

GOVERNOR'S EMERGENCY EDUCATION RELIEF FUND
PART C: USES OF GOVERNOR'S EMERGENCY EDUCATION FUNDS

Section 18002 of Division B of the CARES Act provides in relevant part that grants awarded under the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund be used to support the ability of local educational agencies (LEAs) and institutions of higher education (IHEs) to continue to provide educational services to their students. The Department is interested in learning how and to what extent each State intends to use the award, or a portion of the award, to establish, develop, improve, or expand the availability, accessibility, capacity, and use of remote learning techniques and technologies which includes both distance education as defined in section 103(7) of the HEA and distance learning as defined in ESEA section 8101(14). The Department requests the following information:

1. Does the State intend to use any of the awarded funds to support remote learning for all students?

a. Please describe whether the State considered conducting an assessment of the barriers to implementing effective remote learning for all students, or utilizing an existing assessment, to help target resources toward greatest needs.

b. With respect to LEAs, please describe how the State intends to use the funds to help students and teachers adopt or improve remote learning that serves all students, including students with disabilities, students from low-income families, charter school students, and non-public school students.

c. With respect to IHEs, please describe how the State intends to focus expenditures to ensure that all institutions – public and private – have the needed supports to continue executing their missions and educating their students.

1. Does the State intend to use any of the awarded funds to support remote learning for all students?

The State of New Mexico will use the awarded funds to support remote learning options for all students, including young children, elementary and secondary students, and college and university students.

The New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department proposes providing the following:

- Professional development for early childhood professionals
- Home learning support for families of young children
- Six to eight weeks of summer programming for pre-K students that prioritize access for low-income and special needs students with a focus on kindergarten transition
- Supplying sanitization, cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure the safe return of students including coaching and support for providers that are not covered by other federal funding

The New Mexico Public Education Department, proposes providing the following:

- Professional development and instructional coaching for teachers and administrators to facilitate remote learning

- Training and support for students and families participating in remote learning
- Providing digital devices for students who do not have access to a device in the home
- Supporting internet connectivity for students lacking broadband internet access in the home
- Purchasing software and licenses for high quality remote learning content and management platforms
- Technology infrastructure support for schools and districts
- Social and emotional learning support for students during building closures and when they transition back into school facilities
- Targeted support for students with special needs or in need of at-risk services during a building closure and when they transition back into school facilities
- Supplying sanitization, cleaning supplies and PPE that ensure the safe return of students and instructional providers to building sites

The New Mexico Higher Education Department proposes providing the following:

- Online professional development and support for instructional providers, students and parents across the age spectrum – from early childhood to higher education – to improve all student ability to effectively participate in online instruction
- Workforce development to support the readiness of adults to re-enter high-demand professional fields

a. Please describe whether the State considered conducting an assessment of the barriers to implementing effective remote learning for all students, or utilizing an existing assessment, to help target resources toward greatest needs.

The state conducted an assessment of the barriers specific to each age group to determine the most critical actions required to improve effective participation in online learning. The results indicate that differentiated, targeted, age appropriate professional development must be offered to three distinct groups: early childhood care providers and parents; elementary and secondary educators, students and parents in public and charter schools; and faculty and students at institutions of higher education.

The curricula and pedagogy must be age appropriate, respond to the software and hardware most commonly utilized by each population, and respond to the challenges unique to each group. The assessment also indicated that low-income, special needs and rural students in addition to families of young children face unique barriers to accessing online learning which must be prioritized.

b. With respect to LEAs, please describe how the State intends to use the funds to help students and teachers adopt or improve remote learning that serves all students, including students with disabilities, students from low-income families, charter school students, and non-public school students.

The New Mexico Public Education Department will ensure that local education agencies (LEAs) have the tools and training necessary to effectively facilitate remote learning for students across the state by:

- Assessing gaps in access to digital devices and connectivity by providing LEAs with the funding and support necessary to effectively address these gaps

- Identifying high quality professional development providers and instructional coaching in areas of remote learning by providing LEAs with the funding and support to participate in trainings offered by these groups

In addition, the New Mexico Public Education Department will further support students, families and educators by:

- Identifying and disseminating high-quality materials and guidance for educators to learn best practices and instructional strategies for engaging students in age appropriate academic and social and emotional learning supports in addition to providing funding for job-embedded training
- Identifying and disseminating high quality materials and guidance for educators to learn best practices and instructional strategies to support students with special needs in addition to providing funding for job-embedded training
- Assisting teachers to learn best practices and instructional strategies to support students at greatest risk of disengagement in addition to providing funding for job-embedded training
- Assisting parents to learn best practices and develop familiarity with the technology so they can adequately support their children to effectively participate in coursework while providing healthy social and emotional learning options

c. With respect to IHEs, please describe how the State intends to focus expenditures to ensure that all institutions – public and private – have the needed supports to continue executing their missions and educating their students.

