Agency Priority Goal | Action Plan | FY 23 – Q2

Address the impact of COVID-19 on students, educators, and faculty

Goal Leader:

Joaquin Tamayo, Senior Advisor, Office of the Deputy Secretary

Goal Overview

Goal Statement

The Department will be a leader and partner in addressing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in educational areas. By September 30, 2023, the Department will respond to the impact of COVID-19 and the need to continuously provide for high-quality educational environments and capabilities by supporting state educational agencies (SEAs), local educational agencies (LEAs) and institutions of higher education (IHEs) to:

- Continue to support schools in maintaining safe, fully in-person instructions for students.
- Utilize COVID relief funds on appropriate, effective and evidence-based activities to reengage students, address lost instructional time, and improve educational opportunities by offering 300+ Department-led technical assistance engagements.

Problem to Be Solved

States, districts, schools, and colleges across the country have shifted their focus regarding the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic from re-opening to recovery. The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) [Protect Public Data Hub Learning Modalities Map](#) indicated that 99.4 percent of school districts in the United States reported an option for in-person learning during week of February 20 through February 27, 2022. In addition to ongoing efforts to ensure a safe physical learning environment, educators across the country are addressing needs related to the impact of lost instructional time; student and staff social, emotional, and mental well-being; and ongoing teacher and administrator shortages. The U.S. Department of Education's (Department's) Institute of Education Sciences' (IES') National Center for Education Statistics found in its January 2022 [School Pulse Panel](#) survey results, that nearly all public schools reported requiring students to quarantine as a result of COVID-19. Additionally, 44 percent of public schools reported full- or part-time teacher vacancies, and school leaders reported concerns including lack of substitute teachers, student learning loss, and parental frustration over changing safety guidelines. The Department has and continues to play a critical role in supporting full recovery from the pandemic in the education community, from prekindergarten through higher education, through both distribution of unprecedented funding and on-going technical assistance.

What Success Looks Like

Indicators of success will include: (1) educational institutions continuing to be an option for in-person learning; (2) educators and other school staff being recruited, inducted, professionally developed, and retained in sufficient numbers to meet students' needs; (3) student and staff needs related to social, emotional, and mental well-being being addressed, (4) robust, evidence-based strategies and approaches to addressing learning loss will be implemented, evaluated, and continuously improved, and (5) decrease in indicators such as chronic absenteeism to demonstrate student re-engagement with schooling (6) institutions of higher education report on their annual report that Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds enabled them to keep students enrolled who were at risk of dropping out due to pandemic-related factors.

States, districts, schools, colleges, and universities have unprecedented relief funds to support these key indicators. The Department will monitor spending of relief funds in each of these key areas for both accountability and oversight and to identify ongoing opportunities where technical assistance and engagements can benefit applicants and the impact of the programs.

Goal target(s)[1]

Achievement statement		Key indicator(s)		Quantify progress			Frequency
By...	**We will...**	**Name of indicator[2]**		**Target value**	**Starting value**	**Current value[3]**	**Update cycle**
09/30/23	The Department will respond to the impact of COVID-19 and the need to continuously provide for high-quality educational environments and capabilities by supporting SEAs, LEAs and IHEs to: • Continue to support schools in maintaining safe, fully in-person instructions for students. • Utilize COVID relief funds on appropriate, effective and evidence-based activities to reengage students, address lost instructional time, and improve educational opportunities by offering 300+ Department-led technical assistance engagements.	1.	Amount spent within each ESSER program on meeting students' academic, social, emotional, and other needs.	TBD	TBD	$6,135,079,987.56	Annually
		2.	Percentage of institutions of higher education that report on their annual report that Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds enabled them to keep students enrolled who were at risk of dropping out due to pandemic-related factors.	75%	89.8%	89.8%	Annually
		3.	Percentage of K-12 public schools offering full-time in-person instruction.[4]	100%	--	99.9%	Quarterly

