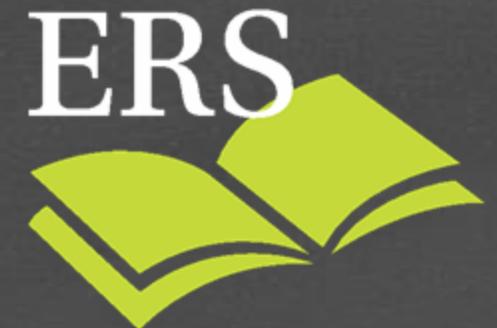
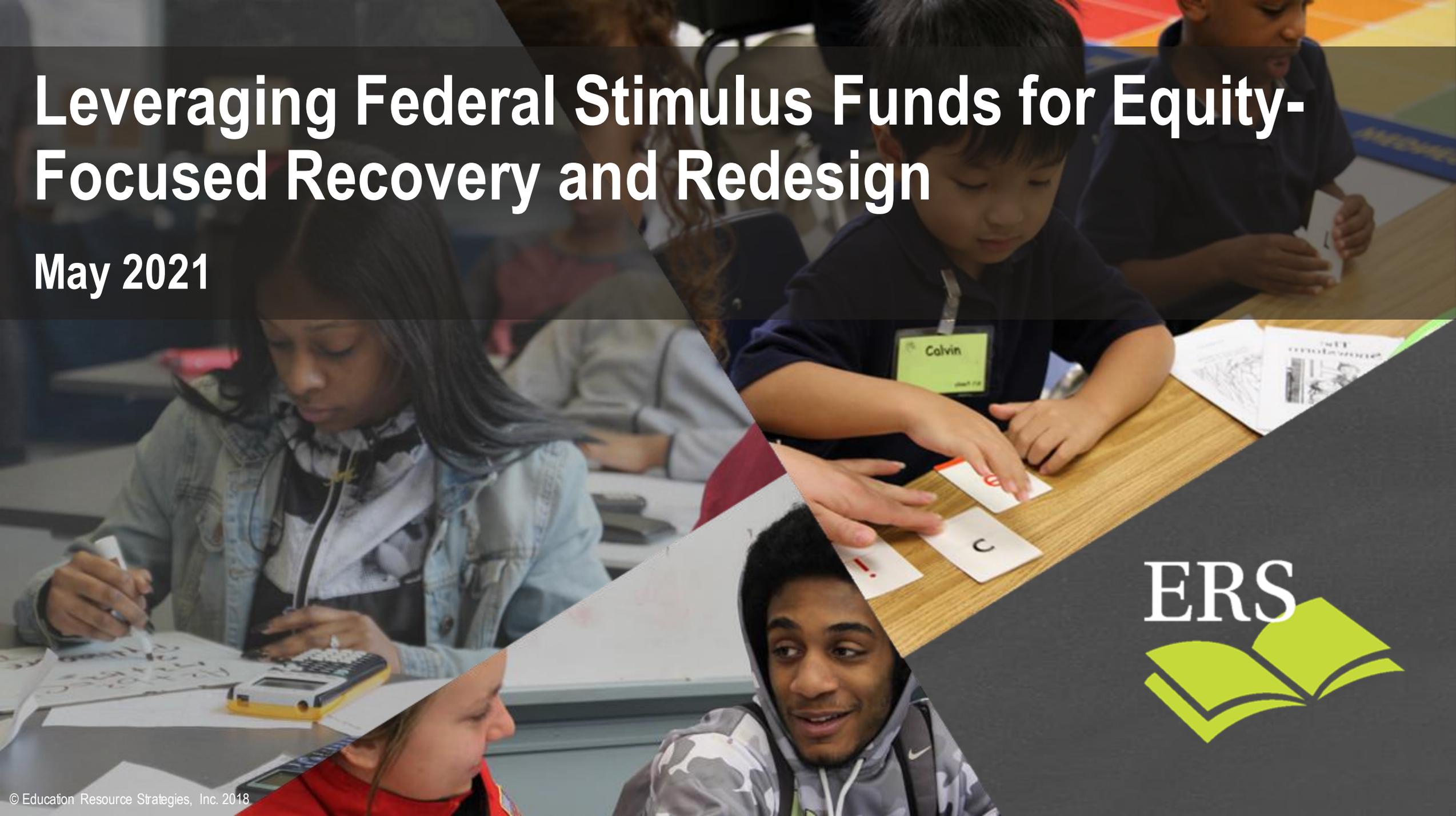


