

On March 27, 2020, President Trump, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, signed the CARES Act, which is a \$2 trillion package of assistance measures. The Act provided the Arkansas's Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) the opportunity to apply for waivers and request funding for both public school districts and nonpublic schools in Arkansas. Arkansas requested and was approved for waivers including one which allows the state to waive the requirement for assessment, accountability and reporting in 2020. You may see more about this and other waivers on the Division's Website at:

<http://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/divisions/public-school-accountability/federal-programs/cares-act>

Referred to as the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund, DESE has established four focus areas for funding districts from the CARES Act. With a particular focus on serving ALL students adversely affected by COVID-19, a district may select all that apply to their needs. The four areas are:

1. Food Security
2. Direct Student Support/Continuous Learning Opportunities
3. Technology
4. Systemic Procedures

To learn more about the CARES Act and what each of these include, including timelines for applying, use the link above.

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