ACHIEVE!

PRIORITIES-BASED PLANNING GUIDE FOR SCHOOL SYSTEMS

ESSER II AND ESSER III FUNDING

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DEPARTMENT of
EDUCATION
louisiana Believes

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BELIEVE! AND *ACHIEVE!*

On April 15, 2020, Gov. John Bel Edwards signed a proclamation closing K-12 public schools in Louisiana to students until the end of the school year, with students getting their education via remote learning, in an effort to fight the spread of COVID-19. Since Louisiana's school facilities first closed in response to the pandemic, school systems, and the Department prioritized the safety of students and staff.

In anticipation of school facility closure or modified operations in the 2020-2021 academic year, the Department focused on supporting school systems with preparing for a strong start, developing comprehensive plans to ensure all students had access to continuous quality teaching and learning, whether virtual, in-person, or hybrid.

Now, one year later, we are working with school systems to create comprehensive plans that prioritize safety, with additional efforts focused on:

• Getting back to in-person teaching and learning safely

• Assessing and addressing academic needs and accelerate learning

• Meeting the social-emotional and mental health needs of our students and educators

To support school systems with planning for and budgeting new pandemic relief funds the LDOE has launched **Believe! (Early Childhood)** and *Achieve!* (pre-K-12).

This guidance document focuses on *Achieve!* (pre-K-12) and provides school systems with pertinent information for creating their budgets in alignment with the priorities and focus areas outlined in **Believe to Achieve: Louisiana's Educational Priorities**. Within the **Priority Planning** section of this document, school systems have access to high-impact, evidence-based initiatives associated with Department initiatives and corresponding focus areas.

OVERVIEW OF *ACHIEVE!* FUNDING

Louisiana's Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funding Summary

Grant Fund	ESSER II	ESSER III
Allocation & Methodology	**State Allocation Table**	**State Allocation Table**
Stimulus Program	**CRRSA**	**ARPA**
Total ESSER Allocation	$54.3 billion	$122 billion
LDOE Total Award Amount	$1,160,119,378	$2,605,462,325
Minimum LEA Allocation	$1,044,107,100	$2,344,916,922
Available for obligation*	9/30/23	9/30/24
Encouraged Uses of Funds	Measure and address learning loss among students disproportionately affected by the coronavirus and school closures, particularly students with high-needs. Investment in facility repairs and improvements and air quality improvements for school buildings.	Reopen schools and sustain their safe operation aligned to CDC prevention guidance, so students can return to in-person learning. Provide evidenced-based interventions to meet social, emotional, and academic needs of students.

*Period of availability includes the Tydings period. Pre-award costs are allowable for expenses incurred from March 13, 2020 for ESSER I, II, III.

More information and notable differences between the ESSER I, II, and III funds can be found in the **Fact Sheet** released by ED.

Priorities-Based Strategic Planning

It is important to remember that these are one-time funds that must be used to prepare for and respond to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. School systems should consider multi-year budgets in alignment with the priorities and focus areas outlined in **Believe to Achieve: Louisiana's Educational Priorities**, mapping out how they will support their schools in meeting the social, emotional, and academic needs of their students through the fall of 2024.

Strong Start	**ESSER I**	April 2020	September 2022
Achieve!	**ESSER II**	January 2021	September 2023
Achieve!	**ESSER III**	March 2021	September 2024

Allocation Methodology

LDOE will use this same **funding methodology** as ED to calculate estimated LEA allocations based on 2020 LEA shares of Title I, Part A allocations. SEAs must distribute a minimum of 90% of their total allocation to LEAs.

LDOE will release estimated ESSER II and ESSER III allocations to school systems in two action periods in order to:

- support strategic and coordinated response efforts through 2024,
- ensure school systems are spending down their ESSER I and ESSER II funds first, and
- help school systems meet the 20% requirement of ESSER III.

