



Guide to Funding Data Management Initiatives Using ARRA Stimulus

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By Educational Systemics



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“America’s economic security tomorrow is directly tied to the quality of education we provide today. This is our task. This is our challenge. Now let’s get to work.”



- Secretary Arne Duncan, March 20, 2009

Introduction

This report is designed to provide Local Education Agencies (LEAs) with information on how to fund their data management initiatives through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009.

Note from Mizuni

“We are committed to education and to providing educators with tools to inform instruction and increase student achievement. The U.S. education system has an unprecedented opportunity to capitalize on the funding available through ARRA to implement change in our schools and improve student learning. We hope that this report provides valuable information to you on the highlights of the stimulus package and helps you determine the best way for your district to apply ARRA funds to achieve your goals.”

- Mr. Ignacio Ybarra, President, Mizuni, Inc.



ARRA Stimulus Package – Federal Level

Overview of Federal funds

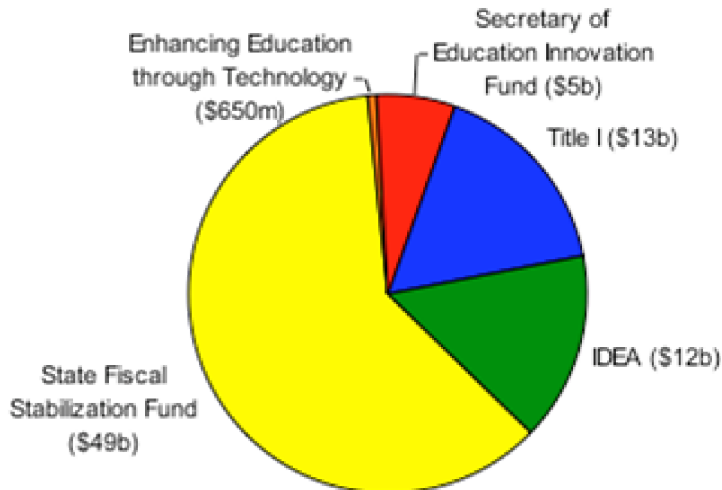
The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) provides approximately \$100 billion for education, creating a historic opportunity to save hundreds of thousands of jobs, support states and school districts, and advance reforms and improvements that will create long-lasting results for our students and our nation.¹

Four core principals guide the distribution and use of the ARRA funds:

- 1. Spend funds quickly to save and create jobs.*
- 2. Increase student achievement through school improvement and reform.*
- 3. Ensure transparency, reporting and accountability.*
- 4. Invest one-time ARRA funds thoughtfully to minimize the "funding cliff."*

The bulk of the \$80B PK-12 federal funds for education will be distributed to states and districts through five main vehicles.

Breakdown of Federal Stimulus Funds in \$billions



www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/presentation/arra.pdf

¹ <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/implementation.html>

ARRA Funding Overview

Highlights of the funding channels are listed in the table below.

	<i>Funding Channel</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Distribution</i>	<i>Use of Funds</i>
1a.	Title I - Part A	\$10B	Based on population of low-income students. \$5B released in spring 2009. Other \$5B will be released 7/1-9/30/09 after state plan for record keeping and reporting is approved.	Helps low-achieving children meet challenging academic standards.
1b.	Title I – School Improvement Grants	\$3B	Funds available in Fall 2009 pending further information.	States encouraged to spend 40% on middle and high schools.
2.	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)	\$12B	Based on population of special education students. \$6B released in Spring 2009. Other \$6B will be released 7/1-9/30/09 after state plans for record keeping and reporting are approved.	Funds cost of educating students with disabilities. 15% can be spent on Response To Intervention.
3.	State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSF)	\$48.6B	Based on census data. States distribute these funds to districts based on the state's existing funding formula. States will receive 2/3 after state application is received. Additional 1/3 will be distributed after approval of state's education reform plan.	Use toward the advance of essential education reforms (See box of Core Reforms below) to benefit students from early learning through post-secondary education.
4.	Enhancing Education through Technology State Grant Program	\$650M	Funds available in Fall 2009, conditions to be outlined at a later date.	Helps increase student achievement through the use of technology. 25% of funds must be used for Professional Development.
5a.	Innovation Fund: Race to the Top State Grants	\$4.35B	Competitive grants to states. Will be awarded in late Fall 2009 and Summer 2010.	Show progress toward the Secretary of Education's Core Reforms or Assurances. (See box below)
5b.	Innovation Fund: What Works District Grants	\$650M	Competitive grants to districts and non-profits. Will be awarded in late Fall 2009 and Summer 2010.	Awarded to districts that have made significant gains in closing achievement gaps to be models of best practices.

