

## Coronavirus Relief Funding for School Districts and Charter Schools

### Overview

Assembly Bill (AB) 3 (31<sup>st</sup> Special Session) authorized the transfer of \$50 million to the Nevada Department of Education for the creation of a grant program to award funds to school districts and charter schools. In accordance with AB 3, grants will be awarded on a per pupil basis to school districts and charter schools to develop and implement the capability to provide alternative intensive instruction. This instruction will include, without limitation, providing Internet connectivity to pupils and developing and providing programs to mitigate deficits in educational attainment to students who are likely to develop the largest deficits in educational attainment as a result of the loss of in-person intensive instruction.

The funding for this grant program is provided through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which also established the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF). The grant program authorized in AB 3 must be compliant with the restrictions and requirements established for CRF. These requirements are vastly different from the requirements of other programs established through the CARES Act, including the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER) and the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER).

### Per Pupil Allocation of Funding

AB 3 authorized the Superintendent of Public Instruction to identify the categories of eligible pupils who are likely to develop the largest deficits in educational attainment as a result of the loss of in-person intensive instruction. Additionally, AB 3 requires that certain categories of pupils be included:

- a) Elementary school pupils who exhibit a deficiency in the subject area of reading, including, without limitation, pupils identified pursuant to NRS 392.750 and pupils who are entitled to receive intervention services and intensive instruction pursuant to NRS 392.760;
- b) Pupils who are English learners, as defined in NRS 385.007;
- c) Pupils who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch pursuant to 42 U.S.C. 1751;
- d) Pupils who scored at or below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile on an assessment of proficiency described in paragraphs (a) to (e), inclusive of subsection 1 of NRS 387.137, or for a grade level for which such an assessment does not exist or does not provide sufficient information to identify all such pupils, are projected to be at or below the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile by the Nevada Department of Education pursuant to subsection 2 of NRS 387.137;
- e) Pupils who attend a public school which is rated at or below the 20<sup>th</sup> percentile of lowest performing schools, as determined by the Nevada Department of Education pursuant to the statewide system of accountability for public schools; and
- f) Any other category of pupils that the Superintendent of Public Instruction determines to be likely to develop a disproportionate deficit in educational attainment as a result of the loss of in-person intensive instruction.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction, in consultation with school district superintendents and the executive director of the State Public Charter School Authority, reviewed the categories of eligible pupils identified in AB 3 and determined that the categories of eligible students are sufficiently comprehensive. The categories of students included in AB 3 include approximately 328,000 students, resulting in a per pupil funding amount of \$152.22.

As required in AB 3, grant awards may not be used to support pupils participating in a program of special education pursuant to NRS 388.419.

### **Allowable Uses of CRF**

The CARES Act requires that payments from the CRF only be used to cover expenses that:

1. Are necessary to support expenditures incurred due to the public health emergency with respect to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19);
2. Were not accounted for in the annual budget most recently approved as of March 27, 2020, for the State or government (in this instance school district or charter school); and
3. Were incurred during the period that begins on March 1, 2020 and ends of December 30, 2020.

Guidance on the eligible uses of CRF disbursements is located on the Department of Treasury website <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/cares/state-and-local-governments> and must be strictly adhered. The following documents provide specific guidance:

<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Coronavirus-Relief-Fund-Guidance-for-State-Territorial-Local-and-Tribal-Governments.pdf>

<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/Coronavirus-Relief-Fund-Frequently-Asked-Questions.pdf>

Funding may not be used to finance ongoing expenditures of the Nevada Department of Education or any award recipient.

Additionally, AB 3 includes state-specific requirements that must be adhered to by each grant recipient:

- a) Must be accounted for separately from any other money received by the school district or charter school and used only for allowed purposes.
- b) May not be used to settle or arbitrate disputes between a recognized organization representing employees of a school district and the school district, or to settle any negotiations.
- c) May not be used to adjust the district-wide schedules of salaries and benefits of the employees of a school district.

### **Grant Application Process**

In order to receive funds, each school district and the State Public Charter School Authority must provide the following information to the Nevada Department of Education:

1. Proposed Scope of Work that indicates how students in identified categories will benefit from this grant program
2. Budget Expenditure Summary and justification
3. Signed Statement of Certifications and Assurances

NDE is committed to making these funds available as expeditiously as possible. To expedite the grant application and subaward process, eligible recipients may begin preparing grant application immediately. Subgrants will be contingent upon the approval of the work program to transfer CRF funds to the Nevada Department of Education for this grant program and will not become fully executed until such time as the work program is approved.

### **Grant Period**

Grants made with CRF funds may not be used for any expense incurred before March 1, 2020 or after December 30, 2020. All money awarded through this grant program must be expended by the recipient on or before December 30, 2020. Any remaining balance, as of December 30, 2020, must not be spent for any purpose by either the Nevada Department of Education or the entity to which money was granted.