Leveraging Federal Stimulus Funds for Equity-Focused Recovery and Redesign

May 2021



In this presentation:

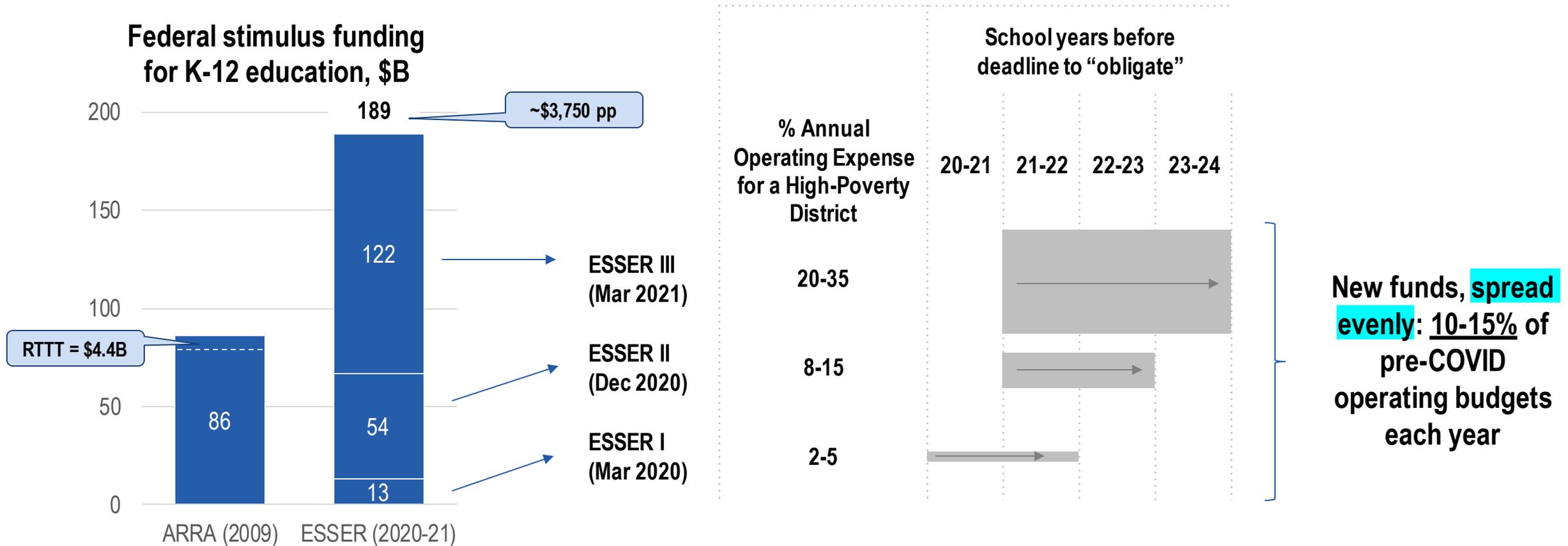
- Meeting the moment
- Power Strategies for equity-focused recovery and redesign
- “Do Now, Build Toward” for strategic and sustainable change
- Creating the conditions for transformative improvement in K-12 education

Defining our shared challenge

- Students, especially students from low-income backgrounds and students of color, have experienced **months of disrupted learning**.
- With federal stimulus funding (ESSER), **school districts have unprecedented power** to rapidly respond to meet students' needs and ensure that we don't "return to the old normal" when new funding expires.
- Based on spending patterns after the Great Recession, we know it is **easy to spend quickly, backfill shortfalls, and reinvest in more of the same** strategies that existed before COVID — instead of using funds to spark meaningful long-term change.

How can district leaders use stimulus funds to center equity, accelerate student learning and create a sustainable foundation for long-term improvement?

