Using ESSER Funds for High-Dosage Tutoring
1. Introduction

2. What does the research say?

3. How can districts and schools invest sustainably?

4. What does strategic scheduling and staffing look like?

5. Conclusion
Our Shared Challenge

• Students — especially students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, English language learners, and students with disabilities — have experienced months of disrupted learning.

• The unprecedented infusion of federal stimulus funds (ESSER) provides an important opportunity for districts to equitably meet students’ needs and lay the foundation for meaningful, long-term change. With careful planning and investments, leaders can ensure changes are sustainable beyond the three-year ESSER funding period.

“It’s time to redefine what ‘going back to normal’ means and use learnings from the pandemic to innovate and rethink the student learning experience.”

-Elementary school dean of students in Minnesota

Source: Educators for Excellence, Voices from the Classroom, 2021
“Do Now, Build Toward”

District and school leaders can best navigate ESSER investment decisions by taking a “Do Now, Build Toward” approach — choosing doable starting points for the 2021-22 school year, while designing changes with a long-terms sustainable vision in mind.

These overviews lay out a long-term, “Build Toward” vision for key strategies district and school leaders are prioritizing in schools this fall.

These guides offer a blueprint for organizing resources this school year and beyond.

See the full “Do Now, Build Toward” toolkit.
The **Schools Start Here** Series

**IN THIS SERIES:**
How can district and school leaders use stimulus funding to make “Do Now” investments that respond to urgent student needs, center equity, accelerate student learning, and also sustainably “Build Toward” long-term improvement?

**IN THIS GUIDE:**
What could it look like for my district or school to organize resources to support tutoring that helps students learn grade-level content?
What does the research say?
Research shows that “high-dosage” tutoring can be one of the most effective ways to improve student learning.

WHO IS IT EFFECTIVE FOR?

- Research shows that tutoring leads to learning gains across all grades and subjects, particularly early literacy and high school math.¹
- Tutoring can increase student learning by an additional 3-15 months and is one of the most effective ways to increase achievement for students from low-income backgrounds.¹
- Tutoring can be an especially cost-effective investment given the impact.²

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

- Tutoring must be “high-dosage” to be effective — at least 30-60 minutes each day, 3 days/week, for at least 10 weeks, in groups of 1-4 students (although elementary students may benefit from shorter, more frequent sessions).¹
- Training: Tutors receive initial training and ongoing support.
- Timing: Takes place during the school day to maximize student attendance and engagement.
- Curriculum: Use high-quality, culturally relevant instructional materials that are aligned with grade-level standards.
- Integration with core instruction: Addresses gaps in skills that are needed to access future content, rather than remediation.
- Relationships: Prioritize stable tutor-student matches to build relationships.

Source: ¹EdResearch for Recovery; ²the Annenberg Institute
Recent studies show that many roles can serve as effective tutors, though staffing decisions can impact other necessary components of an effective tutoring program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certified Teachers as Tutors</th>
<th>Support Staff, Volunteers, or AmeriCorps/Other Service Network Members as Tutors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Can effectively tutor larger groups with less upfront training necessary and keep instruction aligned with Tier 1 instruction and curriculum.</td>
<td>• Can only tutor smaller groups effectively, with the support of upfront training, ongoing feedback, and collaboration with core teachers to ensure alignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Likely more expensive on an hourly basis and harder to schedule during the regular school day.</td>
<td>• Likely less expensive on an hourly basis and easier to schedule flexibly during the regular school day.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See the “Scheduling & Staffing” section for more details on staffing considerations.

Source: EdResearch for Recovery
As part of COVID-19 response, tutoring can support all students in accessing grade-level Tier 1 instruction.

Effective tiered instruction requires...

- **High-quality Tier 1 instruction for all students** that is differentiated to address students’ unique needs and enable access to grade-level content.
- **Frequent data collection and monitoring** to identify students who need additional support, to adjust student groupings, and to inform instruction.
- **Additional targeted and intensive attention** for some students to address gaps in the foundational skills needed for accessing Tier 1 instruction.

