

# K-12 COVID-19 Relief Options

CAPITALIZING ON ESSER AND GEER FUNDS



## An Opportunity to Acquire Best-in-Class Floor Cleaning Equipment

It's hard to find positives amid the COVID-19 pandemic, especially when it comes to K-12 schools and the impact on students, teachers and staff. So, when a "win" presents itself, it's advisable to seize it.

Government relief funds are available now for a wide range of K-12 initiatives, including the creation and maintenance of clean, safe learning environments. Among the possible uses of relief funds is the acquisition of specialized cleaning supplies, sanitization or cleaning equipment. In other words, if you've been waiting for the right moment to replace your old floor cleaning systems — or evolve past the dirty, dark ages of using a mop and bucket to clean floors — this is your opportunity.

As a result, K-12 schools may be able use a portion of the federal and state relief funds they receive to purchase Tennant floor cleaning equipment. There are several reasons buying a Tennant machine makes sense right now. One of the most compelling reasons is the return-on-investment (ROI). You can use COVID-19 relief funds to buy a Tennant machine and use it to create cleaner, safer environments *right now*. But Tennant floor cleaning machines tend to last for years — and years. Tennant walk-behind floor scrubbers and rider floor scrubbers, burnishers and upright vacuums all have strong, long-term value when regularly and properly maintained.

So, while it's a smart idea to use funds from the CARES Act, the CRRSA Act and the American Rescue Plan Act to create clean, safe environments as part of your return-to-school strategy *today*, you'll also see a strong return on that investment for years — long after the pandemic has subsided.

## Kids and Students Deserve Clean, Safe Environments

K-12 schools have increasingly prioritized clean, safe environments to protect the health and wellness of students, teachers and staff, and even to promote better academic outcomes. The pandemic has only magnified the importance of clean and safe surfaces — and the largest and most challenging surface in a

school is the floor. Most custodial professionals know that improper floor cleaning can contribute to slips and falls, as well as bacterial growth and the spread of viruses.

Now that schools are reopening, this reality has placed extra burdens on custodians and janitors. In addition to increased labor costs to manage extra surface wipe-downs, an expanded focus on floor cleaning is shining a new light on cleaning efficacy. Older floor cleaning machines and mop-and-bucket approaches may not deliver the results needed — both in terms of aesthetics and health and wellness.

The costs and efficacy risks are more pronounced now than ever. Most K-12 schools' back-to-school plans include more frequent floor cleaning. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has offered some guidance in this area. CDC policies state that while high-touch surfaces should be cleaned at least once a day, more frequent cleaning is likely necessary in areas occupied by younger children.<sup>1</sup> (For more details on CDC guidance for K-12, please read: [Operational Strategy for K-12 Schools through Phased Prevention](#)).<sup>2</sup>

## Nearly \$200B in Relief Funds Available

In 2020 and 2021, the U.S. Congress passed three stimulus bills that provided just over \$194.5B to K-12 schools. Each state is eligible to receive a portion of this nearly \$200B. A majority of those funds are available through the Elementary and Secondary Emergency Education Relief (ESSER) fund and the Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) fund. ESSER funds are sent directly to state education agencies (SEAs), which distribute them to local education agencies (LEAs). GEER funds are distributed per the governor's discretion in each state.<sup>3</sup>

K-12 schools have never had access to this level of funding; but they also have rarely been faced with an educational, economic and social challenge like the COVID-19 pandemic. There are stipulations on how schools can spend these funds. One of the primary uses is to clean or sanitize facilities.<sup>4</sup> Based on this, K-12 schools may be eligible to use funds to acquire Tennant floor cleaning equipment.

Custodial staff are key frontline workers who are risking their own health and safety to make K-12 schools safe for returning students and faculty. The new burden they bear — in terms of increased cleaning activities — applies to this provision, adding further affirmation to using funds to buy Tennant floor cleaning equipment that will support these critical frontline workers.