	ESSER II Funds		ESSER III Funds	
	Formula *Action 1 (50%)*	**Formula** *Action 2 (50%)*	**Formula EB** *Action 1 (20%)*	**Formula** *Action 2 (80%)*
Released in eGMS	March 2021	January 2022	March 2021	*TBD*

Timeline

Below is a timeline for ESSER II and ESSER III to support school systems with developing budgets

Timeline	Action
March 2021	Release 50% of ESSER II and 20% of ESSER III EB formula allocations to LEAs with guidance
April 2021	LEAs use the guidance and assess needs to build out budgets in *Achieve!*
May 3, 2021	***Achieve!* budget applications are due in eGMS**
May 2021	LDOE reviews *Achieve!* budgets
June 1, 2021	**Initial reviews and feedback provided on all *Achieve!* budgets by June 1**
TBD	*Release 80% of ESSER III formula allocations to LEAs with updated guidance*
January 2022	*Release 50% of remaining ESSER II formula allocations to LEAs with updated guidance*

Allowable Use of Funds

ESSER II requires that all expenditures must be an allowable activity under the CARES Act, however, these funds may be leveraged for a wide range of activities. The allowable activities include uses permitted by ESSER I in addition to several new categories of expenditures associated with measuring and remediating learning loss and efforts to ready school facilities for reopening. ESSER II does not include a supplement, not supplant provision (SNS) providing additional flexibility in budgeting to meet the needs of addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is important to remember that ESSER funding is one-time, non-recurring emergency aid when developing spending plans. There are 15 uses of funds for ESSER II formula funds which may be used on a wide variety of activities as identified under the **CAA**:

1. Any activity authorized by the ESEA of 1965, IDEA, AEFLA, Perkins, McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

2. Coordination of preparedness and response efforts.

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

4. Activities to address the unique needs of low-income students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities.

5. Developing and implementing procedures and systems to improve the preparedness and response efforts of LEAs.

6. Training and professional development for LEA staff on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.

7. Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of a LEA, including buildings operated by such agencies.

8. Planning, coordinating, and implementing activities during long-term closures.

9. Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity) for students who are served by the LEA 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 after-school programs.

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:

    a. Administering and using high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable, to accurately assess academic progress and assist educators in meeting students' academic needs, including differentiating instruction.

    b. Implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students.

    c. Providing information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support students, including in a distance learning environment.

    d. Tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education.

13. School facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce the risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs.

14. Inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement, and upgrade projects to improve the indoor air quality in school facilities.

15. Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation and continuity of services in LEAs and continuing to employ existing staff of the LEA. Any entity that receives funds under the Education Stabilization Fund shall, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruptions or closures related to COVID-19.

To support school systems with determining how ESSER II and III formula funds can be allocated, the Department has developed an **ESSER II Allowability Examples** document to provide school systems with examples of how ESSER II and III formula funds can be allocated. This is not an exhaustive list but is meant to provide quality examples to support with planning.

Allowability Crosswalk

LDOE has developed this document to support school systems with aligning Educational Priorities to ESSER II allowabilities based on guidance from the United States Department of Education (ED). Within this document are examples of high-impact investments aligned to the ED allowabilities. School systems must remember the general cost principles in 2 CFR Subpart E, including but not limited to obtaining necessary prior approval for equipment and capital expenditures (including construction and capital improvement projects), and maintaining appropriate time and effort documentation to support compensation (including stipends) for personnel.

