

# STATE OF COLORADO

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LEGISLATIVE SERVICES BUILDING  
200 EAST 14TH AVENUE, 3RD FLOOR  
DENVER, CO 80203  
TELEPHONE 303-866-2061

<http://leg.colorado.gov/agencies/joint-budget-committee>

DRAFT

May 8, 2020

Ms. Lauren Larson  
Executive Director  
Governor's Office of State Planning and Budgeting  
State Capitol, Room 111  
Denver, Colorado 80203

Dear Ms. Larson:

On May 7, 2020, the Joint Budget Committee discussed budget balancing for the Department of Higher Education. As part of that discussion, we noted that Committee decisions regarding the allocation of budget reductions for the state higher education governing boards should take into account the planned allocation of money from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund created in Section 18002 of H.R.748, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

We understand that the Governor's Office will shortly receive \$44,004,996 for the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund. As you are aware, these funds may be used for:

- Emergency support grants to local education agencies that the "State educational agency deems have been most significantly affected by coronavirus to support the ability of such institutions to continue to provide educational services and support the ongoing functionality of the local educational agency";
- Emergency support grants to higher education institutions that the "Governor determines have been most significantly impacted by coronavirus to support the ability of such institutions to continue to provide educational services and support the ongoing functionality of the institution"; and
- Support to any other institution of higher education, local education agency, or education related entity within the State that the Governor deems essential for carrying out emergency educational services to students for various activities, including, among others, authorized services for students with disabilities, career and technical education programs, services for homeless students, child care and early childhood education, social and emotional support, and the protection of education-related jobs.

Based on input from the state higher education governing boards, the Joint Budget Committee staff has recommended that any reductions in funding for these governing boards be applied equally *except* that our staff believes that some of the smallest higher education institutions should not be cut as deeply. Additional assistance for those entities facing the most significant challenges could be addressed through the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund. We therefore wish to coordinate with your office in this process.

We would appreciate a list of your planned awards by May 12. If this is not feasible, please let us know when you plan to make relevant decisions and provide additional information on how you expect to approach the allocation of these funds, including how you expect to divide the funding between K-12 and higher education recipients and the key factors you expect to consider when awarding the money, so that we can take that into account. Alternatively, if you would like recommendations on the allocation of these funds from the JBC, please let us know.

Thank you for your prompt assistance.

Sincerely,

Daneyá Esgar  
Chair