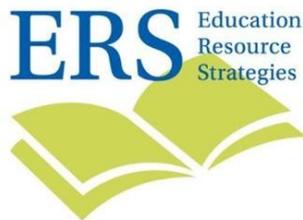


# MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR ESSER FUNDS: REFLECTING AND REVISING AT THE ESSER HALFTIME

February 17, 2023





# AASA Learning Recovery & Redesign Guidance

## Project Overview

---

# Essential Question

How can districts use ESSER funds to meet immediate needs

*and*

redesign toward a more student-centered, equity-focused, and future-driven approach?



# AASA Learning Recovery & Redesign Guiding Principles

---



Plant Seeds



Center  
Equity



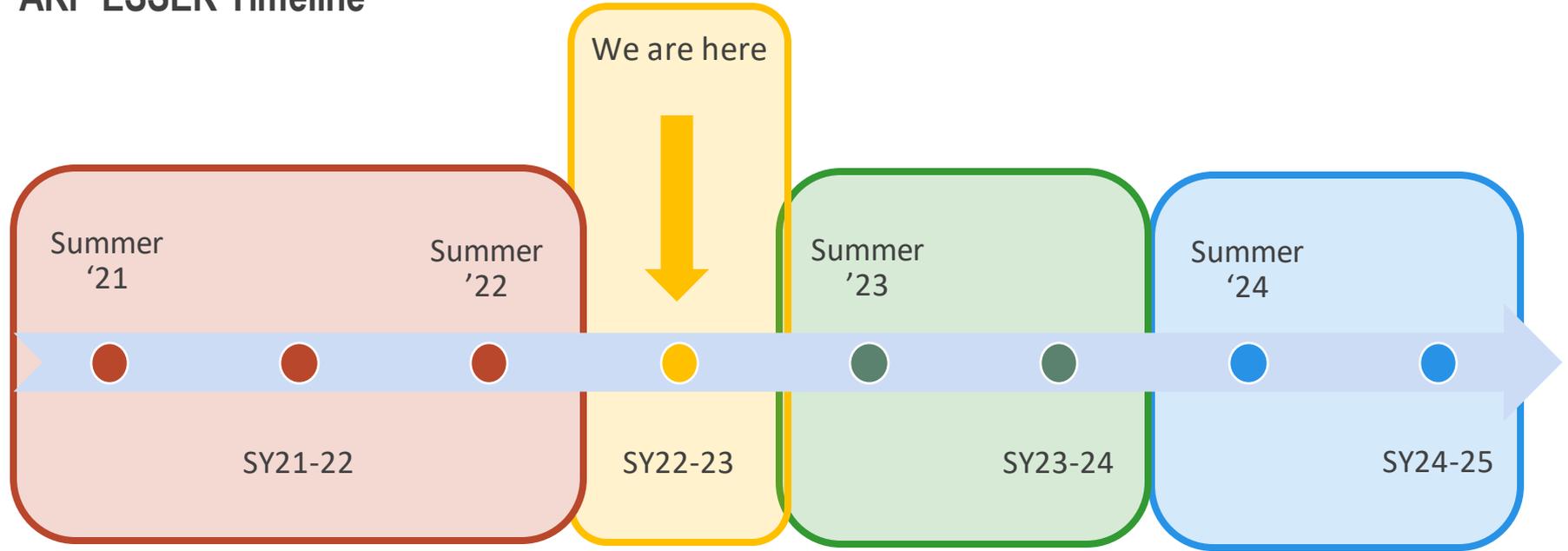
Use & Build  
Knowledge



Sustain  
Strategically

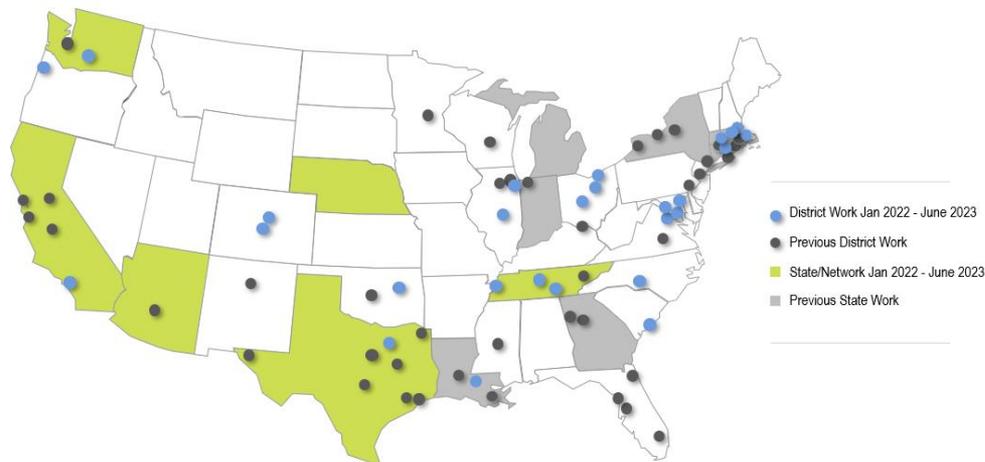
# How can we use this moment to reflect, learn, and take action?

## ARP ESSER Timeline



# About Education Resource Strategies

Education Resource Strategies (ERS) empowers school system leaders to make transformative shifts in resources, structures, and