ED Allowability	High-Impact Investments	Example Cost Per Unit	LDOE Priorities Aligned
1, 4, 8, 10, 12	Additional Staff	$20,000–$80,000	✓ Equitable, inclusive environment ✓ High-quality teaching & learning
1, 3	Differentiated Compensation	$2,000–$5,000	✓ Equitable, inclusive environment ✓ High-quality teaching & learning ✓ Develop, retain HQ workforce
1, 11	Early Childhood	$1,500–$3,500	✓ Equitable, inclusive environment ✓ High quality teaching & learning
9,12	Educational Technology and Infrastructure	$20–$1,149	✓ Equitable, inclusive environment ✓ High-quality teaching & learning ✓ High impact systems
5, 6, 9	Family Engagement	$25–$100	✓ High impact systems
9, 11	Graduation Readiness	$6–$580	✓ Career, college, degree, or service ✓ Equitable, inclusive environment ✓ High-quality teaching and learning
1, 4, 8, 11, 12	Instructional Materials, Resources, & Support	$1–$80	✓ Career, college, degree, or service ✓ Equitable, inclusive environment ✓ High-quality teaching and learning
1, 4, 8, 11	Learners with Diverse Needs	$275–$580	✓ Equitable, inclusive environment ✓ High-quality teaching & learning
2, 4, 10, 15	Mental Health	$1–$2,600	✓ Equitable, inclusive environment
1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 15	Educator Professional Learning & Support	$25–$80,000	✓ Develop, retain HQ workforce
3, 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14	Reopening and Preparedness	$1–$800	✓ High impact systems
1, 3, 6, 11	Stipends	$18–$45	✓ Equitable, inclusive environment ✓ High quality teaching & learning ✓ Develop, retain HQ workforce ✓ High impact systems

Coding Budget Items

For each line of the *Achieve!* budget, school systems will identify the (1) Priority, (2) Focus Area, and (3) Classify the use of funds. The school system will select the object code and Education Improvement Codes (EIC) within the *Achieve!* budget. Note that the descriptions for each EIC are not comprehensive, and there will be cases where more than one EIC is appropriate. When that is the case, the school system should choose the most specific EIC available. For example, compensatory education for students with disabilities should be marked "CMPED" even though this expense could also be coded "SPED." The table below provides systems with a list of applicable EIC codes for ESSER I, ESSER II, and ESSER III.

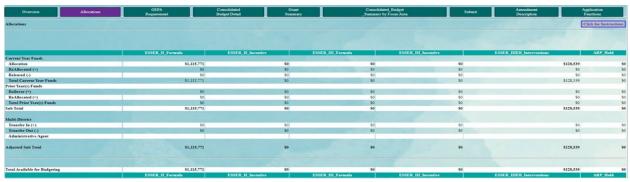| TYPE OF EXPENSE EIC	EIC	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III
Individual student supports - diagnostics, learning plans, tutoring	ISS	✓	✓	✓
Core subject curricular supplements/materials for continuous learning	CRCL	✓	✓	✓
Non-core/CTE supplements/materials for continuous learning	NCCL	✓	✓	✓
High School Supports - IGPs and graduate transitions	HS	✓	✓	✓
Social, emotional, and mental health screeners and supports	SEMH	✓	✓	✓
English learner supports - curriculum access, compensatory ed, etc.	ELS	✓	✓	✓
Students with disabilities support - related services, AT, etc.	SPED	✓	✓	✓
Students with disabilities - compensatory education	CMPED	✓	✓	✓
Other subgroup supports - homeless, foster care, low-income	SUB	✓	✓	✓
Professional development for workforce talent	PD	✓	✓	✓
Adaptive staffing plan support	STAFF	✓	✓	✓
Expanded learning time - summer school, early start, after-school	ELT	✓	✓	✓
Student devices - laptops, tablets, etc	STUDEV	✓	✓	✓
Student Connectivity - Internet access, phone access	WIFI	✓	✓	✓
Early childhood - preschool seats and related costs	EC	✓	✓	✓
Feeding	FEED	✓	✓	✓
Sanitation - training and supplies	SAN	✓	✓	✓
Operations - response and preparedness activities	OPS	✓	✓	✓
Other allowable expense	OTHER	✓	✓	✓
Nonpublic student devices	NPDEV	✓		
Nonpublic student connectivity - Internet access, phone access	NPWIFI	✓		
Other nonpublic school equitable services	NPES	✓		
High-quality assessments	HQA		✓	✓
*Evidenced-based activities academics - summer learning and enrichment	EBASL	✓	✓	✓
*Evidenced-based activities academics - tutoring	EBAT	✓	✓	✓
*Evidenced-based activities academics - after-school programming	EBASP	✓	✓	✓
*Evidenced-based activities academics - other	EBAO	✓	✓	✓
*Evidenced-based activities social emotional/mental health	EBS	✓	✓	✓
*Extended school day or extended school year	ESDY	✓	✓	✓
Information and assistance to parents and families	FAM		✓	✓
Student attendance and engagement	AE		✓	✓
School facility repairs and improvements	FRI		✓	✓
In-door air quality in school facilities	IAQ		✓	✓
Continuity of services	CS		✓	✓
Reopening schools in alignment with CDC guidance	RO	✓	✓	✓
*EIC codes that have an asterisk and bolded text are specific to the 20% of ESSER III funds.				

