

June 9, 2020

The Honorable Betsy DeVos  
Secretary of Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos:

On May 4, the Collaborative for Student Success and nine partners united in the pursuit of educational equity and accountability for our nation's most at-risk students. We sent you this [letter](#) detailing the importance of requiring State and local educational agencies (SEAs and LEAs) to report on how they spend funding received under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (P.L. 116–136) Education Stabilization Fund. Since then, more than **[8,000 individuals](#)** from across the country have joined us in asking that the U.S. Department of Education collect and publicly report how SEAs and LEAs used CARES Act funds to accomplish the following goals:

- Meet the unique needs of underserved students;
- Prioritize equitable learning opportunities, including increasing accessibility to distance learning;
- Address learning loss and achievement gaps;
- Account for any missing data during school closure in the state accountability system;
- Provide meals and other wraparound services to students; and
- Provide professional development to educators while working to retain them and other support staff.

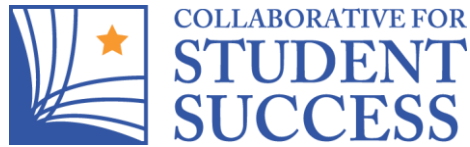
The petition signers represent a diverse set of states, underscoring the universal concern for transparency and accountability. More than 800 individuals from Michigan, 600 from Washington, 400 from Florida, and 300 from Tennessee joined us in our call for information on how taxpayer dollars are used to help all students during this global emergency.

We reiterate our request that the Department inform SEAs and LEAs that they will need to collect, and report publicly after a year, specific information about how they used CARES Act funds to help students most in need. We have attached a list of potential items for SEAs and LEAs to report.

Thank you again for your consideration and we look forward to working with the Department on these efforts in the future. Please do not hesitate to reach out ([jcowen@forstudentsuccess.org](mailto:jcowen@forstudentsuccess.org)) with any questions or comments.

Respectfully,

Jim Cowen  
Executive Director  
Collaborative for Student Success



## **Attachment A**

### **STATE REPORTS**

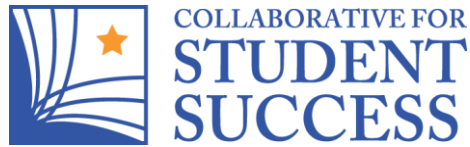
A year after passage of the CARES Act, an SEA receiving funds under the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund shall submit a report to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require, that describes —

- How the SEA used funds to meet the unique academic and social and emotional needs of students, particularly students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, foster care youth, students experiencing homelessness, and students engaged in the juvenile justice system;
- How the SEA will account for any missing data from the time during school closure in the SEA accountability and public reporting system;
- Any quantifiable impact the funds the SEA received had on the education of students, in particular students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, foster care youth, students experiencing homelessness, and students engaged in the juvenile justice system, such as:
  - The number of students who received technology for distance education, including devices and connectivity;
  - The number of hours students received distance education;
  - The number of hours students with disabilities received special education and related services virtually or remotely compared to what their individualized education programs (IEPs) called for;
  - The number of students who took AP/IB/SAT/ACT tests in a remote learning environment;
  - The number of educators (teachers, school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel) either retained or hired;
  - Any learning gains experienced by students;
  - The number of hours of training teachers received on providing distance education; and
  - The number of students who earned a credential online;
- The number of jobs that the SEA estimates were saved or created with funds the SEA received and how many of those jobs were in high need schools; and
- How the SEA used flexibilities it received from ESEA waivers during and after school closures and, as required in section 8401 of ESEA, (1) the progress of schools covered under the provisions of such waiver toward improving student academic achievement; and (2) how the use of the waiver contributed to such progress.

### **LEA REPORTS**

A year after passage of the CARES Act, an LEA receiving funds under the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund shall submit a report to the SEA, at such time and in such manner as the SEA may require, that describes —

- How the LEA used funds to meet the unique academic and social and emotional needs of students, particularly students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, foster care youth, students experiencing homelessness, and students engaged in the juvenile justice system;



- How the LEA used funds to ensure all students have equitable access to learning opportunities during and after school closures, including access to technology and high-quality instructional materials, and how compensatory services for students with disabilities were provided;
- How the LEA used funds to meet the technology needs of all students, particularly students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, racial and ethnic minorities, English learners, foster care youth, students experiencing homelessness, and students engaged in the juvenile justice system;
- How the LEA used funds to address learning loss, close opportunity and achievement gaps, and provide needed compensatory services for students with disabilities due to closures;
- Any quantifiable impact the funds the LEA received had on the education of students, in particular students from low-income backgrounds, students with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, foster care youth, students experiencing homelessness, and students engaged in the juvenile justice system, such as:
  - The number of students who received technology for distance education, including devices and connectivity;
  - The number of hours students received distance education;
  - The number of hours students with disabilities received special education and related services virtually or remotely compared to what their individualized education programs (IEPs) called for;
  - The number of students who took AP/IB/SAT/ACT tests in a remote learning environment;
  - The number of educators (teachers, school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel) either retained or hired;
  - Any learning gains experienced by students;
  - The number of hours of training teachers received on providing distance education; and
  - The number of students who earned a credential online;
- The methodology the LEA used to distribute funds to schools;
- The percentage and amount of funds that will be used to provide equitable services to nonpublic school students and teachers;
- How low-income students, students with disabilities, and English learners in non-public schools received equitable services;
- The number of jobs that the LEA estimates were saved or created with funds the LEA received and how many of those jobs were in high need schools;
- How the LEA plans to resume administering State assessments as soon as possible using funds received, including any diagnostic assessments that will be used to determine learning loss of students due to school closures; and
- How the LEA used flexibilities it received from ESEA waivers during and after school closures and, as required in section 8401 of ESEA, (1) the progress of schools covered under the provisions of such waiver toward improving student academic achievement; and (2) how the use of the waiver contributed to such progress.

## **STATE REPORTS TO SECRETARY**

An SEA that receives Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund shall compile two reports: one that includes, in the aggregate, the information it receives from its LEAs from the LEA reports and another that includes the information required in the State report. The SEA shall submit these reports to the Secretary at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require. The Secretary shall make these reports publicly available within 14 days of receipt.