practices so that all students—especially those with the greatest learning needs and those furthest from opportunity—attend a school where they can learn and thrive. We partner with district teams, expand leaders' knowledge and skills, and share lessons and tools with the field.



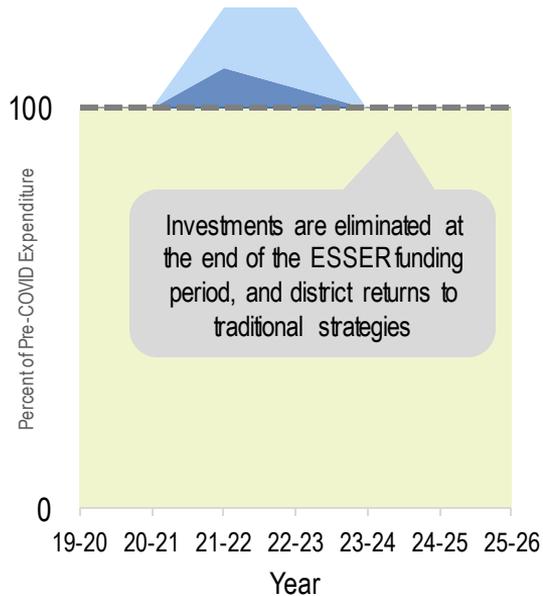
# Session Objectives

- Understand how system leaders should use this moment in the ESSER timeline to:
  - Monitor progress of plan implementation
  - Make adjustments based on what's working and changing contexts
  - Consider how to strategically sustain after ESSER
- Hear from Mesa Public Schools leadership on how they began these conversations with their team and where their work is now
- Develop the key moves system leaders can make in the SY23-24 budget cycle to optimize the ESSER opportunity

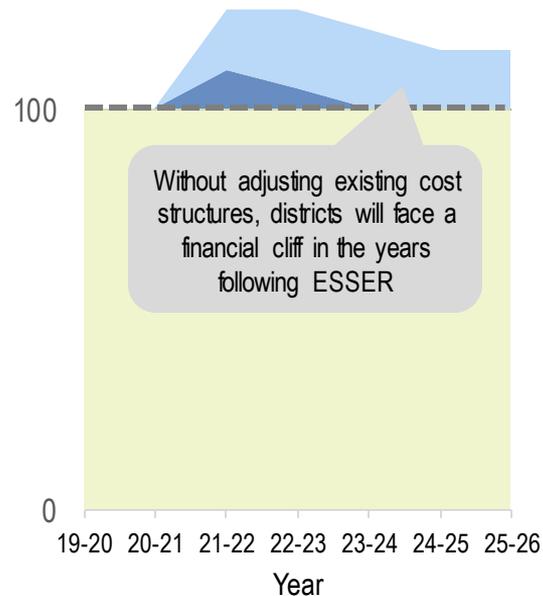
# How ESSER funding could transform our ways of operating:

