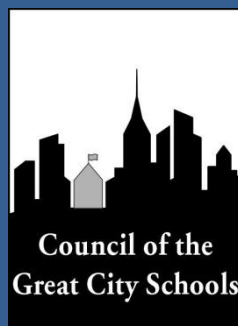




# Investing Wisely and Quickly

## Use of ARRA Funds in America's Great City Schools

May 2010



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## Major Findings

- Forty (40) Great City School districts completed a series of surveys on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA or the Recovery Act), and received a total of \$7.3 billion in IDEA, Title I, and State Fiscal Stabilization Funds.
- ARRA funds paid for 49,787 FTE jobs, almost eight percent of the entire workforce in these 40 urban school systems, in the 2009-10 school year. The Council estimates that over 65,000 jobs were paid for with ARRA across all 65 Great City School districts.
- Responding urban districts received \$3.4 billion under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF), and paid for almost 30,000 jobs through this program in 2009-10.
- Seventy-five percent of responding districts indicated that the combined amount of State Education Aid and SFSF funds received in 2009-10 was the same as or lower than the amount of State Education Aid alone that their districts received in 2008-09.
- The 40 urban school districts responding to the survey received approximately \$2.5 billion in Title I funds under ARRA, and paid for more than 11,000 jobs in 2009-10.
- Urban school districts sought a number of waivers from Title I spending requirements to gain the most flexibility possible with ARRA funding, including waivers of the 20 percent set-aside for supplemental services (SES) and choice, Title I carryover limits, and base per pupil allocations for SES.
- More than 87 percent of respondents indicated they use Title I stimulus dollars to expand services into additional eligible schools.
- The 40 responding districts indicated that they received some \$1.4 billion in stimulus funds under IDEA and paid for more than 8,500 jobs in 2009-10.
- Fewer than half of the respondents were able to utilize the IDEA provision that allowed districts to reduce their local maintenance of effort (MoE) by an amount equal to 50 percent of their IDEA increase over the 2008 fiscal year.
- Local revenue sources remained stable during the early years of the economic downturn, but may drop once lagging valuation assessments reflect decreased property values.
- More than half of urban school districts used one or more of the school construction bonding options available under the Recovery Act.
- The Council forecasts a decline of at least \$4.0 billion in total revenues this upcoming school year, jeopardizing approximately 44,000 jobs without additional assistance.

## **Table of Contents**

**4**

**Introduction**

**5**

**ARRA Education Funds**

**7**

**The Four Assurances**

**8**

**Survey Results**

**15**

**Examples of ARRA Funding Uses**

**21**

**Analysis of Survey Results**

**28**

**ARRA Implementation Issues**

**33**

**Upcoming Funding Challenges**

**37**

**Synopsis and Discussion**

**40**

**City-by-City Use of Funds**

# Investing Wisely and Quickly: Use of ARRA Funds in America's Great City Schools

## Introduction

The nation's economic downturn has caused enormous damage to America's public and private institutions, and prompted a significant governmental response from two Administrations. In October 2008, President George W. Bush worked with the 110th Congress to approve a \$700 billion bank "bailout," which authorized the federal government to purchase assets and equity from financial institutions struggling as a result of the subprime mortgage crisis. But it became clear that the economic crisis went broader and deeper than the financial industry. In recognition of this reality, and prior to the January 20, 2009, inauguration of President Barack Obama, both chambers of Congress and the incoming Administration were working on a stimulus package that could help the nation survive the worsening economic conditions.

This additional federal stimulus program, which included both tax and spending provisions, was designed to save and create jobs, invest in long-term growth, and drive economic recovery. The investments focused on traditional areas of economic stimulus, such as unemployment benefits, job training, and infrastructure projects, but it also sought to support areas of specific interest to the new President that were believed to drive long-term prosperity. These areas included energy efficiency; science and technology; health care; and elementary, secondary, and higher education.

President Obama signed the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the Recovery Act or ARRA) into law on February 17, 2009. This federal stimulus package provided an unprecedented infusion of new education aid for the nation's schools—more than \$100 billion. The intent of these new funds was to spur economic growth, fill budget gaps created by the recession, and make a down payment on the reform of public education. Much of this new aid was targeted at the nation's largest urban public schools, the focus of much of the nation's educational reform efforts.

After enactment, the U.S. Department of Education published a series of guidance documents describing the multiple types of federal assistance available for states and school districts under ARRA and laying out expectations for the use of Recovery Act funds. Federal officials wanted to advance the stimulus plan's immediate economic goals by investing resources *quickly*, but also wanted to support ARRA's longer-term objectives by investing *wisely*, using the Recovery funds to strengthen education, spur reforms, and improve results for students. U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan outlined the principles for the use of ARRA funds:

- Spend funds quickly to save and create jobs
- Improve student achievement through school improvement and reform

- Ensure transparency, reporting, and accountability
- Invest one-time ARRA funds thoughtfully to minimize the "funding cliff"

## ARRA Education Funds

The economic stimulus package signed into law by President Obama contained significant one-time funding for education, including a number of programs that provided direct aid to local school districts. Some of this support came through a new mechanism—the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund—and some through long-standing federal education programs that would be governed under ARRA largely by the same rules, requirements, and guidelines as the regular program funding. Specifically, the Recovery Act’s education funds in 2009 and 2010 were composed of the following programs:

### State Fiscal Stabilization Fund

The largest source of funding for K-12 education under the Recovery Act came *via* a new program, the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF). This program, which received \$53.6 billion nationally, included state-directed grants for elementary, secondary, and higher education; additional funds for government services at the discretion of each Governor (which could include education); and federal competitive grants distributed by the U.S. Secretary of Education.

Almost \$40 billion of the total amount under the SFSF was directed to Governors in order to “backfill” budget cuts made in elementary, secondary, and higher education. Each state was instructed to determine the proportion of funding cuts made in each of the education levels, and distribute the state’s share of the SFSF to each—in the same proportion. Funds that a school district received through the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund could be used for any activity authorized under a number of federal education laws, including the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, or for school renovation and repair. An additional \$8.8 billion was also provided to Governors for public safety or other government services, and at the Governor’s discretion, could also be used for education.

The Recovery Act also included \$5 billion for two competitive grant programs to be administered by Secretary Duncan. The larger grant program was titled, “State Incentive Grants” in the final legislation and became known as “Race to the Top.” This grant offered \$4.35 billion in competitive funds to states that met four specified assurances and outlined a plan for improving student performance and closing achievement gaps. The State Incentive Grant provisions of the law also stated that any state receiving an award must distribute at least 50 percent of the entire award to local school districts based on the federal Title I formula.

The remaining \$650 million in the Secretary’s competitive allocation was for Innovation Grants to school districts, or partnerships that include school districts, nonprofit organizations, or consortiums of schools. The purpose of these funds, as clarified in the FY 2010 final

appropriations bill, was to award school districts or partnerships that could demonstrate joint success in improving student performance, closing achievement gaps, or making other improvements, such as raising graduation rates. This Recovery Act support, now known as Investing in Innovation (i3) Grants, aimed to identify, document, and bring to scale the best practices in school districts.

## **Title I**

The existing federal Title I program for improving the academic achievement of disadvantaged students received a total of \$13 billion under the Recovery Act. From that total, \$10 billion was split equally between the Targeted Grants portion and the Education Finance Incentive Grant portions of the Title I formula, and distributed to Title I programs operating in approximately 12,000 local school districts across the country. The remaining \$3 billion was set aside for states to administer Title I School Improvement Grants.

## **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) program received \$12.2 billion under the Recovery Act. More than \$11 billion of that amount was allocated for IDEA Part B grants to school districts. Not only would these ARRA funds provide support for special education, but under an IDEA statutory provision, up to 50 percent of the annual increase in IDEA Part B could be used flexibly to free up local funding that was being spent to meet federal special education requirements. This flexibility was badly needed by school districts experiencing the brunt of the economic meltdown.

The Recovery Act also provided an additional \$400 million for preschool grants under IDEA, as well as \$500 million for IDEA grants under the Infants and Toddlers program.

## **School Construction**

Although grant funding for school modernization was removed from the stimulus legislation before it was passed by Congress, the tax portion of the Recovery Act included significant support in this area through interest-free bonds. A large-scale bond program, championed for years by Congressman Charles Rangel (D-NY) and Senator Jay Rockefeller (D-WV), was included in the final ARRA package. The new bond program, known as Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCBs), offered \$22 billion in interest-free bonding authority (\$11 billion for each of the calendar years 2009 and 2010) for school construction, renovation and repair, or land acquisition.

The funding distribution for this program was unique, in that 40 percent of the total bonding authority was distributed directly to the 100 largest school districts in the nation, based on the number of students living in poverty, as defined by the U.S. Census. This mechanism ensured that support would be provided quickly to districts with the highest numbers of poor students, without a need to apply for a bond allocation through their respective states. The

legislation stipulated that the remaining 60 percent of the total bonding authority would be distributed among all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

ARRA also renewed and expanded the popular Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs), first authorized in 1997, which provided \$400 million per year in interest-free bonding authority to states. QZABs provide funding that may be used for renovating school buildings, purchasing equipment, developing curricula, and training school personnel, but may not be used for new construction. The Recovery Act increased the total bonding authority for QZABs to \$1.4 billion for each of the 2009 and 2010 calendar years.

The tax portion of ARRA also included another bonding provision that school districts would find useful in addressing their facility needs. The new Build America Bond (BAB) program authorized state and local governments to issue BABs as taxable bonds in 2009 and 2010. BABs can be used to finance any capital expenditures for which state and local entities otherwise could issue tax-exempt government bonds. The issuers receive a direct federal subsidy payment for a portion of their borrowing costs—equal to 35 percent of the total coupon interest paid to investors.

### **Other Education Funding**

The Recovery Act included other smaller amounts of funding for school districts through the U.S. Department of Education, including \$650 million for education technology (Title II-D of ESEA), \$200 million for the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF), and \$70 million for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The U.S. Department of Agriculture also received \$100 million under ARRA for the National School Lunch Program. These funds were allocated for school-meals equipment assistance, distributed on a priority basis by states to schools in which at least 50 percent or more of the student body was eligible for free or reduced-price meals.

## **The Four Assurances**

The final ARRA legislation included a number of assurances that Governors were required to meet in order to receive funding under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF). Four assurances focused specifically on improving student performance, and were disseminated widely as principles for the expenditure of funds under all ARRA programs, and not just the SFSF. These four assurances, which appeared in some form in the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the America Competes Act of 2007, created the basis for the Department's efforts to reform education more broadly through ARRA. The four assurances are:

1. 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;



2. Establishing pre-K-to college-and-career data systems that track progress and foster continuous improvement;
3. Making improvements in teacher effectiveness and in the equitable distribution of qualified teachers for all students, particularly students who are most in need; and
4. Providing intensive support and effective interventions for the lowest-performing schools.

The Recovery Act also included an additional requirement instructing states to assure that, in fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011, they would maintain support for elementary, secondary, and higher education at least at the level of support provided in fiscal year 2006.

## Survey Results

To determine how this unprecedented federal infusion of education funding was being used in the nation’s major city school systems, the Council of the Great City Schools sent four surveys to each of the organization’s 65-member city school systems in the fall of 2009. The surveys asked districts for information about the stimulus funding available to them under the Recovery Act – State Fiscal Stabilization Fund, Title I, IDEA, and School Construction Bonds – as well as budget and revenue status. Forty big city school districts completed all four surveys for a total response rate of 61.5 percent.<sup>1</sup> School districts in six additional cities completed one to three surveys each, but their results were not included in this section of the report in order to produce results that were statistically comparable.

The 40 cities responding to all four surveys have a total enrollment of 5,451,065 students, employ some 629,811 individuals—including 322,734 full-time equivalent (FTE) teachers, and serve 8,612 schools. Approximately 60 percent of the students in these districts are eligible for a federal free or reduced price lunch; 15 percent are English language learners; and 12 percent are students with disabilities. About 35 percent of the students are African American; 36 percent are Hispanic; 20 percent are white; and 7 percent are Asian American, Native American, Alaskan Native, or other.

**Exhibit 1. Aggregate ARRA Funds Received by the Great City Schools**

Total ARRA Funds	Total Jobs Paid for with ARRA Funds
\$7,263,138,958	49,787

<sup>1</sup> City school districts completing all four surveys used in this study included Albuquerque, Anchorage, Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Boston, Broward County (Fort Lauderdale), Buffalo, Charlotte-Mecklenburg, Chicago, Cincinnati, Clark County (Las Vegas), Cleveland, Columbus, Dallas, Denver, Duval County (Jacksonville), Fresno, Guilford County (Greensboro), Hillsborough County (Tampa), Houston, Indianapolis, Little Rock, Los Angeles, Miami-Dade County, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, New York City, Newark, Norfolk, Orange County (Orlando), Pittsburgh, Portland, Richmond, Rochester, San Francisco, Seattle, St. Louis, St. Paul, and Wichita.

## Aggregate ARRA Funds

The districts responding to the survey received a total of \$7.3 billion in IDEA, Title I, and State Fiscal Stabilization Funds under ARRA. The funds paid for 49,787 FTE jobs—or 7.9 percent of the entire workforce in these 40 city school systems. If one applies this percentage across all 65 Great City School districts, then we project that ARRA paid for approximately 65,169 education jobs in these major cities, in addition to a substantial number of program enhancements, materials, professional development, and technology upgrades.

**Exhibit 2. Number of Jobs Paid for by ARRA in 2009-10**

Great City School District	Number of Jobs Paid for by ARRA in 2009-10	Great City School District	Number of Jobs Paid for by ARRA in 2009-10
Albuquerque	1,557	Houston	796
Anchorage	93	Indianapolis	204
Atlanta	507	Little Rock	41
Austin	112	Los Angeles	7,181
Baltimore	629	Miami-Dade	2,962
Boston	69	Milwaukee	438
Broward County	2,639	Minneapolis	323
Buffalo	1,216	New York City	13,579
Charlotte-Mecklenburg	458	Newark	2,565
Chicago	3,767	Norfolk	305
Cincinnati	129	Orlando	1,676
Clark County	143	Pittsburgh	53
Cleveland	890	Portland	397
Columbus	232	Richmond	251
Dallas	243	Rochester	266

Great City School District	Number of Jobs Paid for by ARRA in 2009-10	Great City School District	Number of Jobs Paid for by ARRA in 2009-10
Denver	218	San Francisco	245
Duval County	906	Seattle	142
Fresno	608	St. Louis	453
Greensboro	964	St. Paul	328
Hillsborough County	1,576	Wichita	628
<b>Total: 49,787 Jobs</b>			

### State Fiscal Stabilization Funds

Urban districts were asked to report the total grant that they received through the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF). The total amount of funding received by the 40 districts completing the entire survey equaled \$3.4 billion. (See Exhibit 3.) The Council also asked about the number of installments it would take for the districts to receive their full amount from their states. Responding districts indicated that they would receive their SFSF funds in an average of 2.7 payments, with funds first made available in some districts as early as April 2009. Districts indicated that the final installments were expected sometime between June 2009 and late 2011.

#### Exhibit 3. State Fiscal Stabilization Funds Received under ARRA

Total State Fiscal Stabilization Funds	Total Jobs Paid for with State Fiscal Stabilization Funds
\$3,364,610,175	29,770

Districts were also asked about the level of State Education Aid they received in 2009-10, and whether states reduced state education funding in anticipation of receiving SFSF funds through the economic stimulus package. Thirty respondents, 75 percent of those surveyed, indicated that their states did reduce education aid to their school districts. A follow-up question asked about the combined amount of State Education Aid and SFSF funds received in 2009-10, compared with the amount of State Education Aid alone that their districts received in 2008-09. Of the 40 respondents, 10 districts indicated that the combination of State Education Aid and SFSF funds in 2009-10 would provide a net increase over the amount of state aid in 2008-09. The remaining 30 respondents indicated that the combination of funds would represent a net decrease (16 school districts) over 2008-09 or would provide no change over 2008-09 (14 districts). (See Exhibit 4.)

#### Exhibit 4. Reductions in State Aid from 2008-09 School Year

Change in Revenue from Combination of SFSF and State Aid (2009-10) Compared to State Aid Only (2008-09)	Number of Districts	Percentage of Districts
Net Increase over 2008-09	10	25.0%
Net Decrease from 2008-09	16	40.0%
Essentially No Change from 2008-09	14	35.0%

Districts were also asked about their use of funds for school repair and renovation, an allowable use under the Stabilization package. Only four urban school districts indicated that they intended to use a portion of their Stabilization funding for infrastructure projects, amounting to a total of approximately \$225 million.

Finally, urban districts were asked how many jobs (FTEs) were paid for in the 2009-10 school year with federal Stabilization grants. The 40 responding urban districts indicated that approximately 29,770 FTEs were funded through these grants in the current school year.

#### Title I

The 40 urban school districts responding to the survey also received approximately \$2.5 billion in Title I funds under ARRA. (See Exhibit 5.) Districts indicated that funds would be available to them in multiple installments, with the full amount provided in an average of 2.3 payments. Funds were first available to some districts soon after passage of the Recovery Act, while other districts did not receive Title I funds from their state until January 2010. The final installment dates among the respondents ranged from June 2009 to late 2011, after the formal obligation deadline.

#### Exhibit 5. Title I Funds Received under ARRA

Total Title I Funds	Total Jobs Paid for with Title I Funds
\$2,477,083,561	11,243

Districts were also asked about which federal waivers they expected to seek in order to gain additional flexibility with the funds. Thirty-nine urban school districts, more than 97 percent of those completing the survey, indicated that they would seek a waiver from specific spending requirements mandated under Title I stimulus funding. Thirty-seven districts, or 92.5 percent, indicated that they intended to request waivers in connection with the requirement that 20 percent of their Title I funds be set aside for supplemental educational

services (SES) and federal School Choice options. A large majority of respondents (82.5 percent), moreover, indicated they would seek waivers from regular Title I carryover provisions, while more than 62.5 percent (25 school districts) sought waivers from having to include Title I ARRA funds in calculating base per-pupil allocations for SES.

Almost half of the respondents (47.5 percent) indicated interest in waivers allowing districts identified for improvement to act as their own SES providers. Districts also expected to seek waivers from Title I set-asides for professional development, with 45 percent of respondents indicating they would seek a waiver from the school-level set-aside, and 35 percent of respondents seeking a waiver from the district-level set-aside. Thirteen urban school districts, or 32.5 percent of respondents, wanted to waive the one-year planning period required under Title I schoolwide programs, and 25 percent would seek waivers from the 14-day parental notice requirement under School Choice. (See Exhibit 6.)

**Exhibit 6. Number and Percentage of Districts Expecting to Apply for Waivers**

Areas for Waiver Requests	Number of Districts	Percent of Districts
20 percent set-aside for SES /Choice	37	92.5%
Title I carryover limits	33	82.5%
Base per pupil allocation for SES	25	62.5%
Allowance for district to be SES provider	19	47.5%
10 percent school-level professional development	18	45.0%
10 percent district-level professional development	14	35.0%
One-year planning period for school-wide projects	13	32.5%
14-day Choice notification rule	10	25.0%

The availability of additional funds under ARRA also provided an opportunity to expand services into eligible schools that had previously not received Title I funds. Thirty-five of the 40 responding districts, more than 87 percent, indicated they would use Title I stimulus dollars to expand services. Twelve urban districts or 30 percent of respondents, planned to use the Title I funds in additional K-8 schools that had not previously been served. Eight districts, or 20 percent, planned to use the funds to support Title I high schools alone, and more than 37 percent (15 urban school districts) would use the ARRA funds for Title I to reach into both K-8 and high schools. (See Exhibit 7.)

**Exhibit 7. Number and Percentage of Districts Using Funds for Title I Program Expansion**

Eligible Title I School Type	Number of Districts Using Title I Funds to Expand Services	Percentage of Districts Using Title I Funds to Expand Services
K-8	12	30.0%
High School	8	20.0%
Both K-8 and High School	15	37.5%

The survey also asked urban districts what proportion of their Title I ARRA grant would be devoted to district-level activities and what proportion would be distributed to schools through building-level allocations. The average percentage of the total Title I ARRA funds spent on district-level activities was 52 percent in the 40 responding districts. The same 40 districts spent an average of 41.5 percent of the same Title I grant on building-level allocations. Eleven respondents spent 75 percent or more of the Title I funds on district-level activities, and ten districts spent 75 percent or more of the ARRA Title I funds on building-level allocations.

Finally, urban school districts were asked about the number of jobs (FTEs) that were being paid for in the 2009-10 school year with Title I stimulus funds. The results showed that 11,243 FTEs were funded under Title I ARRA.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

Urban school districts in the Council were asked to report the total Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funding that they were slated to receive under the Recovery Act. The 40 responding districts indicated that they received some \$1.4 billion. (See Exhibit 8.) The responding districts would receive this aid in one to 12 installments from their respective states, with an average number of payments equaling 2.5 installments. Districts started receiving IDEA funding between June 2009 and January 2010, with many districts expecting to receive their final installment at the end of the ARRA funding cycle in late-2011.

**Exhibit 8. IDEA Funds Received Under ARRA**

Total IDEA Funds	Total Jobs Paid for with IDEA Funds
\$1,421,445,222	8,773

Fewer than half of the respondents (18 districts, or 45 percent) were able to utilize the IDEA provision that allowed districts to reduce their local maintenance of effort (MoE) by an amount equal to 50 percent of their IDEA increase over the 2008 fiscal year. Fifteen of these 18 districts (more than 80 percent), however, took the opportunity to reduce their local MoE in

order to garner more flexibility over funds. The total amount by which these districts were able to reduce their local MoE equaled \$147.6 million. (See Exhibit 9.)

**Exhibit 9. Districts Able to Take Advantage of IDEA Local MoE Provision**

Number of Districts Able to Reduce MoE Under IDEA	Number of Districts Reducing MoE Under IDEA	Amount of Local MoE Reduction under IDEA
18	15	\$147,614,460

Districts able to use the flexibility under MoE did so by using the freed-up resources for activities and services such as—

- Providing services to students with disabilities that align with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA);
- Paying out-of-district tuition for students with disabilities;
- Increased technology capacity for regular and special education;
- Contracting services for students with disabilities;
- Recalling teachers whose positions had been eliminated from loss of state revenue; and
- Providing or expanding teacher and administrator professional development.

Eight urban school districts, or 20 percent of respondents, indicated that they did not want to use the IDEA provision that would have allowed them to reduce local MoE. Eleven districts, or 27.5 percent of respondents, could not use the MoE provision because they did not meet state performance targets, while another 20 percent were prohibited from using the IDEA flexibility because they were required to provide early intervention services (EIS) due to problems with the disproportionate identification of minority students as disabled. Five districts, slightly more than 12 percent of respondents, were unable to reduce MoE because they were out of compliance with IDEA requirements, and one district was told by the state that it was ineligible to reduce its local MoE, but was not given a specific reason.

Urban school districts reported that an estimated 8,773 jobs (FTEs) were being paid for using IDEA funding available under the ARRA stimulus grant.

**School Construction**

The survey also asked about district use of school construction bonding options available under the Recovery Act. Twenty-two urban districts, or 55 percent of the responding districts, indicated they had used one or more of the three major bonding options authorized under ARRA—Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCBs), Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs), and Build America Bonds (BABs)—to improve school facilities in the 2009 calendar year. Nineteen districts, more than 47 percent, used the new Qualified School Construction



Bonds, 11 districts used the new Build America Bonds, and seven districts used the existing Qualified Zone Academy Bonds.

## Budget and Revenue

Council districts were also asked to indicate the total dollar amount that they received or expected to receive from specific revenue sources (state, local, federal, and other) for the 2008-09, 2009-10, and 2010-11 school years. These numbers excluded revenue from bond sales, as well as the sale of property or equipment, and were based on revenue definitions from the National Center for Education Statistics. In instances in which a district submitted a survey before 2010-11 budget figures were available, flat funding was assumed for that school year.

Responses from the 40 responding districts showed that total revenues, across all sources, was approximately \$70.4 billion in the 2008-09 school year, \$70.7 billion in 2009-10, and is expected to be some \$67.8 billion in 2010-11.

In 2008-09, the \$70.4 billion in overall revenue was comprised of approximately \$31.4 billion in state funds, \$29.5 billion in local funds, \$7.7 billion in federal funds, and \$1.8 billion from other sources. The 2009-10 revenue total of \$70.7 billion was comprised of \$29.6 billion in state funds, \$29.4 billion in local funds, \$10.2 billion in federal funds, and \$1.5 billion from other sources. The revenue total for the 2010-11 school year conservatively shows approximately a \$3.0 billion reduction in these 40 districts. The \$67.8 billion for 2010-11 is expected to include \$28.6 billion in state funding, \$29.1 billion in local funds, \$8.7 billion in federal funds, and \$1.4 billion from other sources. (See Exhibit 10.)

**Exhibit 10. Revenue Changes from 2008-09 to 2010-11**

Revenue Sources	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11*
Federal	\$7,660,454,722	\$10,207,940,973	\$8,684,752,279
State	\$31,414,792,079	\$29,601,452,636	\$28,566,979,496
Local	\$29,517,494,095	\$29,400,315,654	\$29,107,351,547
Other	\$1,838,999,823	\$1,478,813,907	\$1,393,872,325
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$70,431,740,720</b>	<b>\$70,688,523,170</b>	<b>\$67,752,955,647</b>

\*2010-11 figures assumed flat funding if no other budget numbers were available.

## Examples of ARRA Funding Uses

In addition to the surveys that were sent to urban districts regarding the programs under ARRA, the Council of the Great City Schools collected specific information on the uses of stimulus funds for each program. This information was gathered from a variety of sources—entries from our ARRA survey, budget documents, school board presentations, preliminary



department proposals, and news reports—and a number of examples are presented here by program fund. Additional information on the uses of ARRA support on a city-by-city basis can be found on page 40.

## **State Fiscal Stabilization Funds**

State Fiscal Stabilization Funds, as previously indicated, are being used extensively across districts to retain existing positions and create new jobs. For example, Hillsborough County Public Schools (Tampa, Fla.) saved 1,168 positions for which no other funding sources were available, and created new instructional and support positions throughout the district. Des Moines Independent Community School District, to cite another example, was also able to save teacher, administrator, and paraprofessional positions.

