

CARES Act Funding Available to Schools/Districts Including Support for Arts Education

The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CARES II) was signed into law on Dec. 27, 2020. This new COVID relief bill extends or modifies several provisions in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES I) Act that was passed in March 2020.

Most districts will receive FOUR TIMES the amount of money than what they received in the first round last summer!

These funds may be used to support arts education!

The new relief bill authorizes \$81.9 billion for the Education Stabilization Fund. The bulk of that funding falls under Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief. For this document we will refer to this generically as CARES II Funding. CARES II will receive an additional \$54 billion on top of the \$13 billion that was allocated under CARES I last year.

The total funding provided to each state, as well as the guidance document that each state Department of Education has provided to every district within your state on how these funds may be used, can be found on the [National Conference of State Legislatures Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund Tracker](#) site.

With additional help on the way, now is the time to plan with school administrators about how this funding can support music education. Reach out to your building principal to discuss the resources that are necessary to conduct music classes safely in-person. The principal will either have spending authority on the funds or will be able to help submit a request for music-related purchases at the district level.

Be prepared to suggest some ways these funds may be used to support music education. [There are fifteen \(15\)](#) numbered categories of allowable use from the statute. Below are several ideas and the related category number for each.

Instruments, Supplies and Materials to Help Ensure Health and Safety (3,5)

- Individual instruments for each student to eliminate sharing
- Individual mouthpieces for each student
- Rental programs so that each student will have their own instrument
- Choral masks or other protective equipment
- Instrument masks, bell covers or other protective equipment
- Addressing the recommendations of the NFHS research studies

PPE, Cleaning Supplies and Sanitation (7)

- Appropriate cleaning and sanitizing materials
 - Sonic instrument cleaners

- Mouthpiece cleaner
- Supplies to sanitize and clean facilities
 - Hand sanitizer
 - Disinfectant wipes
 - Disinfectant spray

Facility Considerations (13, 14, 15)

- Appropriate airflow upgrades in music rooms (13,14)
- Supplies and materials to make instructional environment meet recommended standards (tape, portable carts, tents for outdoor instruction, related materials) (15)
- Equipment required to accommodate social distancing. (12)
- Addressing the recommendations of the NFHS Research Studies (13, 15, 15)

Instructional Support (4, 9, 11)

- Tools and resources for distance education/learning (9)
 - Trainings in available online resources specifically designed for music educators to create virtual ensemble performances
 - Software programs to assist students with guided practice and self-assessment while learning how to play their instruments in a virtual learning environment
- Supporting low-income students with resources to help them with online learning (4, 9)
 - Instruments for every child
 - Instrument supplies such as reeds, rosin, trumpet grease, etc.
- Provide tutoring programs outside normal school hours to address student needs. (11)
 - Group instruction
- Activities to address the unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English Learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth, including how outreach and services delivery will meet the needs of each population. (4)
 - Development of a peer coaching program
 - Establishment of partnerships with local Latin Chambers of Commerce, United Sound, etc.
- Provide internet access for students struggling to learn remotely (9)
- Provide additional staffing to expand beginner programs to reach students who were unable to participate in arts instruction during the 20/21 school year.
- Offer career and technical education services to prepare all students for postsecondary education and the workforce (e.g., virtual job-shadowing, resume writing, interview skills, etc.).
- Provide extra supports aligned to the district's regular education program, which may include services to assist preschool children in the transition from early childhood education programs to elementary school programs (also, the transition from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school).

- Provide basic instruction on trouble-shooting and the maintenance of technology, connectivity, file-sharing, remote tech support, etc.

Summer Programs (11, 12)

- Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental afterschool programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, students with disabilities, English Learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children in foster care. (11,12)
 - Enrichment activities including those relating to music-making (guitar, keyboard, mariachi, music technology, ukulele, melodica, drum circles, steel drum band, etc.)
- Delivery of services during extended school year programs and/or summer enrichment programs for all students. (11)
 - Band camps
 - Parks and Rec programs
 - Big Brother, Big Sister programs
 - School district summer enrichment programs
- Deliver extension activities outside normal school hours to support a successful return to school. (11)
 - Introduction to band, choir, orchestra induction programs prior to the opening of school
- Create CTE summer bridge program for students who are transitioning from Middle School to High School. (11)

Planning (1, 2, 5, 8)

- Developing and implementing plans for the next school year
 - Professional development time/compensation for group planning
 - Professional development time/compensation for curriculum expansion to accommodate the needs of the coming year
 - Training for music educators on strategies to conduct in-person music instruction safely (ref. NFHS/NAfME Reopening Guidance)

Key Dates

- CARES ACT FUNDS (ESSERF I) MUST BE SPENT BY SEPTEMBER 30, 2022.
- CARES ACT FUNDS (ESSERF II) MUST BE APPLIED FOR BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 30, 2021
- CARES ACT FUNDS (ESSERF II) MUST BE SPENT BY SCHOOL DISTRICTS NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

For further information, check out the following resources:

Important Links

- CARES (ESSER) II Fact Sheet https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/01/Final_ESSERII_Factsheet_1.5.21.pdf

- CARES (ESSER) II Allocations, a list of funding available to each state. https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/01/Final_ESSERII_Methodology_Table_1.5.21.pdf
- Additional information about CARES (ESSER I and II) funding from the Office of Elementary & Secondary Education & Secondary Education (<https://oese.ed.gov/offices/education-stabilization-fund/elementary-secondary-school-emergency-relief-fund/>)
- Information about education funding in the new Covid-19 relief package from National Association for Music Education (NAfME) (<https://nafme.org/federal-education-funding-update/>)
- Check out this dashboard (<https://covid-relief-data.ed.gov>) of ESSER funding that has been allocated and spent by each state and territory.

Articles

- [Get CARES Act Funding for Your Program](#)
- [6 Steps to Get Funds that Support ESSA's "Well-Rounded Education"](#)
- [Funding Resource Roundup](#)

Resources:

- [Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund](#)