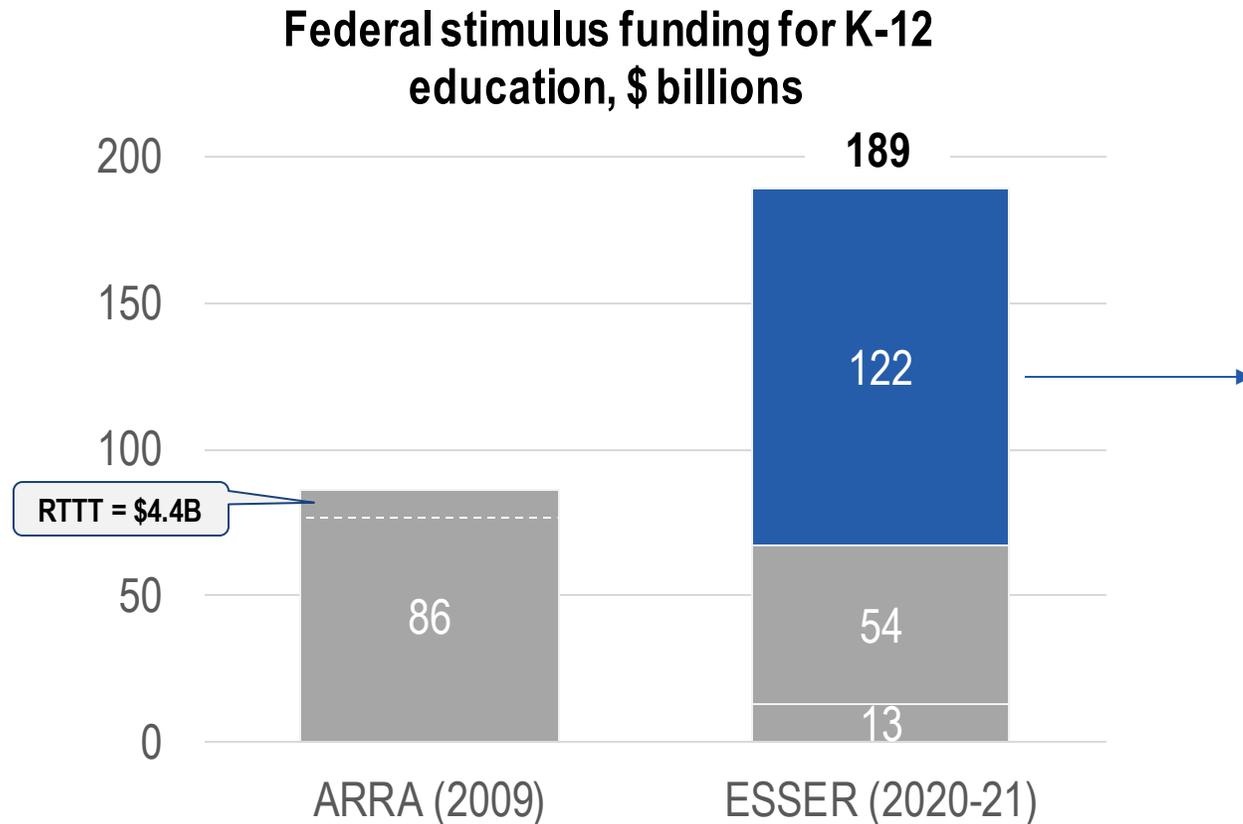
The federal government is providing significantly more K-12 stimulus support than during the Great Recession



Notes: ARRA = American Recovery and Reinvestment Act; ESSER = Elementary and Secondary School Relief Fund. Total for K-12 excludes set-asides for non-public schools and for Governor's Fund (GEER)

Source: ERS; District Administration; National Conference of State Legislatures

ESSER III funds are allocated to reach students living in low-income communities



ESSER III provides non-recurring revenue to be spent over the next three years

- Most of ESSER III (\$110B) allocated directly to districts through **Title I** formula, with few prescriptions
- State education agencies have several **set-asides** to distribute funds to districts for summer and after school programs
- **Equity:** Districts must protect high need schools from reductions in state and local funding

