

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 25, 2020

Governor Ron DeSantis
State of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Commissioner Richard Corcoran
Florida Department of Education
Turlington Building, Suite 1514
325 West Gaines Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399

Dear Governor DeSantis and Commissioner Corcoran:

We write to share our concern that Florida was the last state to apply for its share of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund, even as Florida school districts continued to incur additional COVID-19 expenses without any revenues coming in. We urge you to ensure that federal emergency funding reaches the school districts and the students who are most in need expeditiously and ask that you clarify how you plan to determine which districts are eligible for aid through the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund.

Florida school districts are relying on emergency aid to keep employees salaried, purchase technology to narrow the digital divide, and address the needs of their most vulnerable students. In preparation for school re-openings, districts also will be required to fund the purchase of cleaning supplies and train school staff on sanitation guidelines. The School Superintendents Association estimates that it will cost districts on average roughly \$1.2 million to safely reopen.

With those needs in mind, Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act in March, which allocated \$770 million in emergency aid for Florida's K-12 schools. The state also has received aid through the GEER Fund that can be used to provide emergency support through grants to the hardest-hit school districts.

The CARES Act requires that to distribute GEER funds, the Florida Department of Education must determine which districts have been "most significantly impacted by coronavirus." Please share what criteria you plan to use to make this determination.

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While Florida's public schools have stepped up to meet unprecedented challenges, they are in urgent need of timely support to continue providing quality education to all students, particularly those who have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. To meet this exigency, we urge you to work together closely to identify the districts that are most in need and ensure that federal aid is swiftly made available.

Sincerely,



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress

/s/

Charlie Crist
Member of Congress

Val B. Demings
Member of Congress

Ted E. Deutch
Member of Congress

Lois Frankel
Member of Congress

Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress

Al Lawson, Jr.
Member of Congress

Stephanie Murphy
Member of Congress

Donna E. Shalala
Member of Congress

Darren Soto
Member of Congress

Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress