ESSER III and Community Input

Partner Toolkit

July 2021

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Overview of Toolkit and ESSER III Information

I.   Overview of Toolkit

We know that ESSER III dollars could be incredibly valuable to districts and schools to support their plans to address student and staff needs, especially in the aftermath of the pandemic. We have also heard from various superintendents, district communications staff, and education partners that tools specific to the community input requirement for accessing ESSER III money would be helpful. In response to that feedback, we created this ESSER III Community Input Toolkit.

The ESSER III Community Input Toolkit is not intended to support districts in developing their ESSER III plans and grant applications. The Arizona Department of Education can be more helpful with specific questions and needs related to the plan and application process. Contained within are high-level information on the community input piece of ESSER III, tips for engaging community stakeholders, sample content, and examples of community input resources from around the state.

It's our hope that this is a useful resource to be used by:
- School District Governing Boards
- School District Administration
- Charter School Administration
- School Leaders

II.   Arizona Department of Education ESSER III Website
  a. ADE's ESSER III Website includes a variety of information including:
   i. FAQs
   ii. Webinars
   iii. Factsheets
  b. Target deadline for LEAs to submit their ESSER III application: **August 23, 2021.**
  c. For additional questions and support, email **ESSER@AZED.GOV**

III.   ESSER III and Community Input

Access to ESSER III allocations requires LEAs to engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders and provide the public the opportunity to give input into the development of the LEA's plan. There are specific stakeholders to engage within your LEA – parents, teachers, administrators. There are also recommended community stakeholders, as relevant for your community. Some suggestions for both are included on the next page of this toolkit.

You can find more on the specific requirements of ESSER III by visiting ADE's ESSER III Website.

Once you develop your plan and collect community input from key stakeholders, you need to make the plan publicly available on your website. It is advised that the plan be presented in an accessible format for parents and the community to review. in an approachable format for parents and the community

Engaging Stakeholders – Groups and Tips

I. **Organizations to Engage – where applicable**
   a. **Within Your LEAs**
      i. Local AEA Chapter
      ii. PTO/PTA Leadership
      iii. Parents of Special Needs Students
      iv. ELL Parents
      v. Parent Councils
      vi. Teacher Site Leaders
      vii. Title I Staff
      viii. Special Education Staff
      ix. ELL Staff
      x. Counselors and Mental Health Staff
      xi. **Not required, but consider engaging:** students (especially from middle and high schools)
   b. **Within Your Community** (NOTE: this is not a comprehensive list and some of the groups may not be present in your community. This is intended to be a general resource. You may know of more relevant stakeholders within your specific community.)
      i. Mental Health Organizations – check out the NAMI Site to Find a Local Chapter
      ii. Representing Underserved Children – you can connect with the following groups via their websites:
         1. ACLU-Arizona – civil rights
         2. ALL in Education – Latinx students
         3. ARC of Arizona – civil rights
         4. Arizona Anti-Defamation League – civil rights
         5. Arizona Center for Disability Law – civil rights
         6. Arizona NAACP – civil rights
         7. Asian Pacific American Advocates – OCA – Asian and Pacific Islander
         8. Black Mothers Forum – Black and African American students
         9. Children's Action Alliance – foster and underserved youth
         10. Equality Arizona – civil rights and LGBTQ students
         11. FosterEd – foster youth
         12. Fostering Advocates Arizona – foster youth
         13. Greater Phoenix Urban League – students of color
         14. International Rescue Committee (IRC) – refugee students
         15. Local Tribal Education Leaders – tribal students
         16. Living United for Change Arizona (LUChA) – civil rights and Latinx students
         17. Raising Special Kids – special needs students
         18. Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development – homeless youth
         19. Unidos – Latinx students
         20. United Way – see your local chapter's website for contact
         21. Youth On Their Own – homeless youth

COLLECTING COMMUNITY INPUT RESOURCES – FORUMS

Three Steps to Successful Community Forums

STEP ONE: PLAN FOR YOUR FORUM

Build your list of target stakeholders
- Ensure you are intentionally reaching groups laid out in ESSER III requirements
- Consider engaging the broader community, as relevant for your LEA

Consider the needs of your stakeholders
- Meeting in person vs. virtually, language needs, support for those with exceptional abilities
- You may want to do more than one forum to meet the needs of various stakeholders

The Meeting Details
- Best dates/times for participants
- If in-person, consider the venue
    - is it accessible – parking, transit options (where available)?
    - how should venue be set up?
- Do you need a translator or administrator who can conduct forum in preferred language?
- Do you want participants to register?
    i. Create registration form and provide link
- Do you want participants to receive meeting materials beforehand?