Los Angeles Unified School District allotted roughly 80 percent of the district's Stabilization funds to saving 2,600 positions. These positions allowed the district to maintain K-3 class sizes; avoid further increases in the sizes of secondary school classes; and uphold class size standards. With SFSFs, the Los Angeles school system was able to preserve the positions of school police officers and elementary art and music teachers, clerical support workers, custodians, nurses, and counselors.

SFSF funding allocated to Orange County Public Schools (Orlando, Fla.) enabled the school system to preserve the jobs of 26 social workers, 275 guidance counselors, and 196 resource teachers. In addition, 143 media specialists, 110 staffing specialists, 155 technology-support representatives, and 19 school-based instructional and curriculum support teachers continued to be employed by the district. In sum, the Orange County school system will save a total of 931 jobs that would otherwise have been in jeopardy without Stabilization funding.

Boston Public Schools used a considerable amount of its State Fiscal Stabilization Fund to support its Acceleration Agenda (the district's strategic plan) in order to help close the achievement gap between English language learners (ELLs) and other students by increasing professional development and expanding teachers' access to appropriate materials and assessments required for effective instruction of ELLs.

State Fiscal Stabilization Funds, moreover, were used to continue Anchorage School District's technology reorganization initiative. SFSF-funded efforts helped move tech-support teachers back into the classroom and place IT support into schools. The district has created a staffing plan for transitioning technology teachers back into instructional roles and moving IT support workers (at a significantly lower salary than teachers) into the schools. Stabilization money supported this effort and helped the district add necessary positions during the transition years. Funding required for long-term positions will be supported through the General Fund if the effort is a success.

## **Title I**

Jobs also remained a high priority for urban school districts with Title I funding, although significant instructional purchases were supported with this ARRA grant. In Clark County (Las Vegas), Title I funds paid for 132 teachers, 82 school-based support staff members, and 32 temporary staff members. Dayton Public Schools used Title I funding under ARRA to retain a number of important staff positions in jeopardy, including Title I early childhood education parent and community facilitators, whose role is to support district efforts to engage parents in school activities. The Dayton school system was able to retain language and literacy instruction coaches who provide support for schoolwide reading teachers at K-8 schools, and administrators who provide supplemental support for schoolwide humanities programs.

Hillsborough County Public Schools (Tampa) used Title I to support salary-differential and performance-pay programs to attract and retain highly qualified early childhood and K-12 teachers at the district's highest-poverty schools. ARRA enhanced the district's current incentive programs by providing salary incentives to teachers, media specialists, and school-based administrators in high-need Title I schools tied to student performance goals. Stipends were also provided to other certified personnel for attending training sessions necessary to achieve or maintain highly qualified status under the No Child Left Behind Act.

Title I funds available to the New York City Department of Education under ARRA were allocated almost entirely to schools in order to continue innovative programs at risk of being reduced due to state budget cuts. A portion of Title I funds were also being used to expand successful programs into additional Title I-eligible schools in the city. Des Moines Independent Community School District also used its Title I funds under ARRA to expand the school system's roster of Title I schools, in addition to adopting a new district-wide K-5 math curriculum, implementing a special education program for 18- to 21-year-olds, and creating key middle-school support positions in the district's designated Turnaround Zone.

Other urban districts, such as Atlanta Public Schools, used stimulus dollars to boost student learning and increase academic achievement by using ARRA Title I funds to support comprehensive reform models, supplemental instructional programs, (e.g. student writing programs, literacy and mathematics development programs), and extended-learning opportunities, such as summer enrichment programs, Saturday instructional academies, zero-hour programs, and before- and after-school programs. Atlanta believes that these initiatives can produce substantial results, including an increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding state standards both in the classroom and on state tests; a narrowing of the achievement gap for middle and high school students in the core curricular areas; a boost in the number of students who successfully complete graduation requirements and pursue higher levels of education; and an increase in writing skills among all students in grades K-12.

Cleveland Metropolitan School District used Title I funds under ARRA to provide professional development for all district literacy and math teachers over the two-year period of stimulus funding. Substitute teachers were used to provide release time for faculty, and state

school improvement funds were used to provide regular coaching in the classroom. In addition, the Cleveland school system used funds to create a principal pipeline that identifies and invests in aspiring administrators. This effort included coaching and developing early-career administrators, deepening leadership skills among mid-career administrators, and identifying master administrators.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools used ARRA funds to increase the number of eligible schools receiving Title I services, from 255 schools to 359. Part of this effort included expanding the number of Title I schools providing enrichment services to prekindergarten students. Title I ARRA funding was also used to assist high schools through the district's secondary school reform effort, providing those schools that are identified under the state's differential accountability plan with Title I teachers. The district also used Title I to provide professional development specifically for curriculum-support specialists, instructional coaches, teachers, and academic deans who work in schools identified under the state's accountability model.

In Boston, the school district used Title I to boost literacy instruction efforts, providing students more tools to become strong readers. The district is also working to improve performance in science and math; and Title I funds were used to assist schools that lack the necessary materials and teacher preparation to offer more rigorous math and science instruction, particularly in the middle grades. In addition, Boston Public Schools' Title I funding enabled the district to design and create summer school programs for about 1,600 students in grades 4 and 5, something the district did not have previously.

Houston Independent School District used ARRA funding for Title I in all eligible schools for extended-learning time for students who needed more intensive instruction. The goal was to increase the number of students advancing to the next grade and help them stay on par with their peer groups. Individual schools had the ability to determine specifically how and when this effort was structured, but the district expected new student options to include extended days, Saturday programs, and intensive summer programs.

In addition, the Houston school system is using stimulus funds to support the start-up costs of various choice programs for students. These possibilities include two new campuses with virtual courses and flexible scheduling, including evening hours in disparate geographic areas throughout the district. The district is also instituting optional, flexible school hours at all comprehensive district high schools. These schools provide both virtual courses and traditional courses during the school day, afternoons and evenings, and on Saturdays. And the district is expanding virtual courses offered in Spanish in all comprehensive high schools with high numbers of English language learners. In addition, the district is using stimulus funds to open a school for students between the ages of 18 to 26 in stand-alone campuses using virtual classes.

In an effort to ensure that teachers are properly prepared, professional development and technical assistance are also major targets for Title I stimulus spending. Columbus City Schools' ARRA Title I funds were used to ensure that all district teachers had the opportunity to build capacity and engage in high-quality, sustained professional development. These funds covered

salaries, stipends, and release-time needed to provide professional development days during the school year, as well as extended days and training Saturday opportunities throughout the two-year stimulus period. The Columbus school system is contracting with external groups to provide services in Professional Learning Communities and effective instruction to English language learners. It is also implementing a more rigorous curriculum, working with homeless students, and increasing the human resources available to assist the district in delivering professional development to schools.

Nashville Public Schools allocated its Title I stimulus funding to local schools, offering them additional money to support the effective implementation of school improvement plans. The district's Title I set-aside for parental involvement funds was used to support family-school liaisons to enhance community, parent, and school relations. Title I's professional development funds were targeted on the district's reform agenda and its efforts to increase capacity for instructional leadership. An additional set-aside for extended learning time was taken from the Title I funds under ARRA to allow schools to extend their days beyond traditional hours.

And the ARRA Title I grant for Chicago Public Schools was used to support early childhood centers, services to English language learners, school improvement efforts, professional development, parent involvement, and after-school programs.

### **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

Similar to the use of funds under Title I, IDEA spending under ARRA was used for a variety of purposes—mainly focused on: retaining special education jobs as well as program-specific purchases and instructional efforts. Milwaukee Public Schools pursued a number of reforms with its IDEA stimulus grant, including professional development on identifying special students with disabilities and implementing proven special education strategies and techniques. The district also focused its funding on literacy, math, positive behavioral supports, and parent training. A portion of the district's IDEA grant was devoted to Individualized Education Program (IEP) enhancement and development, including the acquisition of supplies, equipment, materials, and the provision of training for staff members who implement IEPs. The school district also invested IDEA stimulus funding to help train parents of students with disabilities.

In the Northwest, Portland Public Schools implemented an intensive language arts reading program for special education students in grades nine through 12, drawing on IDEA funds under ARRA. This effort was spurred by evidence that many special education students were not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards in language arts, and, as a result, were not graduating. Seattle Public School's special education department used federal IDEA stimulus funds to implement recommendations from reviews conducted by the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative. The recommendations focused on the three major areas of service delivery, transition, and organizational structure. ARRA funds were being used to implement the recommendations across these three areas, and amplify the special education department's ability to support the school district's strategic plan.

Denver Public Schools used a portion of its IDEA funds to obtain state-of-the-art assistive technology devices for particular students with disabilities and provide training on the use of those devices to improve these students' access to the general curriculum. The district expected to hire Response to Intervention (RTI) instructors and positive behavioral support coaches who would move from school to school to implement an RTI framework districtwide, focusing on academics and behavior. Instructional teams increased their capacity to assist schools in working with challenging students, and service providers were given smaller caseloads in order to improve services to students.

Boston Public Schools used IDEA funding under ARRA to restore jobs, including the positions of about 35 school-based instructional and support staff members that had been slated for elimination. Similarly, Chicago Public Schools paid salary and benefit costs for special education teachers at specialty schools, which are dedicated to educating children with disabilities. Los Angeles Unified School District allocated a significant portion of its IDEA funding to avoid further staff reduction—estimated at 333 jobs. The district planned to use half of its funding to save jobs and the other half to cover one-time special education program costs. IDEA funding under ARRA was also used to buttress the district's efforts to provide professional development for teachers in differentiated instruction and specialized training related to autism support.

Clark County School District (Las Vegas) used its IDEA grant under ARRA to assist in the initiation, expansion, and improvement of programs for educating children with disabilities. Funds were used to expand extended-school-day opportunities and instructional programs, as well as to support efforts aimed at dropout prevention, credit retrieval, positive behavioral support, and autism support. IDEA funding also supported parent involvement, school-to-work programs, site-based teacher-mentors, assistive technology, and university partnerships, along with data collection for Response to Intervention (RTI) efforts, and professional development.

New York City Department of Education used IDEA stimulus funds to cover the costs of related services for students with disabilities, as well as to support collaborative team-teaching needs. The district is also looking into using IDEA funding to expand early intervention services to assist students who have not been identified as needing special education or related services, but who could benefit from additional academic and behavioral supports to succeed in the general education environment.

Jefferson County Public Schools (Louisville) has a number of activities budgeted with IDEA stimulus funds, including paying a portion of the costs for 10 transcribers. The district also used IDEA funds to purchase 10 new "lift" buses and retrofit 168 buses to current standards. The Jefferson County school system was also able to use this money to retain current staff and hire new special education staff, as well as to fund a new unit start-up, and pay for associated contracts. The IDEA ARRA grant also funded a number of additional positions, including content-area special education teachers in math, reading, science, and social studies;

staff members hired to address behavioral and low-incidence disabilities; school psychologists; and transition staff members for postsecondary activities.

## **School Construction Bonds**

Clark County School District improved 66 schools using the Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCBs), including 45 elementary schools, six middle schools, and 15 high schools. The most significant improvements involved roof replacements. Other facility improvements included HVAC upgrades, plumbing modifications, and safety repairs. QSCBs also enabled the school district to pay for technology improvements in some buildings, including local area network upgrades in the district's elementary, middle, and high schools.

San Diego Unified School District was the first school system in the nation to utilize the interest-free QSCBs, as reported by the finance newspaper, *The Bond Buyer*. The district had plans for a school facility improvement program in place before ARRA was enacted, with prior bond authorization approved by the voters. This head start allowed the San Diego schools to take advantage of the federal bonding authority quickly—exactly as the stimulus measure intended: to provide fiscal relief to the district and create jobs in the community. The district realized savings of approximately \$20 million as a result of the federal bonding authority, and used the funds to make technology investments that would otherwise have been delayed.

The San Diego school system's bonding allocation of \$38.8 billion in QSCBs was included as part of the district's larger capital improvement program, and used for repairing outdated student restrooms and deteriorating plumbing and roofs, as well as for upgrading career and vocational classrooms and labs. In addition, the funding provided up-to-date classroom technology; improved school safety and security hardware, and upgraded fire alarms; and enabled the district to replace dilapidated portable classrooms and remove hazardous substances.

The Broward County Public Schools (Fort Lauderdale) received \$49 million in direct bonding authority under the QSCB program in 2009 and also issued approximately \$64 million in taxable Build America Bonds (BABs) under ARRA. The district supported various projects using these bonds, including classroom additions and new media centers in elementary schools. The bonding authority also covered new school kitchens and cafeterias, as well as new physical education centers. The net savings and benefit to the Broward County schools from the use of QSCBs and BABs for school facility upgrades is approximately \$20 million.

## **Analysis of Survey Results**

The results of the survey show a mix of benefits for urban schools and schoolchildren from the funds appropriated under the Recovery Act. The most tangible benefit for schools and children was the number of jobs provided under ARRA—some 50,000 FTE positions in the 40 responding cities—that kept class sizes from rising further, provided additional coaching and



professional development for teachers and staff, and expanded schools capacity to provide specialized programs for poor and disabled students.

In all, tens of thousands of critical education jobs, including teachers, guidance counselors, school nurses, instructional coaches, and other support personnel--were paid for with the ARRA funds that went to these high-poverty urban schools. But in addition to jobs, the districts also spent considerable amounts on materials, technology, equipment, and the like.

The three main funding streams under ARRA—the State Fiscal Stabilization Funds, Title I, and IDEA—also gave urban school districts a major opportunity to undertake key reforms in a variety of areas. Special education funding enabled districts to develop or expand Response to Intervention (RTI) efforts, implement positive behavior supports, and purchase assistive technology devices. Funding under Title I is supporting coaching and teacher mentoring, school leadership academies, performance management systems, early childhood projects, and extended-learning-time programs. ARRA has also allowed districts to boost much-needed efforts in urban high schools through new funding for eligible Title I schools, high school transition assistance, college and career coaching, early dropout warning systems, and credit recovery programs.

## **State Fiscal Stabilization Funds**

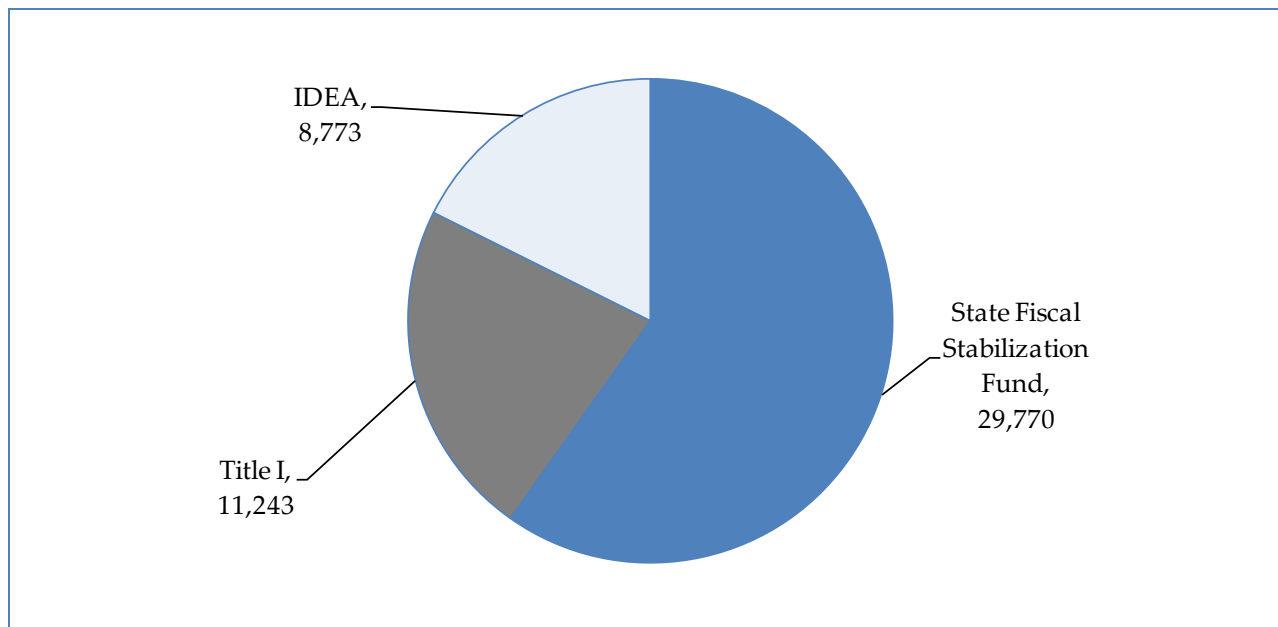
The survey results on the Stabilization funds revealed a number of significant patterns or themes. The first involved state funding for education, with three-quarters of the districts indicating that state aid was reduced in anticipation of federal funding under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF). The responses were also telling in that three-quarters of the districts reported that the combination of federal Stabilization funds and state education aid was roughly the same or less than the amount of state education aid that they had received in the previous year. (The ability of states to “swap” federal funding for their own education aid, traditionally a violation of federal maintenance of effort provisions, is discussed in the “Implementation Issues” section of this report.) It is clear that more districts would have experienced a net decrease in funds were SFSF not available for 2009-10.

The impact of this state cutback in education also helps explain the second major pattern or theme in the Stabilization survey results. On a dollar-for-dollar basis, the SFSF was spent for education jobs at a much higher rate than Title I and IDEA funds. The 40 districts responding to the survey received approximately one-third more funding under the SFSF than Title I, yet the Stabilization fund paid for about two-and-a-half times the number of jobs (full-time equivalent positions or FTEs) as Title I funding did under ARRA.

SFSFs also paid for more jobs dollar-for-dollar than IDEA. The 40 urban districts responding to all surveys reported receiving more than double the amount of money under the SFSF than they received under IDEA, yet the Stabilization fund supported approximately three-

and-a-half times the number of FTEs. (See Exhibit 11.) In simpler terms, the SFSF paid for almost twice as many jobs—dollar for dollar—as Title I and 1.5 times as many jobs as IDEA.

**Exhibit 11. Number of Jobs Paid for with ARRA in the Great City Schools**



The explanation for these job differences in SFSF makes some sense. With significant reductions—more cuts than districts originally expected—in the amount of state education aid that urban districts received, large amounts of ARRA funding had to be used to backfill existing education costs and personnel. Stabilization funding was the natural choice for school districts in this case, because the new funding stream provided greater flexibility, compared with the stricter fiscal requirements under Title I and IDEA.

These two historic programs—Title I and IDEA—also had long and established lists of funding needs within urban school districts, whereas the SFSF program was authorized and funded for the first time under ARRA, and did not have a specific constituency that needed to be served. Districts had hoped to use more of the flexible funding offered by SFSF to build upon existing reform efforts, but the survey results make it clear that using the federal funds to retain jobs became a higher priority once it was apparent that state aid for education had eroded as badly as it did.

### **Title I**

The most significant findings in the Title I section of the survey dealt with the issue of waivers. All but one of the responding urban school districts (97.5 percent) indicated that they would seek waivers from one or more existing program or spending provisions under Title I. The near-universal requests for waivers are not surprising, considering both the economic situation of school districts and the strict fiscal requirements of the program. Urban school



districts are often required to set aside large amounts of their Title I dollars, potentially totaling more than 35 percent, for one purpose or another. But the existing economic situation and the expectations for reform that accompanied ARRA forced local school districts to juggle multiple demands.

Since the passage of No Child Left Behind, school districts in improvement status have been barred from operating their own SES programs, which, in turn, sends much needed Title I dollars to external programs that have a poor track record of performance. It is not surprising that one of the areas where almost all of the respondents (92.5 percent) sought waivers involved the required set-aside of funds for supplemental educational services (SES). Just under half of the responding districts indicated that they would seek a waiver allowing school districts to act as their own SES providers.

Likewise, more than half of the responding urban districts indicated that they would seek waivers of the Title I provision for calculating the amount of funding SES programs receive for each student served. The per-pupil amount for SES is calculated by dividing a school district's total Title I allocation by the number of eligible Title I students in the district, but the new ARRA funds under Title I would have substantially driven up the amount of monies that school districts would be required to pay outside providers while seeing little change in services.

It was also predictable that a high percentage of districts were seeking to waive Title I carryover requirements. The Title I statute permits school districts to carry over up to 15 percent of their Title I allocations in any fiscal year, and districts wishing to carry forward an amount exceeding that percent may seek approval to do so once every three years. Without a waiver, districts could have been required to spend 85 percent of their combined ARRA and regular Title I allocations in the first year or by September 30, 2010.

Urban school districts also indicated their intention to apply for three additional waivers in significant numbers. In order to get the most flexibility out of ARRA's Title I funds, respondents sought freedom from mandated set-asides mostly for professional development. These waiver requests did not signal that additional training was not useful, but that the districts had other priorities for some of the funds that might prove more effective under the current economic circumstances.

Finally, about one-third of urban school districts sought waivers of the one-year planning period for schoolwide programs under Title I. A comprehensive schoolwide plan is important for reforming the instructional program in the school, and Title I requires that, in general, such a plan must be developed during the first year. The waiver of the planning period was necessary for districts that wanted to begin operating schoolwide programs immediately without having to wait half-way through the stimulus period in order to use the dollars.

## Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

The most significant finding regarding the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funding under ARRA related to the lack of financial flexibility that accompanied the law. Congress is aware of the financial burden that federal special education requirements place on local school budgets, and the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA included a provision that could help school districts shift some of the local share of these costs onto the federal grant. But the Department of Education’s interpretation of the provision was more restrictive and limited the number of school districts that were able to take advantage of the potential flexibility. (These interpretations are discussed in greater detail in the next section.)

Because of the significant one-year increases in IDEA under the Recovery Act, many, if not most, school districts expected to take advantage of this statutory flexibility in IDEA, and use freed-up local resources to pursue innovative reforms and instructional improvements, as well as address revenue shortfalls. When urban districts were granted authority to reduce MoE, they did so in strong numbers, with more than 80 percent of the districts that were approved to use this provision taking advantage of the flexibility created by Congress. Unfortunately, large number of districts did not have the flexibility to pursue some of the reforms that the Administration and others hoped for.

## Budget and Revenue

The drop in state funding for urban schools in the 2009-10 school year, as well as the increases in federal grants over the same period, was confirmed in the Council’s survey results. Support that school districts received under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was intended to help soften the short-term blow of the economic downturn. The increase in federal money was slightly higher than the state reductions, which helped explain the additional funding that some urban districts had to undertake some new efforts, such as expanding Title I into high schools and providing enrichment services to prekindergarten.

Perhaps the most surprising finding, however, was the change in local funding over the last two years. State funding decreased significantly during this time; and federal funding saw a spike with the Recovery Act. During this same period, however, revenues from local sources remained relatively stable in most places. These 40 school districts received 99.6 percent of the local revenues in the 2009-10 school year that they received the year before. In the upcoming 2010-11 school year, urban school districts were conservatively expecting to receive about 99.0 percent of the local revenue they received in 2009-10 if tax collections and property valuations did not drop, but there is now evidence that they will. (See Exhibit 12.)

**Exhibit 12. Estimated Local Revenue in the Great City Schools**

	Local Revenue 2008-09	Local Revenue 2009-10	Local Revenue 2010-11
Aggregate Amount for 40 Respondents	\$29,517,494,095	\$29,400,315,654	\$29,107,351,547

This overall pattern does not mean that there were not significant drops in local funding in some cities. As one would expect, the poor economy, the sinking housing market, and the high unemployment rate have affected city revenues, and have dampened tax collection rates. In Broward County, for instance, property owners paid \$127 million less in School Board property taxes in 2009-10 than the year before, and the district faced a local revenue decline of almost \$200 million. Indianapolis Public Schools needed to use a significant amount of its reserves to cover millions lost in local revenue. Alabama, on the other hand, does not fund school districts with property taxes, but by income tax and sales tax. The economic downturn has severely restricted education funding throughout the state because of the unusually high unemployment rates and low consumer spending. Alabama Education Trust Fund revenues are down by approximately 20 percent and causing cutbacks in personnel and programs at the local level.

Overall, survey results showed that local revenues in responding districts did not drop significantly. It was clear from follow-up discussions with chief financial officers and budget directors from the school districts that the explanations often rested in the delay in applying property valuations to local taxes. Much of the local revenues in these cities in 2009-10 were driven off of peak valuations that were in place immediately before the economic downturn. In one city, for instance, the school district actually experienced an 11 percent increase in assessed valuation, but the valuations were based on July 2006 through June 2008 rates. As assessed valuations begin to reflect the current economy, however, revenues are expected to flatten out or decrease.

In other cities like Baltimore where the school system is financially dependent on city hall for local revenues, the stability in those revenues in 2009-10 reflected city leaders' commitment to protecting education support even at the expense of cuts to other city services. Other city school districts were able to maintain local revenues through improved tax collections, although many indicated that tax delinquency rates were starting to soar. Finally, other cities saw the steadiness in local revenues as an artifact of the depressed housing valuations that existed in many urban areas before the recession.

## **School Construction**

Although the House and Senate conference committee removed grant funding for school construction from ARRA, the final legislation did offer federal support for facilities improvements through two new bond programs and an expansion of the existing Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs). Although more than half of the districts responding used one or more of these mechanisms for infrastructure projects in 2009, the number was lower than one might have expected given the lack of funding for facility improvements in the nation's schools. (See Exhibit 13.) School modernization funding remains a vital need for most big cities, where students attend classes in some of the nation's oldest school buildings, and facilities have often suffered from overcrowding, inadequate repair, and deferred maintenance.

### Exhibit 13. Number of Great City School Districts Using School Construction Bonds in 2009

Type of School Construction Bond	Number of Districts Using Bond in 2009
Qualified School Construction Bond	19
Qualified Zone Academy Bond	7
Build America Bond	11

The reasons for the lower-than-expected participation rates, particularly with the Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCBs), appear to rest in the fact that the bonds represented a brand new and untested funding mechanism for school districts, and that there was no established market for them. Potential investors, moreover, were extremely cautious about entering into long-term financial deals with underfunded school districts in a bad economy. It may also be that many school districts, despite the interest-free bonds, simply could not afford to repay the principle costs of new capital projects.

