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RE: Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER) 45-day report

Overview of Intent

As proposed in the Certification and Agreement, the State of Nevada intends to use GEER funds to support technological capacity and access to support remote learning for all LEAs and IHEs that have been most significantly impacted by COVID-19. Multiple agencies within the State of Nevada, such as the Nevada Department of Education; the Governor's Office of Science, Innovation, and Technology (OSIT); the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE); the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS); and the Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation (DETR), are working collaboratively to increase connectivity to combat the digital divide in rural areas, where there is no or limited internet connectivity for students, and in urban areas, where limitations are experienced due to financial instability, housing insecurity, device access, etc.

GEER funds will ensure that Nevada's highest need students in public and private schools (institutions) can access remote learning reliably. Additionally, GEER funds will be used to provide professional development and support opportunities for remote learning to educators and families.

Recent Progress

To provide all Nevada students, educators and families with equitable access to high-quality instruction and continuous learning, NDE has entered into contractual agreements to integrate a learning management system into the existing student data management system. This will allow students to access assignments, take exams, collaborate with peers, track their progress, and communicate with educators. This will also allow educators to document, track and deliver educational courses and materials and training programs.

To provide statewide access to standards-aligned digital curriculum resources, academic content, and professional development, NDE contracted with a vendor to provide digital content for student learning. This access to high-quality digital curriculum across the State is imperative during this time to ensure the continuity of learning, as well as equity in access for Nevada's students.

As noted in the Overview of Intent, described above, NDE is collaborating with other State, local and non-profit organizations to increase access to internet connectivity for students, educators,

and families across the state. This collaboration will allow GEER funds to be invested strategically to increase access to devices and mobile hotspots for individuals and communities through the procurement of devices with built in hotspots for students and investment in school-based and/or community-based infrastructure for increased connectivity.

GEER Clarifications

Please describe the State's process for awarding GEER funds to LEAs, IHEs, and /or other education related entities, including:

- a. Timeline(s) for awarding GEER funds to LEAs, IHEs, and/or other educational-related entities;
- b. The criteria, process, and deliberations you use to determine which LEAs, IHEs, and/or other educational agencies are:
 - i. "most significantly impacted by coronavirus;" and/or
 - ii. "Essential" for carrying out emergency educational service;
- c. The funding mechanisms (e.g., grants, contracts) the State will use to provide GEER funds to LEAs, IHEs, and/or other education-related entities; and
- d. Any specific funding conditions or requirements the State will place on awards to ensure the funds are spent for specific purposes or activities.

Response: Efforts are underway to determine how to allocate GEER funds to increase access to internet connectivity. As stated previously, this is a collaborative effort to ensure connectivity and capacity are increased statewide. At this point in time, it is anticipated that GEER funds will be allocated through subgrant agreements to LEAs based on average daily enrollment from the 2019-2020 school year. As Nevada becomes a "hot spot" for COVID-19, all districts are being significantly impacted by the coronavirus and many are revisiting their reopening plans for the fall, with a renewed emphasis on distance education. The possibility of continuing distance education in the fall increases the urgency to ensure all students have access to devices and connectivity.

If funding is allocated through subgrant agreements, the agreements will include the assurances used by NDE in all subgrant agreements. The assurances include, but are not limited to, the process for requesting reimbursement, requesting budget revisions, and reporting requirements.

2. Describe the system of internal controls the State will use to ensure GEER funds are expended for allowable purposes and in accordance with cash management principals and the Uniform Guidance. See 2CFR 200.313.

Response: NDE intends to use its system of internal controls to ensure GEER funds are expended for allowable purposes. These internal controls are identical to those that will be used for the ESSER funds, as well.

3. If GEER funds are being awarded or used for payments to SEA or IHE administrators, executives, and/or state or local teachers' unions or associations, please describe your process for reporting the amount of funds used for this purpose, and how the funds are consistent with allowable uses of funds under section 18002(c) of the CARES Act.

Response: In Nevada, GEER funds will not be used for payments to SEA or IHE administrators, executives, and/or state or local teachers' unions or associations.

4. If you intend to provide GEER funds to LEAs, please describe the process you will use to ensure that LEAs receiving GEER funds provide equitable services to students and teachers in non-public schools located within the LEA in the same manner as provided under section 1117 of the ESEA.

Response: When awarding GEER funds to LEAs, NDE intends to apply the same practices that were used for the ESSER funds.