



State of Hawaii Initial Report for the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund

July 15, 2020

Introduction

On April 22, 2020, Hawaii was awarded \$9,993,387.00 in federal relief funding from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund, which may be used to provide subgrants to districts "most significantly impacted by coronavirus." Governor David Ige will allocate the amount for Governor's Reinventing Education and Innovation Grant Program.

PART 1: State of Hawaii's Process for Awarding GEER Funds

"Governors have the opportunity to truly rethink and transform the approach to education during this national emergency and ensure learning continues."

Betsy DeVos, April 14, 2020

The State of Hawaii will award funds from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund to support six (6) strategies for relief, innovation, and sustainability. A key strategy will be a sub-grant program that inspires and promotes reinvention and innovation in education. The sub-grant program will create "innovation grants" to address immediate needs of schools and educational entities.

"The State of Hawaii will develop a grant award program to enable LEAs and IHEs to have an opportunity to expand their remote learning efforts. Hardware and software, connectivity, and instructional expertise development will be eligible uses. The grants will be tracked and made available as a resource to all educators. This will enable sharing of lessons learned and best practices. A portion of the funds will be set aside to expand programs that prove to be innovative and deliver desired outcomes."

Hawaii Certification & Agreement for GEER Funding, April 16, 2020

The purpose of these grants will be to innovatively address the impact that the coronavirus pandemic has had, and continues to have, on students and parents in Hawaii. This includes both (1) continuing to provide educational services while schools and campuses are closed and (2) supporting on-going functionality of those schools and campuses. Hawaii will solicit grant proposals for innovative programs that embrace the Hawaii Blueprint for Education¹ and a commitment to reinvent and transform education for the post Covid-19 world.

“...this pandemic is changing Hawaii and that every organization needs to reinvent itself in the post Covid19 environment. Hopefully these emergency funds can do all of those things – can plug gaps that are necessary and can provide incentives and fund organizations and schools that are doing innovative things that both respond to the pandemic and most importantly set a course for educational change and reform.”

Governor David Ige’s Address to GEER Advisory Group Members on June 16, 2020

The overall process used to determine how Hawaii will award GEER funds can be described in three (3) steps.

RELIEF, RESILIENCE, & REINVENTION FOR HAWAII EDUCATION

Step 1: Embracing the Hawaii Blueprint for Education

As each state addresses the significant impacts of the coronavirus, the state of Hawaii is embracing three basic tenets of *relief*, *resilience*, and *reinvention* to go beyond “surviving the pandemic” to transforming and reinventing education as a result of it.

Governor David Ige set forth the vision for education empowerment and innovation for the 50th state with the “Hawaii Blueprint for Education” in 2017. The Blueprint provides a bold shared vision for education in the state and is unprecedented for its’ inclusiveness and the extensive engagement of community stakeholders. More than one thousand (1000) students, teachers, principals, parents, and community members attended the first Hawaii Education Summit on July 9, 2016, and over 2000 stakeholders attended follow up town hall meetings and Blueprint forums to provide insights and feedback. Ironically, in 2017, the Blueprint was prophetic is forecasting something as unexpected as the current pandemic,

“...as we move further into this new education century, our public school learning environments will need to adapt. We will identify innovative, cost-effective strategies that will provide the best possible environments for students and teachers ... we will transform traditional schools and classrooms into flexible, well-resourced learning areas that are clean, safe, ecological, and conducive to creative, engaging teaching and learning.”

