



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

Funding Your Continuous Education Plan: *Using ARP-IDEA to Support Students with Disabilities*

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the United States Department of Education (USED) has provided the District of Columbia with recovery funding to support toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) American Rescue Plan (ARP) for the IDEA Part B formula grant programs:

- **IDEA Part B Grants (Section 611)** for children and youth with disabilities aged 3 through 21
- **IDEA Part B Preschool Grants (Section 619)** for children with disabilities aged 3 through 5

The ARP-IDEA supplemental funds for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2021 will assist LEAs in providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE) for children with disabilities ages 3 through 21.

The purpose of ARP-IDEA is to help recover from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and sustain safe operations. Funds may be used for all allowable purposes under the IDEA and are subject to all requirements and provisions that apply to IDEA funds. In alignment with USED priorities for these funds, OSSE encourages LEAs to focus these funds on the following priorities:

- **School Re-entry;**
- **Disruption in the Education of Children with Disabilities;**
- **Mental Health Services; and**
- **Equity in Special Education and Early Intervention Services.**

In your ARP-IDEA application, you will be asked to organize your budget accordingly. In addition to this application, you were asked to complete a [Continuous Education Plan](#) to demonstrate how you intend to reopen, continue safe operations, and address the impacts of the pandemic for the 2021-22 school year.

Given the wide range of [allowable uses](#) under IDEA, OSSE encourages you to consider how this recovery funding can be best used to implement your LEA's [Continuous Education Plan](#). Therefore, this guide serves to:

- Make connections between the components of [Continuous Education Plans](#) and [OSSE's recovery priorities](#) of safe reopening/operation, student and staff wellbeing, and accelerated learning; and
- Support LEAs while planning how to use funding by providing examples of programs and activities that can be supported through ARP-IDEA.

LEAs can further explore use of these strategies by accessing the [OSSE High Leverage Practices for Inclusive Classrooms Resources](#).

For additional information and resources, please visit OSSE's [Continuous Education Resources for LEAs website](#) or if you have questions, please email Kieran.Bowen@dc.gov.



ARP-IDEA Spending Priorities

IDEA Part B, Sections 611 and 619

This fall, OSSE will release the ARP-IDEA application. In the spring OSSE released the [CEP Resource Guide](#). In the ARP-IDEA application, you will be asked to organize your budget using four spending priorities: School re-entry, Disruption in the education of children with disabilities, Mental Health services and Equity in special education and early intervention services.

OSSE reminds LEAs of the Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirement which prohibits LEAs from reducing the level of expenditures for the education of children with disabilities made by the LEA from local funds below the level of those expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

The tables below list examples of resources that your LEA may need to fund to safely operate schools and provide supports to students with disabilities. This is not a comprehensive list of all the resources that the ARP-IDEA grant can support but can serve as a starting point for designing your programming and building a budget.

School Re-entry	
Category	Examples
Physical Health and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disseminate health and COVID-19 information that is specifically related to children with disabilities Develop emergency plans for children with disabilities as public health guidance evolves—such as during quarantines, hospitalizations, or unplanned school closures, or for students with medical certifications who are participating in distance learning
Provide Support Across Learning Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritize delivery of five days of in-person learning each week Plan to support learning across all environments, including how students will be supported to manage transitions between learning environments Review grading and retention policies Provide technology access for distance learning if needed Invest in hardware, software, and infrastructure that allow students with disabilities to access and engage with virtual or blended instruction

Disruption in the Education of Children with Disabilities	
Category	Examples
IDEA Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address any backlog of initial evaluations not completed within the timeline or that were delayed due to circumstances related to the COVID-19 pandemic Contract with outside vendors and practitioners to perform assessments if needed Pay costs associated with training existing staff to acquire the necessary expertise and qualifications to conduct evaluations



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a plan to complete all outstanding Individualized Education Program (IEP) renewals • Review and change staffing assignments, schedules and responsibilities of related service providers as necessary and obtaining qualified outside contract support if needed • Pay for special education certified substitute teachers to ensure continuity of services when staff members have to be out on leave
Classroom Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure continuity of services across learning environments • Assess students' current levels of performance, designate or design appropriate accelerated learning instructional approaches, and provide accelerated learning to address any learning gaps resulting from interrupted instruction in the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years • Provide the full array of special education and related services, that may include compensatory services, for students with disabilities to ensure they receive FAPE

Mental Health Services	
Category	Examples
Student Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rebuild relationships • Provide opportunities for social emotional learning • Screen, monitor and refer students with mental health concerns related to the COVID-19 pandemic • Re-establish behavioral and disciplinary approaches • Re-engage students with disabilities in learning
Educator Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate access to mental health supports • Build staff community • Engage and support talent
Family Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage families in ongoing two-way communication • Communicate clearly about the continuous education plan, accelerated learning, and recovery services • Share assessment and progress monitoring results, including any regression experienced by their student and plans to address it • Ensure language access • Make key contact information available about screening, referring, evaluating, identifying and supporting students with disabilities • Involve families to support students' attendance and re-engagement • Follow updated attendance policy • Expand existing home visiting programs and focus particularly on the students most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic



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Equity in Special Education and Early Intervention Services	
Category	Examples
IDEA Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade assessment and evaluation tools, such as those that perform auto calculations of data to reduce burden and streamline report-writing • Timely complete new initial evaluations and reevaluations • Update or amend IEPs to plan for the delivery of accelerated learning in instances where a child requires changed or additional special education supports to access accelerated learning • Hire additional special education and related services staff
Classroom Supports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize more adults in classrooms to prioritize educator strengths and usage of break-out sessions so that educators can better facilitate differentiated instruction to meet students' needs • Collaborate with other child-serving agencies and non-public schools to support students with disabilities in foster care, carceral, and non-public settings • Establish tutoring programs and prioritize serving students with disabilities and students most in need • Streamline curriculum while focusing on grade-level standards • Customize instruction based on strengths and areas of growth for each student • Administer formative assessments regularly to assess progress of individual students and adapt instructional approaches for students who are not making sufficient progress