

# 10027 - ESSER III 3/20-9/24 84.425U - 2021

## Status Report Details

Funding Opportunity: 9830-ESSER III - Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund III  
Program Area: CARES-CRRSA-ARP  
Status: Editing  
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Initially Submitted By:  
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Last Submitted By:  
Approved Date:

## Contact Information

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## Organization Information

**Name\*:** Belcourt School District #7 - DPI

**Organization Type\*:** Public LEA

**Tax Id:**

**Organization Website:** <http://www.belcourt.k12.nd.us>

**Address\*:** PO Box 440

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**SAM.gov Entity ID:** CM3NZMDUSML7

**SAM.gov Name:** Belcourt School District 7

**SAM.gov Entity ID Expiration Date:** 03/16/2022

## ESSER III Application - Stakeholder Consultation

### Stakeholder Consultation

#### Students\*:

Belcourt School District 7 (BSD7) is located on the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indian (TMBCI) Reservation, and follows tribal mandates, executive orders and resolutions of TMBCI Tribal Council. Because of the restrictions to meet in person, BSD7 sought student input via virtual meetings. The Student Council President and Representatives attend monthly meetings, providing input on current issues (ranging from student academics and activities to COVID concerns), as well as initiatives they have done to assist our school and community throughout this pandemic. School board members, administrators have actively engaged in discussion with students regarding student concerns and suggestions. Student council has also had several meetings with the TMBCI Tribal Council in relation to their educational needs, especially students who were not thriving in a virtual environment.

Based on Student Input, BSD is—

BSD 7 has taken the concerns and initiatives of student representatives into account during the development of the spending plan. Specifically, we are creating action plans in the following areas: additional staff (certified teachers, intensely trained tutors) to address concerns of learning loss as well as targeting specific intervention needs of a student population that was already at risk and historically behind academically in comparison to the state and the nation (National Indian Education Study 2019, n.d.) and pursuing innovative ways to make education more creative, engaging, and applicable to the unique needs of our students.

We also recognize the need for our Native American students to rely on their Native values to continue their education in spite of the pandemic. This amplifies the need for BSD 7 to not only implement the requirements of SB 2304 (Flagship Education Act), but to become actively involved in the Champion Pathway (Calling, Crossing, Constructing, Collaborating and Continuing) of Cultural Understandings (n.d., Teachin

gs of Our Elders, <https://teachingsofourelders.org/champion-pathway/>). BSD 7 should not merely implement North Dakota Native American Essential Understandings lesson plans/curriculum, but become an important resource to assist others to hear the stories, and teachings of Native Americans. This initiative will bring deeper understanding to the history of indigenous people and their journey, hopefully assisting in bridging the gap and eliminating stereotypes of Native Americans, who are 5.6% of the North Dakota population (n.d., Quick Facts North Dakota, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/ND>). The goal is that we will provide authentic opportunities not only for TMBCI enrolled students, but for Native students across the state (perhaps the nation), and to implement our own creations through our own Learning Management System that could eventually be shared for any who wish to participate. Above all, it will provide students an opportunity to heal from generational trauma that is so prevalent in Indian Country and magnified by the pandemic.

#### **Tribes (if applicable)-MUST write NA if not applicable\*:**

BSD 7 has consistently consulted with TMBCI Tribal Council regarding the use of ESSER Funds. Frequent informal meetings with the TMBCI Tribal Councilman/Liaison has occurred, as well as formal meeting with the entire Tribal Council. Discussions on possible acquisition of tribal land and/or property near BSD 7 is still in progress, as TMBCI is also determining where their own ESSER Funds will be targeted to wards. Currently, there are two buildings immediately next to school facilities, which would provide opportunity for BSD 7 to expand their services to students within our school. Consideration of limited spacing has been an utmost concern of both BSD 7 and TMBCI Tribal Council, and the possible acquisition of tribal land/buildings, and renovation of buildings to adequately meet the needs of our students is a current initiative BSD 7 and Tribal Council is working towards.

The TMBCI Tribal Council has relied on administrators and educators to provide insight as to what should be identified as ESSER III funding priorities. In fact, TMBCI Tribal Council has used a large amount of their ESSER funds to support not only BSD 7 students, but surrounding public schools outside of the reservation (St. John, Dunseith) that educate Native American students. Tribal Council has consistently stated that we are the experts in education, and they trust us to identify the biggest needs and challenges our students face, and align our funding to them.