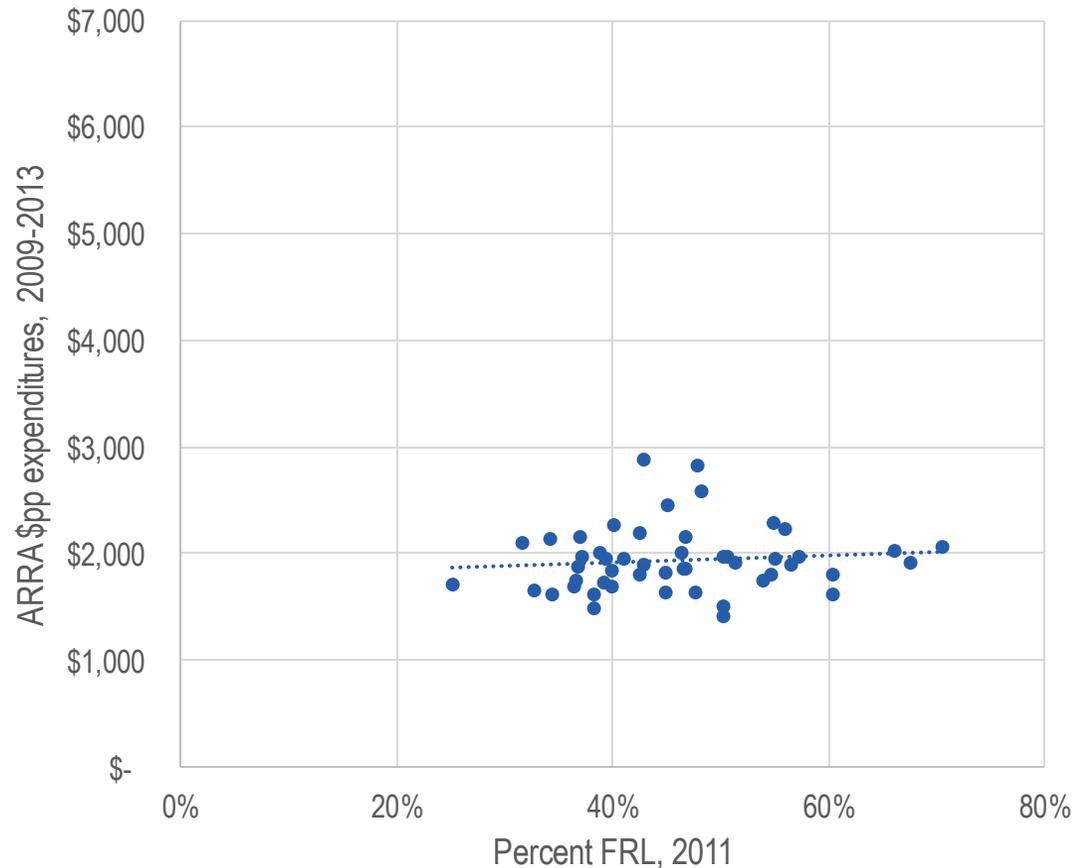
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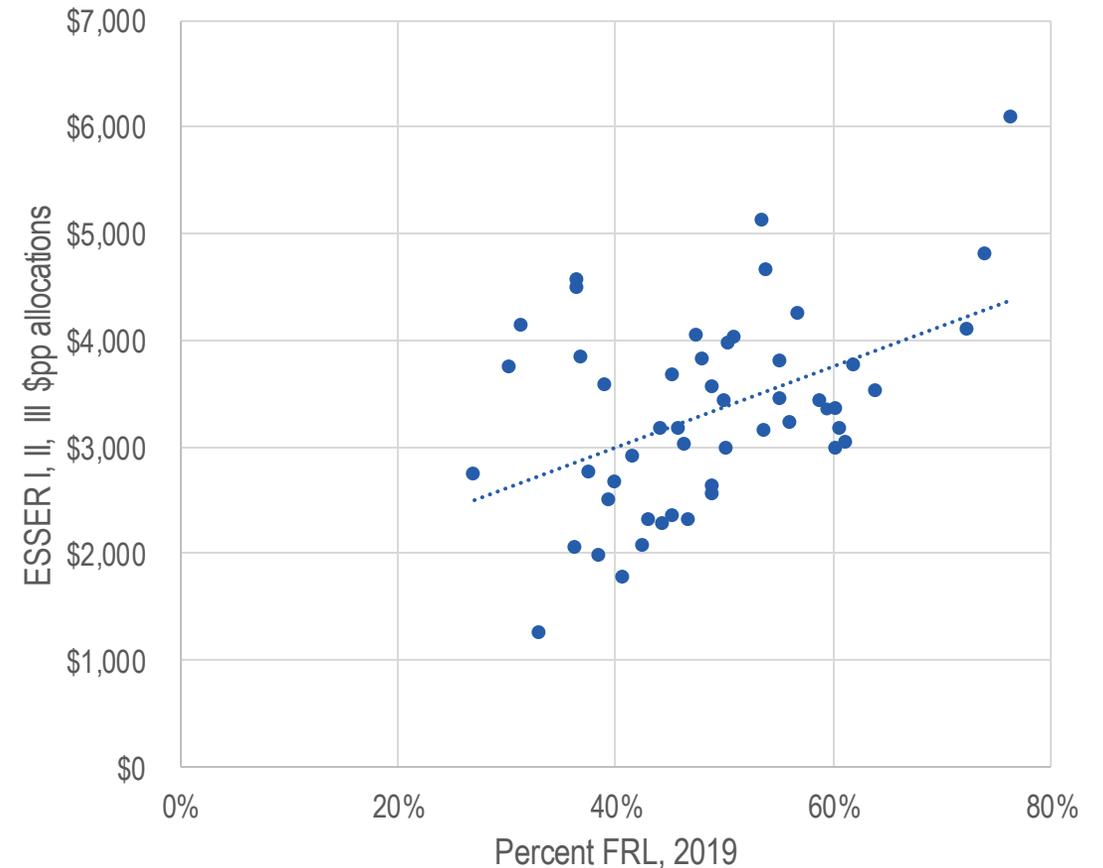
ESSER allocations are greater and more need-driven than the 2009 federal stimulus

