

NATIONAL ALLIANCE WEEKLY BRIEF, MARCH 23, 2020

BLOG

(/WEB/20200612201056/HTTPS://WWW.PUBLICCHARTERS.ORG/LATEST-NEWS/CATEGORY/BLOG)

Nina Rees

(/web/20200612201056/https://www.publiccharters.org/us/staff/nina-rees)

Schools, families, and communities around America continue to adjust to major changes in their daily routines. Courageous and dedicated educators are leading the response at individual schools and the National Alliance is doing everything we can to support them. We're in constant contact with Congress, the Administration, and federal agencies as they deliver relief legislation and adapt federal policies to the current crisis. Together with state charter support organizations, we're working to ensure that policy responses treat charter schools fairly and recognize their unique needs.

We also have a request of everyone in the charter school community. As more and more schools engage in some form of distance learning, students who lack access to broadband technology are at real risk of falling behind their peers. We are partnering with other education and children's organizations to ask the FCC to allow the federal E-Rate program, which normally funds internet access in schools and libraries, to also provide funding to connect students to the Internet at home. This is the immediate battle in the fight for educational equity. Please **sign on** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://futureready.org/homeinternet/?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6ldJhZgL9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_) to our request!

Challenging times bring out the best in Americans, and we're so proud to see stories of charter schools everywhere reaching out to help their students and communities. We've generated a **blog post** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://www.publiccharters.org/latest-news/2020/03/20/uplifting-stories-charter-community?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6ldJhZgL9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_) with just some of the examples and plan to add to it as we move forward. Please **send us the stories** (<https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/mailto:info@publiccharters.org>) that are making you take heart as we all get through this together!



Nina Rees
President & CEO
National Alliance for Public Charter Schools

UPDATE FROM CONGRESS

Earlier this month, an initial COVID-19 relief package was signed into law including \$8.3 billion in emergency funding for vaccine development, research, and supporting state and local health budgets. Last week, Congress passed a second relief package that was signed into law by the president on March 18. This package includes \$1 billion in nutritional aid, expands access to COVID-19 testing, and expands sick leave benefits. A third relief package is currently under consideration, with competing bills from the House and Senate. Congressional leaders are trying to negotiate a final bipartisan deal using those bills. The bill from Leader McConnell (R-KY) includes a \$20 billion program which allocates funds to governors, State Education Agencies (SEAs)/ Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and institutions of higher education for COVID-19—including \$2 billion in grants to governors to distribute to K-12 schools or colleges at their discretion and \$12 billion for PK-12 through SEAs and LEAs by formula for schools to use for a wide range of purposes including purchasing technology. Further, the bill also includes language that ensures all waivers from Elementary and Secondary Education Act requirements granted by the Secretary of Education include charter schools, as applicable, and are implemented in accordance with state charter laws. The bill from Speaker Pelosi (D-CA) includes \$50 billion for governors to allocate to K-12 and higher education. Governors would have to use not less than 30 percent for higher education and not less than 30 percent for LEAs. According to Politico, her bill also proposes \$2 billion to bolster the FCC's

COVID-19

UPDATE FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

On Friday, Secretary DeVos announced

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(https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://info.publiccharters.org/e2t/c/*VTrMHQ2wPGc4Vd4NvN4SmVvh0/*W3HhhLb4SdJ1wW1yfdN_4f6zW3J4F2F8wx5zfW8B_07_3KzG0zW3knXG15wL96LW1sL3M03MybvY4XH_kR8srs54VXN02k64R3dSW8IYpFw55nSC9W1VJH714c2R9W71B_tr1Q5zCRDDW5_MPYr3dQrF7W97QXJy97zmGdVhBMkf99qRm-VsYlZv24WWCrW4r1-cy1r-QLWW8xHIFV8GcIm4W1ZZbQz3ygvH8N8c3fNYJ4GzxW4h8FqX7q67PKN7yOBMT38Gc4W69syF42cyH2GW5D8VHL7Bp67JW4c7_YM9IS7fSW3PZpl'utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6ldJhZgL9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_).

Over the weekend, ED released a fact sheet

(https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/frontpage/faq/rr/policyguidance/Supple%20Fact%20Sheet'utm_content=&utm_name=&utm_term=&utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6ldJhZgL9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_) in response to concerns that previous guidance left school districts unsure of how to provide services for students with disabilities

(https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2020/03/19/are-we-going-to-get-ourselves-in.html?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6ldJhZgL9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_) while school buildings are closed as a result of COVID-19 and educators are shifting to online and distance learning. The fact sheet clarifies that while federal law mandates that students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to participate in everything schools provide, including online learning, districts have flexibility in reaching that goal.

