**American Rescue Plan provides new funding for schools**

The American Rescue Plan, the pandemic relief bill enacted in March, includes the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund, an almost $123 billion fund to support K-12 schools.

The U.S. Department of Education will reserve $800 million of the funds to identify and provide services to homeless children and youth. The remaining funds will be allocated to states based on the Title I poverty formula.

States must reserve 5% of funds received to address learning loss, not less than 1% for summer enrichment programs, not less than 1% for after-school programs, and no more than 0.5% for administrative costs. States will then be required to allocate 90% of the funds to school districts, also based on the Title I poverty formula. The funds are available until Sept. 30, 2023.

Once the funds have been allocated to local school districts, the districts must apportion the funds in two ways. The first 20% of funds received must be used “to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning, extended day, comprehensive after-school programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that such interventions respond to students’ academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus on” disadvantaged student subgroups, homeless students, and students in foster care.

The remaining 80% is where funds can be used for professional learning. These funds can be used for “any activity authorized in the following current laws: Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act and Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006.” This includes professional learning activities covered by Title IIA.

We encourage Learning Forward members and stakeholders to elevate professional learning as a needed use of these funds by telling superintendents and school board members that professional learning and support for educators has never been more important. To meet today’s challenges, educators need instructional coaching, mentoring, online PLCs, virtual supports for engaging students, and any other ongoing, school-embedded professional learning supports.

Learn more at **learningforward.org/advocacy**.