

MINUTES



Commissioner's Task Force on ESSER II and EANS Distribution of Money Friday, March 5th, 2021

CALL TO ORDER

(00:06:05)

Chair Jim Porter called the weekly meeting of the Commissioner's Task Force to order at 3:00p.m. on Friday, March 5th, 2021. The meeting was conducted via video conference and was live streamed for the public to observe and listen.

ATTENDANCE:

(00:06:20)

All Task Force members attended by video conference:

Jim Porter	Dr. Frank Harwood
Janet Waugh	Roberta Lewis
Brenda Dietrich	Tracy Callard
Pat Pettey	Jason Winbolt
Adam Thomas	Brad Bergsma
Simeon Russell	Janet Eaton
Lisa Peters	Dr. Nick Compagnone
Dr. Mike Argabright	Adam Proffitt
Jamie Rumford	Melissa Rooker
Dr. Alicia Thompson	

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION
(00:06:56)

Mike Argabright made a motion to approve the agenda for the March 5th meeting, and Jamie Rumford had seconded it. Motion carried (19-0).

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 26TH MEETING MINUTES

MOTION
(00:07:47)

Jason Winbolt made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from Feb. 26th, 2021, and Bert Lewis seconded the motion. Motion carried (19-0).

COMMISSIONER WATSON – Recap of EANS Law and Authorized Uses of Funds

(00:08:17)

Commissioner Watson started the meeting off by thanking the participants again for their willingness to volunteer their time for the Commissioner’s Task Force.

He mentioned to Task Force members that today's meeting will be a heavy meeting; and it will be focused towards the EANS fund application, and process.

Commissioner Watson also mentioned to Task Force members that the senate is hearing ESSER III and what may become EANS II (it may be released around midnight; but they will not be going over this item today).

(00:10:13)

The list of approved expenditures for the Emergency Assistance for Non-Public Schools (EANS) is a federal list and is subject to state requirements; the Task Force will not have any authority or ability to change the list. Commissioner Watson then walked through the thirteen approved expenditures for the EANS funds.

(00:12:20)

COMMISSIONER WATSON – EANS Application Launch Process and Timeline

(00:15:28)

Commissioner Watson emphasized that each time there is another form of funds being distributed, there will be slightly different rules attached to it.

Within 30-days from the time a private school submits their application, the private school will have to receive notification whether their application has been approved or denied.

The average expected award for each private school is \$150,000 to \$300,000 per school, but this is an estimate as we will not know the number of schools that will apply, and what needs will be requested. Commissioner Watson then stated that the Task Force will try to look at an assessment of requests to prioritize allocation of EANS funds across schools.

Commissioner Watson had then discussed the tight deadline for EANS Funds –

(00:22:43)

03/08 – EANS Draft Application Pre-Launch

03/15 – EANS Application Launch – Available for submission

03/26 – EANS submission deadline

04/02 – EANS Review – Task Force reviews initial batch of EANS apps

04/09 – Task Force determines EANS approval recommendations

04/13 and 04/14 – Board of Education approves EANS applications

04/15 – Decisions communicated to schools

Applications will be reviewed and approved in a batch process, that way everyone has the same access to the funds if all of the funds are requested. The week of March 8th through the 12th is crucial for private schools, as there will be webinars available, as well as the draft application will be available for private schools to review.

Tate Toedman (KSDE) mentioned that the 30-day time clock will begin from when we’ve received the funds; which was received on Feb. 26th, the application has to be accessible to private schools within the 30 days.

CONTINUED - COMMISSIONER WATSON – EANS Application Launch Process and Timeline

00:15:27

The next 30-day window will be from when we received an application; so, when the application has been received, a decision has to be made on it within 30 days. Tate also mentioned that the webinar for private schools will be Wednesday or Thursday of next week (notification will be sent out a minimum of 24 to 48 hours in advance). He also mentioned that private schools will not be able to apply for both EANS funds, and PPP, as that is how the law is written. Tate plans to look further into the law for clarification. Next, Commissioner Watson discussed how the EANS Launch Plan was designed to maximize school awareness and comfort with the application such as:

- Weekly KSDE communications: to non-public school email list with updated information.
- Task Force meetings live-streamed: and non-public school leaders will be encouraged to watch.
- Feedback on draft application: being solicited from selected non-public school leaders as well as the Commissioner’s Task Force.
- Webinar: being scheduled for the week of March 8th to walk through application in Kansas CommonApp; will be recorded and posted online for those who cannot attend.
- Office hours: being scheduled for the week of March 15th to address questions; will be recorded and posted online for those who cannot attend.
- Frequently asked questions: will be posted online and updated frequently.