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/implementation.html>

Obligation Deadlines

While most of the money will be available to states by the Fall of 2009, states generally have until September 2010, or in some cases September 2011, to “obligate” or formally commit to how they will use the funds.

<i>Channel</i>	<i>Obligation Deadline</i>
Title I – Part A	85% obligated by 9/30/2010; remainder by 9/30/2011
IDEA	Majority should be obligated in 2009/10 school year. All funds must be obligated by 9/30/2011.
SFSF	Commit as soon as possible, but must be obligated by 9/30/2011.

Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems

\$250 million of the ARRA funds have been allocated specifically to states in the form of grants to develop and implement statewide longitudinal data systems consistent with the America COMPETES Act. These systems are intended to enhance the ability of states to efficiently and accurately manage, analyze, and use education data, including individual student records. The data systems developed with funds from these grants should help states, districts, schools, and teachers make real-time, data-driven decisions to improve student learning, as well as facilitate research to increase student achievement and close achievement gaps.²

LEAs that already have a data management and reporting system or implement a new one will be better prepared in one to three years when the statewide system is fully functional. At that point, it will probably be a requirement for LEAs to push their data to the state Student Information System. Those districts that have the best infrastructure and flexibility in data systems will be better positioned to meet the state mandates.

² <http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/index.asp>

Four Core Reforms or Assurances to use ARRA funds:

States must address and provide data metrics to support four specific areas identified in ARRA that evidence shows make a critical contribution to student results:

- a. Making progress toward rigorous college- and career-ready standards and high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable for all students, including English language learners and students with disabilities;
- b. Establishing pre-K-to college and career data systems that track progress and foster continuous improvement;
- c. Making improvements in teacher effectiveness and in the equitable distribution of qualified teachers for all students, particularly students who are most in need;
- d. Providing intensive support and effective interventions for the lowest-performing schools.

Guiding Questions for use of ARRA Funds

In considering whether a project is a good fit for ARRA funds, decision-makers should be able to answer “yes” to the following five questions as a guideline for the appropriateness of the investment.

- Drive results for students** - Will the proposed use of funds drive results for all students?
- Increase capacity** - Will the proposed use of funds increase the long-term capacity of teachers, schools and school districts to improve results for students?
- Accelerate Reform** - Does the proposed use of funds advance the state and district’s strategy and the research based reform goals encompassed in ARRA?
- Avoid the funding cliff** - Does the proposed use of funds sufficiently take into account that ARRA funds are expected to be temporary and avoid recurring costs that states and districts are unprepared to assume when this funding ends?
- Track results** - Does the proposed use of funds include approaches to measure and track implementation and results, modify strategies based on evidence, and discontinue strategies that do not lead to improved student results? Are the possible effects of the ARRA resources being evaluated and improved over time?

Use of ARRA Funds for Data Management Initiatives and Mizuni Solutions

The Secretary of Education highlights the establishment of data systems and the use of data for improvement in the Core Reforms (see page 5) supported by the stimulus package.

Targeted, effective, and strategic ways for LEAs to spend stimulus funds on data management (see table below) are supported by the Mizuni Solutions - Mizuni Data Warehouse, Mizuni Data Dashboards, Mizuni Automated Reports, and Mizuni SIF Integration Tools.

	<i>Data Management Initiative</i>	<i>Title I</i>	<i>IDEA</i>	<i>SFSF</i>
1	Create a longitudinal data system to drive decision-making and continuous improvement efforts.			✓
2	Develop or enhance existing data systems to provide teachers access to student data such as attendance, grades, course schedules, and ELL status.			✓
3	Help teachers monitor student progress, deliver instruction, and provide immediate and targeted intervention for low-income students in an efficient manner.	✓		✓
4	Implement a reporting system that tracks students' academic performance and growth and how that compares to statewide averages for similar students and schools with linked teacher and student identifiers that track student growth over time.			✓
5	Develop and implement a data system that helps teachers and administrators identify students at risk of failure or dropping out.	✓		✓
6	Provide intensive professional development on the use of data to improve instruction.	✓		✓
7	Determine the success of children served under Title I in meeting TAKS, and provide information to teachers, parents, and students on the progress being made toward meeting TAKS.	✓		✓
8	Implement an easy-to-use online Individual Education Program (IEP) system aligned with state academic standards that can be used by parents, teachers and principals to create content-rich IEPs aligned to the general education curriculum. Make the IEP system interoperable with the Student Information System for increased efficiency.		✓	✓
9	Link districts' multiple data systems (including student, financial, and personnel) and use resulting information for analyses and reports that enable community, district, and school leaders to better understand the educational and cost effectiveness of district programs and strategies and allocate resources accordingly.			✓

