

Dear Chief State School Officers, State Higher Education Executive Officers, and Leaders of Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs):

The *Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018*, signed into law by President Trump on February 9, 2018, included significant new funding to support disaster relief. The U.S. Department of Education (Department) will award up to \$2.7 billion to assist K-12 schools and school districts and institutions of higher education (IHEs) in meeting the educational needs of students affected by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria and the 2017 California wildfires. This disaster assistance will help schools, school districts and IHEs return to their full capabilities as quickly and effectively as possible.

More specific information, including application details and other relevant provisions of the legislation, will be shared with you in the near future. (For your convenience, enclosed is a copy of Division B, Subdivision 1, Title VIII of P.L. 115-123, the “Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018,” or see the enrolled version of H.R. 1892 at pages 32-36 available at <https://www.congress.gov/115/bills/hr1892/BILLS-115hr1892enr.pdf>.)

The funding opportunities are as follows:

*(1) Immediate Aid to Restart School Operations (Restart)*

Under this program, the Department is authorized to award funds to State educational agencies (SEAs) where a major disaster or emergency has been declared under sections 401 or 501 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5170 and 5190) related to the consequences of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma or Maria or the 2017 California wildfires (“a covered disaster or emergency”). The eligible states and territories are Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Texas and the U.S. Virgin Islands. These SEAs, in turn, will provide assistance or services to local educational agencies (LEAs), including public charter schools, and non-public schools to help defray expenses related to the restart of operations in, the reopening of and the re-enrollment of students in elementary and secondary schools that serve an area affected by a covered disaster or emergency.

We know that SEAs, LEAs, public charter schools and non-public schools in the affected areas have incurred, and continue to incur, considerable expenses as they work to reopen schools and are in urgent need of financial assistance. In determining allocations under this authority, the Department will consider the number of students enrolled, during the 2016–17 school year, in elementary schools and secondary schools that were closed as a result of a covered disaster or emergency, as well as other relevant factors.

*(2) Emergency Impact Aid for Displaced Students*

Under this program, the Department will award Emergency Impact Aid funding to SEAs, which, in turn, will provide assistance to LEAs to cover the cost of educating students enrolled in public schools, including public charter schools, and non-public schools who were displaced by a covered disaster or emergency.

The Department will make payments to SEAs based on quarterly counts of displaced students enrolled in public schools, including charter schools, and non-public schools. SEAs will make payments to LEAs for the costs of educating public and non-public students, based on the number of covered students served. To receive funding, eligible SEAs will need to provide data and other application information that will be requested shortly.

Congress appropriated a combined amount of approximately \$2.5 billion for both the Restart and Emergency Impact Aid for Displaced Students programs. The amounts awarded under each program will be based on demand and specific data received from eligible applicants.

*(3) Assistance for Homeless Children and Youths*

Congress appropriated \$25 million for additional grants to SEAs for LEAs to address the needs of homeless students displaced by the covered disasters or emergencies. The Department anticipates using data on displaced public school students collected under the Emergency Impact Aid program to make allocations to SEAs under the Assistance for Homeless Children and Youths program. SEAs will award subgrants to LEAs on the basis of demonstrated need. LEAs must use the funds awarded under this program to support activities that are allowable under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

*(4) Emergency Assistance to Institutions of Higher Education*

Congress appropriated \$100 million for this program, which will provide emergency assistance to IHEs and their students in areas directly affected by the covered disasters or emergencies.

*(5) Defraying Costs of Enrolling Displaced Students in Higher Education*

Congress appropriated \$75 million for this program, which will provide payments to IHEs to help defray the unexpected expenses associated with enrolling displaced students from IHEs directly affected by a covered disaster or emergency, in accordance with criteria to be established and made publicly available.

The Department will be sharing additional information in the near future, including application packages and technical assistance, on its “Disaster Relief” webpage at <https://www.ed.gov/disasterrelief>.

For additional information on the programs for K-12 schools and school districts, please contact David Esquith, Director, Office of Safe and Healthy Students, at [David.Esquith@ed.gov](mailto:David.Esquith@ed.gov). For additional information on the programs for IHEs, please contact Adam Kissel, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Higher Education Programs, Office of Postsecondary Education, at [Adam.Kissel@ed.gov](mailto:Adam.Kissel@ed.gov).

The Department looks forward to working closely with applicants and grantees as they recover from the impact of the disasters and emergencies and as these programs progress.

Sincerely,

Betsy DeVos

Enclosure