



American Rescue Plan Act Summary

by Claire Suggs

More Federal Pandemic Relief Funding Headed to Georgia's Schools

Congress passed the [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#), which will send [an estimated \\$4.2 billion](#) to Georgia for public schools.ⁱ Most of these funds, approximately \$3.8 billion, will go to school districts. The funds will be distributed to districts based on their share of Title I funding and must be used by Sept. 30, 2024ⁱⁱ. This money is part of the approximately \$122 billion going to public schools across the country through the ARP Act. Other education-related funding in the act includes

- \$3 billion for students with disabilities
- \$800 million for students experiencing homelessness
- \$2.75 billion to governors for private schools (Georgia is expected to get about \$65 million)
- \$7.2 billion for the E-rate program to improve student and educator home internet access

How Districts Can Use ARP Funds

There is considerable flexibility in how districts can use ARP funds. They must use 20 percent of this money to address learning loss through evidence-based interventions that address students' academic, social and emotional needs and can include summer learning and enrichment programs, afterschool and extended year programs. The remaining funds can be used for activities allowed under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. These activities include:

- Coordinating with public health departments
- Activities to address the unique needs of low-income students, students with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and students in foster care
- Purchasing educational technology
- Providing mental health services including the establishing full-service community schools

- Summer and afterschool programs
- Repairing and maintaining school facilities and upgrading indoor air systems to reduce virus transmission
- Activities to maintain continuity of services and employ existing staff

How the Georgia Department of Education Can Use ARP Funds

The Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) must reserve targeted portions of the approximately \$4.2 billion allocated to the state for public schools for specific purposes:

- At least 5 percent to address learning loss
- At least 1 percent for summer enrichment programs
- At least 1 percent for afterschool programs
- At most 2.5 percent for other state activities
- At most 0.5 percent for administration

These amounts are in addition to the estimated \$3.8 billion GaDOE will send to school districts.

The ARP Act contains other education-related investments intended to benefit children including \$1 billion for Head Start programs, \$39 billion for child care, and \$200 million for public libraries.

PAGE will provide more information on the ARP Act as it becomes available.

ⁱ Skinner, R. R., Foundation, J. H., Dortch, C., & Nyhof, E. (2021, March 8). Estimated FY 2021 Grants to States and Institutions of Higher Education Under the Education Stabilization Fund Based on the Senate-Passed Substitute for H.R. 1319. Congressional Research Service. Retrieved from https://www.democrats.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/CD%20memo_ESSER_EANS_HEERF_Senate%20passed%20sub%20to%20HR1319_3-8-21.pdf

ⁱⁱ The act states that the funds must be spent by September 2023, but the U.S. Department of Education allows a one-year extension for this deadline.