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[1] *Number of states reporting the use of Department funds for full-service community schools*, was removed as a key indicator for APG 1, due to data unavailability.
[2] Due to a variety of factors that make accurate data unavailable to calculate, key indicator 1 was replaced with *Amount spent within each ESSER program on meeting students' academic, social, emotional, and other needs.* The current value is the total of amount spent in each ESSER program: ESSER I $2,881,927,315.72, ESSER II $2,834,799,390.28, and ARP ESSER $418,353,281.56.
[3] Key Indicator 2: The current value represents the latest data available (for FY2021) which has just been reported in the grantee annual performance reports in Q3 of FY2022. FY2022 value will be available in FY2023 Q4, based on Annual Performance Reports received for prior year.
[4] Effective February 2, 2023, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, streamlined the sharing of COVID-19 data into one, easy-to-use platform. The HHS Protect Public Data Hub website is no longer being updated with COVID-19-related data. The School Learning Modalities page data are no longer collected; historical information is available at School Learning Modalities | HealthData.gov.

Goal Team

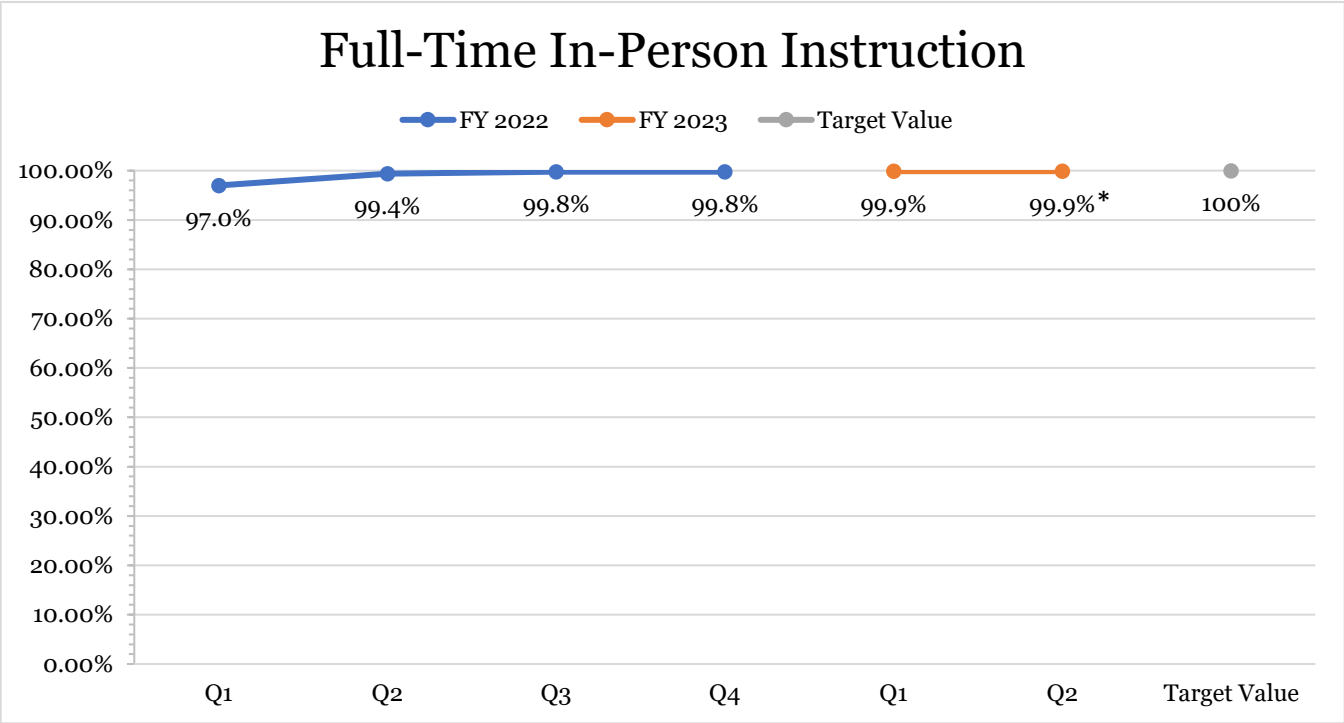| Goal Leader *Joaquin Tamayo* *Senior Advisor, Office of the Deputy Secretary*	
Education Stabilization Fund (ESF) and American Rescue Plan (ARP) Programs *(funded by pandemic recovery funds)* ***James Lane*** Senior Advisor, Office of the Secretary	**Higher Education** *(funded by pandemic recovery funds)* ***Nasser Paydar*** Assistant Secretary, Office of Postsecondary Education

