

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.**
-

The State of Texas will transfer GEER funds to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to, in part, support remote learning for all students.

TEA (K-12)

The State of Texas intends to use a portion of the GEER funds for a number of projects related to the purposes described in the question above. The state has launched Operation Connectivity with the stated goal of ensuring 100% of students have broadband and the necessary devices at home so that every student can participate in distance learning. As part of that, a comprehensive needs assessment is in process to diagnose current barriers to access. Additionally, an Instructional Continuity Task Force has gathered feedback on the tooling needed to ensure all LEAs can offer quality distance learning. GEER funding has the potential to ensure that state can reach the goal related to connectivity.

With over 1200 school systems in Texas, there is a huge variety in the quality of distance learning curricular tools in various districts, leading to significant inequity in terms of student experience during COVID closures. The State of Texas intends to use a portion of the GEER funds to address that inequity by providing a comprehensive set of instructional materials in an online, modifiable learning environment with aligned assessments and progress monitoring components. The high-quality instructional materials will be available to make up for lost learning time and for contingency plans for possible future, continuous learning at-home in a variety of in-person and remote scenarios. TEA has estimated that this project will improve full-time and part-time at-home learning for over 4 million Texas students.

Those students who require additional assistance should continue to be supported even while school buildings are closed. TEA has also proposed using a portion of the GEER funds to provide a virtual, evidence-based dyslexia intervention service that includes all required state components and uses a technology platform that allows for continuity of dyslexia intervention to occur. The platform will include seamless integration of all curriculum resources and

materials with delivery options that allow for the curriculum and related curriculum resources to be delivered through total virtual instruction, blended instruction, or face to face instruction.

THECB (Higher Education)

Texas leaders, including institutional officers at public and private institutions responsible for digital learning, have shared with the THECB that instructional design remains a barrier to effective remote learning. While Texas institutions rapidly converted almost all their course offerings to remote or online formats, faculty need additional support going forward to ensure that online courses reflect principles of effective instructional design and are accessible to all students. THECB had already begun working with IHEs to remove barriers to remote learning through development and implementation of an online educational resources (OER) course content statewide repository. Further development will aid in the rapid scaling of a searchable library of course materials for Texas Core Curriculum courses, customized by Texas faculty, that represent the majority of courses transferred among institutions and that can be available for free or at-cost to Texas students.

The state intends to use a portion of GEER funds to make targeted grants available to Texas colleges and universities – both public and private – through THECB to support effective online learning in the following categories:

- Grants to support faculty teams in developing new OER for online delivery of one or more of the fifty most frequently transferred Texas Core Curriculum courses, with an emphasis on effective instructional design.
- Grants to support faculty teams in the effective redesign of any of the fifty most frequently transferred Texas Core Curriculum courses, incorporating or adapting existing OER. These courses represent the vast majority of courses transferred among and across Texas institutions.
- Grants to support the implementation of institutional data analytics and reporting capabilities to drive student progress toward timely completion.

In addition, THECB will work closely with Texas institutions and national experts to produce a web-based online learning and student success clearinghouse to present curated resources and associated data about effective approaches to online learning and student success.

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.

TEA (K-12)

The State of Texas intends to use a portion of the GEER funds to support technical capacity and access to remote learning for all students. As described above, TEA plans to address the inequity and

inconsistency of remote learning capabilities by providing a comprehensive set of instructional materials in an online, modifiable learning environment with aligned assessments and progress monitoring components. It is estimated that this project will improve full-time or part-time at home learning for over 4 million Texas students.

Given the disruption in normal school attendance caused by COVID-19, students must be able to continue learning at home. This requires broadband access and devices at home. A significant percentage of students do not have access to internet at home, including large numbers of low income and rural Texas families. The previously mentioned Operation Connectivity will help lessen this inequity. Also previously mentioned, the proposed program for dyslexia intervention will improve remote learning for that cohort of students.

THECB (Higher Education)

The State of Texas plans to direct a portion of GEER funds so the THECB can work with Texas institutions and national experts to produce a web-based clearinghouse to present curated information and associated data about effective, evidence-based approaches to online learning and student success. One of the essential functions of this clearinghouse will be to support facilitated networks of faculty and institutional leaders responsible for digital learning and expand access to instructional expertise about effective design for digital learning.

Funding will also strengthen institutional data capabilities and technological capacity to monitor and support efficient student progress toward high-value credentials and promising careers. Texas colleges and universities will be eligible to receive the grants described in the section above to improve online learning, especially related to OER and analytics.

In addition, the state plans to use a portion of the GEER funds to provide emergency student support, administered through THECB and then through Texas IHE's, to the disadvantaged populations listed in Sec. 18003(d)(4) of the CARES Act, including new and current students whose families are experiencing financial hardship due to COVID-19. This will ensure students are able to begin or continue their higher education and stay on their path to earning a high-value credential and joining the workforce. THECB's existing grant payment system will enable rapid distribution of payments to IHEs.

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.

TEA (K-12)

As described above, TEA plans to use a portion of the GEER funds to provide a comprehensive set of instructional materials in an online, modifiable learning environment with aligned assessments and progress monitoring components. The high-quality instructional materials are available to make up for lost learning time and to contingency plan for possible future, continuous learning at home in a variety

of in person or remote scenarios. It is estimated that this project will improve full-time or part-time at home learning for over 4 million Texas students.

THECB (Higher Education)

In addition to the purposes described above, the state plans to use a portion of the GEER funds to develop and improve data infrastructure to provide timely, actionable intelligence to students, institutions, employers, and policymakers for stronger advising, increased efficiency, and ongoing improvement. This infrastructure will include technology-enabled advising resources for students and educators, including new applications to enable educators to monitor and support students' progress-to-credential. For students and their families, educators, and policymakers, this infrastructure could include:

- An interactive advising tool to help Texans identify and connect with higher education programs, compare training opportunities and programs of interest, access interactive advising, apply for financial aid, view potential costs and earnings, search job opportunities, and grant permission for records to be shared across multiple institutions and scholarship providers.
- Accelerated production of an application now being developed by Texas colleges and universities to enable students to identify efficient pathways to postsecondary credentials, including potential applicability of dual credit, advanced placement (AP), and transfer credits to degree pathways.
- Updated secondary and postsecondary college and career adviser training resources focused on college readiness options, career advising in the context of post-pandemic recovery, and college and career advising for adult and returning students.
- Progress-to-credential dashboards and secure tools to enable every Texas college and university to monitor individual student progress through recommended course sequences and identify students who go off-track. These new capabilities will dramatically enhance student advising capabilities and enable a range of new state policy options focused on student progress efficiencies.

The secure, cloud-based infrastructure to support these and other innovative tools that will support effective, technology-enabled learning and student success across the state will include integrated analytics, visualization tools, and robust governance. This infrastructure will also enable program-level reporting of postsecondary and workforce outcomes for every IHE. Going forward, this infrastructure will also facilitate access to and ongoing analysis of the state's robust educational and workforce data for state agencies, IHEs, researchers, and external partners.