

Your Question:

You asked for information on state policies concerning summer learning opportunities that address unfinished learning caused by the pandemic.

Our Response:

Summer learning has been identified as a potential strategy for helping address unfinished learning caused by the pandemic. The following response includes three sections — state legislative action, other state action, and federal funding — that pertain to summer learning opportunities being proposed or used in this way.

State Legislative Action

Although states have enacted legislation to provide for summer learning and other efforts to address unfinished learning, these bills have largely granted districts flexibility or allocated funding to support the implementation of these strategies. The following examples of enacted legislation address summer learning and unfinished learning more generally. In some cases, state legislatures directed the allocation of federal funding. Additional proposed and enacted legislation addressing the COVID-19 pandemic can be found in the Education Commission of the States [state education policy tracking database](#) and the [2021 state education policy watchlist](#).

- **California** [A.B. 86](#) allocated funds to support districts in providing additional instructional time through summer school or intersessional instructional programs.
- **Michigan** [H.B. 4048](#) appropriated \$10 million to support innovative summer programs.
- **North Carolina** [H.B. 196](#) directed funding from the federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund to address learning loss and provide enrichment activities in the summer. The department will allocate these funds to districts based on need. [S.B. 36](#) allowed funding allocated for summer learning programs in 2020 to be used in 2021 as well.
- **Tennessee** [H.B. 7004](#) and [S.B. 7002](#) required the department of education to establish and administer a learning loss remediation program and directed local education agencies to participate in the program by implementing after-school learning mini-camps, learning loss bridge camps, and summer learning camps.
- **Utah** [S.B. 1](#) directed federal funding to support efforts to address learning loss, including summer school programs.
- **Washington** [H.B. 1368](#) required districts to develop an academic and student well-being recovery plan in order to receive federal relief funds. The plan must include efforts to address learning loss.

Other State Action

Some states have developed guidance to support schools and districts in establishing and operating summer learning programs. For example:

- **Illinois** released a [Learning Renewal Resource Guide](#), that includes a chapter dedicated to supporting district tutoring, after-school and summer enrichment programs.
- **Massachusetts** released [guidance on summer learning](#) to help schools and districts prepare for in-person summer school programs in 2020. The department also established the [Summer and Vacation Learning Program Grant](#) and the [Increased Access to Afterschool, Out-of-School Time and Summer Learning Programs state continuation grant](#) for the 2020 and 2021 summers.

Additionally, some governors highlighted summer learning as a policy priority in their State of the State addresses. Based on Education Commission of the States [compilation](#) of the education-related proposals these addresses, governors in **Alabama**, **Alaska** and **Arizona** identified summer learning as a budgetary priority. This [report](#) provides an overview of 2021 State of the State addresses, including Alaska’s summer learning proposal, which would prioritize math, reading and coding coursework.

Federal Funding

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) established the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) and the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER), which have been used by states to address a variety of needs, including efforts to address learning loss. The recently passed [American Rescue Plan](#) (ARP) places some restrictions on how state and local education agencies allocate the final pot of ESSER funds by dedicating portions for specific services. State education agencies must reserve at least 5% of ARP ESSER funding to address interrupted learning, 1% for evidence-based summer programs and 1% for after-school programs. Local education agencies must use at least 20% of their ARP ESSER funds for addressing interrupted learning through the implementation of evidence-based interventions. Examples listed in the bill include summer learning, comprehensive after-school programs and extended school years.

While additional GEERs funding was not included in the ARP, some states used those dollars to establish summer learning opportunities in 2020. The Hunt Institute’s GEERs funding [tracker](#) highlights **Florida** as a state that established [summer learning programs](#) with these funds. It is unclear if this strategy will be used again in the summer 2021.

The National Conference of State Legislatures’ ESSER [tracker](#) identified at least five states using ESSER funds for summer learning opportunities.

- **Alaska** set aside funding for additional summer school seats in the Alaska Statewide Virtual School.
- **Delaware** emphasized summer learning and supplemental after-school programs when awarding grants to LEAs.
- **Hawaii** allocated \$6 million for summer learning programs.
- **Minnesota** allowed local education agencies to use ESSER funds for summer learning programs.
- **Texas** used funds to develop an online summer bridge program.