Goal Strategies

The Department will employ a variety of strategies intended to support this agency priority goal, including the following:

- The Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE) will implement ongoing monitoring of relief funds, including review of State relief fund reporting, and provide ongoing support to States in the use of relief funds. A variety of resources related to use of relief funds can be found using the following links: Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund - Office of Elementary and Secondary Education and Deadlines and Announcements - Office of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- The Department's cross-office efforts by OESE, IES, and the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services to support the field will include ongoing development and dissemination of resources via multiple avenues including social media. For example, the Department will continue to lift up examples from the field through the Safer Schools and Campuses Best Practices Clearinghouse, implement Lessons from the Field webinars, publish fact sheets.
- The Department will continue ongoing collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to support the physical safety of schools and campuses.
- Implementation of technical assistance communities of practice to support States and districts.
- The Department will support effective use of funds through the many opportunities for peer sharing and partnering with States, school districts, and other education stakeholders.
- The Department will facilitate institutions' use of CARES Act flexibilities related to the administration of Title IV and Higher Education Act of 1965 programs as well as flexibilities outlined in the Federal Student Aid Programs Federal Register Notice using authority of the Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students Act of 2003 to assist students affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in completing their programs of study.
- The Department will continue to host and participate in engagements and provide technical assistance for institutions that receive funding, in order to ensure that they are using their funds to meet priority needs and for appropriate purposes.
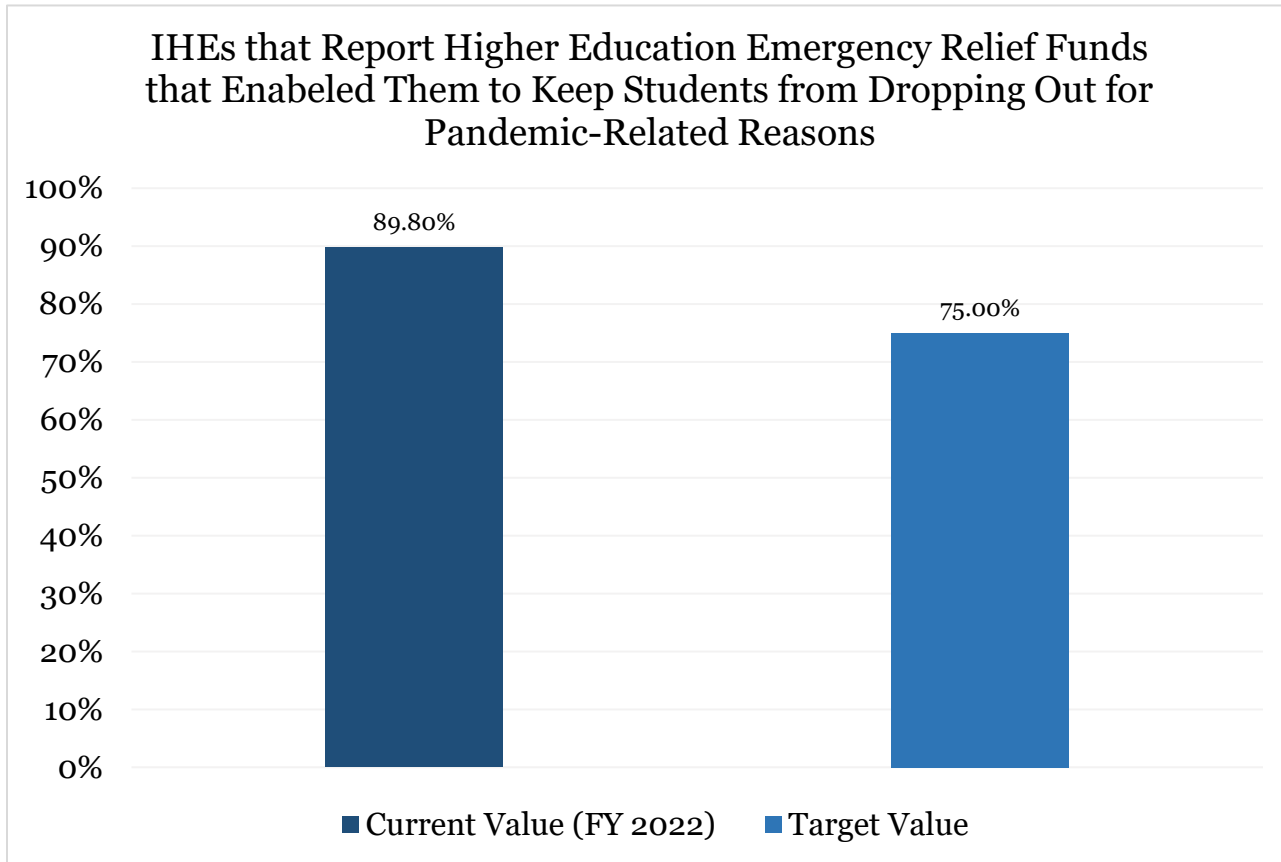
Key indicators

