

School Construction with Federal Funds Overview

AOE School Construction Team

AOE.federalconstruction@vermont.gov

- Cassandra Ryan
- Patrick Halladay
- Josh Souliere
- Toni Marra
- Abby Houle
- Kevin Doering
- Jill Briggs Campbell

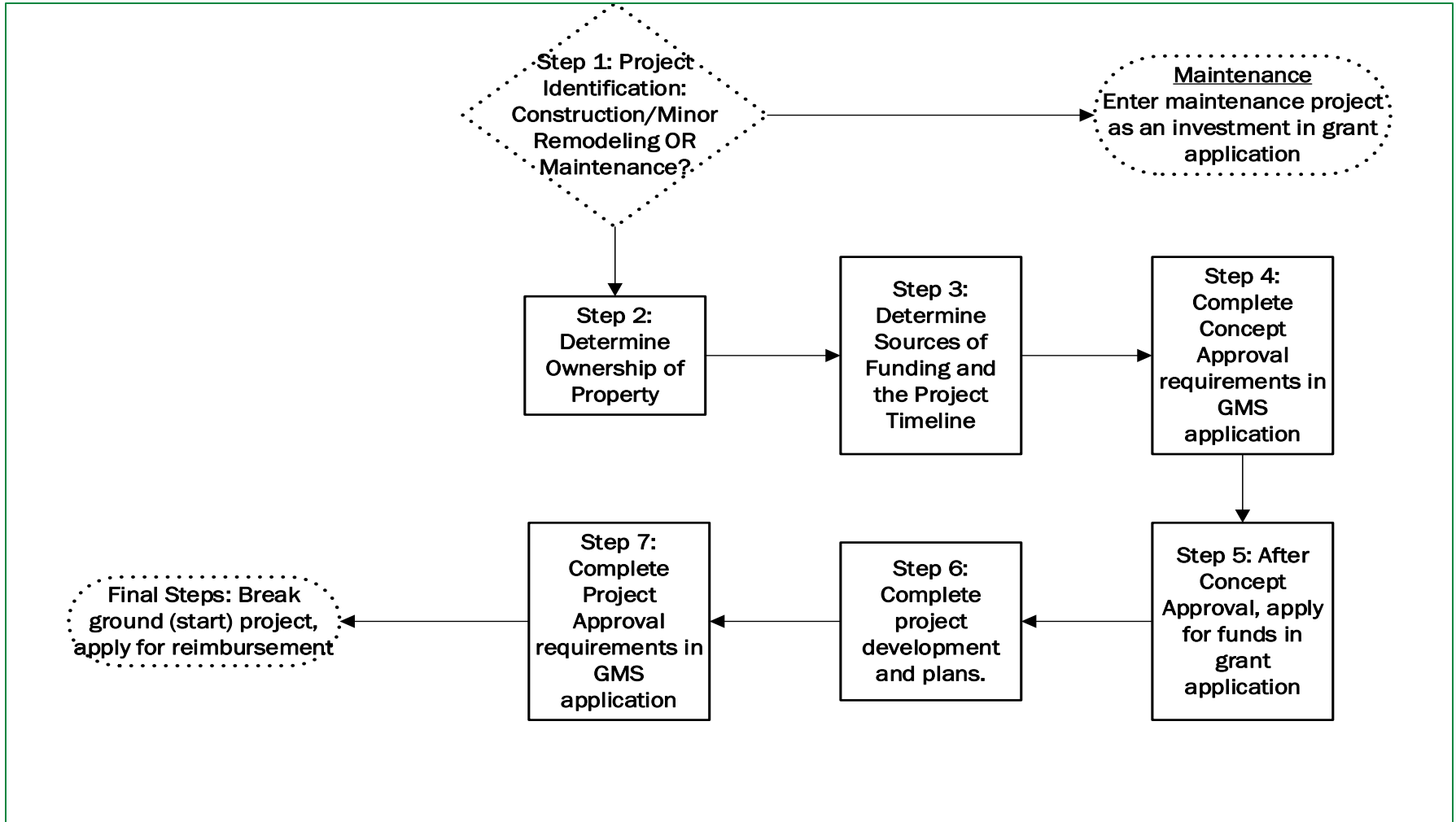
Federal Funding for School Construction

- ESSER I (through September 30, 2022)
- ESSER II (through September 30, 2023)
- ARP ESSER (through September 30, 2024)
- Indoor Air Quality Grant (Efficiency VT) (through December 2024)
- Potential Infrastructure Bill (TBD)

