



Reopening Florida's Schools and the CARES Act

Closing Achievement Gaps and
Creating Safe Spaces for Learning



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION
fldoe.org



“Together, we will get through this difficult time and emerge stronger than before.”

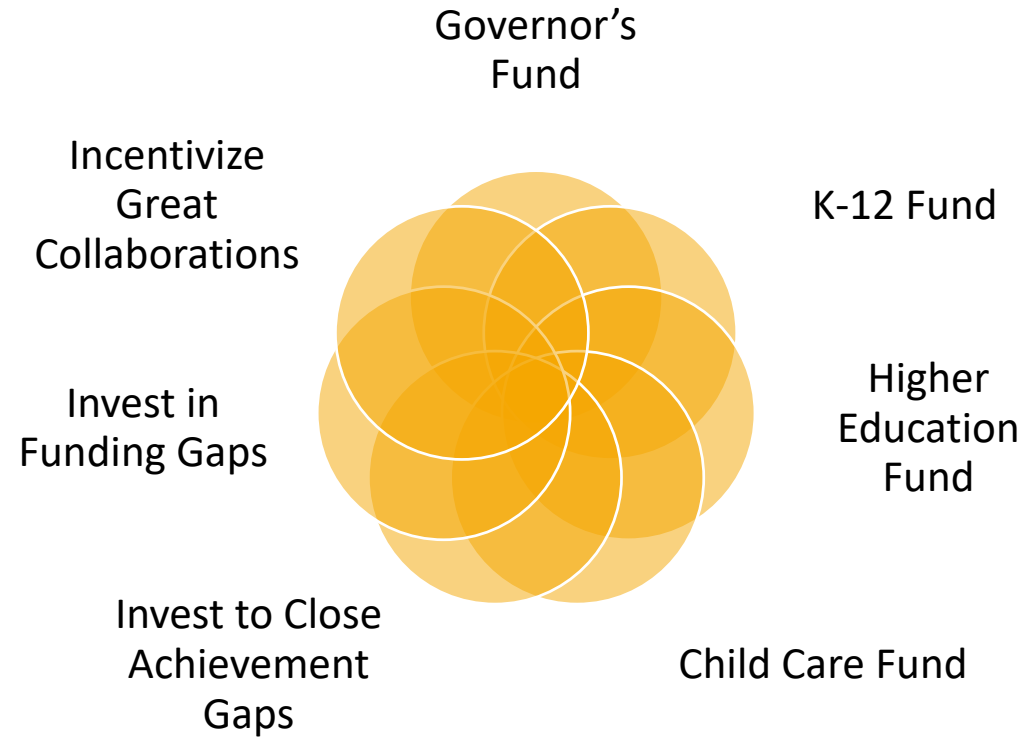
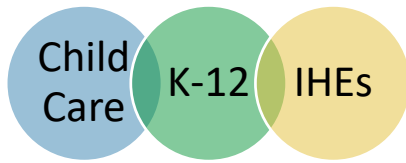
– Governor Ron DeSantis

Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step.

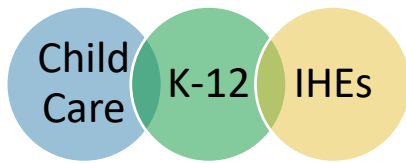
Utilizing This State Plan

- Part 1 This plan provides diverse insights on the connection between schools and the economy and their subsequent impacts on achievement gaps.
- Part 2 This plan provides health and instructional recommendations for reopening Florida’s schools, aligned to the executive direction of [Florida Governor Ron DeSantis](#), the Re-Open Florida Task Force’s [Safe. Smart. Step-by-Step. Plan](#), the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). **Child care (early learning) programs, K-12 schools and postsecondary institutions should use this document as points to consider and implement with local context, and note that health related mitigations may need to adjust as Florida learns more about the impacts of COVID-19.**
- Part 3 This plan provides the Florida Department of Education’s (FDOE) implementation plan for the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act’s education and child care related components. The plan includes potential opportunities to align FDOE-directed portions of the CARES Act with local education agencies’ (LEA) and postsecondary’s (institutions of higher education or IHE) controlled CARES Act funding.
- Part 4 This plan holds adequate reserve funds back for needs that may emerge closer to and during the 2020-2021 academic year.
- Appendix The appendices to this document contain page numbers and links to reopening strategies and resources referenced throughout Parts 2-3 of the document.
- Indicators Throughout much of the document, indicators on the top left or right of pages to specify whether the page’s content pertains to Child Care, K-12, IHEs or multiple levels of education.





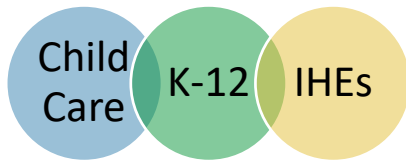
Part 3: The CARES Act



Overview

The goals align with Governor DeSantis' priorities for Florida's economy and the [State Board of Education's 2020-2025 Strategic Plan](#), as revised November 2019.