Full-Time In-Person Instruction

—●— FY 2022   —●— FY 2023   —●— Target Value

- 97.0% (Q1)
- 99.4% (Q2)
- 99.8% (Q3)
- 99.8% (Q4)
- 99.9% (Q1)
- 99.9%* (Q2)
- 100% (Target Value)

* Effective February 2, 2023, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, streamlined the sharing of COVID-19 data into one, easy-to-use platform. The HHS Protect Public Data Hub website is no longer being updated with COVID-19-related data. The School Learning Modalities page, data are no longer collected; historical information is available at School Learning Modalities | HealthData.gov.

Percentage of K-12 public schools offering full-time in-person instruction.	Quarterly
Key Indicator Title	**Frequency**

Key indicators

IHEs that Report Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds that Enabeled Them to Keep Students from Dropping Out for Pandemic-Related Reasons

89.80%

75.00%

■ Current Value (FY 2022)   ■ Target Value

Percentage of institutions of higher education that report on their annual report that Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds enabled them to keep students enrolled who were at risk of dropping out due to pandemic-related factors.

Key Indicator Title

Annually

Frequency

Key milestones

	Milestone Summary				
Key Milestone	**Milestone Due Date**	**Milestone Status**	**Change from last quarter**	**Office**	**Comments**
Conference Presentation: Association of Educational Federal Finance Administration (Monitoring and Audit Resolution)	FY 2022, Q1	Complete	N/A	OESE	OESE's Management Support Office and State and Grantee Relations teams conducted joint presentations at the Association of Educational Federal Financial Administrators conference on monitoring and audit resolution requirements, with emphasis on what to expect regarding ESF and ARP compliance and accountability reporting.
Release basic Needs Guidance	FY 2022, Q2	Complete	N/A	OPE	In January 2022, OPE released basic needs guidance.
Conduct Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) Supplemental Support under American Rescue Plan (SSARP) Webinar for grantees and release NIA on SSARP Institutions with the Greatest Need	FY 2022, Q2	Complete	N/A	OPE	In February 2022, OPE conducted HEERF SSARP Webinar for grantees and released the NIA on SSARP Institutions with the Greatest Need.
External Stakeholder Webinar: with the Council of Chief State School Officers on Pandemic Recovery Funds Financial Management Requirements	FY 2022, Q2	Complete	N/A	OESE	Stakeholder webinar with noted advocacy group and association of State education chief officers; coverage of pandemic monitoring and compliance requirements.
Briefing with Congressional Appropriations Committee Staff on ARP 1 Year Deadlines, Monitoring, Reporting and Accountability (both House and Senate staff)	FY 2022, Q2	Complete	N/A	OESE	OS Senior Advisor and senior leaders from OESE met with appropriators to respond to specific questions related to progress and requirements on the approach of the one-year anniversary of the ARP.

