

Federal Education Relief & Recovery Funds

Overview of the American Rescue Plan's Funding Streams & Federal Relief Packages' Timelines

Updated April 20, 2021

This series of resources provides an analysis of federal education recovery funds. Each graphic is meant to support Network leaders' planning, advocacy, and ongoing monitoring of these funds. Below, you'll find:

1. A breakdown of the **funding streams within March 2021's American Rescue Plan Act (ARP)** across K–12 and higher education. These graphics help clarify the scale and federal funds flowing to states and districts and to explain what the funds can be used for.
2. An **overview of the timelines** state and district leaders have to spend the funds for each of the following packages:
 - Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (signed into law March 2020);
 - Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSSA) Act (December 2020); and
 - American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act (March 2021).

Each package has funds specified for different streams that may include the following:

- Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund
- Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)
- Emergency Assistance to Non–Public Schools (EANS) Program
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Funds
- Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund
- Homeless Children & Youth Funds
- Child Care and Development Block Grants (CCDBG)
- Child Care Stabilization Funding

These graphics for each federal relief package show the different requirements, allowable uses, timelines, and deadlines. These details can help advocates identify critical windows for input, push for transparency, hold state and local leaders accountable, and ensure that these funds are used effectively and creatively to accelerate student learning and reinvent education.

Table of Contents

Part One: Deep Dive on the American Rescue Plan's Funding Streams

The brief analyzes funding streams within ARP and visualizes funding across both K–12 and higher education and puts the scale of these funds in context. The majority of K–12 dollars within ARP are distributed through the ESSER III fund, and 90 percent of all ESSER III funds will flow directly to school districts. Funds for higher education in ARP are distributed through the HEER III fund, with the majority of funds allocated directly to higher education institutions and their students.

Page 1: Distribution of Elementary and Secondary School Funds to States

Page 2: Distribution of Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)

Page 3: Key Definitions & Allowable Uses in ARP

Part Two: Overview of Federal Relief Packages' Timelines

The second brief details state and district timelines to plan for and spend funds within all three federal Covid–19 relief packages. Each funding stream's timeline includes when the bill went into effect, the period of time funds are available, and when funds must be awarded and spent by each agency.

Page 4: Key Definitions & Technical Notes

Page 5: Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund

Page 6: Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)