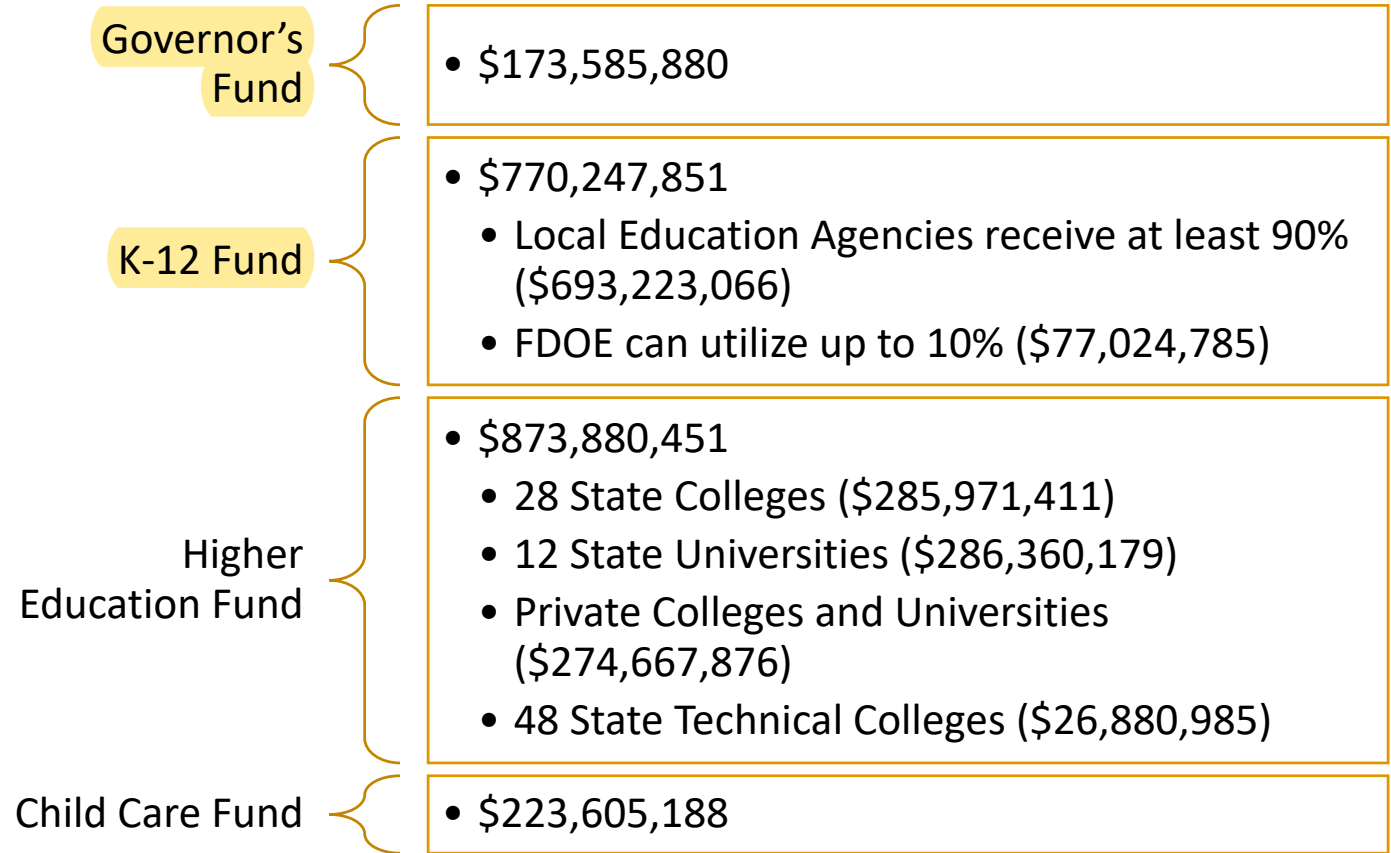
- ❑ Friday, March 27, President Trump [signed into law](#) the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act*. This assistance for states includes more than \$2 billion combined from the [Education Stabilization Fund](#) and child care relief, supporting young Floridians birth through postsecondary.
- ❑ The Governor and Commissioner's analysis and recommendations consider the total impacts of all four education-related CARES Act funding sources combined, albeit the majority of those funds are not directed by FDOE and in some cases are distributed directly to educational institutions.