STEP TWO: INVITE PARTICIPANTS

Ways to Reach Audience

- If you're looking to engage a target audience ONLY, consider more retail invitation – email, phone calls, texts, etc.
- If you are looking for broad community engagement, consider more wholesale invitations – website, social media, mass emails, flyer distribution, etc.

Hot Tips:
- Remember – data shows that the way to get people to do things is to personally ask or have someone they know ask them!
- Send invites 14 days in advance
- If registration is required, follow up via e-mail, text and phone

STEP THREE: HOLD YOUR FORUM

Define Roles
- Roles could include: facilitator, timekeepers, and notetakers.
- Facilitator will moderate the session.

Establish Ground Rules
- these could include: 1) there are no wrong answers; 2) one person should speak at a time; 3) each person will be given 3 minutes (or less for a large group) for their response to allow everyone the opportunity to provide input; 4) all participants should listen respectfully.

Start with presentation about ESSER III
- Be sure to include ways dollars can be spent, ideas for how they could be used in your district and the intended impact of investing in those areas. Show how your plan will address ESSER III strategic priorities PowerPoint Presentation (azed.gov)
- Determine how you will handle questions – wait until end or take questions during presentation
- Make sure you take questions!

Collect Stakeholder Feedback
- Decide questions in advance and note taker should capture feedback
- Some sample questions could include:
    - What was your favorite part of the plan presented?
    - What was your least favorite part of the plan presented?
- Divide into groups (or into different "rooms" via virtual setting) with a facilitator in each
    - Get the group to rank the suggested parts of the plan
    - You should plan for at least 25 minutes for this exercise
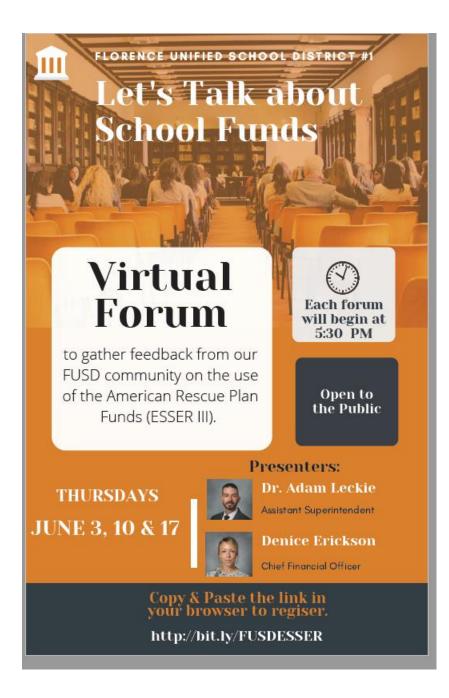   - Report out to the larger group

Follow up
- You can do a survey following forum to collect input from a broader audience and/or to get final feedback from participants
- Share the final plan directly with participants, indicating how their feedback is reflected
- Post final plan on website and promote to your broader community

SAMPLE FLYER

Editable Flyer You Can Use
Follow this link to access a template flyer you can edit to include relevant details about your forum and add your logo.
https://www.canva.com/design/DAEizdALqhk/R14bh2eb18aZ_ByNvkdThg/view?utm_content=DAEizdALqhk&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=publishsharelink

Here's another example from Florence Unified School District:

SAMPLE EMAIL COPY – FORUM INVITE

SUBJECT: You're Invited: Important Conversation about School Funds

BODY:

Dear Valued Community Member,

This year has been one like no other. In the wake of the pandemic, we know we have a big job ahead of us. We also have an enormous opportunity to come back stronger than ever.

The federal government allocated emergency funds to schools around the country through the American Rescue Plan. We are building our plan for how to use those dollars to meet the individual needs of all students, while supporting staff and the community. We want you to be a part of building that plan.

Specifically, we are holding (virtual) forum(s) to provide more information and hear directly from you and other members of our community. The details, as well as link to register, is included in the flyer below.

You are an important partner in our school community. Your voice and perspective are critical to include in this conversation and the decisions we make. We hope you can join us!