Illustrative

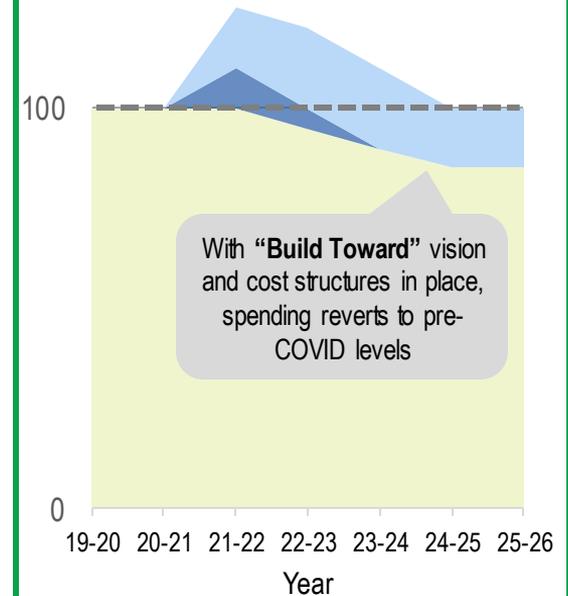
**Scenario 1:** Ramp up redesign and then ramp down once the funding period ends, getting back to baseline in FY25



**Scenario 2:** Ramp up redesign, ramp down some programs without making tradeoffs betting on additional funding



**Scenario 3:** ESSER gives districts a three-year runway to implement a “do now, build toward” approach



Current Strategies    Redesign Strategies    Recovery Strategies

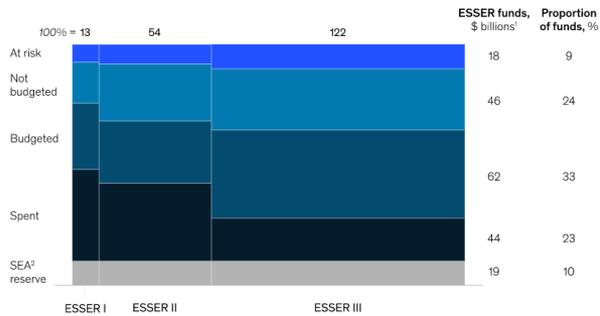
# The national conversation continues to center on spend rate and measuring impact on student learning

McKinsey  
& Company

*Halfway through... districts have yet to spend the bulk of funds*

McKinsey & Co  
November 2022

School districts have spent about \$45 billion of \$190 billion ESSER funds, and nearly \$20 billion may be at risk of going unused.



EducationWeek®

*Schools Are Heading Into a Perfect Financial Storm*

Mark Lieberman  
February 2022

*“Many districts prioritized spending temporary federal funds on one-time expenses. But **some took a gamble on using the money for recurring expenses**, hoping they’d eventually find an alternative source.”*

AXIOS

*Schools aren’t spending their COVID catch-up funds fast enough*

Erin Doherty  
November 2022

*“Of the programs that are in place, there **aren’t widespread metrics to assess the extent to which the efforts are working** — and schools aren’t quick to switch gears if something isn’t working.”*

# “Maslow’s Hierarchy” of communication for ESSER impact



# Narrative arc for communicating ESSER progress



We developed plans grounded in research with input from our community, that are designed to be effective, equitable, & sustainable

We are moving quickly to implement our plans with fidelity and are setting up structures to evaluate our progress

We are adjusting our plans based on changing needs & leading indicators of what's working