Hawaii Education Blueprint, page 24

And thanks to the insights, wisdom, and collective efficacy of thousands of community members, the Hawaii Education Blueprint set key aspirations for Hawaii leaders to envision and strive for. The following key examples especially apply:

- *“Global Learner Outcomes ... schools will prepare students for the unknown future by assuring that they have the skills and dispositions of a global learner: Complex Thinker, effective Communicator, Self-Directed Learner, Community Contributor, Quality Producer, Effective and Ethical User of Technology, and Creative Innovator.” (page 24)*
- *“... schools will create and sustain a culture that values innovation and unleashes curiosity and creativity in all learners ...” (page 23)*
- *“...supporting parent and family engagement will be a priority for school leaders, teachers, and support staff ...” (page 23)*
- *“...students need explicit social emotional learning supports to access curriculum and programs in physically and emotionally safe environments ...students learn empathy in a diverse cultural environment where collaboration with and compassion for others is emphasized.” (page 16)*
- *“...we will establish a world class research and design center... we will address technical and adaptive problems of practice by leveraging the expertise and experiences of educators and researchers through mutual partnerships.” (page 24)*

As we fast forward to 2020, the tenets of relief, resilience, and reinvention essentially build on the Blueprint and represent a new “3 Rs” to lead Hawaii schools on a course from “pandemic education” to purposeful educational change and reform.

Step 2: Creating the Conditions for Success – Purpose, Expertise, and Collaboration

The process for awarding funds for the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund) has included a strategic planning process that has been inclusive, collaborative, and agile in defining the problems caused by the pandemic and formulating thoughtful solutions. The catalyst for the Hawaii GEER plan was the formation of a Governor’s GEER Advisory Group who were empowered and entrusted to carefully assess the impacts, identify priority needs, and seek creative and innovative solutions for immediate relief, creative innovations, and lasting successful impact for Hawaii schools. In addressing all GEER Advisory Group members, Governor Ige defined the challenge with the following success criteria:

- (1) to build on the shared vision of thousands of educators, students, parents, and community members in Hawaii and *“embrace the 2017 Hawaii Blueprint for Education”*,
- (2) to aspire for innovation and reinvention with the understanding that *“every organization needs to reinvent itself in the post Covid19 environment”*, and
- (3) to be bold and future focused to *“set a course for educational change and reform”* that results in both relief and sustainability.

The potential success of any task force or advisory group is based on the composition and strengths of its' individual members. Governor Ige was intentional in seeking the insights of the state leaders of higher education, the public school system, private schools, and charter schools. Additionally, it was important to include respected school leaders from the most populated island of Oahu and the neighbor islands, as well as education leaders who represented the diverse and unique needs of elementary and secondary schools. As a result, the Hawaii GEER Advisory Group was formed on June 4, 2020 and is an impressive team of innovative education and community leaders who contributed their significant knowledge, experience and collective wisdom to the thoughtful design of Hawaii's GEER Plan.

Step 3: Determining Priorities and Creative Solutions

The many ways that the Covid-19 has had a devastating impact on educational institutions and the related multitude of pressing needs created an overwhelming challenge to be addressed by a limited amount of funding. During a meeting of Advisory Group members on June 24, 2020, the consensus was that there needed to be more narrowly articulated focus for how GEER funds would be used in Hawaii. The following priorities and priority actions were determined:

- to maximize the relief and lasting impact of GEER funds through the following focused areas of needs: (1) digital equity for devices, access, and connectivity, (2) parent education, parent training, and family support for distance learning and blended learning, (3) transformation of teaching and learning through innovation.
- to seek efficient and effective processes for the administration of federal GEER funds.
- to take advantage of the professional learning expertise and curriculum development capacity and strengths of the University of Hawaii in the area of distance learning and blended learning.
- to incorporate best practices, innovations, and designs from proven large scale educational technology programs that were successful such as the Hawaii Education Research Network (HERN) and the Schools of the Future (SOTF).
- to allow schools and complexes to seek grants that were significant in amount in proportion to the work required to apply and implement any program.
- to promote innovation and reinvention through all components of the process: the application process, the implementation process, the monitoring process, and the evaluation process. It was recommended that the Office of the Governor would seek ways to facilitate collaboration and partnering through required convening of grantees to share lessons learned and best practices.
- to inform schools and the public as soon as possible about the Hawaii GEER plan and accompanying programs and grant opportunities.

