

Information on ARRA Funding

Below you will find information on The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) taken from the United States Department of Education web-site. This is a brief explanation of the purpose of ARRA funding and guidelines on how funds are to be spent. In addition you will find specific explanation of various Titles/Grant funds, dollars available respectively, and when funds are available.

“In a global economy where the most valuable skill you can sell is your knowledge, a good education is no longer just a pathway to opportunity— it is a pre-requisite. The countries that out-teach us today will out-compete us tomorrow.”

—President Barack Obama, Feb. 24, 2009

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provides approximately \$100 billion for education, creating a historic opportunity to save hundreds of thousands of jobs, support states and school districts, and advance reforms and improvements that will create long-lasting results for our students and our nation including early learning, K-12, and post-secondary education. This document describes the principles and strategy that will guide the distribution and implementation of the ARRA funds appropriated to the U.S. Department of Education. Accompanying documents provide initial guidelines for three components of ARRA education funding: the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF), Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Title I), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B. Separately, we will issue guidelines on other ARRA funds as they are developed. The Department will periodically provide updated information at www.ed.gov.



Principles: The overall goals of the ARRA are to stimulate the economy in the short term and invest in education and other essential public services to ensure the long-term economic health of our nation. The success of the education part of the ARRA will depend on the shared commitment and responsibility of students, parents, teachers, principals, superintendents, education boards, college presidents, state school chiefs, governors, local officials, and federal officials. Collectively, we must advance ARRA's short-term economic goals by investing quickly, and we must support ARRA's long-term economic goals by investing wisely, using these funds to strengthen education, drive reforms, and improve results for students from early learning through post-secondary education. Four principles guide the distribution and use of ARRA funds:

- a. Spend funds quickly to save and create jobs. ARRA funds will be distributed quickly to states, local educational agencies and other entities in order to avert layoffs, create and save jobs and improve student achievement. States and LEAs in turn are urged to move rapidly to develop plans for using funds, consistent with the law's reporting and accountability requirements, and to promptly begin spending funds to help drive the nation's economic recovery.

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- b. **Improve student achievement through school improvement and reform.** ARRA funds should be used to improve student achievement. In addition, the SFSF provides funds to close the achievement gap, help students from all backgrounds achieve high standards, and address four specific areas that are authorized under bipartisan education legislation – including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the America Competes Act of 2007:
1. Making progress toward rigorous college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities;
 2. Establishing pre-K-to college and career data systems that track progress and foster continuous improvement;
 3. Making improvements in teacher effectiveness and in the equitable distribution of qualified teachers for all students, particularly students who are most in need;
 4. Providing intensive support and effective interventions for the lowest-performing schools.
- c. **Ensure transparency, reporting and accountability.** To prevent fraud and abuse, support the most effective uses of ARRA funds, and accurately measure and track results, recipients must publicly report on how funds are used. Due to the unprecedented scope and importance of this investment, ARRA funds are subject to additional and more rigorous reporting requirements than normally apply to grant recipients.
- d. **Invest one-time ARRA funds thoughtfully to minimize the "funding cliff."** ARRA represents a historic infusion of funds that is expected to be temporary. Depending on the program, these funds are available for only two to three years. These funds should be invested in ways that do not result in unsustainable continuing commitments after the funding expires.

Categories of funds and schedule for distribution: Balancing the need for speedy investments and for rigorous accountability and transparency, the Department has designed the following approaches for distributing different categories of funds. Some funds will be distributed in stages to states on a formula basis and then distributed from states to local education agencies (LEAs) or institutions of higher education (IHEs) for use over the next two school years (2009–10 and 2010–11); some funds will be distributed all at once; some funds will be distributed through a competitive grant process.