Making ESSER Dollars Count: Best Practices and Success Stories

Sarah Mehrotra, Senior Data & Policy Analyst

The Education Trust
Welcome! In the chat please share where you are joining from and one word or phrase that comes to mind when you think of ESSER spending.
Session Agenda

• ESSER: Where are we now?
• How are districts prioritizing equity in ESSER spending?
• Learning from the field: A Conversation with Keri Randolph
• Closing
Equitable Student Experiences: 10 Dimensions

- School Funding
- Teaching Quality & Diversity
- School Leadership Quality & Diversity
- Empowering, Rigorous Content
- Instructional Time & Attention
- Positive & Inviting School Climate
- Student Supports & Intervention
- High-Quality Early Learning
- Learning-Ready Facilities
- Diverse Classrooms & Schools
Where in the world are we with all of this federal funding?

**ESSER:** Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund
Where in the world are we with all of this federal funding?

20% allocated to learning loss

80% allocated to policies that address needs arising from the pandemic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCIES’ PLANNED ESSER III SPENDING</th>
<th>Budgeted Amount</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
<th>National Projection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staffing</td>
<td>$17,367,216,065</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>$29,744,251,535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Recovery</td>
<td>$16,080,634,991</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>$27,540,767,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities and Operations</td>
<td>$14,984,550,496</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>$25,663,539,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td>$5,809,851,390</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>$9,950,338,642</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental and Physical Health</td>
<td>$4,090,139,117</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>$7,005,044,807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Financials</td>
<td>$3,543,663,153</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>$6,069,113,656</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$2,351,271,704</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>$4,026,944,602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$64,227,326,915</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>$110,000,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This FutureEd analysis is based on a June 7, 2022, compilation by the data-services firm Burbio on Covid-relief spending plans released by 5,004 local education agencies in 50 states and the District of Columbia representing 74% of the nation’s public-school students. The analysis breaks down $64.2 billion in designated spending in federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER III) funds.

Source: Financial Trends in Local Schools’ Covid-Aid Spending (July, 2022)

*Note: Ed Trust uses “unfinished learning”. Others may use “learning loss” or “academic recovery”
There are a wide range of messages about how districts are spending these funds.

Source: Flush with COVID-19 aid, schools steer funding to sports (AP News, 2021); (PBS, 2022); Millions in Stimulus Aid, and Clashing Over How to Spend It (NYT, 2022); Expectations for ESSER: Will the improvements be sustainable? (K-12 Dive, 2022)
There are a wide range of messages about how districts are spending these funds.

How should districts spend ESSER funds in the most equitable and strategic way to aid in pandemic recovery?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Buckets of equitable practices</th>
<th>Unfinished learning: Tutoring</th>
<th>Unfinished learning: Expanded learning time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student, Family, and Community Engagement</td>
<td>Safe &amp; Equitable Learning Environments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addressing Teacher Shortages</td>
<td>Data Equity &amp; Reporting Transparency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unfinished Learning: Expanded Learning Time
Key Questions

**Equity & Accessibility**
Is the practice...
- Focused on students who have suffered the most during the pandemic?

**Rigor & Content**
Is the practice...
- Using rigorous and high-quality instruction?
- Measurable?

**Additional questions & considerations**
- Providing additional compensation & support for educators?
- Leveraging community members?
Spotlight on Dallas ISD Expanded Learning Time Programing

Dallas ISD student profile:
- 70% Latino
- 22% Black
- 5% White
- 66% Free or Reduced Price Lunch

Key considerations
- Focused on students who have suffered the most?
- Using rigorous and high-quality instruction?
  - Measurable?
  - Providing additional compensation & support for educators?
- Leveraging community members?
Spotlight on Dallas ISD Expanded Learning Time Programing
Reflect in the chat: How is Dallas ISD prioritizing equity in their extended learning time program?
Equity & Accessibility

Is the practice...
• Focused on students who have suffered the most during the pandemic?

Rigor & Content

Is the practice...
• Evidence-based?
• Integrated into district strategies?
• Leveraging community expertise?
• Measurable?
Spotlight on Alexandria’s Parent Liaison Program

ACPS student profile:
- 37% Latino
- 28% White
- 26% Black
- 63% Free or Reduced Price Lunch

Equity & Accessibility
Is the practice...
Focused on students who have suffered the most during the pandemic?

Rigor & Content
Is the practice...
- Evidence-based?
- Leveraging community expertise?
- Integrated into district strategies?
- Measurable?

37% Latino
28% White
26% Black
63% Free or Reduced Price Lunch
Equity & Accessibility
- Is the practice...
- Focused on students who have suffered the most during the pandemic?

Relationships
- Is the practice...
- Providing social, emotional, and mental health supports to students?

Additional questions & considerations
- Is the practice measurable?
- Does it engage communities & families?
Learning from the field:
Welcome, Keri Randolph!

Keri Randolph

Former Chief Strategy Officer
Metro Nashville Public Schools;
Current Executive Director of Chattanooga 2.0
Questions?
Please Complete This Short Feedback Survey

tinyurl.com/betternewnormal