Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) Fund Grant Program Authorized Under American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act

ESSER III Out-of-School Time (OST) Grant Sequence and Timeline

When submitting a grant proposal, the largest amount of time is taken up by the work done before the grant application is completed. This document provides an outline for a possible sequence and timeline for completing and submitting a grant application for the ESSER III OST Grant. Ideally, the agency submitting the grant application and relevant partners will meet to do the needs assessment and grant planning. However, due to the limited amount of time, feedback, ideas, and sharing can be done virtually. Even with a short timeline, engagement of partners is essential to a well developed plan and grant application.

Identify Partners

Determine who the partners for this project will be. Students, families, school, district, and agency staff are the typical partners. However, partners can also include agencies and programs that are working to support the project. This might include the public library, a local employer offering job site shadowing or training, youth serving organizations, individuals, or groups offering Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) program support.

Where to start: Identify who is invested in the outcomes of this project?

Gather Data

The purpose of the Needs Assessment is not to justify that your agency is in need of funds. Rather, your data will tell a story about how students have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and which students are experiencing the greatest challenges. Data sources should be local and can come from the school, community, and county. Consider academic data, student, family, and community surveys regarding climate, needs and impacts. Data can also include results of social, emotional, and mental health screening. Review Wisconsin 2022 County Health Rankings for information about different health and wellness impacts on your county. What data do you have on staffing and staff to student ratios for both in school and out-of-school time? Disaggregate the data you collect, where possible, to identify those students most impacted.

Where to start: Identify what story you want to tell about how COVID-19 has impacted your students, families, and communities, and determine what data is needed to tell that story.

Analyze Data for Root Causes

Two resources may be helpful for this portion of your grant application work:

1) Review data against the Social Determinants of Health
2) Choose a model for interpreting the data. One model is "I See", "I Think" "I Wonder"

I See: What stands out to you in the data? Do you see trends? Are some students more impacted or experiencing more distress or challenge? Are there themes that show up in survey responses?

I Think: What do you think is the reason for what you are seeing? Did students most impacted miss more instructional time? Did some families experience more difficulties and hardships during the pandemic? Did staffing shortages result in fewer students receiving out-of-school time services?

I Wonder: What interventions do you think could improve outcomes? We believe we can do (X) if we (X). "We believe we can reduce students' feelings of anxiety if we provide each student in the OST program with an adult mentor, increase their knowledge of mental health, and encourage student self advocacy".

Where to start: Bring partners together to review the data, discuss what they See, Think and Wonder.

Identify all Priority Areas and Activities for this Project

With partners, review all of the Wonder and belief statements and determine which will be the priorities of this project.

When priority areas are identified, brainstorm possible strategies and activities that can address the priority areas.

Where to start: Review the Wonders and priority areas identified by the partner team.

Identify the Grant Writing Team

Identify one to three individuals to be the primary grant writers. Primary grant writers will answer all of the application questions. They will take each priority area and draft Specific, Measurable, Appropriate, Realistic, Time specific (SMART) Goals. Grant writers will ensure that the Goals are written into the SMART Goal format.

Using the activities and strategies generated by the partner meetings, primary grant writers will identify which action steps are doable in the time allotted for this project. They will ensure that strategies and improvement strategies are evidence based, that they have a timeline and personnel responsible for making sure that activities are implemented.

Primary grant writers can enter all of this information into the Action Plan template and share with partners to ensure that the primary grant writers have captured the project accurately, and that all personnel responsible for activities (including partner organizations) are aware of their responsibilities.

The grant writers will also be responsible for determining the grant amount being requested, providing contact information for all required individuals, obtaining all required signatures, and submitting required documents with the application.

Where to start: Determine who will be responsible for writing the grant application. Download the Action Plan template to assist with this step in the grant writing process.

Write the Application

Once the work above has been completed, the primary grant writers begin entering the information into the application. It is recommended that the grant writers draft the answers to the application responses in a word document or a google document in order to share with one another, review what is written, track character totals and make necessary edits. Once the answer is completed, copy and paste into the application portal.

Make sure that all grant application questions are answered. Do not worry about providing redundant answers. If you are asked for information that you provided in a previous question, provide it again.

Grant writers may divide the writing responsibilities, but the responses should be reviewed to make sure that the application has a consistent voice.

If possible, have your application reviewed against the scoring rubric by individuals not writing the application. This pre-submission grant review can provide insight on details that were missed, answers that are incomplete, or responses that are not clear.

Before submitting the application review for the following:

- Are all sections complete?
- Are all required signatures obtained and uploaded to the portal?
- Has the application been proofread?
- Have the required Letters of Commitment (minimum of one, maximum of three) been uploaded to the portal?

Once the application is submitted, it can no longer be accessed on the portal. You will receive a copy of your application for your records.

Where to start: Download a copy of the grant application word document. Log into the portal to become familiar with how you will enter your information.

Timeline

Due to federal requirements regarding the disbursement of funds in this grant program, the application timeline is more compressed than is typical. Below is a proposed timeline for completing the application process.

Step	Timeline	Who
Identify Partners	By August 30, 2022	Agency submitting the application
Gather Data	Complete by September 12, 2022	Agency and partners collaborative
Analyze Data for Root Causes	Week of September 12, 2022	Agency and partners collaborative
Identify all Priority Areas and Activities for this Project	Week of September 12, 2022	Agency and partners collaborative
Identify the Grant Writing Team	Week of September 19, 2022	Agency
Write the Application	Week of September 26, 2022	Primary grant writers
Submit the Application	October 10 – 14, 2022	Primary grant writers