- All of these requirements have become even more challenging for teachers, schools, and districts to do given the disruptions of COVID-19 and their fixed capacity.
- High-dosage tutoring is one way to provide targeted and intensive support with greater duration and consistency than prior interventions and to address a wider range of student needs that previously seen.
How can districts and schools invest sustainably?
Federal stimulus funds provide an opportunity to address students’ current needs and build toward lasting improvement.

To plan ESSER investments with long-term sustainability in mind...

- **Size the full cost of implementing strategies over time.**
  Consider all the cost components associated with implementing the strategy well, including those that address intensified needs and those that build long-term capacity. Understand which costs will need to be sustained over time.

- **Plan out how spending and organization will shift to sustain critical investments over time.**
  To avoid fiscal cliffs, have an exit strategy where possible. Carefully monitor and plan for what needs to be sustained.

- **Invest in building bridges to new ways of organizing.**
  Pilot and evaluate new approaches that lower future costs or redirect resources to sustain this strategy.

- **Define success, measure, and adjust.**
  Investing in a continuous improvement system is critical for ensuring that strategies evolve and improve over time. For more on this, see Uncharted Waters.
To invest sustainably, districts and schools will need to size the full cost of key components of their approach to tutoring.

**Tutors**
Who will provide tutoring?

**Dedicated Time for Tutoring**
How do we find sufficient time? How do we minimize trade-offs?

**Training, Ongoing Support, and Collaboration**
What training, support, and collaboration structures do tutors need?

**Program Development and Management**
Who oversees implementation of the program?

**High-Quality, Aligned Materials**
What additional materials do we need for tutoring?

**Assessments and Monitoring Systems**
How do we assess and monitor progress?
ESSER investments should balance investing in immediate student needs with building lasting capacity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address intensified needs</th>
<th>Build system capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tutors</td>
<td>🔄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Time for Tutoring</td>
<td>🔄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training, Ongoing Support, and Collaboration</td>
<td>🔄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Development and Management</td>
<td>🔄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High-Quality, Aligned Materials</td>
<td>🔄</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessments and Monitoring Systems</td>
<td>🔄</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Investments in these areas increase the amount of tutoring that is possible but can also build capacity if made strategically. For example, tutors can become a part of an improved teacher pipeline (see Glass Frog webinar and supporting research).

Investments in these areas build the capacity of the system to be able to provide more effective tutoring.

Plan out how spending and organization will shift to sustain critical investments over time.
ESSER funding enables significantly more tutoring in near term to address pandemic-related needs. Districts should monitor results and ongoing needs over ESSER timeline to plan ongoing investments.

**Key Question:** How can districts and schools sustain increased tutoring — without increasing long-term costs?

ESSER can fund higher initial investments in these areas as systems build out their programs, develop partnerships, and connect tutoring to other strategic initiatives. Systems should evaluate ongoing need for investment in these areas once program is established and student need is lower post-recovery.

ESSER funds start-up costs. Long-term, investments in these areas return to baseline once curriculum and monitoring systems are in place.

Plan out how spending and organization will shift to sustain critical investments over time.

While some investments will decrease, other investments will need to be sustained in order to provide more/better tutoring after ESSER.
For now, schools might…

- Build "tutoring corps" layered on top of other instructional and support roles.
- Provide stipends to teachers to tutor students outside of the school day.
- Provide stipends to tutors and teachers to meet after school to collaborate.
- Hire additional staff to coach and support tutors.

…while piloting and evaluating ways to provide more and better tutoring, even without stimulus dollars.

