

Tennessee GEER Reporting: 45-day Report

1. 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 education-related entities;
 - b. The criteria, process and deliberations you use to determine which LEAs, IHEs, and/or other education-related 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.

The impact of coronavirus pandemic has impacted all local education agencies and communities across the state. Currently, 100% of districts in Tennessee are Title I districts, with 19.74% of students aged 5-17 in Tennessee living in poverty. This high level of poverty ranks Tennessee as 12th in the nation for student poverty rates. Further, of Tennessee’s 147 local education agencies, 97 (65.9%) serve fewer than 5,000 students each. As such, Tennessee deems all districts significantly impacted by coronavirus and the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funding will support all LEAs and communities across the state.

The Office of the Governor and Tennessee Department of Education will be awarding GEER funds to LEAs, IHEs, charter schools, and non-profit entities across the state to support initiatives and programs identified as priorities prior to and during the COVID-19 pandemic: literacy, whole child supports, educator preparation and development, CTE and postsecondary, and other initiatives. The table below provides more detail on each initiative funded by GEER. Assurances and conditions will be part of all funding mechanisms and will ensure that funds will be used for the intended purpose, will be subject to all state and federal rules and statutes, and will be expended during the period of availability.

| Initiative | Amount | Criteria | Funding Mechanism | Timeline |
|---|------------|---|---|---|
| Literacy coaches to provide support for literacy practices both in person and distance. | 10,000,000 | Implementation support will be provided cyclically in three-year, staggered terms for all participating schools in the state; this will allow for in-school support from locally-selected providers as well as additional capacity through CORE offices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicitation resulting in 2-3 contracts • Districts* “opt in” to implementation support networks for teachers and school leaders <i>*Prioritizing in year 1 our rural districts and those at-risk schools.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall 2020: RFP • Spring 2021: 1st cohort • Fall 2021: 2nd cohort • Spring/Fall 2022: 3rd cohort |
| Literacy | 20,000,000 | Literacy training for all K-3 teachers statewide (offered in-person and virtual); the department will issue an RFP to procure a provider to develop materials and develop training in the simple view of reading; all teachers completing the training will receive instructional resources for their classrooms, | Grants to LEAs | The RFP will be released in January 2021, with training available May–Aug. 2021, with in-person and in a distance format |

| Initiative | Amount | Criteria | Funding Mechanism | Timeline |
|--|------------|---|--|--|
| | | as well as a stipend via subgrants awarded to districts | | |
| Online academic tool and PBS | 4,500,000 | These funds would support the build-out for full systems integration and access | Contract | RFP issued late 2020; awarded 2021 |
| Child well-being supports | 1,000,000 | Funding to provide additional support for child well-being checks and to implement other recommendations from the state's Child Wellbeing Task Force | State administered program utilizing nonprofit and other partners statewide via grant contracts | Jan./Feb. 2021 |
| Mental Health | 1,750,000 | Mental health and whole child supports were identified by districts as major needs for students; this funding would be utilized to support the infrastructure for students with disabilities, as well as community mapping and whole child supports | State administered program utilizing nonprofit and other partners statewide via grant contracts | Ongoing: fall 2020-spring 2021 |
| Child wellbeing regional supports for health and wellness planning | 800,000 | Eight regional supports to supplement supports currently provided to districts by the state's regional offices; these positions would support strong planning practices, including the support of district action teams, as well as providing resources for child wellness, during and post COVID | Positions hired and placed regionally in the eight centers of regional excellence (CORE) offices | Fall 2020/Winter 2021 |
| Charter School Grants | 10,000,000 | Continuation of the charter school grant program disbursed on a formula based on performance or achievement | Subgrants | Fall/early winter 2020 distribution |
| Educator Pipeline: grow your own | 2,000,000 | Funding to support local districts in strengthening their teacher pipelines through local partnerships with institutions of higher education | Contract/interagency agreements with IHEs | Winter 2020 |
| EPP Literacy Design grants | 2,000,000 | Up to 10 EPPs over the life of the program to develop /revise EPP programs to focus on foundational literacy skills, HQIM, databased decision making, and developmentally appropriate literacy practices | Grant contracts | Initial rollout fall 2020 |
| District Instructional Innovation Grants | 2,000,000 | Competitive grants for districts supporting the innovation of new instructional models; we anticipate awarding 1-3 districts who are serving the state's disadvantaged populations | Competitive grant | January 2021 competition to be awarded spring 2021 |