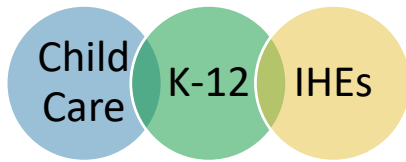


The Four Education Related Categories of CARES Act Funding

The Governor's and Commissioner's recommendations herein pertain to three flexible funding streams:

- Governor's Fund
- FDOE's portion (10%) of the K-12 Fund
- Child Care Fund





Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund (Governor's Fund)

\$173,585,880

- The Governor applied and U.S. DOE awarded the grant on 5/28/20.
- The purpose of this fund is to provide emergency support to local educational agencies (LEAs), institutions of higher education (IHEs), and other education-related entities most impacted by the coronavirus or that the Governor deems essential for carrying out emergency educational services to students.
- The Governor must return funds not awarded within one year of receiving.
- Under the CARES Act, the FDOE is required to recommend to the Governor which LEAs have been most significantly impacted by the coronavirus.

K-12

Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (K-12 Fund)

\$770,247,851

- FDOE must submit the application for these funds.
- The Act allows the FDOE to reserve up to 10% for state-level activities and costs of administration.
- The remainder, at least 90%, is guaranteed to LEAs (including Florida Virtual School, the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind and the state's lab schools) in the proportion to which they received Title I, Part A funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).
- State must return funds not awarded within one year of receiving.
- LEAs are permitted to use the funds for a wide range of 12 specified activities.

LEA's 90% of the K-12 Fund

Per the CARES Act, at least 90% (\$693,223,066) of the K-12 Fund is guaranteed to LEAs in the proportion to which they received Title I, Part A funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

- ❑ A local educational agency that receives funds under this Act may use the funds for any of 12 purposes:
 1. Any activity authorized by the ESEA of 1965, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 or Subtitle VII-B of The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.
 2. Coordination of preparedness and response efforts of local educational agencies with state, local, tribal, and territorial public health departments and other relevant agencies, to improve coordinated responses among such entities to prevent, prepare for and respond to coronavirus.
 3. Providing principals and others school leaders with the resources necessary to address the needs of their individual schools.
 4. Activities to address the unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness and foster care youth, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.

LEA's 90% of the K-12 Fund *Continued...*

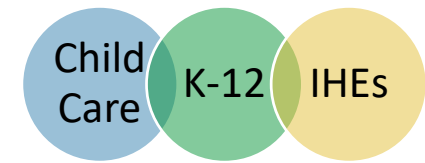
LEAs must follow all applicable state laws regarding distribution of funds for public charter schools for those funds distributed through the Governor's Fund and the K-12 Fund.

- ❑ A local educational agency that receives funds under this Act may use the funds for any of 12 purposes:
 5. Developing and implementing procedures and systems to improve the preparedness and response efforts of local educational agencies.
 6. Training and professional development for staff of the local educational agency on sanitation and minimizing the spread of infectious diseases.
 7. Purchasing supplies to sanitize and clean the facilities of a local educational agency, including buildings operated by such agency.
 8. Planning for and coordinating during long-term closures, including how to provide meals to eligible students, how to provide technology for online learning to all students, how to provide guidance for carrying out requirements under IDEA and how to ensure other educational services can continue to be provided consistent with all federal, state, and local requirements.

LEA's 90% of the K-12 Fund *Continued...*

The Education Stabilization Fund requires that **LEAs receiving either Governor's Fund or K-12 Fund provide equitable services to private schools, after consultation**, in the same manner as provided for Title I, Part A.

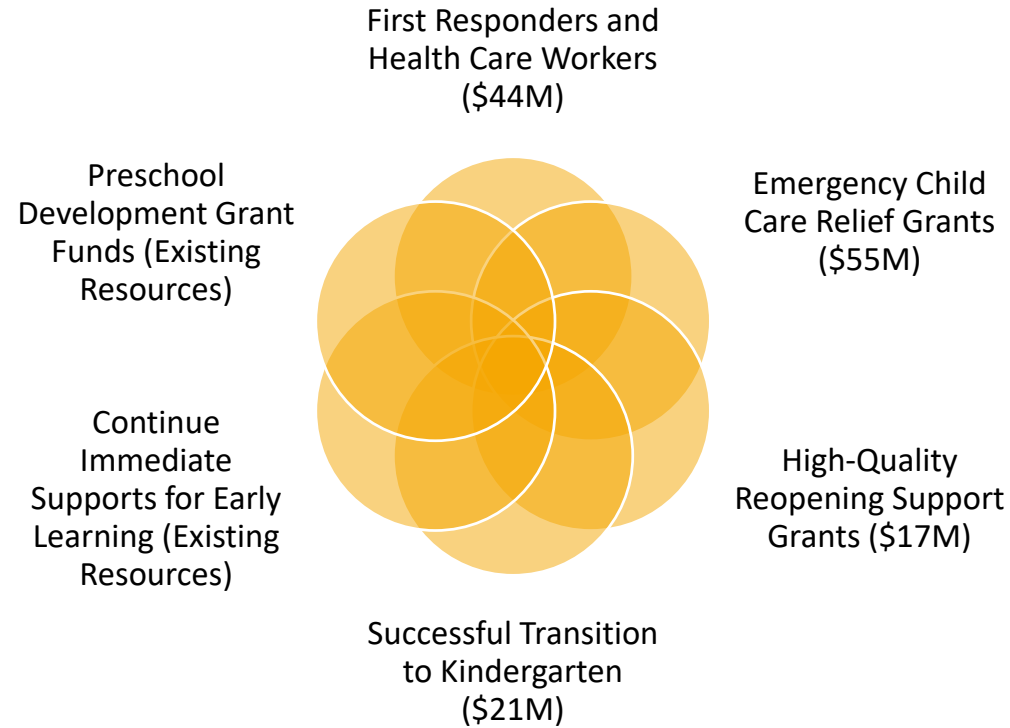
- ❑ A local educational agency that receives funds under this Act may use the funds for any of 12 purposes:
 9. Purchasing educational technology (including hardware, software and connectivity) for students who are served by the local educational agency that aids in regular and substantive educational interaction between students and their classroom instructors, including low-income students and students with disabilities, which may include assistive technology or adaptive equipment.
 10. [Providing mental health services and supports.](#)
 11. Planning and implementing activities related to summer learning and supplemental after school programs, including providing classroom instruction or online learning during the summer months and addressing the needs of low-income students, students with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness and children in foster care.
 12. Other activities that are necessary to maintain the operation and continuity of services in local educational agencies and continuing to employ existing staff of the local educational agency.