Each dot represents a state

ARRA expenditures, 2009-13



ESSER allocations



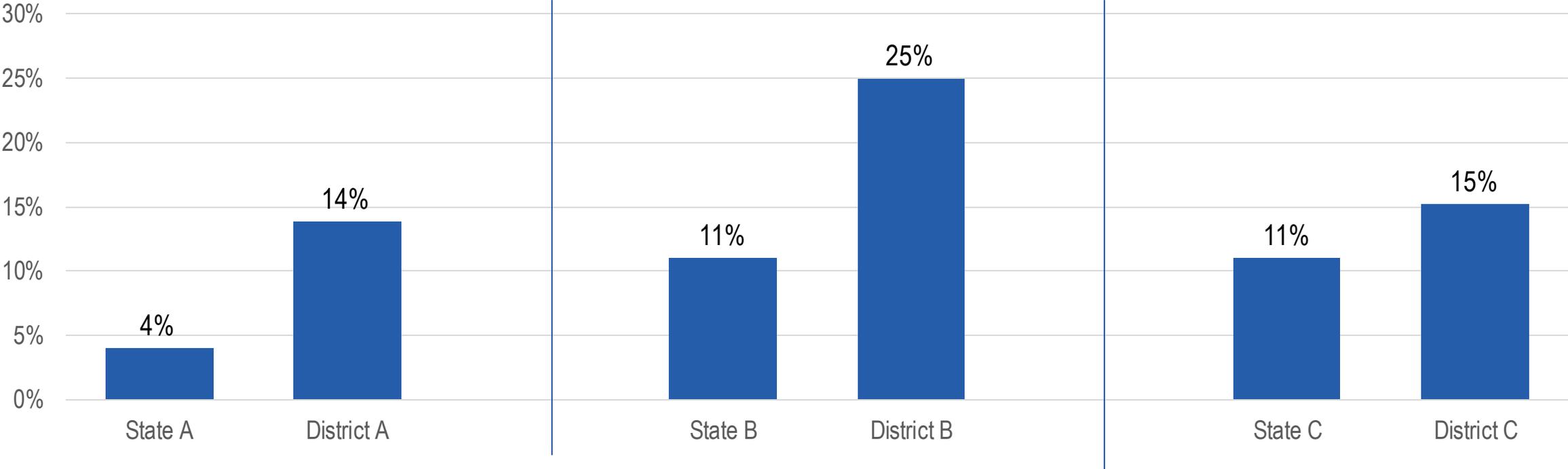
Note: ESSER allocations estimate in \$pp the minimum LEA distributions for all 50 states and D.C.; this excludes maximum SEA reservations from the calculation

Source: U.S. Department of Education, NCES, ERS

Need-based allocations have a greater impact on budgets in the highest-need districts

**PRELIMINARY
ESTIMATES**

Estimated Annual Percent Increase in Expenditures, 2021-22 through 2023-24, in 3 High-Poverty Districts vs Statewide Average



Source: U.S. Department of Education, in-progress district ESSER plans for 2021-22, ERS analysis.

This year has brought dramatic changes in mindset about what is possible in K-12 education

- Changes in **school designs** to better meet students' and teachers' needs are possible.
- **Technology** can be a central part of instruction, collaboration, and teachers' professional learning.
- **Families** can be and must be deeply involved in supporting students' learning.
- Teachers' **roles** can be differentiated to benefit everyone.
- **Community partners and programs** can facilitate learning both inside and outside of typical school hours can help to meet students' social-emotional needs.
- It is everyone's job to tackle **racial inequities** by addressing systems, structures, policies, practices, and biases.