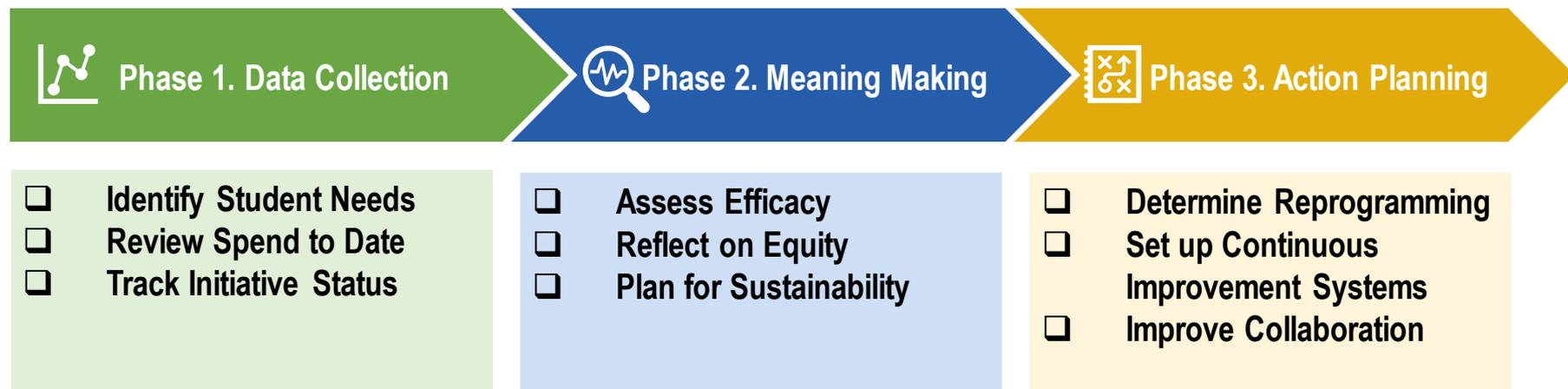
We are on track to fully spend down our ESSER funds without creating a substantial cliff

We are achieving improved outcomes for students

At this point in the ESSER timeline, system leaders should be focused on communicating these messages to their stakeholders to demonstrate effective stewardship of ESSER funds

# ESSER Halftime Review

System and school leaders conducting an ESSER Halftime Review seek to understand what is working about their ESSER spending strategy and where efforts can be re-focused for sustainable impact on student learning *and* finances.



# Mesa Public Schools



## District Overview

- Received \$246M in ESSER funds (~40% of annual budget)
- Total Enrollment: ~58k students
- Classroom FTE: ~3.5k



**Holly Williams**  
Associate Superintendent

# MPS allocated \$246M of ESSER funds to return and recover from the pandemic as well as innovate on traditional system design

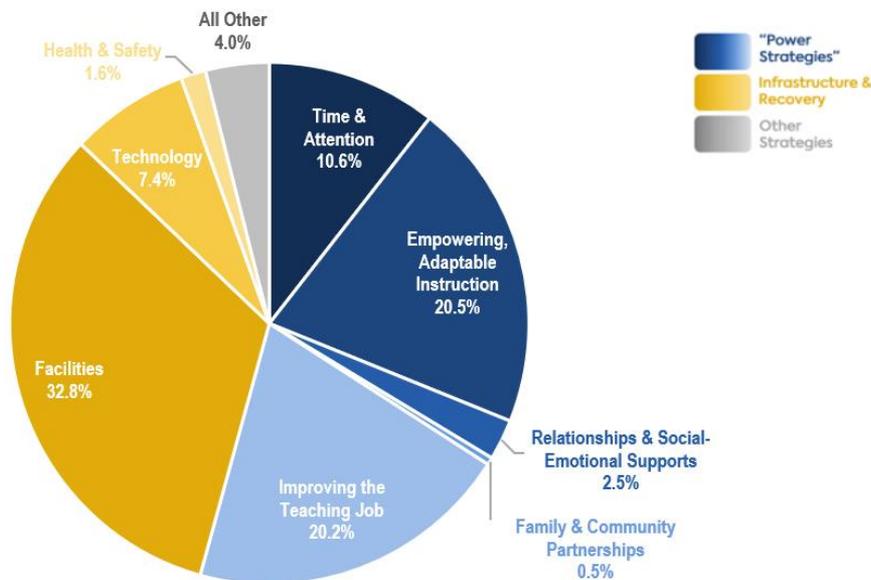
<p>Support students' mental and physical health</p> <p>\$100M</p>	<p>Implement academic recovery strategies</p> <p>\$18M</p>	<p>Ensure strong classroom instruction</p> <p>\$33M</p>	<p>Retain and prepare a stable workforce for the future</p> <p>\$60M</p>	<p>Innovate and redesign traditional educational experiences for long-term success</p> <p>\$26M</p>
<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HVAC</li> <li>• Xplore Expansion</li> <li>• PPE</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Athletics</li> <li>• Food &amp; Nutrition</li> <li>• Capital Items &amp; Technology</li> </ul>	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summer Academies</li> <li>• Tutoring</li> <li>• Mesa Distance Learning Program</li> <li>• Transportation</li> </ul>	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology (Interactive TVs, devices, hotspots, etc.)</li> <li>• Curriculum &amp; literacy resources</li> <li>• Assessment Tools</li> <li>• Music Program</li> <li>• Library books and materials</li> </ul>	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associate Teachers</li> <li>• Additional Positions (teachers, academic coaches, counselors, nurses, etc.)</li> <li>• Professional Development</li> <li>• Emergency Subs</li> </ul>	<p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mesa Virtual Campus</li> <li>• School Innovation Grants</li> </ul> <div>  <p><i>This is a living document per USED guidance</i></p> </div>