Sincerely,
XX Superintendent/School Leader

[PASTE DIGITAL FLYER WITH HYPERLINK HERE]

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POST

Casting a Wide Net
If you want a broad representation of community to participate in the forums, post on social media.

Sample Facebook Post
YOU'RE INVITED to a Community Conversation about School Funds. We want your input as we develop our plan for using federal COVID relief money to invest in the success of our students. See flyer and RSVP TODAY! Deadline to register is: XX

[INCLUDE DIGITAL FLYER AS AN IMAGE]

Sample Twitter Post
YOU'RE INVITED: a convo about school funds. How would you invest money to ensure the success of all of our students? See flyer and RSVP. Deadline is JULY XX, 2021.

[INCLUDE DIGITAL FLYER AS AN IMAGE]

COLLECTING COMMUNITY INPUT RESOURCES – SURVEYS

Resources for Collecting Community Input Survey

Best Practices in Survey Design and Administration

The following tips for designing effective surveys are excerpted from the *Survey Design and Administration Best Practices* via the GROK Knowledgebase at Louisiana State University. Click here to access the full resource and pdf.

✓ Create a smooth and clear navigation through the survey by providing section headings, clear instructions on how to proceed through the survey, and how to submit responses.

✓ The first questions should engage the respondent and get them into the flow of the survey. Earlier questions can affect how respondents interpret or respond to later questions.

✓ Place demographic questions at the end to avoid response bias.

✓ Group questions that cover similar topics together and use text to introduce each section.

✓ Avoid double-barreled questions. These questions often contain the word 'and.' A survey question should contain only a single concept so you can define what you're measuring.

✓ Keep your questions and answer choices short, simple and clear.

✓ Avoid jargon, acronyms, technical terms and obscure phrases.

✓ Avoid leading and loaded questions (e.g., "Do you agree that…).

✓ It is recommended to use a 5-point Likert scale. The 5 values should be both clear and distinct from each other. The 'distance' between the values should be as 'equal' as possible.

✓ Avoid using negatives in items (e.g., not, none, never) as well as indefinite qualifiers (e.g., only, just, merely, many, few, or seldom).

✓ For "Check all that apply" and "Select up to three responses" questions, keep the list from getting too long (no more than 10 answers is a good guideline).

✓ Use "other" as often as necessary as a possible response, but use discretion when giving the option to "describe other (optional)."

✓ Avoid forced-choice questions. Use options such as "don't know" and "not applicable" sparingly, otherwise it gives respondents an easy way to skip past a question.

✓ Include a 'Thank You' statement at the end of the survey.

Tips on Building Your Community Survey
- o One way to collect community input is through a survey
- o Consider your list of target stakeholders and then consider "casting a wide net" to collect input from a broad and inclusive representation of your community
- o The survey tool should be accessible, engaging and unbiased
- o Appropriately document and archive responses received from public input collected via survey.

Sample Survey Questions and Formats

Sample 1- Yuma One
Several Arizona schools have already been engaging community members in the public input process through the use of virtual surveys. One example has been provided by the Yuma One Unified School District (link to full survey and accompanying videos can be viewed here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfGYkYHzCrgWIxCj8vMnkjHnN_IkhuWSN8XFL4toRynDBJlkw/formResponse).

A full text version of the survey is available in the **Appendix**.

Sample 2- Florence
The Florence Unified School District used a virtual survey/ online feedback collection tool in combination with a series of virtual public presentations that are archived and available for viewing at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-rfn6QNmFEs&t=471s
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZMeVvkkL-0&t=6s
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p0gqabl3n7o&t=498s
- • A link to the Florence Unified School District Survey Tool is available here:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfuY-rZba45gY1JkKNBx47iVq3WteyY8yKCOb3iOCki9IlrqQ/viewform .

Survey Formats

Virtual Surveys

A wide variety of surveying tools are available online that may suit your LEA's needs. See table below for a list and associated links to several different "free" survey options. Please note that the list is not exhaustive and inclusion therein does not constitute an endorsement nor a recommendation. Please investigate which tool is best suited to your institution's and community's needs. Some of the survey vendors listed below may assess additional fees for longer questionnaires, for larger numbers of responses received, or to access more advanced survey and analysis tools (all links active as of 6.29.21).

