



DIRECTING K-12 FUNDS

High-Impact Tutoring as a Key Focus

**Guidelines and Understandings for
Decision-Makers in Funding Allocation**

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INTRODUCTION

As a part of K-12 leadership, your mission is to elevate student learning and bolster teacher expertise. Part of achieving this is mastering the nuances of effective educational fund management.

Effective educational finances go beyond just budgeting; they require visionary investments. This guide touches on ESSER's implications, future financial planning, and avenues for additional support, spotlighting [high-dosage tutoring as a linchpin for enhanced student progress](#).

The conclusion of the ESSER funding period ushers in new challenges and opportunities. We provide actionable insights for sustained growth, highlighting the best ways to identify funding needs, tap into valuable resources, and frame strategies that resonate with future education demands.

It's not just about overseeing budgets—it's about creating meaningful impacts. With meticulous evaluations and data-driven decisions, there's an opportunity to refine the education landscape, making it more responsive and effective.

Incorporating personalized learning can redefine the educational journey. Leveraging technology facilitates deeper student engagement, narrows achievement gaps, and offers fresh tools for educators.

The horizon of education beckons with promises and responsibilities. With high-dosage tutoring as a focal strategy, are you prepared to shape its future? Together, we can navigate this terrain, aligning with contemporary needs and forging a legacy for generations to come.

K-12 FUNDING: THE CURRENT U.S. LANDSCAPE

A clear understanding of the current funding landscape is crucial for K-12 district leaders. This knowledge is vital for effective resource management and ensuring student success. Funding primarily stems from federal, state, and local sources across states and districts. This section will delve into the prominent K-12 funding models, address allocation challenges, and discuss post-ESSER financial strategies.

1 Formula-Driven Funding

Funding is derived from a consistent formula that considers student population, district size, and socioeconomic indicators, with the objective of leveling the distribution field for all districts.

2 Property Tax Funding

In many states, education funding depends on local property taxes. Elevated property values increase a district's tax base and, consequently, its funding potential. Yet, this can lead to unequal resource distribution among communities with disparate property wealth.

3 Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funding

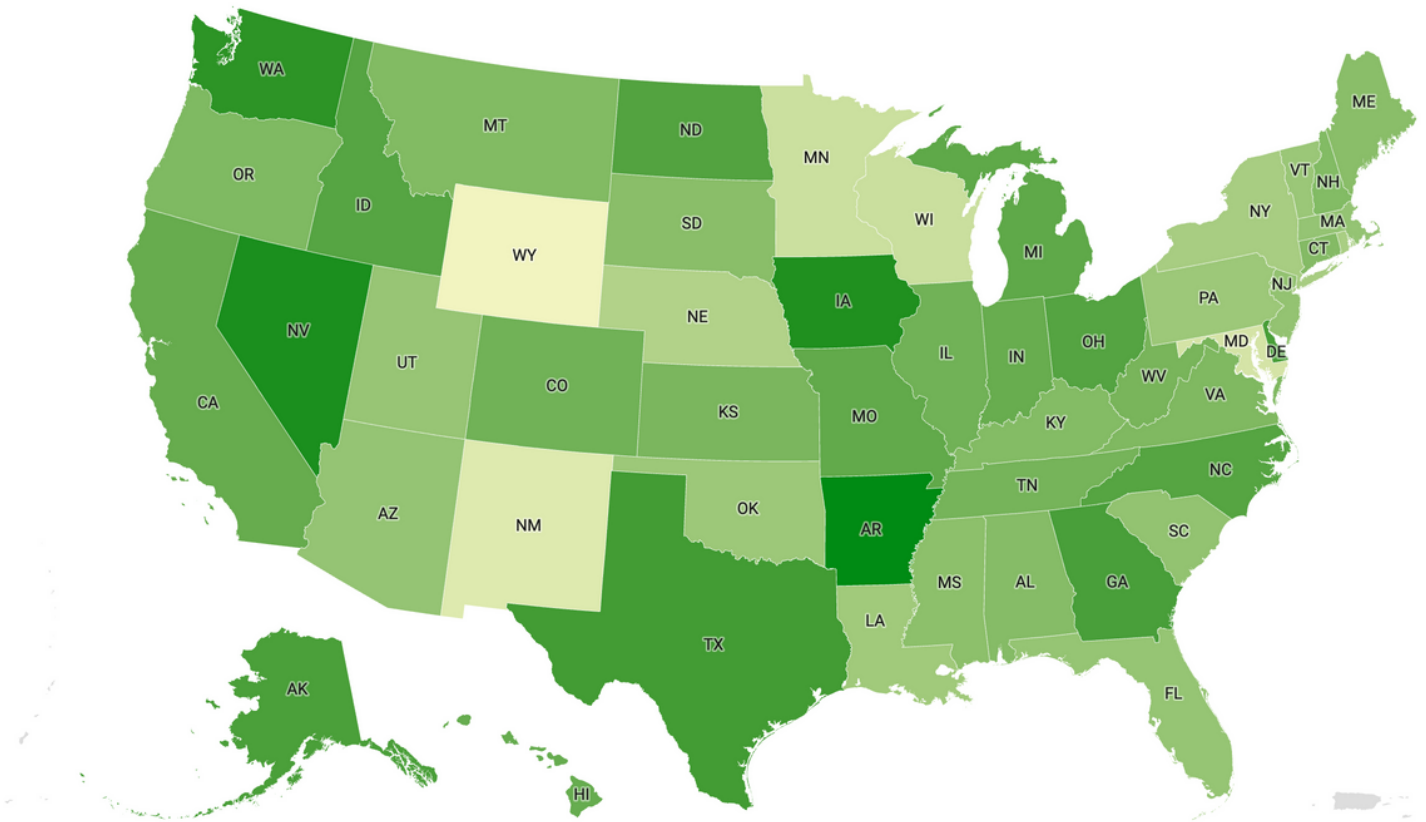
State education agencies can now request a 14-month extension to [spend American Rescue Plan money](#) just as they were allowed to do under the first two allocations of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief fund. **If approved, states and districts would have the flexibility of spending ARP funds 14 months beyond the Jan. 28, 2025, deadline or until late March 2026.**