An additional complication in the use of these new instruments stemmed from the federal government's response to the nation's economic crisis itself. As the Federal Reserve continued to cut or freeze interest rates, the financial return for investors interested in purchasing school construction bonds remained low. Many school districts found that they needed to pay an additional coupon rate to lure investors, which diminished or negated the attraction of the interest-free bonds. A number of districts also found that they could negotiate lower payment costs if they signed longer-term bond deals, but it was an option that was not available with the fixed-term federal bonds.

The other new program, the Build America Bonds (BABs), offered some school districts a more attractive refund option and grew in popularity during 2009. ARRA authorized state and local governments to issue BABs in 2009 and 2010 to finance capital expenditures where tax-exempt governmental bonds were typically issued. Instead of the interest-free option that QSCBs and QZABs offered, BAB issuers received a direct federal subsidy for a portion of their borrowing costs. This arrangement allowed school districts to negotiate bond deals outside of the U.S. Treasury-determined interest rates and timelines, and to receive a refund check from the federal government that covered some of their interest payments.

Although school district budgets have dropped since the passage of ARRA, the second year of the school construction bonds might prove more beneficial in improving school facilities. In March 2010, President Obama signed the HIRE Act, H.R. 2847, into law, which made important changes to QSCBs that will make the bonds easier for school districts to use. The changes will also allow school districts the option of using their QSCB bonding authority in a manner similar to the BABs program, essentially permitting districts to receive a direct federal reimbursement on interest payments they make to bond holders. In addition, the HIRE Act allows the 100-largest school districts that received a direct allocation of bonding authority in

2009 to roll over any unused amount into 2010. These changes will make the bonds more accessible to school districts, and—when combined with new Internal Revenue Service guidance on “Stripping Transactions for Qualified Tax Credit Bonds”—more marketable to potential investors.

## **ARRA Implementation Issues**

Big-city school systems across the country supported and appreciated the President and the Department of Education’s call for using ARRA funds to advance school reform and save jobs, as well as maintaining high standards, turning around low-performing schools, supporting effective teachers, and developing better data systems. At the same time, the implementation of the stimulus act sometimes presented problems at the local level that undercut intended priorities or delayed implementation. These issues resulted in important policy lessons that both Congress and the Administration might keep in mind if there is another round of support.

One example involved the sometimes conflicting messages that Congress and the Administration were sending about what the main purposes of the stimulus funds were. The directive to save jobs and pursue innovations sent mixed messages that were difficult to interpret at the local level. Local officials understood both objectives and were eager to use stimulus aid in pursuit of urban school reforms, but the severity of cuts in state budgets left most districts struggling to stay afloat and working to balance all priorities. Additional clarity may also help in avoiding some of the problems outlined below.

### **State Supplanting of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF)**

Perhaps the single-largest problem in pursuing significant reforms under ARRA involved the statutory language authorizing the new State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. The legislation included a provision requiring Governors, as a condition for funding, to ensure that each state’s fiscal support for elementary, secondary, and higher education would not drop below 2006 levels. This maintenance of effort provision was set higher in original drafts of the legislation, but was lowered in the final version when a number of states indicated that budget cuts had already reduced aid significantly, and that higher thresholds might make them ineligible for SFSF support.

However, the result of the new 2006 threshold was that many states dropped education funding to 2006 levels and still maintained eligibility. In many cases, in fact, states reduced their state education spending to amounts that matched what they expected to receive in federal Stabilization funding. The result was that education budgets were reduced by greater amounts than local school districts expected, and federal ARRA funds that were targeted for education subsidized state priorities in non-education areas.

This shifting of funds into non-education areas did not go unnoticed by the U.S. Department of Education. The Department’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) issued an Alert

Memorandum in late September 2009 that highlighted the nature and cause of such state actions. The memorandum also highlighted examples of practices by states – including replenishing its Rainy Day Fund or replacing state education funds with their SFSF allocation – in which state revenues would be freed up and spent for non-education budget items.

Despite recommendations from the OIG to monitor and halt such actions, little specific action was taken to prevent further supplanting of SFSF funds—and it was unclear what action the Administration could have pursued given the 2006 threshold established by the legislation itself. The U.S. Department of Education did allow states that could not meet the 2006 fiscal threshold to submit waivers documenting their inability to do so. This waiver option could have been made available with a higher threshold, but that did not happen.

The result was that the SFSF—the most flexible stream of education funding under ARRA, and the program most likely to support innovative reform efforts—provided little additional funds to local school districts to pursue this priority. Again, the vast majority of city school systems responding to the survey indicated that the combination of SFSF and state education funding resulted in either no change or a net decrease over the prior year, so urban school systems were left to pay for jobs with funds that might have otherwise been used for innovation. Still, the districts appeared to have used the funds for solid educational purposes.

### **Reducing Maintenance of Effort under IDEA**

Districts were also eagerly anticipating the new \$11.3 billion available through Part B of IDEA both because of the needed program support and the flexibility presumed in the IDEA legislation that reduced local special education maintenance-of-effort levels by an amount that was equivalent to half of the new dollars. Many, if not most, school districts expected to take advantage of this statutory flexibility, and use freed-up local resources to pursue innovative reforms and instructional improvements, as well as to address revenue shortfalls.

The U.S. Department of Education, however, offered a far more limited interpretation of the maintenance of effort (MoE) provision than most had expected. The interpretation prevented any school district from using any of its 50 percent increase in IDEA funds to lower local maintenance of effort if—under another provision of IDEA—the school system was required to spend IDEA funding for early intervention services. In this circumstance, the prohibition against the MoE reduction was absolute, regardless of how large the new IDEA allocations under ARRA might be.

With the significant, one-time infusion of IDEA dollars under the stimulus package, the relationship between the MoE and the early intervention provisions was untested. In this situation, it had been widely understood that the difference between 50 percent of the IDEA increase and the amount used for early intervention would still be available to relieve local spending through the MoE reduction. The U.S. Department of Education did not make the same interpretation, however, and benefits intended by Congress and expected locally were difficult for school districts to realize.



An additional complication involved how each state categorized local implementation of IDEA requirements. Under the federal interpretation, school districts that were labeled as “Needing Assistance” with IDEA requirements had their flexibility to use the MoE provision restricted. However, a district could be labeled by their state as “Needing Assistance” even if the district had provided the “free and appropriate public education” required under IDEA and had not had any state action taken against them.

The standard for a school district needing assistance, moreover, differs from state to state, and there is no single definition of what this label means or available data on how many districts would fall into this category. The prohibition against districts using the MoE provision was reasonable in situations in which districts needed intervention or substantial intervention. But a district that was determined to need assistance, regardless of the cause, was broadly prohibited from using the MoE provision with their ARRA allocation of IDEA funds.

These interpretations ultimately diminished the flexibility created by Congress in the statute, as well as the ability of school systems to use the freed-up funds to pursue the reforms that the Administration hoped to see.

### **Use of Title I Funds under ARRA**

Within a few weeks after ARRA was signed into law, the U.S. Department of Education issued its first fact sheet on Title I, with general parameters for the use of ARRA funds for disadvantaged students. The fact sheet highlighted areas such as Eligibility, Fiscal Issues, Accountability Principles, and the Secretary of Education’s intentions to consider requests for waivers.

The Title I program, as defined under the No Child Left Behind Act, includes a number of specific funding set-asides, stringent maintenance of effort and accounting provisions, notifications, and countless other requirements. The goals of the ARRA funds—to save jobs and invest in reforms, as well as to spend funds quickly and wisely—were sometimes challenged by the strictures of the Title I program’s statutory language. The required set-aside for supplemental educational services (SES) and the Title I fiscal carryover limitation, in fact, were specifically highlighted in the fact sheet as the type of waivers that would be forthcoming, and provided an early notice to school districts that additional flexibility would be granted for Title I funds under ARRA.

Unfortunately, the guidance on the Title I waivers was not released until almost five months after the bill was enacted, in July 2009. The planning and budgeting that school districts undertook in preparation for the 2009-10 school year occurred well before this release, and the lack of information on which waivers would be favorably received resulted in districts being unaware of the funds that they would have available and what flexibility would be afforded.

The late release also resulted in multiple school district submissions to their states on how they would use Title I funds. Districts were not only budgeting and planning their

upcoming Title I program prior to July 2009; many school districts were also required to submit applications, Title I plans, and other paperwork to the state before July 2009. The result was that districts sometimes had to submit an initial set of applications, spending plans, and paperwork, and then resubmit the amended versions once the waivers had been approved.

Hoping to avoid such duplication, many states and districts sought to submit waiver requests for specific Title I requirements prior to the release of the guidance. These submissions were actively discouraged by the U.S. Department of Education, however.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the late release of the Title I “Use of Funds” guidance (in early September 2009) also affected school district ability to undertake some reforms because state Title I offices were espousing more conservative approaches to how Title I funds could be used in the absence of federal guidance. For example, many school systems wanted to reserve a significant portion of the Title I funds at the district level in order to enact new reforms that had not been previously or extensively pursued. However, some districts were informed by their states that all Title I funding under ARRA had to be allocated to the building level, with each participating school receiving a specific allocation.

The early-September 2009 guidance on “Using Title I, Part A ARRA Funds for Grants to Local Educational Agencies to Strengthen Education, Drive Reform, and Improve Results for Students,” however, stated that school districts could reserve some or even all of its Title I allocation in certain situations for priorities determined at the district-level. This federal affirmation was helpful, but did not take place until after the start of the 2009-10 school year, and the earlier state interpretations drove planning, budgets, and the expenditure of funds.

Another example of how delays—this time at the state level—affected local operations involved basic bureaucratic snafus. After receiving an initial award letter from its state in April 2009, one urban district was informed that it could not begin spending Title I funds under ARRA until July 1, because the state had assigned next year’s accounting code to the funds. Shortly afterwards, the district was told to ignore the previous information, because the state had decided to spend against the code anyway. After the district set up its budget, the state changed its mind a third time and district had to revamp its budget with new codes. The initial April award letter, moreover, stated that ARRA funds were being reduced by an unspecified amount to accommodate state set-asides, so the district was not clear how much money it had to work with. The district finally received confirmation of its total award in late October 2009. And it was not until late October when the district was notified by the state about the approval of requested Title I waivers. The state finally granted approval of the district’s ARRA Title I spending plan in December 2009, but without knowledge of its grant size, fiscal waivers, programmatic direction, and spending approval, the district was unwilling to assume it had been authorized to spend the ARRA money as planned and did not implement its reforms until 2010.

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<sup>2</sup> The April 2009 Title I guidance contained the disclaimer that stated, “Although eligible entities may apply for a waiver at any time, ED recommends that they submit requests after the guidance is available to ensure that those requests contain all the relevant information.”



## **School Construction**

The Recovery Act also included significant support for improving school facilities, including the allocation of interest-free school construction bonding authority (Qualified School Construction Bonds or QSCBs) to states and school districts. In order to ensure that the QSCBs had an immediate stimulus effect and were available in the poorest communities in the nation, the legislation included a requirement that 40 percent of the annual amount be allocated directly to the 100 school districts with the largest numbers of students living in poor neighborhoods.

Unfortunately, the number of the poorest school districts receiving direct allocations—and the total amount that they would receive—was lowered as a result of QSCB guidance released by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. In its guidance, the Treasury Department identified Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and Hawaii as large school districts that would receive allocations under the 40 percent set-aside. These entities were not included in the remaining 60 percent allocation for states, even though this was the specific intention of Congress.<sup>3</sup>

The decision to include Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and Hawaii in the large school district allocation lowered the total amount of bonds available to other school districts by more than \$400 million per year, or approximately 10 percent. The interpretation by the Treasury Department was particularly confusing because the three entities that were included under the school district set-aside would still have received direct and immediate QSCB allocations as State Educational Agencies (SEAs).

## **Educational Technology**

ARRA also included funding of \$650 million for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act's Title II-D technology program. The program requires that the distribution of education technology funds to school districts be divided 50-50, with half delivered based on the Title I formula and 50 percent through a competitive application. As a stimulus measure, the formula distribution of technology funds under ARRA was key because it delivered resources to local school districts more quickly. But the Department of Education's guidance and fact sheet on ARRA technology funds encouraged states to use 100 percent competitive grant awards, thereby eliminating the guarantee of quick funding through the formula and delaying the distribution of resources to local school districts.

In recent fiscal years, including under the regular FY 2009 Appropriations bill, Congress included a proviso allowing states the option of going to an all-competitive grant program because appropriations for education technology had become so low. This "100 percent

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<sup>3</sup> The ARRA Conference Report, which outlines congressional intent and provides instructions on program implementation, explicitly explained, "For allocation purposes, a State includes the District of Columbia and any possession of the United States."

competitive” proviso was not included in the ARRA legislation, however, or in the accompanying conference report. In fact, the committee report for the Senate-passed version of ARRA included a directive to states to use the 50 percent formula and 50 percent competitive mechanism found in the Title II-D statute.

## Upcoming Funding Challenges

In 2009, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) provided a financial lifeline for the nation's urban schools. ARRA invested nearly \$100 billion in various forms of federal assistance to the nation's schools and higher education institutions to help them survive the economic crisis. The ARRA funding has been put to good use, and helped ensure that tens of thousands of critical education jobs were not eliminated in the big cities and across the country. In many districts, however, these funds will be depleted in the coming year. And the severe economic situation is not over for school districts despite signs of an improving economy; the worst of state and local education budget reductions may still lie ahead.

Preliminary data from urban districts, in fact, paints a grim budget picture for the 2010-11 school year. The Council of the Great City Schools followed its initial survey that has school districts projecting revenues for 2010-11 based on last year’s property valuations and other assumptions with a second survey conducted during March and April 2010. Information from about twenty school districts shows a budget gap of more than \$2.5 billion for the upcoming school year, affecting some 21,000 jobs. (See Exhibit 14.) The Council projects across its 65 member big-city school districts that the emerging budget hole amounts to at least \$4.0 billion, putting approximately 44,000 jobs in jeopardy.

**Exhibit 14. Great City School District Budget Gaps and Estimated Job Cuts in 2010-11**

Great City School District	Budget Gap in 2010-11	Estimated Job Cuts in 2010-11
Albuquerque	\$43,000,000	200
Anchorage	\$10,000,000	46
Boston	\$57,700,000	360
Broward County (FL)	\$101,700,000	1,800
Charlotte	\$78,300,000	1,031
Chicago	\$600,000,000	3,000
Clark County (NV)	\$141,000,000	1,077
Cincinnati	\$20,000,000	100
Duval County (FL)	\$75,000,000	20
Houston	\$53,700,000	414

Great City School District	Budget Gap in 2010-11	Estimated Job Cuts in 2010-11
Indianapolis	\$26,600,000	60
Los Angeles	\$640,000,000	4,124
Minneapolis	\$19,000,000	150
New York City	\$493,000,000	6,700
Newark	\$77,000,000	758
Norfolk	\$48,500,000	388
Richmond	\$21,900,000	118
Seattle	\$24,000,000	115
St. Louis	\$57,500,000	490
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,587,900,000</b>	<b>20,951</b>

Los Angeles Unified School District, for instance, is facing a \$640 million budget cut in the upcoming school year, and a \$1.5 billion reduction over the past two years. Two thousand teachers were let go last year and even more are facing job losses in 2010-11. The district was forced to send out nearly 5,200 Reduction-in-Force (RIF) notices to teachers, principals and other school-based staff in spring 2010.

Additional employees from the Los Angeles schools will likely lose their jobs as well, including thousands of non-instructional staff members. Some of the retained employees will keep their jobs, but must take more than 40 unpaid furlough days and a pay cut of more than 20 percent, saving some \$157 million. But many employees, serving as school police, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, and others—often, the first adult that students see at school every day—are having their jobs eliminated as a result of the nation’s financial realities.

The severity of the economic situation is not unique to the Los Angeles school district or even a handful of other urban school districts. Clark County School District in Las Vegas, Nev., is facing a shortfall of approximately \$141 million in the 2010-11 school year. Last year, Clark County eliminated more than 1,000 jobs, including 682 licensed teachers, 331 support staff members, and 43 administrators. In the coming year, the district is planning to cut 649 more positions, including an additional 540 teachers and 109 central-office and school-based administrators. The teachers losing jobs over these two years total almost seven percent of the licensed teachers in the district’s schools. (See Exhibit 15).

**Exhibit 15. Clark County School District Reductions in Positions to Date and Planned**

School Year	School Based Jobs			Central Office Jobs		Total
	Licensed Teachers	Support Staff	Admin. Staff	Support Staff	Admin. Staff	
2009-10	682	100	16	231	27	1,056
2010-11	540	0	90	0	19	649
<b>Two-Year Total</b>	<b>1,222</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>231</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>1,705</b>

Clark County School District, the nation’s fifth-largest school system, must take additional actions beyond job reductions to address their funding gap for the 2010-11 school year. Elementary schools will convert from a year-round to a nine-month calendar. Class sizes in Grades 1-3 will be increased by two students, and the district’s textbook and supply budgets will be cut. After the district’s tentative budget recommended these workforce reductions and school changes to address the shortfall, however, an additional \$30 million budget gap was created due to last-minute shortfalls in the state’s property tax estimates. This additional reduction may require the elimination of an additional 428 jobs, and if combined with the 649 jobs already targeted for elimination, will bring the school district’s total loss to more than 1,000 jobs for the second year in a row.

The New York City Department of Education is facing a \$493 million budget gap due to reduced funding from the state in 2010-11. As a result, the nation’s largest school district has to eliminate 6,400 teacher jobs, as well as 300 other positions. The state cut will also result in a reduction in the district’s Summer Special Education Programs, and a restructuring of school support services. The state decision to freeze foundation aid at a time when the New York City schools are experiencing increased enrollment will create an \$80 million gap in foundation aid. In addition to decreasing revenues, New York City expects increases in mandated and contractual costs that cannot be avoided, such as \$150 million for increases in salaries due to seniority and educational differentials and increased special education costs.

The New York City Department of Education has already made cuts to central administration and field administration by over 18 percent over the last two years, and cut eight percent in that time to school budgets. New York City schools also had to retroactively lower raises in teacher and principal salaries for the existing school year and the upcoming year, and undertook similar savings on management and administrative salaries.

Chicago Public Schools, the nation’s third-largest school system, cut 800 administrative staff positions so far this school year, and an additional 200 jobs will be eliminated by the end of the fiscal year. The district is also facing a \$600 million budget deficit in the 2010-11 year. Chicago’s school system must deal with its upcoming budget gap by laying off 3,000 employees, including 2,700 teachers. The district will also have to mandate 15 furlough days for all non-union staff members, increase class sizes to 35 students, and make up to 11 percent in

funding cuts for charter schools. It also anticipates reducing funds significantly for non-varsity sports, as well as for magnet, Montessori, gifted, and International Baccalaureate programs. Finally, the district will have to make significant cuts to its full-day kindergarten program and reduce after-school and summer school offerings.

Broward County Public Schools in Florida will also confront major budget cuts in the upcoming school year. The district is facing a budget gap of \$101 million for the 2010-11 school year, and is considering eliminating 1,800 jobs, including significant reductions in administrative staff, teachers, assistant principals, and guidance counselors. Moreover, in addition to layoffs, the school system will be forced to cut education programs and reduce support for art, music, and physical education in elementary schools.

In New Jersey, Newark Public Schools is facing a budget gap of \$77 million for the 2010-11 school year. The district will be eliminating approximately 450 teacher positions, and 750 jobs overall. The school system will be forced to eliminate the district's science center, adult education classes, and aeronautical program to address the shortfall. It will also institute a wage freeze for all remaining employees in the school district and require them to pay more health care cost from their salaries.

Seattle Public Schools gets more than half its budget from the State of Washington. In the current economy, the state is facing a funding gap of \$2.8 billion, and cuts to the Seattle schools have created a \$24.6 million funding shortfall for the 2010-11 school year. The school district is attempting to minimize the direct impact of budget cuts on students, but has enacted a district-wide hiring and spending freeze, and has proposed the use of \$4.4 million in valuable reserves, which could undermine bond ratings. In addition, most of the district's job cuts are focused on the central office, with 85 positions being eliminated, although an additional 30 teachers will also lose their jobs. Seattle Public Schools is also working with staff across the district and engaging the community to prepare for a projected shortfall of \$24.2 million in 2011-12.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina receives more than 80 percent of its funding from state and local revenues. For the second year in a row, the district will be faced with tens of millions of dollars in cuts because of declines in those two sources. Local funding for the Charlotte schools in 2009-2010 was cut by more than \$40 million, which was well over ten times greater than the next largest deficit in any other school district in North Carolina. In 2010-11, the school district is facing a budget gap of approximately \$78 million. This gap will require the district to eliminate more than 1,000 jobs, including those of 580 teachers.

North Carolina's largest school system will also eliminate middle school athletics and reduce funds for textbooks. Part of the strategy to meet the budget gap includes restructuring its decentralized area offices, decreasing the number of Learning Communities in the district, reducing teacher assistant allotments to schools, and increasing class size teacher/student ratios by up to two students per class in grades 4 – 12. In the upcoming school year, the district is also implementing two furlough days for all 10-, 11-, and 12-month employees, reducing work

schedules for teacher assistants to 37.5 hours per week, and reducing employment terms for assistant principals from 11 months to ten months.

## Synopsis and Discussion

The stimulus program was approved by Congress and signed into law by President Obama in February 2009, and there is now sufficient data from the first full school year of the program to draw some broad conclusions about what the program has and has not accomplished in the nation's major urban public school systems. Data are also emerging on what the upcoming school year is likely to bring under the second year of the stimulus program, and the new data suggests necessary next steps for addressing growing financial threats to these and other schools across the country.

First, the data clearly demonstrate that the stimulus package provided an important lifeline to public schools across the country, particularly those in the nation's biggest cities. Many lessons were learned during the process, but there is little doubt that the stimulus was needed, welcomed, and effective. In particular, the stimulus program and the \$7.3 billion it provided to the 40 responding large city school districts paid for some 50,000 full-time equivalent jobs and a substantial number of program enhancements, expansions, and upgrades for schools. These jobs amounted to nearly eight percent of all jobs in these urban school districts. The data are also clear that the stimulus program made all the difference in the ability of these districts to maintain programs and sustain the fragile academic gains they have been producing over the last several years. Congress and the Administration should be commended for their leadership and thanked for their courage in the face of opposition and controversy. The futures of many children were protected and the country is better off because of it.

Second, the data indicate that the Stabilization Fund was able to produce more jobs dollar-for-dollar than either Title I or IDEA. The latter two programs were able to create a substantial number of jobs, but the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund paid for almost twice as many jobs as Title I and about 1.5 times as many jobs as IDEA dollar for dollar. There is reason to believe that some districts received Stabilization funds sooner after the stimulus legislation was passed than they received Title I or IDEA, but the reason for the greater job-producing punch of the Stabilization program may rest in its flexibility compared to the other programs. It may also be the case that districts used more Title I and IDEA funds for materials, technology, and professional development and less on personnel.

Third, the districts used the funds on a wide variety of important and productive educational purposes. Title I was expanded into more eligible schools, and IDEA provided much more assistive technology to children who needed it. Funds were broadly used for professional development, extended learning time, upgraded instructional programming, early childhood initiatives, supplemental materials for English language learners, instructional coaches, summer enrichment, community engagement, behavior supports, Response-to-Intervention strategies, and many other activities that help build school and personnel capacity.



The funds also protected class sizes and retained counselors, social workers, librarians, and other critical staff that disadvantaged children need in order to learn. To the extent that the districts were able to take advantage of capital funds, the districts used them to repair roofs, plumbing, and boiler systems; upgrade technology and equipment; and renovate kitchens, science labs, and other school facilities.

Fourth, the data show that the federal funds were used responsibly by district recipients. Stabilization funds were used mostly to save jobs, as the more heavily regulated Title I and IDEA programs were not always well suited—even with waivers—to support districtwide reform given that not all schools were eligible for funding under these programs. Districts were also mindful of the two-year life of the program and, when possible, avoided incurring long-term obligations that could not be maintained after the funds went away. Outside observers looking for more dramatic reforms may have been disappointed, but also may not have been cognizant of the regulations governing the existing programs that much of the funding flowed through.

Still, there was a considerable amount of long-term capacity building and reform that was pursued with these stimulus dollars, and a number of big city school systems pursued innovative reforms with the federal funds. For instance, the Clark County (Las Vegas) school district used portions of its stimulus dollars to set up an early childhood data system to track pupils as they advanced through later grades; Hillsborough County (Tampa) used portions of its Title I stimulus dollars for its teacher incentive pay program; Cleveland used parts of its funds to set up a principal-pipeline program to train aspiring school principals and other administrators; and Dallas is using some of its stimulus funds for high school reform and dropout prevention activities. Pittsburgh is applying some of its stimulus aid to support its Pathway to Promise program, which is working to improve and strengthen the transition into high school among rising ninth graders, and Seattle is using its funding to support a new science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) high school program and spur its English language learner reforms.

Fifth, the data indicated that there were lessons learned along the way that could benefit the program in another round of aid. One lesson involved the purposes of the funds. While the U.S. Department of Education emphasized bold reforms, Congress was looking to save jobs. In the final analysis, urban school systems delivered both, but it was not always easy for districts to sort out what the priorities were. Another round might be clearer about what is expected. A second lesson involved the funding mechanisms used by the stimulus legislation. It was clear that funding provided through the Stabilization program flowed to the local level somewhat faster and was easier to use than funding under Title I and IDEA, which was sometimes slowed by various state program offices monitoring compliance with existing guidelines. The use of something like the Title I formula to target aid was a helpful way to distribute monies, but tying it to the federal program itself slowed the process. A third lesson involved Congress' attempt to protect schools in a few states by setting a 2006 expenditure floor. Rather than protecting schools in a few states, however, states raced through the loophole and viewed the

Congressional language as permission to cut education below levels they might have otherwise done, backfilling the state cuts with equal amounts of federal Stabilization funds. Future efforts should guard against language that would allow states to offset their own funding with federal dollars--a practice that produced little net effect for schools in the first year. Finally, the Department of Education under the new Administration did not always attend adequately to operational problems that its regulatory decisions caused or to issues that were affected by the delay in decisions.

Sixth, the data suggest that the decline in state aid to these urban school systems has been significant and sudden, and too abrupt for any organization public or private to adjust adequately. Urban school districts are leading cutting-edge efforts nationally to improve operational efficiency in public education, but the budget cuts were too severe for operational efficiencies to cover. The recession may force schools to rethink how they deploy their resources, but doing so is a long-term process that requires careful planning and thoughtful transitions. In the short-run, the economic downturn is causing little but havoc.

