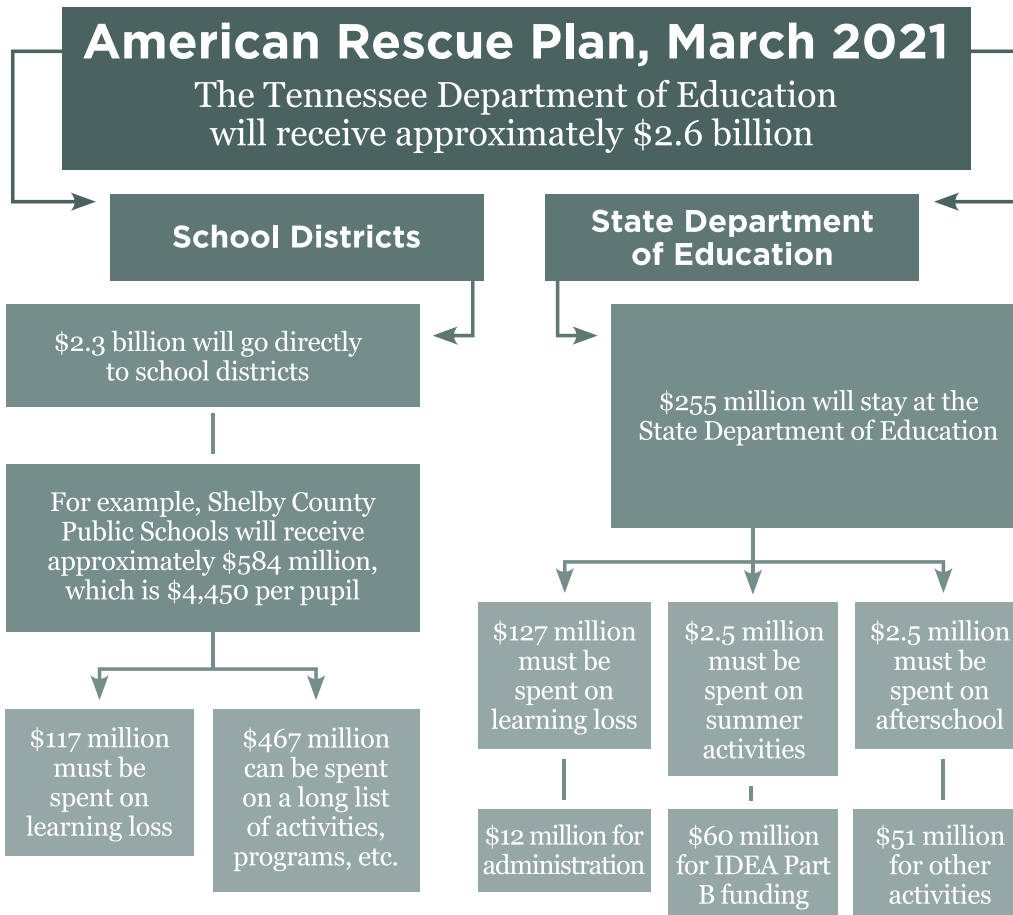


Spending Principles from the American Rescue Plan (ARP)



Congress recently passed the American Rescue Plan (ARP), which includes \$123 billion for K-12 education, of which \$2.3 billion will go to Tennessee’s school districts. Considering that this amount is nearly eight times what the federal government spends annually on its Title I program, our schools may never see this kind of influx of federal funds again and must seize on the opportunity to make transformative changes for students and teachers.



TennesseeCAN Policy Recommendations on How Dollars Could be Spent

Change Long-Term Behavior: Promote Competency-Based Learning and Innovative Assessments

- Competency-based learning does away with grade levels and instead, student progress is based on their mastery of the material. This approach would ensure students have a sequential and well-organized approach to learning that helps ameliorate learning loss.
- If the state invests in quality control measures regarding how competency-based learning and assessing is organized and delivered, then classrooms will be more personalized for students no matter what is happening outside the four walls of the classroom (or the computer screen).

Spending Principles from the American Rescue Plan (ARP)



Personalize Funding to Student Needs

- It is safe to assume that schools have many of the same basic needs in responding to this pandemic, yet not every school has the same need for resource allocation. Since these federal dollars allow more flexibility than is allowed with state dollars, schools may deploy and/or support existing staff more creatively than most do now.
- If a school is not able to provide or contract for a special service for a student, parents of that student should be able to use this federal money as direct payments for those special services that their school may not be able to provide. These direct payments to families could also be used for tutoring, socio-emotional or mental health supports or improved internet access.

Find Power in Financial Transparency

- The TNDOE is requiring districts to tag expenditures from these federal dollars to one of fourteen budget tags, so that policymakers and other stakeholders can find power in analyzing these expenditures, rebuilding trust with families and sharing new and promising practices that may continue after the pandemic. This course of action aligns with guidance from the US Department of Education that school districts include “stakeholder engagement and strong fiscal safeguards” in their spending plans.
- The BEP formula requires school districts to wait annually for the state legislature to tell them how much money they believe they should receive. With these federal dollars, school districts now have a chance to prove to state lawmakers and policymakers that if they are given flexibility in spending based on student needs, they will maximize their impact on student achievement and growth, ultimately responding to their communities with solutions that are aligned to their needs.

Allowable Areas of Spending (Budget Tags)
Addressing Learning Loss
Addressing Learning Acceleration
Addressing Facility Needs and Deferred Maintenance
Purchasing Education Technology
Planning for Long-Term Closures
Unique Needs of Special Populations
School Facility Repairs
Mental Health Supports
High-Quality Instructional Materials for Math Adoption
High-Quality Instructional Materials for Early Literacy
Public Health Coordination and Protocols
Other Necessary Activities
Indirect Cost
Administrative Cost (5% Limit)