#### **Civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations)\*:**

Special Ed Coordinators/Directors meet with all administrators (BIE and District) every Tuesday. Thereafter, special education meets every Wednesday to go over any information provided at the Tuesday meeting, and concerns regarding special education students are shared, addressed and monitored to ensure that students with disabilities needs are met, especially during the pandemic. Additionally, a Guided Study Paraprofessional was hired, who will assist teachers in instruction and transition of students enrolled in special education programs, and to facilitate the educational and social experiences of students, especially as it concerns enrollment and success in career and technical education programs.

Belcourt School District has two Title IX Coordinators who attends appropriate civil rights training to ensure that we as a district are in compliance with all federal civil rights legislation and school policy. School policy clearly outlines prohibitions, definitions, complaint filing procedures, and responsibilities of Title IX Coordinators (BSD 7 Policy Manual AAC).

#### **Superintendents\*:**

The Superintendent has sought advice, reviewed recommendations and led the ESSER planning process through: soliciting stakeholder input (students, parents, staff, and community), which was primarily done virtually due to past Tribal mandates limiting in person gatherings; meeting with the Belcourt School District School Board ESSER Committee, BSD 7 Business Manager and Finance Office; collaboration with local administration, BIE Education Program Administrator, NDDPI, North Central Education Cooperative (NCEC), North Dakota Council of Exceptional Leaders (NCEL), and the TMBCI Tribal Council to determine priorities of students; and participated (at the TMBCI Council's request) meetings with the Indian Affairs Committee for information pertinent to our Native students.

The Superintendent has attended virtual and in-person meetings (DPI, DOH, TMBCI, BIE) to ensure appropriate, meaningful and forward-thinking initiatives that are allowable and sustainable through the use of all ESSER funding.

The Superintendent sits on several committees throughout the community with other stakeholders to address needs of our community during the pandemic, including but not limited to: NCEC (BINAX, professional development), Health and Safety Team (Tribal Health Officer/Infectious Disease Control Specialist/IHS/Rolette County/NDDOH, TMBCI, BSD 7, BIE, school board, parents, students, Turtle Mountain Community College), Foster Care Project, COVID Team, Core District Reading Group, Strategic Planning Committee, TMCS SpEd, BSD7 ESSER Committee, and BSD7 Construction Committee.

Lastly, the Superintendent, at the request of Senator John Hoeven, testified before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs "Examining the COVID-19 Response in Native Communities: Native Education Systems One Year Later." The Testimony includes the impact of COVID-19 on Indian Country, and priorities we identified: Technology Equipment, Internet Connectivity, Learning Management Systems, BIE background

nd checks and assessments, and teacher/student mental/behavioral health support). Testimony can be found at <https://www.indian.senate.gov/sites/default/files/Testimony%20Dr.%20Michelle%20Thomas.pdf>.

**Teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions\*:**

BSD 7 is a Class A school, and meaningful conversation with a large group of people can be challenging and non-productive. Therefore, a district leadership team was formed that includes school improvement team members consisting of administrators, educators (General Ed and Special Ed) and school staff. Discussion primarily focused on addressing the needs of at-risk students. Unfortunately, this is a very large part of our population, and we are well into the process of establishing Tier I, II and III support, with a strong focus on literacy. Math and social/emotional are in its beginning stages, and will follow the evidence-based guidance of the MTSS (Multi-Tiered Support System) model.

MTSS has been a strongly identified focus of educators. Identifying the Tier each student is at and structuring strategies for each group has been paramount in the framework of instructional delivery at BSD 7. Teams identified at each building (TMES, TMMS and TMHS) work with a consult with MTSS expertise in preparing for evidence-based interventions for those whose data indicates the need.

Discussions with facilities has guided and continues to guide the decision making process in the use of ESSER Funds for facility improvements, construction, etc. BSD 7 works cooperatively with the BIE. The majority of the buildings within the district are property of the federal government. Because of this, BSD 7 is seeking construction projects that address space issues across campus. As of now, BIE structures are not conducive to the full potential of social distancing of students and staff within the building. Additionally, facilities to support identified programming outside of the school day are needed, as BIE facilities are difficult to use outside of the school week.

