



Covid Impacts and Nebraska's Opportunity

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Objectives

- Briefly discuss impact on academic achievement
- Frame this “Opportunity of a Lifetime”
- Give a high-level overview of ESSER funding and NDE’s investments
- Highlight partnerships with NCFF
- Answer questions



COVID Impact

The background image is a photograph of the Apollo 16 lunar surface. An astronaut in a full spacesuit is standing on the left, saluting. In the center is the Apollo 16 Lunar Module (LM) with its distinctive hexagonal structure. To the right of the LM is a large, multi-lobed satellite dish antenna. The entire scene is set against a backdrop of a desolate, cratered lunar landscape under a dark sky. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter, and the text 'COVID Impact' is centered in white.

Academic Impact of Covid-19

- Three impacted school years
- It will take years to know the full scope of the impact
- Nebraska is in a better position...
- Key findings:
 - Nebraska's participation rate in assessments dropped by nearly 5%
 - Data from the Nebraska Student Centered Assessment System (NSCAS) will provide a **new baseline**
 - Significant **achievement gaps persist**, and in some cases widened
 - Homeschool enrollment **expanded, then contracted** to pre-pandemic numbers
 - Overall public school enrollment was down
 - **Graduation rates held steady**, but remain lower than pre-pandemic
 - **Chronic absenteeism nearly doubled** in 2020-21**



What are we going to do about it?

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

A blue-tinted photograph of the Apollo 16 lunar surface. An astronaut in a full spacesuit stands on the left, saluting. In the center is the Lunar Module (LM) with its descent stage and ascent stage. To the right is the Lunar Roving Vehicle (LRV) with a large dish antenna. The background shows the lunar horizon and a bright sky. The text "ESSER Overview" is overlaid in white.

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

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

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



Comprehensive Mental Health Services			
Contractor/Project	Description	Amount	State Board Approval Date
Mental Health Support Grant	Mental Health Support Staff, Equipment, Training	\$14,577,140	August 2021
Kernal's Afterschool SEL Research	Social-emotional learning Supports	\$150,000	September 2021
SEL Framework Development	Social-emotional learning supports	\$100,000	Several contracts less than \$50,000
MOSAIC	Social-emotional learning supports	\$250,000	November 2020

Family and Community Engagement

Contractor/Project	Description	Amount	State Board Approval Date
Nebraska Children and Families Foundation	Community Schools Pilot	\$900,000	Amended August 2021
CEDARS	Transitions Supports for Students	\$460,000	June 2021
TransAct	Translation services; add on supports for schools, parents, and students	\$226,650	May 2021
Nebraska Children and Families Foundation/ Nebraska Statewide Family Engagement Center	Nebraska Statewide Family Engagement Center	\$500,000	May 2021
Ready Rosie	Early Childhood Family Engagement Software	\$2.4 million	May 2021; October 2021

Professional Learning & Teacher Pipeline

Contractor/Project	Description	Amount	State Board Approval Date
UNL	Diverse educator pilot project	\$49,828	N/A - Commissioner Approved
Fixed-Term Positions	Educator Certification Capacity	\$1.2 million	Pending
NAESP	Pre-K Leadership Academy	\$350,000	Pending
TBD	Special Education Inclusion Training	\$950,000	Pending

Accelerated Learning

Contractor/Project	Description	Amount	State Board Approval Date
Nebraska Children and Families Foundation	Expanded Learning Collaborative	\$11 million	August 2021
YRTC Supports under DHHS/NDE collaboration	YRTC Academic Investments (Materials and Interventions)	\$501,000	Pending
Funding to Five Districts Ineligible for ESSER funds	ESSER II & III distributed by formula; schools apply using GMS	\$800,000	April 2021; June 2021
Instruction Partners	Learning Acceleration for K-8 Math; Integration of NeMTSS, HQIM, and CIP (3 years)	\$5.6 million	August 2021
TNTP	Statewide Support for Learning Acceleration; Support for CSI Schools (3 years)	\$2.7 million	August 2021
Liber Institute (Cangleska Project)	Professional Learning to Strengthen School-Tribal Partnerships	\$750,000	October 2021
NROC	Digital learning resources	\$25,000	N/A - Commissioner Approved
Supplemental reVISION Funding	Additional coverage for schools applying for reVISION action grants	\$395,000	August 2021