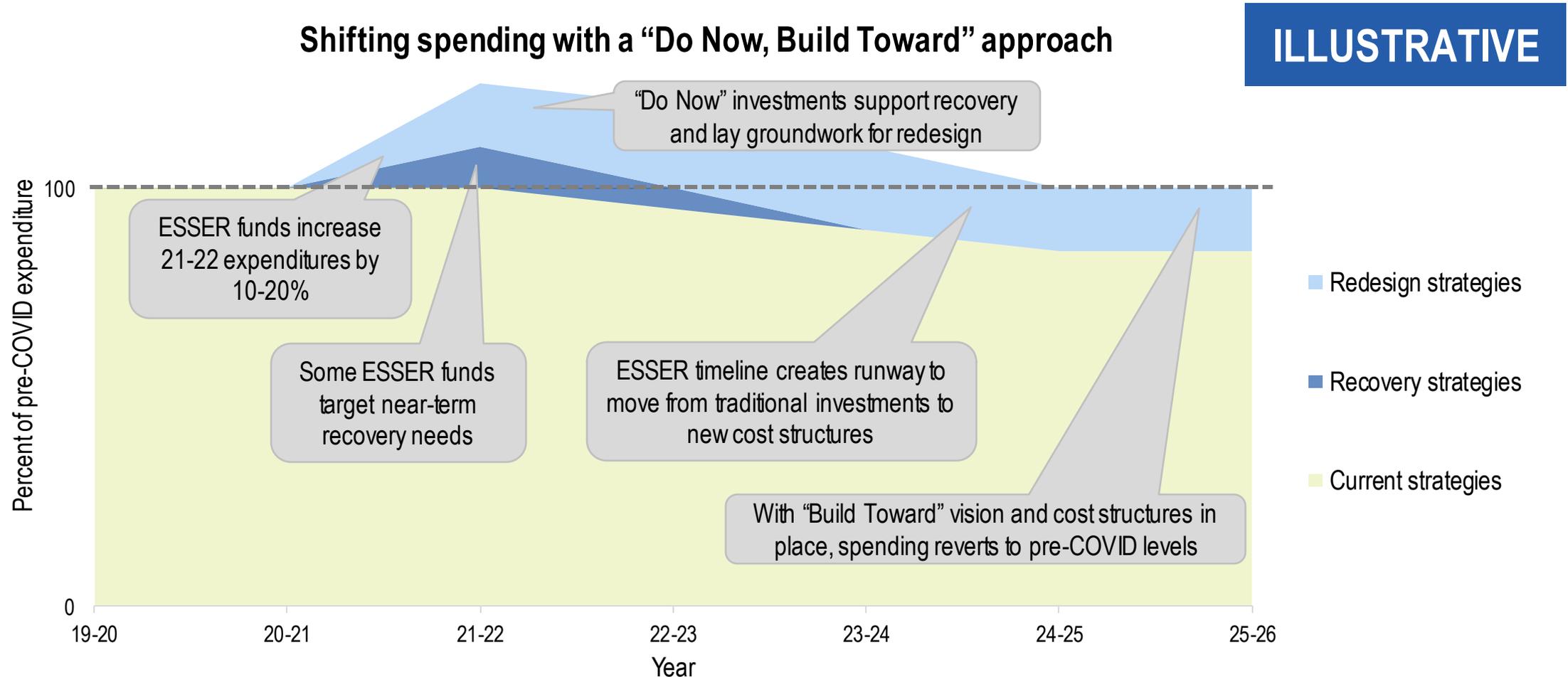
Evidence-based Power Strategies are designed to help district leaders focus on impact now *and* in the future

- ✓ Grounded in years of **research**
- ✓ Address students' critical **academic and social-emotional needs** that have emerged or been exacerbated as a result of the pandemic
- ✓ Tackle underlying cost structures in ways that make them **sustainable** to implement over time
- ✓ Help leaders realize a vision for students and teachers that **fulfills our collective hopes and expectations** for what school can be

Power Strategies for accelerating equity-focused recovery and redesign

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

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



Expand and target **individual attention and learning time** inside and outside of traditional school hours, especially for students with the greatest learning needs.

Do Now...

- **Extend core instructional time** in a specific grade or subject
- Assign existing non-teacher staff to **small-group instruction** at targeted times in the day
- Identify a partner to provide **high-dosage tutoring** for a subset of high-need students

Build Towards...