External Stakeholder Webinars: ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief and Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools Annual Performance Reporting Requirements Training	FY 2022, Q2	Complete	N/A	OESE	Training and technical assistance opportunity provided to SEA and LEA grantees; coverage of annual performance reporting requirements and ARP Year 1 deadlines.
External Quarterly Grantee Monitoring Reviews	FY 2022, Q2-Q3	Complete	N/A	OESE	52 SEAs participated in a quarterly monitoring call focused on the LEA use of the 20% ARP ESSER set aside to address learning loss. In fiscal year 2023, all SEAs will participate in two quarterly monitoring calls focused on a high-priority issue.
Publication of Full-Service Community Schools Grant Program notice inviting applications (NIA)	FY 2022, Q3-Q4	Complete	N/A	OESE	NIA published in July, and also received an additional $7 million to add to the FY 2022 enacted budget level to bring the full amount of grants to be awarded in December to $75 million.
Release Mental Health Guidance	FY 2022, Q3	Complete	N/A	OPE	In May 2022, OPE released Mental Health Guidance.
Conduct HEERF quarterly reporting webinars	FY 2022, Q3	Complete	N/A	OPE	In June 2022, OPE held HEERF quarterly reporting webinars.
Implement HEERF A2 Grantee Webinars on use of funds for construction and renovation	FY 2022, Q3-Q4	Complete	N/A	OPE	In FY2022, OPE held 6 HEERF A2 Grantee Webinars on use of funds for construction and renovation.
Release SSARP Slate	FY 2022, Q4	Complete	N/A	OPE	In July 2022, OPE released the SSARP Slate, awarding 244 grants to institutions of higher education.
External Quarterly Grantee Monitoring Reviews	FY 2023, Q2	Complete	N/A	OESE	50 States, Puerto Rico, and Washington DC participated in a quarterly monitoring call with a review focused on the awarding of funds and subrecipient oversight by GEER grantees.

Publication Maintenance of Equity FAQs & Use of Funds Guidance	FY 2023, Q2	Complete	N/A	OESE	The Maintenance of Equity FAQs and Use of Funds Guidance for SEAs and LEAs provided guidance to ensure essential resources meet the needs of students who have been subject to longstanding opportunity gaps in our education system.
Publication of Disposition Use of Funds Guidance	FY 2023, Q2	Complete	N/A	OESE	The Disposition Use of Funds guidance is to support grantees in planning for the end of the performance period regarding equipment and supplies purchased with CARES Act funds.
Provided webinar on required Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA) reporting	FY 2023, Q2	Complete	N/A	OESE	The Grants Policy and Training Division and OESE collaboratively hosted a webinar that provided an overview of FFATA requirements, supported with the navigation of FSRS.gov, and shared how to overcome common reporting challenges.
Provided webinar on Grant Closeout	FY 2023, Q2	Complete	N/A	OESE	The Grant Closeout and Late Liquidation webinar reviewed the requirements for closing out CARES ESSER and GEER grant and Department's standard formula grant liquidation policy as it applies to requests to liquidate funds after the end of the liquidation period.
Approval and removal of conditions on resubmitted ARP ESSER state plans	Ongoing	On-Track	N/A	OESE	OESE reviewed 7 State plan resubmissions for the ARP ESSER program requirements and approved the removal of conditions for three States in the 1st Quarter. Additionally, OESE reviewed and approved 1 State plan amendment during the 1st Quarter.
Public schools offering full-time in-person instruction	Ongoing	On-Track	N/A	IES	The School Pulse Panel (SPP) is a new study collecting information on issues concerning the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education.

