

Education Stabilization Fund of the CARES Act

Background

The CARES Act establishes the Education Stabilization Fund, a \$30.75B fund which the Department of Education will distribute to states in two separate funding streams that schools may be able to access. Those two funding streams are:

Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER) (Section 18002 of The Education Stabilization Fund)

- Money in this fund will be allocated to each state based on a 2-part formula with 60% being allocated in proportion to each state's share of the national school-aged population, and 40% being allocated in proportion to each state's share of Title I students.
- In addition to providing funds to school districts and institutions of higher education, governors can use funds to provide emergency support for other education-related entities within the State that the Governor deems essential for carrying out emergency educational services to students. Allowable uses of funds include:
 - the provision of child-care and early childhood education
 - [Georgia's](#) governor has already committed GEER funding for licensed child-care centers
 - social and emotional support
 - the protection of education-related jobs
 - any activity authorized by Section 18003 (see below)

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) (Section 18003 of The Education Stabilization Fund)

- Money in this fund will be allocated to states and from the state to local educational agencies (LEA's) in the same proportion they receive funding under Title IA of ESEA in the most recent fiscal year.
- There are [twelve uses](#) for money provided under the fund, including:
 - Any activity authorized under ESEA or IDEA which might include professional development, instructional materials, resources to support educational programs, and special education for children and youth with disabilities
 - Resources for principals/ school leaders to address needs of their individual schools
 - Activities to address the unique needs of a variety of populations including low-income students, children with disabilities, and racial and ethnic minorities
 - Training for staff on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases
 - Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean school facilities
 - Planning for and coordinating during long-term closures including how to provide meals, technology, guidance for carrying out IDEA
 - Purchasing technology (hardware, software, connectivity) for students to aid in educational interaction between students and their teachers.
 - Providing mental health services and supports
 - Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning
 - Other activities necessary to maintain the operation of and continuity of services and continuing to employ existing staff

Non-Public School Participation

- As with Title funds under ESEA, the CARES Act requires the local educational agency (LEA/school district) to provide equitable services to non-public schools with regards to funding distributed through these two funding streams.
- As with Title I, Title IIa and Title IV, the CARES Act requires LEAs to consult with non-public school leaders in order to provide equitable services.
- All non-public schools, regardless of past participation in federal Title programs, must be contacted by their LEA and offered the opportunity to receive equitable services from their LEA *if* the LEA has received funding.
- Because these funds follow the same equitable services model as the various Title funds, receiving funds through the programs will *not* make your school a recipient of federal financial assistance.

Prepare to Request Funding

1. *Begin drafting a needs assessment for your school, students, and teachers.*

The legislation lists twelve categories of permissible uses of the Schools funds found in Section 18003 (d) [here](#). While a needs assessment is not required, getting your needs on paper will ensure you are prepared when the time comes for consultation with your LEA.

2. *Proactively reach out to your LEAs.*

LEAs are required to consult with non-public schools. If you are a school that has not participated in ESSA or IDEA in the past, it's important to reach out so the LEA knows your school exists. Introduce yourself and let them know you intend to participate.

3. *At the time of consultation, bring the actual bill text of Sections 18002, 18003 and 18005 (at the end of this document), along with the [USDE Guidance](#).*

Advocate

Individuals:

- Connect with your state Montessori advocacy group. If you don't know your group's name or the contact people, you can find [state by state listings](#) on our website. Get on their mailing list so you are prepared to join any calls to action they put out.

State Advocacy Groups:

- Make sure someone in your state group is connected with [state CAPE](#) and [state AEYC](#) chapters and others doing advocacy around education and childcare.
- Contact your governor's office to let them know about the needs of early childhood programs. You can point to [Georgia](#) and other states who are allotting GEER funding for early childhood programs.
- If schools are running into issues, consider contacting your Ombudsman: States are required to appoint an Ombudsman to oversee equitable services required under section [1117 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act \(ESEA\)](#). That Ombudsman will also be overseeing equitable services under the funds listed above.

Links

- Section 18002 [Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund](#)
- Section 18002 [Uses of Funds](#)
- Section 18003 [Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund](#)
- Section 18003 [Uses of Funds](#)
- [MPPI FAQ](#) on US Department of Education Guidance