BSD 7 has worked with Belcourt Association for the Improvement of Teaching (BAIT) to collaborate on agreements and/or amendments to the negotiated agreement to support teachers during the pandemic. Results from the discussion include telework options in extreme cases, daycare needs (identified as a strong need through a survey to staff), ensuring a safe environment, voluntary BINAX testing, and financial support of initiatives outside of the regular work day that are not part of the teacher contracts.

**Stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students\*:**

BSD 7 works closely with parents of students with disabilities as well as advocates and social workers who represent the needs of students with disabilities. IEPs of students specifically address students' interests. The potential expansion of the current CTE program will provide additional support to these students.

BSD 7 works closely with TMBCI Child Welfare and Rolette County Child Welfare, as there are a large number of students who are in foster care. Specific student needs are addressed as needed. When foster care students are also students with disabilities, the aforementioned are at each IEP meeting to determine what goals, objectives, modifications and accommodations are necessary for the success of the student.

Meetings are also held with child welfare, the tribal judicial system and other agencies (IHS, BIA PD) to work collaboratively to address the needs of the students and their families, with the ultimate hope of reunifying families in a functional way.

There is also a homeless shelter on the TMBCI reservation, and BSD7 and BIE have funds to support the needs of these students (supplies, tutoring, other things as needed). ESSER II funds were also earmarked for additional needs of these students during the pandemic.

Within the community, many of our students are also identified as homeless, as they live in multi-generational households in which the house is not theirs. Therefore, BSD 7 supports the needs of these students and/or families.

BSD 7 serves an underserved student population. Socioeconomic status, Native American, 100% free/reduced lunch, and students with disabilities are considered more at risk vs. the general student population as a result of COVID-19. Fortunately as a Title I Schoolwide District, all ESSER Funds will be used to address learning loss for all students. Historically, as Native Americans, students have been behind the

nation academically. All ESSER funds will provide us with the opportunity to not only recoup learning loss, but to bring them to a level playing field as their peers, not only in North Dakota but the nation.

At this time, BSD 7 does not have incarcerated students, migratory students, and English Learners.

### ***ESSER III Approved Applications***

**District confirms the approved ESSER III application will be posted to their website for public access.\*:** Yes

## **ESSER III Application**

### ***Prevention & Mitigation Strategies***

#### **Return to In-Person Instruction Plan\*:**

<https://www.belcourt.k12.nd.us/cms/lib/ND02202901/Centricity/Domain/8/Return%20to%20Inperson%20Instruction%20and%20Continuity%20of%20Services%20Plan.pdf>  
LEA Website Link (copy from browser-must include http)

**District confirms the plan will be updated at least every six months through September 2024 and will seek ongoing public input on the plan.\*:** Yes

**Describe how ARP ESSER III funds will be used by the district to implement prevention and mitigation strategies.\*:**

BSD 7 has and will continue to use ESSER funds to implement prevention and mitigation strategies. Because of the size of the Belcourt school system, BIE regulations and Tribal mandates, executive orders, and tribal resolutions, BSD 7 has gone above and beyond prevention and mitigation efforts. We have and will continue using funds to hire additional staff (RN's, CNA's), BINAX testing, fund duties specific to the COVID Coordinator, Contact Tracing, PPE, dividers, busing modifications to adhere to social distancing, vaccination clinics (already held 3, will hold several more), Academic Enrichment Fairs for parents/students to access resources to supplement learning, appropriate additional accommodations for students with disabilities, modification of facilities, equipment purchases to improve ventilation, outside classrooms, communication regarding the prevention and mitigation efforts. These efforts are not only geared towards the regular school day, but extra-curricular activities and family events as well.

### ***Learning Loss***

**Describe how the district will use the mandatory 20% set-aside to address the academic impact of learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions.\*:**

BSD 7 has a required set aside of 20% of \$21,434,495.00, which equals \$4,286,899.00. The 20% required set-aside must be used intentionally tailored to the needs of our students, as we have incurred a substantial learning loss to an already deficit academic achievement.

