

# Operation Connectivity State Funding Program

August 3, 2020

## Overview

On July 17, 2020, Governor Abbott, Lt. Governor Patrick, Speaker Bonnen, and the Chairs of the Senate Finance and House Appropriations Committees announced targeted eLearning funding of \$200 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to enable remote learning during the COVID-19 pandemic for Texas students that lack connectivity or devices. The majority of the \$200 million in funding will be allocated to LEAs through matching funds for purchases of hotspots (with data plans) and devices through a statewide bulk purchasing program. The funding would be used to establish a reimbursement program with a matching fund component with district leaders being encouraged to work with counties and mayors to access local CRF to extend bulk purchase program.

## Funding Allocation – Bulk Purchase Matching Funds

LEAs will be eligible for fund matching of 50% of expenditures incurred through the statewide bulk purchasing program. LEA fund matching will be provided to serve all economically disadvantaged students in the LEA. <sup>1</sup> The costs associated with device and hotspot purchase volume that exceeds the number of economically disadvantaged students in an LEA will not be eligible for fund matching.<sup>2</sup> However, if an LEA is purchasing a quantity of devices and/or hotspots less than or equal to the number of economically disadvantaged students, the LEA will receive the full 50% fund matching for those expenditures. LEAs can order additional devices and hotspots initially requested in the survey via the bulk order purchase at the same reduced cost and pay the total with local funds.

### For example (figures illustrative):

<p><b>District A orders device volume <u>equal</u> to economically disadvantaged (eco dis.) enrollment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enrollment: 1000 total students; <b>500</b> economically disadvantaged students</li><li>• District A is capped at 500 total devices for this program (due to percent eco dis.)</li><li>• Bulk order: <b>500</b> devices x \$200 cost per device = <b>\$100,000 LEA spend</b></li><li>• LEA spend eligible for fund matching: up to <b>500</b> students x \$200 cost per device = up to <b>\$100,000</b></li><li>• TEA fund matching: up to <b>\$50,000</b></li><li>• LEA responsibility: \$50,000</li></ul>
<p><b>District B orders device volume <u>greater</u> than economically disadvantaged enrollment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enrollment: 1000 total students; <b>500</b> economically disadvantaged students</li><li>• District B is capped at 500 total devices for this program (due to percent eco dis.)</li><li>• Bulk order: <b>750</b> devices x \$200 cost per device = <b>\$150,000 LEA spend</b></li><li>• LEA spend eligible for fund matching: up to <b>500</b> students x \$200 cost per device = up to <b>\$100,000</b></li><li>• TEA fund matching: up to <b>\$50,000</b></li><li>• LEA responsibility: \$100,000</li></ul>
<p><b>District C orders device volume <u>less</u> than economically disadvantaged enrollment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enrollment: 1000 total students; <b>500</b> economically disadvantaged students</li><li>• District C is capped at 500 total devices for this program (due to percent eco dis.)</li><li>• Bulk order: <b>250</b> devices x \$200 cost per device = <b>\$50,000 LEA spend</b></li><li>• LEA spend eligible for fund matching: up to <b>250</b> students x \$200 cost per device = up to <b>\$50,000</b></li><li>• TEA fund matching: up to <b>\$25,000</b></li><li>• LEA responsibility: \$25,000</li></ul>

<sup>1</sup> The number of economically disadvantaged students in an LEA are calculated as the PEIMS ages 3-21 low income students (eligible for free lunch, reduced price lunch, or federal aid programs), from the October 2019 fall collection, released for 2020-2021 ESSA funding formulas.