# Power Strategies for Accelerating Equity-focused Recovery and Redesign

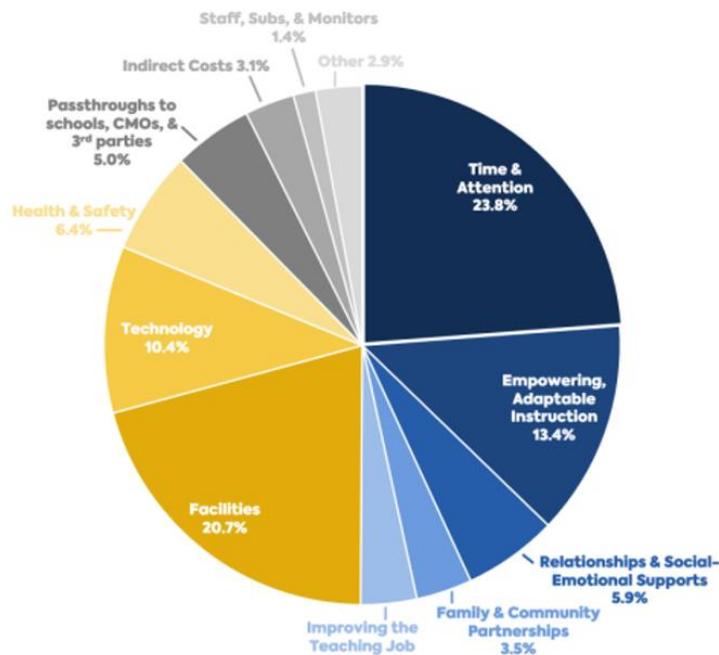
1	Empowering, Adaptable Instruction	Ensure <b>teaching teams have high-quality curriculum, time and support</b> to collaboratively assess and accelerate learning and provide just-in-time support.
2	Time and Attention	Expand and target <b>individual attention and learning time</b> inside and outside of traditional school hours, especially for students with the greatest learning needs.
3	Improving the Teaching Job	Restructure <b>teaching jobs and roles</b> to be more rewarding, collaborative, and sustainable while enabling excellent instruction from a diverse teaching force
4	Relationships & Social Emotional Support	Organize to cultivate <b>positive student-adult relationships</b> and ensure support for wellness and social emotional needs
5	Community & Family Partnerships	Engage <b>families, community partners, and other out-of-school resources</b> to increase academic, health, social, and emotional support for students.

# MPS has allocated a greater proportion of its ESSER funds to Power Strategies than national trends, driven by investments in teachers and instruction