In fact, data on the upcoming school year suggest that the bottom has not been hit by many school districts--even with a second year of stimulus aid. The federal aid may cover some state cutbacks, but declines in local revenues will hit many school districts for the first time in the 2010-11 school year. And the drop-off is likely to come at precisely the point when the ARRA stimulus funding is exhausted. Compounding the situation is that the declines in 2010-11 and 2011-12 revenues will be hitting school districts at the same time that states may be adopting new common core standards, which are far more rigorous than most current state standards. Local districts may also need to adapt to any reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act that Congress approves at about the same time. The academic gains that many urban school systems have been seeing in recent years may be in jeopardy under this kind of strain.

Still, the education portion of ARRA should be considered a success, and school districts that received the aid should be commended for the productive and responsible ways they used the federal dollars. Public education continues to be worth the investment of Congress, the Administration, and citizens of the nation.



## City-by-City Uses of Funds

### Albuquerque

The superintendent of the Albuquerque Public Schools convened a daylong retreat for staff and assigned an associate superintendent to determine where and how the district could use the stimulus funds most effectively.

The school system will use Title I stimulus funding to expand services for the school system's poorest children. The district will use the appropriate set-aside of its Title I ARRA funds to serve homeless students. These funds will be used to hire outreach staff to enroll and support homeless Pre-K- through 12th-grade students. Support services for these students include a preschool program, after-school tutoring, summer school programs, a student mentoring program, as well as practical necessities such as backpacks, school supplies, and school uniforms. Training and conferences for program staff are included in the district's set-aside, while the funds will also enable the district to purchase computers and a vehicle to transport homeless students.

Title I ARRA funds will also be used to support the district's extended-learning summer programs, focusing on interventions that will further develop students' proficiency in reading and math. The reading curriculum that the programs used was developed to include themed comprehension projects, activities to refine skills, and literacy acquisition strategies. The math curriculum targets students who need to focus on basic math skills and their applications. These interventions are designed to prepare students to acquire the skills that they may have missed and to better cope with the increasing literacy demands of the next grade. Additionally, activities will focus on developing better problem solving and critical thinking skills. ARRA funds will also support the eighth-grade Summer Math Bridge "Transition" Program. This program uses targeted intervention strategies to accelerate learning and support positive youth development, as part of a proactive approach to support students who are struggling with math and at risk of failing at the high school level.

The Albuquerque Community Learning Centers Project provides targeted tutoring in reading/language arts and math, based on school assessment. It provides homework help in reading/language arts and math, in coordination with a student's regular school-day teacher. At the same time, the project integrates reading/language arts and math concepts and standards into enrichment and other extended-learning activities. Similarly, it supports students' social and emotional learning and development through the integration of concepts of personal and interpersonal skills into their daily activities.

Albuquerque Public Schools has also made plans to use its Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) stimulus funds to improve special education. Under the school system's special education technology plan, the district wants to ensure that special education professionals in schools and in the department of special education have the technology that they need to support students in special education programs. Special education staff will

collaborate with the district's information technology unit by using a two-year technology audit to determine minimum standards for special education programs in schools. They will collect information from every site, all related-service providers, and leadership teams. This information will then be used to order and distribute equipment based on identified needs.

In addition to providing new technology, the district plans to implement a two-year professional development plan that would expand training for special education staff, regular education staff, and administrative staff to increase positive outcomes for students with special needs that align with district goals. Albuquerque Public Schools also plans to fund efforts to increase achievement in preschoolers with disabilities by monitoring the use of instructional materials and supplies and by keeping track of feedback and data related to training provided for early childhood educators and parents. The district plans to use an early childhood assessment instrument to determine progress.

Currently, the district is 95-99 percent in compliance with federally mandated evaluation timelines. To reach 100 percent compliance and improve student achievement, the school system plans to evaluate and identify students with disabilities and giftedness, reduce redundant work done by evaluators, and keep track of the number of initial evaluations completed no more than 60 days from the date of parent consent. The district also plans to provide specialized materials for instruction, therapy, and assistive technology over a two-year period to increase the number of students who are making progress and meeting Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals.

ARRA funds will also help the district in its goal of providing a state-of-the-art facility to address the needs of students with autism and related mental health/developmental disabilities who require intensive programs to meet their extensive needs. The district plans to open a specialized center with a highly structured, predictable environment, providing service on an extended calendar for students unable to participate in a regular school classroom on a typical school campus. The center would address the needs of students who are over-stimulated, unable to participate in activities and classes for a typical length of time, have significant maladaptive behaviors, and lack independent adaptive and community skills.

The district also plans to provide transition specialists and special education staff with the training, materials, and support needed so that students have a better chance of experiencing positive post-school outcomes in the areas of postsecondary education or training, employment, and independent living, as needed. The Post-School Outcomes Survey will be used to gather data on students who left high school the previous year and are currently attending postsecondary institutions, participating in training programs, and/or are working.

## **Anchorage**

Anchorage School District will use ARRA funds in a number of ways, but will focus mainly on projects that increase student achievement, build teacher capacity, and increase the graduation rate. These projects are in keeping with the district's main goal that all students earn a diploma

and be college- and career-ready when they graduate. Under the district's ARRA plan, about 130 jobs will be created within the next two years. The district has a plan in place to review the programs and jobs created by the stimulus funds to determine their success.

The district has a number of projects that it is eager to pursue with ARRA funds, specifically the Title I and IDEA formula allocations, and the flexible funding available under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund.

The first of the projects that the district plans to fund focuses on college- and career-readiness. This comprehensive project will prepare students in Anchorage public schools for postsecondary education, training, and careers to help meet Alaska's workforce needs. Through the use of college/career-ready assessments and curricula—in concert with professional guidance—students and families will have extensive information on student interests, aptitudes, and needs about education and career pathways. Career/Tech Ed planning will be incorporated into the educational specifications after approval by the school board at a later date.

The second project focuses on online learning. The district plans to increase the number of netbooks and online learning applications for students. This step will allow teachers to differentiate instruction for students *in* their classrooms while responding to individual student needs for independent and engaging learning opportunities. It will also provide opportunities for independent learning *outside* the classroom.

The Response to Intervention (RTI) Comprehensive Readiness Project is the third project receiving funding through ARRA. A comprehensive assessment system will provide teachers with specific data on individual student achievement and progress. The project also provides for curriculum renewals, additional student learning time, and parent outreach and education. The district is heavily engaged in its efforts to systematize RTI in the elementary-school division as the critical starting point for maximum effect. However, RTI is occurring at the site level in secondary schools as well, as required by IDEA. The district recognizes that the Tier I curriculum must be sound in order for RTI efforts to be successful. ARRA will help bring the curriculum up to date after having lagged behind cycle for several years. The funds will also allow for more professional development on RTI for teachers who are working with struggling students, using data, and applying differentiated instruction. With these funds, also, elementary reading coaches, elementary counselors, middle and high school intervention support specialists, and middle school outreach teachers will be able to benefit from more professional development opportunities; staff will have more time to collaborate on data analysis and planning; and elementary, middle, and high school summer schools will receive a cash infusion.

The third project will help to enhance leadership capacity. The district needs a comprehensive professional development program to assist the administrative leadership team in supporting and guiding staff in its efforts to meet Anchorage School Board goals and individual student needs. The district's principal mentorship program assists those new to the role of administrator, in terms of induction and initial mentoring. However, the district still lacks a comprehensive plan for professional development aligned with the six-year instructional plan. Stimulus funding

will help ensure that planning process does occur, resulting in a more cohesive and comprehensive leadership professional development plan. Additionally, funds in this project will provide support to the district's inaugural University of Alaska at Anchorage (UAA) Leadership Cohort. A selected group of 18 students in UAA's educational leadership program will receive additional support via stimulus funds on their road to becoming successful Anchorage School District administrators.

Stimulus dollars will also aid in updating the curriculum by enabling the district to purchase new texts and technology-based materials, as well as by providing professional development for instructional staff on the new materials. These include grades 4-6 social studies curricula, grades K-6 music curricula, and grade 8 health curricula, as well as training related to world languages assessments, elementary science kits, and art.

In the area of technology, the IT/ED tech restructure completion project is another effort that the district would like to pursue. State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSFs) will be used to continue the reorganization effort that began three years ago to use appropriate staff members to support client machines, as well as to support teachers. Reorganization efforts will continue to move tech-support teachers back into the classroom and move IT support into the schools. The district has created a staffing plan for truly transitioning the tech teachers back into instructional roles and moving IT tech support workers (at a significantly lower salary than the teachers) into the schools. Stimulus money is only needed for these positions the first and second years of this effort to support the added positions during the transition years. Funding for the required long-term positions would be supported through the General Fund in the following years if the effort is deemed successful and the school board so directs the funding.

Another Anchorage School District technology-related project—network refurbishment—also stands to benefit from stimulus funds. The funds will help the district to provide effective educational tools based on new technologies, including hardware such as netbooks, interactive Whiteboards, projectors, and digital cameras; instructional reading and math applications; and network applications. ARRA funds will also help the district expand and acquire the technology tools used for keeping in touch with parents, notifying families in emergencies, and increasing home communication. These applications and supporting tools use the local area network, the wide area network, and the Internet. A network upgrade will provide added cost savings to the district by increasing wide area network capability and centralized servers, low-cost backup solutions, increased Internet bandwidth capability, along with unified communication, reduced support staff requirements, and substantially lowered hardware refresh costs.

The library patron system is also a priority area for the district. Stimulus funding will help the district upgrade a library system that supports Anchorage School District students in gaining 21st century skills and meeting grade-level expectations; meeting state and district library and information literacy standards; and supporting teachers in a meaningful way to deliver curriculum to students. The current system lacks many of the tools that the most casual Internet user has come to expect, which has been found to be detrimental to the engagement of students.

Additionally, stimulus funds will aid in building system renewal. Fire alarm, security system, intercom, lighting, and HVAC repairs will be made to several schools across the district. The district's Office of Support Services has prioritized a list of building system upgrades that would be allowable projects under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund.

Anchorage School District will also use Title I funds available under ARRA to expand preschool programs, acquire and apply Web-based student progress monitoring tools, and support professional development on implementation. Additional funds available through Title II-D of ARRA will be used on a project to allow teachers to incorporate technology into the district's grade-level expectations and curricular activities.

In addition, IDEA funds available under ARRA will be used to redesign teacher professional development to ensure more sustained, job-embedded, collaborative, data-driven, and focused efforts to improve student achievement for those with disabilities. The grant will fund additional instructional days and teacher duty for more intensive professional development over the two-year period. Funds will also be used to enhance the skills of highly effective teachers and administrators, who will then be able to serve as instructional leaders and coaches. The funds will provide more professional development for both special education and general education teachers on evidence-based strategies, such as positive behavioral supports to improve outcomes. The ARRA special education funds will provide expanded after-school and summer school opportunities, including one-on-one and small-group instruction, and other similar instructional activities to address the academic needs of low-performing students.

The IDEA stimulus grant will also allow the district to implement an easy-to-use, online Individualized Education Program (IEP) system for students with disabilities. The online system will be aligned with state academic standards and can be used to provide greater access to the general education curriculum. Moreover, the district will be able to contract for outside services to assist students through tutorial, training, and staff development activities.

Overall, the Anchorage school system hopes to use the stimulus funds to continue to advance its efforts to prevent students from dropping out of school and increase the graduation rate. ARRA is funding programs that establish career and education goals for students, with each middle school student working with an adult to develop individualized career and college plans based on his or her interests and skills. The district will also purchase software that monitors when students are in danger of failing, and alert staff members who can intervene. The *Anchorage Daily News* praised the district in a recent editorial for its use of stimulus funds.

## **Atlanta**

Atlanta Public Schools has hired a dedicated stimulus team program manager to provide supervision, leadership, coordination, and program development for using stimulus funds. The manager is responsible for overseeing, coordinating, and managing the programmatic components of stimulus fund expenditure and utilization to ensure program compliance, and

will supervise all department representatives responsible for overseeing and reporting on the ARRA funds.

The district has identified four priorities and initiatives for its use of stimulus funding: creating and saving jobs, building capacity and sustaining growth, supporting students, and enhancing material support. The anticipated outcomes from these initiatives include sustaining critical positions that support instruction and have an impact on student achievement and effectively implementing, managing, and tracking ARRA funds to ensure district compliance with federal and state guidelines.

ARRA funds will be used to sustain teaching and other instructional positions that otherwise would have been lost due to cuts in state and local funding. Title I funds will be used to support 11 instructional mentor positions (seven high school and four middle school) and five middle school counselor positions. IDEA funds will be used to save 49 special education paraprofessional positions. In addition, three additional instructional mentor positions will be created at the high school level using Title I funds.

State Fiscal Stabilization Funds will shore up the budget shortfalls that resulted from severe state and local budgetary constraints, enabling the district to maintain existing successful programs that have been responsible for increasing student achievement significantly over the past several years.

To build capacity and sustain growth, Title I and other ARRA funds will be used to provide English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) and gifted endorsements, extended professional learning opportunities, teacher induction programs, consultants, and incentives and internships. The district has a significant number of teachers who have not met certification requirements in the areas of special education, English language learners (ELLs), mathematics, science, and foreign language. The district recognizes the need to increase the number of teachers who are certified to teach appropriate gifted courses. Atlanta Public Schools will use the ARRA stimulus funds to plan and create necessary endorsement courses to address these critical areas.

The district can reduce the number of teachers that are not highly qualified by helping them to successfully pass the appropriate Georgia Assessment for the Certification of Educators (GACE) content assessment. The district will focus efforts toward assisting special education, ELL, gifted, mathematics, science, and foreign language teachers in meeting the content assessment requirements. ARRA funds will provide GACE workshops throughout the year to help teachers meet state testing requirements. Content assessment workshops will be provided to lead participants through a deeper understanding of Georgia Performance Standards and the state's testing framework. ARRA funds will be used to reimburse teachers for the fees needed to take and pass the required GACE assessment(s).

The ARRA funding will also help build internal capacity by extending professional development opportunities to district staff. The district will offer teachers numerous professional learning opportunities to increase the number of highly qualified and effective teachers meeting the



diverse needs of the students in the school system. Teachers will also gain deeper instructional knowledge in critical areas, such as core curriculum, English language learners, inclusion, behavioral support, and comprehensive reform models. These learning opportunities will also cover such topics as Response to Intervention (RTI), differentiated instruction, and co-teaching modules, all of which will ultimately lead to greater student achievement. The district is also planning to use a portion of the stimulus funds to increase the number of teachers who are dual certified, an important strategy designed to boost student achievement and prepare for the impact of future budget cuts and school closings.

In addition to system-level courses, each school will have the opportunity to offer professional development specific to the needs of its student population, including strategies to meet the needs of ELL students, inclusion strategies for special education students, and strategies for teaching gifted, mathematics, science, and foreign language students.

ARRA will allow the district to provide quality support that fosters effective leadership for teachers and administrators within schools and classrooms. Funds will provide differentiated professional learning for both teachers and instructional personnel who support teachers (instructional mentors, model teacher leaders, coaches, etc.). Stimulus funds will also be used to build capacity within the district's current and emerging leadership. Thus, this funding will be used to support leadership internship programs, such as the Superintendent's Academy for Building Leaders in Education and secondary leaders' academies.

The district plans to buttress student learning and increase academic achievement by using Title I funds to support comprehensive reform models, supplemental instructional programs, (e.g., student writing programs, literacy and mathematics development programs), and extended-learning opportunities, such as summer enrichment programs, Saturday instructional academies, zero-hour programs, and before- and after-school programs. The district expects these initiatives to provide substantial results. These results include seeing an increase in the number of students meeting or exceeding state standards both in the classroom and on state tests; closing the achievement gap for middle and high school students in the core curricular areas; increasing the number of students who successfully complete graduation requirements and pursue higher levels of education; and increasing writing scores among all students in grades K-12.

Funds will also be used to sustain and develop structural academic supports across the district, such as those relating to college readiness starting in the early grades (e.g., advisory, mentoring, on-track-to-graduate, college and career interest inventories, SAT and ACT prep, etc.) and to grade-level transitions. ARRA funds will also help the district improve student performance through the collection and analysis of instructional and demographic data (e.g., benchmark testing, materials, human resources, and equipment).

The district's plans to use ARRA Title I funds to acquire teaching materials (for example, in the areas of science, math, English language instruction, instructional technology, assistive technology, and social studies) that are needed to further enhance the instructional program and support academic achievement and social development. Title I funds will also be used to install



21st century technological supports, which will enhance the learning process and foster ongoing academic achievement.

IDEA funds will be used for area-specific professional development (autism, inclusion, and piloting positive behavioral support models) for Program for Exceptional Children (PEC) paraprofessionals, math endorsement courses for PEC teachers, and instructional coaches for inclusion. ARRA funds will also be used to provide additional assistive technology software to PEC programs.

ARRA can help Atlanta Public Schools meet the overall goals for the Program for Exceptional Children to enhance the achievement of students with disabilities, increasing the successful transition of students with disabilities from preschool through postsecondary education, and creating a sustainable model to build the capacity of all stakeholders to enhance the learning environment. These stakeholders include general education and special education staff, leadership teams, parents, the Georgia Network for Educational and Therapeutic Support, community partners, and college and university personnel.

The PEC will use ARRA funds to provide intensive training and professional development for autism teachers and paraprofessionals, as well as training for all special education school-based leaders. ARRA will help the district to develop and implement Professional Learning Communities and Communities of Practice at the school-reform team level, to offer math endorsement courses for PEC teachers, and to increase inclusion training for both general and special education teachers, with an emphasis on middle and high school.

ARRA will also enable the district to provide additional funding for instructional coaches for inclusion; create a mathematics and science retreat for students with disabilities; provide additional funding for a high school transition coach for PEC students; and provide funding to purchase assistive technology software for all schools. Moreover, ARRA will provide funding for additional paraprofessionals to support students with instructional and behavioral issues and to foster focused parent engagement and training, as well as to support promising practices programs at the high school level and provide targeted support in legal compliance areas.

Other programs will be buttressed with ARRA funds through the purchase of materials and other instructional and behavioral supports. These supports include technology and software, such as Whiteboard systems; supplemental instructional and therapy materials; online courses for high school students; equipment for the sensory and work-it-out rooms; contracted instructional coaches and transition specialists; and professional development.

ARRA will also enable the district to further support current early intervening services by funding a pilot Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) program in four middle schools; providing a PBS coach on utilizing targeted and individualized PBS interventions to reduce over-identification and disproportionate use of discipline for target student populations; making use of Response to Intervention support; and providing intensive training and professional learning in schoolwide discipline plans. ARRA will also assist the district with efforts to improve

schoolwide culture and climate; increase parental engagement; and develop lesson plans to enhance student engagement. ARRA will also provide funding for additional support personnel and training in collecting and disaggregating disciplinary data that can be used to improve instruction and school climate.

The outcomes of the district's preschool program would also be enhanced due to ARRA, as the district plans to provide professional development on effective and innovative reading techniques geared toward preparing children for kindergarten; PBS for preschool; the effective use of portfolio assessments for preschool-aged children; and Response to Intervention evidence-based strategies for preschool-aged children. The district is also planning to purchase portfolio assessments that have been correlated with preschool outcomes, and hire or contract additional literacy and math coaches at the preschool level.

### **Austin**

Austin Independent School District does not expect to receive a net increase over the previous year with the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund because Texas is supplanting state aid with this federal amount. The district held a series of community forums to discuss possible uses of the additional stimulus dollars (Title I and IDEA) and to jointly develop ideas and priorities, with invitations sent to schools, parents, community partners, and nonprofit groups. The school system established a cross-functional team to work on how to implement the ideas and get the most out of the short-term funds. Austin Independent School District has developed a place on its Web site for ideas and has created an e-mail list of all parents and community members who submitted ideas to enhance future community outreach efforts. At present, the district plans to use ARRA funds for professional development around the instructional support of English language learners, English language development, and academies' intensive language instruction for English language learners as part of the district's reading and literacy program.

### **Baltimore**

Baltimore City Public Schools will utilize ARRA funds to have an impact on students, teachers, and the community by expanding prekindergarten education through the addition of 65 new classrooms for early childhood programs. Stimulus dollars will also enable the district to reconfigure the physical locations where citywide special education programs are placed and where they are concentrated.

In the area of professional development, the district will use ARRA funds to enhance professional development opportunities in math and other critical content areas, as well as for the development of a data warehouse to improve the use of data-driven instruction. Additionally, the district will create a new accountability system and develop a more extensive network of community-based organizations that the district can use to expand partnerships.

## **Boston**

Boston Public Schools has established a set of priorities for both Title I and IDEA funding under ARRA to maximize the benefits of the stimulus funding and ensure the continuation and expansion of efforts that have made the district successful in raising urban students' achievement levels.

A top priority for the district is restoring the positions of school-based staff. Existing budget deficits will require schools to lay off teachers, school support staff, and administrators. Title I ARRA funding will be used to restore approximately 100 positions back to schools. Another top priority is monitoring student progress for improved teaching and learning. Schools currently use a fractured system of tests that cannot provide useful information to teachers in a timely manner to improve instruction. The stimulus funding will help the district give teachers and schools the right tools to monitor student outcomes (achievement, behavior, attendance) for continuous improvement.

The district's efforts to improve literacy instruction will be strengthened with the ARRA funding. Many Boston public schools lack the necessary tools to help all students become strong readers. Additional Title I funds provide an opportunity to give teachers the needed tools and training to improve the literacy outcomes for each of their students, with emphasis given to Commonwealth Priority Schools, those the state has identified as underperforming during a specific review period.

Additionally, the district has been working to improve performance in science and math, but some schools lack the necessary tools and teacher preparation to offer rigorous math and science instruction, particularly in the middle grades. Stimulus funding will enable the district to provide teachers the needed tools and training to improve math and science instruction. Existing budget deficits have also forced the district to lay off instructional coaches for English language arts, math, English language learners, and social studies. The district will utilize ARRA funding to restore as many instructional support positions as possible so that those professionals who currently work directly with teachers and administrators to support improvements in teaching and learning can continue their efforts.

Title I funding will also enable the district to redesign and create access to summer school programs for up to 1,600 students in grades 4 and 5. Currently, the district does not provide summer safety nets to fourth- and fifth-graders, and existing summer safety nets will have to be eliminated because of budget shortfalls. This challenge is exacerbated by the shortage of ongoing safety nets to keep high school students on track for graduation when they fall behind. The district also recognizes the need for greater family engagement in student learning to accelerate student performance and decrease persistent achievement gaps. The school system will devote significant amounts of ARRA funding to provide family and community outreach coordinators, fund a parent university, disseminate family engagement materials, and offer translation services for schools.

Boston Public Schools will be using a considerable amount of its State Fiscal Stabilization Funds to restore job positions and to hire teachers of English language learners (ELLs). Funds specifically will be used to support the district's Acceleration Agenda (Boston's strategic plan) to help ELLs close the achievement gap, increase professional development to enhance the instruction of ELL students, and expand teachers' access to appropriate materials and assessments required for effective instruction of ELLs.

Similar to the priorities under Title I, the district will use IDEA ARRA funding to restore jobs, saving the jobs of about 35 school-based instructional and support staff members that had been slated for elimination due to existing budget deficits. The district will also focus on reducing the disproportionately high number of special education referrals. As it stands now, the district lacks systematic strategies and tools for reducing unnecessary special education referrals, particularly for male minority students. Additional IDEA funding makes it possible for the district to increase support to schools for implementing pre-referral academic and behavior interventions, with a specific focus on attendance and truancy issues.

The district will also work to increase inclusionary models and practices in schools, by providing schools with resources and staff to widen the opportunities for students with disabilities to receive instruction in general education settings. Stimulus funding under IDEA also will allow the district to assist schools that lack sufficient staff, materials, and training to fully support students with autism. IDEA funds will provide schools with additional resources and training to enhance in-classroom supports for students with autism.

### **Broward County (Fort Lauderdale)**

Broward County Public Schools will use State Fiscal Stabilization Fund monies to save approximately 1,500 jobs that were at risk of elimination due to state and local revenue shortfalls.

The district is planning to allocate a portion of its ARRA funding to support its Effective Teaching Program, an effort designed to allow exemplary teachers to mentor other classroom teachers in order to guide, advise, coach, and assist them. The district also intends to create and save jobs through the retention and creation of positions for school-based instructional coaches, instructional facilitators, and instructional technology specialists. The district will spend its new Title I funds on technology and extended-learning and tutorial programs, as well as on efforts to enhance teacher quality through professional development, summer academies, content-specific coaching, and instructional-facilitator training.

Broward County Public Schools has similar plans for its new IDEA stimulus funding in terms of saving and creating jobs, and improving services to students. The district plans to use IDEA stimulus money to fund school-based instructional facilitators, exceptional student education (ESE) specialists, and psychologists. The district will also use ARRA funds to help special education students with transition services, specifically through job coaching, training, and career placement. In addition, special education will benefit from technology upgrades, new assistive technology, and technology upgrades in centers and ESE classrooms. As part of its

effort to improve student services, Broward County Public Schools will use IDEA funds to improve instructional quality through additional professional development, training to expand teacher endorsements, and additional paraprofessionals and behavioral specialists.

The District's Head Start Program received Quality Improvement ARRA funding to implement new curricula that are aligned with the K-3 educational state standards. The curricula focus on improving preschool students' pre-literacy and mathematic skills. Additionally, the funding has been used to create a new database to enter Head Start applications electronically and monitor Head Start programmatic services.

The district will take advantage of the new bonding authority in the stimulus package—both the Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCBs) and the Build America Bonds (BABs)—to make needed school-facility improvements and upgrades. BABs give the district access to a much larger taxable market by allowing the system to issue taxable debt and receive a federal payment for 35 percent of the interest expense.

The QSCBs program will have an even greater impact in Broward County. As one of the nation's largest school districts, Broward County Public Schools received a specific allocation totaling almost \$100 million over two calendar years. In January of 2009, the school board approved financing documents for school facility Certificates of Participation (COPs) to fund approximately \$127 million in capital projects across the school district. Unfortunately, the credit crisis had created significant turmoil in the municipal bond market, and these disruptions made it economically impractical to sell the COPs. With the new school construction bonds available under ARRA, however, the district was able to pursue the opportunity to restructure the issue by taking advantage of the new federal interest-free bonds. On May 5, 2009, the School Board of Broward County approved a resolution authorizing district staff to proceed with the transaction.