BSD 7 data indicates 10-15% learning loss in Mathematics and ELA. Research indicates that those who were already at a disadvantage pre-COVID have the most significant loss (Dorn, Hancock, Sarakatsannis, & Viruleg, 2020).

A large sum of the required set aside will be used to create a structured summer reading program. A meta-analysis indicated that disadvantaged students made significant progress through the implementation of summer reading program because they do not experience high-quality learning activities over the summer compared to high-income students (Kim & Quinn, 2013, p. 387).

Rising rates of depression and anxiety have contributed greatly to the learning loss of our BSD 7 students, requiring a dire need of wraparound services. BSD7 has requested proposals from local mental health providers outside of IHS (Indian Health Services), as we recognize and understand the overwhelming workload our IHS mental health providers are currently experiencing due to the pandemic. Mental Health Support proposals have been obtained from local mental health providers who are Indigenous and recognize, relate and effectively support the needs of our students who are suffering from social/emotional issues that ultimately contributed to the widened gap of learning loss (Dom, Hancock, Sarakatsannis, & Viruleg, 2020).

High impact coaching and tutoring will be implemented in after-school programming. BSD 7 will transition tutors funded by GEERS into ESSER III funding, who will work alongside retired teachers with a strong background in intense reading/math instruction. Any paraprofessionals/teachers currently employed will be encouraged to become high impact teachers/tutors as well. BSD 7 has a high number of students who will benefit from this, and the intent is to cover content where the student is academically at, but to also connect it to classroom instruction he/she is currently receiving. Staff will also be available to provide the tutoring during school hours. BSD 7 has joined forces with Reading Corp (K-3) to train tutors to implement intervention.

Structured after-school programs will also be designed to reinforce the core learning, is culturally relevant to our Native students, and small in size (Dom, Hancock, Sarakatsannis, & Viruleg, 2020). Administration has reviewed and school staff will review and select academic, career/leadership/multicomponent, physical activity/health/STEM and sports interventions for these programs that are evidenced as ESSA Tier I-III. Other programming to be offered (depending on available staff) include STEM, physical activity/health, career/leadership, and academic enrichment. Computer science will be a focus to assist our disadvantaged students to leverage the technology field. Professional Development, robot kits, circuit playgrounds, and other physical computer devices are some of the items funds will support (ESSER Funding for Computer Science Guide).

Through a tribal resolution, distance education is still an option that must be provided to students 11 and under (who currently cannot get the vaccine), and students who have a Medical Doctor's statement specifying the reason for Distance. Therefore, BSD 7 has contracted with the Center for Distance Education to assist with addressing instruction and recoupment of learning loss.

We recognize the need for our students to rely on their Native values to continue their education in spite of the pandemic. This amplifies the need for BSD 7 to not only implement the requirements of SB 2304 (Flagship Education Act), but to become actively involved in the Champion Pathway of Cultural Understandings. BSD 7 should not merely implement North Dakota Native American Essential Understandings lesson plans/curriculum, but become a resource to assist others to learn the stories, and teachings of Native Americans. This initiative will bring deeper understanding of indigenous people and their journey, hopefully assisting in bridging the gap and eliminating stereotypes of Native Americans, who are 5.6% of the ND population. The goal is to provide authentic opportunities for our students to not only learn, but teach others about their culture, creating a stronger sense of identity and self worth.

All professional development, curriculum and assessments specific to the programs to address learning loss will be included in the 20% set aside.

Dom, E., Hancock, B., Sarakatsannis, J., & Viruleg, E. (2020, December 08). COVID-19 and Learning Loss—Disparities Grow and Students Need Help. McKinsey & Company.

Kim, J. S., & Quinn, D. M. (2013). The Effects of Summer Reading on Low-Income Children's Literacy Achievement from Kindergarten to Grade 8.

### ***Needs of Students Disproportionately Impacted***

**Describe how the district will respond to the needs of students disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Address each stakeholder group.\*:**

BSD 7 serves an underserved student population. Unfortunately, almost all of our students fall under several categories. Socioeconomic status, Native American, 100% free/reduced lunch, and students with disabilities are considered more at risk vs. the general student population as a result of COVID-19.