Page 7: Emergency Assistance to Non–Public Schools (EANS) Program

Page 7: K–12 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Funds

Page 8: Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund

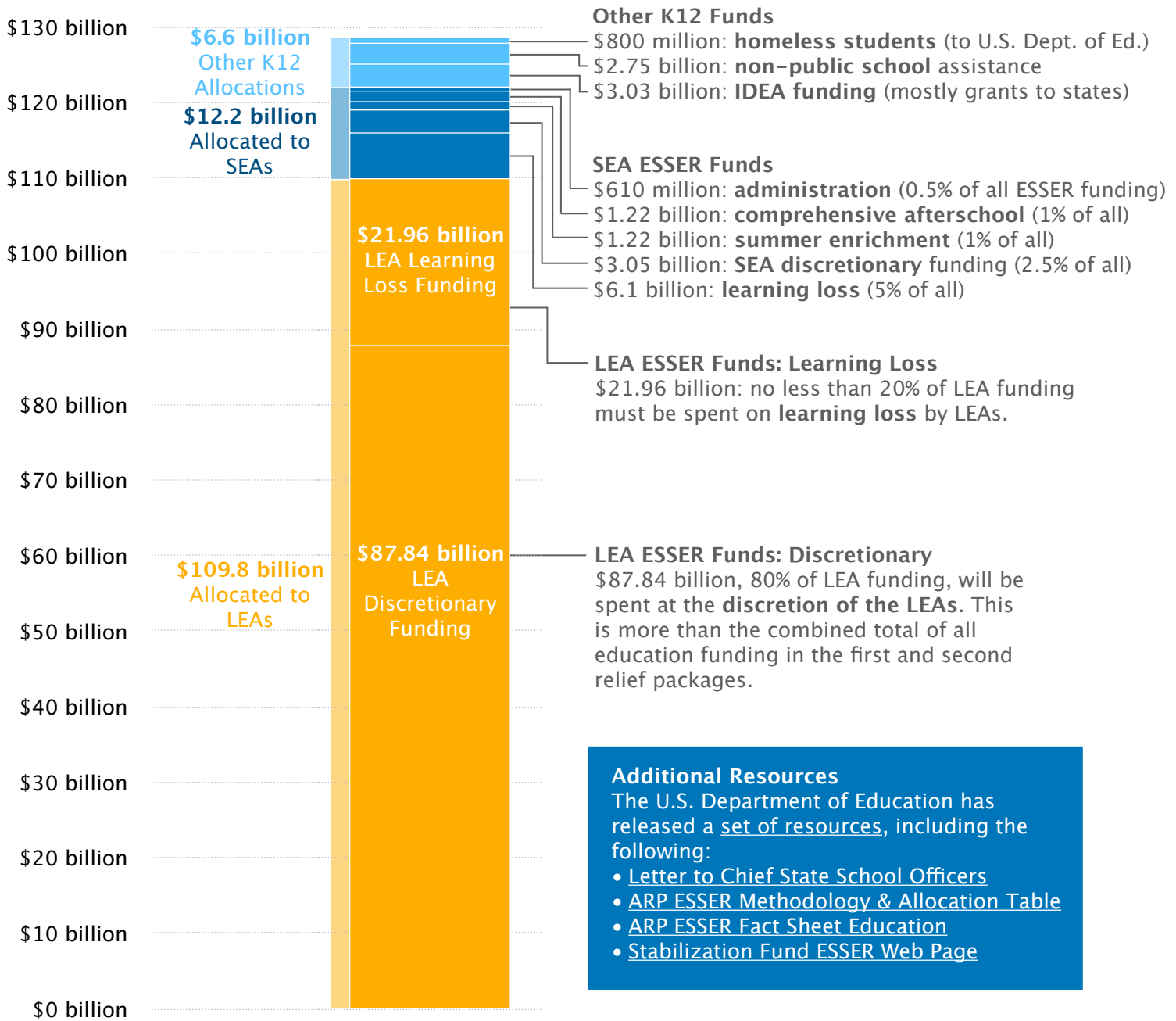
Page 8: Homeless Children & Youth Funds

Page 9: Child Care and Development Block Grants (CCDBG) & Child Care Stabilization Funding

