



Independent School Newsletter



Special Edition: GEER EANS COVID Relief Funds

This month's newsletter is devoted to providing independent schools with information regarding an unprecedented opportunity to receive support through emergency relief funding in order to mitigate the impact of COVID-19.

This issue will cover a wide range of important topics, such as:

- *Results of Emergency Relief Survey
- *School eligibility reminders
- *Application process
- *Important dates & corresponding deadlines

- *Update on Federal guidance and application requirements

Important Reminder:

Independent Schools who did not complete and submit a GEER EANS survey to the Agency of Education by the March 5th deadline, are still eligible to receive and apply for emergency relief funding.

Technical support is available throughout the GEER EANS application process.

To reach a member of the independent school team, please reach out to:

Designated GEER EANS email:
AOE.GEEREANS@vermont.gov or

Pat.PallasGray@vermont.gov

Deborah.ormsbee@vermont.gov

GEER EANS Survey Results

On February 12, 2021 the Agency sent a survey to all non-profit independent schools

The purpose of the survey was to 1) provide some initial information to independent schools regarding the requirements and elements of the GEER EANS program; 2) give independent schools a first opportunity to review and verify low-income student enrollment data that AOE will use to weight the allocations of funds and 3) collect preliminary information from independent schools regarding their unmet COVID-19 costs and potential interest in applying for GEER EANS.

A tabulation of survey results will assist AOE personnel on how best to provide services or assistance to eligible independent schools to address educational disruptions caused by COVID-19.

Eligibility Reminders

For purposes of the EANS program, an eligible independent school is an elementary or secondary school that:

- Is non-profit;
- Is a Recognized or Approved Kindergarten, Elementary or Secondary Independent School in Vermont
- Was in existence prior to March 13, 2020, the date the President declared the national emergency due to COVID-19; and
- Did not, and will not, apply for and receive a loan under the [Small Business Administration's Paycheck Protection Program \(PPP\)](#) (15 U.S.C. 636(a)(37)) that is made on or after December 27, 2020. (See C-13 for information regarding non-public schools that apply for but do not receive a PPP loan).

Allocations & Intent to Apply

The AOE will create an allocation formula based on total student enrollment with an additional amount of support provided on a per low-income student basis.

To finalize the allocation formula and aid schools in fiscal planning, the AOE will need to know which eligible independent schools intend to apply for GEER EANS.

Schools will need to submit an Intent to Apply webform by **March 19, 4pm.**

The Intent to Apply form will include a request for total student enrollment and low-income student enrollment. Schools may use the **same** data that they submitted in their GEER EANS survey and is a Federal requirement for receiving access to emergency relief support.

PLEASE NOTE: If a school does not submit an Intent to Apply by March 19, by 4 pm, they will NOT be eligible to apply for GEER EANS.

**Complete and submit the
“[Intent to Apply](#)” form
by March 19, 2021 at 4pm.**

Application Process

The AOE will send out a mass communication on March 23 simultaneously with the posting of a live application.

The application will be released as a webform. Paper copies of the application are available upon request. Forward paper application requests to:

J. Deborah Ormsbee at:

deborah.ormsbee@vermont.gov



Technical Assistance:

Schools can expect the GEER EANS team will be providing real-time office hours after the application is released.

Agency staff will work closely with each applicant during the review process to provide individualized technical support and guidance around procurement of services, as well as, provide information and process for seeking reimbursement.

Schools can also expect, after initial consultation process, to receive an approval or denial of their applications within **30 calendar days of submission.**

For those schools who have not already provided low-income data, the GEER EANS team will also be available to assist with collection of data that meets federal guidelines.

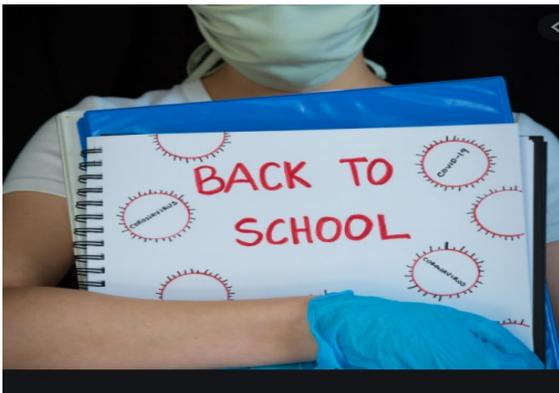
Key Dates & Important Deadlines:

- March 23, 2021- Release of GEER EANS application to the field
- Applicants will receive approval or denial of their application within 30 days of submission
- April 30, 2021- Deadline for Independent Schools to submit applications to AOE

Allowable Cost Requirements

A non-public school may apply to receive services or assistance from the AOE or its contractors to address educational disruptions resulting from COVID-19 for:

- Supplies to sanitize, disinfect, and clean school facilities
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
- Improving ventilation systems, including windows or portable air purification systems
- Training and professional development for staff on sanitization, the use of PPE, and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases
- Physical barriers to facilitate social distancing
- Other materials, supplies or equipment recommended by the CDC for reopening and operation of school facilities to effectively maintain health and safety
- Expanding capacity to administer coronavirus testing to effectively monitor and suppress the virus
- Educational technology
- Redeveloping instructional plans for remote or hybrid learning or to address learning loss
- Leasing sites or spaces to ensure social distancing
- Reasonable transportation costs
- Initiating and maintaining education and support services or assistance for remote or hybrid learning or to address learning loss



Federal Guidance & Reimbursements

GEER EANS is unique in that it offers independent schools the opportunity to seek reimbursement for allowable costs already incurred or future allowable costs through the AOE.

GEER EANS is similar to other federal programs, in that the Agency will be required to retain title to all goods and services and will work with schools to determine the process by which title is retained.

Reimbursements for expenses, of any services or assistance, that an independent school incurred on or after March 13, 2020, are allowed [except for items listed below]:

- Improvements to ventilation systems (including windows), except for portable air purification systems, which may be reimbursed.
- Staff training and professional development on sanitization, the use of PPE, and minimizing the spread of COVID-19.
- Developing instructional plans, including curriculum development, for remote or hybrid learning or to address learning loss.
- Initiating and maintaining education and support services or assistance for remote or hybrid learning or to address learning loss.
- Any expenses reimbursed through a loan guaranteed under the PPP (15 U.S.C. 636(a)) prior to December 27, 2020.

Schools will need to **decide in their application** if they are going to seek reimbursement for costs or request the AOE provide goods or services or opt for both options.