

IDEA ARRA Funds

Basic Information

1. All IDEA ARRA funds are to be considered Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2009 or State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2010 funds (includes Part B flow through (611) and federal preschool (619)) even though some of the funds will be distributed prior to July 1, 2009.
 - a. Funds will be made available:
 - i. April 2009, 50% of ARRA IDEA allocation for both flow-through and preschool
 - ii. July 2009 regular IDEA allocation
 - iii. October 2009, 50% of ARRA IDEA allocation
 - b. IDEA ARRA funds must be obligated by September 30, 2011
 - c. There will not be additional IDEA ARRA funds to allocate in SFY 2011
 - d. 100% of federal IDEA funds may be carried over for one additional year for SFY 2009, 2010 and 2011
2. When calculating required or optional set asides for IDEA funds, systems must use the total amount of their SFY 2010 allocation which includes:
 - a. IDEA ARRA 611 flow-through funds
 - b. IDEA ARRA 619 preschool funds
 - c. Regular IDEA 611 flow through funds
 - d. Regular IDEA 619 preschool funds
3. Systems with significant disproportionality based on race and ethnicity that are required to reserve 15% of funds for Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS) must reserve 15% of the total IDEA and ARRA allocations. (both 611 and 619 funds)
 - a. Systems required to reserve these funds may NOT use the flexibility of reducing local MOE by 50%
4. Systems that choose to reserve up to 15% of funds for CEIS must calculate the amount based on the total SFY 2010 (regular IDEA and ARRA) amount. This could impact the opportunity to reduce local MOE. (Appendix D in IDEA federal regulations provides an example.)
5. Proportionate share amounts for students in private nonprofit elementary and secondary schools and homeschools must be reserved and expended based on the total IDEA and ARRA allocation.
6. NO IDEA regulations for expending funds have been revised or waived, all regulations pertaining to excess costs, maintenance of effort, supplement not supplant, coordinated early intervening services and reducing local maintenance of effort apply to these funds.

Supplement, Not Supplant

7. Under IDEA, funds must be used to supplement state, local and other federal funds for providing services to students with disabilities. As long as the system maintains its level of state and local

expenditures from year to year for special education and related services, then IDEA funds are supplementing, not supplanting.

Maintenance of Effort

8. In general, MOE means a system maintains its level of local and state funding from the previous year in order to access federal funds for IDEA as a supplement to available funding.
9. IDEA allows the use of 50% of the increase in IDEA funds from the previous year to be used to reduce the local maintenance of effort. The IDEA funds used to reduce the MOE must be used for Special Education purposes. For example, if a system received 500,000 in IDEA funds in SFY2009 and is going to receive \$1,000,000 in SFY2010, the system has an increase of \$500,000. Fifty percent of that increase (\$250,000) can be used to reduce the local MOE by \$250,000. This \$250,000 must be used for any special education activity or position that was previously paid with state or local funds. The system's required MOE is reduced by \$250,000 from this point forward until they begin to spend more local and state funds. In addition, the "freed up" state and local funds must be used for allowable activities under the ESEA.
 - a. To use this reduction of local MOE, the system MUST be in the "meets requirements" category as identified in the annual determination letter sent to superintendents in March 2009.
 - b. Systems that are required to reserve 15% for Coordinated Early Intervening Services due to disproportionality for SFY 1010 may NOT use funds to reduce local and state MOE.
10. A system may reduce the level of expenditure for local MOE if the reduction is attributable to the following:
 - a. The retirement or voluntary departure of special education and related services personnel or the departure for just cause of such personnel;
 - b. A decrease in the enrollment of children with disabilities;
 - c. The termination of responsibility for providing high cost services to a child with a disability due to aging out, graduating, returning to a less costly environment or no longer eligible for special education and related services;
 - d. The high cost services provided to a child are assumed or provided by the state or another entity; or
 - e. The termination of costly expenditures such as equipment items or construction of school facilities.

Excess Costs

11. The IDEA funds are to be used to provide IEP required special education and related services that are the excess costs of providing services to students with disabilities, except in specific circumstances as described for CEIS and reduction of MOE.
 - a. Instructional staff not funded through QBE such as paraprofessionals, job coaching support, transition specialists, preschool staff, related service personnel, assistive technology consultants, behavior specialists (not an exhaustive list) may be funded through IDEA.

- b. Instructional support materials to supplement basic education supplies are allowed such as a supplemental reading program, additional math manipulatives that are not provided to all students, adaptive equipment for computers, and specific software for computers. Materials that are supplied to all classrooms or students such as computers, textbooks, or calculators should not be provided with IDEA funds.
 - c. Construction is not allowed.
 - d. Buses are generally not allowed, unless specifically for preschool children with disabilities.
12. The Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support (GNETS) does not receive funds through the flow through formula (because they are a program and not a system), thus will NOT receive stimulus funds. Students in GNETS are the responsibility of the local system that placed them in GNETS for assuring progress in the general curriculum and the provision of special education and related services. The Department strongly recommends each system calculate the per child amount and provide those funds to GNETS for improving outcomes.

For individual situations or more specific information, contact the Divisions for Special Education Services and Supports, Nancy O'Hara (nohara@doe.k12.ga.us) or Kim Hartsell (khartsel@doe.k12.ga.us) or 404 657-9963.