and identification;</li> <li>● Reengagement including through providing nontraditional transportation supports especially in rural communities; and</li> <li>● Credit accrual and recovery.</li> </ul>
Children and youth in foster care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Technical assistance to LEAs and schools on federal and state requirements for serving children and youth in foster care and best practices, including those responsive to the pandemic;</li> <li>● Given changes and potential changes in personnel, updated LEA and school-based foster care point of contacts, which will be newly published on the SEA website and encouraged to be published on relevant LEA and school websites; and</li> <li>● Expand engagement with DHHS in coordinating support of children and youth in foster care, including through institutionalizing data sharing.</li> </ul>
Migratory students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identification and recruitment of migratory students statewide given that recruiters could not contact potential families in person during the pandemic;</li> <li>● Technology, especially to support supplemental learning during the summer and continued access to online learning platforms year-round; and</li> <li>● A transition back to home-based services and supports, given the inability of migrant staff to provide in-person instruction and support during the pandemic.</li> </ul>

<p>Other groups of students identified by the State (e.g., youth involved in the criminal justice system, students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years, students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures, LGBTQ+ students)</p>	<p>Students in rural communities, existing mostly in Northern New Hampshire or “North country:”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Higher quality remote instruction, especially through teacher professional development provided by the University System of New Hampshire, Granite State College;</li> <li>● Technology, especially to support supplemental learning during the summer and during the school year; and</li> <li>● Removed barriers to accessing career development opportunities through inter-district transportation supports.</li> </ul>
---	--

4. [Understanding the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic](#): Describe how the SEA will support its LEAs in identifying the extent of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on student learning and student well-being, including identifying the groups of students most impacted by the pandemic. Where possible, please identify the data sources the SEA will suggest its LEAs use in thoughtfully diagnosing areas of need, including data on the academic, social, emotional, and mental health impacts of lost instructional time.

**SEA Response**

The SEA is prepared to support LEAs in identifying the extent of the impact of the pandemic on students’ learning and well-being, including identification of subgroups of students most impacted, in several ways. As part of the process in which LEAs will develop their own ARP plans, LEAs will be required to engage in stakeholder feedback with all required stakeholder groups, which will uncover authentic need from a diverse array of sources as described by the people experiencing it. We will also provide LEAs with access to formative/benchmarking assessments, data from the most recent statewide assessments, and ongoing communications/technical assistance channels to help foster communities of practice among LEA leaders.

Perhaps differently than some states, New Hampshire has available rich data regarding student performance that it intends to share with LEAs. New Hampshire anticipates full administration in spring 2021 of the summative assessments for English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science for grades 3-8 and grade 11. In addition, the ELP assessment, ACCESS 2.0, was fully administered in 2020 and 2021, allowing New Hampshire to derive academic impact data for English language learners. New Hampshire also administered an interim summative assessment in ELA and math in fall 2020.

New Hampshire will use 2021 and historical assessment data to research the following questions:

- To what extent are 2021 assessment participation rates different from historical patterns?
- How different is the observed 2021 achievement status of New Hampshire students from their historical status, in
  - English language arts?
  - Mathematics?
  - English language proficiency?
- How different is the observed 2021 achievement growth of New Hampshire students from their expected growth, in
  - English language arts?
  - Mathematics?
  - English language proficiency?
- What is the anticipated academic recovery time for each based on the experienced COVID-19 disruptions?

Participation rates will be evaluated, summarized and considered throughout the analysis and reporting of academic impact. Specifically, the testing population will be compared with historical testing populations for the purpose of understanding the extent to which status and growth comparisons between pre- and post-pandemic are appropriate, or require that populations be sampled, or results adjusted, to produce accurate information about impact based on these measures. Participation and non-participation in state tests will be investigated based upon numerous factors including student demographic characteristics, mode-of education during the pandemic (to the extent that the data can be collected), student achievement characteristics, and school characteristics.

**Status.** English language arts and mathematics performance levels, and English language proficiency levels will be compared from year-to-year (based on representative samples as appropriate to New Hampshire’s final test participation rates and population characteristics). A difference in differences approach will be used to understand whether any differences in achievement status between 2019 and 2021 are substantially larger than those noted pre-pandemic.

**Growth.** For the purpose of identifying the academic impact of the pandemic on student growth, New Hampshire proposes to establish pre- pandemic Student Growth Percentiles (SGPs, Betebenner, 2009) baseline growth norms that can be used to evaluate student growth in the state from 2019 to 2021. By definition, pre-pandemic growth for students will show a median SGP of 50 for each grade and content area. Deviations below 50 for growth in 2021 will, therefore, be interpretable as a negative academic impact for students statewide, within schools, and for student subgroups.

**Recovery.** Based upon these findings, determinations will be made regarding the expected recovery time for students to “return” to their “pre-COVID” performance levels. Findings will be disaggregated by racial/ethnic status, special education status, English learner identification, poverty level, community type, school type, mode of instruction, and attendance rate. By determining the “recovery time” based on student or community statuses, the SEA will be able to identify those most impacted by the pandemic and in need of the most intervention.

**Reporting.** The SEA aims to publish a report of its findings in the late fall of 2021, after assessment results have been compiled and validated. The SEA also intends to provide the findings in a digestible format to schools and provide guidance on how to utilize the findings to determine short-term needs to be addressed and to establish a long-term strategy to build upon the immediate response. In order to make assessment data more accessible to families, the SEA will work through a vendor to provide families with individualized graphical animations of student performance results.

With this information, it will be possible to:

- Inform policy decisions related to the recovery of student learning, including targeting interventions toward those schools and students who have been most disrupted by remote instruction and other pandemic instructional models or other factors that may have impacted a student’s academic progress;
- Inform district and school level planning for recovery interventions;
- Respond to questions from the press and the public;
- Effectively engage and inform parents of the status of student learning, and
- Serve as a strong basis for monitoring recovery.

The SEA also created a new school climate survey, which was piloted in three LEAs in November 2020 supported by technical assistance from the Office of Social and Emotional Wellness. Across these three pilot LEAs, there were 529 educator respondents and 1,034 families. The pilot survey included indicators around school safety, family engagement, and resources, among other school climate domains. In both stakeholder groups, school safety questions produced highly favorable responses, and home education partnerships emerged as an area for improvement. The participating LEAs used pilot survey results as one of the many datasets used to inform their implementation of New Hampshire’s Multi-Tiered System of Supports for Behavioral Health and Wellness (MTSS-B) as well as district-wide strategic planning in general.

The statewide 603 Bright Futures Survey was announced June 1, 2021 and disseminated to parents, educators and community members. It expanded the school climate pilot survey to include survey questions on perspectives on the response by New Hampshire schools to the COVID-19 pandemic this past year and how the experience should influence instructional as plans are made for fall learning. It also includes perspectives on

how school districts facilitated parent involvement in the special education process, informing IDEA Indicator 8. Surveys may be found here:

- Families in K-12, Preschool, and Private Schools: [bit.ly/nhdoefamily](https://bit.ly/nhdoefamily)
- Staff in Public and Private Schools: [bit.ly/nhdoestaff](https://bit.ly/nhdoestaff)
- Community Members: [bit.ly/nhdoecommunity](https://bit.ly/nhdoecommunity)

The 603 Bright Futures Survey will close June 30, 2021. Survey results will be published on the SEA's website and LEAs will have access to their unique data to inform statewide and LEA-specific conversations on the social, emotional, and mental health impacts of the pandemic and how to best support student well-being in the 2021-2022 school year and beyond.

5. School Operating Status: It is essential to have data on how students are learning in order to support the goals of access and equity, especially for student groups that have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Describe the current status of data collection on operational status and mode of instruction of all schools in your State. This description must include:
  - i. A description of to what extent, and how frequently, the State collects now and will collect in the future data for all schools in your State on:
    - a. Mode of instruction: The number of schools in your State that are offering fully remote or online-only instruction; both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid model); and/or full-time in-person instruction;
    - b. Enrollment: Student enrollment for all students and disaggregated for each of the student groups described in A.3.iviii for each mode of instruction; and
    - c. Attendance: Student attendance for all students and disaggregated for each of the student groups described in A.3.iviii for each mode of instruction.

## SEA Response

Currently, more than 99% of all New Hampshire students have the option of 5-days per week of in-person instruction.

On April 2, 2021, consistent with the belief that all students should have access to full-time, in-person instruction, Governor Christopher Sununu issued [Emergency Order #89](#).<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Prior to Emergency Order #89, Governor Sununu issued [Emergency Order #85](#) on March 8, 2021. This Emergency Order required, among other things, that "New Hampshire schools must provide in person instruction for at least two days per week for any student who wishes to elect such an option, unless a school elects to transition to full time distance learning for all students or a segment of students."

This Emergency Order required, among other things, that “all New Hampshire schools must provide in person instruction 5 days per week for all students who elect such an option” no later than April 19, 2021. The Emergency Order provided a waiver process for schools that would not be able to meet this requirement. Six schools were granted waivers to allow for a delayed opening. On May 3, 2021, all but two New Hampshire schools had complied with the order and two schools were granted extended waivers for the remainder of the school year. Both of these schools offer unique programming to students with high-risk health conditions.

While all New Hampshire students have the opportunity for full-time in-person instruction, except noted above, the SEA has modified its annual End of Year (EOY) data collection to collect instructional mode and attendance information by student, including sub-group and by mode of instruction throughout 2020/2021. This level of data, to the extent LEAs are able to accurately provide it to the SEA, will provide detailed student level information that can be correlated between student performance and instructional modes throughout the year.

New Hampshire does not have a statewide student information system. As such, the annual EOY data collection is the most expeditious method to compile the information. The SEA commits to posting the data on its website once validated so the public may view it. The SEA would also flag that not all school districts have student information systems that will support this data collection, so some estimating may be required. In order to ensure accuracy, the SEA commits to a thorough review of all data and additional follow-ups with LEAs as necessary in order to meet its goal to publish clear and reliable information for the public to view online.

ii. [The data described in A.5.i.a. and b. using the template in Appendix A \(and to the extent available, the data described in A.5.i.c.\) for the most recent time period available. Please note that this data can be submitted separately within 14 calendar days after a State submits this plan. The SEA must also make this data publicly available on its website as soon as possible but no later than June 21, 2021, and regularly provide updated available information on its website. The SEA will periodically review data listed in A.5.i on SEA websites.](#)

## **SEA Response**

The SEA has completed the information in Appendix A, to the extent it has such data available. This includes information for Elementary, Middle School and High School. The SEA does not currently have such information for sub-groups. The SEA has modified its annual End of Year (EOY) data collection to collect this enrollment information by sub-group and by mode of instruction for 2020/2021. New Hampshire does not have a statewide student information system. As such, the EOY data collection is the most expeditious method to compile the information. The SEA would also flag that not all school districts have student information systems that will support this data

collection, so some estimating may be required. In order to ensure accuracy, the SEA commits to a thorough review of all data and additional follow-ups with LEAs as necessary in order to meet its goal to publish clear and reliable information for the public to view online.

- iii. To the extent available, a description of the planned operational status and mode of instruction for the State and its LEAs for Summer 2021 and for the 2021-2022 school year.

## **SEA Response**

Consistent with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #89, New Hampshire schools are currently open for full-time, in-person instruction. The Emergency Order provides a waiver process for schools unable to meet this requirement; two schools serving medically fragile students received such a waiver. Aside from those limited exceptions and barring some unforeseeable circumstance, the expectation is that all New Hampshire schools will be open for full-time, in-person instruction during the fall of 2021.

During the summer of 2021, the expectation is that all New Hampshire schools will offer full-time, in-person instruction comparable to programming offered during summers past; some school districts intend to offer additional programming to address learning loss. The SEA utilized \$3.0 million of GEER I State funds to provide access to New Hampshire youth recreation camps to support student social, emotional, and mental health through the ReKINDling Curiosity program. As a wrap-around service to this offering the SEA also contracted with the New Hampshire Community Behavioral Health Association and Community Mental Health Centers to provide training and support to New Hampshire camps in support of students attending camp. The SEA will use its 1% ARP ESSER State set-aside to provide summer enrichment activities, including by potentially extending this transformational program to summer 2022 and beyond.

### **B. Safely Reopening Schools and Sustaining their Safe Operations**

The Department recognizes that safely reopening schools and sustaining their safe operations to maximize in-person instruction is essential for student learning and student well-being, and especially for being able to address the educational inequities that have been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. In this section, SEAs will describe how they will support their LEAs in this vital area.

1. Support for LEAs: Describe how the SEA will support its LEAs in safely returning to in-person instruction and sustaining the safe operation of schools.

This description must include:

- i. How the SEA will support its LEAs implementing, to the greatest extent practicable, prevention and mitigation policies in line with the most up-to-date guidance from the Centers for Disease Control

and Prevention (“CDC”) for the reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain the health and safety of students, educators, and other staff;

*Complete the table below, adding rows as necessary, or provide a narrative description.*

**SEA Response**

The SEA released its first version of [New Hampshire Grades K-12 Back-to-School Guidance](#) in early July 2020. This comprehensive resource, which has been continually updated throughout the 2020-2021 school year (most recent update as of March 2021), provides New Hampshire LEAs with comprehensive guidance about the safe operation of school. This resource was developed by the SEA in collaboration with DHHS and reflects CDC as well as state public health guidelines, as applied to the unique circumstances of the pandemic in New Hampshire. These high-quality resources are complemented by easy-to-understand FAQs, checklists, and posters that are available in multiple languages.

In addition to this critical resource, both the SEA and State and local public health officials have continued to provide on-going updates and resources to LEAs throughout the pandemic. This included, early in the pandemic, meetings with school leaders and the SEA three-times weekly to communicate vital information. Beginning in the fall 2020, these meetings were tapered to first twice per week and then weekly. Finally, these meetings were tapered to twice per month and a weekly call was introduced directly with DHHS to respond to specific health related questions school leaders, and in particular school nurses, might have relative to COVID-19 response.

In no small part, these efforts have resulted in the New Hampshire schools being open for full-time, in-person instruction as of April 2021.

All of this historical support and continued support is documented both on school resource pages on the [DHHS website](#) as well as on the [SEA website](#). These high levels of support will continue through 2021 and 2022.

**Table B1.**

<b>Mitigation strategy</b>	<b>SEA response</b>
Universal and correct wearing of masks	State public health officials continue to provide direct guidance on the importance and appropriate application of mask guidance. This is continually updated, as reflected in <a href="#">this most recent update</a> .
Physical distancing (e.g., including use of cohorts/podding)	COVID-19 mitigation strategies, including physical distancing, are specifically addressed in <a href="#">New Hampshire Grades K-12 Back-to-School Guidance</a> and updated communications from the SEA and state public health as described above. In addition, a number of <a href="#">communication</a>

	<p><a href="#">resources</a> were developed for use by LEAs in communicating these important practices.</p>
Handwashing and respiratory etiquette	<p>COVID-19 mitigation strategies, including hand sanitation and respiratory etiquette, are specifically addressed in <a href="#">New Hampshire Grades K-12 Back-to-School Guidance</a> and updated communications from the SEA and state public health as described above. In addition, a number of <a href="#">communication resources</a> were developed for use by LEAs in communicating these important practices.</p>
Cleaning and maintaining healthy facilities, including improving ventilation	<p>COVID-19 mitigation strategies, including cleaning and facilities, are specifically addressed in <a href="#">New Hampshire Grades K-12 Back-to-School Guidance</a> and updated communications from the SEA and state public health as described above.</p>
Contact tracing in combination with isolation and quarantine, in collaboration with the State, local, territorial, or Tribal health SEAs	<p>In coordination with state public health, a school liaison office was established at public health to assist schools to respond to specific questions not included in guidance documents and to work alongside schools in contact tracing, where appropriate, depending on community infection rates. In addition, a <a href="#">School Toolkit</a> was developed to provide guidance for contact tracing. These supports will continue in the 2021-2022 school year.</p>
Diagnostic and screening testing	<p>COVID-19 mitigation strategies, including diagnostic and screening, are specifically addressed in <a href="#">New Hampshire Grades K-12 Back-to-School Guidance</a> and updated communications from the SEA and state public health as described above. In addition, specific guidance was provided to LEAs relative to <a href="#">diagnostic and screening testing</a> were developed for use by LEAs in communicating these important practices. Lastly, in April 2021 and in partnership with state public health officials, the Safer At School Screening Program (SASS) was made available to schools. This program extended testing benefits to schools across New Hampshire through the end of the 2021 school year. 97 schools participated in the program, or about 20% of all public schools in the state. This program will continue to be offered to schools for the 2021-2022 school year</p>
Efforts to provide vaccinations to educators, other staff, and students, if eligible	<p>New Hampshire had one of the nation’s most successful vaccine roll-out programs in the country. New Hampshire educators were prioritized for vaccines just behind emergency and medical personnel and the most vulnerable populations. Vaccine administration was coordinated through Community Health Centers, including options for on-site</p>

	clinics at school locations. In New Hampshire, there are today available vaccine opportunities for those eligible and seeking a vaccination.
Appropriate accommodations for children with disabilities with respect to the health and safety policies	Starting in Mach 2020, significant effort and attention was placed on making sure that students with disabilities were making progress toward educational and other IEP goals. This included specific state <a href="#">Emergency Order #48 Special Education Requirements to Support Education</a> . Further, working with state public health, specific guidance was developed early in the pandemic for the safe delivery of in-person special education services, including services to some of our most medically needy students. In addition, CARES Act and state level IDEA funds were specifically allocated to support third-party providers of services to students with disabilities and to provide school districts with funds to support needed compensatory education services.

- ii. [Any Statewide plans, policies, estimated timelines, and specific milestones related to reopening and operation of school facilities, including any mechanisms the SEA will use to track, monitor, or enforce their implementation;](#)

## SEA Response

Consistent with Governor Sununu’s Emergency Order #89, New Hampshire schools are currently open for full-time, in-person instruction. The Emergency Order provides a waiver process for schools unable to meet this requirement; two schools serving medically fragile students received such a waiver. The expectation is that all New Hampshire schools will be open for full-time, in-person instruction during the fall of 2021.

To monitor LEA implementation and to meet federal ARP ESSER statutory and regulatory requirements, the SEA released a template for the LEA Plan on the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services, otherwise known as the “school district reopening plan,” on May 25, 2021, the day following the SEA’s allocation of two-thirds of ARP ESSER LEA funds. The plan template, which is consistent with ARPA and ARP ESSER IFR requirements, and other ARP ESSER documents can be found [here](#). In addition to LEAs complying with the statutory requirements for public posting and comments within 30 days of receipt of ARP ESSER funds, the SEA will publish all LEA Plans on the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services on its ARP ESSER webpage.

Moving forward, the SEA will resume monitoring and enforcing the New Hampshire Minimum Standards for Public School Approval, which governs the day-to-day operating status of schools in the state and imposes basic requirements (such as the minimum number of instructional hours required in a school year) as it has traditionally done.

- iii. [To what extent the SEA and its LEAs consult with Federal, State, and local health officials. This description should include, if available, whether the SEA and its LEAs have received support for screening testing from their State or local health SEA based on funding awarded by the CDC; and](#)

## SEA Response

The SEA has facilitated collaboration between state public health officials, state leaders, and school leaders, both from LEAs and Non-public schools, from the beginning of the pandemic. The [SEA](#) and [state public health](#) websites include extensive information and resources developed in close coordination.

In April 2021, in partnership with state public health officials, the Safer At School Screening Program (SASS) was made available to schools. This program extended testing benefits to schools across New Hampshire through the end of the 2021 school year. 97 schools participated in the program, or about 20% of all public schools in the state. This program will continue to be offered to schools for the 2021-2022 school year.

- iv. Any guidance, professional learning, and technical assistance opportunities the SEA will make available to its LEAs.

## SEA Response

Since the beginning of the pandemic, the SEA has provided LEAs guidance and technical assistance on a dedicated website, through community discussions, over social media and many other modes of communication.

For LEA staff, the SEA has offered on-going professional development opportunities in two principal areas. The first is relative to the mental and behavioral health of both students and educators alike. In doing so, the SEA built an [important library](#) of training in this area through its Bureau of Student Wellness. The Bureau of Student Wellness will continue to provide pandemic-responsive professional development for student mental and behavioral health, including by further growing its library of resources on its [YouTube channel](#) and [portal](#) in response to the field's needs.

While the SEA expects schools to offer in-person instruction in the fall of 2021, we also recognize that our educators need to have tools available to them in the event that they need, once again, to pivot to a remote instructional model. Toward that end, through an RFP process, the SEA has contracted with the University System of New Hampshire, Granite State College to offer all [New Hampshire educators training](#) in designing an online course, instructing an online course and using the state learning management system to conduct that instruction. To encourage educator participation in this program, the SEA will pay participation stipends.

- 2. [Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Plans](#): Describe how the SEA will ensure that its LEAs that receive ARP ESSER funds meet the requirements in section 2001(i) of the ARP Act and the requirements relating to the ARP ESSER funds published in the Federal Register and available at <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/american-rescue-plan/american-rescue-planelementary-and-secondary-school-emergency-relief/> (ARP ESSER requirements) to either: (a) within 30 days of receipt of the funds, develop and make publicly available on the LEA's website a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services, or (b) have developed and made publicly available on the LEA's website such a plan that meets statutory requirements before the enactment of the ARP Act, including:
  - i. How the SEA will ensure that each LEA plan includes, or will be modified to include, the extent to which it has adopted policies and a description of any such policies on each of the strategies listed in table B1;
  - ii. How the SEA will ensure that each LEA plan describes how it will ensure continuity of services including but not limited to services to address the students' academic needs, and students' and staff social, emotional, mental

- health, and other needs, which may include student health and food services;
- iii. How the SEA will ensure that the LEA periodically reviews, no less frequently than every six months for the duration of the ARP ESSER grant period (i.e., through September 30, 2023),<sup>2</sup> and revises as appropriate, its plan, and how the SEA will ensure that the LEA seeks public input, and takes such input into account on (1) whether revisions are necessary and, if so, (2) the revisions to the plan; and
  - iv. Describe, to the extent the SEA collects it, information about LEA implementation, to the greatest extent practicable, of each element of the most up-to-date CDC guidance listed in table B1 and its LEAs' needs for support and technical assistance to implement strategies consistent, to the greatest extent practicable, with relevant CDC guidance.

## SEA Response

At the time of passage of ARP ESSER, the SEA held informational sessions with LEAs to familiarize them with the provisions of the new law. In these informational sessions, specific reference was made to Section 2001(i) Safe Return to In-Person Instruction. One of the areas emphasized was the reopening plan requirement that LEA's "shall seek public comment on the plan and take such comments into account in the development of the plan." In addition, the SEA used the maximum allowable number of days in order to make LEA grant fund allocations. This, in turn, provided the LEA's with the maximum allowable time to fulfill this requirement.

To ensure LEAs meet such federal ARP ESSER statutory and regulatory requirements, the SEA released a template for the LEA Plan on the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services, otherwise known as the "school district reopening plan," on May 25, 2021, the day following the SEA's allocation of two-thirds of ARP ESSER LEA funds. The plan template, which is consistent with ARPA and ARP ESSER IFR requirements, and other ARP ESSER documents can be found [here](#). On May 26, 2021, the SEA conducted a webinar with all school district superintendents walking through the template, which outlines the relevant statutory and regulatory requirements, and explaining relevant deadlines including that the plan must be submitted and posted within 30 days of receipt of funds. The template includes:

- i. The extent to which the LEA adopted each CDC health and safety strategy in table B1 in SY 2020-2021 and the extent to which the LEA will adopt each strategy in SY 2021-2022. Such components of the school district reopening plan will be evaluated for completeness.

---

<sup>2</sup> ARP ESSER funds are subject to the Tydings amendment in section 421(b) of the General Education Provisions Act, 20 U.S.C. 1225(b), and are therefore available to SEAs and LEAs for obligation through September 30, 2024. Review and revisions of these plans, if necessary, are not required during the Tydings period.

- ii. Descriptions in both SY 2020-2021 and SY 2021-2022 of how the LEA provided/will provide continuity of services in addressing student academic needs; continuity of services in addressing student social, emotional, mental, and other health needs, which may include student health and food services; and continuity of services in addressing staff social, emotional, mental, and other health needs. Such components of the school district reopening plan will be evaluated for completeness.
- iii. Affirmation and description of how the LEA will meet the federal regulatory requirement to review and, as appropriate, revise its school district reopening plan at least every six months through September 30, 2023; how the LEA will meet the federal statutory requirement to seek public input and take such input into account in determining whether to revise the plan and, if revisions are determined necessary, on the revisions it makes to its plan; how the LEA will also meet the federal regulatory requirement to address CDC safety recommendations and, if the CDC has updated its safety recommendations at the time the LEA is revising its plan, each of the updated CDC safety recommendations. Such components of the school district reopening plan will be evaluated for completeness. The SEA will require affirmation of review and, if applicable, resubmission of the school district reopening plan every six months through September 30, 2023.
- iv. Descriptions of LEA adoption of each CDC health and safety strategy in table B1 in SY 2020-2021 and SY 2021-2022. Such components of the school district reopening plan will be evaluated for completeness. The SEA will make potential CDC guidance updates available to district superintendents, as it did so with previous iterations of CDC guidance. The SEA will also continue to connect LEAs with state and local health officials to appropriately meet their needs for relevant support and technical assistance regarding localized safety measures based on the guidance provided by the CDC, NH Public Health, and local public health officials.

