## ESEA Office Hours on 8.13.2020

Q: Can we put a line to set aside funds to be reallocated second semester since we are not sure what things will look like then?

A: Our advice is to put a line item to budget all the money for this first year. We know that there will be carryover into the next year. Put in your budget, funds for activities that you plan to use for this entire year, but you must use all your money through this year. You can only budget through June 30, 2021. For staff, budget all the way through June 30, then anything that is not expended will be used in the carry-over application.

Q: If we have 19-20 expenditures then is that period March 13-June 30?

A: You must budget those funds for the entire year. Anything budgeted in 2020 fiscal year will be budgeted through June 2021. Just budget all your money for the entire funding year.

Comment: I think until we get kids in school, we do not know what the needs are going to be for students for the second semester. We need time to assess that need. If a budgeted item describes the connection to COVID and if what you are planning is aligned and allowable, that would be approved by December 31st. You can fine-tune and make revision in the PAR process.

Q: I am confused why the grant award period begins May 7, 2020. The guidance says March 13, 2020 to June 30, 2021.

A: this is the availability of funding to us. When we provide guidance saying that you can go back to March 2020, that means that the CARES act lets districts get paid for activities related to COVID. This is not part of the grant award period but retroactive spending. The money did not become available until May 7th so that is when the award period starts.

Q: Is it a fair assumption that our budget we submit now for ESSER can be revised later that would provide districts flexibility if the budget is re-prioritized or needs arise during the year?

A: Yes

Q: Do you have an update on GEER funds?

A: There are a few initiatives underway for GEER. Specifically, are you wondering about the Quality Teacher Recruitment, Innovative or CEL funds?

There are no updates on this.

Q: In the lost learning time calc template is there a reason why row 36 defaults to 4.5 hours, should we edit that field to be our actual fall hours of instruction?

A: Line 36 is an estimated total for fall.

Follow-up Q: Ok one more on the template...….For the data in the detail section regarding average instructional hours in the spring, the instructions indicate this number can be based on only "average number of hours....during the shutdown". I'm assuming this means March 15th ish to end of spring semester. Has CDE approved using this specific period in the calculation as opposed to average hours in spring or even all last school year?

A: March 13th is what they considered the first day of the period in question. In a nutshell, it’s the date that the school/district was closed.

Q: Do you have any examples that you are ready to share on Time & Effort for CRF -- we talked about this a while ago, but as we start to get our new hires with CRF just wondered.

A: Track their time and effort as you do in the past now as well. If you do not feel that you have an appropriate tool, Jennifer Austin can send you an example. Districts should be tracking all federal funds in the same manner.

Q: Is a cement pad that supports a portable building (the portable is under $5,000) allowable under CRF. The cement pad is also under $5,000.

A: The only caveat would be if it’s a portable classroom trailer and it can be moved from one area to another and its best practice for it to sit on the cement pad. In that case, one can exist without the other and would not be considered one purchase. “One cannot exist without the other.”

Q: In CRF - gift cards to reward student engagement in eLearning are allowed or not? Card to students?

A: No, gift cards are not allowed.

Follow-up Question: What if a school used Amazon gift cards to get tech supplies for online learning when the school was shut down?

A: Steer clear of referring to that as a “gift card.” Make sure to document the “why” behind these purchases and where they were shipped to.

Q: If we have positions paid out of CRF and/or ESSER, and we are required to go to remote learning, are we able to continue paying those positions out of the grant if they are no longer working? This tends to be support positions, i.e. para's, that schools may not utilize when we are remote, but the district continues to pay these positions.

A: This is a good question. For ESSER, the district is required to continue to pay salaries after the funding expires. Yes, but Nazie will follow-up with an answer on this. CRF has more restrictions than ESSER so the answer might be no. Adam will follow-up on this.

Q: If charters use CRF or ESSER funds to buy technology, who owns the technology, the charter school or the district? We have an NPS that would like to hire a ¾ FTE and our understanding is that they would need to be hired through the school district. Their idea is to hire them as a temp.

A: This is addressed in our guidance. It all depends on the agreement between the district and the charter. If it’s not addressed, then it should be. You would treat them as a contractor. Response from Jennifer Austin: hmm as a contractor then I feel they would not have rights to that equipment (even thought that level of technology is considered a supply in 2CFR200. They will need to have liability insurance. The District still must pay their portion of PERA if they are PERA eligible.

Adam: The district should not own the technology that the charter would purchase. We have edits about a minimum allocation that needs to flow to the charter schools. CDE’s guidance is that a district should allocated 100% of CRF to a Charter School based on entitlement. That guidance is not wed to any statute. Once a charter school receives their funds as long as they are following allowable expenditure guidance, then the charter school purchases belong to them.

When a charter school has a start up grant and they close, it becomes the district’s property.

It comes down to 'who is the fiscal agent of the funds', who is the grant contract assigned to. It will be up to the district's decision on where the title lies to that supply, remember it is NOT equipment, which is an entirely different bag of worms. The district should have that language in their agreements with their districts to eliminate any issues. Even if the technology belongs to the charter schools, they have to follow the federal funding tracking process.

CORRECT, laptops, and iPads are NOT equipment they are supplies.

Q: But aren't Charters considered 'district schools" since you don't have to consult with them anymore?

A: Not sure about the not consulting with them anymore. The district holds the charter, so they are considered district schools. Therefore, the expectation is that the district tracks those expenditures. There should be a contract between the district and charter. The requirement is that they are a treated as stakeholders or they need to be considered in stakeholder process but NPS are included in the formal consultation process. You should still consult with charters on equal footing as other public schools.