

# Utah State Board of Education

## ESSER II State Set-Aside Funding Request

**Purpose:** USBE has received \$23,312,069.18 in state set-aside funding to be available for **state project proposals that are necessary due to COVID-19**. This funding was made available to the state community to support Utah safely reopening schools, measuring and effectively addressing significant learning loss, and take other actions to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the students and families who depend on our K-12 schools.

**Directions:** Please complete the table below with your funding request. Once it is complete, please submit a link to your completed document to the USBE CARES team using this [submission site](#). If you have additional questions, please reach out to Sarah Young, Director of Strategic Initiatives, ([sarah.young@schools.utah.gov](mailto:sarah.young@schools.utah.gov)).

**Due Date:** Rolling application window. The application will be open until the funding is all allocated.

Proposal Information	
<b>Program Title:</b>	<b>Statewide LETRS Implementation</b>
<b>Total Amount Requested:</b>	<b>\$11,900,000 (one-time) over the 2 years</b>
<b>Duration of Funding:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><i>Must be spent by September 30, 2023</i></li><li><i>Please note, this is one-time funding</i></li></ul>	<b>July 1, 2021-September 15, 2023</b>
<b>USBE Section(s):</b>	<b>Teaching and Learning</b>
<b>Description of Project:</b> <p>We encourage staff to prioritize evidence-based practices and call those out in their narrative. Additionally, we encourage staff to align</p>	<b>Description:</b> <p>In order to address the learning disruption that is evident in our statewide K-3 Literacy data (Acadience Reading), this proposal includes a statewide LETRS implementation plan including K-3 teachers, literacy coaches, school administrators, and school psychologists. This plan will include training that is required for</p>

their work to the strategic plan as is appropriate.

LEAs who will be invited based on their local data. Specifically, LEAs who have at least 4 demographics groups that are not surpassing at least 60% growth will be invited to partake in this opportunity. Using this equity criteria, these funds will serve approximately 8000 educators and 155,000 students. This proposal is similar to the work done in the state of Mississippi and other states who have increased NAEP scores. For more information on the MS outcomes, click [here](#). This project would include training all K-3 teachers and literacy coaches from those LEAs invited across the state on LETRS (Units 1-8-3rd edition) while also completing the loop by providing training for the school level administrators and school psychologists on LETRS for Administrators to ensure knowledge gained from the ongoing LETRS training is expected and inspected in the K-3 classroom. This includes additional implementation resources that would be provided by USBE staff such as a planning template, non-negotiables to ensure successful implementation, a checklist for classroom observations, and a bridge to practice expectations for teachers.

Training for educators and coaches would include online course requirements prior to in-person training along with 8 full day training sessions and bridge to practice assignments. Training for administrators and school psychologists includes 3 full day training sessions and additional resources for implementation. All of this is included in the cost below. In general, the timeline to complete units 1-8 takes approximately 2 years for LETRS training. LETRS for Administrators won't take as long and is generally 1 year.

To best align with the Early Learning efforts provided by the recently funded HB 114 (passed during the 2020 session) and to blend this new funding with this proposed funding, intentional planning would be critical for success. The professional learning funding provided for FY22 is up to LEAs to determine and can be used for:

- Stipends for educators to attend training
- Presenter fees
- Coaching supports
- Substitute costs

LEAs could choose potential options to further increase capacity building along with ensuring that LETRS training can be sustained beyond the 24FY include sending coaches/specialists to deeper

training on LETRS to become LETRS coaches/mentors to build further knowledge and support capabilities. This would provide a sustainable model for new teachers coming in without the knowledge, from out of state, or who need additional support in passing the new science of reading licensing exam. They may also wish to use the funds for substitute costs for teachers to attend these trainings.

LEAs may also see more specific needs based on their local data and can focus their efforts on providing additional personalized PD opportunities using the professional learning grant funding such as focusing on:

- Early mathematics
- Specific grade level(s)
- Certain components of literacy or numeracy instruction
- Improvement in the intervention systems currently being employed

Again, these are examples, the LEAs would have the choice to decide the best usage of these funds based on their local needs.