For fiscal year 2010, the district will take advantage of the second portion of QSCB stimulus package offered. The Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment Act (HIRE Act), just signed in March of 2010, will allow the district the option to issue the QSCBs as an interest-bearing taxable bond and receive a federal cash subsidy payment to offset the interest costs. The School Board of Broward County is expected to review and authorize these financial transactions prior to closing.

## **Buffalo**

Buffalo City Public Schools will use ARRA stimulus funding to prevent layoffs, with approximately 376 full-time classroom positions funded through the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF). This number includes kindergarten teachers, teacher aides, and teacher assistants. In addition, SFSFs will be used to pay the hourly salaries of district school bus aides, totaling 424 FTE positions.

The district will commit Title I stimulus dollars to professional development through the Professional Development Academy, which will offer teachers in Title I schools some 48 hours of professional development during the school year, with topics based on an individual data

analysis of each school's needs. The district will also use this funding to support the data system used to track student achievement and teacher effectiveness, as well as to conduct research on the success of district Title I programs and interventions.

Additional ARRA funds earmarked for professional development will be allocated to pay summer and after-school teachers for professional development; to promote curriculum development; and to provide teacher center oversight. Funds will also be available for educational speakers; online courses for teachers; grants to attend professional learning conferences; and technology loan programs for classrooms, which cover instructional supplies, software, and online resources.

ARRA funding will focus on supporting student achievement through several different initiatives, including after-school programs targeted to schools in need, such as those identified for school improvement, corrective action, and restructuring. These programs will be held two days a week for students in grades 3-8. The districts will also work to meet the needs of ninth-grade students through an after-school academic intervention services program, which will be held four days a week in Title I schools.

ARRA funding will be used to support an evaluation of the district's English language orientation program (ELOP), as well as its Title I program—both conducted by the University of Buffalo. ARRA funds for Title I will also be used by the Buffalo Public Schools to support a parent university designed to help parents act as full partners in their child's education. Buffalo's parent universities will equip parents with the skills and knowledge that foster parent engagement and promote student success.

IDEA funds available under ARRA will be used to support approximately 62 full-time staff positions. The majority of these positions will be counselors, but the positions will also include literacy coaches, reading support teachers, social workers, and student support team/committee on special education chairs, among others. IDEA funding will also support the night school credit-recovery program, Response to Intervention programs, culturally responsive teaching consultants, and services for students at risk of special education identification. The district will also use ARRA funds for individualized education program (IEP) auditors, literacy and math instruction for students with disabilities, and positive behavioral support training and consulting.

IDEA funds for the education of preschool children will be put to good use in Buffalo Public Schools, as well, supporting three full-time speech teachers for early childhood centers, along with testing supplies and materials for preschool and kindergarten special education placements.

The district has also targeted ARRA resources for some of Buffalo's neediest students. McKinney Vento Funds will fund a community education leader, and will provide transportation, education, and the supplies needed for programs supporting homeless families. These resources will include funding teacher salaries for homeless student tutoring, staff



supplies, and “Rights and Resource” education for the parent university course for homeless families. ARRA funding will also be used to purchase school supplies, including school uniforms, for homeless students. In addition, these dollars will augment the district nurse travel fund, which supports visits to shelters where homeless students live and will help to cover the costs of staff travel to homeless education conferences and of homeless student emergency bus transportation, which provides service to after-school programs and shelters.

The child nutrition funding under ARRA will also benefit the district, allowing Buffalo Public Schools to update its food service equipment in 11 city schools, as well as to purchase a food processor and salad bar, steamer, and kettle for schools with specific needs.

## **Charleston**

Charleston County School District plans to make energy efficiency improvements with stimulus aid, according to WCBD, News 2 in Charleston. Occupancy sensors will be installed in many classrooms, and improvements will also be made to heating and air conditioning units to make them more efficient. It is believed that such improvements will reduce the district’s large energy cost burden.

## **Charlotte-Mecklenburg**

Staff members in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools are working collaboratively and thoughtfully to identify key priorities for the ARRA funding, with a focus on staffing needs, classroom instructional resources, professional development, and technology systems to ensure data-driven instruction and efficient support operations.

In addition to the three major funding streams (SFSF, Title I, and IDEA), Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools has submitted several competitive ARRA grant applications, either as lead applicant, or as a partnering agency with other agencies. These applications are currently pending.

## **Chicago**

The federal stimulus package will provide Chicago Public Schools with more than \$400 million in funding for several existing programs over two years. ARRA’s Title I grant will be used to support early childhood centers, services to English language learners, school improvement efforts, professional development, parent involvement, and after-school programs. ARRA’s IDEA funds will pay for salary and benefit costs for special education teachers at specialty schools that are dedicated to educating children with disabilities.

Chicago Public Schools also expects a funding cliff in two years as the \$400 million in ARRA stimulus funds expire. Approximately \$94 million of these funds will be used in FY 2010 to maintain supplemental programs whose funding was reduced by the state and to support cost increases approved by the Illinois State Board of Education. Some \$130 million of these funds



will be reserved for use in FY 2011 in order to support supplemental programs and school improvement initiatives, as well as to meet budgetary needs as allowed.

### **Christina (Wilmington, Del.)**

Christina School District plans to use ARRA stimulus dollars to support a pilot program proposed by the district's early childhood leadership team that will allow 30 four-year-olds—who otherwise would not have had the opportunity—to attend preschool before going to kindergarten. The students were selected based on specific eligibility requirements focused on serving families with the greatest need.

In addition, a portion of the funding will be used to update kitchen facilities using the food services grant. Four Christina schools were slated for installation of new equipment during the fall of 2009. These updates will support improvements in cooking and holding hot foods, as a part of the National School Lunch Program.

### **Cincinnati**

Cincinnati Public Schools will use IDEA stimulus funding to provide professional development to its staff. The district will also use stimulus funding to further promote the implementation of promising and innovative practices as part of its school reform initiative at the elementary school level. These practices include co-teaching, instructional technology, and Response to Intervention strategies within a three-tiered model of academic and behavioral supports. IDEA funding will also provide the district with supplementary equipment and early intervening services.

The district will use State Fiscal Stabilization Fund stimulus dollars to assist in paying for the electricity in the district's school buildings and will use Title I monies to support the redesigning of schools and the creation of "fifth quarter" instruction. Additionally, Title I funds will support summer schools and contribute to the support of curriculum managers and to ongoing professional development.

### **Clark County (Las Vegas)**

Clark County School District will use its State Fiscal Stabilization Fund dollars to make up for falling sales tax revenue and offset decreased state funding. The district will also issue \$104 million in ARRA's Qualified School Construction Bonds over a two-year period to fund renovation and modernization projects that had been approved by the bond oversight committee and by the Board of School Trustees prior to the enactment of ARRA but for which funding was previously unavailable.

The district will use Title I stimulus funding to provide additional staff development and to expand a variety of resources for students. These resources include early childhood programs, before- and after-school programs, Saturday school, summer school, and tutorial and remedial

programs. In additional stimulus dollars will support online classes, parent involvement, and credit retrieval. The district expanded its Title I program by 68 schools using ARRA funding, and now has a total of 151 Title I schools. Title I funds paid for 132 new teachers, 82 school-based support staff members, and 32 temporary staff members. The district also plans to invest Title I resources in training more highly qualified teachers. Additional Title I funds will provide supplementary educational-vocational assistance for approximately 145 students attending Spring Mountain Youth Camp and Summit View Correctional Institution.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Funds will assist the district in supporting homeless students. Using this funding, Clark County School District plans to expand the High School Circle of Hope program, provide additional tutoring services for homeless students in need of assistance, and purchase supplies and materials necessary for these students to be successful.

The district's IDEA ARRA grant will be used to assist in the initiation, expansion, and improvement of programs for educating children with disabilities. Funds will be used to expand extended-school-day opportunities and instructional programs, as well as to support efforts aimed at dropout prevention, credit retrieval, positive behavioral support, and autism support. IDEA funding will also support parent involvement, school-to-work programs, site-based teacher mentors, assistive technology, and university partnerships, along with data collection for Response to Intervention, and professional development.

An IDEA early childhood grant will help the district with program improvements to meet National Association for the Education of Young Children accreditation standards and to upgrade services for children with disabilities before they enter first grade. Through addressing one or more of the established IDEA indicators, the district hopes to improve cognitive and social outcomes for preschool children, as well as to improve parents' involvement in their children's special education programs. The early childhood grant will support data tracking, assistive technology, and professional development.

The district's transportation department has applied for a \$6 million ARRA grant that will allow the department to update its bus fleet and use cleaner fuel options. The matching grant will enable the school system to purchase approximately 33 compressed natural gas (CNG) buses, install a CNG fueling station for those buses, and create a quick-fill CNG station at the district's Transportation Center. Funds made possible by the grant will help the district establish the necessary infrastructure to allow for expansion of the CNG fueling capabilities at the transportation facility.

The district also received a child nutrition ARRA grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the purchase of food transportation equipment. The additional equipment will expand the kitchen capability of individual schools and enable them to provide more school-prepared meals. The district is also planning to submit an application for funding under the Race to the Top and Investing in Innovation programs.

## **Cleveland**

Cleveland Metropolitan School District has a number of important priorities in place that will benefit from the stimulus funding available under ARRA. These priorities include a district plan to develop a more robust and timely assessment system that includes both formative and summative assessments, as well as the ability to rapidly transfer assessment data into the district's existing longitudinal data warehouse for immediate teacher use.

The district will provide regular professional development for all district literacy and math teachers over the two-year period of ARRA funding. Substitute teachers will be used to provide release time for faculty; and state school improvement funds will be used to provide regular coaching of learned skills in the classroom. A grant from the teacher incentive fund will be used to create model lessons for substitute teachers to draw on while regular teachers receive professional development. The district is also planning to provide a variety of additional resources and support services to 10 low-performing "turnaround" schools

In addition, the district plans to use ARRA funds to create a principal pipeline that invests in identifying and supporting aspiring administrators. This effort will include coaching and developing early-career administrators, deepening leadership skills among mid-career administrators, and identifying master administrators.

Cleveland Metropolitan School District will also provide extended-day instructional services to elementary- and middle-grade students who are below proficiency levels in reading and math. Similarly, extended-day services will be offered to high school students who have failed to meet secondary level exit exam requirements.

The district plans to deepen prevention and early intervention services by developing stronger conditions for learning within school buildings. This effort includes a focus on climate, social-emotional learning challenges, and safety in schools; implementation of a literacy-based social-emotional learning curriculum; identification of curriculum coaches; and professional development for implementing the curriculum. The district also plans to invest in career and college coaching for high school juniors and seniors, to ensure strong high school exit planning and to boost graduation rates.

Additionally, the district will work to strengthen attendance and discipline interventions by investing in professional development and family intervention support efforts, and by increasing the quality of attendance data. Finally, ARRA support will enable the district to double family and community engagement staff during the two-year funding period, which will significantly boost customer service and the school system's relationships with students' families.

## **Columbus**

Columbus City Schools was facing a potential cut of up to 20 percent in state education funding. Even though State Fiscal Stabilization Funds will not provide the district with additional monies

over the previous year, these funds allowed the district to receive the expected amount of state education funding for the 2009-10 school year and maintain current staff levels.

To maximize the use of ARRA funds, the district's chief academic officer and chief operating officer solicited proposals from the staff. These proposals were then put into a spreadsheet, categorized by department, function, objective, and potential funding source. The requests exceeded the anticipated ARRA funding amounts, so a committee was formed to prioritize and align the plan with Columbus City Schools' mission statement and goals for the next two school years. The committee's decisions resulted in the district plan for using ARRA funds.

The majority of the district's ARRA Title I funds will be used to support supplemental and additional instructional efforts to help students improve their academic performance. The district is hiring approximately 240 part-time teachers to work with struggling readers in grades K-3, 6, and 7. The district is also adding three preschool sites in high-need areas, along with teachers to support these units. The district also provided an "early experience" for incoming kindergarten classes prior to the start of the 2009-10 school year.

The district is using stimulus funds to support the literacy program with the purchase of additional software and books, instructional materials for the new preschool sites, and academic materials needed for classrooms in Title I schools. An additional set of interpreters will be provided to support the growing needs of the English language learners in the district and their families, and to assist parents with enrollment, teacher meetings, and other school-related activities. ARRA funds will also enable schools to purchase technology to facilitate 21st century learning through hands-on experiences and interactive lessons.

Columbus City Schools' second largest investment with ARRA Title I funds will support professional development offerings to build the capacity of the district's instructional staff. ARRA Title I funds will be used to ensure that all district teachers will have the opportunity to engage in high-quality, sustained professional development. For example, these funds will cover the salaries, stipends, release time, etc., needed to provide professional development days during the school year, as well as extended days and Saturday opportunities throughout the next two years. The district will contract with external entities to provide leadership and expertise in Professional Learning Communities and effective instruction to English language learners, while implementing a rigorous curriculum, working with homeless students, and increasing the human resources available to assist the district in delivering the professional development to the schools.

The district will also devote Title I funds to local school improvement efforts. ARRA will be used to hire six teachers who will work with schools that have been specifically identified for improvement based on Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) measures under the No Child Left Behind Act. These teachers—working with two part-time administrators and two data analysts—will help low-performing schools identify problems and achieve the goals in their school improvement plans. The district will contract with experts in the design and

programming necessary to maintain and enhance the online school improvement planning tool used by all Title I schools.

Each Title I school in the district will also receive a significant ARRA allocation, based on the current Title I funding formula, to ensure that each school will have the opportunity to address specific needs related to core academic content areas. The district's high schools will use their funds for graduation coaches who work directly with students who are either short on required credits or need to pass one or more Ohio Graduation Tests. Schools may also use their ARRA Title I allocation for technology; additional professional development; instructional materials and supplies; tutoring and Saturday School; as well as for other approved Title I purchases that relate to academic improvement in reading and math.

The district's Office of Innovative Programs will receive ARRA funds for the planning, oversight, implementation, and evaluation of the school system's Innovative Program Schools. ARRA will enable the district to add staff members who can plan and develop curricula and launch innovative programs in existing school facilities. Innovative school programs will center on a theme, such as international studies or science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM).

In addition to supporting the required set-asides (non-public schools, parental involvement, etc.), the district will use Title I ARRA funds to provide additional staff to assist those schools that have an English as a second language (ESL) unit or a high population of students who are English language learners. Related to this, these funds will be used to provide staff development for ESL teachers. Title I will also be used to continue early childhood education at two sites that were slated for closure due to the most recent round of state budget cuts. ARRA funds for Title I will allow these two existing sites to remain open, as well as fund the opening of three new sites in high-need, high-poverty areas.

Columbus City Schools also received an ARRA grant under Title I, Part D funds for students participating in the neglected and delinquent (N&D) program. The majority of funds will be used to support supplemental instructional opportunities for students in the five institutions that participate with the district in the program. The district will increase the hours in existing tutors' weekly schedules, as well as hire two new part-time tutors to work with the students most academically in need. ARRA will support the N&D tutoring program with additional software, instructional technology, and academic materials. The Title I, Part D funds will also support professional development opportunities to build the capacity of the district teachers assigned to the N&D facilities. These funds will make it possible for the teachers to attend conferences and professional meetings with their peers and education experts.

Columbus City Schools will also receive a significant amount of stimulus funding to improve services for children with disabilities. The majority of ARRA funds under IDEA will be used to support supplemental and additional instructional opportunities for students at the high school level and to upgrade instructional materials used within the special education programs. The district will hire 14 high school intervention specialists who will monitor the academic performance, attendance, and discipline of students with disabilities, as well as provide support

for alternate assessments and accommodations for the Ohio Graduation Test. Stimulus funds will be used to purchase adapted instructional materials and software aimed at facilitating access to the general education curriculum, as well as additional software and books supporting the district's literacy program. In addition, up to six parent consultants will be funded through ARRA IDEA to provide parental support and assistance at special education facilities.

Another major investment undertaken with ARRA IDEA funds is the creation of professional development opportunities that will improve students with disabilities' access to the general education curriculum. ARRA dollars will enable the district to hire two teachers to work with both special education and general education teachers in areas such as collaborative learning, differentiated instruction, positive behavioral supports, and the use of adaptive technology and software to facilitate access to the general curriculum.

Professional development will be provided to special education teachers, tutors, and related-services staff and administrators, as well as general education staff, in the areas of co-teaching, Ohio CORE requirements, assistive technology, and procedures for new Individualized Education Program (IEP) and evaluation team report forms to ensure compliance with state and federal guidelines ARRA funding for salaries will support opportunities for extended days and Saturday professional development throughout the next two years and can increase the district's capacity to serve its students significantly.

The district will devote ARRA funds to IDEA support services, which will enable the school system to add 20 support specialists, including 15 instructional assistants, 3.5 (FTE) speech and language pathologists, and 1.5 (FTE) new school psychologists. The district will contract with experts in technology to develop more effective and efficient ways for district teachers and administrators to use data to drive instruction. In addition, an equipment allocation will be used to expand adaptive instructional devices and materials across all grade levels.

Columbus City Schools is also planning to meet a number of vital needs with additional funding available under ARRA. Funds from the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Program will be used to defray the high cost of transportation as a result of allowing homeless students to remain in their school of origin and not having to transfer to a different school during the school year. McKinney-Vento funding will also support transportation for homeless children to attend summer education programs located at shelter agencies in the city. Non-school facilities (shelter agencies) will also receive ARRA funding to support the implementation of the McKinney-Vento requirements and to purchase school supplies and basic educational materials for after-school and summer education programs serving homeless students.

The district's IDEA early childhood grant under ARRA will be used to provide services to help ensure that children with disabilities have access to high-quality, prekindergarten services, with specific support for additional prekindergarten teachers, instructional assistants, and supplies and materials to support the academic program. The district will use a grant from the National School Lunch Program to pay for new ovens in school cafeterias and update point-of-sale equipment in the school cafeterias. This new equipment will increase speed, accuracy, and



system operating time, and will improve the food safety and quality in schools with aging and outdated kitchen facilities. Finally, the district will use an ARRA grant from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency to increase the fuel efficiency of older school buses, in an effort to reduce emissions and improve gas mileage.

## **Dallas**

Dallas Independent School District established a cross-functional stimulus funds task force to identify priority areas for the use of stimulus dollars. The task force reviewed district goals, current programs, and student performance data. It then identified four goals to drive the use of the ARRA funds: supporting struggling students at all Title I schools; improving graduation and college readiness rates; closing achievement gaps between and among student groups; and building teacher capacity to improve instruction.

The district will use Title I ARRA funds in ways that meet the district's priorities and align with the funding template provided by the State of Texas. ARRA-supported initiatives in the district will include high school completion and dropout prevention programs; high-quality professional development; and activities aligned with Response to Intervention, Reading First (or similarly implemented reading programs); and with science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) education. The district will also focus on school improvement efforts, technology upgrades, and increasing access to early childhood education.

The district will support high school completion efforts and dropout prevention programs with ARRA funds by providing intensive reading and math instruction and intervention strategies for students shown to be at risk of failure on the end-of-course assessments. Further, the district will provide professional development training and infrastructure support around these instructional strategies and also will provide supplemental training in fiscal/grant management for at-risk programs (to include the identification and coordination of funding sources). Dallas Independent School District will also implement and support programs to increase or expand family engagement, mentoring, and alternative education options for at-risk youth. Similarly, it will support the implementation of flexible scheduling, after-school academic support programs, and individualized learning environments for at-risk youth. Supporting targeted academic and social support for at-risk youth is part of the district's strategy, including college and career counseling combined with social-emotional counseling. The district will also implement instructional strategies at the high school level that are aligned with the state's college readiness standards to ensure that students have the knowledge and skills that they need to be successful in entry-level college courses, with a supplemental but focused approach for middle school teachers. ARRA will also support the district's efforts to establish a high school Early Start and Over-Age Credit Recovery Program, and a dropout prevention center.

The district also plans to use ARRA Title I funding to provide high-quality, focused, and sustained professional development that is aligned with the state's academic content standards (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills [TEKS]).



Supplemental professional-development materials purchased with ARRA funds will advance middle school teachers' understanding of the prerequisite skills necessary for students to succeed in core content-area high school courses and help high school teachers better understand how to teach both the breadth of content and the rigor reflected in the TEKS. This knowledge includes understanding recent revisions in the TEKS and understanding the new assessment requirements for high school graduation and the ways in which these requirements are different from Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) requirements. This knowledge also includes understanding the implications of college readiness in the new assessment requirements of the educational opportunity centers. ARRA-funded professional development will provide opportunities for both middle and high school teachers to increase their content knowledge, develop greater expertise in their delivery of content, and better understand what supports each student needs to make academic progress and how to implement those supports. District teachers will also receive training on English language proficiency standards; Texas adolescent literacy academies; end-of-course assessments; college and career readiness standards; the use of diagnostics, benchmark assessments, etc., for purposes of instruction; the identification of the various categories of students who are English language learners (ELLs) and the supports available to these students; and Texas prekindergarten guidelines.

The district will also focus on providing high-quality, targeted, and sustained professional development that concentrates on age-appropriate screening and assessment measures for all students. Professional development will also assist with individualizing instruction so that students develop a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy. Thus, the district will provide training designed specifically to help teachers develop individualized instructional strategies for students identified as needing intervention, as well as training on the implementation of best practices for increasing student achievement. Working toward these goals, the district will use ARRA funds to create and execute action plans and evaluate results at district-, campus-, and grade-level meetings.

ARRA will also help the district deal with the loss of federal funding for Reading First. Dallas Independent School District will use Title I funds to implement a sustainability plan (for Reading First or similar types of research-based reading programs) on Title I campuses.

ARRA funding will support the district's Response to Intervention program by providing research-based progress-monitoring tools, technology, and professional development around effective implementation in the classroom. Title I funds will also be used to pay the salaries of math, reading, and behavior coaches to help provide and support small-group and individualized instruction, as well as support for summer school and a math initiative, which features a comprehensive set of interactive arithmetic lessons.

Title I schools in School Improvement status under No Child Left Behind will receive contracts to assist with campus needs assessments and strategic planning, including the identification and coordination of funding sources for services to best meet the identified needs of the campus to improve academic performance and meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the education law. The district will also use stimulus money to provide Title I School Improvement campuses

with resources to assist students with note-taking and test-taking strategies, study skills, and activities aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards.

The district also plans to implement quality curriculum management systems to meet identified technology needs of Title I campuses. Schools will utilize strategies and activities to incorporate technology into the classroom, including the use of student academic progress monitoring systems that inform individualized classroom instruction and the provision of educational technology to promote higher-order thinking skills, problem solving, and creativity. As part of its technology thrust, the district will develop and use an early warning data system to determine students at risk of failure.

Dallas Independent School District will also use stimulus funds to support activities aligned with STEM education. The district plans to increase student use of technology, including robotics, and provide supplemental intensive instruction designed around algebraic readiness and science programs to help students meet the state's 4X4 graduation requirements (i.e., four courses in both math and science during the four years of high school). ARRA funding will also be used to help the district collaborate with the state's T-STEM Centers for access to high-quality, engaging, and rigorous content strategies for use in middle school and high school classrooms and to help the district increase the integration of Career and Technical Education Foundation courses.

## **Dayton**

Dayton Public Schools began planning for the use of ARRA funds last spring, after the stimulus legislation was enacted. The district shared information about the funds with parents during a district-parent meeting in May, and departments within the school district provided input in the development of a spending plan.

In the first quarter that funding was available, the district used Title I funding under ARRA to create five math instructional positions to provide supplemental support to struggling students. The district also contracted with a private vendor to provide supplemental math instruction to students in non-public schools, and hired the local Educational Services Center to provide an external coach for school improvement efforts.

The school system also used Title I funding to retain a number of important staff positions in jeopardy within the district. These positions included those of a Title I early childhood education parent and community facilitator, whose role is to support district efforts to engage parents in school activities. The district was also able to retain the supplemental educational services (SES) facilitator, who monitors SES provider communication and paperwork among the parents, school, and district; the collaborative language and literacy instruction coach, who provides supplemental support for schoolwide reading teachers at two K-8 schools; and the associate director for Title I, who provides supplemental support for schoolwide humanities.

This district plan for Title I under ARRA includes funding a number of positions that will be filled over time, including those of a Title I ARRA evaluator; Title I intervention teachers to

provide intensive intervention in school improvement locations; and instructional paraprofessionals to support school improvement activities. Dayton Public Schools will also spend Title I funds on neighborhood parent and community centers, instructional technology and software, pre-K transition and elementary intervention programs, as well as on preschool materials, software, and support staff. The district will also spend ARRA funds on a professional development contract with Xavier University.

IDEA funds available to Dayton Public Schools through ARRA will also be used to create and retain important jobs. The district created a vision therapist position for students in non-public schools. The therapist provides Braille instruction and modified materials for visually impaired students attending a non-public school, as well as consultation for general education teachers. The district also used IDEA funds in the first quarter of ARRA to retain jobs for students with disabilities in private placements. These jobs include four intervention specialists and three speech therapists who can continue to provide services in non-public schools. The district is also using the ARRA funds for the purchase of computer automation systems, specifically a Web-based Individualized Education Program (IEP) application to facilitate writing student IEPs.

Dayton Public Schools is currently unsure of the amount of funding available to the district through the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund program, but has prioritized needed textbook adoptions (i.e. social studies) and retaining the Plato Credit Recovery Program. The district also received an ARRA grant through the National School Lunch Program's kitchen equipment assistance fund, which will help the district modernize equipment and improve the quality and safety of food served to the school system's students.

## **Denver**

Denver Public Schools will use Title I, Part A ARRA funds for Response to Intervention (RTI) training and materials, as well as for interventions targeted toward English language arts (ELA) students, toward assessing and redesigning the district's professional development plan, and toward increasing parent and community involvement. The interventions program will create sixth-grade summer academies, as well as expand ninth-grade summer academies to serve more students. Credit recovery and other high school graduation rate initiatives will also be funded under the ELA intervention strategies program.