Page 10: Timeline Sources

Overview of American Rescue Plan’s Funding Streams

Distribution of Elementary and Secondary School Funds to States

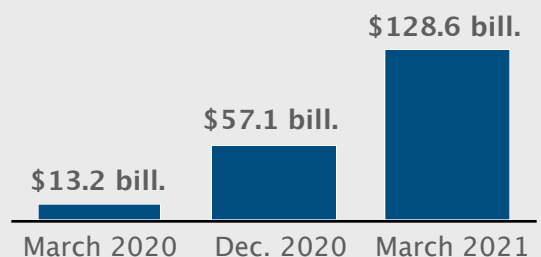


Source: congress.gov

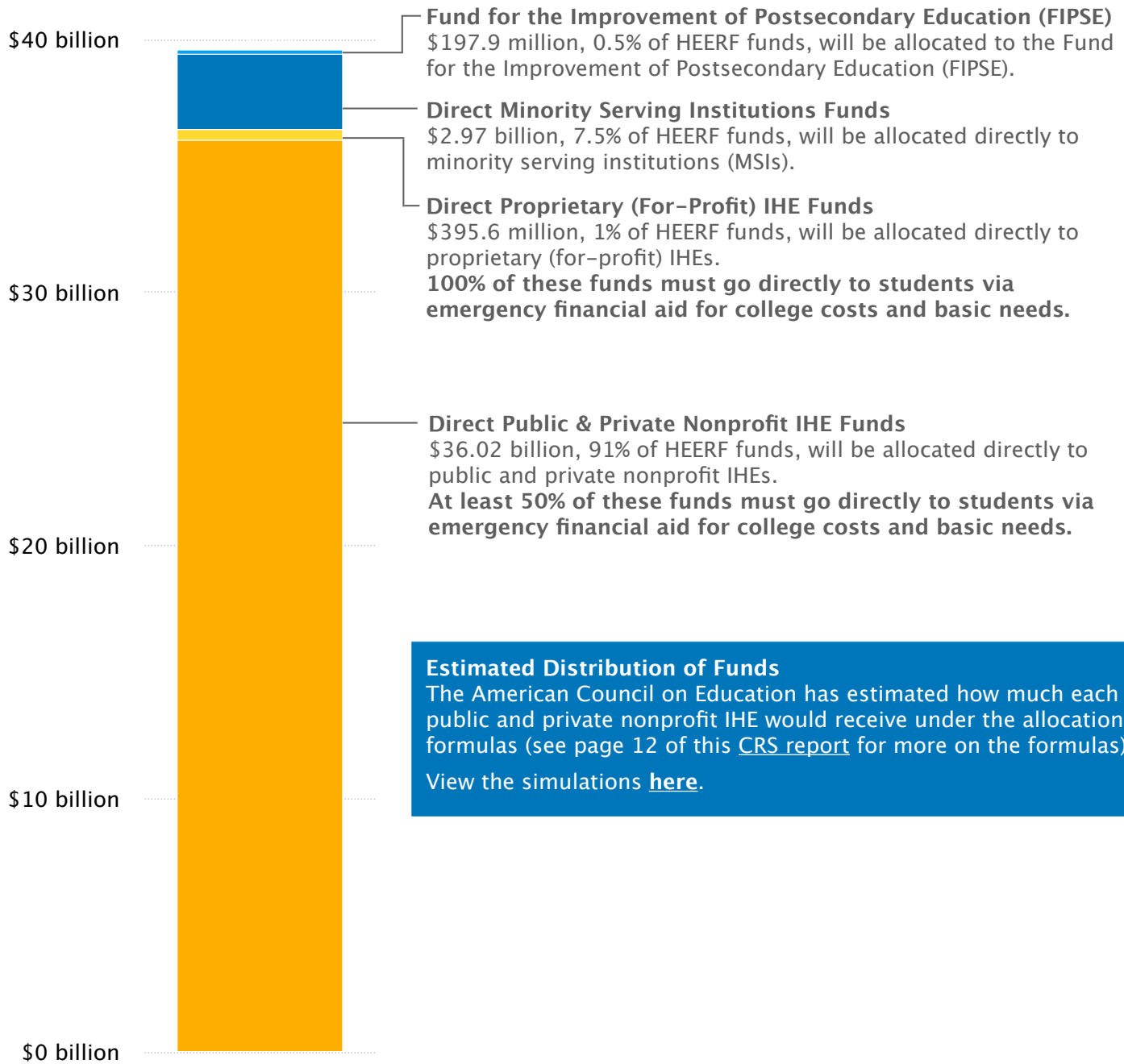
Key Facts

- SEAs must allocate the \$109.8 billion to LEAs within 60 days of receipt from federal government.
- LEAs must obligate the funds by Oct. 2024 and publish a plan for reopening within 30 days of receipt of funds.
- LEA ESSER Funds will be allocated based on the Title I formula, so low-wealth districts will receive more than wealthy districts.
- The plan adds spending requirements for SEAs and LEAs to protect funding levels through FY 2023 for school districts and schools with high percentages of students living in poverty.

Total K12 Education Funding in Relief Packages



Distribution of Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF)



Estimated Distribution of Funds
The American Council on Education has estimated how much each public and private nonprofit IHE would receive under the allocation formulas (see page 12 of this [CRS report](#) for more on the formulas). View the simulations [here](#).

Source: [Congressional Research Service](#)

Key Facts

- It is not clear if international students or those in Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) qualify.
- This package increased the share of funds going to public and private nonprofit IHEs from 89% to 91% compared to the last one and reduced the share for for-profit IHEs from 3% to 1%.
- The plan requires a maintenance of effort proportional to overall state planning through FY 2023.

Total Higher Education Funding in Relief Packages



Source: [WSJ](#)

Key Definitions & Allowable Uses for ARP

ESSER

- **Learning Loss:** LEAs & SEAs shall "address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive afterschool 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 the student subgroups."
 - **Allowable Uses:** "Addressing learning loss by:
 - (i) administering and using high-quality assessments that are valid and reliable, to accurately assess students' academic progress and assist educators in meeting students' academic needs, including through differentiating instruction;
 - (ii) implementing evidence-based activities to meet the comprehensive needs of students;
 - (iii) providing information and assistance to parents and families on how they can effectively support students, including in a distance learning environment; and
 - (iv) tracking student attendance and improving student engagement in distance education."
- **Summer Enrichment:** "ensure evidence-based summer enrichment programs respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus on specific student populations."
- **Comprehensive Afterschool:** "ensure evidence-based comprehensive afterschool programs respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus on specific student populations."

Source: [congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov)

HEERF

- **Student Allowable Uses:**
 - Any component of student's cost of attendance; and
 - Emergency costs that arise due to coronavirus, such as: tuition; food; housing; health care (including mental); child care.
- **Institutional Allowable Uses:**
 - Defray expenses associated with coronavirus including:
 - Lost revenue;
 - Reimbursement for expenses already incurred;
 - Technology costs associated with a transition to distance education;
 - Faculty and staff trainings; and
 - Payroll.
 - Make additional financial aid grants to students.
 - Institutions must use a portion of their allocation for:
 - Implementing evidence-based practices to monitor and suppress coronavirus in accordance with public health guidelines; and
 - Conduct direct outreach to financial aid applicants about the opportunity to receive a financial aid adjustment due to the recent unemployment of a family member or independent student, or other circumstances.