ARRA Funding Overview

	<i>Data Management Initiative</i>	<i>Title I</i>	<i>IDEA</i>	<i>SFSF</i>
10.	Track the number and percentage of students by school who graduate high school and go on to complete at least one year's worth of college credit. Use the information to strengthen high school programs and increase the percentage of students going on to college.			✓

References

- <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/implementation.html>
- <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/presentation/arra.pdf>
- <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/leg/recovery/factsheet/stabilization-fund.html>
- <http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg2.html#sec1112>
- <http://nces.ed.gov/Programs/SLDS/index.asp>
- <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/>
- http://www.window.state.tx.us/recovery/apply/grants_edu.php
- <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/index4.aspx?id=4164>
- <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/arrastimulus/>
- <http://txstimulusfund.com/Default.aspx>
- http://www.ascd.org/public_policy/Explanation_of_the_State_Stabilization_Fund.aspx
- <http://www.edweek.org/ew/marketplace/products/stimulus-spotlight.html>

Appendix A: ARRA Stimulus Package – Texas

The federal ARRA funds flow to the state of Texas as follows:

<i>ARRA Funds for Texas (as of July 1, 2009)</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Application Due</i>
Title I –Part A	\$944M	Formula	TBD
Title I – School Improvement Grants	\$285M	Formula	TBD
IDEA Part B	\$946M	Formula	TBD
State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF)	\$3.98B	Formula	TBD
Title II – Part D – Education Technology	\$59M	TBD	TBD

http://www.window.state.tx.us/recovery/apply/grants_edu.php

ARRA funds from Title I, IDEA, and the SFSF are formula grants, meaning they flow to the Texas districts based on student population and demographics. Each district must complete an eGrant application at the Texas Education Agency web site:

<http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/taa/formfund030609.html>

Information on how districts apply for the Educational Technology Grants and the Investing in What Works and Innovation funds was not yet available as of the publication date of this report.

Strategic Planning for use of ARRA Funds in Texas

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is committed to using funds to ensure every student in Texas has access to an effective teacher through the four targeted investment areas as detailed in the Four Core Assurances by the DOE. The use of funds should lead to improved results for students, long-term gains in school system capacity, and increased efficiency and effectiveness. TEA encourages LEAs to develop a strategic and sustainable plan to spend these funds in the wisest manner possible. During the planning phase, LEAs are asked to consider the following:

1. Will your expenditure increase student achievement and reduce the achievement gap?
2. Do your plans for the funds align with other state and local strategies?
3. Will your investment be considered innovative and better position the district to receive additional funds from the state to support continued education reform?

Texas High School Project - Data Diagnostics Planning Project

The Texas High School Project (THSP), a unique public-private alliance, is dedicated to ensuring that all Texas students graduate high school ready for college and career success and prepared to be contributing members of the community. Public and private organizations in the THSP include the Texas Education Agency, the Governor's Office, the Texas Legislature, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, Communities Foundation of Texas and National Instruments. THSP has begun an important data initiative called the Data Diagnostics Planning Project, a data initiative to assess the current data systems and practices of the Big 8 urban districts of Texas and share best practices. As a result of this assessment, THSP has identified five distinct data practices to be modeled by districts across the state of Texas. All of these best practices can be implemented with the Mizuni Data Warehouse and Data Dashboard.

1. **The student-teacher link** - Districts should use data systems to connect students with teachers so that teachers are able to see attendance, grades, achievement, and other key information to determine if a student is at risk or on track for college readiness.
2. **National Clearinghouse Data or the Higher Education Coordinating Board Data** - As more districts focus on college readiness and college patterns, districts should connect to a higher education data system for longitudinal K-20 records to ensure students are prepared for college.
3. **Longitudinal high school completion data** - Identifying trends over time starting in kindergarten helps schools identify students at risk.
4. **Early warning systems** - Schools should develop early warning systems to determine whether students are on track and to identify what data elements are indicators of acceptable progress.
5. **Formative assessment** - Schools should gather formative assessment data to identify student understanding and growth throughout the year.