CARES ACT Spending Summary

- FDOE is developing assurances that LEAs, schools, technical colleges and state colleges will meet to support and maximize the impact of these investments.
- FDOE will further utilize existing resources and apply for four federal grants to direct additional resources to achieve these goals.

CLOSING ACHIEVEMENT GAPS AND HEALTHY SCHOOLS	PAGE	GOVERNOR'S FUND	FDOE'S 10% OF K-12 FUND	CHILD CARE FUND
First Responders and Health Care Workers	95			\$ 44,000,000
Emergency Child Care Relief Grants	96			\$ 55,047,450
High-Quality Reopening Support Grants	97			\$ 16,905,385
Successful Transition to Kindergarten	98			\$ 20,900,825
PreK-3 Progress Monitoring and Data Informed Supports	102		\$ 20,000,000	
Upskill Highly Effective Reading Coaches	103		\$ 5,000,000	
Capacity Building for Reading	104		\$ 5,000,000	
Ensuring High Quality Regional Reading Supports	105		\$ 5,000,000	
Ensuring the B.E.S.T. Curriculum for Reading and Civics	106	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 20,000,000	
Summer Recovery	107	\$ 64,000,000		
Additional Strategies to Support Summer Learning	108	\$ 1,000,000		
Rapid Credentials	111	\$ 35,000,000		
Pathway to Job Market Dashboard	112	\$ 2,500,000		
CTE Equipment	113	\$ 10,900,000		
Free SAT/ACT	114		\$ 8,000,000	
Civic Literacy	115	\$ 1,000,000		
Supplemental Health and Safety Protective Measures	120	Reimbursement		
Telehealth	121	\$ 2,000,000		
Instructional Continuity Plans	122		\$ 8,000,000	
Virtual Safety Net	123		\$ 5,000,000	
Teacher Training on Virtual Learning Management Systems	124		\$ 250,000	
TOTAL		\$ 120,400,000	\$ 76,250,000	\$ 136,853,660
ORIGINAL ALLOCATION		\$ 173,585,880	\$ 77,024,785	\$ 223,605,188
TO SAFETY NET RESERVE FUNDS		\$ 53,185,880	\$ 774,785	\$ 86,751,528
SAFETY NET RESERVE FUNDS	PAGE	GOVERNOR'S FUND	FDOE'S 10% OF K-12 FUND	CHILD CARE FUND
Ensure Scholarships for Low-Income Students	128	\$ 30,000,000		
Private School Stabilization Grant Funds	129	\$ 15,000,000		
TOTAL		\$ 45,000,000	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL SAFETY NET RESERVES		\$ 53,185,880	\$ 774,785	\$ 86,751,528
RESERVE BALANCE		\$ 8,185,880	\$ 774,785	\$ 86,751,528