In addition to the new SEA processes described above, the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) built a state COVID-19 dashboard. This dashboard collects and reports a number of data elements relative to COVID-19. There is a specific school section in which DHHS has the ability to collect information on instructional models across the state. In addition, however, the dashboard was also built to collect information relative to school level policies across a number of important areas including: General Policies (e.g., masks, extra-curricular activities, and sports), Hygiene, Distancing (classrooms, lunch and recess), Transportation and Guest Access to schools. All of these tools may be deployed to understand how LEAs may be implementing the current CDC and state public health guidance. To the extent it is practicable, the SEA will support DHHS and its LEAs to fully populate these dashboards with current information for view by parents and the public.

### C. Planning for the Use and Coordination of ARP ESSER Funds

The Department recognizes that seeking input from diverse stakeholders is essential to developing plans for the use of ARP ESSER funds that are responsive to the needs of students, families, and educators. In this section, SEAs will describe their plans for consultation and for coordinating the use of ARP ESSER funds with other resources to meet the needs of students.

1. SEA Consultation: Consistent with the ARP ESSER requirements, describe how the SEA engaged in meaningful consultation with stakeholders, and incorporated input into its plan, including, but not limited to:
  - i. students;
  - ii. families;
  - iii. Tribes (if applicable);
  - iv. civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations);
  - v. school and district administrators (including special education administrators);
  - vi. superintendents;
  - vii. charter school leaders (if applicable);
  - viii. teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions; and
  - ix. stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

The description must include how the SEA provided the public the opportunity to provide input in the development of the plan, a summary of the input (including any letters of support), and how the SEA took such input into account.

### SEA Response

The SEA values robust input from stakeholders on such an important topic and engaged with stakeholders from around the state, including students, families, civil rights experts, school and district leaders, teacher, and stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

In the Spring of 2020, the SEA convened a broad stakeholder group called the School Transition, Redesign and Reopening Taskforce (STRRT). STRRT and its related workgroup members included over 60 individuals representing a wide range of stakeholders. STRRT stakeholder input was a critical component of the state reopening guidance developed by the SEA and the Department of Health and Human Services.

As such, STRRT was reactivated to quickly gain input for the State Plan for the ARP/ESSER.

Members of STRRT by stakeholder group included the following:

i. Students	The Student Voice work group was composed of four students, three from secondary education and one from a middle school. All participated with parental permission.
ii. Families	The family representatives provided feedback for each of these workgroups and family perspectives.
iii. Tribes	N/A
iv. Civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations)	The Taskforce included representatives who work with students with disabilities as well as the New Hampshire Association of Special Education. In addition, the SEA made specific outreach for feedback from the New Hampshire Commissioner for Human Rights and Disability Rights Center of New Hampshire.
v. School and district administrators (including special education administrators)	Five of the six work groups of the Taskforce ( <i>Instruction, Student Wellness, School Operations, Technology, and Associations</i> ) included school board members, school administrators, special education administrators, school principals, on each of the workgroups.
vi. Superintendents	Five of the six work groups of the Taskforce ( <i>Instruction, Student Wellness, School Operations, Technology, and Associations</i> ) included a school superintendent on each of the workgroups with executive director of the New Hampshire School Administrators Association acting as chair of the Associations work group
vii. Charter school leaders (if applicable)	Five of the six work groups of the Taskforce ( <i>Instruction, Student Wellness, School Operations, Technology, and Associations</i> ) included representatives from charter schools, as well as the executive director of the New Hampshire Alliance for Public Charter Schools.
viii. Teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions	Five of the six work groups of the Taskforce ( <i>Instruction, Student Wellness, School Operations, Technology, and Associations</i> ) included representatives from teachers and other school staff.

<p>ix. Stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students</p>	<p>In addition to their representation on the other workgroups, representatives from each of these organizations participated in and provided feedback as a stand-alone workgroup:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NH Athletic Directors Association (NHADA)</li> <li>• NH School Boards Association (NHSBA)</li> <li>• NH Parent Teachers Association (NHPTA)</li> <li>• NH School Principals Association (NHSPA)</li> <li>• NH School Administrators Association (NHSAA)</li> <li>• NH American Federation of Teachers (NH-AFT)</li> <li>• NH Association of School Psychologists</li> <li>• NH School Counselors Association (NHSCA)</li> <li>• NH Association of Special Education Administrators (NHASEA)</li> <li>• NH Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA)</li> <li>• NH Music Educators Association (NHMEA)</li> <li>• NH School Library Media Association (NHSLMA)</li> <li>• NH School Nurses Association</li> <li>• NH Extended Learning Opportunities (NHELON)</li> <li>• NH Afterschool Network (NHAN)</li> <li>• NH American Choral Directors Association (NHACDA)</li> <li>• NH Chief Technology Officers Organization (NHCTO)</li> <li>• NH Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NHAPCA)</li> <li>• National Education Association of NH (NEA-NH)</li> <li>• NH Parent Information Center (PIC)</li> <li>• NH Career &amp; Technical Education (NHCTE)</li> <li>• State Board of Education</li> <li>• NH Private Special Education Association</li> <li>• NH Association of School Business Officials (NHASBO)</li> <li>• NH School Transportation Association (NHSTA)</li> <li>• School District Governance Association of NH (SDGANH)</li> <li>• Athletic Directors Association (NHADA)</li> <li>• NH School Boards Association (NHSBA)</li> </ul>
--	---

STRRT was organized into six workgroups, including Instruction, Student Wellness, School Operations, Technology, Student Voice and Associations. Among each of these groups, there were representatives from various stakeholder constituent groups, as illustrated here:

<b>Instruction Workgroup</b>
Parent
Special Education, Oyster River School District
Principal, Spaulding Youth Center
Parent
Teacher, Vilas Middle School
Superintendent (SAU #76)
Principial, Manchester School of Technology
Parent
Teacher, Granite State High School
Home Education Advisory Council (HEAC)
Diocese of Manchester
Superintendent, Mill Falls Charter School
Teacher, Pembroke Hills Elementary School
Principal, Adult Diploma Program (SAU #84)
Assistant Superintendent, Merrimack Valley School District
Superintendent, Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS)
English Language Learners, NH DOE

<b>Student Wellness Workgroup</b>
Counselor, Franklin School District
NH Pediatric Society (NH AAP)
Counselor, Bakersville School
NH Children's Behavioral Health Collaborative
Seacoast Community Mental Health Center
Teacher, Timberlane Regional High School
School Nurse, Merrimack School District
Parent
Parent
NH Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS)
Special Education Teacher, Bedford School District

<b>Operations Workgroup</b>
Assistant Superintendent, Manchester School District
Parent
Assistant Superintendent (SAU #63)
Parent
Nashua School District, 21 <sup>st</sup> CCLC
Superintendent (SAU #42)
Administrator, Portsmouth School Department
NH School Transportation Assoc. (NHSTA)
Teacher, Goffstown & New Boston
Principal, White Mountain Regional High School
Superintendent (SAU #29)
Parent
Teacher, Salisbury Elementary School

<b>Technology Workgroup</b>
Technology Lead, Lafayette Regional School, Franconia
Mainstream Managed Security
Teacher, Oyster River School District
Teacher, Belmont Middle School
Parent
Superintendent (SAU #58)
Teacher, Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS)

<b>Student Voice Workgroup</b>
Student (secondary)
Student (secondary)
Student (secondary)
Student (secondary)
Student (middle school)

<b>Associations Workgroup</b>
NH Athletic Directors Assoc. (NHADA)
NH School Boards Assoc. (NHSBA)
NH Parent Teachers Association (NHPTA)
NH School Principals Assoc. (NHSPA)
NH School Administrators Assoc. (NHSAA)
NH American Federation of Teachers (NH-AFT)
NH Assoc. of School Psychologists
NH School Counselors Assoc. (NHSCA)
NH Assoc. of Special Ed Admin (NHASEA)
NH Interscholastic Athletic Assoc. (NHIAA)
NH Music Educators Assoc. (NHMEA)
NH School Library Media Association (NHSLMA)
NH School Nurses Assoc.
NH Extended Learning Opportunities (NHELON)
NH Afterschool Network (NHAN)
NH American Choral Directors Assoc. (NHACDA)
NH Chief Technology Officers Organization (NHCTO)
NH Alliance for Public Charter Schools (NHAPCA)
National Education Assoc. of NH (NEA-NH)
NH Parent Information Center (PIC)
NH Career & Technical Education (NHCTE)
State Board of Education
NH Private Special Education Association
NH Assoc. of School Business Officials (NHASBO)
NH School Transportation Assoc. (NHSTA)
School District Governance Assoc. of NH (SDGANH)

STRRT followed an expedited process to solicit meaningful feedback for the ARP/ESSER plan. This process, which was facilitated by the Region 1 Comprehensive Center (AIR), included the following process:

- The SEA communicated the stakeholder engagement process to all STRRT designees and workgroup members.
- The SEA prepared a set of communication templates for STRRT designees to engage workgroup members.
- The SEA engaged the state Comprehensive Center, led by AIR, to facilitate stakeholder feedback.
- STRRT designees coordinated the gathering of feedback from workgroup members.
- The Comprehensive Center compiled all workgroup feedback into standard presentation templates.
- A public meeting was scheduled (and advertised on the SEAs website) on May 17, 2021. This public meeting, which was also attended by local press, was facilitated by the Comprehensive Center. In the public meeting, STRRT designees presented their feedback to the full STRRT, followed by an open discussion period.
- An open invitation was made to allow listening public members to submit additional feedback, if they wanted.

In addition to the very public stakeholder process described above, the SEA made specific outreach to two additional groups, the New Hampshire Commission on Human Rights and the Disability Rights Center of New Hampshire, to ensure complete feedback was received from civil rights organizations.

A complete list of **feedback received is included as Exhibit A to this plan and has been posted on the SEA website**. The feedback that was received was considered and, as much as possible, incorporated into the strategies and actions described in this plan.

2. Coordinating Funds: Describe to what extent the SEA has and will coordinate Federal COVID-19 pandemic funding and other Federal funding. This description must include:
  - i. How the SEA and its LEAs 1) are using or have used prior to the submission of this plan and 2) plan to use following submission of this plan, Federal COVID-19 funding under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (“CARES”) Act and the CRRSA Act to support a safe return to and safely maximize in-person instruction, sustain these operations safely, and address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individual

student groups (including students from low-income families, children with disabilities, English learners, racial or ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students);

- ii. To what extent ESSER I and ESSER II funds have been awarded to LEAs and, if funds have not yet been made available to LEAs, when they will be. In addition, please provide any available information on the total dollar amounts of ESSER I and ESSER II funds that have been obligated but not expended by the SEA and its LEAs, including whether the SEA is able to track LEA obligations.
- iii. In supporting LEAs as they plan for the safe return to and continuity of in-person instruction and for meeting the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, the extent to which the SEA is also using other Federal funding sources including but not limited to under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (“ESEA”), IDEA, Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (“WIOA”), funding for child nutrition services, and McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, and the funds to support the needs of students experiencing homelessness provided by section 2001(b)(1) of the ARP Act.

## **SEA Response**

### **Table C1.**

100% of ESSER I and ESSER II funds, as well as ARP/ESSER funds have been made available to LEAs.

As of June 4, 2021, LEAs have accessed and spend ESSER I and ESSER II funds as follows.

### **LEA Used of Funds**

The tables below outline how LEAs have allocated and drawn down funds from the ESSER I and ESSER II grants.