Source: NASFAA

Other Education Funds in the Plan

- \$39.97 billion for Child Care Stabilization and Child Care and Development Block Grants
- \$7.17 billion for E-Rate
- \$5.6 billion to maintain and expand the [Pandemic-EBT program](#)
- \$1 billion for Head Start
- \$1 billion for Americorps
- \$100 million for research and dissemination by the Institute of Education Sciences

Source: [congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov)

Overview of Federal Relief Packages' Timelines

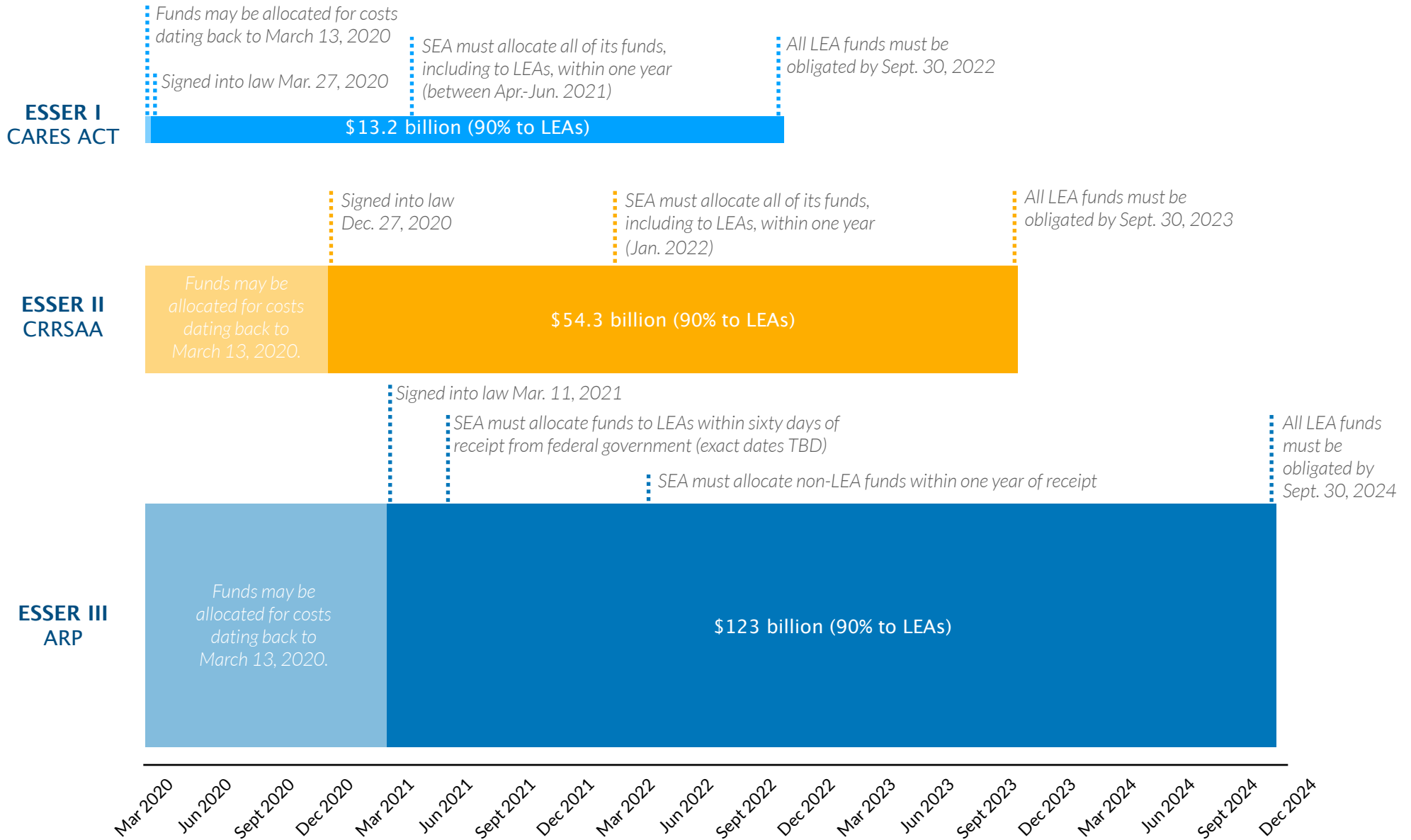
Key Definitions

- For a more exhaustive list of terms and definitions related to federal education laws and programs, [check out this primer.](#)
- Federal law uses different terms to specify deadlines for states and districts to plan for and spend these relief funds. See below for the definitions of each of these terms, in the order they appear in the document:
 - **Allocate/Distribute:** Funds are considered 'allocated' or 'distributed' when they are subgranted, or dealt out, to the final agency (i.e. from the SEA to the LEA in ESSER or from the Governor to the university in GEER), but have not yet been spent. This is typically the first step.
 - **Obligate/Spend/Liquidate:** Funds are considered 'obligated,' 'spent,' or 'liquidated' when they have either been paid out or have been used to enter into a contract for materials or services.
 - **Remain Available:** The period of time funds are able to be used or spent before the money must be returned to the federal government.
 - **Award:** Funds are considered 'awarded' when they are subgranted, awarded a contract, or when the agency retains funds to provide direct services.