Construction Project Overview

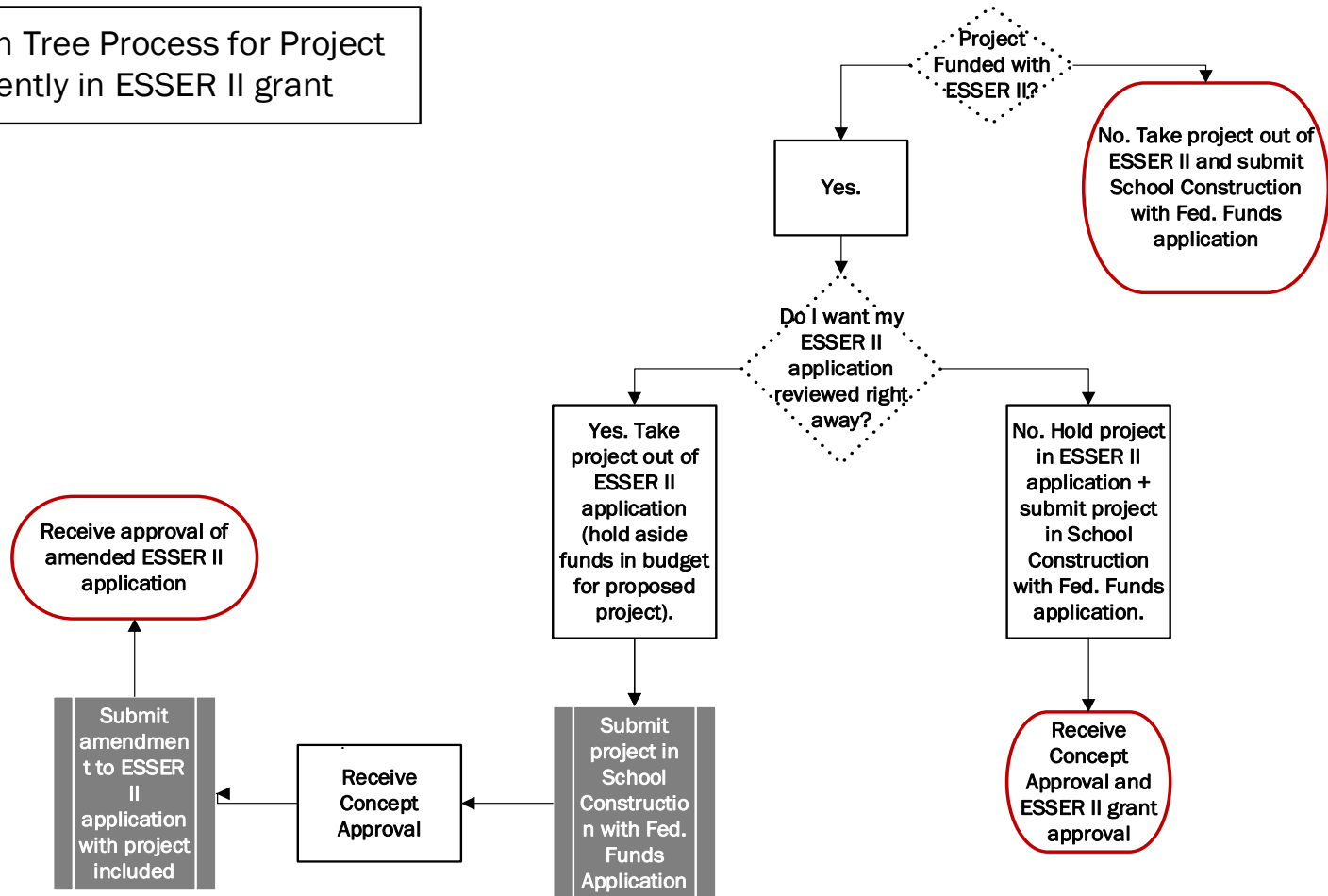
1. Project identification.
2. Determine ownership of the property.
3. Determine the source(s) of funding and the timeline (start and end date)
4. Complete the requirements for Concept Approval in the [GMS Application for Construction with Federal Funds](#) and submit
5. Apply for federal funds in grant application
6. Complete plan development and obtain all required permits
7. Complete Project Approval requirements in the [GMS Application for Construction with Federal Funds](#) and submit as an amendment