### ***LEA ESSER I (as of Jun 4, 2021)***

Category	Budgeted	Drawn Down	Description
Preparing for or supporting the 2020-2021 academic year	13,713,020	6,964,459	Technology, bus contracts, staff/faculty compensation, PPE, custodians, materials/supplies that meet CDC guidelines.
Remote Instruction	8,050,421	4,580,082	Technology, virtual licences/software
Facilities	5,831,668	2,761,127	PPE, portable air ventilation, PPE, materials/supplies that meet CDC guidelines.
Remote Support	3,597,901	1,863,245	Streaming services, delivery of technology to remote students.
Equitable Services	2,058,726	646,813	Non-public schools
Indirect Cost and Other	310,555	308,999	Primarily materials that support CDC guidelines (social distancing, PPE)

### LEA ESSER II (as of June 4, 2021)

Category	Budgeted	Drawn Down	Description
Preparing for or supporting the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic years	18,193,783	291,076	Staffing, PPE, software, licensing, technology, furniture, materials, materials that support CDC guidelines.
Indoor Air Quality includes Windows and Doors	7,637,521	-	Construction projects (including HVAC), materials, windows and doors.
Remote Instruction	3,230,388	120,171	Licensing, software, technology, staffing, staffing education
Facilities	3,143,116	43,386	Water sources for social distancing, furniture, materials, custodians/cleaning, materials that support CDC guidelines.
Remote Support	434,345	36,563	Licensing, software, technology
Indirect Cost	442,838	348	
Supporting the 2019-2020 academic year for costs incurred after 3/13/2020 not claimed elsewhere	191,484	10,805	Primarily materials that support CDC guidelines - reimbursement items that were not already allocated to the CARES ESSER I grant.

### SEA Use of Funds

The table below outlines how the SEA has preliminarily obligated and the unallocated federal grant funds.

	GEER I	ESSER I	GEER II	EANS	ESSER II	Arp/ESSER	Total
Unallocated	0	(3,621)	393,563	13,195	1,877,910	10,500,000	12,781,047
LEA Funds	-	33,877,235	-	-	140,459,226	315,000,000	489,336,461
Technology and Instructional Support	2,896,314	2,896,314	-	-	4,107,260	-	9,899,888
Educator Training	-	205,500	-	-	2,000,000	-	2,205,500
Learning Loss	-	-	500,000	-	6,350,000	17,500,000	24,350,000
COVID Student Support	2,640,000	175,500	500,000	-	-	-	3,315,500
COVID Admin Support	-	-	1,450,000	-	-	-	1,450,000
Summer Programing	3,000,000	235,640	-	-	-	3,500,000	6,735,640
Before/After School	-	-	-	-	-	3,500,000	3,500,000
Student Mental Health	-	-	500,000	-	150,000	-	650,000
EANS	-	-	-	7,056,014	-	-	7,056,014
Administration	355,156	254,804	456,285	-	1,121,410	-	2,187,656
	8,891,470	37,641,372	3,799,848	7,069,209	156,065,807	350,000,000	563,467,706

To support a safe return to and safely maximize in-person instruction, sustain these operations safely, and address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on individual student groups, the SEA provided the following supports to:

- **Students from low-income families:** The SEA has targeted its CARES and CRRSA-funded programming to student groups on which the pandemic had a disproportionate impact. For example, the ReKINDling Curiosity: Every Kid Goes to Camp program

and the YES! program described serve means-tested students and students with disabilities; program supports reflect student need. Beginning in SY 2021-2022, the SEA also plans to utilize Title I funds to provide students in Title I and Title I eligible high schools with access to online college credit-bearing courses. These courses are embedded in the school day and are offered in partnership with Equity Lab.

- **Children with disabilities:** Using IDEA state funds, the SEA reimbursed school districts over \$1.7 million for compensatory education funds to support providing students with disabilities who may not have received all the services needed during the pandemic with appropriate compensatory education services. Early in the pandemic, the SEA also provided school districts over \$1 million in IDEA state funds based on a per-pupil award to support the purchase of electronics and other materials needed to support students with disabilities in receiving their services remotely. Finally, using federal funds the Governor’s Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery designated the SEA to administer, the SEA provided nearly \$3 million to approved private providers of special education to offset lost revenue and pandemic-related expenses. Thus, the SEA helped ensure these vital entities providing support services to students with some of the most severe disabilities within New Hampshire would be available to support students during and after the pandemic.
- **English learners:** English learners (ELs) in New Hampshire are an immensely diverse group of students with varying experiences and a range of educational needs. For many ELs, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the difficulties ELs face. The quick pivot to remote learning resulted in an uneven response across the state. Recognizing that ELs disproportionately may have difficulty accessing disrupted instruction, the SEA provided \$1.0 million of funding to nonprofits supporting these families, including immigrant support organizations, and a local university to provide direct support to make sure that these students were able to access their instruction during the pandemic.
- **Racial or ethnic minorities:** The SEA provided and will continue to provide additional support to under-performing student subgroups, including low income students, ESL students and students with disabilities, which groups disproportionately include racial and ethnic minorities. The SEA does not provide support exclusively based on race consistent with federal civil rights law.
- **Students experiencing homelessness:** To ensure students experiencing homelessness have access to and appropriate supports from their district public school of choice, the New Hampshire McKinney Vento team provided timely responses to increased and novel requests for technical assistance regarding LEA responsibilities to serve students experiencing homelessness. This technical assistance was provided through phone meetings and the dissemination of guidance through information driven responses to individual needs. Additionally, the SEA supported the development of pandemic responsive content to be presented at the state and regional liaison conferences at which critical learning and networking takes place. The SEA also supported LEA use to the federal Title I-A grant and ESSER funds to remove barriers

to education, which include providing technology and hot spots for internet access to students during remote learning.

- **Children and youth in foster care:** Through the ESEA Programs Office, the SEA has supported those children and youth in foster care by providing districts with technical assistance around best interest decisions for the students' academic success. This includes assuring that all students entering foster care will be able to remain at their school of origin, if in the best interest of the student. The SEA works with the LEAs to make sure that there is a foster care plan in place to this end, addressing how transportation will be provided, naming a foster care point of contact for the LEA, and requiring immediate enrollment and transfer of records, should the student need to change schools. Remaining in the school of choice or lessening the impact of a necessary change are vital to ensuring that students entering foster care will continue to have academic success. Additionally, the SEA has and will continue to work collaboratively with the NH DHHS to ensure educational stability for students in foster care including additional support for transportation, immediate enrollment, and record transfers, as well as additional educational support services.
- **Migratory students:** During the pandemic, the New Hampshire Migrant Education Program team which is supported by federal basic and consortium migrant education grants, ensured that all students received educational materials by mail and drop-off. Referrals to appropriate educational and social services were made after a discussion with parents/caregivers regarding needed academic, nutritional, and social/emotional supports during the pandemic. All families were sent personal protective equipment kits (PPE), which included a flier in their native language explaining the importance of social distancing and the safety guidelines set forth by the State. To protect both our students and our staff, one-on-one tutoring, home visits, and recruiting took place virtually. Online tutorials were offered to interested students, and SEA staff contacted families to ensure they had access to both internet and computers in order to participate in remote learning offered by the school district and the SEA.

The SEA has evaluated other Federal funding sources in an effort to support LEAs in their COVID-19 response. These include:

- Starting in March 2020, significant effort and attention was placed on making sure that students with disabilities were making progress toward educational and other IEP goals. This included state [Emergency Order #48 Special Education Requirements to Support Education](#). This Emergency Order, among other things, required,
  - “1. Each school district is required to hold Individualized Education Plan (“IEP”) team meetings, as set forth in RSA 186-C:7 and Ed 1107, to consider Extended-School Year (“ESY”) services for every child with an IEP, regardless of whether they have been provided ESY in the past, no later than June 30th, 2020. If, at the time of the IEP team meeting, the remote instruction emergency orders have been neither removed nor extended through the summer, the IEP program team shall consider options for both traditional in-person ESY programs and for remote ESY programs.

- Each school district must ensure that they hold IEP team meetings for every student identified for special education services no later than 30 calendar days after the first day of the school district's 2020-2021 school year. At the meeting, the IEP team will consider what Compensatory Education Services, if any, are required to be provided to make up for services not provided during period of remote instruction and support, student regression, or student's failure to make expected progress as indicated in the student's IEP.”

As a result of these Emergency Order activities, LEAs compiled a list of identified compensatory education services that were needed. In support of providing these compensatory services, the SEA used \$1.7 million of state level IDEA funds.

- Upon return to instruction in September 2020, it became apparent that certain English learner populations might need additional support in accessing their instruction. The SEA, working with the governor’s office, implemented contracts using \$1.0 million of CARES Act funds with community organizations and a local college to provide direct support services to this population. This program was so effective in supporting the English learner population, that the SEA has continued the work in the Spring of 2021 with an additional \$1.0 million of GEER funds.
- Recognizing the serious strain on LEA finances as a result of COVID-19 response, the SEA worked with the governor’s office to develop and implement a \$45 million Supplemental Funding program for LEAs, including \$500 per pupil and \$10 million of emergency grant funds.
- Recognizing also that Special Education service providers were also significantly disrupted by COVID-19, a special \$3.0 million grant program was offered to these essential third party providers to help them in providing essential support services to students with disabilities.
- Recognizing the disruption to student enrichment and before and after school programming, the SEA offered a \$1.5 million grant program to student enrichment programming using CARES Act funds. In addition, the SEA offered Title IVB programs, many of whom expanded programming to support remote learners while parents were working, supplemental grants to support extended programming.
- Through the USDA, the SEA received \$47 million of additional funding to support extended meal support to families, many significantly impacted by the pandemic. These funds were distributed through both LEA and qualifying community meal programs.

## D. Maximizing State-Level Funds to Support Students

The Department recognizes that States have an extraordinary opportunity to address the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on underserved students through the ARP Act's required State set-asides to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, provide summer learning and enrichment programs, and provide comprehensive afterschool programs. In this section, SEAs will describe their evidence-based strategies for these resources.

1. Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time: Describe how the SEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(f)(1) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 5 percent of the State's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) on evidence-based interventions to address the academic impact of lost instructional time by supporting the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that such interventions respond to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The description must include:
  - i. A description of the evidence-based interventions (e.g., providing intensive or high-dosage tutoring, accelerating learning) the SEA has selected, and the extent to which the SEA will evaluate the impact of those interventions on an ongoing basis to understand if they are working;
  - ii. How the evidence-based interventions will specifically address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii. When possible, please indicate which data sources the SEA will use to determine the impact of lost instructional time; and
  - iii. The extent to which the SEA will use funds it reserves to identify and engage 1) students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and 2) students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.

### SEA Response

In its selection of evidence-based interventions to address learning loss, the SEA intends to consult the federal What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), engage with subject matter experts, and seek technical assistance from the Comprehensive Centers in order to identify the most effective evidence-based interventions that best fit New Hampshire's unique context. Whenever possible, and where it makes most sense, the SEA intends to select programs that align to ESSA's highest tiers of evidence. However, the SEA also recognizes that the unprecedented nature of the pandemic event and the typical lag in publishing results from randomized control trial (RCT) studies means that for many of our students' current situations during the pandemic, there may not be evidence of the

highest quality available to support our intervention choices. In those instances, the SEA commits to selecting interventions with moderate or promising evidence, or those programs that demonstrate a rationale based on research that the intervention is likely to improve student outcomes. To the extent it's practical and feasible, the SEA intends to evaluate and make public the impact of its academic interventions.

Through the SEA stakeholder engagement process, important feedback was obtained that helped shape the SEA's response to student learning loss. That feedback is included at **Exhibit A** and has been posted on the SEA website.

The SEA will prioritize its spending based on stakeholder feedback and the identified issues and priorities outlined in Section A.2., above. These include:

- **Individualized Instruction to Recover Any Learning Loss.**

As a result of the pandemic and indications from assessment data (see discussion below for assessment during the pandemic), the SEA anticipates that the student performance curve across the state will look different this year. The expectation is that the middle will have flattened and the ends of the performance curve will have grown, with more students at the top end of the curve and more students at the bottom end, with a larger standard deviation. In other words, some students are performing better than they were pre-pandemic and some students are performing worse than they were performing pre-pandemic.

Some students thrived in pandemic learning, either through strong home supports or the exercise of greater individual agency that allowed them to flourish. Alternatively, more students had difficulty accessing their education, either because of lack of appropriate resources or an instructional model that was not conducive to their learning style, among other reasons. Given these dynamics, it will be important for all students to be engaged based on where they are on their learning curve, whether accelerated or having fallen behind, in a way that challenges them, is not stigmatizing, and allows them to be successful.

Individualized instruction will also be a challenge facing our schools. Educators returning to the classroom will need tools and instructional approaches that enable them to be effective with a broader range of students and a system flexible enough to allow teachers room to help students succeed. This issue will provide fertile ground for investment of relief funds.

