

Administrative Memo

Date: August 6, 2020
To: School Administrators
From: Chris Neale, assistant commissioner, Office of Quality Schools
Subject: QS-20-009 – Missouri Student Connectivity Grant

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) has opened the Missouri Student Connectivity (MSC) Grant to address the digital divide for Missouri students, knowing that about one in five students did not have access to online learning opportunities when school buildings were closed last spring. DESE is now accepting applications for the MSC grant, which has two components: the Access project (MSC-A) and the Connections (MSC-C) project. These two projects have the combined purpose of increasing students' access to both the internet and to digital learning resources by expanding school Wi-Fi networks and providing Wi-Fi enabled devices for students.

The MSC grant program is funded through several CARES Act funding streams: the Coronavirus Relief Fund, the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund, and the state reserve of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund. The combined total will provide \$30 million to address the digital divide for Missouri's students. You can learn more about those funding details here in [Administrative Memo FAS-20-008](#).

The goal of the MSC-A is to expand internet availability for students primarily through broadcasting Wi-Fi signals outside of local education agency (LEA) buildings, subject to current statutory and regulatory requirements and restrictions about Wi-Fi broadcasting. All LEAs are eligible for MSC-A project funds. MSC-A grants carry a dollar for dollar matching requirement. LEAs are encouraged to partner with their counties to secure those matching funds through county Coronavirus Relief Funds.

The MSC-C project directs grant funds to LEAs with the greatest need for Wi-Fi enabled devices, as determined by DESE.

DESE has developed guidance for grant applicants. This guidance, as well as links to the allocations and applications, can be found at dese.mo.gov/cares-act. Please contact the Office of Quality Schools at 573-751-4234 or qualityschools@dese.mo.gov for additional information.