Part 3: CARES – Progress to Early Learning

High-Quality Reopening Support Grants

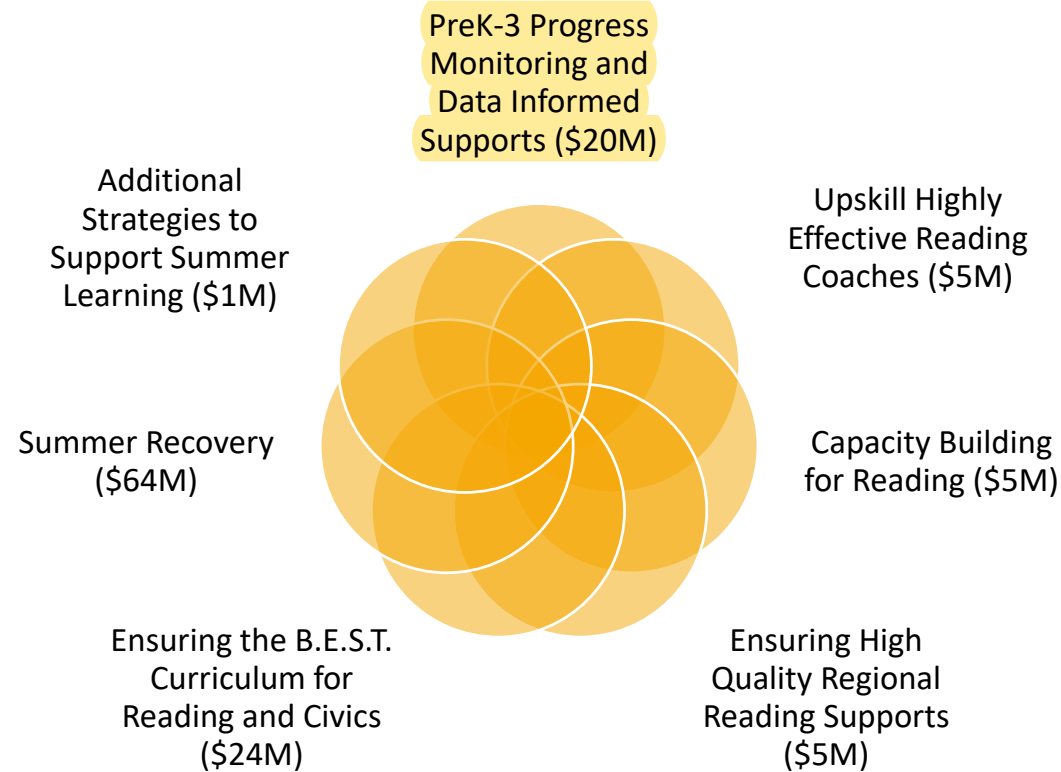
\$17 Million (from Child Care Fund)

- Support closed high-quality VPK/SR (i.e., CLASS score required for contracting) to reopen with funding for infrastructure, staff payments/bonuses for retention, cleaning supplies/services and other costs to ensure healthy and safe environments.
- Support closed high-quality non-VPK/SR providers (i.e., Gold Seal status) to reopen with funding for infrastructure, staff payments/bonuses for retention, cleaning supplies/services and other costs to ensure healthy and safe environments.
- Support is for high quality providers that were closed on April 30, 2020.

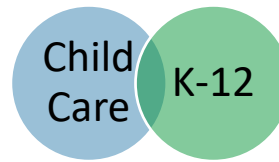
Successful Transition to Kindergarten

\$21 Million (from Child Care Fund)

- ❑ \$18 million: Implement summer programs for rising kindergarten students identified with limited language and emergent literacy skills as determined by the VPK assessments and teacher recommendations.
 - ❑ Linked to “Summer Recovery” on page 107.
- ❑ \$2.9 million: Pilot a VPK-K progress monitoring system statewide.
 - ❑ Linked to “PreK-3 Progress Monitoring and Data Informed Supports” on page 102.



Part 3: CARES – Progress to 90% Reading Proficiency



PreK-3 Progress Monitoring and Data Informed Supports **\$20 Million** (from FDOE's 10% of K-12 Fund)

- ❑ Up to \$10 million:
 - ❑ Invest in building the capacity of districts and schools to use screening and progress monitoring data to drive informed teaching practices and curriculum decisions. Invest in a screening and progress monitoring assessment with LEAs.
 - ❑ Data share to help leverage student data and deployment of professional development to drive improvements.
 - ❑ FDOE will work with districts to deploy professional development, intervention and identification/implementation of the best curriculum (high quality curriculum and the best instruction to drive accelerated growth).
- ❑ Up to \$4 million: FDOE will source a modernized cloud based statewide data collection and student information system with the ability to serve all school districts and public charter schools, Pre-K through 12th grade, for the purposes of data collection, longitudinal analysis and progress monitoring and also all state and federal funding accountability and reporting requirements. Such a system would allow districts and schools to use the state's student information system as their own, at their discretion.
- ❑ At least \$6 million: For data modernization, FDOE would provide LEAs with a data science budget, with the agreement that county school districts would use these funds for the benefit of all schools in the district – traditional public, public charter and private schools. These funds would allow each district to dedicate a project manager to ensure successful implementation.

