

# CARES Act Education Stabilization Fund

As part of the [CARES Act](#), which passed in March 2020, and the omnibus relief package that Congress passed in December 2020, the federal government has provided over \$111 billion in COVID-19 emergency relief funding to states for K–12 school districts and institutions of higher education through the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF).

The ESF is divided into three separate funds:

**Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund**—which allows state governors great discretion in funding K–12 school districts, institutions of higher education, and other educational entities.

**Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund** for K–12 school districts.

**Higher Education Emergency Relief (HEER) Fund** for institutions of higher education.

“The CARES Act and omnibus relief package have numerous allowable uses as indicated in the below chart. They also require states to maintain support for K–12 and higher education in FY 2020 through FY 2022 that matches, at a minimum, the average level of support provided in the last three fiscal years.

Relief Fund	How Funds Flow	Total Funding	Funding Per Package	Deadlines	How Funding is Awarded/ Eligible Uses of Funding
Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund	Department of Education → Governors → K–12 School Districts and Universities	\$7 billion	CARES Act: \$3 billion	Subgrantees must use funds by September 30, 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Governors have the discretion to award subgrants to public or private institutions and K–12 schools.</li> <li>■ Governors must allocate funds in the following way:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 60 percent on the basis of the relative population of individuals aged 5–24 in the state; and</li> <li>● 40 percent on the basis of the relative number of children counted under Title I of ESEA.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Subgrantees can use funding for education technology.</li> </ul>
			Year-End Package: \$4 billion	Subgrantees must use funds by September 30, 2023.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Same allocation of funding as the CARES Act.</li> <li>■ \$2.75 billion set aside for private schools, which includes education technology as an eligible use of funds.</li> <li>■ Subgrantees can use funding for education technology.</li> </ul>

Relief Fund	How Funds Flow	Total Funding	Funding Per Package	Deadlines	How Funding is Awarded/ Eligible Uses of Funding
<b>Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund</b>	Department of Education → State Educational Agencies (SEAs) → K–12 school districts	\$190.5 billion	<b>CARES Act:</b> \$13.5 billion	School districts must use funds by September 30, 2022.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SEAs must allocate funding based on the state’s share of Title I, Part A funds, with at least 90% going to Title I schools.</li> <li>Eligible uses of funding include the purchase of hardware, software, or connectivity products, including education technology.</li> </ul>
			<b>Year-End Package:</b> \$54.3 billion	School districts must use funds by September 30, 2023.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Same requirements as the CARES Act for SEAs to allocate funds to Title I schools.</li> <li>Same eligible uses of funding as the CARES Act but also includes additional uses for funds that will help address learning loss among K–12 students.</li> </ul>
			<b>American Rescue Plan:</b> \$122.7 billion	School districts must use funds by September 30, 2023.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Same requirements as the CARES Act for SEAs to allocate funds to Title I schools.</li> <li>Includes set asides for activities to address learning loss and purchase education technology</li> </ul>
<b>Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund</b>	Department of Education → Institutions of Higher Education	\$76.5 billion	<b>CARES Act:</b> \$14.25 billion	Universities must spend funds within one calendar year of receipt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At least 50% must be used for emergency financial aid grants for students.</li> <li>Other funds go towards the institutional share, which can be used for a variety of activities, including expenses to support distance learning and education technology.</li> </ul>
			<b>Year-End Package:</b> \$22.7 billion	Universities must spend funds within one calendar year of receipt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Universities must spend at least the same amount of funding as they did under the CARES Act on emergency financial aid grants for students.</li> <li>Other funds go towards the institutional share, which can be used for a variety of activities, including expenses to support distance learning and education technology.</li> </ul>
			<b>American Rescue Plan:</b> \$39.5 billion	Universities must use funds by September 30, 2023.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Universities must spend at least the same amount of funding as they did under the CARES Act on emergency financial aid grants for students.</li> <li>The remaining funds are for the university’s “institutional share” which can be used to defray expenses associated with the pandemic, including lost revenue.</li> </ul>