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Colorado Department of Education News Release

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News Release

State receives nearly \$121 million in federal relief for Colorado school districts

Districts can begin applying for their shares by end of month

DENVER - Colorado Education Commissioner Katy Anthes announced today that nearly \$121 million in emergency federal relief will be made available to Colorado school districts through the Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Money for districts can be used for a wide variety of expenses related to the coronavirus pandemic, including purchasing cleaning supplies and educational technology, providing support for at-risk students and providing summer learning opportunities as well as activities already allowed under other federal education laws. The funding is Colorado's portion of the \$13 billion Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund designated for states under the CARES Act passed by Congress in March.

"As Colorado schools prepare for an unpredictable future due to the coronavirus, this money will support students and staff in the coming months," Anthes said. "While we all are working hard to open schools this fall as safely as possible, we don't really know what the next school year looks like at this point. We do know that schools will be dealing with the impacts of the virus and this money will be a big help."

Approximately 90% of the \$121 million will be divided up among school districts using the Title I formula that allocates federal funding each fiscal year for low-income students. [Click here for a list of district ESSER allocations.](#)

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within a week. Districts will begin receiving their funds after they have an approved application.

Districts may use their ESSER Fund allocation for the following 12 categories of expenditures:

1. Funding activities authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, including the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act), the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act, the Perkins Act or subtitle B of Title VII of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
2. Coordinating preparedness and response efforts with state, local, tribal and territorial health departments to prevent and prepare a response to the coronavirus.
3. Providing principals and other school leaders the resources necessary to address the needs of their individual schools.
4. Funding any activity that addresses the delivery of services to at-risk and minority students.
5. Developing and implementing procedures to improve school preparedness and response efforts.
6. Training and offering professional development for staff on sanitation and minimizing the spread of COVID-19.
7. Purchasing cleaning supplies.
8. Planning for and coordinating services during long-term closures including providing meals, technology for online learning, guidance for carrying out IDEA services, etc.
9. Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software and connectivity) to conduct online learning for students served by the district. This may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment for students with disabilities.
10. Providing mental health services and supports.
11. Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental after-school programs during the summer months and providing continued services to at-risk and minority students.
12. Funding other activities necessary to maintain the operation and continuity of services in the district and continuing to employ existing staff members.

The remaining 10% of Colorado's ESSER funds may be reserved at the state level for statewide support to districts in response to COVID-19 or to provide additional grant opportunities. [CDE launched a survey](#) to gather input on the best use of those funds.

For more information, on the ESSER funds, [visit CDE's webpage](#).

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