In redesigning the current professional development system, the district plans to reassess evaluation, areas of focus, offerings, and structures. The district will also use Title I funds to increase mentoring and teacher support for both the first and second year of teaching; increase teacher professional development and principal professional development to support teacher development; and design a method to evaluate instruction taking place in the classroom (including specific "look-for's" and standards alignment). The district will also design a reporting tool that takes benchmark and progress monitoring information and systemizes the results into reports that teachers can use to inform their instruction.

To strengthen parent and community engagement, the district will use Title I funds to support and expand the role of parent/family liaisons, cultivate the parent volunteer network, expand districtwide parent training institutes and parent tutor and volunteer training, and develop more effective tracking procedures and measures of parent participation. With these new and expanded tools and networks, Denver Public Schools will target increased communication and outreach to parents of students in lower-performing schools.

The theme of Title I spending will carry over into IDEA because ARRA funds will be used for expanding interventions, enhancing educator professional development, and fostering greater parent and community engagement in the area of special education. The district will expand interventions by hiring special education disability-access teachers in high schools and middle schools to improve inclusive opportunities for students. Special education itinerant teachers and itinerant paraprofessionals will be hired to assist in addressing student needs at the building level.

IDEA ARRA funds will also be used to obtain state-of-the-art assistive technology devices for particular students with disabilities and provide training in the use of those devices to improve these students' access to the general curriculum. The district will hire RTI itinerant instructors and positive behavioral support coaches to implement an RTI framework in all schools focusing on academics or behavior. Different service teams will be able to increase their capacity to assist schools in working with challenging students and more service providers will be given smaller caseloads in order to improve services to students.

The district will use IDEA ARRA funds for professional development to meet an increased demand for training to address severe behavior issues. This effort will begin with a weeklong institute to initiate sustainable yearlong professional development. It will include new and revived professional development initiatives, such as reinstating training for those working with English language learners who have disabilities; beginning new programs for students with conduct disorders; and providing training on interventions designed to address particular intensive needs. The district will also provide professional development for those working in inclusive programs to help them understand and identify specific learning disabilities and provide guidance to mentors who work with students with disabilities. In addition, the district plans to develop or expand the capacity to collect and use data to improve teaching and learning.

The district will use IDEA funding to expand parental involvement by investing in programs that build capacity for family participation and support and by improving systems to conduct timely eligibility evaluations and to provide services. The district is also eager to work with employers in the community to develop job placements for young people with disabilities.

Additional ARRA funds will also be put to good use in Denver schools. The district's IDEA preschool grant will expand the availability and range of inclusive special education options offered in public and private integrated preschools. Technology funding under Title II-D will be used to purchase video libraries and provide professional development to support their use.

Denver Public Schools will also contract out an evaluation of the effectiveness of ARRA funds in the district in the interest of designing a system that includes a look at hard data on student performance, as well as a way to evaluate teacher effectiveness in Title I schools based on the district definition of effective teaching.

## **Des Moines**

Des Moines Public Schools has allocated the vast majority of its State Fiscal Stabilization Fund money for the retention of existing jobs that were in jeopardy due to state and local budget cuts. These staff positions included teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals.

Other noteworthy district initiatives enabled by ARRA funding include the adoption of a new districtwide K-5 math curriculum; expansion of the school system's roster of Title I schools; implementation of a special education program for 18- to 21-year-olds; and the creation of key positions at middle schools in the district's designated Turnaround Zone.

The district must absorb a 10 percent across-the-board budget cut recently imposed by the Governor, and is currently unsure how to address the even more daunting budget threats that will loom over the district after ARRA funds run out.

## **Detroit**

Detroit Public Schools hopes to use the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) grant that the district receives from Michigan for its reinvestment plan to save 192 teaching jobs and to implement a financial tracking system to monitor the spending of funds effectively. Key portions of the SFSF aim to target areas that support student achievement and graduation rates, teacher development, and technology use.

Key investments with the SFSF allocation include class size reductions in early learning grades and an extended-day program—consisting of two hours a day, three days a week, for 20 weeks—designed to provide additional support in reading and mathematics. Supplemental materials for the mathematics and literacy initiatives will also be made available to fill the gap between the district's adopted materials and the state assessments and to offer support to students who need additional learning opportunities. The SFSF will also contribute to the improvement of graduation rates through “double-dosing” ninth-grade mathematics and English language arts courses for struggling students. The district is also working to ensure success in ninth grade, which is the greatest predictor of improved high school graduation rates, by offering credit-recovery opportunities for students and helping them to stay on track with their graduation requirements.

In the area of technology, the district plans to invest in a Web-based product that features online lesson plans, ongoing assessments to measure student achievement, and supplemental literacy materials, all of which will ensure that teachers are able to create, organize, and deliver effective, individualized instruction. Additionally, stimulus dollars will support a professional

development software tracking program that will ensure that teacher professional development activities are directly tied to student achievement. The software tracking program also will help administrators determine additional professional development needs for their buildings and provide extensive professional development to address these needs.

Detroit Public Schools also plans to announce a large-scale facilities modernization and investment plan supported with ARRA resources. This plan will be a key step in reinventing the district's education model, providing safe and modern learning environments, and ensuring student success.

## **District of Columbia**

Just before the economic downturn, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) changed its school budgeting formula in an effort to bring art, music, and physical education teachers, and wraparound social services, to all the school system's children, as well as job-embedded professional development to teachers. Funds available to the district under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) will enable the school system to maintain this newly designed equity during the recession and continue to direct necessary funds to schools by preserving the comprehensive staffing model for school budgeting.

The SFSF will also enable the school system to continue implementing much-needed innovation. For example, a portion of the stimulus funds distributed to schools will support those participating in the DCPS Collaborative. School leaders in the collaborative's successful schools work closely and intensively with the leaders of the district's most struggling schools. Principals meet regularly to address various issues, observe successful initiatives, and present their discoveries and results to non-collaborative schools. This model allows principals to demonstrate best practices, create shared accountability, and increase the achievement levels of the lower-performing schools.

The school system will use Title I stimulus funds to support innovative out-of-school-time programs and the people who make them happen, such as the full-time coordinators who recruit high-quality programs for their schools and implement accountability measures for all after-school work. Stimulus funds can also assist the district in providing much-needed additional instructional time through the Saturday Scholars Program, evening credit-recovery classes, and summer school.

ARRA funding can also assist the school system in its dedicated effort to turn around special education, an effort that will continue through the recession. The school system has a great need to offer successful programs to all students. A good example is the district's autism program, which has been praised for its innovation in serving children on the autism spectrum. The district also has a similar high-quality program for students with Asperger's syndrome, and the stimulus funds will be used to replicate these types of successes throughout new programs across the district.



IDEA funds from ARRA will also be directed toward reforming the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process by engaging parents more fully in their children's education. This step represents a basic but important improvement from past action, and the district believes it is especially vital that this reform continues through the recession. In addition, IEPs are not currently available in an electronic form for the staff members who refer to them. With the support of stimulus funds, the district is working to add IEPs into a secure database for the first time.

The school district has also committed to building a state-of-the-art early childhood center that would identify children at a young age, provide services immediately upon assessment, and ultimately help address the issue of overrepresentation of students in special education. With the support of stimulus funds, District of Columbia Public Schools hopes to move forward on this project, as well as to develop a process for moving students out of special education before they transition to middle or high school.

### **Duval County (Jacksonville)**

Duval County Public Schools will use ARRA funds to save or create approximately 900 jobs. The State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) dollars will enable the district to reinstate positions that support the equal distribution of teachers, shore up struggling schools, and enhance the quality of academic assessments. The federal stimulus grant will allow elementary schools to receive the same level of supplemental funding as provided during the 2008-09 school year for art, music, physical education, and media learning, as well as save proposed cuts in the areas of guidance and academic coaching. The SFSF will also be used to provide positions to secondary schools based on the district's Challenge School factor, base student allocation, and additional support services funding. These dollars will also be used to make intensive summer academies available for low-achieving students. All together, support from the SFSF is responsible for saving and creating 597 FTE positions in the school system.

ARRA funding will also allow Duval County Public Schools to reclassify 11 high schools and nine middle schools as Title I schools. Additionally, the district will use Title I funding to increase Pre-K services and summer school capacity, and to meet highly qualified teacher requirements and provide teacher incentives. Title I ARRA allocations will save 227 jobs in the district.

ARRA IDEA funding will be used in four main categories: creating and saving jobs; intervention and curricular development; professional development; and new technologies. ARRA funds will be used to restore 38 varying "exceptionality" positions and create more than 40 new positions. Thus, special education students will benefit from the services of additional speech language pathologists, a new specific learning disabilities specialist, a district-based specialist for parentally placed private school students, district-based transition specialists, a Pre-K disabilities teacher, a district-based emotional and behavior disabilities specialist, positive behavior support intervention specialists, and team-based transition coaches and mentors to support schools. In addition to those full-time positions, IDEA funding will be used to provide part-time hourly

funding to establish Response to Intervention (RTI) and coordinated early intervening services facilitators at each school.

The district will also use one-time IDEA funds to purchase, upgrade, or replace technology. Duval County Public Schools will buy or replace assistive technology equipment and materials and will purchase specialized equipment and materials for students with disabilities served at three Exceptional Education Center schools. The district will upgrade technology and instructional methodologies for students served through the home or hospital program, and fund the enhancement and development of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) student management system. In addition, Duval County Public Schools plans to replace audiological-assessment equipment and individual student support materials, as well as purchase Web-based legal, policy, and compliance resources. This new funding source will also be used to develop distance-learning capabilities for special education students.

To increase the effectiveness of instruction for special education students, IDEA funding under ARRA will be used to develop and enhance RTI assessment and data reporting materials and to fund essential academic offerings, interventions, and support. ARRA will allow Duval County Public Schools to continue funding both the Arts Access initiative for students with disabilities and the expansion of mental health support services. Further advances will include the purchase of a new social skills and behavioral management curriculum; funding for school-based exceptional student education liaison part-time positions; and the restoration of district-based exceptional education positions. Additionally, the district will provide funding to specified staff members during summer months to facilitate the completion of assessments and evaluations. It will also fund intensive reading remediation intervention methodologies.

Professional development for teachers, administrators and staff working in special education will also be supported through IDEA stimulus funding. The district plans to fund the 2009 and 2010 Exceptional Education Summer Academy, compliance training, and the Autism Spectrum Disorder Principal's Academy with ARRA funds. It will also purchase professional crisis management materials; provide training and funding for school-based collaborative planning time for general education and special education teachers; and fund an autism-spectrum disorder endorsement for more than 100 district teachers.

The district will also receive an IDEA preschool grant under ARRA, and will use the funding to provide training for more than 100 prekindergarten disabilities teachers on an early childhood developmental assessment and early literacy and learning model curriculum and to provide expanded mental health support services to prekindergarten students with disabilities. In addition, the district will use ARRA funds to purchase organizational and social skills materials, supplies, and materials for sensory integration and visual and auditory arts materials.

### **East Baton Rouge**

Because of East Baton Rouge Parrish School System's recent transition in leadership, planning continues for how the district will use ARRA funds. The district expects to use a considerable

amount of funding for allowable uses under Title I and for career education enhancements. These enhancements may include science initiatives, pre-K programs, electronic tutoring, and professional development. The district has not sought community input on how to use the ARRA funds at this point.

To date, stimulus funding has been used to provide 170 seasonal flu vaccines to students and to help renovate and repair several school buildings. Superintendent John Dilworth hopes to have a list outlining the schools and their funding for upgrades soon. The funding will last about three years.

### **Fort Worth**

Fort Worth Independent School District has set up a task force that meets weekly to plan for using stimulus funds. Each district department has a representative on the task force. The group tracks grant-availability and operates a special Web site to keep the public informed about progress. The district plans to use IDEA funds to provide laptops for special education teachers. It is also using ARRA funds to develop a teacher-quality partnership and is collaborating with a local university on the project.

### **Fresno**

Fresno Unified School District is using federal stimulus funds, along with instituting a hiring and purchasing freeze, to balance its 2010-11 budget and avoid layoffs. The district will use its \$34.9 million State Fiscal Stabilization Fund grant to finance deferred maintenance projects in the district. IDEA and Title I funding will be used to create and retain jobs: 305 positions through IDEA and, to date, 60 positions through Title I. Title I funding has been allocated for hiring and retaining librarians, library technicians, health assistants, and nurses. IDEA funding will be used to reduce the local contribution to special education costs in 2009-10. Other special education initiatives will be undertaken once agreed to by the school board in October. The district anticipates that additional jobs will be created after these initiatives are approved.

### **Guilford County (Greensboro, N.C.)**

With the exception of local educational agency (LEA) improvement funds, funds for homeless services, and ARRA reserve funds for 2010-11, Guilford County Schools has allocated all Title I stimulus funds directly to the schools. The district has allowed leadership teams to decide how the funds will be used, based on the data generated at the school and district levels. With both the regular and ARRA parent involvement funds, 100 percent were allocated directly to the schools. Schools used their allocations in a variety of ways, including restoring positions lost through local and state funding cuts and creating new positions. Schools also offered additional and ongoing professional development opportunities for staff and increased the number of tutors and/or the hours of tutoring. Title I stimulus funding was also used to purchase additional technological equipment and educational supplies and materials.

The district received State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) dollars from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction for 2009-10. The final 2009-10 state budget reflects a significant reduction in the non-instructional support allotment category. This category provides funding for non-instructional support personnel and associated benefits. These funds may be used at the central office or at individual schools for a variety of purposes, ranging from paying the salaries of clerical assistants, custodians, and substitute teachers to purchasing textbooks.

The superintendent and chief financial officer of Guilford County Schools were required to execute an application and assurances document for initial funding under the SFSF program. At that time, the state budget had not been finalized and the current budget proposal reflected the use of SFSF dollars to offset reductions in the non-instructional support allotment category and the instructional supplies category. The district was advised that executing the application and assurances documents was required/mandatory in order to receive the SFSF monies. Consequently, the district included the following statement with its executed documents:

“While Guilford County Schools (GCS) will cooperate with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) in the implementation of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund program and will provide all requested information of the uses of the funds, we believe that we would be remiss if we did not share our concern that GCS and many, if not all other districts in the state, will face some challenges in meeting the assurances contained within the attached document if the final state budget utilizes State Fiscal Stabilization Funding (SFSF) Program funds to offset significant reductions in one or more allotment categories as does the current House budget proposal wherein the SFSF Program funds are targeted to offset significant reductions of approximately \$357M in Non-Instructional Support (PRC 003) and approximately \$46.5M in Classroom Materials and Supplies (PRC 061) allotment categories for fiscal year 2009-10.”

In addition to the SFSF allotment, IDEA funding will pay for 98 teaching positions. Consistent with the federal guiding principles regarding the distribution of the IDEA stimulus grant, funds will be used to retain exceptional children teaching positions in the district.

### **Hillsborough County (Tampa)**

Hillsborough County Public Schools convened a task force, co-chaired by the school system’s general director for special education and general director for federal programs (Title I), to develop recommendations on the use of ARRA funds. The task force included staff members from the district, community members, parents, and students. The group made recommendations to the district for allocating stimulus funds under four categories, each representing one of the ARRA “assurances.”

The primary purpose for using ARRA State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSFs) in the district is to retain employees for whom no other revenue source is available. The ARRA money will be used to create new instructional and support positions throughout the district, but these funds will

also prevent the district from having to lay off significant numbers of staff—a severe reality had the federal stimulus legislation not been enacted. Over all, the district will be creating or retaining approximately 1,500 jobs due to ARRA.

The district has a number of goals for use of the Title I funds, including supporting salary differential and performance pay programs to attract and retain highly qualified early childhood and K-12 teachers at the district’s highest poverty schools. ARRA will enhance current incentive programs by providing teacher salary performance incentives in these high-need Title I schools and by providing salary differential incentives to media specialists and school-based administrators when student performance goals are met. Stipends will also be provided to other certified personnel for attending training sessions necessary to achieve or maintain highly qualified status.

These struggling schools will also receive funds to implement school reform and improvement strategies that will align all instructional lessons with newly released state standards. Principals and staff will implement an intensive “Unpacking the Standards” project that will allow schools to align instruction with assessments and interventions. ARRA funding will also help the district carry out comprehensive reform strategies at selected schools that are having difficulty making significant academic gains. Additional social work services will be made available with ARRA funding at schools involved with school improvement and academic reform initiatives. In addition, the district will fund 22 supplemental guidance counselor positions with stimulus money, allowing the school system to maintain full-time guidance units at Title I elementary schools.

Stimulus Title I funding will also be used to pay for supplemental instructional support, including retaining 30 reading coaches at high-need Title I schools—positions that had no remaining funding source as a result of the elimination of Reading First. The district will also use ARRA funding to provide 10 math and 10 science middle school teachers, 10 language arts elementary school teachers, 20 elementary and middle school Title I teachers, and 50 highly qualified paraprofessionals to provide tutoring in Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) programs for students who are taking advanced classes in all district middle and senior high schools.

The district also plans to use Title I funding to support teacher training and professional development. ARRA dollars will be used to pay salaries for teachers and stipends for other certified staff members who attend training sessions necessary to achieve or maintain highly qualified teacher status; contracted services to provide content and pedagogical training for teachers at Title I schools; and consultants to provide teacher training on instructional strategies and curriculum standards.

Hillsborough County Public Schools will also create a leadership development program that will identify key future leaders in the district and provide training to prepare them for leadership opportunities at high-needs schools. Specifically, ARRA funding will be used to provide technical assistance for school-based leaders at Title I schools; leadership support, travel, and

registration to attend state and local leadership conferences, meetings, and training sessions; and stipends for professional development for school-based administrators.

The district's plan for ARRA funds includes improving access to user-friendly formative assessment systems. It will use Title I stimulus funding to hire consultants to provide teachers with technical assistance on formative assessment implementation and train them on this implementation. Additional costs for this project funded by ARRA will include online software subscriptions, as well as other fees associated with student and teacher access to formative assessments.

The district will also use Title I ARRA dollars to support college and career preparation programs and help the school system develop more user-friendly parent and student communication materials that highlight the district's technical and career placement opportunities. ARRA will help pay for contracted services with local vendors to provide college and career experiences and for buses to take students to places of business or to college campuses.

The district runs a successful extended-time program that gives students the opportunity to remain in a safe and educationally enriched environment after the traditional school day ends. ARRA funding will enable the school system to create 140 new positions for temporary teachers who will provide additional tutorial services to students at Title I elementary and middle schools with extended-time programs, as well as provide necessary classroom supplies for the new opportunities.

The district will also use ARRA funding to strengthen the school system's parent engagement efforts, and will provide 15 new instructional-focused parent involvement liaisons and five new non-instructional parent involvement liaisons. Consultants will be hired to assist Title I schools with the implementation of reform strategies by holding parent meetings and maintaining ongoing communication to parents and the community. Consultants will also be hired to provide technical assistance for parents on the technology implementations occurring in the district.

ARRA's Title I funds will also be spent to supplement a districtwide technology and instructional materials upgrade, in coordination with IDEA Maintenance of Effort funds, IDEA, and Title II-D. The new funds will be used to purchase computers and software for classrooms and labs at Title I schools and supplemental instructional materials for teachers and students that align with current standards. These funds will also be used to support research-based instructional strategies and supplemental textbooks to ensure that all students at Title I schools have wide access to a variety of instructional materials.

Additionally, ARRA funds will be used to purchase classroom equipment that supports best instructional practices and provides additional educational opportunities for students in Title I schools (such as calculators for math classes and LCD projectors for student projects). The district will also use the ARRA opportunity to enhance the capabilities of the district's current



data systems so that all pertinent information can be retrieved in a user-friendly manner. The district will also enhance its early childhood programs through the purchase of computer programs and software licenses, classroom equipment to support instructional practices and educational opportunities, and supplemental instructional materials that align with current standards and research-based instructional strategies.

Hillsborough County Public Schools will receive significant funding under ARRA that reflects the purposes of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The IDEA ARRA dollars will support a number of services for students with disabilities, including the extension of the school year and the purchase of curricula and adaptive assistive technology that will be used in low-prevalence classrooms. ARRA funds will be used to reimburse exceptional student education teachers who are required by the State of Florida to take additional coursework in order to be highly qualified. The district will also use IDEA ARRA dollars to hire eight new Response to Intervention coaches and four new pre-K assessment specialists to assist with screenings and evaluations resulting ultimately in services for pre-K students.

In addition, the district will utilize the provision of IDEA that allows the school system—as a result of the increased funding under ARRA—to create additional flexibility by reducing the school district’s IDEA Maintenance of Effort in FY 2009. The IDEA Maintenance of Effort dollars will be used for professional development focused on state and district initiatives for all staff members. A portion of these dollars will also assist in professional development for both instructional and support personnel (e.g., teachers, bus drivers, bus attendants, lunchroom workers) in the areas of curriculum, differentiated instruction, the effective use of purchased materials, and positive behavior strategies for students with severe cognitive disabilities.

Finally, Hillsborough County Public Schools will allocate the appropriate share of funding under ARRA to all required set-asides. Title I funds have been earmarked to ensure that the district will meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act for public school choice and supplemental services, as well as for private school services. The district will use a third-party contract to enhance instructional services at non-public sites.

## **Houston**

Houston Independent School District will not receive additional funds from the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund because Texas is reducing state aid to the school system and replacing it with the ARRA amount. The district is working on plans to use other stimulus dollars for both districtwide and school-level projects. One critical component of the school system’s plan involves using Title I ARRA funding in all schools for extended instructional time for students who need more intensive instruction. The goal is to increase the number of students advancing to the next grade and staying on par with their peer groups. Individual schools will have the ability to determine specifically how this will be done and how the additional time will be used. The district expects additional extended days, Saturday programs, and/or intensive summer programming.

The district is also recommending the use of diverse service providers to offer additional instructional time. Vendors wishing to provide these services are being invited to submit proposals to the district. Following approval, a vendor fair will be held for principals and school teams to learn about options for partnering with outside entities to provide after-school programming.

Title I ARRA funds will also be used to implement the nationally recognized DUKE TIP program at every middle school. This program is designed to provide students with the opportunity to prepare for the PSAT tests beginning in seventh grade, and has proven effective in increasing SAT scores of students.

The district will offer summer school with teachers identified as high value-added teachers (those performing in the top 10 percent of the school system's teachers on the district's valued-added metric over two consecutive years). These teachers will provide summer instruction to students who are at risk of being held back and/or are at risk of dropping out, and will be paid 125 percent of their regular daily rate. In addition, novice or struggling teachers would be assigned to observe and work with master teachers at the traditional summer-school pay rate.

Stimulus funding will help the district ensure that all schools can provide services to support the social and emotional needs of students. Schools can elect to hire licensed counselors or social workers, or to contract with community agencies, such as Communities-in-Schools, to provide the services.

Houston Independent School District plans to use stimulus funding to expand its Literacy Leads the Way initiative to include more on-site support by intervention specialists and literacy coaches in the elementary schools. Literacy coaches already work in the secondary schools, and this expansion would allow a systemic approach across the grades. These individuals would also be responsible for working with principals to monitor/lead the intervention assistance teams and to support students identified as dyslexic.

ARRA planning in the school system also involves a new, locally designed accountability system at the elementary schools. This new system will measure the number and percentage of students staying on track for graduation by assessing a cohort of students entering first grade and following them through sixth grade. The new process will also include an indicator that will show how many students (number and percentage) are reading on grade level as they enter third grade. This new indicator will be supported with stimulus funds and will assess reading progress from grades 1 to 4.

The district is considering using stimulus funds to support the start-up costs of various choice and options programs for students. These possibilities would include two new campuses with virtual courses and flexible scheduling/hours, including night hours (open in disparate geographic areas throughout the district). Another possibility would involve optional, flexible school hours at all comprehensive district high schools. The schools would provide both virtual courses and traditional courses during the school day, afternoons, and evenings, and on

Saturdays. A third possibility would involve expanding virtual courses in Spanish in all comprehensive high schools with high numbers of English language learners. In addition, the district is considering using stimulus funds to open a school for students between the ages of 18 and 26 in stand-alone campuses using virtual classes.

Houston Independent School District will utilize stimulus funds at the district level to require all kindergarten through grade 3 teachers to attend four-day literacy training during the summer and/or on Saturdays throughout the school year. The training, which has been created in partnership with the Neuhaus Education Center, is designed to strengthen teachers' ability to teach reading effectively. In addition, the district will require all secondary mathematics and science teachers to attend three days of training to increase content knowledge and improve instructional strategies. The district will use high-performing teachers to plan and deliver the training. All teachers will be paid for attendance.

Finally, the district is determining its ability to reduce local Maintenance of Effort under IDEA. Houston Independent School District will use IDEA stimulus funds to provide schools with large percentages of special education students (higher than the district's average of nine percent) a full-time special education specialist to support instructional practice and assist with monitoring implementation of students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). The school system will either upgrade or purchase new assistive technology devices to enhance student learning and provide professional development on the effective use of these technologies. The district also expects to use IDEA stimulus funds to expand online instructional systems that provide individualized support for student learning in reading and mathematics.

## **Indianapolis**

Indianapolis Public Schools is using its stimulus grant in three primary areas: staff development; assistive technology and equipment; and contracted services for student support. Although the district's budget problems are more extensive than the stimulus will be able to solve, these funds have had a positive impact. The district originally had to lay off 400 teachers because of economic conditions, but the stimulus funding will allow it to hire 200 teachers back. Remaining stimulus funds will be used for professional development and technology.

In the area of staff development, 147 licensed teachers provide school-based professional development for language arts and math instructors. Much of the ARRA-funded professional development will focus on English-as-a-second-language (ESL) training, because many of these teachers were let go due to budget constraints. The development plan also includes the provision of 50 licensed special education teachers as an integral component of the staff development cadre supporting the system's staff development initiatives for language arts and math. Additional staff development will continue in special education specific areas such as autism, significant disabilities, differentiation, etc.

Additionally, 13 staff development specialists will be trained to work specifically with schools to develop and monitor Response to Intervention building-based teams and ISTART-7 (Indiana

Standard Tool for Article 7) teacher support in designing effective individual education plans and data collection to better inform instruction.

Indianapolis Public Schools has also allotted Title I stimulus funding to assistive technology and student-specific equipment. Purchases that have been completed include student computers, district lab upgrades, graphing calculators, and iPods. The district plans to acquire instructional mobile units at all schoolwide Title I school sites and to upgrade its technical infrastructure in the future.

