

Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds (HEERF) Reporting on the Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students – April and June 2021

The federal government passed three different plans related to the coronavirus that helped to provide funds for higher education institutions. These plans had three different names and were passed at different times, but they also were related. Each of the three plans included the “Higher Education Emergency Relief Funds” (HEERF). We refer to these as HEERF I, HEERF II, and HEERF III.

Each of the HEERFs provided dollars to be spent as emergency financial aid grants to students to help students with unexpected financial challenges as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child-care expenses.

The first act, Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act or, CARES Act, was passed by Congress on March 27th, 2020. Wartburg College has received funds under section 18004 of the CARES Act, Pub. L. No. 116-136, 134 Stat. 281 (March 27, 2020) Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (“HEERF”). The funds received under this act are referred to as HEERF I.

The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II) is authorized by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSAA), Public Law 116-260, signed into law on Dec. 27, 2020.

The Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund III (HEERF III) is authorized by the American Rescue Plan (ARP), Public Law 117-2, signed into law on March 11, 2021.

Originally, under HEERF I rules, only certain students were “eligible” to receive emergency financial aid grants funded from this source. However, under HEERF III, the definition of eligible students was broadened, which allowed us to provide these federal funds to more students.

The College signed and returned to the Department of Education the Certification and Agreement and the assurance that the institution has used, or intends to use, the applicable amount of funds designated under each of the three acts to provide Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students. The amounts under each of the three acts designated as Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students is noted in the chart that follows. Wartburg College has spent all the HEERF dollars designated for Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students and has spent an additional \$247,953 (\$243,980 from HEERF I and \$3,973 from HEERF III) from the HEERF dollars designated as institutional funds. The institutional funds are allowed to be spent for Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students as well as a variety of other items.

	Emergency Financial Aid Grants to Students	Institutional Portion	Total	Date of Distribution to Students
HEERF I	\$ 644,635	\$243,980	\$ 888,615	May 12, 2020
HEERF II	\$ 644,635		\$ 644,635	March 11, 2021
HEERF III	<u>\$1,659,442</u>	<u>\$ 3,973</u>	<u>\$1,663,415</u>	May 26, 2021
Total	\$2,948,712	\$247,953	\$3,196,665	

The following is an estimate of the number of students that were eligible to receive funding through the HEERF dollars:

<u>HEERF I</u>	<u>Original</u>	Revised * <u>Student Eligibility</u>	<u>Total</u>
Full-time	1,179	235	1,414
Part-time	<u>14</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>40</u>
Total	1,193	261	1,454

* The change in student eligibility happened with HEERF III

<u>HEERF II & III **</u>	<u>Total</u>
Full-time	1,525
Part-time	<u>39</u>
Total	1,564

** We used the fall 2020 enrollment at the beginning of the term to estimate the number of eligible students for both HEERF II & III.

The following is the actual number of students that received funding through the HEERF dollars:

<u>HEERF I</u>	<u>Original</u>	Revised * <u>Student Eligibility</u>	<u>Total</u>
Full-time	1,179	235	1,414
Part-time	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>8</u>
Total	1,187	235	1,422

* This happened with HEERF III regulations, allowing us to use HEERF dollars for additional students

<u>HEERF II & III</u>	<u>Total</u>
Full-time	1,376
Part-time	<u>0</u>
Total	1,376

Originally, Wartburg College awarded Emergency Financial Aid Grants funded from HEERF I to students who filed the FAFSA and provided any required verification documents associated with such filing. Under HEERF III, the definition of eligible students was broadened, therefore, we were able to fund more students using HEERF dollars.

The amount each student received took all of the following into consideration:

- Estimated expenses each student incurred related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus
- Need, as determined by the amount of estimated family contribution per the FAFSA and other information we had available

In addition, HEERF I and III also considered the following:

- Specific request received from students for financial assistance related to the disruption of campus operations due to coronavirus

For HEERF I dollars, we considered all undergraduate degree seeking students (full & part-time) that were registered as of March 17, 2020. For HEERF II and III dollars, we considered all full-time degree seeking undergraduate students that were registered as of March 2. 100% of the full-time registered undergraduate students as of the dates indicated above received HEERF dollars.

The allocations were reviewed by the Director of Financial Aid at Wartburg College as well as Wartburg College President's Cabinet.

Students received a variety of communications related to the Emergency Financial Aid Grants. For HEERF I, see list of such communications in the "CARES Act Report – June 2020" [Microsoft Word - CARES Act - interim reporting - June 10-2020.docx \(wartburg.edu\)](#)

For HEERF II and III, the following is a summary of these various communications:

- March 3: An email from the President, letting all currently full-time registered undergraduate students know they would be receiving at least some funding from HEERF II.
- March 10: An email to the full-time registered undergraduate students as of March 3, 2021 from the Business Office, letting them know how their HEERF II dollars will be delivered and how they can cash the check.
- March 11: Juice # email sent to students that additional funds are available for COVID-related hardship and provided a link to a form, noting how to request additional funds.
- March 15: Juice # email sent to students to remind them that additional funds are available for COVID-related hardship and provided a link to a form, noting how to request additional funds. A deadline of March 26, 2021 was also communicated.
- March 22: Juice # email sent to students to remind them that additional funds are available for COVID-related hardship and provided a link to a form, noting how to request additional funds and that the deadline to apply is March 26, 2021.
- May 24: An email to all our full-time undergraduate students from the President, letting the students know we received the HEERF III authorization of funds and that checks will be distributed to students by the end of May term.
- May 25: An email to the full-time registered undergraduate students as of March 3, 2021 from the Business Office, letting them know how their HEERF II dollars will be delivered and how they can cash the check.
- Various dates: Frequently asked questions were periodically posted to and updated at [Knights Care: COVID-19 Updates & Safety - Wartburg College](#).

The Juice is the College's official communication tool for news and events, and is sent via email to all students, faculty, and staff