COMMISSIONER WATSON – EANS APPLICATION OVERVIEW

(00:36:58)

Commissioner Watson mentioned that the Task Force will focus on three key points when reviewing the EANS applications. The three key points include ensuring compliance, inform application decisions, and lastly, support future reporting.

Tate Toedman had then taken over the presentation, and the first item he mentioned was that a new email account was created for EANS questions, and the email address is eans@ksde.org.

He then mentioned that in the excel sheet private schools will see six tabs, and the tabs will include:

1. Introduction/Instructions
2. Products and Services
3. Full-time personnel
4. Part-time personnel
5. Other
6. Reimbursement

Tate emphasized that there will be a menu/catalog created for the service centers; and the

CONTINUED - COMMISSIONER WATSON – EANS APPLICATION OVERVIEW

(00:53:37)

catalog will include services being provided such as masks, webinars, virtual coaching, etc. The catalog was created to help simplify the application process for private schools. Tate also mentioned that the items listed in the catalog can be seen as approvable under the right circumstances; when the private school completes the application, they will need to explain the impact of COVID-19, and why this would be an appropriate expense for their building. He mentioned that the current draft of the service center catalog includes 300 products, and 60 services; which will be included in the pre-populated option on the application. Tate then went through a list of items the private schools should and shouldn't do.

(00:55:46)

He also mentioned that the Task Force will have access to all submitted and reviewed applications including a consolidated view; which will consist of a list of each school, total number of students, the percentage of low-income students, the amount of funds they have requested, and what amount of funds were recommended.

Tate mentioned that the funds will not go directly to the private schools, as they will be given to the service centers, and the service center will draw down the funds as needed. The service centers will be required to update the Kansas State Dept. of Education frequently regarding the funds they are requesting to draw down.

A summary report of applications, requests, and recommendations for all schools will also be provided to the Task Force members.

COMMISSIONER WATSON - EANS Application Review Process

(01:15:33)

Commissioner Watson went through the EANS application process, which will look like the following (steps 4 and 5 will relate directly to the Task Force):

1. EANS Application submitted to KSDE
2. Initial screening
3. Application Review
4. Summary Reporting
5. Allocation of resources

The approach to EANS applications must take several key considerations into account such as the number of applications, total eligible requests, differentiated needs across schools, etc. Commissioner Watson then proposed how internally the EANS applications will be prioritized; which will be the following (in order):

1. Determination of request eligibility
2. Prioritized distribution
3. Remaining distribution

COMMISSIONER WATSON – ESSER Timeline and Review Process

(01:27:57)

Commissioner Watson stated that the layout for next week's meeting (March 12th) will be the same as today's meeting, but the focus will be on ESSER II funds.

He then explained the proposed timeline for the ESSER II funds application, which is the following:

03/11 – ESSER/Common App Webinar

03/12 – Task Force aligns on ESSER app and review process

03/17 – ESSER application; available for submission

03/24 – ESSER Office Hours

*After 03/17, ESSER applications will then be reviewed on a rolling basis and approved in monthly Kansas State Board of Education meetings.

Commissioner Watson mentioned that the ESSER II applications will be screened as they are received, and the reason behind this is because the district already has the allocation for the money. The applications will be provided to Task Force members on Wednesdays as pre-read material.

He then discussed the review process for the ESSER applications which is shown below:

1. ESSER Application submitted to KSDE
2. Initial screening
3. Application review
4. Individual request determination
5. Recommendation

Chairman Porter emphasized that although our previous meetings have been ahead of schedule, the next few meetings may **not** be.

(01:32:59)

Brad Neuenswander mentioned that service centers were chosen to provide services to the private schools as they have continuously provided services to the private schools, and they have the staff available.

Jason Winbolt asked if someone on the Task Force is associated with a school district who submits an application for the funds, will they have to recuse themselves due to conflict of interest. Chairman Porter then responded that it would be a personal choice to remove themselves, but that is how he would approach the situation.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Porter adjourned the meeting at 4:33pm. The next meeting will occur on Friday, March 12th at 3:00pm.