Rapid Credentials

\$35 Million (from Governor's Fund)

- ❑ In partnership with the state's 28 Florida College System (FCS) institutions and the state's 48 technical colleges, FDOE is proposing to increase capacity around short-term, in-demand 1) *technical certificate programs* (i.e., short, *credit* options offered by all our FCS institutions); 2) market-driven and in-demand *clock hour career certificate programs* (i.e., short, vocational training programs offered by our technical colleges); and 3) engaging, transformative, in-demand *industry certification* preparation courses (i.e., courses that culminate in an industry-recognized certification that can articulate into college credit).
- ❑ FDOE has identified over 100 of these programs statewide and has cross-walked them to CareerSource Florida's in-demand sector strategies.
- ❑ All three (i.e., technical certificates, clock hour career certificates and industry certifications) of these workforce education-related options are accessible, affordable and articulate into "higher-level" credentials (i.e., AS degrees or BAS degrees) that will make Florida a national exemplar in COVID-19 economic stabilization and recovery efforts.
- ❑ Looking *forward*, FDOE intends to bring all of its resources to bear in helping faculty, administrators and staff provide the necessary resources to reimagine its postsecondary CTE offerings as a mechanism for economic and social mobility.
- ❑ This proposal marries perfectly with the following Dashboard concept, the state's new Perkins V Plan and partnership with CareerSource Florida and regional workforce boards and the state's WIOA funding support of online CTE instruction.

Pathway to Job Market Dashboard

\$2.5 Million (from Governor's Fund)

- ❑ Further meets the goals of [Executive Order 19-31](#) by positioning Florida to become #1 in workforce education by 2030, developing a technology platform to provide accurate quantitative data on all of Florida's CTE courses/programs.
- ❑ For economic recovery, postsecondary technical/vocational certifications are an increasingly viable route to well-paying middle-skill jobs and careers in critical needs areas. In Florida, these areas include healthcare technicians, first responders, trades, manufacturing, supply chain and logistics, and general business administration.
- ❑ Currently, CTE data is captured and collected locally and available to FDOE upon request. FDOE would source a technology platform that would provide quantitative data on all of its CTE courses and programs at the state and regional level. The tool would provide internal and external CTE stakeholders a "cockpit view" of the performance (e.g., established performance quality indicators and extent of the program's market alignment) of Florida's credentials of value.
- ❑ The platform would integrate all existing labor market information resources and data, analyzing and aggregating them in a way that paints the most comprehensive and accurate picture possible of the labor market. The platform would be housed within and maintained by FDOE, and integrate data from all secondary CTE programs and all CTE programs within the state's postsecondary system (i.e., all Florida College System institutions and state technical colleges).
- ❑ In the end, the dashboard would permit all of the state's workforce and economic development agencies to access and capture key workforce intelligence and analytics.

CTE Equipment \$10.9 Million (from Governor's Fund)

- Infrastructure and equipment grants for K-12 schools or technical colleges that could support in-demand CTE programs of study for K-12 students.
- Funding awards based on base allocation of \$55K per district and then \$10K more per K-12 school or technical college who serves K-12 district CTE students with select CTE programs.
- This dollar amount is needed to make a meaningful impact for LEAs and their corresponding technical colleges.
- CTE programs are costly to run and districts often require additional resources to purchase industry-standard technology and equipment.

Free SAT/ACT \$8 Million (from FDOE's 10% of K-12 Fund)

- Florida will provide up to \$8 million for vouchers to allow public school students to take the SAT or ACT for free during the 2020-2021 academic year.
- To provide all students, especially traditionally underserved populations, with an opportunity to take the SAT or ACT free of charge which may qualify them for admissions to a postsecondary institution and qualify them to earn a Bright Futures scholarship.
- Estimated 200,000 students at \$40 per test.