**Evidence-based Practices:**

With *LETRS*, decades of research translate best practice into everyday classroom success, including a systematic approach to building oral and written language to improve reading instruction, along with:

- Detailed Reporting for Accountability
- Bridge to Practice Exercises
- Embedded Video Modeling of Instruction

This model of professional learning aligns with the UT Professional Learning standards. By providing LETRS training throughout the state, learning communities will be embedded in each school to form collective responsibility. LETRS for Administrators will train and develop the capacity of school leaders and psychologists to continue to support the learning and practice of the teachers in their schools. Numerous resources will be provided during the online coursework along with the in-person training to advance student learning. The professional learning outcomes can be measured primarily through pre and post data along with student outcomes once implementation is complete. This experience promotes learning design and implementation that aligns with

improving practices and sustained support for educators through coaches and leaders who are expecting and inspecting the knowledge and skills learned. This professional learning includes a blended learning model of online coursework, bridge the practice exercises, and in-person training.

**Measuring Outcomes:**

Outcomes can be measured through pre and post assessment data at the end of each unit. These data are included in the LETRS Database system (included in the cost). These assessments measure the level of knowledge on the science of read prior to and after training.

In addition, the budget includes funding to fund a new office staff position for 2 years to be the program manager and run the day-to-day work for the LETRS cohorts along with collection and organization of the data on pre and post learning to evaluate educator knowledge gained.

**Alignment to the Strategic Plan:**

This proposal is in alignment with the following goals:

- Early Learning: Each student starts strong through early grades with a foundation in literacy and numeracy.
  - LETRS training will provide educators with the literacy knowledge and strategies needed to increase high-quality literacy instruction in K-3 classrooms.
  
- Personalized Teaching and Learning: Each student and educator has access to personalized teaching and learning experiences.
  - LETRS training supports LEAs in providing personalized learning for students by using the literacy knowledge and skills learned to teach every student how to read starting where they are at and providing exactly what they need to be successful. This training will also increase access for students to have highly qualified school personnel, not by chance, but by design, regardless of where they live.

- Effective Educators and Leaders: Each student is taught by effective educators who are supported by effective school leaders.
  - LETRS along with LETRS for Administrators promotes equitable access to highly effective teachers, coaches, and leaders. In order to ensure that every level of teacher support is highly knowledgeable and can provide further personalized support for educators in their classrooms throughout this ongoing, job-embedded professional learning experience.

**Information on LETRS:**

LETRS (*Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling*) is the most comprehensive and effective course of study to address the five essential components of effective reading instruction in a flexible delivery model, allowing educators to bridge research-based professional development into classroom success.

LETRS empowers teachers to understand the science behind why students struggle. With an ESSA evidence level of Promising, *LETRS* details for teachers the **what**, **why**, and **how** of scientifically based reading instruction.

- **What** must be taught during reading and spelling lessons to obtain the best results
- **Why** reading instructions have several key components and how they are related to one another
- **How** to explain spoken and written English language structures
- **How** to interpret individual differences in student achievement
- **How** to implement instructional routines, activities, and approaches and differentiate instruction

Teachers matter more to student achievement than any other aspect of schooling. Teachers need professional learning that provides deeper knowledge, skills, and practice to successfully address reading difficulties. With *LETRS* educators benefit from:

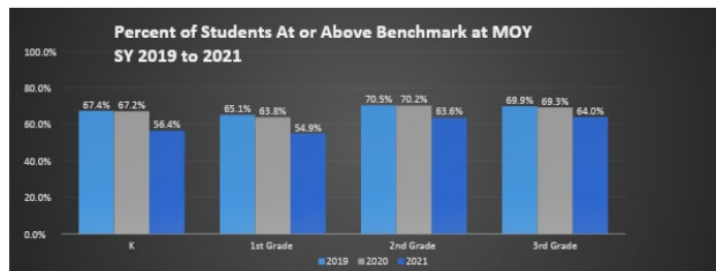
- Understanding the content and methodology of research-based, explicit, structured literacy instruction