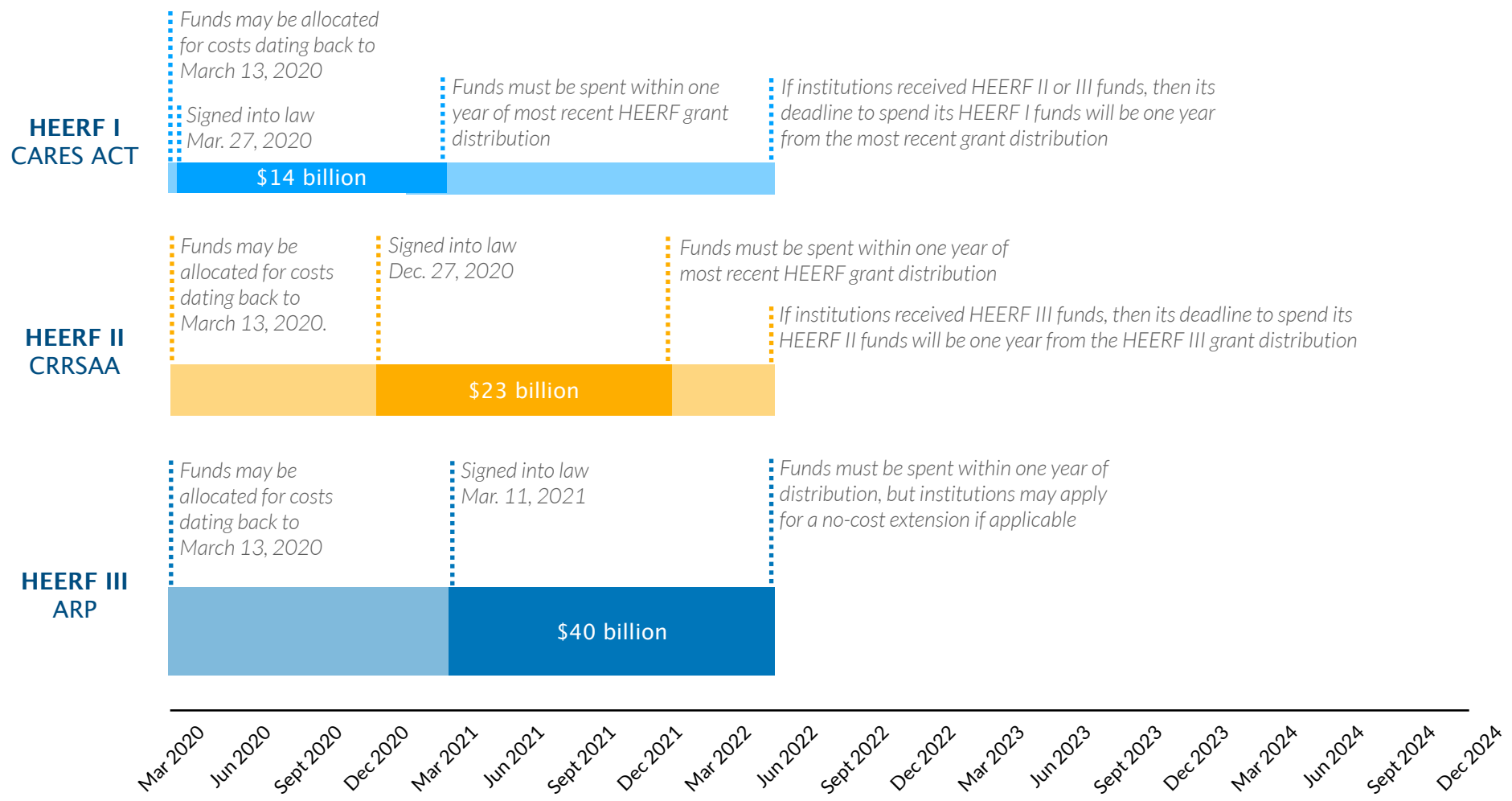
Technical Notes

- **Many of the rules and requirements for ARPA funds have not yet been released by the federal Department of Education. Therefore, some of the language and requirements are subject to change in the coming weeks.**
 - Specifically, the Department is likely to release additional information in the future on reporting requirements for districts and states.
 - At this time, we are unsure if there is any lag time between when the state allocates these funds and when the district receives them.
 - At this time, the Department has not announced the final deadline for spending ARPA's Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funds.
 - At this time, the Department has not determined the process and timeline for allocating the \$800 million set-aside for homeless youth. Funds will flow to SEAs, but additional agencies outside the districts may be eligible to receive these funds, such as community organizations.
- The deadlines included in these documents are inclusive of the Tydings Amendment, so unless otherwise noted (see: HEER funds), these are the final dates that agencies have to spend this money before any unspent, remaining funds must be returned to the federal government.
- \$81 million of ARPA's ESSER III dollars, or two-thirds of the total, have already gone to states. The remaining one-third of ESSER III funds will flow to states once districts submit their 'Safe Return to In-Person Instruction Plan.'