| Initiative | Amount | Criteria | Funding Mechanism | Timeline |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Civics Seal | 500,000 | Development of resources and materials for districts to endorse in Civics Education | Position or contract | Fall 2020-Fall 2023 |
| Ayers Foundation | 4,000,000 | Funds to support career development and post-secondary accelerator opportunities for students | Grant contract | Fall/early winter 2020 |
| Jobs for Tennessee Graduates (JTG) | 750,000 | Program to support job training for at-risk students to reach graduation and find employment through a variety of methods | Contract with nonprofit | Late 2020 |
| Niswonger Foundation | 700,000 | Funds to support career development and accelerator for students in College/Career Technical Education | Grant contract | Late 2020/early 2021 |
| Save the Children | 700,000 | Additional funds to support remedial instruction for students during summer and afterschool programs as a result of COVID | Grant contract to non-profit partner | Fall 2020 |
| Teach for America | 1,800,000 | To support pipeline development in hard to staff schools in high-need areas | Contract | Late 2020 |
| TN Caps | 500,000 | Career awareness and outreach for rural communities to address postsecondary enrollment drops as a result of COVID-19 | Contract | Fall 2020 |
| YMCA | 200,000 | Funding to support after-school and other programming for students (academic and non-academic supports), including support for lost learning during school closures | Grant contract | Fall 2020 |

2. Describe the system of internal controls the State will use to ensure that GEER funds are expended for allowable purposes and in accordance with cash management principles and the Uniform Guidance. See 2 CFR §200.303.

The Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) will use established internal control procedures to provide assurance that the programs, contracts, and subgrants awarded with the GEER funds are being implemented with fidelity and within the terms and conditions of the award:

- The TDOE has developed and implements desktop monitoring and reporting for other federal grants via its electronic planning and grants management system, ePlan. The TDOE will utilize this same platform for managing subgrants awarded from GEER funds. This platform has functionality and checks/balances for cash management and other controls.
- The TDOE will use current state procurement policies and procedures for GEER fund contracts in compliance with general procurement standards beginning in section 200.318 of the Uniform Grants Guidance. Contracts will be managed to ensure that contractors are performing work in alignment with the terms and conditions of the contract.
- The state-administered programs funded by GEER will be managed by the department's internal performance management division (PMD). The PMD works with TDOE leadership to ensure that key departmental work is represented in a fully-developed project plan. These project plans are part of

quarterly performance routines, and any state-administered program funded with GEER will be integrated into these current oversight mechanisms to track progress on goals, spending, and implementation.

The TDOE will ensure that the program manager assigned to manage the GEER fund initiatives has reviewed and understands program requirements and has developed a mechanism to provide technical assistance and monitoring for the program initiatives.

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.

No GEER funds will be awarded to SEA/IHE administrators or executives.

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.

The GEER funds will be administered by the Office of Districts and Schools, Division of Federal Programs and Oversight (FPO). FPO oversees federal education grants for ESEA programs which have equitable services provisions and houses the state's ombudsman. The GEER funds awarded to LEAs will utilize the same protocols and processes used for other federal grants. In the GEER Funding Application for LEAs, the FPO team will include equitable services questions focusing on the identification of eligible teachers and students, the consultation process, and services provided. Also in the application, LEAs will be required to upload supporting documentation of proportional share calculations and timely and meaningful consultation. FPO will monitor LEAs to ensure eligible teachers and students have the opportunity to participate in GEER programming as part of the three tiers of results-based monitoring during the 2020-21 school year.