- More learning time via **extended school days and years, intersessions, intensive “high-dosage” tutoring**, and other after-school learning opportunities.
- **Smaller class sizes in priority grade levels and subjects**, and where student needs are greatest, offset by larger class sizes in other areas
- Integrated learning experiences **across live and asynchronous platforms**
- Specialized and advanced **HS classes offered online** to maximize access and free teachers for more individualized instruction

Improving the Teaching Job

Restructure **teaching jobs and roles** to be more rewarding, collaborative, and sustainable while enabling excellent instruction from a diverse teaching force

Do Now...

- Sustain and expand **flexibility in who engages in instruction**
 - Revise **master schedules** and calendars to enable time for learning, collaboration, reflection and individual student/family connection
 - **Reduce teaching loads** in targeted grades
 - Strengthen **curriculum and assessments** as foundation for improving core instruction
-
- Organize **wellness supports** for teachers.
 - Begin “**stay conversations**,” starting with teachers who are most likely to leave this year.

Build Towards...

- Teachers’ **work day, work year and student loads** allow time for reflection, collaboration, and building individual connections with students.
- Incoming teachers benefit from “**shelter-and-develop**” models that lighten their workload while accelerating their development.
- Highly effective teachers take on **meaningful leadership roles** that extend their impact while allowing them to continue working with students.
- Teachers’ **compensation** is highly competitive with other professional roles and grows based on teachers’ contribution and impact.
- Teachers have state-of-the-art **technology and tools** that save them time and help them problem-solve instructional challenges.

Pressure to address immediate needs can limit efforts to change underlying cost structures

How can we **sustain the real change and innovation** we've created this year?

How am I supposed to spend this **influx of dollars**? How do I balance that with the **impending revenue cliff** we'll see in 2 years?

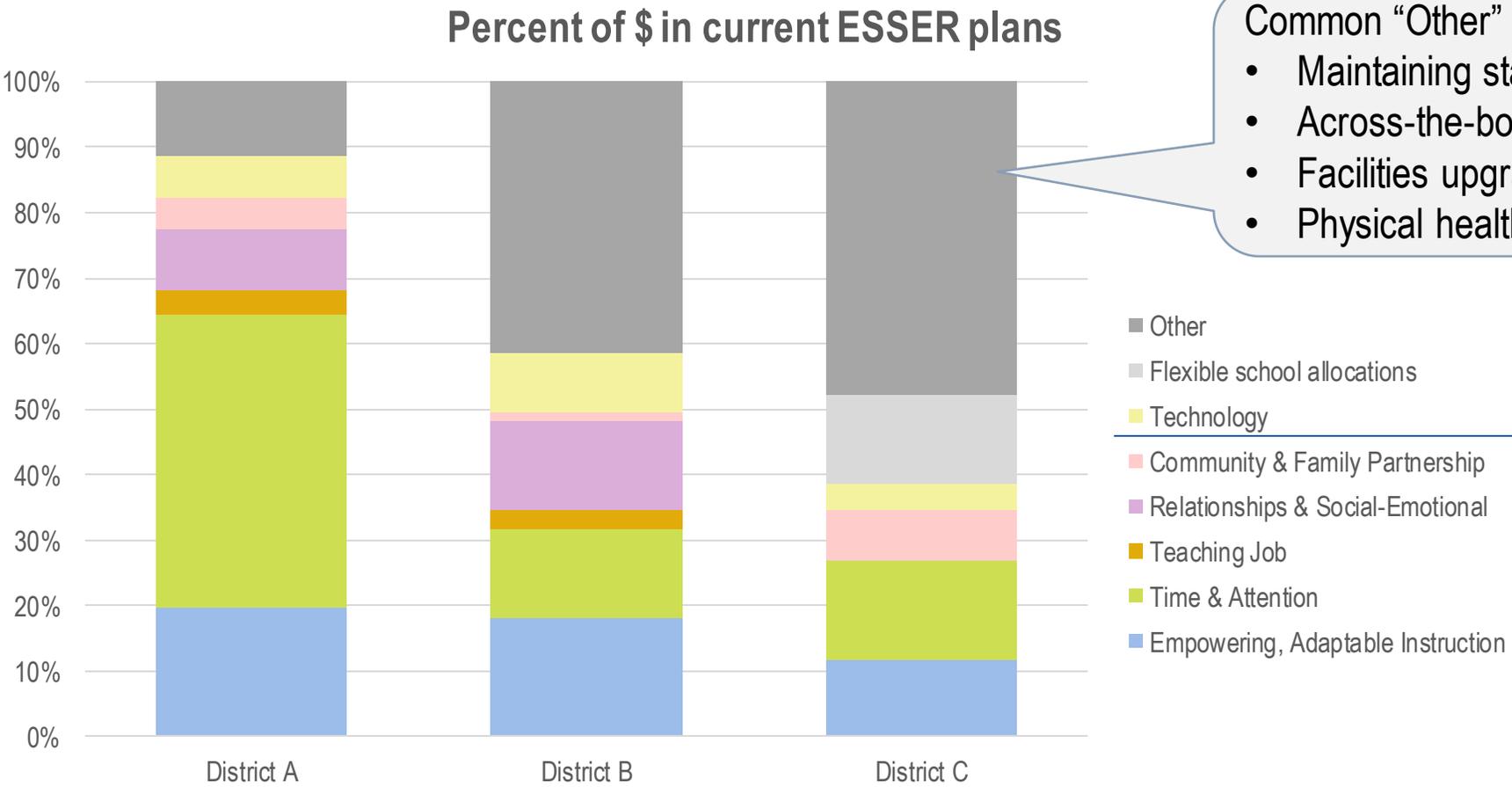
We're overwhelmed with decisions. How do we cut through the noise to focus on **most important changes** we need to make?