MPS ESSER II/III Allocations

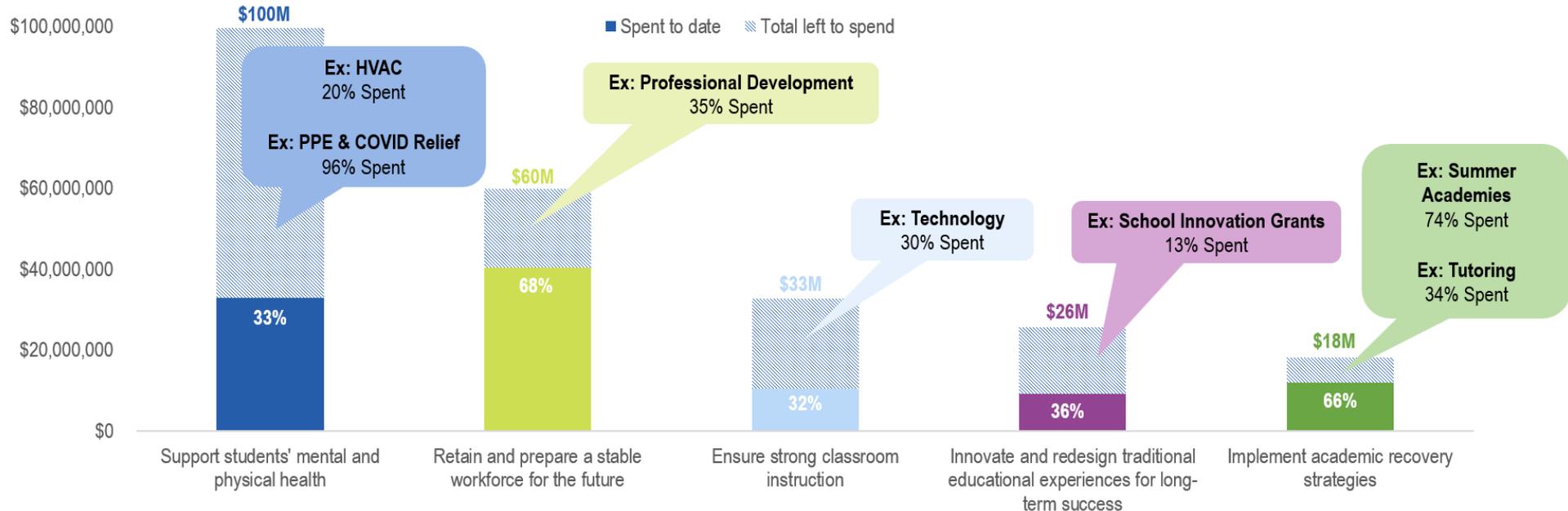


National Trends in ESSER II/III Allocations



# Over the next 2 years, MPS is planning to use ESSER funds in the following ways

Progress on Spend by MPS Priority  
As of November

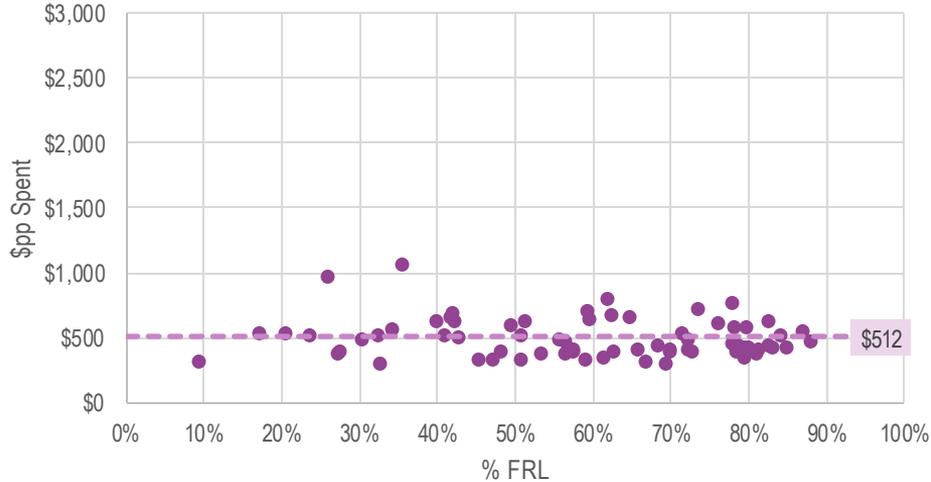


# Emerging insights from Halftime Reviews in ~7 large, higher poverty districts

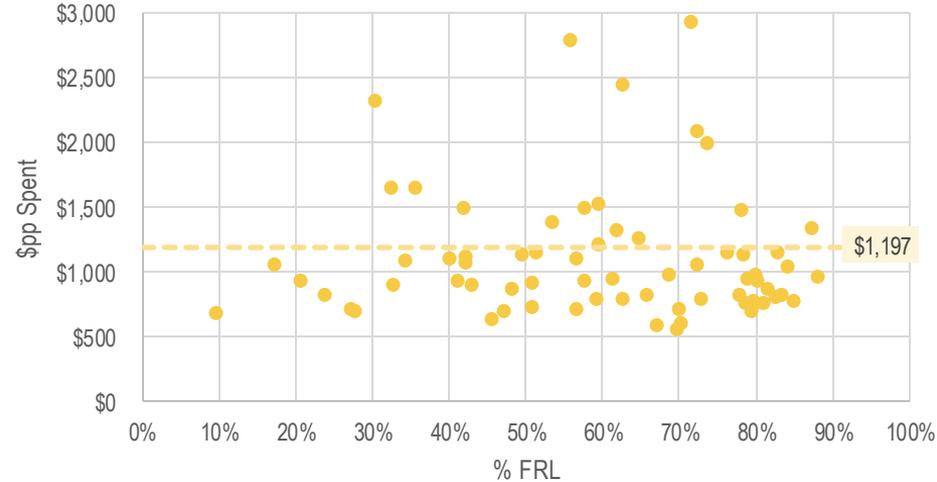
1. District spending is **faster than publicly reported** AND **slower than anticipated**, largely due to industry challenges such as labor shortages and supply change issues. As of last fall, high poverty districts had spent approximately **one-third** of their ESSER funds so far.