 - Within 30 days of a district receiving ARP ESSER III funds, it must "make publicly available on its website a plan for the safe return to in-person instruction and continuity of services. Before making the plan publicly available, the LEA must seek public comment on the plan."

Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund Timeline for Distribution of Funds



Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) Timeline for Distribution of Funds



Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) Program Timeline for Distribution of Funds

EANS CARES ACT

CARES did not have specific funds for non-public schools

EANS CRRSAA

Funds may be allocated for costs dating back to March 13, 2020.

Signed into law Dec. 27, 2020

SEA must allocate funds to non-public schools within six months of receipt

Non-public schools must spend the funds by Sept. 30, 2023

\$2.75 billion

EANS ARP

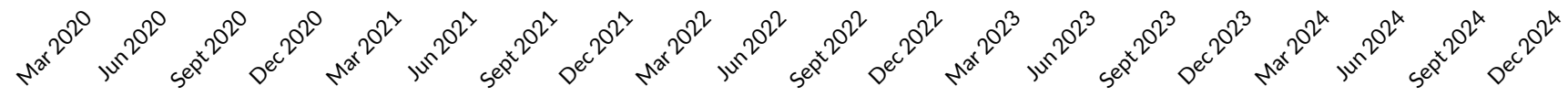
Funds may be allocated for costs dating back to March 13, 2020

Signed into law Mar. 11, 2021

SEA must allocate funds to non-public schools within six months of receipt

Non-public schools must spend the funds by Sept. 30, 2023

\$2.75 billion



K-12 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Funds Timeline for Distribution of Funds

K-12 IDEA CARES ACT & CRRSAA

CARES and CRRSAA did not have specific funds for IDEA

K-12 IDEA ARP

Funds may be allocated for costs dating back to March 13, 2020

Signed into law Mar. 11, 2021

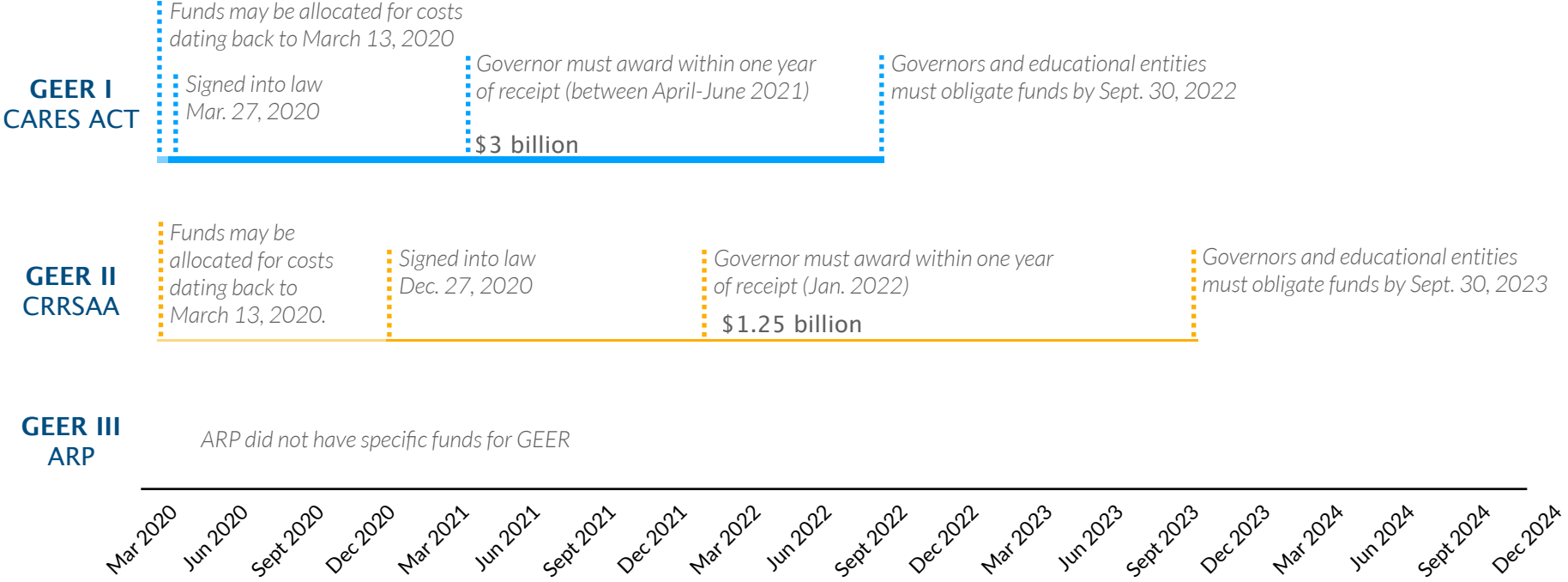
U.S. Department of Education must distribute funds for this fiscal year by Sept. 30, 2021