- **Educator Fatigue**

Many of our educators in New Hampshire worked in instructional models for which they were not trained. Before the pandemic, educator preparation focused on in-person, in-classroom instruction. While most of our educators performed

admirably in the new instructional model, it added to stress and anxiety levels for educators across the state. This may affect their perspective and performance upon return to the classroom that can be supported with additional skill preparation and support. We will utilize our [critical shortage survey](#) results that will be collected in October 2021 to evaluate if higher than normal levels of retirement and attrition exist. This will inform strategies to attend to our teacher workforce, if necessary, and to recruit new and highly motivated teachers.

- **Family Engagement**

The third area of focus for the SEA will be around family engagement. Even before the pandemic, family engagement played an important role in student success. During the pandemic, one of the bright spots was increased family engagement in student learning. One example of this is a family survey that was conducted in May and June of 2020. More than 56,000 parents and educators responded, which far exceeded previous record of response. They provided invaluable input into the design of instruction. This survey will be given again in June 2021. Although family engagement itself is not a problem, the heightened levels of engagement of families is an opportunity that we want to capitalize on and continue, to the benefit of students.

- **Additional Stakeholder Feedback**

A significant theme in our stakeholder feedback was the importance of stabilizing student social and emotional health. Stakeholders identified that, in order to make academic progress, students will need to be socially and emotionally supported. In expanding the offerings provided in partnership with Community Behavioral Health Association described in Section D 2) through ARP ESSER funds, stakeholder feedback identified needs including:

- School based mental and behavioral health supports, including Counselors, social workers, OTs, LDACs, SAPs, community care teams, coaches, mentors, interventionists; and
- Further expansion of the SEA's work on MTSS-B, Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

Additionally, with respect to instruction, representatives from the disability community continue to advocate for continued expansion of inclusionary practices. This is an area that New Hampshire has significantly invested in over the past 4 years, particularly with respect to its UDL program. Additional training and instructional opportunities will further embed inclusionary practices.

The SEA also recognizes its important role in supporting LEAs and statewide activities that LEAs, on their own, would not be in a position to support. The SEA anticipates finalizing plans for the use of its reserved funds in these priority areas with specific

spending plans developed to complement the deployment of LEA funds within the next several months.

**Specific programmatic plans for Learning Recovery/Academic Impact of Lost Instructional Time include:**

The SEA is offering school districts access to a learning recovery program, [Recovering Bright Futures](#), which supports learning pods, an individualized instructional model. This model, supported by \$6 million in ESSER II state funds, allows school districts and communities to offer small-group, multi-age, trauma-sensitive instruction to students who may need additional support. The program may serve up to 1,200 students. Since this is a pandemic-related education innovation, the SEA is currently working to design an external, quasi-experimental study (tier 2) or correlational study (tier 3) utilizing ESSER state level funds.

Additionally, stakeholders also shared the importance of innovative learning spaces, including outdoor learning spaces and alternative spaces for school district learning pods, when providing feedback on ARP ESSER. The SEA anticipates finalizing plans for the use of its reserved funds to support these priorities within the next several months.

The SEA also recognizes the benefit of additional support to struggling students. During 2020-2021, the SEA launched a series of support structures to aid students struggling academically. One example of such support was the launch, along with Khan Academy, of [schoolhouse.world](#). Since the New Hampshire SEA first launched this innovative platform, SEAs from Arkansas, Mississippi, Alaska, Nevada, Rhode Island, North Dakota, Idaho, and Ohio have also partnered with schoolhouse.world.

This platform provides secondary students with high-quality tutoring. While at the initial launch, this was focused principally on math instruction, additional subjects are being developed and rolled out so that students will have a complete set of online tutoring supports to help meet their needs. The SEA also partnered with Modern States to offer online college classes at no cost to New Hampshire schools or families. The expectation is that these new and continuing activities will be supported through federal funds.

Another area of additional support a \$2 million investment by the SEA in its Yes! Program. This program provides students with supplemental support services including intensive tutoring and supplemental special education therapies and services. Up to 1,940 qualifying students – students with disabilities and economically disadvantaged students – are able to access up to \$1,000 to obtain tutoring and special education therapies and services. Qualified education providers for this program include New Hampshire certified educators and qualified service providers including licensed therapists. The SEA anticipates continuing its support of student groups disproportionately impacted by

COVID-19 through intensive, high-dose tutoring and supplemental educational courses and services. The expectation is that these new and continuing activities will be supported through federal funds.

To ensure these interventions address the needs of those students disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, the SEA has targeted both the Recovering Bright Futures and YES! Program to such students through eligibility limitations and preferences. Please find additional information about supports targeted at specific student groups in Section C(2).

Additionally, to support learning recovery among students experiencing homelessness, the SEA plans to subgrant the newly released first round of ARP Homeless funds, ARP Homeless I, to LEAs competitively. This competition will emphasize identification and outreach, reengagement, credit recovery and attainment, transportation, and removing other unique barriers the pandemic has created for students who are experiencing homelessness. In the 2019-2020 school year, 3,500 students were identified as homeless. This number is expected to drop once 2020-2021 school year data becomes available. Many liaisons have reported the reasons for this include students moving due to loss of housing, remote learning challenges, and people who are newly homeless due to the pandemic being unaware of McKinney Vento services.

Finally, New Hampshire is working with LEAs to identify disengaged students, including those who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years and students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction during school building closures. The SEA does not plan to collect such data, although it will require LEAs to describe efforts to reengage students as part of the LEA reopening plans. Consistent with the New Hampshire theory of change, we anticipate LEAs and schools are best positioned to identify disengaged students and serve them effectively, with support from the SEA. Moreover, New Hampshire's focus on competency-based education—measuring mastery rather than seat time—makes education leaders most likely to focus on learning loss.

While the SEA anticipates that the state will continue to offer in-person instruction in the fall of 2021, the SEA aims to improve the quality of online instruction to protect against potential student disengagement. The SEA has, through an RFP process, leveraged \$2 million of ESSER II state funds to contract with the University System of New Hampshire, Granite State College to offer all [New Hampshire educators training](#) in designing an online course, instructing an online course and using the state learning management system to conduct that instruction. To encourage educator participation in this program, the SEA will pay participation stipends.

New Hampshire is well-positioned to gain an understanding of where students are academically. During the spring of 2020, prior to the onset of the pandemic, New Hampshire had over 3,000 students that had already completed the statewide assessment, NHSAS. During the fall 2020, New Hampshire implemented the NHSAS, using the SAT (for students who did not complete that assessment in the spring 2020) and interim-NHSAS for 4th – 8th grade students. During the spring 2021, all students were given the opportunity to take the state accountability assessment (SAT/NHSAS). Further, the New Hampshire Comprehensive Center, AIR, has been engaged to help in the evaluation of these assessment results, giving the SEA important information on student academic performance. Because this information is at the student level and, with the SEA EOY data collection described above with student level data relative to instructional mode, concrete analysis can be completed with student performance data and instructional mode. This granular level of data will allow targeted interventions to students needing additional supports in specific student groups. With this information available in October or November 2021, it will be possible to target interventions toward those schools and students who have been most disrupted by pandemic instructional models, including remote instruction or other factors that may have impacted a student’s academic progress.

2. Evidence-Based Summer Learning and Enrichment Programs: Describe how the SEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(f)(2) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 1 percent of the State’s total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) for evidence-based summer learning and enrichment programs, including those that begin in Summer 2021, and ensure such programs respond to students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The description must include:
  - i. A description of the evidence-based programs that address the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of students (e.g., providing intensive or high-dosage tutoring, accelerating learning) the SEA has selected, and the extent to which the SEA will evaluate the impact of those programs;
  - ii. How the evidence-based programs will specifically address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3. i.--viii. When possible, please indicate which data sources the SEA will use to identify students most in need of summer learning and enrichment programs; and
  - iii. The extent to which the SEA will use funds it reserves to identify and engage 1) students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and 2) students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.

## SEA Response

After making a significant investment in [evidence-based](#) (tier 1, 2 and 3) summer enrichment activities for summer 2021 supported by more than \$3.0 million in federal GEER I funds and given the timing of the SEA's receipt of ARP ESSER funds, the SEA is planning to use its ARP ESSER summer learning and enrichment set aside to fund evidence-based programs and supports during the summers. This may include expanding its [ReKINDling Curiosity](#) program, which aims to serve between 4,485 and 8,330 students. The program provides low-income students and students with disabilities the opportunity to attend a licensed New Hampshire camp, and was designed to lift student spirits, to help students reengage with peers through meaningful enrichment, and to mitigate mental and behavioral health issues. Currently, partners include the New Hampshire Boys and Girls Club and the New Hampshire YMCA.

As part of this program, the SEA also contracted with the New Hampshire Community Behavioral Health Association (CBHA), the Association for the state Community Mental Health Centers. Through this \$500,000 contract, all New Hampshire camp counselors (ages 14 and up) will have available specific training to help identify and respond to mental and behavioral health issues of students attending camps. In addition, the CBHA will support on-site counseling services for those students needing such support as well as referral activities for students needing more intensive support. The principal purpose of this program is to help students reengage so that they will be ready and equipped to learn when they return to school in the fall of 2021.

In its selection of evidence-based summer learning and enrichment programs during the summers, the SEA intends to consult the federal What Works Clearinghouse (WWC), engage with subject matter experts, and seek technical assistance from the Comprehensive Centers in order to identify the most effective and best fit evidence-based programs for our context. Whenever possible and where it makes sense, the SEA intends to select programs from among the highest tier of evidence. However, the SEA also recognizes that the unprecedented nature of the pandemic event and the typical lag in availability of results from randomized control trial (RCT) studies means that for many of our student's current situations, there may not be evidence of the highest quality available to support our program choices. In those instances, the SEA commits to selecting programs with moderate or promising evidence, or those programs that demonstrate a rationale based on research that the program is likely to improve student outcomes. To the extent it's practical and feasible within the financial constraints of the contract, the SEA intends to evaluate and make public the impact of its summer enrichment programs.

To ensure these interventions address the needs of those students disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, the SEA targeted ReKINDling Curiosity to such students through eligibility limitations and preferences. Please find additional information about supports targeted at specific student groups in Section C(2). The SEA intends to use its

ESSER/ARP funding to provide new and additional enrichment opportunities aimed at vulnerable student populations starting in the upcoming summers. The selection of programs will be informed by stakeholder feedback collected during recent outreach.

In order to identify the students most in need, New Hampshire will consult data from the spring 2021 administration of the summative assessments for English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science for grades 3-8 and grade 11. In addition, the ELP assessment, ACCESS 2.0, was fully administered in 2020 and 2021, allowing NH to derive academic impact data for English language learners. NH also administered an interim summative assessment in ELA and math in fall 2020. With this information available in October or November 2021, it will be possible for the SEA to target evidence-based interventions toward those schools and students whose learning was most affected by the pandemic.

3. [Evidence-Based Comprehensive Afterschool Programs](#): Describe how the SEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(f)(3) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 1 percent of the State’s total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) for evidence-based comprehensive afterschool programs (including, for example, before-school programming), and ensure such programs respond to students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. The description must include:
  - i. A description of the evidence-based programs (e.g., including partnerships with community-based organizations) the SEA has selected, and the extent to which the SEA will evaluate the impact of those programs;
  - ii. How the evidence-based programs will specifically address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii. When possible, please indicate which data sources the SEA will use to identify students most in need of comprehensive afterschool programming; and
  - iii. The extent to which the SEA will use funds it reserves to identify and engage 1) students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years; and 2) students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures.

## **SEA Response**

The SEA has supported evidence-based afterschool programs through a number of partnerships with community-based organizations. Most notably, the SEA is utilizing \$500,000 in GEER I and \$300,000 in GEER II to partner with the New Hampshire United Way to provide afterschool enrichment opportunities and other wraparound services to English learners and low-income students. The SEA anticipates leveraging these and other community-based organization partnerships to support student groups disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 in the use of ARP ESSER state funds. In

particular, the SEA will partner with an adult education center to provide similar such services statewide—instruction including in digital literacy, technology and internet, new parent information modules/sessions, and new joint family literacy activities—utilizing ARP ESSER state funds.

The SEA also invested over \$235,000 in ESSER I state funds in educational robotics afterschool and summer enrichment programs. For example, supported by \$57,000 in ESSER I state funds, the SEA, [VEX Robotics](#), [SPARK Academy](#) (a public charter high school) and the Manchester Community College campus will host more than 60 educationally disadvantaged eighth grade students from the Manchester School District (New Hampshire's largest school district) for a six-week, hands-on program using VEX robotics technology during the summer of 2021. By teaching students robotics, they will learn principles of computer programming, math, science, and engineering. This program complements the Manchester LEA's Gear Up program by providing activities that align with the academic classes that the students will be taking within the district while allowing students to learn in an interdisciplinary setting where they can apply the core content area learning to real-life problems.

