

The Hon. Frank Brogan  
Assistant Secretary of Education  
United States Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202

April 3, 2020

Dear Mr. Brogan,

The undersigned organizations, representing more than 150,000 professional educators, dedicated to the nation's more than 5 million English Learners, write to recommend guidance for the implementation of the Coronavirus Assistance, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), which includes funds for K-12 schools and children. We highlight actions to assist America's five million English Learners during this unfortunate crisis.

We would draw your attention to §18003, which provides for funding for our K-12 schools. This section includes the following, §18003(d)(4), under "Uses of Funds"

(4) Activities to address the unique needs of low-income children or students, children with disabilities, English learners, racial and ethnic minorities, students experiencing homelessness, and foster care youth, including how outreach and service delivery will meet the needs of each population.

This bicameral, bipartisan bill will provide much-needed support for schools and children during the COVID-19 pandemic. We understand that such a significant federal investment will require strategic planning and careful consideration of how to best distribute these funds. NAELPA and the members of the National English Learner Roundtable are prepared to collaborate with the U.S. Department of Education, and act as a resource in planning and implementing the use of these funds, in particular how English learners can benefit from the intended impact of this historic legislation.

MPI deployed a survey to state and school/district English learner and bilingual education leaders through NAELPA to collect key concerns about COVID-19-related school closures for English Learners and their families and to provide recommendations for the use of such funds. The results of this survey are shared in the March 26, 2020 *Memo on School Closures and ELs* published by MPI. We attach this *Memo* below.

From the ideas provided in the *Memo*, as well as from the experience and expertise of the undersigned organizations, specific areas where the CARES funding would have an immediate and vitally important impact on English Learners include:

- support for increasing access to technology;
- training for teachers on instructional strategies to support ELs in a distance/online learning environment;
- Information for ELs and their families, in their home languages, about preventative measures to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and to stay healthy;
- Information for ELs and their families, in their home languages, on school closures, social support measures such as meal distribution, and detailed instructions on home-based learning;
- Specific support for migrant ELs;
- Increasing family engagement through proactive measures by teachers and school and district leadership; and,
- Support for SEAs and LEAs to plan for mitigation of the effects of canceled and postponed testing of ELs, to include English Proficiency for placement and other purposes and testing for State Seals of Biliteracy.

This constitutes a set of immediate, high-priority, high-impact areas that specifically target the educational requirements under the ESEA and Title VI of the Civil Rights act for ELs.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and are eager to collaborate with you on forthcoming guidance on how this money shall be spent. Questions may be directed to Dr. William P. Rivers, Executive Director, Joint National Committee for Languages, at 240-529-7684 and [writers@languagepolicy.org](mailto:writers@languagepolicy.org).

With Best Regards,

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages  
California Association for Bilingual Education  
Californians Together  
Center for Applied Linguistics  
Joint National Committee for Languages  
Migration Policy Institute  
National Association of English Learner Program Administrators  
National Council for Languages and International Studies  
TESOL International Association

CC: The Hon. Aimee Viana, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Education  
Dr. Supreet Anand, Acting Director, Office of English Language Acquisition