2. On average, districts **are not yet spending more per pupil** at schools with greater learning needs.
3. There is still room for districts to make an impact with their ESSER funds by implementing a **continuous improvement approach** to adapt their plans over the next few years.
4. The **shorter the remaining window to spend**, the **more limited the options for fully sustainable spend**.

# Since August, MPS has shifted strategy to support schools with higher FRL rates to spend their dollars

Total School-reported ESSER \$pp spent as of August 2022 by % School FRL



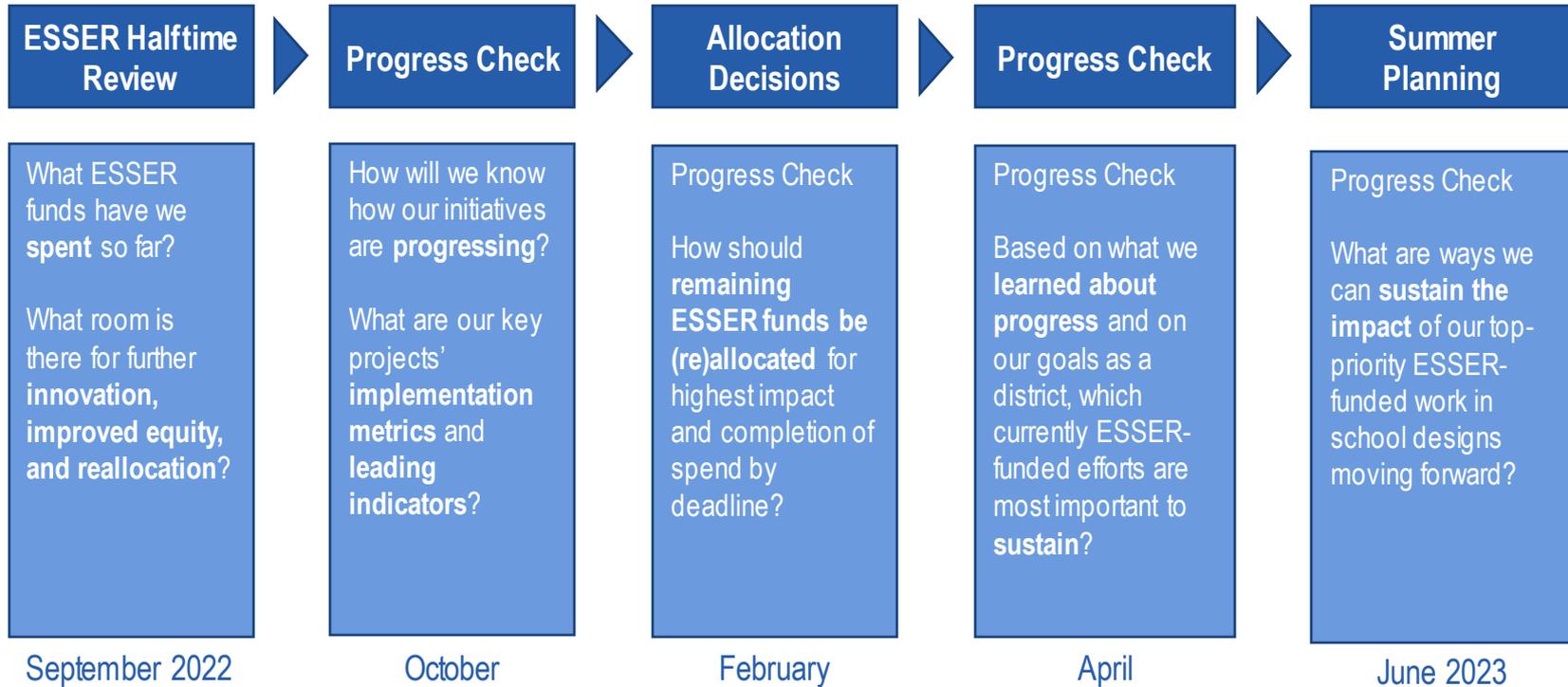
Total School-reported ESSER \$pp spent as of November 2022 by % School FRL



