

## Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund

### General Overview

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, signed into law on March 27, 2020, created the \$30.75 billion Education Stabilization Fund. This fund provides \$13.5 billion in pandemic relief aid for K-12 schools through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund. In addition to ESSER funds, the Governor's office also received \$4,488,802 through the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) fund. The Governor's office determined that it would use the funds to support regional career technical education (CTE) centers across the state and that the Agency of Education (AOE) would administer grants to support COVID-19 response efforts as outlined in the allowable costs section, including instructional technology, and infrastructure needs of CTE centers.

### Eligible Recipients

Regional technical center school districts, CTE centers located within an LEA, and LEAs or a consortium of such LEAs in regions of the state that are served by a CTE center housed within an independent/comprehensive high school. CTE centers housed within an independent/comprehensive high school are not eligible to receive GEER funds directly via a grant, but may receive GEER funds through a contract with an LEA or consortium of LEAs. The LEA or consortium is the legal entity eligible to apply for GEER funds.

### Allocation Formula

#### Prioritizing CTE Centers Most Significantly Impacted by COVID-19

Of the available \$4,488,802, the Agency of Education will retain 4.45% (\$200,000) to administer the grant program. The remaining 95% (\$4.2m) will be distributed to all regional CTE centers or other eligible recipients via two criteria:

Criterion 1: Poverty. 60% of the balance will be distributed based on poverty using census estimates of the population aged 5 to 17 living below the Federal poverty line, which are already built into Federal formula grants (e.g., Perkins) and are a stable data source

Criterion 2: Broadband Access. The remaining 40% will be distributed based on broadband access based on 911 mapping data and broadband internet access by town according to survey data from the Department of Public Service for homes with no or

### Contact Information:

If you have questions about this document or would like additional information please contact:

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low broadband access. The map can be found on the [Department of Public Works](#) website.

Prior to allocation of funds, the above calculations will be run to ensure accuracy. In the event a regional CTE center indicates that it does not intend to apply, that entity will be removed from the allocation calculation and any funds it would have been entitled to via the formula will be redistributed across all remaining regional CTE centers.

For more information on the allocation of funds, please refer to the [Appendix: GEER Allocation of Funds](#).

## Allowable Costs

Allowable costs are for purposes of responding to the COVID-19 emergency for the period from July 1, 2020 to September 30, 2022. Please note that the following is not an exhaustive list. Please contact [aoe.geerapplication@vermont.gov](mailto:aoe.geerapplication@vermont.gov) if you have questions about whether an incurred cost is allowable.

1. Personnel
  - a. Additional or COVID Response Duties
    - i. Staffing costs beyond contract (e.g., not budgeted, extra days, overtime, extra duty)
    - ii. Staff salaries when completing work that is substantially different from regular duties and COVID-19-related (e.g. staffing costs for time associated with developing remote learning capabilities)
    - iii. Administrative time related to COVID-19 response
  - b. Illness
    - i. Salary and benefits for hourly staff who were paid despite not working (e.g. unscheduled time)
    - ii. Cost of staff accessing Covid-19 Emergency Paid Sick Leave (EPSL)
  - c. Professional development
    - i. Summer professional development for school reopening
2. Technology Infrastructure
  - a. Salaries and benefits of IT personnel supporting remote learning doing COVID-19-related work. [**Please note:** as of July 1, districts will need to clearly justify this time as COVID-19-related and outside the scope of what has become regular work.]
  - b. Cost to expand bandwidth
  - c. Software and hardware to support learning, for students and staff, including online credentialing, virtual reality labs, and simulators
3. Instructional Costs
  - a. Additional tools or equipment to provide CTE instruction in accordance with health and safety guidance

- b. Student safety equipment (e.g. welding shields, hard hats)
  - c. Instructional materials and supplies to support curricular changes due to COVID-19
  - d. Curriculum
4. Other
- a. Salaries and benefits of school nurses doing COVID-19-related work, or payment to host high school for provision of nursing services rendered through a shared service agreement.
  - b. Planning costs for school reopening
  - c. Copies and supplies if COVID-19-related

### **Unallowable Costs**

1. Personnel or expenses funded by other federal revenues or specific state funds (e.g., Federal Title grants, special education, etc.) are not eligible for reimbursement with CRF funds
2. Bonuses, merit pay, or similar expenditures, unless related to disruptions or closures caused by COVID-19
3. Subsidizing or offsetting executive salaries and benefits of individuals who are not LEA employees
4. Expenditures related to state or local teacher or faculty unions or associations

## **Application Process and Requirements**

### **Period of Performance**

The Agency is approving pre-award costs back to July 1, 2020, resulting in a period of performance start date of July 1, 2020 and an end date of September 30, 2022. If you have any questions regarding pre-award costs please contact [Robert Coathup](#).

### **Key Dates**

July 1, 2020—Period of Performance Begins.  
 October 23, 2020—Application Opens (Anticipated date)  
 November 23, 2020—Applications Due (Anticipated date)  
 March 20, 2021—Grant Amendments Due  
 September 30, 2022—Close of the Period of Performance  
 November 30, 2022—Final AOE 3.0 due to AOE

The GEER funds allocated to your CTE center must be budgeted in an approved award prior to April 29, 2021. Applicants must submit their GEER grant amendments by March 20, 2021. Applicants will permanently lose access to allocated funds that have not been budgeted in an approved Grant Award and those funds will be returned to the Federal Government. If you have any questions on this critical component to GEER funding, please contact [John Leu](#).

### **Documentation and Procurement**

As always, LEAs are required to follow their own internal procurement and contracting procedures for any purchases made. LEAs may have used micro-purchases or emergency purchase procedures for some purchases as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency. That is acceptable, as long as these purchases followed the LEA's internal procurement procedures. The AOE may test procurements using these funds under future Federal Fiscal Monitoring Reviews.

### **Reporting Requirements**

Subrecipients should be aware that specific requirements around reporting are still forthcoming from US Education and that subrecipients will be required to comply with any reporting requests and deadlines that result from additional federal requirements. AOE will communicate any additional information as it is received.

### **Payment Provisions**

Reimbursement requests must be submitted using an AOE 3.0 and detailed accounting records summarized by Object Codes. All requests for reimbursement must be received by November 30, 2022.