



NEWS RELEASE

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MDE Taking Quick Action to Receive \$390 Million in Federal Schools Funds

LANSING, MICH. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) will be immediately applying for nearly \$390 million from the federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) fund portion of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the department announced today.

The application and guidance from the U.S. Department of Education (USED) for the ESSER funding was released earlier today to states. The \$13.2 billion ESSER Fund provides emergency relief funds to address the impact that COVID-19 has had, and continues to have, on elementary and secondary schools across the United States.

“These funds will be very helpful for local school districts to help meet the needs of students and staff during the pandemic, and we appreciate them as such,” said State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice.

Dr. Rice has been working with Gov. Gretchen Whitmer on the digital divide that exists across school districts in Michigan. These funds will help further narrow the divide between districts that have the requisite technology in the homes of students and staff and those that don’t.

“Though appreciated in many ways, these funds are limited relative to the needs of school districts pre-pandemic, let alone their needs post-pandemic and their needs in light of declining state revenue and likely substantial budget cuts to local school districts,” Dr. Rice added. “These federal funds are one-time funding source and must be used very carefully by local school districts.”

MDE expects a quick approval of its application from USED and will be sharing guidance with local school districts in the next several days for districts to apply for this funding.

ESSER funding allocations have been determined for all eligible school districts. The distribution of these funds is based upon the 2019-20 federal Title I, Part A funding formula.

According to the guidance handed down from USED, local school districts may use ESSER funds for activities that align with the following:

1. Any activity authorized by the ESEA of 1965, including the Native Hawaiian Education Act and the Alaska Native Educational Equity, Support, and Assistance Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Carl D.

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Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, or subtitle B of title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

2. Coordination of preparedness and response efforts of local school districts with state, local, tribal, and territorial public health departments, and other relevant agencies, to improve coordinated responses among such entities to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus.
3. Providing principals and other school leaders with the resources necessary to address the needs of their individual schools.
4. Activities to address the unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.
5. Developing and implementing procedures and systems to improve the preparedness and response efforts of local school districts.
6. Training and professional development for staff of the local school district on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.
7. Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of a local school district, including buildings operated by such agency.
8. Planning for and coordinating during long-term closures, including for how to provide meals to eligible students, how to provide technology for online learning to all students, how to provide guidance for carrying out requirements under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and how to ensure other educational services can continue to be provided consistent with all federal, state, and local requirements.
9. Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software, and connectivity) for students who are served by the local school district that aids in regular and substantive educational interaction between students and their classroom instructors, including low-income students and students with disabilities, which may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.
10. Providing mental health services and supports.
11. Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, students with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care.
12. Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation and continuity of services in local school districts and continuing to employ existing staff of the local school district.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus).

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