The SEA also partnered with evidence-based (tier 3) FIRST NH Robotics leveraging over \$175,000 in ESSER I state funds to provide mentor-based programs offering a progressive series of team robotics challenges for students aged 6-18. The goal of this program is to continue to support student learning in STEM concepts and skills through application in real-life problems posed during hands-on experiments while participating on school teams in the robotic challenges. Through the Spring Back Plan, NH FIRST is also building interest in STEM with the distribution of hands-on experiments for students and their families and through demonstrations around New Hampshire and to summer camps programs within the state. The SEA intends to continue to partner with high-quality afterschool enrichment providers to expand such opportunities, especially in STEM.

Additionally, utilizing \$100,000 of GEER I, the SEA partnered with the vendor of its career assessment platform, AWATO, to develop extended and work based learning opportunities especially targeting student groups disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

Finally, to support continued course access opportunities for students and demand-driven professional development for teachers, the SEA invested over \$6 million in GEER I and ESSER I state funds to create a new state-level learning management system in collaboration with the University System of New Hampshire. This system made available to all New Hampshire schools, educators, and families a technology platform for the effective deployment of remote and online instruction, including best practices around synchronous instruction. The SEA will continue to expand the learning management

system's utility, as it allows evidence-based and high-quality instructional materials, courses, and professional development can be immediately deployed throughout the state, including content that may be used to support high-quality out-of-school time enrichment programs.

4. [Emergency Needs](#): If the SEA plans to reserve funds for emergency needs under section 2001(f)(4) of the ARP Act to address issues responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, describe the anticipated use of those funds, including the extent to which these funds will build SEA and LEA capacity to ensure students' and staff's health and safety; to meet students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs; and to use ARP ESSER funds to implement evidence-based interventions.

## **SEA Response**

The SEA does intend to reserve funds for administrative costs and potentially emergency needs under section 2001(f)(4). Such administrative costs include the staff of a newly established Office of COVID-19 Education Programs, which will build SEA and LEA capacity to ensure students' and staff's health and safety, meet students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, and to use ARP ESSER funds to implement evidence-based interventions. The SEA intends to hire a senior administrator to oversee the office and two additional senior staff. This reserve for administrative costs will also include a Memorandum of Understanding with the New Hampshire Department of Administrative Services' Bureau of Public Works needed to meet federal requirements related to the use of ESSER funds on construction projects.

Regarding potential emergency needs, because most New Hampshire schools have been open during the 2020-2021 school year and given the SEA provided \$45 million of Supplemental Funding to schools for 2020-2021, there are fewer emergency needs at the present time. The SEA commits to partnering with LEAs and stakeholders to identify areas of need when utilizing the remaining funds.

Lastly, to support the effective fiscal management of emergency funds, the SEA invested nearly \$170,000 in providing LEAs access to Georgetown University's McCourt School of Public Policy's Certificate in Education Finance, which equips participants with practical skills in strategic fiscal management, policy analysis, and leadership. The Edunomics Lab will design and conduct a two-day education finance training for up to 500 New Hampshire education leaders. Learning will take place through a combination of interactive classroom instruction, self-reflection, and hands-on practice. Participants will be guided through an examination of the financial and related resource allocation issues that are integral parts of public education policy in the United States; gain familiarity with budgets, spending-related policies, and data sources for financial

information; and wrestle with challenges of productivity and tradeoffs. Participants will build fluency in how management decisions, wide-ranging policies, and resource allocation intersect to impact student success across multiple contexts, including their own. Upon completion of the first the two day course, selected participants will be eligible to participate in advanced training to achieve a Certificate in Education Finance (CEF), paid for by the SEA.

### **E. Supporting LEAs in Planning for and Meeting Students' Needs**

The Department recognizes that the safe return to in-person instruction must be accompanied by a focus on meeting students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, and by addressing the opportunity gaps that existed before – and were exacerbated by – the pandemic. In this section, SEAs will describe how they will support their LEAs in developing high-quality plans for LEAs' use of ARP ESSER funds to achieve these objectives.

1. LEA Plans for the Use of ARP ESSER Funds: Describe what the SEA will require its LEAs to include in LEA plans consistent with the ARP ESSER requirements for the use of ARP ESSER funds, how the SEA will require such plans to be made available to the public, and the deadline by which the LEA must submit its ARP ESSER plan (which must be a reasonable timeline and should be within no later than 90 days after receiving its ARP ESSER allocation). The LEA plans must include, at a minimum:
  - i. The extent to which and how the funds will be used to implement prevention and mitigation strategies that are, to the greatest extent practicable, in line with the most recent CDC guidance, in order to continuously and safely operate schools for in-person learning;
  - ii. How the LEA will use the funds it reserves under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act (totaling not less than 20 percent of the LEA's total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs;
  - iii. How the LEA will spend its remaining ARP ESSER funds consistent with section 2001(e)(2) of the ARP Act; and
  - iv. How the LEA will ensure that the interventions it implements, including but not limited to the interventions under section 2001(e)(1) of the ARP Act to address the academic impact of lost instructional time, will respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students, and particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students.

### **SEA Response**

To ensure LEAs meet such federal ARP ESSER statutory and regulatory requirements, the SEA will release a template for the LEA ARP ESSER Plan, often called the “school district use of funds plan” on June 24, 2021, which is 30 days after LEAs received funds. The timing of this release allows LEAs to focus on completion of the LEA Plan on the Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services plan (which is due when this new template will be released) while still providing the template to LEAs 60 days before such plans are due to the SEA on August 13, 2021. The plan template, which will be consistent ARP ESSER IFR requirements, and other ARP ESSER documents will be posted [here](#). Following publication of the LEA ARP ESSER Plan template, the SEA will conduct a webinar with all school district superintendents walking through the template, including outlining the relevant regulatory requirements and explaining relevant deadlines including that the plan must be submitted and made publicly available on its website within 90 days of receipt of funds. The template will include:

- i. The extent to which (a description and total funds designated) the LEA plans to use funds to implement prevention and mitigation strategies aligned with each of the CDC health and safety strategies in table B1 in SY 2021-2022. Such components of the school district use of funds plan will be evaluated for completeness.
- ii. Total funds reserved (totaling not less than 20 percent of the LEA’s total allocation of ARP ESSER funds) and descriptions (including level of evidence in the interventions chosen) for SY 2021-2022 of how the LEA plans to use funds reserved to address the academic impact of lost instructional time through the implementation of evidence-based learning loss interventions, as required under section 2001(e)(1) of ARPA. Such evidence-based learning loss interventions may include summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs. Such components of the school district use of funds plan will be evaluated for compliance with statutory requirements and completeness.
- iii. Descriptions (categorized by the statutory language in section 2001(e)(2)(A-R) of ARPA and including level of evidence in the interventions chosen if applicable) for SY 2021-2022 of how the LEA plans to its remaining ARP ESSER funds. Such components of the school district use of funds plan will be evaluated for compliance with statutory requirements and completeness.
- iv. Descriptions of how the interventions it implements will respond to the academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of all students and those particularly those students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including specifically students from low-income families, students of color, English learners, children with disabilities, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students. Such

components of the school district use of funds plan will be evaluated for completeness.

2. LEA Consultation: Describe how the SEA will, in planning for the use of ARP ESSER funds, ensure that, consistent with the ARP ESSER requirements], its LEAs engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders, including, but not limited to:
  - i. Students;
  - ii. Families;
  - iii. School and district administrators (including special education administrators); and
  - iv. Teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions.

The LEA must also engage in meaningful consultation with each of the following to the extent present in or served by the LEA:

- v. Tribes;
- vi. Civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and
- vii. Stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

The description must also include how the SEA will ensure that LEAs provide the public the opportunity to provide input in the development of the LEA's plan for the use of ARP ESSER funds and take such input into account.

## **SEA Response**

As described immediately above, the SEA released a template for the LEA ARP ESSER Plan, often called the "school district use of funds plan" on June 24, 2021. The template will also will include:

- Affirmation (yes, no, or not applicable) and description (extent of the consultation and when it occurred relative to finalization of the plan) of how the LEA met the federal regulatory requirement to engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders, including, but not limited to:
  - students;
  - families;
  - teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions;
  - school and district administrators (including special education administrators);
  - Tribes and Tribal organizations, if applicable;
  - civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and

- stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

Such components of the school district use of funds plan will be evaluated for completeness.

- Affirmation (yes or no) and description (input trends, when it occurred relative to finalization of the plan, and how it was utilized) of public input in the development of the school district use of funds plan. Such components of the school district use of funds plan will be evaluated for completeness.

In addition to the new SEA processes described above, as part of the SEA’s Grant Management System (GMS), LEAs provide a plan for the use of funds. Such plans form the basis for the activities of the LEA and are dynamic in that districts report completed plan activities and have the ability to modify plans throughout the grant period. This provides the SEA with real-time engagement with the plan completion and serves as a type of programmatic monitoring throughout the grant period. In addition to this monitoring, the SEA also has a fiscal monitoring program to ensure that LEAs are expending and reporting funds usage according to the plan and allowable uses. Though the use of the SEA GMS, the SEA will continue to monitor grant activity against plan throughout the grant period.

3. Describe how the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs in using ARP ESSER funds. The description must include:
  - i. How the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs’ implementation of evidence-based interventions that respond to students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, such as through summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool programs, or extended school year programs – including the extent to which the SEA will collect evidence of the effectiveness of interventions employed;

## **SEA Response**

Through technical assistance and training, the SEA will support the LEAs in the development of plans for the deployment of LEA ARP/ESSER funds. Topics that the SEA will cover with LEAs include how to target support for the students most affected by COVID-19, reengage students following the pandemic, address learning loss, collect and use stakeholder feedback, and use evidence-based programs. The SEA will use its regular communications channels with LEAs, including a monthly Commissioner call and a monthly senior staff call with all school district superintendents, to provide assistance as well as special sessions to specifically address ARP/ESSER questions and topics. The SEA will also continue to facilitate communities of practice, which provides

opportunities for LEAs to discuss relevant topics with each other. Lastly, the SEA will provide an LEA template for LEAs to develop their own plans, including describing the use of evidence-based programs, and the SEA will review each LEA plan for completeness.

Once planned, the SEA can continue to support LEAs in the management of those funds through the GMS processes. In the GMS process, LEAs provide a plan for the use of funds. Such plans form the basis for the activities of the LEA and are dynamic in that districts report completed plan activities and have the ability to modify plans throughout the grant period. This provides the SEA with real-time engagement with the plan completion and serves as a type of programmatic monitoring throughout the grant period. In addition to this monitoring, the SEA also has a fiscal monitoring program to ensure that LEAs are expending and reporting funds usage according to the plan and allowable uses, including meeting the requirement that a portion of funds are used to support evidence-based programs. Through the use of the SEA GMS, the SEA will continue to monitor grant activity against the plan throughout the grant period. In the event an LEA fails to spend in accordance with its plan or to use the correct percentage of funds on evidence-based programs, the SEA will use its normal monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance, which can include sanctions or recovery of funds.

ii. How the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs in specifically addressing the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on certain groups of students, including each of the student groups listed in question A.3.i.-viii; and

## **SEA Response**

Through technical assistance and training, the SEA will support the LEAs in the development of plans for the deployment of LEA ARP/ESSER funds. Topics that the SEA will cover with LEAs include how to target support for the students most affected by COVID-19. The SEA will provide an LEA template for LEAs to develop their own plans, including a requirement for information about how each LEA will address the students most affected by COVID-19.

The GMS monitoring process described above ensures that the plan is implemented as written, including support for the students most affected by COVID-19. In the event an LEA fails to spend in accordance with its plan, the SEA will use its normal monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance, which can include sanctions or recovery of funds.

iii. How the SEA will support and monitor its LEAs in using ARP ESSER funds to identify, reengage, and support students most likely to have experienced the impact of lost instructional time on student learning, such as:

- a. Students who have missed the most in-person instruction during the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 school years;
- b. Students who did not consistently participate in remote instruction when offered during school building closures; and
- c. Students most at-risk of dropping out of school.

## **SEA Response**

Through technical assistance and training, the SEA will support the LEAs in the development of plans for the deployment of LEA ARP/ESSER funds. Topics that the SEA will cover with LEAs include how to reengage students after COVID-19 and address learning loss. The SEA will provide an LEA template for LEAs to develop their own plans, including a requirement for information about how each LEA will reengage students and address learning loss.