Survey Monkey	https://www.surveymonkey.com/
Hub Spot	https://www.hubspot.com/products/marketing/forms?_ga=2.25681085.1490213283.1625007280-88937146.1625007280
Google Forms	https://www.google.com/forms/about/
Survey Sparrow	https://surveysparrow.com/
Zoho	https://www.zoho.com/survey/
Free Online Surveys	https://freeonlinesurveys.com/
Survs	https://survs.com/

ProProfs Survey Maker	https://www.proprofs.com/survey/
Typeform	https://www.typeform.com/surveys/
Survey Planet	https://surveyplanet.com/
So Go Survey	https://www.sogosurvey.com/
Alchemer	https://www.alchemer.com/
Survey Legend	https://www.surveylegend.com/
Crowd Signal	https://crowdsignal.com/

Non-Virtual Surveys and Additional Considerations

For collecting input from community members without access to virtual services, the LEA may want to consider providing accommodations by offering stakeholders the opportunity to respond to survey questions in an alternative format such as: by phone, via paper/snail mail or by encouraging the stakeholder to participate in the LEA's public forum (if scheduled).

SAMPLE EMAIL COPY – SURVEY

SUBJECT: YOU'LL WANT TO TAKE THIS SURVEY!

BODY:

Dear Valued Community Member,

This year has been one like no other. In the wake of the pandemic, we know we have a big job ahead of us. We also have an enormous opportunity to come back stronger than ever.

The federal government allocated emergency funds to schools around the country through the American Rescue Plan. We are building our plan for how to use those dollars to meet the individual needs of all students, while supporting staff and the community. We want you to be a part of building that plan.

Take this survey TODAY [ADD LINK] and let us know how you want to invest in our students and schools.

You are an important partner in our school community. Your voice and perspective are critical to include in our final plan. Please take the survey today!

Sincerely,
XX Superintendent/School Leader

[PASTE DIGITAL FLYER IF RELEVANT WITH HYPERLINK HERE]

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POST

Casting a Wide Net

If you want broad and inclusive feedback, post the survey link on your website and on social media.

Sample Facebook Post

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK! We want your input as we develop our plan for using federal COVID relief money to invest in the success of our students. Take our survey TODAY! [ADD LINK] Deadline to share your feedback is JULY XX, 2021.

[INCLUDE DIGITAL FLYER AS AN IMAGE IF RELEVANT]

Sample Twitter Post

How would you invest money to ensure the success of all of our students? Take survey TODAY. [ADD BIT.LY LINK] Deadline is JULY XX, 2021.

[INCLUDE DIGITAL FLYER AS AN IMAGE IF RELEVANT]

APPENDIX

Yuma District One – full text survey

Note: The survey link was sent to the broad Yuma community, including intentional stakeholders

1. Select the option that best applies to you:
   o District One Parent
   o District One Employee
   o Yuma Community Member

2. What school(s) will your child(ren) attend in the fall of 2021? (Select all that apply)
   o Alice Byrne
   o C.W. McGraw
   o Castle Dome Middle School
   o Desert Mesa
   o Dorothy Hall
   o Fourth Avenue Jr. High
   o G.W. Carver
   o Gila Vista Jr. High
   o James B. Rolle
   o James D. Price
   o Mary A. Otondo
   o OC Johnson
   o Palmcroft
   o Pecan Grove
   o Ron Watson Middle School
   o Roosevelt
   o Sunrise Elementary
   o Woodard Jr. High
   o Digital Learning Academy

3. Academic Acceleration: Academic Acceleration serves to address learning gaps and assist with accelerating student learning (embedded in this section of the survey is a video about Yuma One's Academic Acceleration program).
   a. When determining how best to enrich learning and increase learning opportunities for District One students, how important is it to invest in the following? *respondents asked to rank items on a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*
      o Enhanced classroom & online curriculum (to include staff training)
      o Instructional materials
      o Reading materials
      o Comprehensive after school programs
      o Summer school
      o Enhanced classroom & online curriculum (to include staff training)
      o Instructional materials