Data, Infrastructure, and Systems			
Contractor/Project	Description	Amount	State Board Approval Date
Center for Assessment	Support for Redesigning Accountability System	\$193,000	March 2021
Opportunity Labs	Continued Consultation for COVID-19 Safety Protocols	\$150,000	March 2021
UNL - Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families, & Schools	Research on impacts of COVID-19 on educators and students	\$50,000	April 2021
Boys Town (Safe2Help)	School Safety and Security Reporting System	\$1.7 million	August 2021
OCIO; Various Contractors, Fixed Term Positions	Staffing Capacity	\$2.5 million	February 2021
Multiple contracts pending needs per various stakeholder	Reserve for Technology Modernization, Security and Risk Management, and Systems Infrastructure	\$15 million	Pending
Hanover Research	Customized projects for NDE and access to digital library	\$250,000	September 2021
Hanover Research	Digital library access for interested ESUs	\$840,000	October 2021
Children's Hospital and Medical Center	Campaign support for Covid response	\$500,000	October 2021

A blue-tinted photograph of an astronaut in a full spacesuit standing on the lunar surface. In the background, a lunar lander is visible with an American flag planted nearby. To the right, a lunar rover is parked. The entire scene is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

NCFF Partnership

Deepened Partnership with NCFF

- As part of our focus on reimagining community and family engagement, NDE has made significant investments in deepening the partnership with NCFF
- Examples:
 - Staff Capacity (Four shared positions) - \$1.2 million
 - Community Schools Pilot Project - \$900,000
 - Statewide Family Engagement Center Supplement - \$500,000
 - Ready Rosie - \$2.4 million
 - Expanded Learning Collaborative - \$800,000
 - \$11 million to summer and after school programs
 - Coordinator and Connector Position - \$70,000

Resources & Next Steps



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

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



Looking Forward

- Where is your district?
 - What do student data look like in your community?
 - Ask your district how they're using funds
 - Districts should have their use of funds posted on their webpages
 - *District funds are **SUPER** flexible*
- Districts are required to conduct a six month review of their plans
- Community engagement is key!
- This one-time funding isn't enough...
 - **Engage** - Tutor, mentor, volunteer
 - **Partner** - Open your doors for students to work and gain hands on experiences
 - **Support** - Invest time, talent, and treasure

Do Now, Build Toward

7 Principles for Investing ESSER Funds

Define Vision & Strategy:

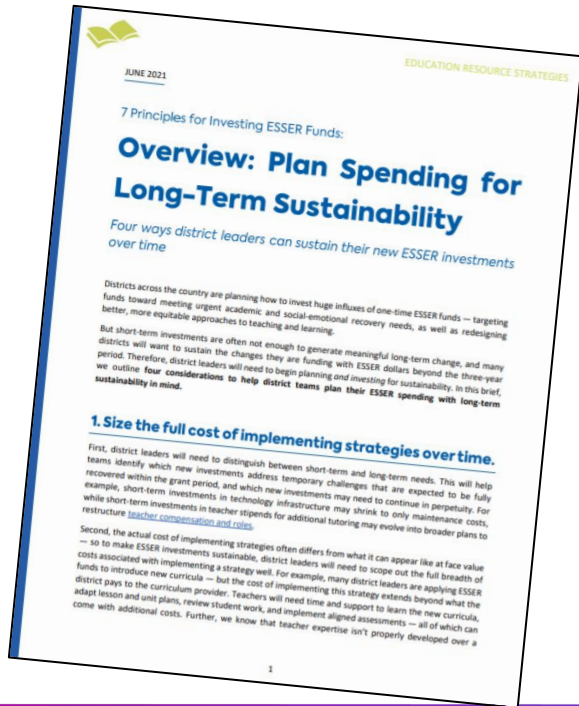
- ✓ Understand and quantify students' needs.
- ✓ Invest in proven, high-impact strategies.
- ✓ Design new scheduling and staffing models.
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- ✓ Design for equity.
- ✓ Plan spending for long-term sustainability.
- ✓ Create system conditions.
- ✓ Define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

Questions/Discussion