COVID-19 RESOURCES FOR CHARTER SCHOOLS

We continue to update our website (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://www.publiccharters.org/covid-19-resources-charter-schools?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6ldJhZgL9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_) with the latest resources as they become available. Here are some new additions from our trusted partners:

- The U.S. Department of Education website has **COVID-19 guidance for schools** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://www.ed.gov/coronavirus?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6ldJhZgL9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_). If you have any questions, you can email **COVID-19@ed.gov** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/mailto:COVID-19@ed.gov).
- The Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) and The School Superintendents Association released a **new resource for school superintendents** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/AASA-FRAC-COVID-FINAL-FACT-SHEET-3-18-2020-2.pdf?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6ldJhZgL9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_) about the two options — the Summer Food Service Program and the Seamless Summer Option —available for schools to receive funding to serve meals and snacks when schools are closed.
- KIPP created an **open-source repository of resources** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://kipp.app.box.com/v/covidresources19/folder/107364479825?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6ldJhZgL9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_), templates, guidelines to help support staff, students and families.
- Success Academy is providing **open access** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/mailto:https://www.successacademies.org/edinstitute/welcome) to its entire curriculum, best practices, resources, and training.
- ExcelinEd has a **map and database** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://www.excelined.org/covid-19/?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6ldJhZgL9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_) with state-by-state updates on actions education systems have taken in response to COVID-19.

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- Education Week maps all **school closures** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://www.edweek.org/ew/section/multimedia/map-coronavirus-and-school-closures.html?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6IdJhZgLG9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_) by state.
- The Center for Reinventing Public Education (CRPE) has **compiled a database** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://www.crpe.org/content/covid-19-school-closures?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6IdJhZgLG9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_) to track how districts shift instruction, student support, and organizational operations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

THREE STORIES TO KEEP YOU GOING

In a short amount of time, COVID-19 has changed the way we live. While the lives of many have changed significantly, one thing that has remained consistent is the drive of school leaders and teachers to continue serving their students the best way they can. Despite the problems many Americans are facing, there are many examples that show how educators are going the extra mile. Check out **three of our favorite stories** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://www.publiccharters.org/latest-news/2020/03/20/uplifting-stories-charter-community?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6IdJhZgLG9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_) from charter schools that are going above and beyond in its communities.

If you have any great stories to share, please send them to Brittnee Exum at Brittnee@publiccharters.org (<https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/mailto:Brittnee@publiccharters.org>)!

SBA EMERGENCY LOANS NOW AVAILABLE TO CHARTER SCHOOLS

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) now has authority to offer emergency loans to both small businesses and nonprofits under its Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) program in **eligible areas** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://www.sba.gov/disaster-assistance/coronavirus-covid-19?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6IdJhZgLG9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_#section-header-1). **While SBA authorities are focused on small businesses, we worked with federal lawmakers to ensure that the loan funding for this crisis is offered to charter schools and other nonprofits to borrow up to \$2 million for up to 30 years at 2.75 percent for nonprofits.** These loans are designed to help businesses and nonprofits meet financial obligations and operating expenses that would not be of concern if the COVID disaster had not occurred. For questions, please contact the SBA disaster assistance customer service center at 1-800-659-2955 (TTY: 1-800-877-8339) or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov (<https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/mailto:disastercustomerservice@sba.gov>). To apply, go to the **SBA website** (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://disasterloan.sba.gov/ela/Account/Login?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6IdJhZgLG9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_).

TWEET OF THE WEEK

Schools aren't just places of learning, but sources of food, afterschool care, health care, and other critical resources--check out [@charteralliance's](https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://ctt.ac/HIJ27?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6IdJhZgLG9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_) list of resources for charter schools during #COVID19 (https://web.archive.org/web/20200612201056/https://ctt.ac/HIJ27?utm_campaign=Weekly%20Brief&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz--dLJDTWNTd13oLckajmYKwNSnb9fgwrRnUZ3K1ZZFuTV6IdJhZgLG9QuFQ0cWiP4YdUxEY_)

Updated at 8 p.m. ET on March 23, 2020.

ADD NEW COMMENT

Your name

Subject

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