- o Reading materials
- o Comprehensive after school programs
- o Summer school
  - b. How important is it to invest in Academic Acceleration overall? *Respondents asked to rank this response from a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*
4. Instructional Technology: Instructional Technology serves to provide rich opportunities for learning via digital content, devices, and support, in addition to more traditional learning experiences (embedded is a video about Yuma One's Instructional Technology program).
   - a. When determining how best to enrich learning and increase learning opportunities for District One students, how important is it to invest in the following? *Respondents asked to rank items on a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*
     - o Network enhancements
     - o Hotspots
     - o iPads, Chromebooks
     - o Improve classroom technology
     - o Hire additional support staff
     - o Network enhancements
     - o Hotspots
     - o iPads, Chromebooks
     - o Improve classroom technology
     - o Hire additional support staff
   - b. How important is it to invest in Instructional Technology overall? *Respondents asked to rank this response from a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*
5. Support Services: Support Services support students' social emotional growth and needs (embedded in this section of the survey is a video about Yuma One's Support Services).
   - a. When determining how best to enrich learning and increase learning opportunities for District One students, how important is it to invest in the following? *Respondents asked to rank items on a (1)Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*
     - o Social Emotional Learning
     - o Staff training on trauma informed practices
     - o Character Strong (Positive relationships, interactions, and student empowerment)
     - o Continuing Kids At Hope ("All kids are capable of success, no exceptions")
     - o Continuing Capturing Kids' Hearts (Building relationships and student connectedness in middle school)
     - o Social Emotional Learning
     - o Staff training on trauma informed practices
     - o Character Strong (Positive relationships, interactions, and student empowerment)
     - o Continuing Kids At Hope ("All kids are capable of success, no exceptions")
     - o Continuing Capturing Kids' Hearts (Building relationships and student connectedness in middle school)
   - b. How important is it to invest in Support Services overall? *Respondents asked to rank this response from a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*

6. Facility Repairs & Improvements: Facility Repairs & Improvements identifies areas of the learning environment in need of repairs and improvements (embedded in this section of the survey is a video about Yuma One's Facility Repairs & Improvements).
   a. When determining how best to enrich learning and increase learning opportunities for District One students, how important is it to invest in the following? *Respondents asked to rank items on a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*
      - Improve ventilation/air quality
      - Classroom furnishings
      - Improve ventilation/air quality
      - Classroom furnishings
   b. How important is it to invest in Facility Repairs & Improvement overall? *Respondents asked to rank this response from a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*

7. Staffing: Supplementing Staffing helps to support student learning and to build skills in reading, mathematics, and other content (embedded in this section of the survey is a video about Yuma One's staffing).
   a. When determining how best to enrich learning and increase learning opportunities for District One students, how important is it to invest in the following? *Respondents asked to rank items on a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*
      - Additional support in the classroom
      - Professional Development for teachers
      - Additional Digital Learning Academy staff
      - Reading Teachers at all elementary schools
      - Staff training on instructional materials and curriculum
      - Additional support in the classroom
      - Professional Development for teachers
      - Additional Digital Learning Academy staff
      - Reading Teachers at all elementary schools
      - Staff training on instructional materials and curriculum
   b. How important is it to invest in Staffing overall? *Respondents asked to rank this response from a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*

8. Safety: Investing in Safety serves to maintain a clean and safe environment for students and staff (embedded in this section of the survey is a video about Yuma One's Safety).
   a. When determining how best to enrich learning and increase learning opportunities for District One students, how important is it to invest in the following? *Respondents asked to rank items on a (1)Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*
      - Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
      - Improve emergency preparedness and response efforts
      - Classroom cleaning, disinfecting
      - Rapid Covid-19 Testing Kits
      - Additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
      - Improve emergency preparedness and response efforts
      - Classroom cleaning, disinfecting
      - Rapid Covid-19 Testing Kits

b. How important is it to invest in Safety overall? *Respondents asked to rank this response from a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*

9. Additional Programs: Additional Programs provide additional experiences for students to explore interests before and after school, as well as within the school day (embedded in this section of the survey is a video about the Additional Programs at Yuma One).

   a. When determining how best to enrich learning and increase learning opportunities for District One students, how important is it to invest in the following? *Respondents asked to rank items on a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*
      - Scholarship for before/after school program
      - STEM
      - Music
      - Career & Technical Education (Middle School)
      - Athletics
      - Clubs
      - Scholarship for before/after school program
      - STEM
      - Music
      - Career & Technical Education (Middle School)
      - Athletics
      - Clubs

   b. How important is it to invest in Additional Programs overall? *Respondents asked to rank this response from a (1) Not Important to (4) Very Important scale.*