eGMS *Achieve!* Application

The Department has incorporated the Educational Priorities and Focus Areas into the eGMS *Achieve!* application. To support school systems with navigating the changes within eGMS, below are screenshots with the updates. Schools systems should contact **LDOE.GrantsHelpDesk@la.gov** with eGMS application questions and include "*Achieve!*" in the subject line.

Overview page of the *Achieve!* application

Allocations page – for the *Achieve!* application, school systems will have funding loaded in ESSER_II_Formula and ESSER_IIIEB_Interventions.

Consolidated budget page "Fund" column – school systems will see ESSER_II_Formula and ESSER_IIIEB_ Interventions in the Fund column dropdown

Consolidated budget page "EIC" column – school systems will see the applicable EIC codes in the EIC column dropdown

Consolidated budget page "Priority Area" column – school systems will see the Educational Priorities in the "Priority Area" column dropdown

Consolidated budget page "Focus Area" column – school systems will see the Focus Areas associated with the Educational Priorities in the "Focus Area" column dropdown

Achieve! Frequently Asked Questions

Please refer to the *Achieve!* **FAQ** for answers to frequently asked questions. For questions not included in the FAQ, please contact the Grants Help Desk at **LDOE.GrantsHelpdesk@la.gov**.

The Department will continue to provide updates to school systems as new information becomes available. Please look for this information in the newsletter, Monthly System Leader Call, and Monthly Federal Support and Grantee Relations Call.

Resources and Support

Resources released by ED:

ESSER II	ESSER III
• **Cover Letter to Commissioners** • **ESSER II Methodology and Allocation Table** • **ESSER II Fact Sheet** • **ESSER II Use of Funds**	• **Letter to Chief State School Officers** • **ARP ESSER Methodology and Allocation Table** • **ARP ESSER Fact Sheet** • **Education Stabilization Fund ESSER Web Page** • **ESSER III Funding Press Release**

Support for completing the *Achieve!* Application will be provided through:

• *Achieve!* **Office Hours**
• *Achieve!* **Library**
• **LDOE Weekly Newsletters**
• **System Leaders Monthly Calls**

Email: Contact **LDOE.GrantsHelpDesk@la.gov** and include "*Achieve!*" in the subject line.

PRIORITY PLANNING

In January, the Department released **Believe to Achieve: Educational Priorities** which serves as the Department's roadmap to improving outcomes for all Louisiana children.

Believe to Achieve includes Louisiana's six critical goals and the new priorities that will direct our efforts to support systems as we work together to achieve our critical goals. Each priority includes focus areas with key actions and initiatives.

The priorities ground the initiatives and resources that are encompassed within this *Achieve!* Guidance document. The purpose of this guidance is to support school systems in determining and planning for the use of ESSER II and ESSER III funds in alignment to the five priorities and associated focus areas.