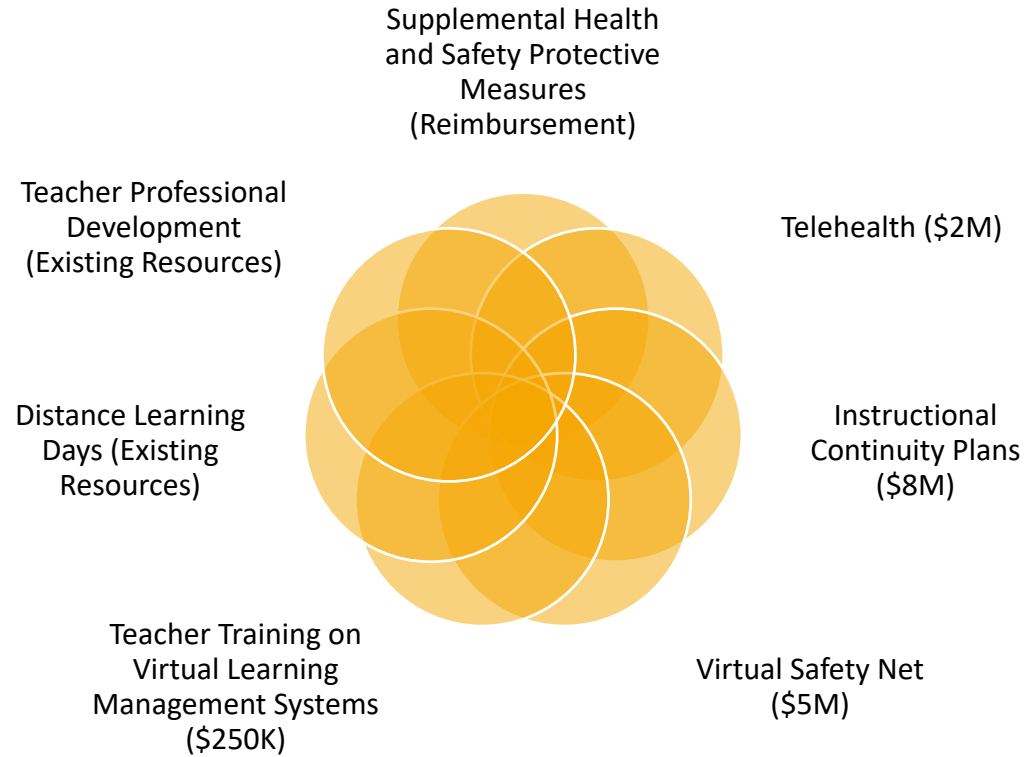
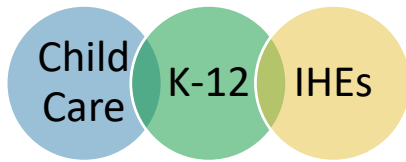
K-12

Civic Literacy

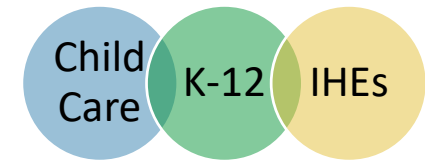
\$1 Million (from Governor's Fund)

"Knowledge is in every country the surest basis of public happiness. To the security of a free Constitution it contributes in various ways: by convincing those, who are entrusted with the public administration, that every valuable end of government is best answered by the enlightened confidence of the people and by teaching the people themselves to know and to value their own rights."
– George Washington

- ❑ Matching grants for LEAs that voluntarily administer the Florida Civics HS exam, helping with expenses related to the administration of the exam.
- ❑ As of March 2020, 30 districts and 235 schools planned to implement the test, although only Escambia and Hardee school districts were able to do so before the interruptions of COVID-19.
- ❑ These funds will help incentivize all those districts that were interested by supporting their 2020-2021 implementation of the test, which is both informative to students about their readiness to be great advocates for themselves and also allows students to opt out of a similar test in Florida's postsecondary institutions.
- ❑ Early findings from the University of North Florida showed that when students who took the test and did not pass were presented with the option of re-taking it, they opted instead to enroll in a civics course.



Part 3: CARES – Healthy and Safe Learning Environments



Supplemental Health and Safety Protective Measures

87.5% Reimbursement (from FEMA and FDEM reimbursement)

- ❑ Educational programs from child care to postsecondary are already incurring costs to undertake the “protective measures” necessary to create and sustain healthier learning environments for students, teachers and staff.
- ❑ Schools should maintain an adequate supply of necessary supplies and materials to undertake those emergency protective measures, including cloth face coverings, supplies for cleaning and disinfecting, hand sanitizer, bleach wipes and spray and other personal protective equipment (PPE).
- ❑ The Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) will coordinate with FDOE and Florida’s public schools to secure up to 87.5% reimbursement for both prior and forward-looking costs of protective measures.
- ❑ Additionally, LEAs, public charter schools and postsecondary institutions can also use their CARES Act funds to purchase testing kits for on-site administration, where appropriate and with guidance from county health departments.
 - ❑ **If conducting testing for COVID-19 on-site, districts and schools must implement procedures that comply with health care and [privacy laws](#) and, when applicable, obtain the explicit approval of parents.**

Telehealth

\$2 Million (from Governor's Fund)

- ❑ FDOE would provide mini-grants to all K-12 school districts, school district consortia, charter networks and private school networks to help train those districts and schools in best practices to deploy telehealth throughout Florida.
- ❑ FDOE would collaborate with the Florida Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) to use the \$2 million to support their existing efforts to deploy additional [therapeutic/clinical tele-mental health services](#) to ensure barriers to accessing these services when needed are mitigated.
- ❑ School districts and schools need these supports to ensure that dollars flow successfully to well-designed, research-informed practices to support tele-counseling and tele-social work services.
- ❑ Training will also be needed for all school counselors, social workers and school psychologists, supporting these professionals and educators who are providing on-line services in the identification of in-home crises that students experience while receiving services through virtual education.