Challenges and pressures

- **Rapid timeline, limited/taxed capacity**, combined with **pressure to spend stimulus quickly**
- **Needed focus on the immediate and urgent**, without time or staff to work on long-term planning
- **Lack of strong processes** to determine how best to invest these funds or track the impact of these investments
- Historic premium on spending new dollars on **staff positions in schools**
- Systems need to simultaneously **support schools to use these resources well** in new designs

Result to avoid: Using stimulus funds to pad budget shortfalls, reinvest in the status quo, or layering in 'add on' approaches that will disappear when the funds run out

Even if we know what to do, it is challenging to invest new resources strategically



- Common "Other" investments:
- Maintaining staffing through enrollment decline
 - Across-the-board bonuses
 - Facilities upgrades
 - Physical health/nurses

7 key resource shifts required to create and sustain a “Build Toward” vision for school

- Ensure **equitable funding across schools** with more going to schools serving higher concentrations of students with greater learning needs
- Revamp **teacher and school leader compensation and career path to** support differentiated roles and responsibilities and raise compensation earlier and significantly for those who contribute most
- **Strategically vary class size and learning time** by subject, grade, student need and lesson type to target attention
- Invest to maximize use of **inclusion strategies** to support students with disabilities
- **Reduce teacher facilitated time** to free time for teacher teaming, planning and connecting individually with students and families
- **Leverage technology** to facilitate instruction across schools, during school day and after hours
- Incorporate **other educators and outside providers** in delivery of instruction

**Reflected in new
master schedules
and staffing models**

Engaging families, educators and other stakeholders is crucial to building a lasting foundation for change

- Establish **guiding principles** for decision-making that align across budget & strategy
- **Engage stakeholders** early and often; provide **transparency** into budget projections and impact
- **Name key assumptions**, inputs, and uncertainties; **link key decisions** to clearly **defined scenarios** under which decisions will take place
- Preserve **decision-making flexibility**; set expectations that conditions may change
- **Balance** seeking input with the need to make decisions
- **Be people-oriented**, and acknowledge the real impact on students, teachers, parents, and staff
- **Use repetition and be consistent** with displays to get to insight and implications faster (starting with shared fact base)

Policymakers can inspire, support and create conditions for radical improvement in the next three years

- Remove **policy** barriers / create policy conditions for change
- Sponsor **pilots**, including through **networks** and **cohorts** of districts
- Create planning and design **tools** and models
- Elevate **bright spots** and translating **lessons** for wider use.
- Support expansion of **district capacity** for planning and community engagement
- Invest in **support providers** who can help systems through this work
- Help districts develop **processes for monitoring progress and continuously improving**

Takeaways

- ESSER enables leaders to address immediate student needs **and** catalyze structural change that sticks long after new funding expires
- A “do now, build toward” approach, grounded in evidence-based Power Strategies, can improve student experiences and outcomes now while laying the groundwork for long-lasting, systemic change
- Resource shifts to create and sustain a “build toward” vision play out in the schedules and staffing models that shape how students and teachers experience school
- Effective community engagement and strategic policy and advocacy efforts can strengthen the conditions for significant improvement in K-12 education over the next 3-5 years

We leaders have a choice.

We can seize this moment to take a hard, honest look at our policies and practices and our rate of speed in dismantling long-standing systemic inequities—and use it as a catalyst for change.

Or we can sit on our hands and pretend they are tied by forces beyond our control.

– District leader