



# LAUNCH NEBRASKA



## Opportunity of a Lifetime: The Role of Public School Foundations After ESSER

November 8, 2021



# Objectives

- Frame this “Opportunity of a Lifetime”
- Give a high-level overview of ESSER funding
- Discuss the role of school foundations in avoiding the fiscal cliff effect
- Highlight resources to support conversations with districts
- Answer questions





# ESSER Overview

# OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME



- The federal investment provides a **significant, transformational, one-time investment** in education
- Opportunity to renew and accelerate learning, with a particular emphasis on **marginalized student groups** (i.e. students of color, students with disabilities, English learners, and economically disadvantaged)
- Opportunity to deepen partnerships forged over this year



# Opportunity of a Lifetime

	<b>Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) March 2020</b>	<b>Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) December 2020</b>	<b>American Rescue Plan March 2021</b>
<b>Total Allocation</b>	\$65 million	\$243 million	\$546 million
<b>Flow Through to LEAs</b>	\$59 million	\$218 million	\$492 million
<b>NDE Set-Aside</b>	\$6 million	\$24 million	\$54 million

# Grant Timelines

## ESSER Grant & Performance Period

It is important to remember that these are one-time funds that must be used to prepare for and respond to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. LEAs should consider multi-year budgets in alignment with the priorities outlined in [Nebraska's Framework for School Renewal & Acceleration, 2021-2022 School Year](#), mapping out how they will support their schools in meeting the social, emotional, and academic needs of their students through the fall of 2024.

ESSER I

April 2020

September 2022

ESSER II

January 2021

September 2023

ESSER III

March 2021

September 2024

**What do we want to be true for our  
students in three years?**

**And beyond?**

The background is a blue-tinted photograph of a lunar base. On the left, an astronaut in a full spacesuit stands on the moon's surface, holding a long probe. In the center and right, there is a complex of equipment including a rover, various storage containers, and a large satellite dish antenna. The terrain is sandy and uneven, with some shadows cast by the equipment.

# Avoiding the Fiscal Cliff: What happens after three years?



# Acknowledgements

- *Our students have immediate needs, requiring immediate attention that may not necessarily need to be sustained.*
- *The task of sustaining investments cannot fall solely on foundations, and certainly cannot fall to school districts alone.*



# Lessons from Race to the Top...

- Start with the vision and goals, not the budget.
- Get explicit about the guiding principles for the work, and make sure the planning and improvement processes reflect those principles.
- Choose a few big strategies aligned to the goals, not a lot of small ideas.
- Obsess about coherence and alignment, and stay vigilant about the ways that strategies may inadvertently work at cross purposes or send mixed messages.
- Acknowledge that no plan will be right out the gate. The plans that will lead to gains will be those that improve and evolve over time.

*Lessons from Race to the Top* by Emily Freitag  
Published by the Fordham Institute (April 2021)



# Principles to Guide Planning

- Honor the promise to taxpayers to **focus on students & relief**
- Commit to a **multi-year spending plan**
- Seek **targeted investments** to increase learning time
- Consider **how equitably funds are applied**
- Be **transparent** and ensure **broad participation in spending decisions**



