



Sara M. Bonser
Superintendent of Schools

September 10, 2020

Mr. Bill Bilyeu
Collin County Administrator
2300 Bloomdale Road, Suite 4192
McKinney, TX 75071

Dear Mr. Bilyeu:

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic response, Governor Abbott and Texas Legislative leaders allocated \$200 million in CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF) funding to match the \$200 million in local district funding to help cover the purchase of technology device and internet access for 100% of our students in a program called Operation Connectivity. This bulk purchasing program has provided a structure to help school districts manage the cost of this needed expenditure. While our students have the choice to be back in class and our doors are open, access to technology is necessary both inside school and for students to access learning should they be unable to be at school either by parent choice or due to illness.

Plano ISD participated in Operation Connectivity in order to ensure that every student has a technology device and every family has access to internet in the home. The Operation Connectivity Program has a local CRF matching opportunity in which the local education agency may seek support from the city or county for a maximum contribution of not more than 25% of the total bulk purchase amount, or for Plano ISD, 25% of \$366,100 for a total of \$91,525. Operation Connectivity funding process has several components:

Operation Connectivity – Technology Funding Process		
Steps	Action	Financial Impact on Plano ISD
Assess technology needs to determine Plano ISD student/family needs eligible for Operation Connectivity bulk order funding	Plano ISD Board of Trustees approved expenditure of \$366,100 for 1,000 hotspots, 500 Chromebooks and 100 iPads at August 4, 2020 Board Meeting with understanding that the District had applied to participate in Operation Connectivity for 50% reimbursement through CRF from TEA for a total District Cost of \$183,050	-\$183,050
Seek reimbursement from local county CRF funds for half of remaining cost to District	Plano ISD letter to Collin County requesting support for a 50% of district Operation Connectivity expense equaling \$91,525. If District receives contribution from county, TEA will provide an additional match equaling the county CARES Act Relief Funding amount	\$91,525
Seek TEA reimbursement for half of remaining cost to District	Plano ISD provides evidence that county will reimburse 50% of remaining District cost (or 25% of overall technology cost) and TEA will match county CRF contribution of \$91,525 and zeroing out cost to Plano ISD for all Operation Connectivity technology costs	\$91,525

Plano ISD is requesting CARES Act Relief Funding consideration equaling \$91,525 from Collin County so that we may seek the TEA matching funds for the technology needed to support our students and families. In order to be responsible to our taxpayers and good stewards of our resources, we feel we must advocate for matching funds when they are available to the greatest degree possible and hope the County will help us through CARES Act funding.



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As you may or may not know, local school district CARES Act Relief Funding was provided to Plano ISD in the amount of \$4.03 million dollars; however, the State immediately decreased state funding by that same amount—effectively providing NO financial relief for COVID costs to the school district. Instead, school districts must ask for help from the city and county, or apply for relief through other available programs. The District is applying for federal relief for PPE and other COVID-related costs at every opportunity. Recently, the City of Plano approved \$500,000 of CARES Act Relief Funding to offset the \$1.5 million cost of PPE needed to safely reopen Plano ISD schools. We are working with our other Collin County school districts to assess the county-wide impact on school budgets and will continue to keep the County and Cities updated on the status of the ongoing cost of PPE needed to ensure we can continue to maximize safety to keep our schools open to in-person learning.

Included for your information are the following supporting documents:

- Plano ISD Board Agenda Item and Interlocal Agreement approved by the Plano ISD School Board on August 4, 2020 showing \$366,100 bulk purchase and 50% cost to PISD of \$183,050
- The Invoice from Region 4 ESC (Fiscal Agent for Operation Connectivity Bulk Ordering for TEA) for the Plano ISD portion of the Operation Connectivity bulk technology purchase of \$183,050
- TEA Guide to Operation Connectivity: How Municipalities and Counties Can Help

Although Plano ISD has until October 1 to submit the application for additional relief should the County determine that they can provide the \$91,525 CARES Act Relief Funds to support Operation Connectivity, funding is on a first come first served basis, so your prompt reply would be greatly appreciated. As part of the application we are required to submit documentation supporting the County's commitment with the following information:

- Date the County allocated CRF funds to Plano ISD
- Amount the County plans to allocate to Plano ISD
- Validation the allocation of funds is for the purpose of matching Plano ISD's bulk purchase order totaling \$366,100 (total cost of which Plano ISD paid \$183,050)
- Whether the County plans to provide CRF matching program funds to other school districts in the county
- Signature of the County official

We would be happy to meet to discuss this or provide any additional information that would help the County in consideration of this request. Thank you for your consideration of this item.

Sincerely,

Sara M. Bonser
Superintendent

Cc: County Commissioner Duncan Webb
County Commissioner Susan Fletcher
County Commissioner Darrell Hale
County Commissioner Cheryl Williams
Plano ISD Board of Trustees