# Some of the investments MPS is making require deliberate decisions before ESSER expires due to their potential ongoing costs

	Likely Onetime Spend	Potential Ongoing Costs
HVAC	100%	-
PPE & COVID Relief	100%	-
Recruit & Retain	32%	68%
Mesa Virtual Campus	68%	32%
Individual School Grants	69%	31%
Summer Academy	72%	28%
Transportation	100%	-
Academics & Literacy	67%	33%
Technology	97%	3%

# MPS has adopted a process, aligned to our budget timeline, to monitor progress and make decisions on ESSER-funded initiatives



# Key moves district leaders can make to sustain accelerated learning and advance equity in the long-term

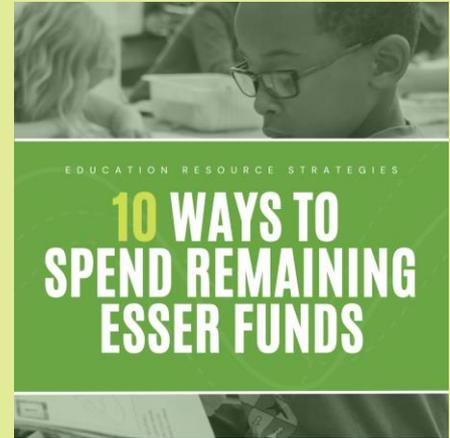
1. Spend remaining ESSER funds at schools by investing in doable strategies that address urgent needs now and build toward redesigned schooling models by:

- Making foundational investments that drive lasting change
- Prototyping or expanding methods of delivering more personalized support
- Addressing the teacher shortage — while redesigning the job

2. Make strategic choices in this current budget planning cycle including:

- Estimating ESSER revenue for FY24 based on spend rate in FY23 and progress on implementation metrics
- Developing a timeline and process for making reallocation decisions in the upcoming 6-12 months
- Bringing a multi-year (at least FY24 and FY25) and an all-funds lens to identify efficiencies and align strategies

3. Advocate for additional state and federal funding and flexibility



See ERS' new [publication](#) for 10 ways to spend remaining ESSER funds

# ERS ESSER Resources & Tools

## ESSER STRATEGY GUIDES

Blueprints for ESSER spending, scheduling, and staffing

[GO TO THE GUIDES](#)



## TENDING GARDENS & PUTTING OUT FIRES

5 actions to help districts do both in the face of widespread burnout

[READ NOW](#)



## ESSER HALFTIME REVIEW

Reflect and learn—then take action with our ESSER Halftime Review

[CONDUCT A REVIEW](#)



Just Published in January 2023:

[10 Ways to Spend Remaining ESSER Dollars to Transform Schooling for Good](#)



VISIT

[www.erstrategies.org](http://www.erstrategies.org)



SUBSCRIBE

[www.erstrategies.org/signup](http://www.erstrategies.org/signup)

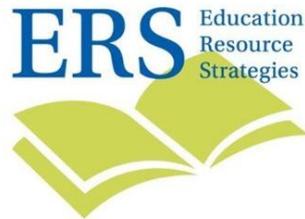


LIKE + FOLLOW

[@ERStrategies](https://www.instagram.com/ERStrategies)

# MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR ESSER FUNDS: REFLECTING AND REVISING AT THE ESSER HALFTIME

February 17, 2023



***Reminder: Please complete the session survey***