

# MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Career Technical Education Directors and Business Managers  
FROM: Daniel M. French, Ed.D., Secretary of Education   
SUBJECT: GEER Fund Application for CTE Centers  
DATE: October 21, 2020

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## Purpose

By this memo you are notified that the application for Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) fund allocations for Vermont school districts and supervisory unions (SU/SDs) is now available in the [Grant Management System](#) (GMS). GEER funds are available as part of the CARES Act of 2020.

## Background

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, signed into law on March 27, 2020, created the \$30.75 billion Education Stabilization Fund. The Governor's office 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 and 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.

## Creating and Editing the Application in the Grant Management System

All district administrators (superintendents), CTE directors and business managers have permissions in the GMS to create and edit the application. If desired, a district administrator can delegate the ability to create and edit the application to additional staff, by assigning the role "leaCARES" to any staff members with a GMS account. See the [GMS login page](#)'s Training section for the four-page instructions and the User Management for District Administrators training video to learn how to assign this role. Note that, as with all other grant applications, only the district administrator can agree to assurances and do the final submission to the AOE.

## Use of Funds

The GEER funds allocated to your LEA must be budgeted in an approved award prior to April 29, 2021, and all grant amendments must be received in GMS by March 20, 2021. LEAs will permanently lose access to allocated funds that have not been budgeted in an approved Grant Award by this date and those funds will be returned to the Federal Government. Information regarding the allocation formula is located on the [Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund webpage](#).

Due to the nature of these funds, the AOE is approving pre-award costs as of July 1, 2020, resulting in a period of performance start date of July 1, 2020, and an end date of Sept. 30, 2022.

Allowable costs are for purposes of responding to the COVID-19 emergency. Please note that the following is not an exhaustive list. Please contact Ruth Durkee at [aoe.geerapplication@vermont.gov](mailto:aoe.geerapplication@vermont.gov) if you have questions about whether an incurred cost is allowable.

## **Allowable Costs**

1. Personnel
  - a. Additional or COVID-19 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, 2020, 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

Please direct questions regarding the GEER Fund application to Ruth Durkee at [aoe.geerapplication@vermont.gov](mailto:aoe.geerapplication@vermont.gov).