Funds will remain available through Sept. 30, 2023

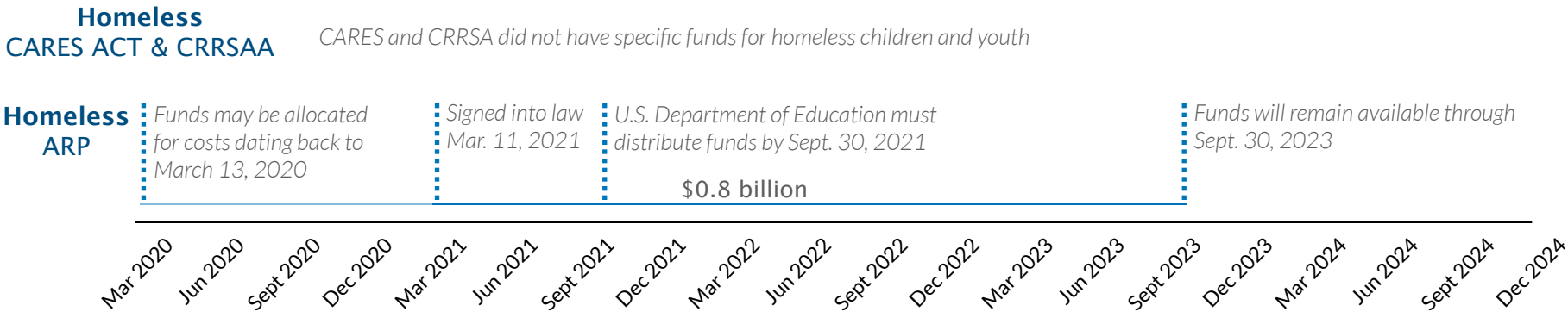
\$2.6 billion



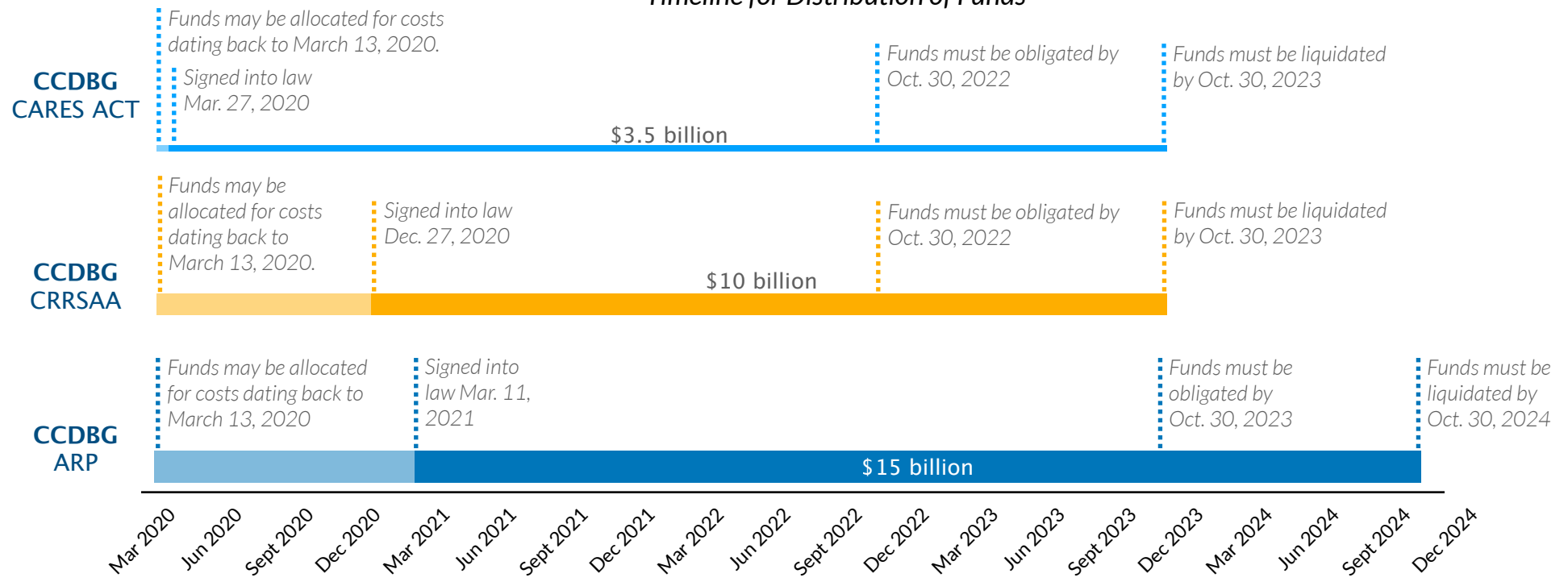
Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund Timeline for Distribution of Funds