ESSER SPEND THUS FAR

This section presents a color-coded map of the U.S., highlighting the varying degrees of ESSER fund utilization across states. It emphasizes the significance of allocating any remaining funds before the looming deadline. You can review the map for a simple, visual representation of spending distribution and be reminded of the need to ensure full fund utilization for our schools and students.

Percentage of ESSER III Allocation Spent by State

Percent spent as of 12/13/23



IMPACT OF FUNDING INEQUITY

While the typical school district allocates significant funds for each student annually, the efficiency of this spending varies. Such inconsistencies can lead to stark contrasts between communities. Due to these disparities, some schools may require additional resources to deliver top-tier education to every student. These funding imbalances don't merely affect budgets; they ripple through, impacting student achievements and the breadth of educational experiences available.

Challenges

Advocating for Increased School Funding

Several school districts are grappling with limited resources, causing strains on staffing, infrastructure, and curriculum offerings. Increasing funding significantly enhances a district's capacity to deliver a well-rounded education and cater to the varied requirements of its student population.

The Flaws in State Funding Distribution

State funding distribution methods can sometimes exacerbate inequities. These formulas might overlook the distinct hurdles and requirements of various districts. Consequently, districts with a significant number of low-income students or those necessitating specialized services might receive less than their fair share, deepening the financial divide.

Funding Flux in Districts

The ever-changing nature of funding avenues often places school districts in precarious positions. Fluctuations arise due to shifts in federal and state funding focus, economic ebbs and flows, and changing demographics. This unpredictability complicates the tasks of long-term strategizing and budget allocation for districts.

Impact on Students

Resource Gaps in Education

Insufficient funding often results in unequal access to essential resources, from outdated learning materials, restricted tech availability, subpar facilities, and a shortage of skilled teachers. Such inequalities can stymie students' growth and limit their academic prospects.

Widening Achievement Disparities

Unbalanced funding often magnifies achievement disparities. Students in under-resourced districts commonly require greater access to prime educational materials, support networks, and extracurriculars. Lack of these resources can lead to diminished academic outcomes and fewer prospects for advancement.