In response to these priorities, the following strategies for the awarding and use of GEER funds were developed:

- **2020 Hawaii Education Virtual Summit** – following on the huge success of Governor Ige’s first Hawaii Education Summit on July 9, 2016, a second summit is to be held virtually to engage all stakeholders as partners in collaborating on solutions and innovations to address Covid-19 issues including distance learning, blended learning, equity issues, and solutions to support parents and families in the event that all schools are closed again to face to face teaching and learning.
 GEER Funding Award: \$50,000.00
- **Distance Learning Teacher Academy** - 21st Century Curriculum Development and Instructional Designs for Engaging Distance Teaching and Learning lead by the University of Hawaii for public, private, and charter schools to include timely, engaging, and effective professional development for Hawaii educators to thrive in the present and future world of distance learning.
 GEER Funding Award: \$5,000,000.00
- **Innovation Grants** for school complexes and educational entities to provide immediate relief to significant impacts from Covid-19 with special emphasis on (1) digital equity for access and connectivity and (2) effective ways to deliver parent education, parent training, and family support, and (3) innovative practices to achieve the Global Learner Outcomes. Grants will range from \$100,000.00 to \$600,000.00. Grants will be awarded based on the criteria below.

 - Digital Equity & Access: Grant proposal provides for equity of access to devices and connectivity, especially to students in communities, locations, and subgroups that are most vulnerable and have the greatest need.
 - Capacity Building: Grant proposal provides for the capacity building of educators, parents, and others who deliver engaging instructional services and can provide meaningful support to the delivery of instructional services to students. This includes strategies to deliver training and professional development to parents, guardians, and family members to support and reinforce engaging instructional activities delivered by educators. This also includes strategies that increase the engagement of educators and mitigate the serious teacher shortage problem facing Hawaii schools.
 - Sustainability & Lasting Results: Grant proposal incorporates strategies, practices, and commitments that demonstrate a strong potential to be sustained and implemented beyond the grant award period as best practices. This includes the implementation of quality social emotional learning for students, school innovation and design, and a focus on the collective efficacy of school teams to implement the reopening of schools effectively and efficiently, while preparing for requisite agility and adaptability to future changes during SY 2020-2021.
 - Note: Plans are to use and adapt the GEER grant proposal application processes used by Alaska and Indiana as appropriate.

GEER Funding Award: \$4,000,000.00

- **Summer Transition to College Program** for high school juniors and seniors who have had their college and career plans impacted by Covid-19. This will be developed and implemented by the University of Hawaii for public, private, and charter school students. GEER Funding Award: \$600,000.00
- **Governor’s Innovation Team.** Key leaders of GEER related grants and programs will form an “innovation team” and participate in regular convenings to share best practices and lessons learned as a community of practice. Team members will be inspired and motivated by breakthrough experiences that empower professionals to embrace innovation and collaboration within their own organizations and across the public, private, and nonprofit sectors.
GEER Funding Award: \$150,000.00
- **Networked Improvement Community for Parent Education and Family Resilience.** The formation of a networked improvement community (NIC) to design and iterate “springboards to action” solutions for parent education and family support using the principles of improvement science to accelerate diffusion and integration of promising interventions into school communities. The Governor’s NIC for Parent Education will include practitioners, researchers, policy makers, and other stakeholders.
GEER Funding Award: \$100,000.00
- **Overall project management.** GEER Funding Award: \$93,387.00

GOVERNORS EMERGENCY EDUCATION RELIEF FUND	
2020 Hawaii Education Virtual Summit	\$ 50,000.00
Innovation Grants	\$4,000,000.00
Distance Learning Teacher Academy for Content Development & Instructional Delivery	\$5,000,000.00
Summer Transition to College Program	\$ 600,000.00
Governor’s Innovation Team	\$ 150,000.00
Networked Improvement Community for Parent Education and Family Resilience	\$ 100,000.00
Project Management	\$ 93,387.00
Total	\$9,993,387.00