Construction Project Overview

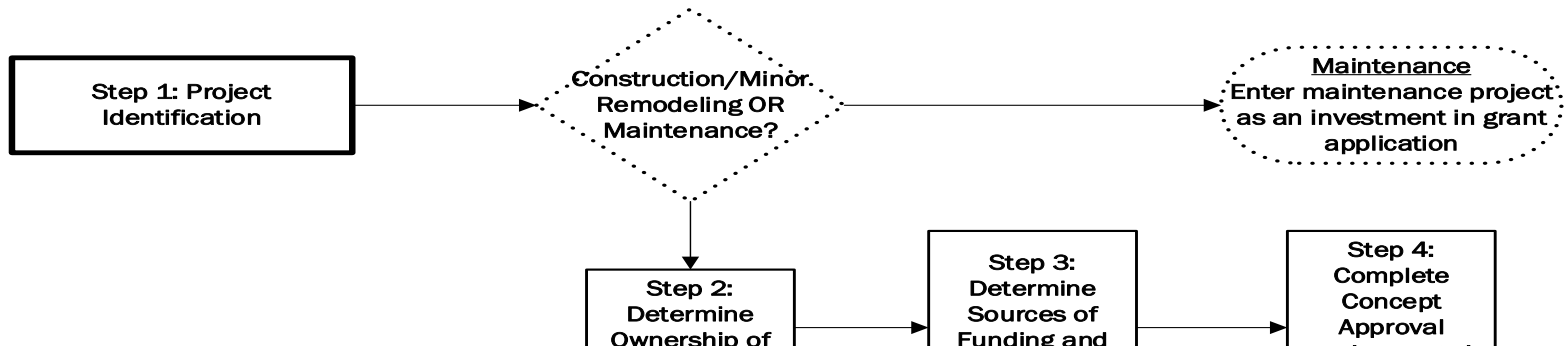


What if your project is in ESSER II already?

Decision Tree Process for Project currently in ESSER II grant



Step One: Project Identification



- Projects that meet the definition of minor remodeling OR construction will follow the same application process in GMS
- Projects that are maintenance do not need review in the School Construction w/Federal Funds GMS application, but must be included in a grant application and must be allowable (meaning, they must be maintenance) and may still trigger the requirement for prior approval as a capital improvement.

Project Identification: Definitions

GMS Application + Grant Application

Construction: “(A) the preparation of drawings and specifications for school facilities; (B) erecting, building, acquiring, altering, remodeling, repairing, or extending school facilities; (C) inspecting and supervising the construction of school facilities; and (D) debt servicing for such activities.” [34 CFR §222.176\(a\)](#)

Minor remodeling: Minor alterations in a previously completed building, for purposes associated with COVID-19. The term also includes the extension of utility lines, such as water and electricity, from points beyond the confines of the space in which the minor remodeling is undertaken but within the confines of the previously completed building.

Grant Application Required

Maintenance: “Costs incurred for utilities, insurance, security, necessary maintenance, janitorial services, repair, or upkeep of buildings and equipment (including Federal property unless otherwise provided for) which neither add to the permanent value of the property nor appreciably prolong its intended life, but keep it in an efficient operating condition, are allowable...” [2 CFR § 200.452](#)

Please Note: Though the project may not be considered construction it may involve the purchase of equipment and/or other capital expenditures that may require prior written approval (see [2 CFR 200.439](#)).

