

# Secretary DeVos Delivers Nearly \$1.4 Billion in Additional CARES Act Relief Funds to HBCUs, Minority Serving Institutions, and Colleges and Universities Serving Low-Income Students

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WASHINGTON — U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced today that nearly \$1.4 billion in additional funding will be directed to Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), including Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs), as well as institutions serving low-income students to help ensure learning continues during the coronavirus national emergency. This funding is part of the Higher Education Emergency Relief (HEER) Fund authorized by *the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act*, signed into law by President Donald J. Trump less than five weeks ago.

"This Administration is committed to the success of HBCUs, Minority Serving Institutions, and the students they serve. Each institution is unique and is an important part of this country's educational fabric," said Secretary DeVos. "By providing additional support to these important institutions, we can help ensure they emerge from this crisis stronger than before. I encourage these institutions, like all others, to use these funds to provide emergency grants to students during this challenging time, and to expand remote learning programs and build IT capacity. These are challenging times, but if we take this opportunity to transform higher education to meet the demands of the 21st century, our nation's students and higher education as a whole will be better for it."

Institutions may use this funding to cover the cost of technology associated with a transition to distance education, grants to cover the costs of attendance for eligible students, and faculty and staff trainings. Additionally, funds may be used to cover operational costs, such as lost revenue, reimbursements for prior expenses, and payroll.

These additional funding allocations to MSIs, including HBCUs and TCCUs, and institutions eligible for the Strengthening Institutions Program (SIP) represent 7.5 percent of overall HEER funds, or around \$1 billion. This funding is provided on top of the primary HEER Fund allocation announced earlier in April. HBCUs, for example, will collectively receive an additional \$577 million through the awards announced today. That amount is on top of the \$353 million amount that the Department allocated to HBCUs through the HEER Fund earlier in the month. TCCUs will receive over \$50 million in this round of HEER funding, bringing the total allocation to TCCUs under the fund to \$65 million.

The HEER Fund also sets aside 2.5 percent of the HEER Fund (\$349 million) to address the greatest unmet needs related to the coronavirus, giving priority to schools that have not been allocated at least \$500,000 from the fund. The Department is deploying these funds to ensure that every eligible public and private nonprofit institution will receive at least \$500,000 in CARES Act relief funding.

In order to access these funds, eligible institutions must sign a Certification and Agreement certifying that they will use their allocations in accordance with the CARES Act and all other applicable federal law. Schools have until Aug. 1, 2020, to apply for the funds. The Certification and Agreement, a cover letter, and the HEER Fund allocation tables by institution are available on the Office of Postsecondary Education's CARES Act [website \(https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/caresact.html\)](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/caresact.html).

The Department has taken quick action to support higher education students from the start of the coronavirus outbreak. Colleges and universities were given immediate regulatory flexibility so students' educations could continue online. Under the leadership of President Trump, the Department also provided student loan relief to tens of millions of borrowers by setting all federally held student loan interest rates to zero percent and allowing borrowers to defer payments for 60 days without interest. The CARES Act extends those benefits to six months. The Department also stopped all federal wage garnishments and collections actions for borrowers with federally held loans in default. Additionally, the Department made \$6.2 billion available for emergency cash grants for higher education students, followed by \$6.2 billion allocated to higher education institutions to ensure learning continues. The Department also disbursed \$7 million to Gallaudet University and \$13 million to Howard University in accordance with the CARES Act, which allocated this funding to help these unique institutions address the challenges associated with the coronavirus.

The Department continues to update [www.ed.gov/coronavirus \(https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus/\)](https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus/) with information on COVID-19 for students, parents, educators and local leaders.

For more information about COVID-19, please visit the following websites:

[coronavirus.gov \(https://coronavirus.gov/\)](https://coronavirus.gov/), [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html) (<https://cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>), and [usa.gov/coronavirus \(https://usa.gov/coronavirus\)](https://usa.gov/coronavirus/).

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*Our mission* is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

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