Achieve! Priority Alignment and Planning Support

The planning guidance outlined below is designed to support school systems as they begin planning for the development of *Achieve!* budgets using ESSER II and ESSER III formula funds. Based on feedback from LEAs regarding the greatest current needs systems are facing, the Department has aligned high-impact initiatives to each new priority and corresponding focus area. Some initiatives have previously been released while others are newly being released within this guidance. Through the eGMS *Achieve!* Application, school systems will have the opportunity to commit to priorities and initiatives. Once school systems have identified stakeholders to be a part of the *Achieve!* planning team, there are three key resources that should be provided to each team member: ESSER II and ESSER III Allowabilities, *Achieve!* Planning Guidance, and EIC codes. These resources will be used as school systems complete the steps below with *Achieve!* planning teams.

1. Determine appropriate stakeholders for the *Achieve!* Planning team

2. Review ESSER II and ESSER III allowabilities

3. Determine school system needs based on data

4. Review planning support guidance below

5. Determine which initiatives support identified school system needs

6. Review resources aligned to initiatives and determine how those resources support district planning and budgeting

Priority: Ensure every student is on track to a professional career, college degree, or service.		
Focus Areas	**Initiatives**	**Resources**
Individualized Graduation Plans	Individual Graduation Planning Partners	**Student Planning Partners**
FAFSA completion	Financial Aid Planning	
Credentials	Career Transition Planning Support	
	Strengthen Advanced Placement	**ESSER II Funding: AP**
	Jump Start Summers	**Jump Start Summers RFA**
Cohort Tracking	Drop-out Prevention	**JAG** **JAG Brochure**
	Freshman Academy	**Ninth Grade Academy Planning Support Partners**
Dual Enrollment	Fast Forward	**Fast Forward**
ACT Scores	ACT Preparation	**SCA ACT Providers**

Priority: Remove barriers and create equitable, inclusive learning experiences for all students.		
Focus Areas	**Initiatives**	**Resources**
Mental and behavioral health, social-emotional learning, and trauma-informed care	Prioritizing SEL	**Job Description Example: School Social Worker**
Proven, evidence-based models for diverse learners	Specialized Support and Related Services	**Compensatory Services Guidance for Students with Disabilities** **Partnerships for Success**
	Early and Accurate Identification with High Quality Assessments	**Diagnostic and Screener Guidance** **Early Childhood Developmental Screening**
	Improving Outcomes for Diverse Learners	**English Learner Guidebook: Changing Educational Outcomes for English Learners** **Strategies for Success: A Guidebook for Supporting Students with Disabilities**
Supports and services for English Learners	Intentional EL Instructional Planning	**_Achieve!_ Funding Guidance for English Learners (ELs)**
Access to high-quality early childhood education	Expanded Pre-K or B-3 seats	**Expanding Access to High-Quality Early Childhood Education for School Systems**

Priority: Provide the highest quality teaching and learning environment from birth through graduation.		
Focus Areas	**Initiatives**	**Resources**
Aligned instructional materials and resources	High-Quality LMS	**LMS Vendor Guide**
	High-Quality Curriculum	**Louisiana Curriculum Vendor Guide**
	Summer Learning Program	**Summer Learning Program Guidance**
Accelerated Learning Recovery	Accelerate: Louisiana's Tutoring Strategy	**Accelerate - Louisiana's Pre-K-12 Tutoring Strategy**
	Supporting Pre-K-First Grade Transitions	**Guidance for Early Childhood Transitions**

Priority: Develop and retain a diverse, highly–effective educator workforce.		
Focus Areas	**Initiatives**	**Resources**
Job-embedded teacher collaboration and professional development School-based Instructional Leadership Teams Observation, feedback, and coaching cycles	School Improvement Best Practices	**School Improvement Best Practices Guidance**
	School Support Institutes	**School Support Institutes 2021-2022**
Job-embedded teacher collaboration and professional development	Supporting Student Well-Being	**Louisiana Student Well-Being Vendor Guide**
	Supporting Educator Well-Being	**Employee Assistance Programs** **EAP Discussion Checklist**
	High Quality Professional Development	**Louisiana Academic Content PD Vendor Guide**
Improve Educator Compensation	Differentiated Compensation Models	***Achieve!* Compensation Guidance**