Stimulus dollars will also support contracted services in the areas of evaluation; mental health and wraparound services for students; learning center development for secondary schools; and improvement in the district's ability to maintain and provide student information electronically. In addition, occupational and physical therapy services will be expanded, as well as additional mental health building supports for identified at-risk students. Additional funds will be available to cover tuition for students with special needs to attend community-based preschool programs with normally developing peers.

## **Jackson**

Jackson Public School District will use ARRA funding to provide services in a number of areas. State Fiscal Stabilization Funds will be used to pay teacher salaries and benefits to build additional instructional support, and will enable the district to purchase a student progress monitoring system, as well as products from Renaissance Learning and PLATO Learning.

The district's Title I stimulus funding will make additional technology and classroom instruction resources available. These resources include classroom libraries, parent center books, parent training, software programs (Discovery Education Content Streaming, Study Island, Star Reading/Star Math, etc.), listening stations, graphing calculators, printers, desktop computers, netbook computers, flex-carts, laptops, digital cameras, televisions, CD players, computer tables and chairs, listening stations, "smart boards," Promethean boards, LCD projectors, student response systems, and Schoolnet. This funding will also be used to help pay the salaries of nurses and Teach for America instructors.

Title I, Part D will fund resources for the Henley Young Juvenile Detention Center. The center will benefit from new technology through the purchase of computers and software (Orchard, SkillsTutor, GED Academy, READ 180, ModuMath), printers, and netbooks. In addition to classroom libraries, a flex-cart and a multimedia cart, students will benefit from workbooks, summer reading materials, life skills packages, Algebra's Cool-Math School, effective parenting books, videos, and training, as well as from basics such as paper and pencils.

IDEA funding will support both salaries and benefits for school social workers, while also providing technology equipment, including computers, printers, headphones, and hearing systems. Funds will also be used to purchase Lift Systems; pay for staff travel; and provide materials and office supplies. The district will use ARRA funding to support private placement

at two schools, and language and speech therapy services to private school participants. This funding will also be used to help support parent academies, after-school programs, and evaluation and instructional supplies and materials.

### **Jefferson County (Louisville)**

Jefferson County Public Schools will use stimulus money to fill gaps in the district budget, offset spending from its General Fund, and pay for new and existing reform efforts, programs, and renovations. The district received State Fiscal Stabilization Funds, which have been used to back fill its General Fund cuts to include funding for teachers and support staff.

The district will use Title I funds to restore and increase school allocations; invest in early childhood; and meet the required set-asides in professional development, supplemental educational services, parental outreach, and district improvement. The district will use ARRA funding for a home-school coordinator program and a partnership with Harvard University.

The district has a number of planned activities budgeted with IDEA stimulus funds, including paying a portion of the cost for 10 transcribers. The district will also use IDEA funds to purchase 10 new “lift” buses and to retrofit 168 buses to current standards. The district will use IDEA funding to retain current and hire new special education staff, as well as to fund a new unit start-up, and pay for associated contracts. The IDEA ARRA grant will also fund a number of additional positions, including those of content- area special education teachers in math, reading, science, and social studies; behavioral and low-incidence staff members; school psychologists; and transition staff members for postsecondary activities. The additional IDEA funds will also support costs associated with new special education classrooms, such as furniture, materials, technology, and research-based projects.

### **Kansas City (Mo.)**

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education informed Kansas City School District that the district cannot use any of the ARRA funding for Title I to undertake district-level reforms. The State was adamant that all Title I funds, after the required set-asides were calculated, must be allocated to the building level.

### **Little Rock**

Little Rock School District will allocate approximately one-third of its State Fiscal Stabilization Fund dollars to update technology and bring interactive Whiteboards into core classrooms. Another one-third of the funds will be used for building modernizations and needed repairs. The remaining funds will provide additional academic support in classrooms.

In addition, the district will use most of the Title I funds on programs to improve student achievement, such as summer school, after-school tutoring, and school-based math and literacy coaches. Remaining Title I funding will support the updating of technology in the classrooms.

## **Long Beach**

Long Beach Unified School District plans to use its State Fiscal Stabilization Fund allocation to retain educators and keep class sizes at a manageable level.

In addition, the Head Start and Early Head Start programs will use a \$1.1 million grant through ARRA to purchase classroom equipment; buy instructional materials to support its language and literacy component and its early math and early science efforts; and improve the physical learning environment with the acquisition of furnishings, such as new area rugs, tables, chairs, and cubbies. The grant also provides for professional development and training for teachers and a one-time cost-of-living adjustment.

The district will also receive a \$524,994 equipment assistance grant funded through ARRA. The money will be used primarily to replace aging freezer and refrigeration equipment at up to 55 schools.

## **Los Angeles**

Los Angeles Unified School District plans to use ARRA stimulus funding primarily to reduce the district's budget deficit and to prevent layoffs. The district anticipates saving 4,621 jobs using stimulus dollars. However, this assistance still will not cover the district's three-year deficit.

More than 80 percent of the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund dollars will be devoted to saving approximately 2,600 jobs. Using the stimulus support, the district has been able to maintain K-3 class size reduction (24:1 vs. 29:1) and preserve the positions of school police officers and elementary art and music teachers. The district also plans to support after-school programs and avoid further increases in the sizes of secondary school classes, while retaining the positions of clerical support workers, custodians, and counselors. The district also plans to uphold class-size standards at 27:1 for continuation and independent studies, campus aides, and the nursing program.

Los Angeles Unified School District will also allocate a significant portion of its IDEA funding to avoid further staff reduction (estimated at 333 jobs). The district hopes to use half of the funding to save jobs and the other half for one-time special education programs. It also will support professional development for teachers in differentiated instruction, specialized training related to autism support, a prevention program for grades K-2, accessible classroom-assistive technology, specialized training, salaries of paraeducators, and technology infrastructure.

Lastly, the superintendent plans to allocate as much ARRA Title I funding as possible (more than 60 percent) to go back to the schools, and is encouraging district schools to use the dollars to stabilize their schools by adding positions. This action will promote choice and better align with federal guidelines.



## **Miami-Dade County**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools has used ARRA funding to provide much-needed financial relief for schools in Miami and will use this funding to support and expand district programs. Specifically, the Title I ARRA funding was included as part of the district's budget for the final months of the 2008-09 school year, and will also be utilized in school years 2009-10 and 2010-11 and in the summer of 2011.

With its ARRA dollars, the district plans to increase the number of schools receiving Title I funding from 255 schools to 359. Part of this effort includes expanding the number of Title I schools providing enrichment services to voluntary prekindergarten students. Title I ARRA funding will also be used to assist high schools through the district's secondary school reform effort, providing those schools that are identified under the State's differential accountability plan with Title I teachers.

Pending the availability of waivers, the district has also planned to use ARRA Title I funds to implement federally required set-asides for No Child Left Behind choice and supplemental educational services. The district will use Title I funds to pay the salaries of community liaison specialists as part of its parental involvement activities. The district also will use ARRA funding to provide professional development geared especially at curriculum support specialists, instructional coaches, teachers, and academic deans who work in schools identified under the State's differentiated accountability model.

Title I's highly qualified teacher set-asides will be met, in part, through contracts with Teach for America and the University of Florida, as well as through stipends for teachers to participate in valuable professional development activities. The district will also use Title I funding to continue summer services, and, because of ARRA, will be able to pay for hourly teachers, supplemental and consumable workbooks, and transportation services.

The district will also use ARRA funds to expand supplemental services to particularly vulnerable students: those in the homeless, neglected, and delinquent populations, and in migrant populations. Thus, these funds will be used to provide hourly staff for students living in homeless shelters and remedial tutorial services for students living in both residential and non-residential neglected and delinquent centers and migrant housing centers.

The school board in Miami also passed a resolution amending existing district leasing schedules for capital projects. The district will be able to take advantage of the interest-free Qualified School Construction Bonding authority available under ARRA for projects that had been approved, but not yet awarded, under previous Certificates of Participation. The availability of the ARRA bonds will provide significant savings to Miami over the life of the bond.

## **Milwaukee**

The stimulus funding available under ARRA provides Milwaukee Public Schools the opportunity to pursue large-scale, targeted intervention strategies to enhance instruction for all district students. In this context, the district has a number of goals it is pursuing with both Title I and IDEA stimulus funds.

First, Title I stimulus funding will be used to improve parental involvement by implementing parent engagement and training strategies at 35 low-performing K-8 schools and by contracting with community groups to develop parent engagement strategies among parents of high school students. The district will also expand early childhood education by adding 12 early childhood classrooms and by implementing an enhanced developmental curriculum for preschool and grades K-4 that is aligned with the broader elementary school curriculum.

Second, the district will use its Title I stimulus funding to provide extended-learning time in reading and mathematics through after-school programs, Saturday academies, and expanded career opportunities. The district will also use this funding to support technical education opportunities and rigorous curricula through the Comprehensive Literacy Plan. Milwaukee Public Schools will also adopt a new middle school curriculum and a high school Advanced Placement curriculum. In addition, the stimulus funds will enable the district to move more aggressively to improve graduation rates by instituting a longer school calendar in nine charter schools, providing expanded credit-recovery and general education diploma (GED) options, targeting postsecondary support beginning in seventh grade, and providing high-school readiness programs involving students and parents.

Third, Milwaukee Public Schools is looking at Title I stimulus funding to improve teacher effectiveness. The district will use stimulus funds to add 36 hours of learning-team time in each school, to develop master teachers, and to place New Leaders for New Schools in low-achieving schools. The district will provide professional development on curriculum implementation, cultural sensitivity, and other district initiatives. It will also use funds to reduce suspensions with the implementation of positive behavior intervention programs and support training.

Fourth, the district will use Title I stimulus funding to improve data-driven decision making and accountability. This effort will involve accelerating the development of district data tools designed to assist in early identification of children at risk. It will also involve implementing an integrated resource information system to link disparate databases, provide real-time management reporting, and meet ARRA financial and reporting requirements.

The district will also pursue a number of reforms with IDEA stimulus funding. These will include professional development on identifying and implementing proven special education strategies and techniques. The district will focus its funding on literacy, math, positive behavioral supports, and parent training. The district will also use IDEA funds to purchase textbooks and materials and to train staff on using computer programs and instructional interventions to support special education children in literacy. Funds will also be used to train

staff on implementing a Web-based computer program and intervention system to support the special curricular needs of students with significant disabilities.

Finally, a portion of the district's IDEA stimulus funding will be devoted to Individualized Education Program (IEP) enhancement and development, including the acquisition of supplies, equipment, materials, and the implementation of training for staff members who implement IEPs. The district will provide materials for new teachers in special education classrooms, as well as communication boards for students, assistive technology, supplies for extended school-year classes for special education students, and amplification systems in 200 special education classrooms for hearing-impaired students. The district will also invest IDEA stimulus funding to help train parents of students with disabilities.

Milwaukee Public Schools will receive \$75.8 million in phase one State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) dollars and expects to receive a similar share of the State of Wisconsin's remaining \$237 million. However, much of that initial funding went to reduce deficits from the past 2008-09 school year, and provided no opportunity for support of new reform. The additional and final allotment of this money is budgeted for the 2009-10 school year, and no SFSF funding will be available for K-12 education in the second year of the stimulus, the 2010-11 school year. Even after SFSF dollars were used to fill budget gaps, year-to-year state funding for K-12 education declined by 2.5 percent in Wisconsin.

## **Minneapolis**

Minneapolis Public Schools pursued an extensive public engagement process to determine how to cut the budget deficit and use the new stimulus funds. Initial ideas included using stimulus funds for early childhood education, special education, and reducing class size. The district plans to use IDEA stimulus dollars to fund special education program review, some professional development, and non-reimbursable special education staff benefits. The district also expects to receive \$1.65 million in school-improvement grants and plans to take advantage of \$21.7 million per year for two years of Qualified School Construction Bonds.

## **Nashville**

Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools will use stimulus funding to serve its 1,412 district students who are considered homeless by the federal definitions. ARRA stimulus dollars will pay for school supplies, transportation services, supplemental instruction services, and social services for families of homeless students. The district anticipates that the number of homeless students increasing in the next school year, and the stimulus funding will provide the resources necessary to meet these students' needs.

The district allocated Title I stimulus funding to local schools, offering additional funds to support the implementation of school improvement plans. The district also reserved the required set-asides for parental involvement and professional development. Parental involvement funds will pay the salaries of family-school liaisons, who are charged with helping

to bridge the gap among community, parents, and school. Professional development funds will focus on the Director of Schools' reform agenda, "MNPS Achieves," which strives to increase the capacity for instructional leadership. An additional set-aside for extended-learning time was taken to allow schools to lengthen the school day beyond traditional hours in an effort to supplement instruction.

Metropolitan Nashville's IDEA stimulus funding was dedicated to three major areas of need in special education: to fund 74 positions; to purchase needed instructional supplies and materials, including a large amount of assistive technology for students; and to expand professional development offerings considerably.

## **Newark**

Newark Public Schools will use stimulus funds to help develop and implement the district's New Teacher Quality Initiative, which includes an enhanced process to evaluate teachers. The district also will use funds to improve learning environments for teachers and students, through new construction, building repair, and renovation. The district will also create an education data system that will follow children from when they first enter school to when they graduate. The district also plans to use the stimulus money to develop a reporting mechanism for charter schools.

Title I ARRA funding in Newark Public Schools will be used to provide academic supports for at-risk students, professional development and classroom support for teachers, leadership training for low-performing schools, training on data-driven instruction, and parental involvement activities. IDEA funding will be used to expand programs to return out-of-district placements; to provide additional professional development and classroom support for special education teachers; to enhance data systems to improve placement and tracking of students with disabilities; and to restore jobs.

The district will also use ARRA funds to overhaul its Web site and make it a more user-friendly communications tool for parents and the community. Overall, the allocation under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund will allow Newark to retain approximately 2,500 jobs. IDEA funds will preserve an additional 48 positions, and Title I funding will preserve 17 full-time positions.

## **New York City**

Stimulus funding under ARRA will help New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) weather the economic crisis. Much of the stabilization funding will be used to offset state budget cuts and to prevent layoffs and keep teachers in classrooms. These actions will enable the district to continue the innovations and reforms that it has undertaken in recent years and shield students, schools, and classrooms from potential harm. Other stimulus funding will be used to support dual certification for teachers of English language learners (ELLs); hire additional teachers for the city's small-school initiative; integrate disparate data systems; and implement a college preparedness initiative with the City University of New York.

Because of the severity of the budget situation in New York City, the district has developed an active process in anticipation of stimulus support. Each potential new grant works through a collaborative process to ensure that NYCDOE can maximize the impact on student outcomes, optimize the funding opportunities, and ensure compliance with funding rules and regulations. After the scope of the opportunity is identified, the district planning process will include consulting with stakeholders; developing a proposal; identifying outcome measures; coordinating work with other agencies and the City; determining budget, staffing, and sustainability; and informing the district's tracking, reporting, and financial controls.

Funds available to NYCDOE under ARRA for Title I will be allocated almost entirely to schools in order to continue innovative programs at risk of being reduced significantly due to state budget cuts. A portion of Title I funds may also be used to expand successful programs into additional Title I-eligible schools. The district is also prioritizing ARRA funding under the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund to save jobs that otherwise would be cut due to non-federal budget shortfalls.

NYCDOE will use IDEA stimulus funds to pay the costs of related services for students with disabilities, as well as to support collaborative team-teaching needs. The district is also looking into using IDEA funding to expand early intervention services to assist students who have not been identified as needing special education or related services, but who could benefit from additional academic and behavioral support in order to succeed in a general education environment.

NYCDOE is also pursuing a number of competitive grants available through the stimulus legislation. The district offered support to higher education partners, the eligible entities for Teacher Quality Partnerships, to develop and expand quality teacher residency programs. NYCDOE is working in collaboration with the Mayor's Office as part of a citywide effort to win a competitive broadband technology grant. The district is also seeking assistance from the U.S. Department of Agriculture under the school lunch kitchen equipment assistance program. NYCDOE's infrastructure team has identified needed upgrades and coordinated an application for 312 schools that will benefit from ARRA assistance in this area.

## **Norfolk**

Norfolk Public Schools will use federal stimulus funding to reduce the State's budget shortfall and prevent layoffs. However, because of the continuing budget deficit, the district will not offer cost-of-living adjustments or step increases of any kind.

The Norfolk school board has recommended updating the 2009-10 school year budgets to reflect the additional funding available in stimulus allocations. Testing subsidies, athletic study halls, suspension recovery, and sixth-grade transition programs have all been recommended for restoration. Also, with stimulus funding, buses for after-school and athletic activities will run every day.

Norfolk Public Schools will use State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) dollars to save 201 positions in the district. These jobs would have been in jeopardy due to state and local budget shortfalls. The district is currently discussing changing its application to use the funding in some other way but the changes have not yet been determined.

### **Oklahoma City**

Oklahoma City Public Schools has been holding extensive meetings on how to spend its ARRA stimulus money, and expects to use these funds to implement a high school secondary reform initiative and to provide additional reading and math coaches. The district is also teaming up with Tulsa Public Schools, the only other major urban school system in the State, to implement instructional reforms.

### **Omaha**

Leaders of Omaha Public Schools have been meeting with community groups to determine the best focus for stimulus funds. Funding will be directed at meeting a number of district priorities. Among them are expanding early childhood education, including forging a partnership with Educare, a national organization that helps children between the ages of three and five; improving graduation rates; implementing professional development for all staff; and paying for English as a second language (ESL) endorsement (tuition and fees). The local college of education will provide classes on site and Omaha Public Schools will select the participating teachers.

### **Orange County (Orlando)**

Orange County Public Schools will use State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF) dollars to save and create jobs in the district. The grant will enable the school system to preserve the jobs of 26 social workers, 275 guidance counselors, 196 resource teachers (six guidance, 184 instruction/curriculum, and six reading), 143 media specialists, 110 staffing specialists, 155 technology support representatives, and seven district-based, and 19 school-based instructional/curriculum support teachers to continue their employment with the district—a total of 931 jobs that would otherwise have been in jeopardy due to state and local budget shortfalls. Orange County Public Schools will also use SFSF dollars to purchase new software that will provide a student information system, Web portal application, integration with third-party software, and specialized query and report applications, as well as hardware to support the new student management system and associated applications.

Title I ARRA funds will be used to support reading coaches at all 70 Title I schools. With these funds, also, 50 math and science coaches will be retained, as well as 19 social workers serving 38 schools. The district's Student Assistance and Family Empowerment (SAFE) program provides a comprehensive range of prevention and intervention services for students and their families at the elementary and secondary schools in the district, focusing on student needs in the areas of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and violence prevention. ARRA funding will support 11 SAFE



coordinators who work at the middle school level, as well as a guidance counselor who will provide services for children at the Juvenile Assessment Center.

The district plans to also use ARRA grants from IDEA to save and create jobs, but it also will allocate these funds to buy essential classroom materials for students with disabilities. ARRA funding has enabled the district to retain 459 educational paraprofessionals who provide assistance to certified teachers, guidance counselors, crisis teachers, and other certified specialists in the education, care, and development of severely mentally, physically, and emotionally disturbed students. This funding will also make it possible for the district to continue to employ 34 job coaches who assist in developing vocational training opportunities for students with disabilities and provide supervision for students with disabilities who are participating in vocation training and job placement activities.

The federal stimulus dollars will also enable the district to continue to employ eight occupational therapists, eight physical therapists, 30 substitute teachers for special education, 30 substitutes for paraprofessionals, 17 registered nurses, and nine licensed practical nurses, 20 school psychologists, six behavior specialists, a high school math coach, and 1.5 (FTE) high school reading coaches. In addition, ARRA will enable the district to create positions for five mental health counselors, two resource teachers for training and development, 21 inclusion specialists to provide teacher support in inclusionary practices, and two staffing specialists to monitor and provide support to schools in order to ensure compliance. A total of 60.5 new jobs will be created and approximately 593 jobs will be saved in special education because of ARRA funding for IDEA.

## **Philadelphia**

School District of Philadelphia will use IDEA stimulus funds towards the purchase of intervention materials, assistive technology, professional development, and social service and transition support.

## **Pittsburgh**

In recent years, Pittsburgh Public Schools has made progress in implementing systemic improvements that are raising student achievement. The district will apply its ARRA funding strategically to critical areas where additional effort should produce significant new gains, especially for struggling students. Specifically, the district is mounting a focused and intense effort to boost the literacy skills of middle school students, with the goal of significantly increasing the number of students who arrive at ninth grade with the skills to be successful in high school. Pathway to Promise, a ninth-grade readiness program, plays an essential role in this effort.

Stimulus funds will be used to strengthen the Pathway to Promise program and increase middle school literacy by introducing a new diagnostic tool to help pinpoint *why* a child is a struggling reader; purchasing a program for intervention strategies for readers who are struggling the most;

building in intervention and enrichment time into every middle grade student's schedule; accelerating the implementation of middle grades' interventions to reach disengaged sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade students by "opening them up" to academic learning; extending the middle grades' literacy focus to ninth and tenth grade by developing a ninth-grade "teacher excellence" core; and increasing teacher effectiveness.

The district also has a summer enrichment program for all students in grades 6-8 that aims to increase the number of students arriving in ninth grade with the literacy skills to be successful in high school by combining literacy exercises with fun, engaging, choice-driven activities. Funding is now available to ensure that all district middle grade students will be able to participate in 2010 and 2011. In the enrichment program, a student participates in targeted literacy activities in the morning and chooses other activities to pursue in the afternoon, ranging from debate to juggling, drama to fencing. The program also includes trips to universities, possible overnight campus visits, and partnerships with local providers. These activities continue during the academic year on Saturdays and after school.

Additionally, the district plans to use IDEA ARRA funds to improve special education. The primary goals include retaining key special education teaching and support positions that otherwise would have been eliminated due to declining enrollment; working to improve the district's capacity to serve special education students in innovative, credible, and engaging programs within the district to reduce the number of students receiving services in restrictive, private placements; accelerating student instruction provided in resource rooms by hiring several curriculum specialists to customize the core curriculum; and hiring additional positive behavior intervention specialists to promote safe and orderly learning environments and decrease the number of students referred to emotional support programs.

## **Portland**

Portland Public Schools will use ARRA's Title I funding to improve a number of areas, but will focus a significant portion of this funding to support the district's extended-day program, preschool activities, and low-performing schools.

The extended-day program will receive funding for staff, materials, and transportation for summer transition academies for grades K-1, 6, and 9. The district will also draw on ARRA funding to support the district's extended-day and summer credit-retrieval programs, program development, and expanded partnerships with community school and summer school providers. In addition, the district will use Title I dollars to enhance the district's preschools by funding staff for preschool program delivery and by expanding Head Start. Stimulus dollars will also enable low-performing schools to receive assessment training and materials and intensive writing interventions, and will cover the cost of coaching FTE positions and other contracted services. These funds will also support the work of five teachers who develop programs and deliver services to neglected or delinquent students. Specifically, these teachers act as transition coordinators who seek to re-engage youth who have dropped out of school.

The district will also use Title I dollars to develop a systemic transition process between regional pre-K and kindergarten providers, as well as to pay for contracted services and technology training. The district plans to use stimulus dollars to support homeless services by funding staff positions and materials, as well as to support strategies to promote family engagement initiatives, especially those targeted at culturally specific communities. Additionally, a generous amount of stimulus funding will assist college-readiness and school-climate programs through Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), Senior Inquiry (dual credit) classes in Title I high schools, and in Safe and Civil Schools that support K-8 redesign.

Portland Public Schools will also invest stimulus dollars in the district's professional development program with the addition of four full-time positions for instructional coaches. Funding will also be allocated to a new teacher mentoring program, as well as for contracted services for equity and diversity training.

Portland Public Schools' IDEA funding will provide General Fund reductions to meet Maintenance of Effort requirements. In 2010, the General Fund will be reduced through furlough days for staff. The district plans to use stimulus funding to reduce the 2009 General Fund by making a \$1.4 million adjustment. These funds will be returned in 2011. IDEA dollars will also be used to bolster the General Fund in order to sustain current programs and services. In addition, this funding will save 49 staff positions. IDEA funding will also allow designated staff members to work with high-needs special education students as part of a "float pool." This effort represents a way to respond to requests for staff to serve high-needs students from schools and Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams that exceed General Fund staffing levels. The district plans to hire paraprofessionals (5.25 FTE) and school psychologists (1.9 FTE) who will not be assigned to specific schools, but will float as necessary.

IDEA funding will also be allocated to the integrated service delivery (ISD) model in the district's high school clusters. These clusters lack adequate support, and without grant funding, all of the positions would not be covered. The district plans to add 2.5 FTE English as a second language (ESL) positions and five FTE special education positions. This funding will also be used to hire new staff to meet the needs of the changing and increasing population of students, as well as to satisfy IEP requirements and special education compliance. Because of the increase in the special education population, both staff and programs require additional resources. This initiative will result in the addition of three teachers for the Education Options Reorganization, one teacher and five paraprofessionals for middle school life-skills classrooms, one teacher and one paraprofessional for middle school classrooms, two speech/language pathologists, and one teacher and an additional 2.6 FTE staff members for Community Transition Center (CTC) classrooms.

New staffing to meet the district's graduation requirements will also be a priority use for the IDEA funding. Portland Public Schools' Pioneer School needs an on-site school counselor. The district plans to hire a part-time teacher on special assignment (TOSA) to work with the redirection team and the ISD team. Funding will also help to address facilities challenges as they relate to the growth in the special education population and/or the need to vacate current

facilities. The district hopes to purchase a portable building for the CTC to accommodate 70+ students in 2009-10. Stimulus funding will cover the purchase and installation of the building.

Additionally, using IDEA funding, the district will implement an intensive language arts reading program for special education students in grades 9 through 12. Many special education students are not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards in language arts, and/or as a result, are not graduating. The district proposes that funding be used to purchase a language curriculum and to pay for 22 hours of professional development for teachers, as well as to provide coaching and mentoring for struggling teachers.