# Do Now, Build Toward

## 7 Principles for Investing ESSER Funds

*Define Vision & Strategy:*

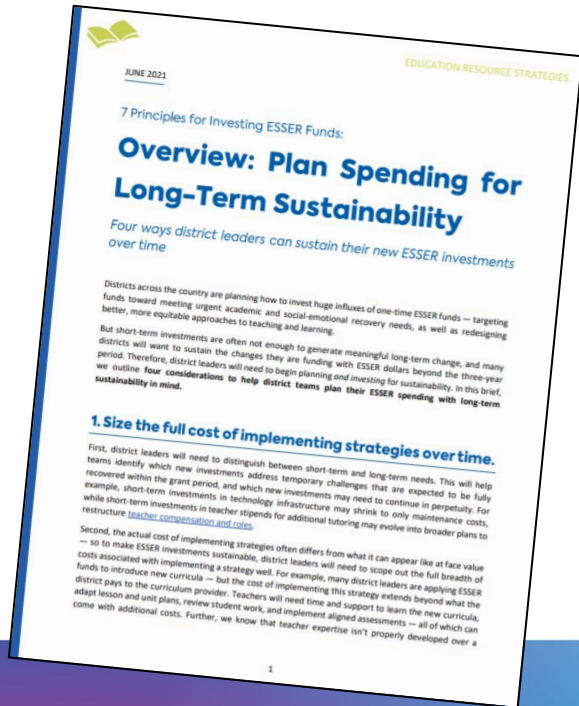
- ✓ Understand and quantify students' needs.
- ✓ Invest in proven, high-impact strategies.
- ✓ Design new scheduling and staffing models.
- .....
- ✓ Design for equity.
- ✓ Plan spending for long-term sustainability.
- ✓ Create system conditions.
- ✓ Define success, measure, and adjust.

# Build New? Invest in Current?

1. **Empowering, Adaptable Instruction:** Ensure teaching teams have high-quality curriculum and the time and support they need to provide differentiated, empowering instruction.
2. **Time & Attention:** Expand and target individual attention and learning time inside and outside of traditional school hours, especially for students with the greatest needs.
3. **The Teaching Job:** Restructure teaching jobs and roles to be more rewarding, collaborative, and sustainable
4. **Relationships & Social-Emotional Support:** Organize school structures that cultivate positive student-adult relationships and streamline support for students' social-emotional needs
5. **Family & Community Partnerships:** Engage families, community partners, and other out-of-school resources to increase academic, health, social, and emotional support for students.



# Planning for Sustainability: Do Now, Build Toward



- Size the full cost of implementing strategies over time
- Integrate all funding sources and stretch the window for investment
- Invest in building bridges to new ways of organizing
- Plan out how spending and organization will shift to sustain critical investments over time.



# Evaluation is Paramount

Districts are investing in some potentially transformational interventions and initiatives.

- *How will we know the impact?*
- *How will we decide what worked and should continue?*
- *Are pilot projects the only way for us to try new things?*

# Key Questions for Now

- Are you at the table in planning with your school leaders?
- How will you know investments have been successful?
- How can you create plans for sustainability now?
- What are you most worried about? Excited about?
- What supports or additional information do you need?



A blue-tinted photograph of an astronaut on the moon. The astronaut is on the left, saluting. In the center is the lunar lander with an American flag on its side. To the right is a large satellite dish. The background shows the lunar horizon.

# Resources

# NDE's Webpage

## ESSER

### Investments and Allocations for Renewal and Acceleration

ESSER Home

- ESSER III (ARP) >
- ESSER II (CRRSA) >
- ESSER I (CARES) >
- EANS Services & Assistance

Questions, Comments, or Corrections? Let us know!

Congress passed three separate stimulus packages to prepare for, prevent, and respond to the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic – The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, and the American Rescue Plan. All told, Nebraska K-12 public education will receive an influx of nearly \$854 million. These three sets of funds are part of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund, with 90 percent of funding going directly to school districts. The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) reserves 10 percent of funding through a set-aside for statewide activities.

	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) March 2020	Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) December 2020	American Rescue Plan (ARP) March 2021
Total Allocation	\$550,000,000	\$200,000,000	\$100,000,000

<https://www.education.ne.gov/esser/>



# Clarifying Terms

## Historically Marginalized

*Marginalized means “to relegate to an unimportant or powerless position within a society or group.” A historically marginalized group is often underrepresented, underserved, underestimated, disregarded, ostracized, oppressed, persecuted, and/or otherwise sidelined in some way. Marginalized groups are often excluded from mainstream social, economic, educational, and/or cultural life.*


The NDE uses the term “historically marginalized student group” to mean:

- *students of color,*
- *students who are economically disadvantaged,*
- *English learners, and*
- *students with disabilities.*