Continue to effectively monitor HEERF implementation on an ongoing basis.	FY2023 Q1 - Q4	On Track	N/A	OPE	OPE continues to monitor HEERF implementation, including institution use of funding. As of the most recent available data, 60% of institutions are under enhanced monitoring OPE satisfied and completed all requirements of the FY2022 ESF Improper Payment Study. OPE finalized and began implementation of an enhanced HEERF Monitoring Framework and began implementation of the enhanced HEERF Monitoring Plan In Q3 of FY23, OPE plans to complete at least two site visits.
Continue to conduct technical assistance activities with HEERF grantees, focused on assisting grantees with HEERF allowable uses and reporting.	FY2023 Q1 - Q4	On Track	Please view "comments" column for updates.	OPE	OPE hosted a technical assistance session with the 62 Institutional Resilience and Expanded Postsecondary Opportunity grantees (November 2022). OPE has hosted eleven technical assistance webinars since the beginning of t FY 2023. During March 2023, two webinars were hosted to provide guidance as the HEERF grant awards performance period comes to an end.

Narrative – FY 2023 Q2

OESE continued to work with SEAs and LEAs to provide high-quality technical assistance regarding the Educational Stabilization Fund (ESF) and other American Rescue Plan (ARP) education funding and programs. OESE has provided nearly 50 relevant sources overall of financial, technical, and programmatic sources to help grantees, advocacy groups, and other stakeholders in helping the Nation's schools and communities recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since Q1 of fiscal year 2022, OESE lifted conditions placed on approved State plans that, during the initial review, did not fully meet the ARP ESSER requirements. For those approved plans that did not fully meet the requirements, a State required, and the Department allowed for, additional time to identify evidence-based interventions that a State will implement to address the academic impact of lost instructional time and ensure that such interventions respond to students' academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs. Of the 23 States with conditions placed on their state plans, in Q2 one State had its condition lifted and one State submitted its revised plan for OESE review. Two States had revised plans under OESE review that were submitted prior to Q2 but additional revisions were required upon review. All other States had their conditions lifted prior to Q2.

In Q1 of fiscal year 2023, OESE reviewed the implementation of the GEER and ESSER for one State as a part of OESE's consolidated monitoring and finalized the State's report in Q2. No programmatic findings for ESSER or GEER were made. Monitoring activities were conducted for one State during Q2.

In Q2 of fiscal year 2023, OESE conducted quarterly reviews with 50 States, Puerto Rico, and Washington DC. The focus of the review was the awarding of funds and subrecipient oversight by GEER grantees. By the end of Q2, OESE issued findings to three States and determined that 42 States had no findings as a result of each review. Seven GEER grantees were still under review at the end of Q2.

Additionally at the start of Q1, OESE released a template for States to request a one-time extension to the period of liquidation for CARES Act grants. During Q2, OESE approved ten liquidation extension requests for the CARES Act ESSER program and six liquidation extensions for the CARES Act GEER program from 13 States.

OESE provided technical assistance to 180 State grantees with required Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (FFATA) reporting. OESE meets with State grantees monthly to provide timely and reliable technical assistance including support with required data collections or required submission of information. In addition, OESE sent 13weekly newsletters in to grantees that included the most up to date information such as, recent grantee communications, upcoming webinars, reporting updates, deadlines, announcements, and grantee resources.

In Q1 the Department announced $63 million in new five-year Full-Service Community Schools (FSCS) grants to support 42 local educational agencies, non-profits, or other public or private organizations and institutions of higher education working to expand existing community schools or establish new programs in eight new states and territories, including Alabama, Alaska, Louisiana, Maryland, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Puerto Rico. The new grantees are committed to implementing the four pillars of community schools: 1) integrated student supports that address out-of-school barriers to learning through partnerships with social and health service agencies and providers; 2) expanded and enriched learning time and opportunities; 3) active family and community engagement; and 4) collaborative leadership and practices.

Additionally, in Q1 of FY 2023, OESE updated "Appendix B" of the maintenance of effort (MOE) FAQs to support States' reporting efforts. In December, OESE issued a letter to Governors and Chief State School Officers that ensures understanding of the MOE and maintenance of equity (MOEquity) requirements. OESE also updated the Uses of Funds FAQs for the ESSER and GEER programs and held a webinar to review those for grantees.