PART 2: Criteria for Determining those Most Impacted by Coronavirus

The most significant impact of the coronavirus on schools includes the negative impact on student engagement and learning as a result of:

- The lack of access to and availability of devices and technology for most vulnerable students and families for remote instruction.
- The lack of connectivity for most vulnerable students and families for remote instruction.
- Need for parent/ guardian training and support for remote instruction of their children.
- The need to improve the quality of remote instruction resulting from the abrupt emergency transition.
- Need for professional development for faculty, staff, and school leaders that can improve teaching practices for engaging students in a distance learning environment.
- Need for resources including professional development for faculty, staff, and school leaders to address the social emotional learning needs of students.
- The urgent need for safety equipment, materials, and resources for reopening schools in accordance with requirements from the Governor and education and health agencies.

The above serve as the criteria for determining those most significantly impacted as of this initial report. Determining the impact of the coronavirus will be a dynamic and ongoing process as the State of Hawaii continues to collect and analyze more data. For example, the Hawaii Department of Education just released the following survey results in June 2020 that indicate the significant impact on secondary students and schools with high levels of poverty:

“The state Education Department recently surveyed Hawaii teachers in hopes of illuminating how many public school students actually participated in remote learning after campuses closed in March.

Based on the poll, the answer is: Far fewer than hoped.

The survey included 61% of Hawaii public school teachers, asking them what percentage of their students “consistently participated” in distance learning.

Of those who taught middle and high school teachers, nearly half said they saw fewer than 1 in 5 of their students participating regularly in distance learning

Just 10% said they saw more than 6 in 10 of their students consistently participating.

Another worrisome finding in the survey: Participation was far lower in some districts compared to others, especially those with greater percentages of students who live in poverty.

- *Just 8% of elementary school teachers in the Nanakuli-Waianae complex said that most of their students consistently participated in distance learning.*
- *In the Castle-Kahuku complex, 6% of secondary school teachers said most of their students consistently participated in distance learning activities.*
- *In the complex that includes Pearl City and Waipahu, 10% of secondary school teachers said the majority of their students regularly participated in online learning.*
- *Among elementary school teachers in the complex, 29% said their students consistently participated.*
- *Student participation was incredibly low in the Kau-Keaau-Pahoa complex. Middle and high school teachers there said just 4% of their students regularly participated in distancing learning.*
- *Elementary school teachers in the complex put the figure at 10%.”*

Source: <https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2020/06/22/survey-public-school-teachers-finds-many-saw-low-student-participation-distance-learning/>

PART 3: Description of Process and Deliberations Involved in Formulating the Criteria

The State of Hawaii applied for the GEER funding from the USDOE on April 16, 2020. The application provided an overview of how educational institutions were being significantly impacted as a result of a “*stay-at-home order since April 1, 2020*”, and that, “*educators were challenged to deploy remote learning solutions due to the Covid19 crisis.*”

Top state education officials quickly assessed the pandemic’s impact and provided strong leadership for their respective organizations and systems.

University of Hawaii President David Lassner announced on March 12, 2020, that the coronavirus pandemic has had a serious impact on the 60,000 faculty, staff, and students that make up the University’s system.

“This is hard and impactful, and we are really committed to helping our students complete the semester particularly those on track graduate in the Spring. And we want to maximize the safety for our faculty, staff, and students, and everyone who visits our campuses.”

After efficiently mobilizing one of the largest districts in the nation, Hawaii Department of Education State Superintendent Christina Kishimoto expressed her gratitude to the 13,000 teachers who responded immediately to provide devices, materials, and learning packets for the 180,000 public school students across the state , and to the hundreds of food service workers who

provided “grab and go” meals for tens of thousands of children, and to the Department’s liaisons for homeless families for supporting the nearly 3000 students in non-sheltered locations.

Hawaii State Board of Education Chairperson Catherine Payne’s leadership has inspired “hope, kindness, and togetherness” and she reported that the discussions and testimonies received by the Board identifies four main priorities that highlight the most significant impact of the coronavirus: (1) health and safety of our students and staff, (2) students most vulnerable to school closures and disruptions to learning, (3) in-person instruction, and (4) student access to devices and connectivity.