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep knowledge of the cognitive and language factors that shape student learning and of pedagogical detail</li> <li>• Information about how to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students</li> </ul> <p><b>Information on LETRS for Administrators:</b>  Administrators can be the catalyst for facilitating change and implementing strong literacy instruction. LETRS® for Administrators is a course of study that helps literacy leaders learn how to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create highly efficient methods of analyzing student data</li> <li>• Establish highly effective instructional blocks in literacy</li> <li>• Examine resources for all tiers of instruction</li> </ul> <p>Administrators are provided specific steps for facilitating change, developing a comprehensive assessment plan, managing resources, assembling a school leadership team, and making data-based decisions.</p> <p><b>Anticipated Budget Breakdown:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$11,000,000 to train K-3 teachers and literacy coaches on LETRS (Units 1-8, 3rd edition)-this includes all training dates and materials for both the online piece and in-person dates</li> <li>• \$500,000 to train administrators and school psychologists on LETRS for Administrators-this includes all materials and in-person training dates</li> <li>• \$200,000 (salary and benefits) to fund a new full-time program specialist position for 2 years to be the program manager and organize the logistics</li> </ul>
<p><b>Data to Support Need Due to COVID-19:</b></p>	<p>Prior to COVID-19, there was a need for professional learning to increase educator content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge in early literacy and mathematics in grades P-3, hence the call for HB 114 during the 2020 session. Due to COVID-19 barriers, these data have dropped to new lows and this issue has only been exacerbated across the state.</p> <p>The state beginning and middle of year data are showing a disruption in learning due to COVID-19 in kindergarten through third grade. Educators need more training, time, support, and materials in order to address this issue. The earlier this disruption</p>

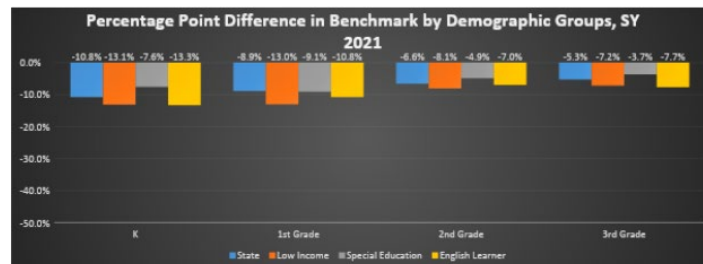
is addressed, the quicker and more cost effective it will be for the state.

The charts below are showing the differences in Acadience Reading data over the last three years in benchmark levels of risk and growth. Prior to SY19-20, the RISE ELA data at the end of third grade had been holding steady at about 50% of our students leaving third grade proficient in literacy. These Acadience Reading data are providing a preview/prediction of likely reduced proficiency percentages in RISE ELA at the end of this school year.

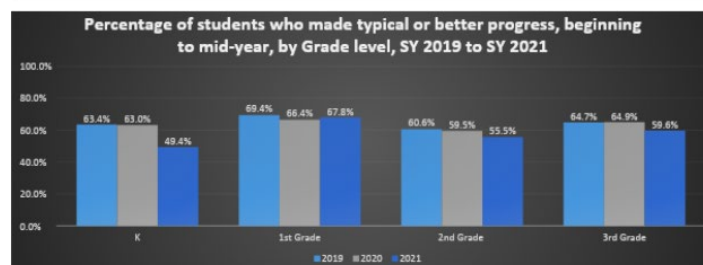
## Acadience Reading Grades K-3 Middle of Year