Now that all new streams of HEERF have been distributed, the Office of Postsecondary Education (OPE) anticipates the need for ongoing technical assistance regarding A2 flexibilities and ensuring compliance as it gets closer to the expiration date for those funds. The A2 flexibilities are those that the HEERF funding stream specifically dedicated to HBCU, TCCUs, and MSIs. To date, OPE (Higher Education Programs) has approved 58 requests submitted under the A2 flexibilities, totaling over $200,000,000 in approved projects.

In FY2022, OPE's Emergency Response Unit (ERU) conducted 15 technical assistance activities with HEERF grantees focused on assisting grantees on HEERF allowable uses and reporting and exceeded our performance target by doing 8 more sessions that planned. OPE plans to continue these technical assistance activities throughout FY2023, and has already performed 11 engagements thus far in the fiscal year. Topics of these engagements include FY 2023 ESF Improper Payment Study, No Cost Extensions, Grant Closeout and the transition to G6.

OPE has released a selection of guidance documents for institutions to encourage using HEERF to support student basic needs, including food, housing, and childcare and best practices to address mental health and substance use disorders on campus. These efforts will support inclusive environments, equity in student access and completion. OPE, in concert with others, implemented a revamped annual report to collect additional data on how ARP funds support evidence-based programs.

From the revamped annual report collection, OPE was able to issue a public report on 2021 HEERF annual data highlighting the impacts the pandemic relief funds had on keeping students enrolled and institutions open.

OPE is tracking the number of institutions who indicate that they have used HEERF to keep students enrolled through their annual reports. Results from FY2021 APRs received from institutions (the latest information available), show that 89.8% indicate this to be the case. The target was to have more than 75% of institutions indicate their use of the funding for this purpose. The Department will have the FY2022 results in Q4 of FY2023 when the FY 2022 APRs are received. Based on FY 2021 results, it appears the Department will achieve the target.

OPE strengthened its ability to monitor grantees, including the development of an ongoing risk-based monitoring plan and improving its data collection through quarterly and annual reporting; which will assist with ongoing monitoring efforts. OPE has finalized and begun implementation of an enhanced HEERF Monitoring Framework and the enhanced HEERF Monitoring Plan. To this end, OPE has initiated enhanced monitoring for appropriate use of pandemic relief funding for institutions to include IHEs determined as high-risk.   As of March 30, 2023, 60% of institutions are being monitored; exceeding the monitoring target. The current high attrition of staff, due to resource limitations, may negatively impact the percentage of grantees monitored.   In Q3 of FY2023, OPE plans to complete at least two site visits.

Additional information

Contributing Programs

Organizations:
> Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE), Office of Postsecondary Education, Office of Career and Technical Adult Education, and Institute of Education Sciences

Program Activities:
- o State and Grantee Relations: ARP Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ARP ESSER) Fund and the Education Stabilization Fund
- o School Choice Improvement Program: Promise Neighborhoods, Magnet Schools Assistance Program, and Full-Service Community Schools
- o Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund

Stakeholder / Congressional Consultations

The Department's fiscal year (FY) 2022 and FY 2023 Agency Priority Goals (APGs) were developed and informed by the priorities of the Administration, the Department's Secretary, and internal and external stakeholders, including educators, education policymakers, state and local leaders, education researchers and related organizations, advocacy organizations, students, and families. Specifically, the Department engaged and solicited suggestions, research, and focus areas from staff at all levels across the Department. The feedback from staff provided valuable perspectives about the opportunities and challenges for the Department. Additionally, as required by the *Government Performance and Results Act and Modernization Act of 2010*, the Department shared the strategic framework and APGs with Congress.

In June 2021, education community stakeholders were given the opportunity to provide comments through a published notice of proposed Secretary's Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grants Programs in the *Federal Register*. Following the invitation for comments, the Final Secretary's Supplemental Priorities and Definitions for Discretionary Grants Programs, which included public comments, discussions, and changes, was published in December 2021.