Priority: Cultivate high–impact systems, structures, and partnerships.		
Focus Areas	**Initiatives**	**Resources**
Strategic planning, resource allocation, and alignment to critical goals	Scheduling and Staffing Supports 2.0	**Staffing and Scheduling Guidance**
Universal connectivity for all students	Connectivity	**Achieve! Emergency Broadband Benefit for Families**
COVID-19 guidance and support	School Reopening 2.0	***Achieve!* School Reopening Guidelines and Resources**

ACHIEVE! TERMINOLOGY

Term	Definition
Adaptive staffing	Optimize teaching talent and student support by enabling feedback on students' work and frequent communication with students and families. Adaptive staffing plans maximize learning time and enable teachers and students to move seamlessly between in-person and distance learning.
After-school programs	Supplemental school programs that offer academic and enrichment activities after the school day hours.
Allowable use	Activities authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2000 (ESSA), IDEA, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Perkins CTE Act, or the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as well as other specified activities for which LEAs can use ESSER funds.
Assistive technology	Item, equipment, or product system used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with disabilities.
Compensatory education	Services provided to students with disabilities to address progress or skills lost due to extended school closures.
Continuity of services	Ensuring students receive the same services received during in-person instruction while facilities are closed and students are learning virtually.
ESSER I (CARES)	Congress set aside approximately $13.2 billion of the $30.75 billion allotted to the Education Stabilization Fund through the CARES Act for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER Fund). The Department awarded these grants to State educational agencies (SEAs) for the purpose of providing local educational agencies (LEAs), including charter schools that are LEAs, with emergency relief funds to address the impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools across the Nation. ESSER 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 2019. (from ED)
ESSER II (CRRSA)	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. (from ED)
ESSER III (ARPA)	The American Rescue Plan Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) Fund under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act of 2021, Public Law 117-2, enacted on March 11, 2021. ARP ESSER provides a total of nearly $122 billion to States and school districts to help safely reopen and sustain the safe operation of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the nation's students. In addition to ARP ESSER, the ARP Act includes $3 billion for special education, $850 million for the Outlying Areas, $2.75 billion to support non-public schools, and additional funding for homeless children and youth, Tribal educational agencies, Native Hawaiians, and Alaska Natives.

Term	Definition
Evidenced-based	ESEA emphasizes the use of evidence-based activities, strategies, and interventions (collectively referred to as "interventions"). Section 8101(21)(A) of the ESEA defines an evidence-based intervention as being supported by strong evidence, moderate evidence, promising evidence, or evidence that demonstrates a rationale (see text box below). Some ESEA programs encourage the use of "evidence-based" interventions while others, including several competitive grant programs and Title I, section 1003 funds, require the use of "evidence-based" interventions that meet higher levels of evidence.
Evidence-based interventions	Interventions proven effective through strong, quality research (could include peer-reviewed, documented empirical evidence of effectiveness or randomized, controlled trials at scale).
Evidence-based social emotional activities	Activities that have been proven to support students' social and emotional health and well-being.
Formula allocation	Formula grants are also known as entitlement grants. Grantees are not required to compete for formula funds; however, grantees are required to complete grant applications and comply with other grant requirements in order to ensure that grant funds are expended in accordance with the defined purpose and goals of the grant program.
Incentive allocation	Competitive or discretionary funding allocated to school systems that requires applications be submitted with specific funding requirements to be met in order for funds to be awarded. Competitive allocations require BESE approval.
Unfinished learning	Skills and knowledge that students have not yet mastered.
Student connectivity	Ensure all students have access to a device, wifi or hotspot, and broadband connectivity to participate fully in virtual learning.
Summer learning	Provides students with additional opportunities for learning and growing during the summer months through academics and enrichment.