Step Two: Source of Funding and Timeline

Questions to consider for ESSER funds:

1. Is this cost allowable under ESSER (prevent, prepare for or respond to COVID-19)?

Costs associated with construction projects including inspection, testing, maintenance, repair, replacement and upgrade to:

- a. Improve indoor air quality including mechanical and non-mechanical heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems; filtering, purification and other air cleaning; fans, control systems, and window and door repair and replacement.
 - b. Comply with social distancing, hygiene and other health guidelines including facility repairs and improvements to enable operation of schools to reduce risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards, and to support student health needs
2. What is the timeframe for each element of this project and what is the timeframe for the funding source?
 3. Does this project require multiple funding sources (ESSERs, IAQ grant, local funds) → what are the timeframes and requirements for each source?

Step 4: Concept Approval in GMS

- Project Description
- COVID-19 context
- Timeline
- Budget with sources of funding identified for each project item
- Assurances
 - Please Note: these are **NOT** the standard grant assurances and should be thoroughly reviewed
 - AOE will provide additional information on each assurance in a subsequent webinar

Who should fill out GMS application?

- BMs, Facilities Directors, other designees can be added by the Superintendent
 - From the main menu click **Access Request**
 - Click on the name of the person to change permissions for
 - On the left click on the **assign** link next to the desired role, in this case **leaConstruction**
 - Click Accept
- Superintendent **must submit** the application

What can we do once we have Concept Approval?

LEA will receive a signed Concept Approval Letter from AOE

- Procure Architectural and Engineering (A&E) services
- Develop plans for project
- Obtain all necessary permits
- Put the project out to bid/procure equipment
- Put the project in a grant application



Caution: You **CANNOT** start the project (break ground) at this stage

Step 5: Apply for Funds in a grant application

- After Concept Approval, put the cost(s) of the project in the proposed federal grant(s) application.
- Reminder: if the LEA proposes to use ARP ESSER, they must meet the Interim Final Requirement for meaningful consultation
- Must be done **before** Project Approval

Step 6: Project Development

- Procure Architectural and Engineering (A&E) services
- Develop plans for project
- Obtain all necessary permits
- Put the project out to bid
- Procure equipment/materials



Caution: LEAs should carefully review all federal and state requirements during this stage

Project Changes: What to Do?

- Projects that change substantially during the planning/development process should be amended in the **Concept Approval** stage
- LEAs must ensure that any substantive changes are still eligible under their proposed federal funding source(s)

Step 7: Project Approval in GMS

- Update budget to reflect any major changes that arose during project planning
- Review assurances from Concept Approval stage
- Upload required documents/information:
 - Title
 - School Board written approval
 - Historic Preservation review form and determination (if applicable)
 - Final Plans
- Superintendent must submit

What can we do once we have Project Approval?

LEAs will receive a signed Project Approval letter from AOE

- Start the project (break ground)
- Seek reimbursement for costs



Caution: LEAs should keep a Project File with all required permits, documents, etc for future monitoring

What is next from AOE?

- Training sessions on special topics:
 - Completing GMS application (7/15 9-10:30 am)
 - Davis-Bacon
 - Procurement
 - Other needs?
- Introduction of Norm Etkind as consultant for construction
- Communications on Indoor Air Quality Grant with Efficiency VT
- Continuing review of project applications and technical assistance

Resources and Links

- [School Construction with Federal Funds](#) webpage
- [School Construction with Federal Funds](#) guidance
- Historical Preservation determination webform (forthcoming)
- [Fire Safety Interactive Map](#)
- [Agency of Natural Resources on-line Permit Navigator](#)
- [Natural Resources Board](#)
- [Department of Environmental Conservation, Find a Permit Specialist](#)
- [Department of Environmental Conservation, Information on PCBs](#)