

January 5, 2021

ITEM 192-104-R0121

Request for Approval of Spending Authority for Supplemental COVID Relief Funding

THAT

The Board of Regents approves spending authority for supplemental COVID relief funding in the Montana University System. Since the time of the last spending approval in September 2020, the MUS has been awarded additional Coronavirus Relief Funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief from the Office of the Governor. Subsequently, on December 2020, Congress approved additional funding to support COVID relief that will be appropriated directly to campuses within the MUS. These mid-year additions to campus operating budgets require spending authority approval by the Board of Regents or the Commissioner.

EXPLANATION

The Coronavirus Relief Fund provides the following allocations to the campuses of the Montana University System:

➤ **Key Access & Security \$10M**

For system-wide upgrade to security key system and electronic building access, allowing for controlled entry and monitoring of residence halls and other high access locations, integral to contact tracing and monitoring of campus health & safety. An electronic key card access system improves the safety of campuses by providing the ability to control and track access to buildings. Currently campuses are unable to lock buildings remotely which is particularly necessary during an emergency situation and are unable to trace who has accessed the buildings. Key card access enhances the ability to contact trace locations that may have been impacted by COVID-19 with earlier detection and response times to outbreaks.

➤ **Mental Health \$.4M**

Funding for technology and services that will increase remote access to clinical and non-clinical mental health resources, increase awareness about those resources among students, and increase the capacity of students to manage and cope with social isolation while they are in quarantine, isolation, or otherwise dislocated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

➤ **Expanded Screening \$.8M**

To expand screening capacity to enhance Montana's COVID-19 response capabilities.

The Governor's Emergency Education Relief provides the following allocations to the campuses of the Montana University System:

➤ **Banner Migration \$.2M**

Funds to assist in the migration of the key administrative information system, Ellucian Banner, from on-premise to a cloud-based solution for the University of Montana Western.

The Coronavirus Response & Supplemental Relief Appropriations Act (CRSRAA) provides the following allocations to the campuses of the Montana University System:

➤ **Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) \$42M**

- Formula based disbursement to institutions based on FTE and headcount, as well as Pell Grant Recipients
- Defray expenses associated with the coronavirus, including lost revenue, reimbursement for expenses already incurred, technology costs associated with a transition to distance education, faculty and staff trainings, and payroll
- Student support activities authorized by HEA that address needs related to the coronavirus
- Financial aid grants to students, which may be used for any component of the student’s COA or for emergency costs that arise due to the coronavirus such as tuition, food, housing, healthcare, or childcare. Institutions shall prioritize grants to students with exceptional need, such as Pell recipients. The bill requires institutions to spend:
 - As much on student grants as they received in CARES Act for such purposes, and
 - 2 percent based on Pell exclusively online recipients for student grants

MUS Estimates of CRSRAA - HEERF			
	HEERF Allocation	Required Student Emergency Grants Allocation	CARES Student Funding - Minimum Amount for Student Emergency Grants
UM	12,533,453	96,489	3,826,138
MT Tech	2,763,646	25,765	838,100
UM Western	1,868,239	60,993	582,451
Helena College	1,413,069	12,866	342,814
MSU	16,185,709	74,085	5,280,040
MSU Billings	4,023,113	189,348	1,096,598
MSU Northern	1,560,958	51,410	455,629
Great Falls College	1,722,935	72,492	422,611
Total	42,071,122	583,448	12,844,381

➤ **Minority Serving Institutions, and Colleges & Universities Serving Low-Income Students \$.8M**

- A segment of dedicated HEERF funding
- Uses of funds are same as HEERF funding

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment #1: MUS COVID Relief Funding Summary