

BOARD AGENDA ITEM

February 9, 2021

SUBJECT:

Consideration of Extending FFCRA Provisions through ESSER II Funding

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) went into effect April 1, 2020, and required employers to provide employees with sick leave and expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. The FFCRA benefits have maintained pay for a number of employees who were otherwise out of leave options. FFCRA expired December 31, 2020. While there is some expectation the new Federal Administration will extend those benefits, COVID-related employee absences continue in the meanwhile.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATION:

The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER II) resulted from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) that was signed into law on December 27, 2020. The SC Department of Education is receiving \$940.4 million in ESSER II funds. From that, our District is projected to receive \$28.2 million. Funds must be spent by September 30, 2023. School districts can use part of their allocation to continue providing FFCRA benefits, among a variety of other uses, something that Superintendent Spearman echoed during a recent overview discussion of ESSER II.

If and when the Federal government extends FFCRA, ESSER II funds would be used for other purposes. [The Administration will bring a proposal for ESSER II funds in coming weeks. This request for continuation of FFCRA benefits was brought for Board consideration in advance of that proposal due to its time-sensitive nature.]

RECOMMENDATION:

Approve utilization of ESSER II funds, if needed, to extend FFCRA benefits

PREPARED BY:

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