

GEER EANS Program Overview

Purpose

On Feb. 23, 2021 Vermont's Certification and Assurances for the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Emergency Assistance for Nonpublic Schools (EANS) Fund was approved by the US Department of Education. The application for the GEER EANS fund, which includes \$4,084,000 in assistance to Vermont's eligible independent schools, will be released on March 23, 2021.

Eligibility

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 Dec. 27, 2020. (See C-13 for information regarding non-public schools that apply for but do not receive a PPP loan).

Key Dates

- March 19, 2021- Intent to Apply deadline.
- 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.
- Aug. 23, 2021- Deadline to obligate GEER EANS funds.
- Sept. 30, 2023- GEER EANS funding will expire.

Allocations and Intent to Apply

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

Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information please contact:
GEER EANS Program Team, at AOE.geereans@vermont.gov.

In order to finalize the allocation formula and aid schools in their fiscal planning, the AOE will need to know which eligible independent schools intend to apply for GEER EANS. Schools will need to submit the [Intent to Apply webform](#) by March 19, 2021, at 4 p.m.

The Intent to Apply 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.

Sources for low-income data include (but are not limited to): Free and Reduced Lunch, Tuition Assistance/Financial Aid Scholarship, E-Rate, Medicaid, CEP, 2020 Census, Family/Parent Survey, or another data source. If a school needs assistance in collecting low-income student data, they may contact AOE.geereans@vermont.gov.

Please note: If a school does not submit an Intent to Apply by March 19, 2021, at 4 p.m. they will not be eligible to apply for GEER EANS.

Application

What to Expect

The AOE will send out a mass communication on March 23, 2021, when the application goes live. It will be a webform, although paper copies can be made available by request.

Schools can expect that the GEER EANS team will be providing real-time technical assistance (“Office Hours”) after the application is released. The team will also be working closely with each applicant during the review process to provide individualized technical support and guidance around procurement of services and the process for seeking reimbursement.

Schools can expect that they will, after this consultation process, receive an approval or denial of their applications within 30 calendar days of submission.

Eligible Costs

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.

Reimbursement or Procurement?

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. Similar to other federal funding programs, the AOE 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.

Schools may apply for reimbursement for the expenses of any services or assistance described above that an independent school incurred on or after March 13, 2020, except for:

- 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 Dec. 27, 2020.

Schools will need to decide in their application if they are going to seek reimbursement for costs or if they want to partner with the AOE to procure goods or services through a contract. If they have questions regarding the reimbursement or procurement process, schools are encouraged to contact the GEER EANS Program Team at AOE.geereans@vermont.gov.