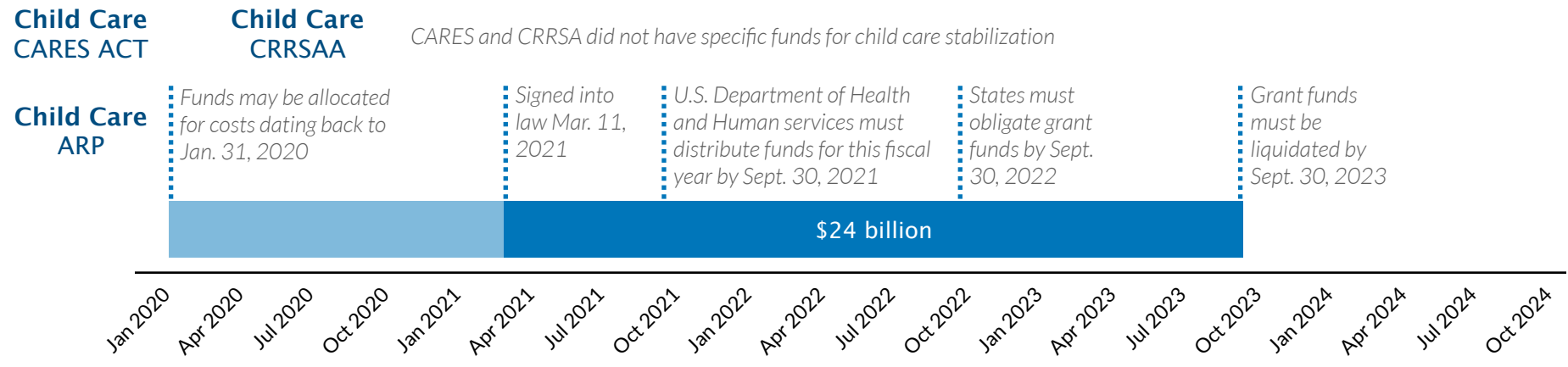
Homeless Children & Youth Funds Timeline for Distribution of Funds



Child Care and Development Block Grants (CCDBG) Timeline for Distribution of Funds



Child Care Stabilization Funding Timeline for Distribution of Funds



Timeline Sources

- **ESSER I (CARES Act) and ESSER II (CRRSA)**
 - [U.S. Department of Education's ESSER Home Page](#)
 - [U.S. Department of Education's ESSER I and II Fact Sheet](#)
- **ESSER III (ARPA, [full bill language here](#))**
 - [U.S. Department of Education's ARPA ESSER III Home Page](#)
 - [U.S. Department of Education's ARPA ESSER III Fact Sheet](#)
- **HEER Funds I, II, III**
 - [HEER Funds I, II, III Comparison Chart](#) (NASFAA)
 - [U.S. Department of Education's CARES Act HEER Fund I Home Page](#)
 - [U.S. Department of Education's CRRSA HEER Fund II Home Page](#)
 - [HEER Fund II Reference Page](#) (NASFAA)
 - [HEER Fund III Reference Page](#) (NASFAA)
- **ARPA's IDEA**
 - [Overview of Funding](#) (New America)
 - [Overview of Funding](#) (EdWeek)
- **Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) Program**
 - [U.S. Department of Education's FAQ for CRRSA's EANS Program](#)
- **ARPA's Allocation for Homeless Children and Youth**
 - [Funding Matrix for ARPA Programs](#) (American University)
- **GEER I and II**
 - [U.S. Department of Education's FAQ for CARES Act's GEER I](#)
 - [U.S. Department of Education's GEER I and II Fact Sheet](#)
- **ARPA's Child Care Stabilization**
 - [State Implementation of the Historic COVID Child Care Relief and Stabilization Funds](#) (The Center for Law and Social Policy)
 - [Child Care in the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#) (Bipartisan Policy Center)
- **Child Care and Development Block Grants (CCDBG)**
 - [CCDBG COVID-19 Relief Funding At-a-Glance](#) (First Five Years Fund)