The Disparity in Educational Opportunities

Disproportionate funding can deepen the divide in educational access. Students in well-funded districts often benefit from broader educational avenues, advanced classes, and specialized initiatives. Conversely, this disparity can narrow the horizons for students from less affluent districts, curtailing their future possibilities.

POST-ESSER FINANCIAL PLANNING

The conclusion of ESSER funding marks a pivotal transition for K-12 leaders. While these funds have been instrumental during the pandemic's challenges, the next steps demand strategic foresight. Ensuring continuity in support for schools, students, and especially in bolstering high-dosage tutoring initiatives, becomes paramount.

In this segment, we'll delve into tangible strategies and insights for K-12 decision-makers, equipping them to seamlessly navigate and prioritize high-dosage tutoring in the post-ESSER landscape.

1 Reflecting on Outcomes

Allocate time to review the influence of ESSER funds within your district. Consider the initiatives introduced, measure their outcomes, and recognize key takeaways. Gauge how well academic, social, and emotional challenges have been met, pinpointing facets that still demand focus.

2 Setting Clear Objectives

Conduct a needs assessment to understand current and emerging student and staff needs. Gather input from teachers, parents, students, and the community. Use these insights for effective planning and resource decisions.

3 Align Programs with Core Priorities

Based on the assessment results, design programs that align with your long-term objectives. Prioritize academic growth, well-being, and equity. Enhance educator support, boost mental health services, and fortify community ties for well-rounded assistance.

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4 Explore Funding Avenues for Key Initiatives

Discover new resources and funding streams to uphold priority programs. Consider alternative federal and state grants, collaborate with community stakeholders, and leverage public-private partnerships for vital financial backing. Organizations, such as Hanover Research, can help evaluate your needs and direct you to appropriate funding sources.

Maximizing Resources with Cognition in Focus

Explore funding avenues, including federal, state, and private grants, aligned with Cognition's goals.



CARES ACT, ESSER, ARP Funding



Title I, Title II, and Title IV Funding



Private and Non-Profit Funding

5 Data-Driven Decision Making

By monitoring data such as student achievements, attendance patterns, and socio-emotional markers, you can identify areas requiring attention. Use this vital information to recalibrate your strategies and ensure educational excellence.



WHERE TO SEEK K-12 FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Explore a curated list of prominent funding avenues tailored to bolster K-12 education:

- **U.S. Department of Education Funding Portal:** Access the primary hub for K-12 educational funding provided by the U.S. Department of Education. Discover more at <https://www.ed.gov/fund>.
- **Federal Grant Database (Grants.gov):** Explore a vast range of federal grants tailored for diverse sectors, inclusive of education. Tailor your search to identify pertinent grants, discern eligibility nuances, and navigate the application process. Dive in at <https://www.grants.gov>.
- **Foundation Directory (Candid Learning):** Tap into invaluable resources aiding K-12 leaders in pinpointing foundation-based funding avenues. Gain comprehensive access to grant databases, funding directory lists, and insightful grant-seeking strategies. Engage at <https://learning.candid.org>.
- **Education Grant Repository:** Delve into a handpicked compilation of education grants spanning federal, state, and private domains. Plus, benefit from expert grant-writing insights and application pointers. Explore further at <https://www.educationgrants.us>.
- **Edutopia:** This educational platform features a funding section, spotlighting diverse grants, contests, and fiscal opportunities tailored for schools. You can visit them at <https://www.edutopia.org/>.
- **Statewide Educational Funds (State Education Agencies):** Specific states harbor their own education funding schemes and assets. For specialized opportunities, peruse your specific State Education Agency's portal.

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- **National Association of State Budget Officers (NASBO):** Dive deep into state budgetary data with NASBO's detailed reports, especially their insights on K-12 education fund allocations.
- **State Educational Technology Directors Association (SETDA):** A go-to for tech-centric grant opportunities and resources, SETDA empowers schools to keep pace with digital advancements.
- **Community Foundation Avenues:** Several community-centric foundations extend grants and funding tailored for educational pursuits. Browse local foundation sites to discover their distinctive education-focused ventures.
- **Corporate Education Sponsorships:** Numerous corporations champion educational ventures via their grant initiatives. Scout corporate sites, especially those supporting education and societal betterment .
- **Educational Association Resources:** Education-centric associations frequently house tools and insights on funding gateways. Associations such as the NAESP, NASSP, and domain-specific bodies could serve as springboards for funding prospects.