Instructional Continuity Plans

\$8 Million (from FDOE's 10% of K-12 Fund)

- ❑ FDOE works hand in hand with parents, teachers, educators, and community members to improve Florida's education system for students of all backgrounds and abilities. When standard operating procedures are disrupted due to emergency situations, each district may be asked to implement their Instructional Continuity Plan (ICP), their plan for implementing distance learning in the event of unanticipated campus closures for an extended period of time. The Instructional Continuity Plan can be deployed for periods of time ranging from a day or week, to a month, a semester or even longer if necessary. Each district's ICP communicates and establishes local-level policies and procedures for providing continued instructional and learning support services to their educational community.
- ❑ FDOE would provide LEAs with an \$8 million budget, with the agreement that school districts would also utilize these funds to support the county's public charter schools and private schools in the development of their ICPs.
- ❑ FDOE would work with school districts to design optimal ways to make use of these funds and ultimately upskill district and school staff to be ready for future use of their ICPs.

Virtual Safety Net

\$5 Million (from FDOE's 10% of K-12 Fund)

- ❑ Florida Virtual School (FLVS) has already invested nearly \$4 million out of existing resources to offer 100 free courses to all schools in Florida, enhanced their existing learning management system and provided Florida with a virtual safety net that could serve 2.7 million students.
- ❑ This \$5 million investment would recoup those funds and also invest further by increasing capacity to 4 million total students.
- ❑ With 3.3 million students enrolled in either a public or private school, along with another 100,000 learning at home, the capacity to serve 4 million students would more than prepare Florida for future crisis response.
- ❑ Additionally, the restoration of these funds is necessary, as FLVS needs funding restored to its reserves, long-term, in case concurrent usage was unexpectedly high during a crisis. Concurrent usage in effect refers to the number of students using FLVS' learning management system at the exact same moment.
- ❑ For the duration of the COVID-19 disruptions to the education system, FLVS will extend its relief service to provide all Florida students access to FLVS' digital course content (content services), provided that the districts/schools have a learning management system in place.

Teacher Training on Virtual Learning Management Systems

\$250K (from FDOE's 10% of K-12 Fund)

- \$250K: Florida Virtual School (FLVS) will continue to provide its 6-hour Virtual Teacher Training (VTT) course for every public school teacher in Florida until all public school teachers are trained.
 - The VTT course is an asynchronous course that showcases FLVS platforms, processes and online teaching best practices to accommodate Florida district teachers who are asked to teach in an online environment.
 - Florida public school teachers who take this 6-hour course will be prepared to instruct through any school district's FLVS franchise.
 - FLVS can provide this training for up to 10,000 teachers per week.
- Within existing resources: FDOE will further support districts and schools' teacher professional development on the following:
 - Teaching through their district's learning management system.
 - Distance learning for specialized forms of instruction, like students with special needs.
 - Delivering high quality instruction in a digital learning environment.
 - Districts and schools will also need guidance on integrating distance learning professional development into their current practices by which teachers earn their required 120 hours of professional learning every 5 years.
 - Districts and schools will further need guidance on conducting a needs assessment.
 - FDOE will help districts and schools identify high quality professional learning facilitators in the digital teaching.

Funding Equity

- ❑ LEAs must follow all applicable state laws regarding distribution of funds for public charter schools for those funds distributed through the Governor's Fund and the K-12 Fund.
- ❑ The Education Stabilization Fund requires that LEAs receiving either the Governor's Fund or K-12 Fund provide equitable services to private schools, after consultation, in the same manner as provided for Title I, Part A.
 - ❑ Under Title I, Part A, the LEAs are not allowed to reimburse private schools for expenditures (such as salaries), but must provide services on behalf of the private schools.
 - ❑ Requires that the control of funds and title to property, materials and equipment purchased remains with the LEA.

Assurances

- ❑ The Education Stabilization Fund requires that LEAs, states, IHEs or other entities that receive funds shall, to the greatest extent practicable, continue to pay its employees and contractors during the period of any disruption due to coronavirus.
- ❑ A state's application for funds to carry out the Education Stabilization Fund includes assurances that the state will maintain support for elementary and secondary education and higher education, including state funding for IHEs and need-based financial aid, but does not include capital projects or research and development in fiscal years 2020 and 2021, based on the average of the prior three years preceding the Act.
 - ❑ However, the U.S. Secretary of Education may waive the maintenance of effort requirement for states that have experienced a precipitous decline in financial resources.
- ❑ FDOE will provide more specific assurances for receipt of Governor's Fund and DOE's portion of the K-12 Fund dollars proposed herein.

Learn More about FDOE's Response and Recovery Efforts

- ❑ www.fldoe.org/em-response
 - ❑ Free Resources for Families and Teachers: www.fldoe.org/em-response/resources-families
 - ❑ Best Practices for Distance Learning: www.fldoe.org/em-response/distance-learning
 - ❑ Recursos en español: www.fldoe.org/em-response/spanish