# Evidence-Based Strategies

Level of Evidence	Definition
Strong evidence	At least one well-designed, well-implemented experimental study (randomized group)
Moderate evidence	At least one well-designed, well-implemented quasi-experimental study (matched groups)
Promising evidence	At least one well-designed, well-implemented correlational student with statistical controls for selection bias
Demonstrates a rationale	Practices that have a well-defined logic model or theory of action, are supported by research, and have some effort underway by an SEA, LEA, or outside research organization to determine their effectiveness



**ESSER III: Evidence-Based Interventions and Strategies**

With the passage of the [American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act](#), states, districts, and schools now have significant federal resources available to implement evidence-based strategies to respond to students' social, emotional, and academic needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on [marginalized student groups](#) (each major racial and ethnic group, economically disadvantaged students, children with disabilities, English learners).<sup>1</sup>

To assist with planning and budgeting for the use of ESSER III funds, this document includes general information regarding [USED requirements relevant to the ESSER III funds](#) for evidence-based interventions, as well as resources to support school districts with determining appropriate interventions for their students.

**Use of ARP ESSER III Funds**

Of the total amount allocated to a district (local education agency) from the State's ARP ESSER III award, districts **must reserve at least 20 percent** of funds to address "learning loss" through the implementation of evidence-based interventions for:

- **Meeting students' social, emotional, mental and physical health, and academic needs**, including through meeting basic student needs; reengaging students; and providing access to a safe and inclusive learning environment.
- **Addressing the impact of COVID-19 on students' opportunity to learn**, including closing the digital divide; implementing strategies for accelerating learning; effectively using data; and addressing resource inequities; and
- **Supporting educator and staff well-being and stability**, including stabilizing a diverse and qualified educator workforce.

From section [8101\(2\)\(A\) of the ESEA](#), the term 'evidence-based,' when used with respect to a state, district, or school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that - (i) demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on evidence, (ii) demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes and includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

# What Change do we Expect?



Schools and districts in Nebraska have the opportunity of a lifetime to make strategic, student-centered investments to address historic, pernicious access and achievement gaps, specifically for [historically marginalized student groups](#). The purpose of this flowchart is to push district thinking and provide examples and exemplars of investments opportunities.

Key Question	Investment Opportunity	Goal/Success Indicator (By September 2024...)
Do all students have access to high-quality instructional materials*?	Yes	100% of districts have an established process to select high-quality instructional materials.
	No. Use ESSER III investments to phase in high-quality instructional materials and professional learning to support implementation. Support for <a href="#">selection</a> and <a href="#">implementation</a> can be found here.	100% of districts have selected and are implementing high quality instructional materials for ELA, mathematics, and science.
Has a professional learning plan been developed to support implementation of high-quality instructional materials?	Yes.	100% of districts have an ongoing professional learning plan to support the successful implementation of high-quality instructional materials, including metrics designed to monitor the quality of implementation. <input type="checkbox"/>
	No. ESSER III funds can be used to support year-long, sustained professional learning designed to support the implementation of high-quality instructional materials. Use this <a href="#">searchable database</a> to identify additional professional learning providers that facilitate materials-specific professional learning experiences.	
Does every student have access to a	Yes	NDE sees an increase in the

## ESSER III “Flowchart”

- What stands out?
- What had you not considered before?

## Early Innovations:

- All in on early childhood
- Strategically upskilling staff
- Two-gen approach through investments in paras and support staff



# The NDE's Top Priorities

- Across 14 roundtable discussions with myriad stakeholders and a survey of nearly 450 respondents yielded the following top priorities:
  - Provide access to **comprehensive mental health services** for students, staff, and communities.
  - Reimagine **family and community engagement**.
  - Develop high-quality **professional learning** opportunities and bolster the **teacher pipeline**.
  - Ensure all students have equitable access to grade-level instruction to **address unfinished learning and support learning acceleration**.
  - Comprehensively **modernize information, data, technology, and process systems**
- NDE submitted its ARP Application to USDOE in June, and approved October 14, 2021



# Thank you!

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