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Federal COVID Relief Funding for K-12 Education in Georgia

Q1

What is the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)?

A law signed on March 11, 2021 that funds efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. States and local education agencies received \$123 billion in federal K-12 funding.

Q2

How much funding will Georgia receive?

\$4,249,371,244. Georgia received the eighth-largest state allocation.

Q3

How much funding will local education agencies (LEAs) receive?

School districts and state-approved charter schools will receive 90% of total funding (\$3.824 billion).

Q4

How does the ARPA funding compare to the first two CARES acts?

Prior to ARPA passage, Georgia received \$2.35 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. ARPA increased total ESSER funding by 180 percent.

Legislation	Passage	Total Funding	District Funding	Funds Expire
Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES I)	3/27/2020	\$457,169,852	\$411,452,867	9/30/2022
Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CARES 2)	12/27/2020	\$1,892,092,618	\$1,702,883,356	9/30/2023
American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA)	3/11/2021	\$4,249,371,244	\$3,824,434,120	9/20/2024



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Q5

Does ARPA require the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) to spend the 10% state share in a certain way?

Yes. The law requires the GaDOE to reserve state funding for the following activities:

- Learning loss: At least \$212.47 million for state-level interventions to recover lost learning time (50% of state share; 5% of total funding)
- Extended learning time: At least \$42.49 million each for summer learning strategies and afterschool programming (20% of state share; 2% of total funding)
- Administrative Costs: Not more than \$21.25 million for administrative costs (5% of state share; 0.5% of total funding).

Q6

Does ARPA require school districts and state-approved charters to spend funds in a certain way?

Yes, in part. LEAs must reserve at least 20% of the ARPA allocation for interventions that address learning loss.

Q7

In addition to the 20% learning loss provision, does ARPA require LEAs to make other assurances?

Yes. The law requires LEAs to make three assurances.

1. Develop a school reopening and continuity of service plan within 30 days of receiving funding and post the document on the official district or charter school website.
2. Complete GaDOE's streamlined (ARPA) application.
3. Demonstrate maintenance of equity for the highest-poverty schools. The law defines maintenance of equity as an assurance that an LEA does not reduce per-pupil funding or staff-to-student ratios because of the infusion of federal funds.

Q8

What three areas did the Georgia Department of Education prioritize in its ARPA Plan?

1. Accelerate learning: Addressing unfinished learning and barriers to student success.
2. Personalized supports: Deepening and differentiating support for students and educators.
3. Promote opportunity: Expanding access to accelerated and extended learning opportunities.



Q9

What existing assets and partnerships will the department leverage to implement the state plan?

Before passage of ARPA, the department released robust guidance through the [Roadmap to Reimagining K-12 Education](#). The department's new K-12 Public Health Liaison position ensures that district and school leaders receive coordinated guidance on how to provide safe and supportive learning environments for students.

Subject-matter experts provide district support in several curricular areas, including career, technical and agricultural education (CTAE), fine arts, STEM/STEAM, and positive behavioral interventions and supports (PBIS). Cross-functional teams provide targeted technical assistance in two areas: school improvement planning and the implementation of federal programs.

GaDOE has created instructional materials and funded formative assessments for teacher use. The new ARPA-funded, online learning platform should increase the visibility and adoption of these resources.

Q10

What funded activities did the Georgia Department of Education identify in its ARPA Plan?

Accelerate Learning (1)	
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase district capacity by hiring state and regional Academic Recovery Specialists.• Fund new agency program specialist positions (nursing, psychology, and social work) to address nonacademic barriers to learning• Support a state-level wraparound services coordinator
Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish school-based health clinics• Support cross-disciplinary work• Refine Formative Instructional Practices (FIPs)
Professional Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliver mental health awareness training for educators
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modernize data and information systems



Personalize Support (2)	
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund new agency Digital Learning and Resource Specialist positions
Professional Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and curate standards-aligned digital learning resources Facilitate online Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)
Technical Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deploy Continuous Improvement Teams (CITs) to increase district capacity to address learning loss and COVID-related challenges

Promote Opportunity (3)	
Staffing/Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create the Office of Rural Education and Innovation to provide practical solutions for rural and place-bound communities Cover costs for educators to pursue endorsements in high-need content areas and complete alternative certification programs through the Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP)
School/Community Grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fund "opportunity grants" to increase access to accelerated academic and career-oriented courses and programming
District Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop LEA guidance and technical specifications for creating digital classrooms and supporting digital and blended learning
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address bandwidth and technology infrastructure gaps

Q11

How will Georgia meet the federal requirement to support extended learning opportunities?

The department has partnered with the Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network (GSAN) to administer the \$85 million Building Opportunities in Out-of-School Time (BOOST) grants. GSAN has created Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for two grant competitions.

Statewide organizations may apply for annual grants of up to \$5 million if they (1) operate year-round programs, (2) serve at least 2,000 youth, and (3) maintain a geographic footprint of at least 15 counties. The plan estimates that GSAN will award four-to-six statewide grants in the amount of \$45 million.

An additional \$40 million will fund between 100 and 120 community grants. Funding amounts are based on the number of sites and the duration of support (i.e.,

Resources

Georgia's ESSER Plan
LEA ESSER III Plans
Use of ESSER Funds
BOOST Grants



year-round versus afterschool/summer only). The maximum grant size for the community competition is \$500,000 per year. Public schools and districts are ineligible for both grant competitions.

As part of the grant administration, GSN will collaborate with regional educational service agencies (RESAs) to provide professional learning on promising practices associated with high-quality afterschool and summer learning programs. Further, GSN will support GaDOE by monitoring program implementation and evaluating effectiveness.

Q12

How did GaDOE allocate funds?

LEAs receive funds based on the Title I funding formula. LEAs with greater concentrations of high-poverty students received larger allocations on a per-pupil basis than districts with lower poverty.

Q13

What is “supplement, not supplant?” Does it apply to the use of ESSER funds?

Supplanting refers to the practice of using federal funds to cover activities previously funded by state or local dollars. The ARPA funds are not subject to the “supplement, not supplant” rule. Therefore, LEA administrators have more autonomy to design strategies that respond to emerging student needs.

Q14

What are capital expenditures? May LEAs use ESSER funds for capital expenditures?

Capital expenditures are funds invested in creating, repairing, or improving districts' fixed assets (e.g., property, technology, and equipment). Federal formula programs prohibit construction and renovation of school facilities and require state-level pre-approval for equipment purchases over \$5,000. However, LEAs may use ESSER funds for capital expenditures subject to GaDOE preapproval.

Q15

Are nonpublic schools eligible to participate in the ESSER III program?

No. Section 2002 of the American Rescue Plan Act created the Emergency Assistance for Non-Public Schools (EANS) program. The Georgia Department of Education will provide up to \$75.4 million in direct funding to nonpublic schools, bypassing school districts that would usually administer such programs.

