Executive Department
State of Idaho

State Capitol
Boise

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF IDAHO
BOISE

EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 2020-16

STRONG FAMILIES, STRONG STUDENTS GRANT INITIATIVE

WHEREAS, Idaho's families, students, and schools have been greatly affected by the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic; and

WHEREAS, Idaho schools, educators, and administrators are working diligently to provide a free, thorough and uniform education to their students while also protecting their safety; and

WHEREAS, Idaho has remained committed to its students, educators, and administrators through its strong financial support to our schools during this time; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the demands and expenses of families and parents to ensure their children get the best education possible during these difficult and uncertain times; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has reduced the availability of childcare and in-person learning for Idaho students and children, and has forced some parents to leave the workforce, change jobs, or reduce working hours in order to ensure their children receive the best possible education; and

WHEREAS, support for Idaho's students, families, and schools not only benefits Idaho's children, but continues to support Idaho businesses and our workforce; and

WHEREAS, Idaho continues to lead the nation in economic momentum due to its strong families and hardworking citizenry; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and right to do all we can to support Idaho families and students in pursuing an education and good jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, in March, Congress passed and President Trump signed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to provide fast and direct assistance to American workers and families impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the CARES Act created the Coronavirus Relief Fund, which provides financial assistance to respond to and mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on April 30, 2020, the Board of Examiners approved, pursuant to Section 67-3516(2), non-cognizable spending authority for the Governor's Office in fund 0345 for the $1.25 billion in funds provided to Idaho by the CARES Act for the time period of March 1, 2020 through December 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Treasury ("Treasury") has stated that it is appropriate to use the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) for expenses incurred between March 1 and December 30, 2020, associated with the safe reopening of public schools, including for costs associated with providing distance learning or for in-person learning; and

WHEREAS, the Treasury has stated it is appropriate to use the CRF for second-order effects of the emergency, such as economic support to those suffering from employment interruptions due to COVID-19, and to provide assistance to individuals and families directly impacted by a loss of income due to the COVID-19 public health emergency; and

WHEREAS, Idaho's Coronavirus Financial Advisory Committee (CFAC) convened on September 15, 2020, and determined that, in its judgment, expenditures for the Strong Families, Strong Students Grant Initiative met the requirements of the CARES Act and direction from the U.S. Department of Treasury on the proper uses of the CRF, and found this use to be necessary to provide support to aid Idaho families, parents, and students to respond to and mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic and to provide those families with economic support to aid in Idaho's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, I agree with the conclusions of CFAC and find that the Strong Families, Strong Students Grant Initiative is necessary to Idaho's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to provide Idaho families with economic support to aid in Idaho's recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Governor is authorized to utilize all resources of the state and to transfer the function of state departments and agencies or units thereof for the purpose of performing or facilitating emergency services, pursuant to Section 46-1008(5)(b) and (c), Idaho Code; and

WHEREAS, the Idaho Constitution, Article IX, Section 1 requires the establishment and maintenance of "a general, uniform and thorough system of public, free common schools" in Idaho; and

WHEREAS, the Idaho Constitution, Article IX, Section 2 vests the "general supervision of the state educational institutions and the public school system of the state of Idaho" with the State Board of Education; and

WHEREAS, under Idaho Code, 33-101, the State Board of Education has general supervision, governance and control of the public school systems; and

WHEREAS, under Idaho Code, 33-107, the Board of Education has statutory authority to perform all duties prescribed for it by the school laws of the state, has the authority to acquire, hold, and dispose of interests in real and personal property, and the general supervision through its executive offices such as the Office of the State Board of Education and the Department of Education, of all entities of public education supported by state funds; and

WHEREAS, under Idaho Code, 33-110, the State Board of Education is designated as the state educational agency, which is authorized to negotiate and contract with the federal government, and to accept financial or other assistance from the federal government; and

WHEREAS, under Idaho Code section 33-125, the State Department of Education is established as an executive agency of the State Board of Education and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, as the executive officer of the State Department of Education, has "the responsibility for carrying out policies, procedures and duties authorized by law or established by the state board of education for all elementary and secondary school matters."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Brad Little, Governor of the State of Idaho, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of this state do hereby order that:

1. *The Strong Families, Strong Students Grant Initiative is hereby created to assist families in paying eligible expenses to support their children's education and that were incurred on or after March 1, 2020.*

2. *The total amount allocated for the Strong Families, Strong Students Grant Initiative will be $50 million from the Coronavirus Relief Fund. Eligible families may receive a grant of up to $1,500 per student and a maximum of $3,500 per family.*

3. *The State Board of Education is to administer the Strong Families, Strong Students Grant Initiative, and to set the eligibility criteria for the recipients and expenses.*

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Idaho in Boise on this 7th day of October in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty.

BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

LAWERENCE DENNEY
SECRETARY OF STATE