


MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Business Managers, Homeless Liaisons
FROM: Daniel M. French, Ed.D., Secretary of Education 
SUBJECT: ARP Homeless I Application for SU/SDs
DATE: June 17, 2021

Purpose

By this memo you are notified that the application for American Rescue Plan (ARP) Homeless I funds for Vermont school districts and supervisory unions (SU/SDs) is now available in the [Grant Management System](#) (GMS). ARP Homeless I funds are available as part of the ARP Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief – Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) Fund.

- Deadline to apply for ARP Homeless I funds: August 15, 2021
- Total ARP Homeless I allocation to LEAs: \$350,246
- Maximum award per LEA: \$100,000
- Period of performance: March 13, 2020-Sept. 30, 2024

Background

The American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) included a total of \$800 million to support the specific needs of children and youth experiencing homelessness through the ARP Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief – Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) Fund. On April 23, 2021, the U.S. Department of Education (USED) announced the first disbursement of these funds under section 2001(b)(1) of the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARP) for the purposes of meeting the immediate needs of students experiencing homelessness, including the identification, enrollment, participation and success of children and youth experiencing homelessness, and the provision of wrap-around services in light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Use of Funds

The ARP Homeless I funds must be administered by the Office of the State Coordinator for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth and in a manner consistent with all requirements of the EHCY program; therefore ARP Homeless I funds will be awarded to LEAs through a competitive grant process. Given the purpose of the ARP-HCY funds, they may be used for pre-award costs dating back to March 13, 2020, when the national emergency was declared. However, LEAs should be mindful of comparable service requirements: any activity or service

that is provided to all or any non-homeless students by the LEA cannot be reimbursed from ARP-HCY funds.

ARP Homeless I funds supplement the EHCY program and LEAs may use these funds for any of the sixteen allowable uses, as authorized by the McKinney-Vento Act (42 U.S.C. §11433(d)):

1. The provision of tutoring, supplemental instruction, and enriched educational services
2. The provision of expedited evaluations of the strengths and needs of homeless children and youths, including needs and eligibility for programs and services (e.g., educational programs for gifted and talented students, children with disabilities, English learners, services provided under Title I, career and technical education, school nutrition programs)
3. Professional development to heighten understanding and sensitivity to the needs of homeless children and youth, the rights of children and youth experiencing homelessness, and the specific educational needs of runaway and homeless youths
4. The provision of referral services for medical, dental, mental, and other health services
5. Excess cost of transportation, not otherwise provided through Federal, State, or local funding, where necessary to enable students to school selected under 722(g)(3)
6. The provision of developmentally appropriate early childhood education programs for preschool-aged homeless children
7. The provision of services and assistance to attract, engage, and retain homeless children and youths, particularly homeless children and youths who are not enrolled in school, in public school programs and services provided to non-homeless children and youths
8. The provision of before- and after-school, mentoring, and summer programs which provides tutoring, homework assistance, and supervision of educational activities
9. The payment of fees and other costs associated with tracking, obtaining, and transferring records necessary to enroll homeless children and youth in school
10. The provision of education/training for parents and guardians of homeless children and youth about the rights of, and resources available to, their children and other activities designed to increase the meaningful involvement of parents/guardians in the education of their children
11. The development of coordination between schools and agencies providing services to homeless children and youth
12. The provision of specialized instructional support services and referrals for such services
13. Activities to address the particular needs of homeless children and youth that may arise from domestic violence and parental mental health or substance abuse problems
14. The adaptation of space and purchase of supplies for any non-school facilities made available under subsection (a)(2) (services provided with subgrant funds to provide services
15. The provision of school supplies, including those supplies to be distributed at shelters or temporary housing facilities, or other appropriate locations
16. The provision of other extraordinary or emergency assistance to enable homeless children and youth to attend school and participate fully in school

In addition, ARP Homeless I funds may be used for any expenses that are reasonable and necessary to facilitate the identification, enrollment, retention and educational success of children and youth experiencing homelessness, such as:

- Providing wraparound services (which could be provided in collaboration with and/or through contracts with community-based organizations, and could include academic supports, trauma-informed care, social-emotional support, and mental health services);
- Purchasing needed supplies (e.g., PPE, eyeglasses, school supplies, personal care items);
- Providing transportation to enable children and youth to attend classes and participate fully in school activities;
- Purchasing cell phones or other technological devices for unaccompanied youth to enable the youth to attend and fully participate in school activities;
- Providing access to reliable, high-speed internet for students through the purchase of internet-connected devices/equipment, mobile hotspots, wireless service plans, or installation of Community Wi-Fi Hotspots (e.g., at homeless shelters), especially in underserved communities;
- Paying for short-term, temporary housing (e.g., a few days in a motel) when such emergency housing is the only reasonable option for COVID-safe temporary housing and when necessary to enable the homeless child or youth to attend school and participate fully in school activities (including summer school); and
- Providing store cards/prepaid debit cards to purchase materials necessary for students to participate in school activities
 - Please note, at this time the Vermont Agency of Education does not allow the purchase of prepaid store cards with federal grant funds. The AOE memo [Alternatives to prepaid store cards \(gift cards\)](#) provides several options LEAs may consider in order to meet programmatic needs, while satisfying federal fiscal regulations and controls.

LEAs are strongly encouraged to use these funds to focus on identifying eligible students this summer, to connect students experiencing homelessness and their families to summer learning and enrichment programs, and to engage students and their families in preparation for this fall. USED also encourages LEAs to award contracts to community-based organizations that are well-positioned to identify children and youth experiencing homelessness in historically underserved populations and connect them to educationally-related support and wrap-around services. When considering funding decisions, LEAs should analyze the needs, including academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs, of students experiencing homelessness in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact.

In alignment with Education Recovery priorities to reengage students, approval priority will be given to applicants whose strategies increase identification of students experiencing homelessness, provide access to summer programming, and/or plan for the provision of wrap-around services for this summer and fall 2021, in collaboration with State and local agencies and other community-based organizations.

Questions regarding the ARP Homeless I grant program should be directed to [Katy Preston](#).