In Hawaii, approximately 21% of K-12 students attend private schools, in sharp contrast to the national average of 10%. So when Dr. Phil Bossert, Executive Director of the Hawaii Association of Independent Schools reports that the 34,000 students enrolled in the 120 independent and parochial schools along with their 3,000 teachers have also been significantly impacted and now face serious financial hardships as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, it reflects a large and important segment of schools and students in Hawaii. The news media’s recent report that the leaders of St John’s the Baptist School in Kalihi announced it is closing because “*the school’s financial situation has worsened*” as a result of the coronavirus may be just the first of many school closings that will impact students and families.

To bring together the collective wisdom and talents of the state’s top education officials, Hawaii Governor David Ige formed an advisory group of education leaders and community representatives to collaborate and share collective insights on addressing the pandemic and recommending uses for GEER funds. The group was officially formed on June 4, 2020 and it was comprised of fourteen (14) leaders representing K-12 public, private, and charter schools, higher education, business and the community. The purpose of the advisory group is to collectively provide input and insights as to how the coronavirus has significantly impacted the education community and to provide feedback and guidance on formulating requisite processes and criteria. Five members of the advisory group also served as members of the writing team for the Hawaii Blueprint for Education: Karen Aka, Phil Bossert, Darrel Galera, Steve Nakasato, and Catherine Payne.

The members of the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund Advisory Group are:

- Karen Aka, Academy 21 and One Shared Future, Community Representative
- Janice Blaber, Principal, Keaau Elementary School
- Dr. Phil Bossert, Executive Director, Hawaii Association of Independent Schools
- Darrel Galera, Hawaii Center for Instructional Leadership
- Brian Hallett, Assistant Superintendent, Hawaii Department of Education
- Dawn Ige, First Lady, State of Hawaii
- Dr. Christina Kishimoto, Superintendent, Hawaii Department of Education
- Dr. David Lassner, President, University of Hawaii

- Yvonne Lau, Executive Director, Charter School Commission
- Dr. Steve Nakasato, Principal, Mililani Uka Elementary
- Catherine Payne, Chairperson, Hawaii State Board of Education
- Kymberly Sparlin, Director of Intergovernmental Relations and Policy, Office of the Governor
- Melissa Speetjens, Principal, Waimea Canyon Middle School
- Gerald Teramae, Principal and Head of School, Island Pacific Academy

The advisory group convened on four occasions, June 9, 2020, June 16, 2020, June 24, 2020, and July 10, 2020 with each meeting being coordinated and facilitated by the Office of the Governor. Key steps taken to promote engagement and collaboration to ensure meaningful deliberations included: (1) an overview and briefing of the purpose and details relating to the GEER funding, (2) distribution of relevant reading materials from the USDOE and the NGA, (3) a message delivered directly from Governor David Ige to advisory group members sharing his vision and aspiration for how GEER funds can be used to encourage innovation and reinvention in addition to providing relief, (4) a review of how other states are planning to use GEER funds, and (5) providing a positive and safe space for advisory groups members to openly discuss and share insights and recommendations.

The Advisory Group looked closely at the impact of the coronavirus on all sectors and levels of our education system in Hawaii. Although there is great diversity of schools and educational entities, there were very similar effects from how schools were most significantly impacted.

The Advisory Group determined that the most significant impact of the coronavirus on schools includes the negative impact on student engagement, learning, and achievement resulting from:

- The lack of access to and availability of devices and technology for most vulnerable students and families for remote instruction and distance learning.
- The lack of connectivity for most vulnerable students and families for remote instruction and distance learning.
- Need for parent/ guardian training and support for remote instruction of their children
- The abrupt emergency transition and the immediate quality of remote instruction.
- Need for timely and effective professional development for faculty, staff, and school leaders. In a June 2020 statewide teacher survey where 8,324 teachers responded, when teachers were asked, “What type of professional development do you need moving forward?”, the greatest PD need of teachers is, “how to engage students online”, where 77% of teachers indicated that this is a priority.
- Urgent needs for reopening schools in accordance with requirements from the leading agencies and departments.