The GMS monitoring process described above ensures that the plan is implemented as written, including reengaging students after COVID-19 and addressing learning loss. In the event an LEA fails to spend in accordance with its plan, the SEA will use its normal monitoring and enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance, which can include sanctions or recovery of funds.

New Hampshire has available rich data regarding student performance that it intends to share with LEAs. New Hampshire anticipates full administration in spring 2021 of the summative assessments for English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science for grades 3-8 and grade 11. In addition, the ELP assessment, ACCESS 2.0, was fully administered in 2020 and 2021, allowing NH to derive academic impact data for English language learners. NH also administered an interim summative assessment in ELA and math in fall 2020.

With this information, it will be possible to target interventions toward those schools and students whose learning was interrupted by the pandemic.

4. Describe the extent to which the SEA will support its LEAs in implementing additional strategies for taking educational equity into account in expending ARP ESSER funds, including but not limited to :
  - i. Allocating funding both to schools and for districtwide activities based on student need, and

## **SEA Response**

Consistent with the SEA's belief in local control of education, the SEA will continue to empower LEAs to utilize their ARP ESSER and other allocations to best serve the needs of their students, families, and teachers. In sharing best practices with LEAs through

webinars and individual technical assistance, the SEA will encourage LEAs to allocate funds to schools on a per-pupil basis weighted by individual student need, including but not limited to low-income students, students with disabilities, English learners, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students. Such LEA implementation strategies both empower school leaders with some autonomy in administering these unprecedented resources and ensure transparency in administering funds based on student need. Through these mechanisms, the SEA also encourages expenditures on districtwide activities that prioritize students with the greatest needs.

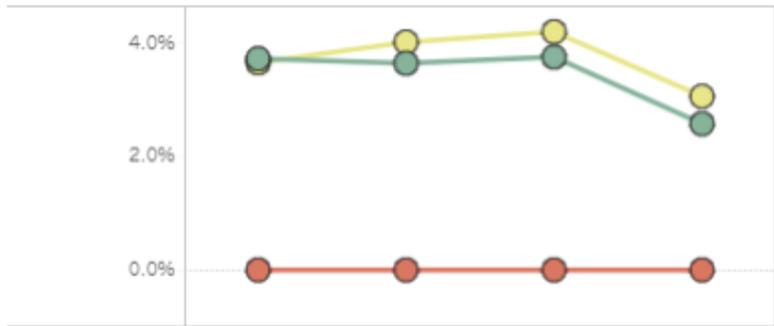
ii. **Implementing an equitable and inclusive return to in-person instruction.** An inclusive return to in-person instruction includes, but is not limited to, establishing policies and practices that avoid the over-use of exclusionary discipline measures (including in- and out-of-school suspensions) and creating a positive and supportive learning environment for all students.

## **SEA Response**

Currently all schools in New Hampshire are open for full-time, in-person instruction, helping to ensure every student has access to an appropriate education.

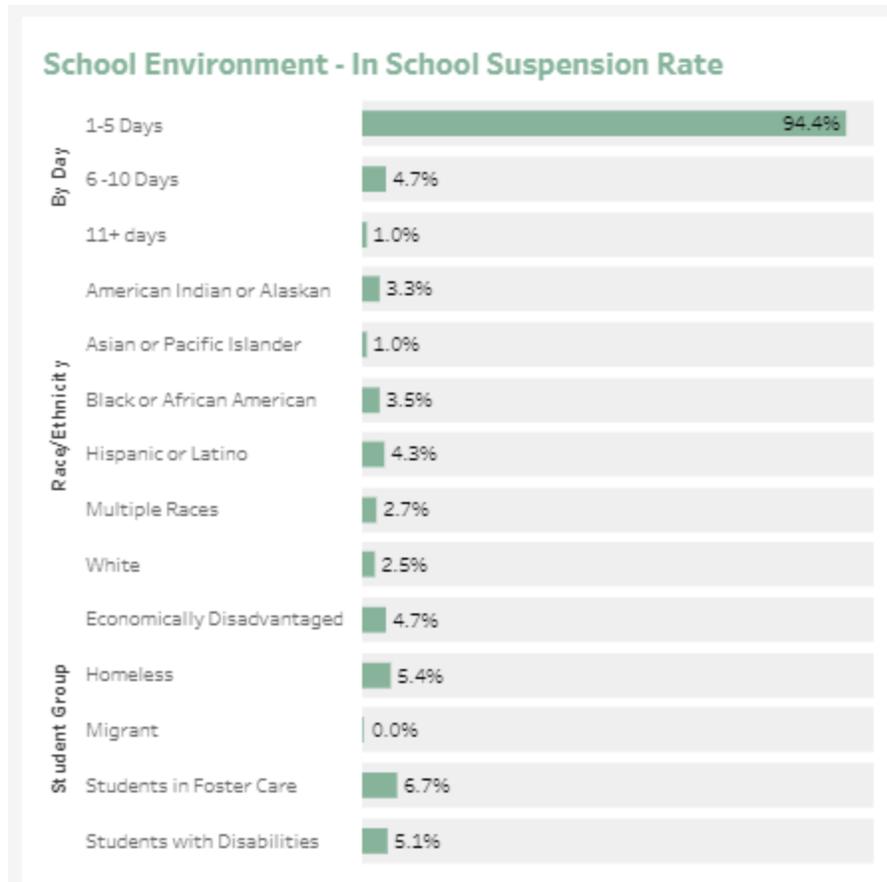
With or without the pandemic, the SEA as well as LEAs are keenly focused on avoiding exclusionary practices. LEAs report annually to the State Board of Education on suspension, restraint, bullying and other practices that might have an unintended effect of excluding certain students disproportionately. This information is tracked on the SEA [website](#) and made public, as illustrated in this screen capture below.

### School Environment Over Time



	2017	2018	2019	2020
In School Suspension Rate	4%	4%	4%	3%
Out of School Suspension Rate	4%	4%	4%	3%
Expulsion Rate	0%	0%	0%	0%
Incidents of Violence	6,814	7,793	8,153	5,422
Average Class Size	19	17	19	18

In addition to general trend information, the SEA also tracks this data across subgroups, both for the state and at the LEA level providing further transparency to potentially exclusionary practices.



The same supports that are used to avoid such outcomes outside of the pandemic remain in force to ensure that all students equally access their education.

## F. Supporting the Educator Workforce

The Department recognizes the toll that the COVID-19 pandemic has taken on the Nation’s educators as well as students. In this section, SEAs will describe strategies for supporting and stabilizing the educator workforce and for making staffing decisions that will support students’ academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs.

### 1. Supporting and Stabilizing the Educator Workforce:

- i. Describe the extent to which the State is facing shortages of educators, education administration personnel, and other school personnel involved in safely reopening schools, and the extent to which they vary by region/type of school district and/or groups of educators (e.g., special educators and related services personnel and paraprofessionals; bilingual or English as a second language educators; science, technology, engineering, and math (“STEM”) educators; career and technical education (“CTE”) educators; early childhood educators). Cite specific data on shortages and needs where available.

*Complete the table below, changing or adding additional rows as needed, or provide a narrative description.*

**SEA Response**

New Hampshire has the lowest unemployment rate in the nation. Even before the pandemic, the state had consistently low unemployment, making recruiting, including recruitment in education, both difficult and a priority for the SEA and LEAs.

Annually, the SEA surveys LEAs to assess recruitment activities. This feedback helps formulate policy decisions to aid LEAs in educator recruitment. For example, aside from teachers with an elementary educator certification, the state annually publishes a critical shortage list that includes all other teacher positions.

During the pandemic, working with the Department of Employment Security, a new recruitment portal was established for educators and school leaders were trained in its use. As a result of these and other efforts, positions identified as difficult to fill are, in most cases, filled with high quality individuals.

Looking forward, the SEA is exploring opportunities to target IDEA State Personnel Development Grant and Title II School Administrator and Principal funds to support the teacher pipeline, including through coaching and mentorship, with an emphasis on special education.

**Table F1.**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Data on shortages and needs</b>
Special educators and related service personnel and paraprofessionals	Over 50% of open positions were deemed ‘difficult to fill’ by the LEAs
Bilingual educators	Over 90% of open positions were deemed ‘difficult to fill’ by the LEAs
English as a second language educators	SEA do not survey for this
STEM educators	Over 40% of open positions in STEM were deemed ‘difficult to fill’ by the LEAs
CTE educators	Over 45% of open positions in CTE were deemed ‘difficult to fill’ by the LEAs
Early childhood educators	No shortage in this area
School counselors	No shortage in this area
Social workers	About 50% of open positions were deemed ‘difficult to fill’ by the LEAs
Nurses	SEA do not survey for this
School psychologists	60% of open positions were deemed ‘difficult to fill’ by the LEAs

ii. Describe how the SEA will assist its LEAs in identifying the most urgent areas of shortages or potential shortages, with particular plans for individual LEAs facing the most significant needs (e.g., by avoiding layoffs, providing high-quality professional learning opportunities, and addressing the impact of stress or trauma on educators). Include a description of how other Federal COVID-19 funding (e.g., ESSER and GEER funds under the CARES Act and CRRSA Act) have already been used to avoid layoffs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **SEA Response**

The SEA has a critical shortage reporting process whereby LEAs report shortages to the SEA and the SEA correlates that information to open job postings in the state. Because the pandemic effect has not been as severe in New Hampshire and there has been a robust economic recovery throughout 2020-2021, LEAs have not had to resort to broad layoffs as a means of balancing budgets.

Further, as part of the pandemic response, the governor's office issued Emergency Order 38, Temporary modification of school board and district statutory requirements. Under this Emergency Order, "2. If a school district's budget is insufficient to fund expenditures associated with addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, the governing body is authorized, once authorization from the Department of Education ("DOE") has been obtained, to make such expenditure to the extent other revenues or unrestricted fund balance are available to meet those expenses. During the current health emergency, the public hearing requirement under RSA 32:11, I, for the expenditure of money in excess of an appropriation due to an unusual circumstance is hereby waived. The governing body must still submit an application to the DOE Commissioner pursuant to RSA 32:11, I, and a copy of such application to the SEA of Revenue Administration pursuant to RSA 32:11, IV. Upon approval by the governing body to submit an application to DOE for an over expenditure, DOE shall review the application and notify the requesting governing body of its decision within 2 business days of DOE's receipt of the application. Applications to DOE can be submitted by email to the Director of the Division of Education Analytics and Resources of the DOE."

Where needed, LEAs were able to use this Emergency Order to adequately fund operations. This included, where necessary, using emergency response funds to avoid layoffs, both for educators as well as contracted support staff.

iii. Describe the actions the SEA will take to fill anticipated gaps in certified teachers for the start of the 2021-2022 school year and to what extent the SEA will further support its LEAs in expanding the educator pipeline and educator diversity while addressing the immediate needs of students disproportionately impacted by the pandemic (e.g., recruiting teaching

candidates to provide high dosage tutoring or implementing residencies for teacher candidates).

### **SEA Response**

Teacher shortages were present even prior to the pandemic. As a result of that, the SEA had already begun alternative credentialing processes, with the goal of attracting qualified individuals outside of the school system and traditional educator preparation pathways. One of the advantages of expanding alternative credentials pathways is the ability to attract a broader and more diverse workforce. During the pandemic, these rules were implemented to offer the LEAs great recruitment flexibility. Further, Emergency Order #64, Temporary Remote Instruction and Support and Hybrid Instruction for K-12 School Districts provided LEAs additional flexibility during the state of emergency to meet staffing needs. The order states, “RSA 189:39-b, V and Ed Rule 504.04(f) are suspended for the duration of the State of Emergency declared in Executive Order 2020-04. A school board, in consultation with the superintendent, may offer a One-Year Certificate of Eligibility to an individual in accordance with the provisions of RSA 189:39-b, I-IV without regard to whether the individual has previously received a One-Year Certificate of Eligibility. Any One-Year Certificate of Eligibility issued by the NH SEA of Education pursuant to this paragraph 4 shall be effective for one calendar year from the date of issuance.”

3. [Staffing to Support Student Needs](#): Describe the extent to which the SEA has developed or will develop strategies and will support its LEAs in increasing student access to key support staff within school buildings, including school counselors, special education personnel, nurses, social workers, and psychologists (e.g. hiring additional personnel or freeing up these staff to focus on providing services to students).