## How and Where to Apply for Funds

Use of ESSER funds is determined by SEAs and LEAs in each state. Visit the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) [ESSER tracker](#) to see how each state is deploying its available funds.<sup>5</sup> GEER funds are available through an application process that varies by state. Information for each state can be found by visiting [oese.ed.gov](https://oese.ed.gov) and using the search feature on the home page to search for "GEER."<sup>6</sup> NCSL also offers a [GEER tracker](#) to see how each state is deploying its funds.<sup>7</sup>

While the process for applying for GEER funds varies by state — and the process of allocating ESSER funds varies by SEA and LEA — most requests for funds will require some form of justification. When engaging in an application process, you should be prepared to include the following information:

**Equipment desired:** *Tennant floor cleaning equipment*

**Location of use and storage:** *School address*

**Purpose of the equipment:** *Cleaning high-traffic surfaces*

**Why equipment is necessary:** *Create clean and safe learning environments*

**How is related to the COVID-19 crisis:** *Increased importance and frequency of cleaning*

**Estimated purchase price:** *Consult a Tennant sales representative for help*

*Note: Application deadlines vary by state, but you are encouraged to complete applications before the start of the 2021-22 school year and no later than the end of December 2022.*

You should research your state's specific process, apply and confirm funding before committing to a purchase of any equipment.

## Why Tennant is the Right Choice for Your K-12 School

Custodial staffs have long understood the importance of keeping high-traffic areas clean and safe. Performance in this area is a matter of pride for schools in every market. But the global pandemic presents custodial staff with a once-in-a-generation challenge. Keeping students, teachers, staff and guest safe amid the invisible and persistent threats of the coronavirus has elevated the importance and stress of the custodian's job.

Long before the pandemic, Tennant recognized that the people tasked with keeping facilities clean and safe needed the right kind of support. They needed floor cleaning technologies that made their jobs easier — and safer. Tennant is laser-focused on making floor cleaning equipment that allows custodial staff to maintain their own focus on what matters: safeguarding students, teachers and staff. When you provide a clean learning environment, you help students succeed and grow. You also enable teachers and staff to perform their jobs better. Tennant provides reliable floor cleaning equipment and innovative technologies that help your facilities look their best — and help your students and staff perform at their best.

Tennant has a complete range of floor cleaning machines for every part of your campus. Keep floors in classrooms, labs, hallways and auditoriums sparkling with walk-behind and rider floor scrubbers (including autonomous options), burnishers and powerful upright vacuums. Restore tile, grout and other hard surfaces with a versatile multi-surface cleaner. Replace mop-and-bucket cleaning with an efficient, all-surface floor cleaning machine for locker rooms, restrooms, and stairwells. Extend the life of your gymnasium floors with efficient, maneuverable rider scrubbers. Tackle parking lots and outdoor areas with powerful outdoor sweepers. [Contact us](#) for a consultation.

## Contact Tennant for Answers to Funding and Cleaning Questions

Floor cleaning systems are the most tangible offering Tennant delivers to K-12 schools. We offer a wealth of knowledge to share regarding best practices for creating clean and safe environments for students, faculty, staff and visitors. We can also provide you with specific cleaning insights related to COVID-19 and the various pandemic-related funding opportunities available to K-12 schools. You can also [contact us](#) to arrange a

demonstration of our floor cleaning technologies. For more information, [visit our website](#) or call 1-800-553-8033.

## References:

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control (CDC) *Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility* <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control (CDC) *COVID-19 microsite*: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/operation-strategy.html>

<sup>3</sup> Office of Secondary and Elementary Education website: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/education-stabilization-fund/governors-emergency-education-relief-fund/> & [GEER FAQ](#)

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Education *Certification and Agreement for Funding under the Education Stabilization Fund Program Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund* <https://oese.ed.gov/files/2020/04/GEER-Certification-and-Agreement.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> *Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund Tracker* <https://www.ncsl.org/ncsl-in-dc/standing-committees/education/cares-act-elementary-and-secondary-school-emergency-relief-fund-tracker.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> Office of Secondary and Elementary Education website [https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/01/FINAL\\_GEERII\\_EANS-Methodology\\_Table\\_1.8.211.pdf](https://oese.ed.gov/files/2021/01/FINAL_GEERII_EANS-Methodology_Table_1.8.211.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> *Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund Tracker* <https://www.ncsl.org/ncsl-in-dc/standing-committees/education/cares-act-governor-s-emergency-education-relief-fund.aspx>