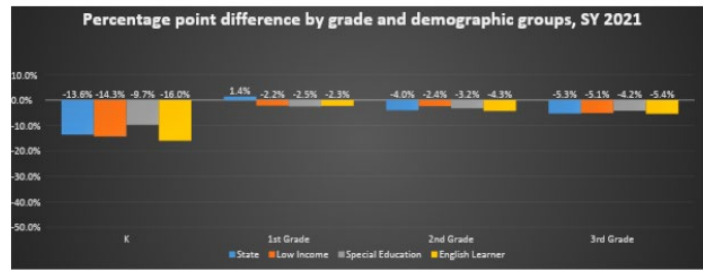
## Demographic Group Performance



## Typical or Better Progress



## Demographic Groups



**Alignment with Federal Allowable Use Cases from ESSER II in response to COVID-19:**  
*(See below for full list)*

**This project aligns with federal allowable use cases 3, 4, 11, and 12. The explanations provided in the above sections provide insight for each of these cases.**

3. Providing principals and other school leaders with the resources necessary to address the needs of their individual schools.

4. Activities to address the unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.

11. Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care.

12. Addressing learning loss among students, including low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care, of the local educational agency, including by b. implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students.

### Contact Information

**Full Name(s)**

**Sara Wiebke**

**Email(s)**

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## **ESSER II Allowable Use Cases:**

### **Purpose**

The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSA), was signed into law on December 27, 2020 and provides an additional \$54.3 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II Fund). ESSER II Fund awards to SEAs are in the same proportion as each State received funds under Part A of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended, in fiscal year 2020.

The Utah State Board of Education is distributing these funds by recommendation of USBE leadership and board approval. This new funding – more than four times the initial award under the CARES Act – is intended to help local education agencies safely reopen schools, measure and effectively address significant learning loss, and take other actions to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on the students and families who depend on our K-12 schools. All use cases must be in alignment with the federal allowable use cases and be in direct response to COVID-19.

### **Federal Allowable Use Cases**

An SEA may use funds it receives under section 313(d) of the CRRSA Act for any activity listed in section 313(d) (described below). Any activity that is an allowable use of Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds by an LEA under section 18003(d) of the CARES Act is also an allowable use of ESSER II funds by an LEA under section 313(d) of the CRRSA Act. Any allowable use of ESSER II funds by an LEA is also an allowable use of ESSER funds by an LEA under section 18003(d) of the CARES Act.

1. Any activity authorized by the ESEA of 1965, including the Native Hawaiian Education Act and the Alaska Native Educational Equity, Support, and Assistance Act (20 U.S.C. 6301 et seq.), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.) (“IDEA”), the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1400 et seq.), the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 (20 U.S.C. 2301 et seq.) (“the Perkins Act”), or subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11431 et seq.).
2. Coordination of preparedness and response efforts of local educational agencies with State, local, Tribal, and territorial public health departments, and other relevant agencies, to improve coordinated responses among such entities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.
3. Providing principals and others school leaders with the resources necessary to address the needs of their individual schools.
4. Activities to address the unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.
5. Developing and implementing procedures and systems to improve the preparedness and response efforts of local educational agencies.
6. Training and professional development for staff of the local educational agency on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.
7. Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of a local educational agency, including buildings operated by such agency.
8. Planning for, coordinating, and implementing activities during long-term closures, including providing meals to eligible students, providing technology for online learning to all students, providing guidance for carrying out requirements under the IDEA and ensuring other educational services can continue to be provided consistent with all Federal, State, and local requirements.
9. Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity) for students who are served by the local educational agency that aids in regular and substantive educational

interaction between students and their classroom instructors, including low-income students and children with disabilities, which may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.

10. Providing mental health services and supports.
11. Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care.
12. Addressing learning loss among students, including low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care, of the local educational agency, including by
  1. Administering and using high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable, to accurately assess students' academic progress and assist educators in meeting students' academic needs, including through differentiating instruction.
  2. Implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students.
  3. Providing information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support students, including in a distance learning environment.
  4. Tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education.
- ~~13. School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs. (Removed in alignment with S.B 1 and H.B. 2)~~
- ~~14. Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities, including mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, filtering, purification and other air cleaning, fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement. (Removed in alignment with S.B 1 and H.B. 2)~~
15. Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation of and continuity of services in local educational agencies and continuing to employ existing staff of the local educational agency.