As a Title I Schoolwide District, all ESSER Funds will be used to address learning loss for all students. Historically, as Native Americans, students have been behind the nation academically. All ESSER funds will provide us with the opportunity to not only recoup learning loss, but to bring them to a level playing field as their peers, not only in North Dakota but the nation.

Additional supports are in place for students with disabilities, as well as foster care and homeless students. Special Education coordinators, directors, teachers, paraprofessionals, Guided paraprofessional (CT E focused), and homeless liaisons are working together to support our students with disabilities and those who are homeless. Resources, additional tutoring, materials, etc. will be supported with ESSER III funding to assist in responding to students disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

At this time, BSD 7 does not have English learners and migratory students.

## Estimated Use of Funds Plan

### *Allowable Use of Funds*

Allowable Use of Funds	Estimated Expenditure Amount	Estimated Amount to address Learning Loss under this Use of Funds (20% of Budget Total MUST be spent on Learning Loss)
Ensure preparedness and coordination	\$100,000.00	\$0.00
Purchase cleaning supplies	\$100,000.00	\$0.00
Educational Technology	\$300,000.00	\$0.00
Mental health supports	\$400,000.00	\$400,000.00
Supplemental learning	\$1,000,000.00	\$1,000,000.00
Transportation	\$300,000.00	\$0.00
Professional development	\$200,000.00	\$200,000.00
IDEA (Special Education)	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
Perkins (Career & Technical Education)	\$200,000.00	\$0.00
School facility repairs and improvements	\$100,000.00	\$0.00
Construction Projects	\$15,000,000.00	\$0.00
Additional pay	\$2,300,000.00	\$2,236,899.00
High quality instructional materials and curricula	\$300,000.00	\$300,000.00
Indian, Native Hawaiian, & Alaskan Native Act	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
Budgetary shortfalls	\$347,596.00	\$0.00
Acquisition of real property or modular classrooms	\$636,899.00	\$0.00
	<b>\$21,434,495.00</b>	<b>\$4,286,899.00</b>

## Compliance with General Education Provisions Act Section 427

### *Compliance with General Education Provisions Act Section 427 (GEPA)*

**What barriers exist in your community that may prevent students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries from access or participation in the funded projects or activities listed in the application?\***

Indian Country is amongst those who struggle most to access broadband due to rural locations. A study in 2016 by the U.S. Government Accountability Office revealed that 7 of 10 tribal residents lack access to broadband. Reasons include inability to access high speed internet connection due to rural location, affordability, and/or lack of knowledge in internet capabilities (Broadband Internet: FCC's Data Overstate A

ccess on Tribal Lands. Retrieved from: <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-18-630>).

Transportation has become a major obstacle, as we are 100% free and reduced lunch, and the majority of our students depend on school transportation. Social distancing according to CDC guidelines has presented a challenge.

Timely communication to all stakeholders. The demographics of parents/guardians range from 18 years old to 80 years old (Grandparents raising grandkids). Therefore, BSD needs to develop a communication plan that addresses all parties (email, social media, phones, letters).

BSD 7 and BIE are two entities within one organization. Different policies, regulations and practices have created barriers that could potentially be a barrier in the projects and activities.

At any given time during an increase in COVID cases, TMBCI Tribal Council could pass a resolution that could potentially shut down BSD 7.

**What steps are being taken to address or overcome these barriers?\***

TMBCI tribal council is investing their own ESSER funds to improve the connectivity of our community, and our students. BSD 7 has ESSER funds to potentially supplement the need for connectivity should a state executive order or a tribal resolution close us down.

Buses have been purchased for more distance between students. Drivers are currently being recruited to drive. BSD 7 has teamed with Turtle Mountain Community College during COVID for bus driver training. Additional vehicles have been purchased as well to assist students in transportation.

A communication plan is being developed within our strategic plan for timely, clear and relevant communication to all stakeholders (including but not limited to: students, parents, staff, board members, tribe, community).

The BSD 7 Superintendent and BIE Education Program Administrator have required meetings of all BSD 7 and BIE Principals/Asst. Principals/SpEd Department to work at overcoming potential barriers.

Should a resolution shutting down schools be issued by TMBCI, BSD 7 teachers have lesson plans aligned to curriculum housed in Google Classroom, and there should be little interruption in instruction should this occur.