



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

For Immediate Distribution | July 22, 2020 | (512) 463-1826

Governor Abbott Announces Additional \$118 Million In Federal Funding To Support Texas Higher Education

AUSTIN -Governor Greg Abbott today announced that the State of Texas will allocate an additional \$118 million in federal funding to support higher education in Texas, including \$93 million to help students continue or restart their progress toward earning a post-secondary credential or degree.

The funding announced today [follows the \\$57 million](#) that Governor Abbott and legislative leaders recently allocated to offset potential cuts to state financial aid programs. This combined investment to post-secondary students and institutions, totaling \$175 million, comes from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund made available through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act signed into law by President Trump.

"One of the best ways to accelerate our economic recovery is to make strategic investments in our future workforce," said Governor Abbott. "These federal funds will provide targeted assistance to keep students enrolled or help them re-enroll in higher education so they can pursue new professional and economic opportunities for themselves and their families. By investing in our students and institutions, we will make our workforce and our economy even stronger."

The funding announced today includes:

- \$46.5 million in targeted financial aid for upskilling and reskilling displaced workers in high-demand fields, including workers who have earned some college credit but no credential, allowing new paths into the workforce with higher earning potential.
- \$46.5 million in emergency student support so students

whose families have been severely financially impacted by COVID-19 can stay enrolled in higher education.

- \$15 million for strategic education and workforce data infrastructure to provide timely, actionable intelligence to students, institutions, employers, and policymakers; scale and expand existing technologies and tools that support college and career advising; and help students stay on track to earn high-value credentials.
- \$10 million to improve the quality of online learning by strengthening distance education course offerings and bolstering institutions capabilities to use data to support student success. This will include funds to develop Open Educational Resource course materials that significantly reduce costs to students.

"In today's economy, we know jobs increasingly follow skills," said Commissioner of Texas Higher Education Harrison Keller. "These strategic investments in our students and institutions will keep more students on track to enter the workforce with the credentials and education that tomorrow's economy will demand. I applaud Governor Abbott for his leadership and the collaborative work of Lieutenant Governor Patrick, Speaker Bonnen, and the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of the Finance, Appropriations, and House and Senate Higher Education Committees for their commitment to Texas students and higher education."

"This \$118 million in federal funds is a strategic investment in Texas higher ed students and our future workforce. "It comes at a critical time and will pay big dividends as we move forward on a full economic recovery," said Lieutenant Governor Dan Patrick.

"Equipping Texas' higher education students with the resources they need to continue toward earning their degree or credentials is one of the most important tools we have in returning our economy to its former heights," said Speaker Dennis Bonnen. "These strategic investments in the future success of our students will go a long way in making our economy and workforce more resilient in the future, and I am proud to join other state leaders in announcing this vital effort."

"We cannot allow COVID-19 to disrupt higher education and slow down the growth of a skilled work force, which this economy needs to get back on track. By providing financial support and investing in a virtual infrastructure, we are helping students overcome the challenges caused by this pandemic and achieve their goals," said Senator Jane Nelson.

"Education is the great equalizer and allows for anyone to achieve their dreams. We know the value of a post secondary credential and these actions by the Governor represent a smart investment in the future of our state. This pandemic has created real barriers for many seeking to advance themselves through higher education, but these investments will help reduce those barriers and allow for the hardest hit populations to continue their education," said Senator Juan Hinojosa.

"It is important to invest in our current workforce and future. These funds will aid our students and workers that are being impacted by COVID-19," said Representative Oscar Longoria.

"Our past has proven that investing in the education of our students, our future workforce, is paramount to ensuring the stability and strength of Texas' economy through a downturn. I'm thankful that Governor Abbott recognizes the importance of this investment and am proud to have worked with my colleagues to secure this necessary funding," said Representative Giovanni Capriglione.

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