The New Mexico Higher Education Department proposes to:

- Provide online professional development that assists faculty and students in improving their ability to offer and participate in online and blended (combined online and in-person) academic learning options
- Support an as-needed transition to blended learning options for career and technical education coursework that maximizes the use of online options while meeting the in-person requirements set by professional licensure boards
- Expand online workforce training options to support the readiness of adults to re-enter the workforce.

2. Does the State intend to use any of the awarded funds to support technological capacity and access – including hardware and software, connectivity, and instructional expertise – to support remote learning for all students? If so, please describe how the State will achieve its goals for both LEAs and IHEs.

a. Please describe the strategies used to serve disadvantaged populations listed in Sec. 18003(d)(4) of the CARES Act.

The New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department, the New Mexico Public Education Department and the New Mexico Higher Education Department propose increasing technology infrastructure supports; purchasing and disseminating digital devices and connectivity options; and purchasing software to support remote learning for all students – early childhood to post-secondary students – from all income categories, students with varying learning needs and students from all regions of the state.

The New Mexico Public Education Department will provide funding to local education agencies (LEAs) for digital devices and connectivity options, and/or direct purchase options, and, additionally, provide digital devices and connectivity options that address the unique challenges across the diverse geographic regions across the state. Rural areas, especially on tribal lands, have limited to no broadband access and need support in differentiated connectivity options.

Many elementary and secondary schools, including charter schools, public schools and private schools, lack a technology infrastructure that adequately supports the level of online connectivity that is currently required amid COVID-19. The state proposes to improve the technology infrastructure supports to provide online learning through the remainder of the school year, into the summer and then transition to blended or in-person learning options in the fall.

a. Please describe the strategies used to serve disadvantaged populations listed in Sec. 18003(d)(4) of the CARES Act.

New Mexico's proposed activities will address the unique needs of low-income children and students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and youth in foster care.

The state's assessment of how it can best address the unique needs of vulnerable populations is as follows:

- Providing differentiated professional development for families, students and instructional providers
- Purchasing and disseminating software and digital devices based on the unique learning needs and circumstances of individual students
- Providing connectivity options that meet the unique needs of low-income, special needs and rural students
- Offering age and need-specific social and emotional learning supports
- Providing intensive summer programming for pre-K students that prioritizes low-income and special needs students
- Providing pre-K to kindergarten transition services that prioritizes high need students
- Providing transitional services for students during building closures and during the transition back into school facilities
- Hiring instructional coaches with expertise in meeting the needs of vulnerable populations.

3. Does the State intend to use any of the awarded funds to support remote learning by developing new informational and academic resources and expanding awareness of, and access to, best practices and innovations in remote learning and support for students, families, and educators? If so, please identify, generally, the resources, best practices, and innovations that the State intends to develop and expand.

3. Does the State intend to use any of the awarded funds to support remote learning by developing new informational and academic resources and expanding awareness of, and access to, best practices and

innovations in remote learning and support for students, families, and educators? If so, please identify, generally, the resources, best practices, and innovations that the State intends to develop and expand.

Resources:

The New Mexico Early Childhood Education and Care Department, the New Mexico Public Education Department and the New Mexico Higher Education Department serve students from cradle to career and the three agencies are collaborating to ensure wide-spread improvement of student-learning outcomes. They are doing so by drawing upon the resources available to each agency, such as child care programs, nutrition and meal access for students, and higher education financial aid, work study and grants.

Best practices include:

- Instructional coaches
- Professional development that includes families and students in addition to instructional providers
- Dissemination of digital devices and improving access to internet connectivity
- Age and need-appropriate social and emotional learning supports

Innovations:

- Targeted, diverse options that meet localized connectivity needs, including hot spots and access to a variety of community-based internet options