HEAR DIRECTLY FROM SOME OF OUR PARTNERS

Cignition has consistently observed the profound difference personalized learning can make. Within these testimonials, the impact of high-dosage tutoring is evident, showcasing how Cignition aids students in navigating educational challenges, advancing their academic prowess, and solidifying their grasp of mathematics and English language arts.



Hilary Morgan

Coordinator of Mathematics, Lexington County School District One

“The overwhelming response from educators in our schools and the students has been positive. Students have enjoyed interacting with their virtual Cignition tutors and engaging collaboratively in meaningful mathematics with their peers. The lessons our students engaged in with their Cignition tutors were grounded in effective teaching practices.”



Emily Volkert

Assistant Principal, Centennial Elementary, Denver Public Schools

“We loved how easy Cignition was to schedule and administer to students at our school. It required little to set up and get running from a school standpoint. Mark (Cignition Program Manager) was flexible to our needs and was quick to respond. Kids and families appreciated the flexibility to access tutoring from home or at school.”



Doris Chisholm

Federal Programs Specialist, Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools

“Cignition has impacted our students enrolled in Out of School Time Tutoring by providing tutoring services in ELA and Math that are aligned with the North Carolina Standard Course of Study as well as the goals of the district. Cignition tutors are prepared and present for students. Cignition is constantly communicating about the progress of students. We have seen tremendous growth in our student academics during the school year. Cignition has made a great impact on student achievement.”

WHY HIGH-IMPACT TUTORING STANDS OUT

Discerning the most effective approach can be daunting with an array of tutoring providers available to schools and districts. While each option has advantages, it's paramount to recognize strategies that elevate student outcomes. Time and again, research points to high-dosage tutoring as a leading method in enhancing learning gains.

New research conducted by the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab further confirms this, as their [Tutoring Evidence Review](#) summarizes a recent meta-analysis of randomized evaluations of tutoring programs, focusing on literature from high-income countries. Key findings from the Evidence Review include:

- Across all studies included in this analysis, tutoring programs consistently lead to large improvements in learning outcomes for students, with an overall pooled effect size of 0.37 standard deviations. This impact translates to a student advancing from the 50th percentile to nearly the 66th percentile.
- Tutoring programs led by teacher or paraprofessional tutors are generally more effective than programs that use nonprofessional (volunteer) or parent tutors. Paraprofessional tutors include, among others, school staff members, undergraduate students in education, and service fellows.
- The effects of tutoring programs tend to be strongest among students in earlier grades, though a smaller set of programs at the secondary level were also found to be effective at improving learning outcomes.
- While the overall effects of math and reading tutoring programs are similar, reading tutoring tends to be relatively more effective for students in preschool through first grade, while math tutoring tends to be more effective for students in second through fifth grade.
- Tutoring programs conducted during school tend to have larger impacts than those conducted after school.

WHAT SETS CIGNITION APART FROM OTHERS?

At Cognition, our lens is always on refining high-impact tutoring methodologies to amplify their reach, impact, and usability for both students and educators. Our [research-validated approach](#) focuses on data-informed instruction and collaborative learning, encouraging student-to-student interaction to build deep conceptual understanding.

We aspire to integrate tutoring seamlessly into everyday teaching. Imagine schools where educators can seamlessly coordinate additional tutoring sessions -- whether during school hours, before school starts, after it ends, or even on weekends. Our platform facilitates this vision, offering integrated scheduling tools, consistent progress monitoring, in-depth reporting, and social-emotional survey feedback.

Our mission doesn't stop there. Cognition aims to be a holistic tutoring solution housed on a single platform. It's not just about facilitating sessions but equipping educators with the tools, assessments, and functions they need to magnify their impact. Through our platform, we aim to elevate instructional capacities, widen educational access, and foster support, leveraging tutoring's transformative power for both students and educators.

Ready to leverage funding for greater educational equality? Click the button below to get started!