Lastly, Portland Public Schools will convert the online student data management system using SPED Advance. The district has been managing information in silos that are not connected to the internal or statewide systems' Student Information System (eSIS). With stimulus dollars, it now plans to centralize its systems using SPED Advance, which is a module of eSIS. Stimulus funding will cover the conversion expense to move to the new system, including paying for training, materials, and the salary of a data project manager.

## **Providence**

Providence Public Schools will use stimulus funds to supplement the district's efforts to build a systemwide curriculum, including textbooks and other instructional tools. The district has an active community partnership and has met with parents and other groups to explore the best use of the funds. The district's Office of Teaching and Learning is driving the process. For example, the district is considering using some of the funds to acquire "smart boards" and other classroom technology. Meanwhile, the threat of the looming funding cliff means that the district will not use ARRA funding to hire additional staff or to increase the pay and benefit packages of current staff.

Federal stimulus money will strengthen the most important instructional initiative of the district: developing high-quality core curricula and investing in instructional materials in English language arts, math, science, and social studies. Providence Public Schools has already developed a preliminary plan towards these ends that is focused on student outcomes, strategically aligned with district goals, and designed to yield long-term gains.

The district anticipates using approximately 65 percent of the Title I stimulus funding to achieve key outcomes in math and science. These outcomes include completing the K-12 curriculum and fully training the math and science teachers in the new curriculum and in the use of the instructional materials, including new Full Option Science System (FOSS) science kits. In this initiative, parents would also be educated on the new curriculum being introduced to the students.

The remaining 35 percent of the Title I stimulus money will be allocated to programs that support English language arts and social studies. This funding would enable the district to begin to develop the K-12 curriculum framework and to invest in instructional materials. The funding

would also be used for intensive supports for struggling readers, as well as for teacher training in reading and social studies and the development and implementation of Advanced Placement courses in all district high schools.

Within each of the four content areas, Providence Public Schools is focusing on investments in instructional materials and technology, professional development, curriculum development, and parental information and outreach materials. The district will use all of the stimulus dollars to support students, teachers, and parents with an unwavering focus on the needs of kids. Nearly half of the funding is currently slated for instructional materials that will be placed directly in the hands of Providence Public Schools' students.

## **Richmond**

Richmond Public Schools is using federal State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSFs) to mitigate the impact of the recession on educational services and save a total of 133 jobs that were proposed for elimination because of budget reductions in the FY 2009-10 general operating budget. SFSF dollars will cover the costs for 44 teaching positions in grades K-3, six in grades 4-5, 13 in grades 6-8, and nine in grades 9-12. The positions of one assistant principal and two guidance counselors in grades 6-8 and 58 instructional assistants in various grades will also be saved through the SFSF.

Additionally, federal State Fiscal Stabilization Funds are being used to partially restore funding for educational activities which were reduced as a result of revenue reductions in the FY 2009-2010 general operating budget, including upgrades and improvements to IT systems as part of the district's integrated implementation of an enterprise wide solution. Richmond will also work with the State to advance the education reform areas identified in the state's SFSF application through implementation of programs and strategies that improve teacher effectiveness and improve student achievement.

Examples of these SFSF-funded activities include Highly Qualified Content Academies, which involves a district review of each exceptional education teachers' transcript to determine the content areas in which teachers are highly qualified. A New Teacher and Mentor Teacher/Clinical Faculty Program provides new teacher support at schools and works to promote new teacher success on a district wide basis. Career Cruising is a pilot program offering online career exploration and a portfolio tool that helps students identify specific career interests and then establish goals. Core Knowledge Academies develop cultural literacy and expose students to a broad range of historical, scientific and cultural topics.

SFSF will also support Foreign Language instruction, including Spanish instruction in all elementary schools including two Kindergarten classes. Mathematics rigor will be supported via John's Hopkins Algebra I Study, which provides 9th graders with a double hour of instruction using two teaching strategies. Distance Learning labs offering foreign language, technology, SAT preparation and AP math and science classes will be available and supported with SFSF, as will the Governor's Career and Technical Education Academy for Science, Technology, Engineering

and Math (STEM), which is an academy designed for ninth-graders that focus on two career pathways: engineering, technology, and therapeutic services including sports medicine.

## **Rochester**

Despite the availability of federal stimulus funding, Rochester City School District has projected it will fall \$13 million short of its proposed budget of \$699 million. Before the federal stimulus was announced, the district reported a \$61 million structural deficit that would have resulted in the possible elimination of 500 to 550 positions, as well as in extensive cuts in its programs. This deficit may continue in the future due to flattened revenue and increasing costs for salaries, benefits, and other expenditures.

Rochester City School District will use Title I funding under ARRA to save 89 jobs, improve student performance through school reform efforts, and ensure transparency, reporting, and accountability. Title I funding will help to improve student performance by focusing on dropout prevention at the school level; paying the salaries of intervention and primary-project paraprofessionals; and paying for Strong Start, an academic and social enrichment program for kindergarten, first- and second-grade students identified as needing additional support. ARRA dollars will also be used to fund professional development incentives to provide support for teachers in Title I schools, as well as to fund parent involvement activities designed to increase family and community engagement in the schools. The stimulus money will also be used to pay FTE library media specialists in elementary schools.

The district will also use Title I funds to expand expeditionary learning programs, which emphasize high achievement through active learning, character growth, and teamwork. These programs teach academic subjects through a challenging set of related real-world projects. In addition, the district will use Title I funds to develop an early college high school program that provides college credits and a higher education “head start” to high school juniors and seniors. The district intends to draw on Title I funds, as well, to implement a national math benchmark testing program, as well as to pay for data dashboards that will allow the district to distill large volumes of academic data into a usable and accessible format.

The district will use IDEA funding from ARRA to save 74 jobs in special education, both directly and through the 50 percent Maintenance of Effort allowance. The district will also use this funding source to pay for positive behavior supports and a work experience program. In addition, the district will use money from IDEA early childhood grants to collect and analyze data; to fund “recognition and response” programs that identify young children who may be at risk for developing learning difficulties; to create a parents’ literacy lending library; and to continue Committee on Preschool Special Education support for annual reviews.

State Fiscal Stabilization Funds received by Rochester City School District will enable the district to save 23 jobs and ensure the equitable distribution of highly qualified teachers. The district will also use Stabilization dollars to restore a number of important district projects, including interventions in low-performing schools, teacher professional development, and programs that



provide intern and teacher-mentors with release time and supplies. Stabilization funds will enable the district to support initiatives, such as the literacy charter schools (called Freedom Schools), expeditionary learning schools, and Montessori learning. Similarly, these funds will help to pay for instructional technology; positive behavioral supports; school safety programs; extended-day, gateway-to-college, and summer programs—all high on the district’s list of priorities. In addition, the district will use stimulus funds to restore money that had been cut from the budget to pay for administrator and central-office staff, the Great Beginnings family development center, art and music programs, social workers and psychologists, and academic data systems.

In addition to the main sources of funding, Rochester City School District will use other ARRA funds to support additional district efforts. For example, it will purchase new food service equipment with money from the child nutrition kitchen equipment grant and use McKinney-Vento funds to meet the demands of the district’s education program for homeless children.

### **Salt Lake City**

Salt Lake City School District has established four primary ARRA IDEA Part B priority areas, which align with the district’s Program Improvement Plan for Special Education and IDEA early intervening services. The district hopes to use ARRA funds to enhance administrative support for the general supervision of special education programs and reform initiatives. The district also plans to draw on stimulus funding to increase the use of data in making decisions aimed at improving the school system’s special education programs and services. The funding would also be used to support integrated technology-based reporting. This would be achieved by identifying teachers who move from school to school and teachers who are in self-contained classrooms for fee-for-services, Medicaid reimbursable services, and would help special education teachers to use “Goalview” for the Individualized Education Program (IEP process).

One of the district’s priorities is to obtain state-of-the art assistive technology devices and to provide training in their use to enhance students with disabilities’ access to the general curriculum, which, in turn, can provide them with access to greater educational opportunities.

Thus, the district plans to provide 16 hours of professional development for approximately 100 special education and regular education teachers on how to integrate assistive technology into classrooms with special education students. The district will also provide six days of professional development to help academic support, behavioral support, and regular education teachers learn to use technology effectively for instruction and for monitoring student academic achievement.

In addition to using stimulus dollars to invest in professional development, the district plans to upgrade assistive technology for special education students (distributed through an assistive technology team-evaluation process); purchase computers and monitors for three classrooms, and provide tech support for academic support and behavioral support classrooms. Lastly, the

district will use this funding for applications and licenses for reading, math, and science programs for academic and behavioral support classrooms.

The district will also use stimulus dollars is to hire transition coordinators to work with employers in the community to provide job placements for youth with disabilities. The district anticipates that this effort will lead to increased high school graduation rates and effective transition from school to the workplace for students with disabilities. With this funding, the district will also be able to offer improved transition services to students between the ages of 18 and 22 by expanding their access to community employers through job sampling and job coaching. Additional expected outcomes include improved transition planning at the high school level, designed to increase student success in coursework and in CTE programs; and better IDEA compliance for high school and post-high school programs, including appropriate transition assessments, transition planning, timelines, and exit performance reports

In support of these efforts, the district will fund eight full-time positions for job coaches to support job placements/shadowing for high school seniors. Four full-time slots will also be made available for certified transition and compliance specialists in high schools. In the area of professional development, the district plans to offer three days of training on job coaching, data collection, and progress monitoring and an additional three days of training for transition and compliance specialists, focusing on their roles and responsibilities. To further strengthen staff development, the district has proposed a strong focus on positive behavior supports. This focus would be supported by providing intensive districtwide professional development for special education and regular education teachers on scaling up proven and innovative evidence-based schoolwide strategies to improve outcomes for students with disabilities.

The anticipated outcomes would involve increased assistance to all schools for implementing a positive behavior intervention system and to middle schools with behavior support classes and classes for implementing Tier 3 behavioral interventions. In the area of job creation and retention, stimulus dollars would fund 2.5 FTE staff positions, adding licensed social workers to middle schools. This funding would also be used for individual and group social-skills counseling, and the implementation of Tier 3 behavioral interventions. In addition, the district would provide teacher-stipends for professional development on implementing PBIS strategies (Tier 1 and Tier 2).

Salt Lake City School District's expected outcomes in this area include an increased level of early intervening services for academics, specifically, increased supplemental academic interventions and progress monitoring for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions at the elementary level. Additional outcomes include increased effective instruction in language arts, math, and science in middle schools and high schools to students with disabilities; upgraded curricula and materials used to teach language arts, math, and science in special education classrooms in middle schools and high schools; and finally, more intensive professional development for teachers to improve instruction to students with disabilities.

The district plans to use stimulus funding to provide two additional special education academic coaches and two speech language pathologists for elementary academic support and behavior support classes in seven elementary schools. The district will also draw on stimulus dollars to fund 2.5 FTE staff positions for functional academic coaches in self-contained functional academic classes to extend core curriculum and instructional strategies to students with disabilities. Proposed staff positions include classified paraprofessionals (19.5 hours/week) to provide progress monitoring of Tier 2 and Tier 3 students and six elementary-level special education interns (30 hour/week) at high-impact special education programs, and an intern coach.

Additionally, the district plans to invest in professional development by adding eight hours of professional development for coaching teams on roles, responsibilities, and scheduling. School-based professional development would also be provided to general education teachers at elementary schools, and to middle and high school teachers, teaching both in regular and special education classes. The training would be focused on effective instruction for students with disabilities. Finally, stimulus funding will enable the district to contract the services of presenters for middle school and high school professional development training sessions and to purchase research-based curricula for language arts, math, and science for middle and high school special education classrooms.

Finally, the district will use ARRA funds to provide private schools their proportionate share of funds. One half-time speech pathologist will be assigned to private schools, along with a part-time certified special education teacher.

## **San Diego**

San Diego Unified School District will use stimulus funding to help replace money lost through enormous state budget cuts. The district and school board are currently considering the most effective way to use Title I stimulus funds, and may direct some funding to an existing class-size reduction program that has suffered due to the recession.

San Diego's was the first school district in the nation to utilize the interest-free Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCBs) available under the federal stimulus package (according to the finance newspaper, *The Bond Buyer*). The district had plans for a school facility improvement program in place before ARRA was enacted, as well as prior bond authorization approval from the voters. This unique situation allowed the San Diego schools to take advantage of the federal bonding authority quickly, for the exact purpose that the stimulus measure intended: to provide fiscal relief to the district and create jobs in the community.

The district's allocation of \$38.8 billion in QSCBs under ARRA was included as part of San Diego's larger capital improvement program, and will be used for repairing outdated student restrooms and deteriorated plumbing and roofs, as well as for upgrading career and vocational classrooms and labs. In addition, the funding will be used to provide up-to-date classroom technology; improve school safety and security and upgrade fire alarms; replace dilapidated

portable classrooms; and remove hazardous substances. The district will realize savings of approximately \$20 million as a result of the federal bonding authority, and will use the funds to make technology investments that would otherwise have been delayed until money was available.

San Diego Unified School District also received \$160,000 in stimulus funds from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency to continue the district's efforts to "clean up" its fleet of school buses. Since 1999, 519 buses have been retrofitted with new diesel technology (10 using ARRA funds) and the district is now using only seven buses without the "green" technology. Students in the district's automotive technology program are receiving training that will prepare them for "green" careers in diesel technology.

## **San Francisco**

San Francisco Unified School District lost \$57 million in state aid, and most of the federal stimulus funding will be used to sustain the reforms that the district has been working to implement. Stimulus funding will also be used for teacher professional development, educational technology, and in ensuring that students have the supports that they need to graduate and attend college. The district set up a Web page to gather comments from the public about how the stimulus money could be used.

The district is using State Fiscal Stabilization Funds (SFSFs) primarily to offset cuts made by the State of California to revenue limit/state aid and state categorical programs. This stimulus funding will allow San Francisco to maintain programs that serve the highest-need students and avoid layoffs of certificated staff in the 2009-10 school year. As a result of SFSFs, the district will be able to maintain several key programs, including summer school programs for students at risk of being retained or failing the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE). Stabilization funds will also support critical intervention and targeted instructional services—such as those provided by instructional reform facilitators, school advisors, parent-community liaisons, middle and high school counselors—to schools with the highest concentration of economically disadvantaged and at-risk of failing students. Strategic professional development for new teachers will also be supported with SFSFs.

More than half of the Title I funding under ARRA will be used to support instructional reform facilitators, who will serve as teachers on special assignment at program improvement school sites. Approximately one-fourth of the funds will focus on parent and community liaisons, who support family services at program improvement school sites. Remaining funding will be used to provide summer school at program improvement sites; to create an academic warehouse and reporting system; and to buttress school choice transportation and indirect funding.

The district's IDEA stimulus funds will be used in 2009-10 to provide increased services to special needs students through non-public schools and non-public agencies.

## Seattle

The State of Washington used State Fiscal Stabilization Funds available under ARRA to supplant, on a one-for-one trade-out, previously programmed state funds for education. Title I and IDEA stimulus funds will be used to revamp Seattle Public Schools' English language learner (ELL) services; to support grade-span coaches; to enhance student data-tracking systems; to support professional development; to invest in technology and early childhood; and to build out performance management data systems.

Specifically, the district anticipates using Title I funds for performance management through an initial implementation of a differentiated school improvement model, a science, technology, engineering, and math high school, early learning, and bilingual education. Seattle Public Schools is still developing additional spending items for its Title I ARRA program.

The district has outlined a new, predictable, and consistent way of providing differentiated responses to schools based on performance. This means that schools struggling in math may receive different supports and interventions than schools struggling with reading. ARRA will further the district's ability to provide targeted resources where schools need them most, which is critical to the district being able to meet its goals.

This performance management approach to school improvement provides the framework for making system-wide improvements. In 2009-10, 12 schools will participate in this effort (five of them Title I schools), and over the next three years, the district will provide these differentiated supports to every school, within allowable funding sources for each school. The initiative will provide differentiated and targeted supports to the current 24 Title I schools based on their performance and diagnosed needs. The five Title I schools participating in the first phase of the performance management implementation will receive more intense support than the other 19 schools, but all Title I schools will receive targeted enrichment support. This support will vary from school to school, but will focus on improving student academic performance and be aligned with each school's commitment to academic excellence.

ARRA Title I funds will help these efforts by directly supporting incremental site-based staff (coaches, teachers, content specialists); professional development/teacher training and the associated release time to support additional training on assessments; effective use of data; and academic interventions. Funding will also be used to support an extended-day program, supplemental materials, diagnostic assessments, and a strengthened family engagement program. Many of the interventions planned with ARRA funding will require hiring additional staff, thus creating employment opportunities and helping to preserve teacher and coaching positions.

ARRA Title I funds will also be used to revamp the bilingual services department. The goal of Seattle Public Schools' bilingual services is to foster language development (through explicit instruction with English as a second language [ESL]) certified teachers) that will empower English language learners to succeed in the mainstream curriculum. The district is hoping to

achieve this goal by sharing the expertise and knowledge of Seattle’s ESL certified teachers with mainstream teachers through collaboration and professional development.

The district is also proposing a differentiated model of service delivery to better meet the needs of its bilingual students and to better support all staff. Schools will be grouped based both on the number and type of services needed at that school and on schools’ current readiness to support English language learners. This grouping will allow the district to more efficiently allocate staff and resources to where the greatest needs are.

To make this transition to a differentiated service model, the district must hire additional bilingual coaches to train certificated school leaders over the next two years—a natural fit considering the spending time frame for ARRA funds. These coaches will build site-based capacity to manage the services. The district is also increasing bilingual certificated staff and relying less heavily on instructional assistants. By identifying, hiring, and training more certificated staff, Seattle Public Schools can build and create a model that can be sustained and better meet the needs of bilingual students.

The ultimate beneficiaries of this new model will be the district’s 5,600 bilingual students who are currently struggling to meet standards with inadequate district supports. In the new model, students have the benefit of a bilingual-endorsed teacher who can provide explicit instruction for longer periods of the day and collaborate with the mainstream teachers. Certificated teachers and instructional assistants will also benefit from the high-quality professional development and guidance from bilingual coaches. ARRA funds will be specifically used to pay for bilingual instructional assistants, school-based certificated staff, central-office staff, as well as for additional hours of staff work for collaboration on student assessment, instructional design, and parent and family engagement.

A third priority for the district’s ARRA plan is expanding and improving the early learning opportunities for low-income students in the city. To do this, Seattle schools are working in partnership with the City and local funders to develop a citywide plan to add integrated Pre-K-3 programs to several low-income Seattle schools, with the goal of having a program in every Title I elementary or K-8 school that has the physical capacity within five years.

Core elements of this program would include high-quality, universally accessible prekindergarten programs that are available to all children whose families want them to participate (a sliding fee may be charged), as well as full-day kindergarten. Professional development in early education and common planning time enable teachers to plan for effective coordination across and between grades, and will help ensure that educators throughout the district are following aligned standards and curricula that allow each year’s learning to build on what children learned the previous year.

In addition, ARRA funding will be used to create a yearly evaluation and ongoing quality assessment of the early childhood programs; a kindergarten readiness assessment to inform how elementary schools can support every five-year-old entering school; and an evaluation of



the program with annual impact assessment briefs. Measuring the return on investment of the program and communicating results with policy makers and the public are important tasks for the district to undertake in order to track, measure, and communicate the impact of the program. Policies and practices will also be put into place that involve parents and communities and foster a shared accountability for the educational success of Pre-K to third-grade students.

Seattle Public Schools has also planned to establish an integrated Pre-K-3 program in at least 20 additional Title I elementary schools within five years. These programs should be high-quality and result in significant, positive student academic gains that directly reduce the achievement gap. The district has scheduled 2009-10 as the planning year and targeted the 2010-11 school year for launching the effort. There are specific planning and launch costs for which the district will use Title I ARRA funds. These costs include salary and benefits for a director of early learning for two years; a kindergarten readiness assessment and related data module; strategic planning assistance to lead design and development of an early learning plan for the City and the school district; and outreach, engagement, and information dissemination to affected families and communities. The district has planned that, by year three, the continuing costs will be fully assumed by existing funding sources.

The district will also use Title I funding for instructional and content coaching, professional development, and family engagement activities for private schools serving Title I students, as well as to cover the loss of state funding (known as I-728) for activities such as class size, professional development, and extended time in Title I schools.

The district's special education department is planning to use federal IDEA stimulus funds to implement recommendations from reviews conducted by the Urban Special Education Leadership Collaborative. The recommendations focused on the three major areas of service delivery, transition, and organizational structure. Stimulus funds will be used to implement and review recommendations across these three major areas, which are critical to the special education department's ability to support the work of the strategic plan.

## **St. Louis**

Stimulus funding for St. Louis Public Schools has been budgeted strategically to allow the use of unrestricted state and local dollars to maintain class sizes that exceed state desirable levels. A significant portion of the district's Title I funding will be used for staff development. The district plans to support after-school liaison positions and retain social workers and early classroom staff. The mandated set-asides include professional development, supplemental educational services, and homeless student services, among others.

The district will use IDEA funding to provide special education tuition for highly involved students and to cover excess special education costs for county transfer students.

St. Louis Public Schools also anticipates receiving Title II-D technology, food service kitchen equipment, career ladder reimbursements, and—contingent upon voter approval—Qualified School Construction Bonds.

## St. Paul

St Paul Public Schools has a team of administrators working on stimulus planning, focusing on the question, “What can we do in two years to improve the system?” The stimulus team has been conducting numerous community presentations, and has already set up financial tracking systems for stimulus funds. The district will use stimulus funds six different areas.

The first is to conduct a comprehensive audit of *Pre-K-12 curricula* to ensure the rigor of academic courses. The second will advance *elementary reform* efforts including job-embedded professional development to ensure fidelity of program implementation; improve the current coaching model; and enhance systematic tiered interventions for literacy, math, and behavior. The third area is designed to advance *secondary reform* efforts, such as a two-year instructional coaching surge to provide intense support for tiered interventions (math, literacy, and behavior); accelerate development and consistent implementation of district curriculum (literacy and math); and identify and implement research-based content literacy reform (READ 180, AMP Reading, EDGE Reading, etc.). The fourth area will fund *interventions* for struggling students: Response to Intervention (RTI), Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS), etc. The fifth area invests in *professional development* by developing and implementing a monitored structure of teacher placement and by realigning staff resources to improve support to teachers in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. Finally, the funding will be invested in *data systems*. Aligned data systems would help the district to better track and evaluate student performance; monitor and reform curriculum and instructional practices; review and redesign staff development efforts; improve compliance; and better manage special education staffing.

St. Paul Public Schools will receive about \$18 million in Title I funds and approximately \$11 million in IDEA funds from the stimulus package. Most funds will be used to overhaul the curriculum, boost community partnerships, and design intervention systems that are capable of reducing referrals to special education.

The district will use approximately half of its Title I stimulus funding for school-level allocations, assuming a waiver of certain Title I requirements. It will use the remaining half for professional development initiatives in schools not meeting Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards. Specifically, funding will be used for both elementary and secondary school reform; elementary literacy efforts; and secondary school curriculum and instructional reform. In addition, funding will also support districtwide interventions; teacher peer assistance and review (pending negotiations); cultural proficiency; Leadership and Learning Center partnership; and parent involvement and engagement activities.

St. Paul Public Schools also will use a portion of its IDEA stimulus funding to provide early intervening services, as part of the district’s efforts to support a pyramid of interventions in literacy, math, and behavior. Included will be work on new districtwide benchmark assessments, progress monitoring assessments, and a districtwide data management system to provide teachers and staff with real-time access to data on students and their performance.

In addition, the district will use IDEA stimulus funding to improve collaboration between general and special education by providing an additional assistant administrator to coordinate the two. The district will also use IDEA stimulus funds to reduce IEP paperwork through an Easy IEP system, special education resource coordinators, and student evaluators. The district will use ARRA dollars to purchase two new lift-buses with removable seats and assistive technology, and will provide both new equipment and professional development for special education teachers.

## **Wichita**

Wichita Public Schools has followed the federal decision-making guidelines and recommendations for ARRA funds, and focused on creating or saving jobs, putting instructional coaches into the classroom, and serving more schoolwide programs, including high schools. In the past, the district has used Title I funding to serve only elementary and middle schools with 75 percent or greater poverty enrollment, providing funds and services to 37 schools. With the additional ARRA funds, the district was able to expand Title I to additional needy schools down to the 55 percent poverty level. Twenty-three additional schools, including 13 elementary schools, a K-8 school, four middle schools, and all five of the districts high schools, will be served with Title I funds under ARRA.

ARRA funds used to support Title I-eligible schools below the 75 percent poverty rate can receive several types of support to help promote a culture of learning. The district plans to strengthen this effort through the use of a specified amount of funds per school. It will target these funds on qualified expenditures, building-based instructional coaches, support for the family literacy component of AmeriCorps, and “Parents As Teachers” support.

The executive director of Title I will work with schools and principals to ensure the appropriate use of funds in accordance with federal guidance. By providing these supports to schools, Wichita Public Schools has followed the intent of the ARRA funding by creating and saving jobs. In particular, the district is saving 24 positions and creating 27 new positions at new Title I schoolwide programs. By placing instructional coaches in schools, classroom-level instruction will be supported with 51 coaches. Moreover, in serving more schoolwide programs—including those in high school— this plan for using the stimulus dollars serves 60 Title I-eligible schools, as compared to the 37 schools that were served in 2008-09.

Finally, the district used IDEA dollars to offset state cuts in special education and used dollars from the State Fiscal Stabilization Fund grant to pay for the base salaries and benefits of teachers on contract for 2009-10.

## About the Council

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The Council of the Great City Schools is a coalition of the nation's largest urban school systems. Its Board of Directors is composed of the Superintendent of Schools and one School Board member from each member city. An Executive Committee of 24 individuals, equally divided in number between Superintendents and School Board members, provides oversight of the 501(c)(3) organization in between Board meetings. The mission of the Council is to advocate for and to assist in the improvement of public education in the nation's major cities. To meet that mission, the Council provides services to its members in the areas of legislation, research, communications, teacher recruitment, curriculum and instruction, and management. The group convenes two major conferences each year on promising practices in urban education; conducts studies on urban school conditions and trends; and operates ongoing networks of senior managers in each city with responsibility in such areas as federal programs, operations and finance, personnel, communications, research, technology, and others. The Council was founded in 1956 and incorporated in 1961, and has its headquarters in Washington, D.C.

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