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For More Information Contact:
JP O'Hare or Jeanne Beattie
(518) 474-1201
www.nysed.gov

State Education Department Announces Process for Local Educational Agencies to Apply for $1.2 Billion in NY CARES Act Funding

The State Education Department today released information on the application process for local educational agencies (LEAs) to apply for $1.2 billion in Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding, Interim State Education Commissioner Shannon Tahoe announced. The CARES Act provides $30.75 billion nationwide in an Education Stabilization Fund to prevent, prepare for and respond to the coronavirus. Completed applications are due by August 15 and will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

"Schools at every level across our State face tremendous challenges as they address the crisis created by COVID-19, with the biggest impact on Black and Latino families, children and low-income communities," Chancellor Betty A. Rosa said. "This federal funding is imperative for New York's schools as they look to reopening, recovering and moving forward safely."

"The immense fiscal and emotional costs of this pandemic are like nothing that our school communities have ever confronted," Interim Commissioner Tahoe said. "We will work with New York's LEAs to process applications for CARES Act funding as quickly as possible to expedite these funds that are crucial to ensure that students are supported academically and emotionally in the wake of this pandemic."

On March 27, 2020, Congress passed, and the President signed into law the CARES Act. Eligible LEAs can apply to the New York State Education Department (NYSED) for Governor's Emergency Education Relief Funds (GEER) and Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER) funds.

Eligible LEAs are asked to submit a single CARES Act Combined Funding Application for both ESSER and, if applicable, GEER, funding using the online SED Monitoring and Vendor Reporting System. Completed applications are due by August 15, 2020; however, extensions will be granted by request. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER)

New York State has been allocated $1.037 billion under ESSER. The United States Education Department (USDE) awards ESSER grants to State educational agencies for the purpose of providing LEAs, including charter schools that are LEAs, with emergency relief funds to address the impact of COVID-19 on elementary and secondary schools. Pursuant to the terms of the CARES Act, allocations were calculated

using the relative shares of grants awarded under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) for the most recent fiscal year (2019-20).

Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER)

New York State has been allocated $164.2 million under GEER. GEER is a flexible emergency block grant designed to allow Governors to decide how best to meet the needs of students, schools, postsecondary institutions and other education-related organizations in their states.

In New York State, the entirety of the State's GEER allocation is being made available to the major school districts to help ensure continued educational services for students amid the unprecedented public health emergency. These funds will be allocated to eligible school districts using the relative shares of grants awarded under Title I, Part A of the ESEA for the most recent fiscal year (2019-20).

Provision of Equitable Services to Non-Public Schools: LEAs must provide equitable services to students and teachers in non-public schools as required under the CARES Act. On July 1, 2020, the USDE published in the Federal Register an Interim Final Rule (IFR) which outlines how LEAs are to calculate the amount of ESSER and GEER funds available for providing equitable services to students and teachers in non-public schools. The IFR was effective immediately upon publication, and NYSED intends to comply with the IFR.

Funding Period

The funding period for both GEER and ESSER funds is from March 13, 2020 to September 30, 2022. LEAs must obligate funds by September 30, 2022 and must liquidate funds by October 30, 2022.

LEA Allocations and Guidance

Additional information, including individual LEA allocations of GEER and ESSER funds and answers to Frequently Asked Questions, is may be found on the CARES Act funding web page.

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New York State Education Building
89 Washington Avenue
Albany, NY 12234

CONTACT US

NYSED General Information: (518) 474-3852
ACCES-VR: 1-800-222-JOBS (5627)
TASC (formerly GED): (518) 474-5906
New York State Archives: (518) 474-6926
New York State Library: (518) 474-5355
New York State Museum: (518) 474-5877
Office of Higher Education: (518) 486-3633
Office of the Professions: (518) 474-3817

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