Additionally, the Advisory Group continues to analyze data and survey results from stakeholder groups to identify other possible areas of impacts on vulnerable communities and ethnic groups requiring assistance and relief.

The Advisory Group identified criteria to be used in designing programs and for selecting and awarding grants including: equity, capacity building, sustainability, partnerships/consortia, and potential for lasting impact for several years.

EQUITY: GEER program or grant proposal provides for equity of access to devices and connectivity, especially to students in communities, locations, and subgroups that are most vulnerable and have the greatest need

CAPACITY BUILDING: GEER program or grant proposal provides for the capacity building of educators, parents, and others who deliver instructional services and can provide meaningful support to the delivery of instructional services to students. This includes strategies to deliver training and professional development to parents, guardians, and family members to support and reinforce instructional activities delivered by educators. This also includes strategies that increase the engagement of educators and mitigate the serious teacher shortage problem facing Hawaii schools.

SUSTAINABILITY: GEER program or grant proposal incorporates strategies and practices that demonstrate a strong potential to be sustained and implemented beyond the grant award period as best practices. This includes the implementation of quality social emotional learning for students, school innovation and design, and a focus on the collective efficacy of school teams to implement the reopening of schools effectively and efficiently, while preparing for requisite agility and adaptability to future changes during SY 2020-2021.

On June 16, 2020, the members of the advisory group shared specific examples of possibilities that could become a reality as a result of this grant program:

- An idea for capacity building for teachers and faculty is actually have them do something together that creates content with lasting impact. For example, K-12 teachers get together to create online STEM content with experts where the lasting benefit is the personal capacity developed and the content that is developed that continues to be used across multiple schools and over time.
- The value of content development that would match up K-12 and higher education to do this work together would be significant. Additionally, we should use funds for parental education and training around what it means to engage in distance learning.
- ideas relating to content development and parent education.
- There is a lot of stuff out there to help teachers to understand how to be good online teachers - but I'm not aware of what's out there for parents – a grant to develop a

parental guide that can be downloaded or accessed online on how to support your child at home with distance education would be a good investment of funds.

- should be larger grants and we could do collaboration with public, private, and charter schools on similar issues like developing content and curriculum. We should encourage some of the areas that we may not be thinking about as much for example the arts and how are we going to move that to an online platform. That would be innovative discussions that we can have.
- larger grants are better. Support the idea to develop content and curriculum delivered in a different kind of way. We need to support the educators in our schools with that.
- Need to focus on the connectivity for all students as well as the one to one (1:1) devices. For the parental piece, we have a large number of parents trying to connect with anyone at school to get answers to questions such as - *How do I get my child on? How do I manipulate this?* So there is a need for parent education and or some type of IT manager to very quickly answer these questions.
- The criteria categories of equity, capacity building and sustainability look good. I appreciate that the process is focused on needs.
- The idea of parent education, parent guide, for remote or distance education is important for how we build our support for our parent community.
- The area of early learning is an important part of this process – equity, capacity building, and sustainability would be important to early learning as well.
- Our school would apply for a grant for curriculum support and development for both synchronous and asynchronous curriculum and learning and for professional development on how to deliver the best kind of learning for students.
- It is recommendation that complexes and complex areas get together with other schools in their community (for example charter schools) so schools can work together. It may be possible for someone at the complex level to coordinate and put this together given that principals and schools will already have so much to do.

Inspired by Governor Ige’s leadership and the aspirations of the Hawaii Blueprint for Education, the process and deliberations of the GEER Advisory Group will continue to be robust, collaborative, and solution-focused.

ⁱ Hawaii’s Blueprint for Public Education (<https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Blueprint-for-Public-Education-2017.pdf>)