### **SEA Response**

Emergency Order #64, Temporary Remote Instruction and Support and Hybrid Instruction for K-12 School Districts provided LEAs additional flexibility during the state of emergency to meet staffing needs, referenced above also provided a strong framework to ensure that students with disabilities and, by inference, students needing additional support services, must be granted access to those services, in-person, where that is appropriate. The Emergency Order states, “School districts are required adhere to all state and federal special education law requirements, including without limitation the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, in the delivery of instruction and support services pursuant to any offered instructional model, including without limitation, traditional instruction, distance learning, and hybrid models, consistent with US Department of Education Guidance. In fulfilling their obligations pursuant to Ed 1100, et seq., school districts who have selected

a remote instructional model for their general education population shall not exclude in-person services from consideration for students with disabilities. In-person services should be provided if such services are necessitated by the student's individualized needs and consistent with the health and safety needs of the child, child's teachers, and child's family.”

In support of schools working to effectively provide these services, specific [guidance](#) was developed for the provision of in-person services, even in some of the most challenging circumstances.

Knowing that the retention and recruitment of qualified staff is a challenge to many LEAs, the SEA collaborated with the Department of Employment security to implement an educator specific recruitment portal. This allowed LEAs to post specific positions, both educators and support staff, to help facilitate the recruiting process throughout the pandemic. This portal is still active and will remain so, even post pandemic.

## **G. Monitoring and Measuring Progress**

The Department recognizes that transparency on how ARP ESSER funds are used and their impact on the Nation’s education system is a fundamental responsibility of Federal, State, and local government. In this section, SEAs will describe how they are building capacity at the SEA and LEA levels to ensure high-quality data collection and reporting and to safeguard funds for their intended purposes.

1. [Capacity for Data Collection and Reporting](#): It is important for an SEA to continuously monitor progress and make adjustments to its strategies, as well as to support its LEAs in making adjustments to LEA strategies, based on impact. Describe how the SEA will ensure its capacity and the capacity of its LEAs to collect data on reporting requirements, including but not limited to the examples of reporting requirements described in the SEA’s Grant Award Notification (listed in Appendix B). Describe the SEA’s capacity and strategy to collect data from its LEAs (disaggregated by student group, where applicable), to the greatest extent practicable, including any steps the SEA will take to build its capacity in the future (which may include the use of ARP ESSER and other Federal COVID-19 pandemic funds at the SEA and LEA levels), on issues that may include the following:
  - i. Student learning, including the academic impact of lost instructional time during the COVID-19 pandemic;
  - ii. Opportunity to learn measures (e.g., chronic absenteeism; student engagement; use of exclusionary discipline; access to and participation in advanced coursework; access to technology, including educator access to professional development on the effective use of technology; access to high-quality educators; access to school

- counselors, social workers, nurses, and school psychologists; and results from student, parent, and/or educator surveys);
- iii. Fiscal data that is comparable across the State (e.g., per-pupil expenditures at the LEA and school levels);
- iv. Jobs created and retained (by position type);
- v. Participation in programs funded by ARP ESSER resources (e.g., summer and afterschool programs); and
- vi. Other reporting requirements reasonably required by the Secretary (please refer to Appendix B of this template; final requirements will be issued separately).

## SEA Response

The SEA has comprehensive beginning-of-year (BOY) and end-of-year (EOY) data collection processes. Further, there are interim data collections that include specific information as allowed by mid-year data collection.

Using our annual data collection processes will allow us to capture data regarding student learning, engagement, access, fiscal data, and other relevant data to the greatest extent practicable, particularly in light of the fact that the state does not currently have a statewide data system.

As part of the EOY data collection for 2020-2021, additional data have been requested by LEAs to help provide and enhance our understanding of student learning during the pandemic and how we can implement programming in response to it, including instructional mode and attendance information by student, including sub-group and by mode of instruction throughout 2020/2021.

The SEA will continue its enhanced data collection as schools deploy ARP/ESSER funds to both understand how these funds are addressing the impact of COVID-19 and to meet the reporting requirements of the Secretary. In our initial discussions with LEAs relative to the enhanced data collections, a number of districts have indicated challenges with additional data collections, including administrative burden, system limitations, and data quality. As part of our theory of action for change in New Hampshire, we respect the prioritization decisions of local school system leaders, including whether to undertake new data collections or to make investments in updating data systems versus other investments that may more immediately respond to pandemic-related or other needs. However, the SEA is firmly committed to meeting all of its data requirements under all applicable federal laws and regulations, as are its LEAs, including collection, disaggregation, and public reporting through its [iPlatform](#). The SEA's [iPlatform](#) is a robust data reporting tool used for telling education data stories from schools/districts. The concept behind this portal is to enhance transparency and stimulate community conversations with parents, districts, legislators, and others about the state of their local school systems.

2. Monitoring and Internal Controls: Describe how the SEA will implement appropriate fiscal monitoring of and internal controls for the ARP ESSER funds (e.g., by updating the SEA's plan for monitoring funds and internal controls under the CARES and CRRSA Acts; addressing potential sources of waste, fraud, and abuse; conducting random audits; or other tools). In this response, please describe the SEA's current capacity to monitor ARP ESSER; steps, if needed, to increase capacity; and any foreseeable gaps in capacity, including how the SEA will provide its LEAs with technical assistance in the anticipated areas of greatest need.

## **SEA Response**

The SEA's Bureau of Federal Compliance (BFC) provides consolidated fiscal monitoring of all LEAs to address potential sources of waste, fraud, and abuse. The BFC completes annual subrecipient risk assessments, undertakes extensive LEA fiscal monitoring (using multiple methods), provides both SEA Program Administrators and subrecipients with training and technical assistance resources related to the proper fiscal management (internal controls) of Federal grant funds, and implements enforcement actions when necessary all in general accordance with the requirements of 2 CFR 200. The ARP ESSER grant subrecipients will be included in the BFC's annual LEA risk assessments and its established fiscal monitoring program.

All ARP ESSER fund subrecipients will be folded into the BFC's current risk assessment and monitoring framework. In addition, given the nuances of some of the compliance requirements around the use of ARP ESSER funds, the BFC will be incorporating specific ARP ESSER risk variables in its LEA risk assessments. These risk assessments will be completed in July of 2021 to inform the BFC's 2021-2022 school year fiscal monitoring program.

In addition to providing LEAs with general technical assistance on Federal compliance requirements (procurement, inventory control, cost principles, etc.), the BFC also develops program specific technical assistance resources on an as-needed basis to assist subrecipients in their management of Federal grant funds. The BFC anticipates this will also be the case with the ARP ESSER funds. The BFC delivers written technical assistance to LEAs through the development and distribution of Fact Sheets and Info Sheets on specific compliance topics, regional training, and the development of on-line resources. Lastly, being a relatively small state, the BFC finds conducting individual technical assistance site visits at LEAs to be extremely beneficial to both the SEA and the LEA.

SEA has established an office dedicated to the support and implementation of ESSER funds. Personnel provide direct technical assistance to LEAs, averaging 20+ direct conversations and meetings with LEAs per week, in addition to providing webinars and

PowerPoint presentations. Additionally, the office has built webpages specific to each ESSER fund to provide Federal grant documentation and State-specific documentation.

CARES ESSER: <https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/division-of-learner-support/bureau-of-instructional-support/cares-act-funding>

CRRSA ESSER: <https://www.education.nh.gov/who-we-are/division-of-learner-support/bureau-of-instructional-support/crrsa-esser-ii-coronavirus>

ARPA ESSER: <https://www.education.nh.gov/american-rescue-plan-act-elementary-and-secondary-school-emergency-relief-fund>

Four webinars have provided clarity and insight to the ESSER funds for each grant, the EOY data collection and the data collection to support the ARP ESSER State Application. PowerPoint presentations are available on the webpages, listed above. A PowerPoint was not provided for the EOY data collection.

CRRSA ESSER: <https://www.education.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt326/files/inline-documents/sonh/esser-ii-nh-faqs.pdf>

ARPA ESSER: <https://www.education.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt326/files/inline-documents/sonh/esser-iii-webinar.pdf>

ARPA ESSER Data Collection webinar:  
<https://www.education.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt326/files/inline-documents/sonh/esser-iii-data-collection-webinar.pdf>

NH specific FAQs were created and are continuously updated to provide insight from US ED for NH specific questions and direct examples of allowable uses of funds implemented by LEAs across the State.

CRRSA ESSER: <https://www.education.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt326/files/inline-documents/sonh/esser-ii-nh-faqs.pdf>

ARPA ESSER: <https://www.education.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt326/files/inline-documents/sonh/esser-iii-webinar.pdf>

The office is utilizing SEA resources to support the timely utilization of ESSER funds. As an example, for more technical issues, the office has collaborated with our BFC to oversee requested use of ESSER funds for construction projects to provide technical assistance and ensure Federal compliance.

Lastly, the Office of School Finance at the SEA conducted an informational session on the ESSER Local Maintenance of Equity requirement in Section 2004(c) of the American

Rescue Plan Act via Zoom. At the time of plan submission, we are still awaiting additional guidance and clarification from the U.S. Department of Education to finalize the calculation requirements. However, the training provided to LEAs covered the following:

- Our current understanding of the federal law and how it may or may not apply to your district;
- Our draft budgeting and staffing allocation tool to assist districts in assessing the applicability of the federal law to their district and developing strategies to achieve compliance; and
- LEA feedback for how the SEA can best operationalize the federal law and provide support and technical assistance.

To help schools comply with requirements, the SEA drafted the DRAFT Excel Document LMOE Calculator designed to be a tool to strategize how to achieve compliance with the MoEQ. The tool is built on assumptions about the federal law and the best available data we have. Once we have federal guidance, a final version of the tool will be provided along with more technical assistance from SEA.

## Appendix A: School Operating Status and Instructional Mode Data Template

Indicate the date or time period represented by the following data.

**Table 1**

In the most recent time period available, how many schools in your State offered each mode of instruction or learning model described below? Each row should account for all schools in your State, so that, for each row, the sum of the numbers in the “offered to all students,” “offered to some students,” and “not offered” columns is equal to the number in the “all schools” column.

To the extent data are available, please complete the above table for 1) all schools in the State, and 2) separately for each instructional level (e.g., pre-kindergarten/elementary schools, middle schools, high schools).

### SEA Response

Consistent with the Governor’s emergency order, all New Hampshire public schools reopened for in-person instruction in April 2021. Schools also offered families the option of continuing remote instruction, should they choose.

Number of schools	All schools	Offered to all students	Offered to some students	Not offered
Remote or online only	0	0	0	0
School buildings open with both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid)	464	464	0	0
School buildings open with full-time in-person instruction	464	464	0	0
Pre-kindergarten/Elementary schools	322	322	0	0
Middle schools	74	74	0	0
High schools	98	98	0	0

This data is represented as of April 19, 2021 when Governor Christopher Sununu’s Emergency Order #89 came into effect.

**Table 2**

In the most recent time period available, what was the enrollment and mode of instruction for the schools in your State?

## SEA Response

The SEA does not have student enrollment data by mode of instruction and student subgroup. This information will be required for districts to report as part of the End-of-Year data collection so that this chart might be updated at that time.

Number of students	Total enrollment	Remote or online only	Both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid)	Full-time in-person instruction
Students from low-income families	33786	6007	1206	26131
White, not Hispanic	134814	28320	9445	93858
Black or African American, not Hispanic	4183	1058	97	3000
Hispanic, of any race	11638	3188	329	7970
Asian, not Hispanic	6730	2759	254	3470
American Indian or Alaskan Native, not Hispanic	572	179	24	447
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, not Hispanic	223	75	23	149
Two or more races, not Hispanic	4468	1136	337	290
Race/Ethnicity information not available	1665	111	17	548
English learners	5228	1266	65	3647
Children with disabilities	27651	5059	1856	21067
Students experiencing homelessness	2276	515	37	1728
Children and youth in foster care	8835	157	33	605

Number of students	Total enrollment	Remote or online only	Both remote/online and in-person instruction (hybrid)	Full-time in-person instruction
Migratory students	102	13	[Suppressed]	87

This data is based on an SEA special data request to inform the ARP ESSER State Plan. The request was disseminated and a webinar was conducted on May 13, 2021. The request was completed by June 1, 2021 with a return rate of 86%.

## Section 427 Compliance:

NHDOE fully complies with Section 427 of GEPA. Section 427 of GEPA highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. The NHDOE takes the following proactive steps in order to mitigate barriers:

- NHDOE announces its programs through a variety of communication channels.
- NHDOE makes information available on its website in a variety of languages.
- NHDOE works with LEAs to make information on its programs specifically available to Special Education teachers and administrators, whom in turn convey it to families.

**EXHIBIT A:**  
**STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK**