

Wyoming 45 Day GEER Plan

Governor Mark Gordon established a COVID-19 Education Task Force to identify and address the most significant impacts from COVID-19, any barriers that exist for remote learning to occur and ensure the continuation of learning in the future for all students.

The task force established sub-committees that worked with stakeholders to identify the greatest challenges in P-20 related to remote learning. Transitions from Pre-K to K and K-12 to higher education were among the leading challenges identified across the spectrum of education. The task force requested proposals from K-12, higher education and other education institutions to identify any funding necessary to address these barriers and/or challenges related to transitions. All proposals were reviewed by the task force and recommendations were made to the Governor on the utilization of the GEER funds.

In addition to the assessment by the Governor's Task Force, adult education conducted short phone calls to evaluate the technological needs of adult students. If they were not able to communicate through the phone, a survey was sent through email. The program was able to speak with all students before remote learning occurred to identify the challenges that were occurring.

The task force recommended awarding half of the GEER funds immediately to meet the needs identified within the proposals received and targeted at meeting the needs of students transitioning back into programs for summer programs or programs offered in the Fall. A total of \$1,867,941.00 will be awarded and allocated evenly across all entities based on the percentage of funds available to the total requested amount. The second half of the funding will be awarded after August 1st after the other CARES money has been obligated and expended and any remaining unforeseen emergency needs are identified.

All GEER funds will be distributed through existing systems within state agencies. The money for Higher Education and Adult Education will be distributed through the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC). Funds for K-12 local education agencies will be distributed by the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) and will be allocated beginning with a base of \$5,000 and then flowing into a per pupil amount and will be tracked through the Department of Education's GMS system. Early Childhood allocations will be distributed through the Department of Family Services (DFS) and will be provided through a grant process administered by a non-profit organization. The Department of Health (WDH) will manage allocations intended to pay for educational costs of school-age children who are receiving in-patient treatment. The remaining funds that were awarded to a private education institution will be distributed by the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) as part of the apprenticeship and internship program.

As listed above, funds granted to Higher Education and Adult Education will be distributed through the Wyoming Community College Commission (WCCC). The WCCC created a tracking document that combines information across the state's community colleges to record all COVID-19 related costs for the colleges. Within this structure, each community college is identified individually as a component part of the whole community college system

request. Specifically, the WCCC has separated out by college the total costs for COVID-19 mitigation, recovery, and reopening as well as the ability to account for any and all CARES funds received by the colleges whether through the HEERF funds, GEER funds, or other avenues that CARES funds might be received such as CARES State Funds. Once CARES GEER funds are received, the funding will be directly distributed to the colleges and the amount will be recorded against the total need. For entities such as Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) that submitted CARES funds for their higher education delivery, the funds will be distributed to the community college that serves as one of its BOCES members. The BOCES funding will be distributed to the college to then administer to its partner BOCES. The Adult Education costs related to the impacts of COVID-19 are similarly tracked within the WCCC. The WCCC is the housing entity and fiscal agent for the Wyoming Adult Education State Program and already has the associated structure in place. As such, Adult Education CARES Funding requests were only submitted through the WCCC and any funding received from CARES funding sources such as CARES GEER funds or CARES State Funds will be recorded against the total need. In all cases, the structure is in place to ensure there is no duplication of the distribution of funds to alleviate the costs related to responding to COVID-19.

As provided above, the DWS will distribute the remaining funds to a private education institution to assist it with an identified internship program. As part of its Workforce Development Training Fund program, DWS will enter into a contract with the private training entity and track spending through its Internship Grant program. Through this contract, the DWS will agree to pay the Contractor for the services described in the Governor's Emergency Education Fund proposal. Total payment under the contract will not exceed \$64,842, and will be made within forty-five (45) days after submission of an invoice pursuant to Wyo. Stat. § 16-6-602. The Contractor is required, through the contract, to submit invoices in sufficient detail to ensure that payments may be made in conformance with the requirements of the contract. The contract provides that should the Contractor fail to perform in a manner consistent with the terms and conditions set forth in the contract, payment may be withheld until such time as the Contractor performs its duties and responsibilities to the satisfaction of the DWS. The DWS Fiscal Division will coordinate with the Governor's Office and the Budget Office to submit a request for the funds (referred to in Wyoming as the B-11 process) and will then set up a budget in the State's payment system (called the WOLFS system) prior to making any payments under the contract.

As indicated, GEER funds going to K-12 local education agencies will go through the Wyoming Department of Education. Funds will be dispersed through a Grants Management System (GSM). LEAs will apply for access to their grant awards through a grant application process, and once approved they may request funds through the GSM as needed. The GSM will also be used to collect quarterly periodic expenditure reports with supporting documentation for compliance review and SEA reporting requirements.

The DFS will distribute funds through an existing contract with a nonprofit to assist it with the development and coordination of a grant process for early learning and community programs

to meet the needs for children and families transitioning to early childhood or kindergarten programs. Through this contract, the DFS will agree to pay the contractor for the services described in the Governor's Emergency Education Fund proposal. Total payment under the contract will not exceed \$243,000, and will be made within forty-five (45) days after submission of an invoice pursuant to Wyo. Stat. § 16-6-602. The contractor is required, through the contract, to submit invoices and to track expenses in sufficient detail to ensure that payments and expenditures are in conformance with the requirements of the contract and the scope of work for these grants as detailed in the Governor's Emergency Education Fund proposal. The contractor will keep a record of CARES Act expenditures to individual early childhood and community programs from CARES Act Child Care Development Block Grant funds and the Governor's Emergency Education Fund.