

# Federal Dollars and School Recovery: A Way Forward

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With the passage of the American Rescue Plan, the total federal education funds expected for COVID relief in Texas grew to over \$19 billion. Educators, parents, and students alike are clear that those funds are sorely needed to help our schools and families recover from the pandemic. While there is significant academic, social/emotional, and economic ground to be made up, our school leaders have a vision for moving forward.

Federal funds are needed in **five areas:**

1. **More instructional staff:** Small-group and differentiated learning will be key to accelerating learning, and this requires additional staff. High-quality professional development is needed to equip teachers for the challenge.
2. **More time:** Extending the school year and/or extending school hours in the coming academic years will be a necessary part of the picture.
3. **More wrap-around services:** Counselors and social workers will be critically important to help students cope with trauma they may have experienced during the pandemic (loss of a loved one, family loss of income, eviction, etc.).
4. **More technology resources:** While the explosion in the number of students with devices holds exciting possibilities for learning, additional devices must be supported with additional software and IT staff. Local districts will need the flexibility, discretion, and support to purchase instructional materials that accelerate learning.
5. **Necessary facility improvements:** There are smart investments schools can make to address air quality, shared surfaces, and other safety practices that can help prevent the spread not only of future viruses, but also of regularly recurring coughs, colds, and flu strains that lead to lost time in the classroom.

Texas is a massive state with a diverse range of communities and student populations. As we use federal education funds to prevent the health crisis from becoming a generational education crisis, school districts *must* be given the flexibility to target the specific needs of their families and bolster their local economies.

#FundTxEdRecovery  
#StrongRecovery