



STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: July 22, 2020  
To: Chief School Administrators, Charter School and Renaissance School Project Leads  
Route To: ESEA Directors, Directors of Special Education, School Business Administrators  
From: Kevin Dehmer, Interim Commissioner of Education  
Deadline: August 4, 2020

### **CARES Act Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund Digital Divide Grant Application**

The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) recognizes that it is critical for all New Jersey students to have reliable internet connectivity and access to digital devices. To support this effort, the NJDOE has officially released a Digital Divide Grant application.

The preliminary application is available now through the NJDOE's [Electronic Web Enabled Grant System \(EWEG\)](#) webpage. In this phase of the application, the NJDOE provides Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with a breakdown of their estimated need for bridging the digital divide.

LEAs will be required to provide a description of how they will use the grant funds to bridge the digital divide and a breakdown of the award amount by grade, type of device, operating system to be used, and the number of devices. LEAs will also provide a description of how all available resources (including grant and other funding sources) will be utilized to bridge the digital divide. The preliminary application will be open until **August 4, 2020**.

After the preliminary application and as matches between committed philanthropic partners and districts are made, as a result of the July 16, 2020 New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) Request for Information ([RFI](#)), districts will incorporate information on committed philanthropic contributions into the final grant application. With completion of these updates, the NJDOE will make final award determinations for the Digital Divide Grant, incorporating the adjustments based on philanthropic contributions. The difference between the estimated need and the philanthropic contributions will equal the final grant allocation to each LEA.

As part of the application submission, LEAs will be asked to submit a comprehensive plan for closing the digital divide. Such plans will include the following:

- Budgeted use of other Fiscal Year 21 Federal Funds;
- Detailed narrative of the anticipated use of philanthropic, in-kind and/or monetary donations;
- Description of the process the district has used, or will use, to identify priority students or households in addressing the digital divide; and
- Detailed budget for the expenditure of the philanthropic and grant funds for closing the digital divide based on the grade level information provided in the preliminary application.

For questions or additional information regarding the Digital Divide Grant application process, contact the NJDOE's Office of Grants Management at [eweghelp@doe.nj.gov](mailto:eweghelp@doe.nj.gov) or (609) 376-9089.

c: Members, State Board of Education      Garden State Coalition of Schools  
NJDOE Staff      NJ LEE Group  
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network