



Memo to ACSI Member-Schools

**New CARES Act Funding Announcement by USDE
Monday, April 27, 2020**

The U.S. Secretary of Education announced today a new K12 grant application release. See the press release [HERE](#). This announcement refers to the Discretionary Fund portion of the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF) of the CARES Act (Sec. 18001). Much of the focus of our ACSI briefings recently has been on the Governor's Emergency Education Fund (Sec. 18002) and the Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Education Fund (Sec. 18003). The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) has already released information for states to apply for those funds. **We continue to await USDE guidance for details on their implementation.**

Today's announcement about the Sec. 18001 ESF Discretionary Fund has some unique aspects. USDE has created two grant programs for states for this portion of the ESF: the **Rethink K12 Education Models Grants** (ESF-REM Grants) and the **Reimagining Workforce Preparation Grants** (ESF-RWP Grants). The ESF Rethink K12 Education Models Grants program includes equitable services requirements for the states.

From the [USDE website](#):

Congress set aside 1% of the \$30.75 billion allotted to the Education Stabilization Fund through the CARES Act for grants to States with the highest coronavirus burden. The Department will make these grants available to States most affected by coronavirus through the two separate grant competitions.

*The **Education Stabilization Fund-Rethink K12 Education Models Grants** (ESF-REM Grants) provide support to State educational agencies (SEAs) in States with the highest coronavirus burden to address specific educational needs of students, their parents, and teachers in public and non-public elementary and secondary schools in accordance with section 18001(a)(3) of the CARES Act.*

For your reference, here are two resources that may be helpful:

1. **Link to State application for the K12 Grant** – please note the multiple references to non-public schools and **equitable services**, though no mention of tuition or scholarships.
<https://oese.ed.gov/files/2020/04/ESF-REM-Notice-Inviting-Applications.pdf>

Purpose of Program: The purpose of the ESF-REM Grants program is to provide support through discretionary grants to State educational agencies (SEAs) (as defined in this notice) in States with the highest coronavirus burden (as defined in this notice) to address specific educational needs of

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*students, their parents, and teachers in public and **non-public** elementary and secondary schools in accordance with section 18001(a)(3) of the CARES Act.*

***NOTE:** An applicant addressing any one of absolute priorities must **ensure equitable access** (as defined in this notice) for non-public school students.*

2. **Link to State Tables** – each state is assigned a percentile: 81-100% earns an additional 20 points to its application; 61-80% receives 16 additional points, etc. Interestingly, the percentile for your state is not based *solely* on coronavirus medical statistics, but also on poverty and access to broadband. **Your state might be higher than you would anticipate.**

(Example: West Virginia's success in dealing with the crisis and other factors has resulted in a relatively low coronavirus figure, but its ratings are higher in the other parts of the formula, thus putting it in the 81-100 percentile. Its application may well earn it funding from either / both of the two grant programs).

Table of each state's coronavirus burden, <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2020/04/ESF-REM-Coronavirus-Burden-Table.pdf>

It is advisable for schools to reach out to your state education agency (SEA) (along with other CAPE and non-public school partners) to note the inclusion of equitable services and see what the SEA application priorities plan to include. There is no mention of consultation required prior to applying (as is normally the case with equitable services), but it doesn't hurt to ask. Once the SEA applies, it would be wise to get a copy of the state's application to USDE so that you can determine how non-public schools might fit in to the equitable services process for your particular state.

SEAs are the eligible applicants. **The deadline for Notice of Intent to Apply is May 19, 2020, and the deadline for Transmittal of Applications is June 29, 2020.** There does not appear to be a consultation requirement, nonetheless you should consider getting in touch with your SEA to let them know that your school is interested in participation. At a minimum it would be good to get your hands on the submitted application once it's out the door.