- Pilot roles that can provide quality tutoring at lower cost, such as creating a corps of trained paraprofessionals.
- Build partnerships with community-based organizations that can offer external tutoring programs, perhaps with district training and support to ensure quality and alignment.
- Intentionally build a tutor-to-teacher pipeline, possibly through university partnerships or AmeriCorps-type programs. Making tutoring part of the pipeline strategy can potentially lower recruiting costs.
- Explore shifts to funding systems that will increase ongoing resources for tutoring at higher-need schools.
- Pilot ways to embed collaboration time between teachers and tutors into the school day instead of using stipends for after school collaboration time.
Districts and schools will need to monitor progress and learn from experience to plan and improve on future investments.

Districts and schools should invest in rapid cycles of continuous improvement to answer questions such as:

- Where is tutoring being implemented with fidelity? Where it isn't, what are the barriers? How can we address them?
- Which schools are bright spots where tutoring is improving students’ learning and reducing the number of students who need additional support? What effective practices can we try?
- What challenges are arising? How can we address them?
- As more students are reaching grade-level achievement, how should we adjust our structures for tutoring?

A whole-system approach to continuous improvement...

- Emphasizes a clear set of priorities
- Empowers practitioners with evidence-based strategies and logic models
- Assesses the fidelity and equity of implementation across the whole district
- Tracks costs and compares them to the ROI of other potential approaches
- Relies on cross-functional system leadership to dismantle barriers, address inequities, and support schools

ERS, Uncharted Waters
How can districts and schools target ESSER dollars now?
Investments in all components of tutoring are strategic and allowable uses for ESSER dollars.

The CARES Act (ESSER I) includes allowable uses of funds related to preventing, preparing for, and responding to COVID-19.

Note that the ‘additional’ LEA allowable uses of funds under the CRRSA Act (ESSER II), such as addressing learning loss, preparing schools for reopening, and testing, repairing, and upgrading projects to improve air quality in school buildings, already are permitted under the CARES Act.

-US Department of Education
Investments in tutoring will vary across districts and schools based on student and staff needs and context.

For more support in estimating the true cost of implementing tutoring sustainably in your specific context, see our ESSER Strategy Planner & Funding Calculator.

- This interactive tool allows you to see a breakdown of potential ESSER spending (SY 2021-22 – SY 2023-24) and the implied spending commitments post-ESSER (from SY 2024-25 and onward).

- For tutoring, select the tab at the bottom labeled “#2 Time & Attention” and scroll left or right within the sheet to view the different strategies.
Deciding **who will provide tutoring** will drive key investments.

**Key Considerations:**
To quantify FTE needed, consider how many students should experience tutoring and at what “dosage.”
- How many students will be tutored at the same time?
- How long is a tutoring cycle?
- How does tutoring relate to other individual attention supports, like small grouping and IEP supports?

To estimate staff compensation, consider **who is best positioned to provide tutoring**.
- Which existing staff can offer some or all tutoring hours necessary?
- Who in the local labor market could help supply tutoring? (This could include external partners, retired teachers, or education majors.)

See the "**Scheduling & Staffing**" section to explore for staffing tutoring.

See our **ESSER Strategy Planner & Funding Calculator** to estimate costs for tutors.
Deciding **when tutoring takes place** will also drive key investments.

- How do we **find sufficient time** for tutoring?
- How will we minimize trade-offs?

See the “Scheduling & Staffing” section to explore ways to find time for tutoring.
To be effective, tutors need training, ongoing support, and collaboration time with classroom teachers.

**What training, support, and collaboration structures do tutors need?**

- **Invest in training and support, depending on talent strategy.** Tutors who are not certified teachers will need multiple types of training and support to be effective, including:
  - Intensive training at the beginning of the school year focused on building relationship and learning effective tutoring practices.
  - Ongoing support: Teachers, coaches, administrators, or site coordinators observe and provide feedback to tutors and supervise tutoring sessions.
- **Create time for classroom teachers and tutors to connect on student progress and ensure that tutoring is aligned to classroom instruction.**
  - The amount of collaboration time needed is impacted by the level of integration desired between tutoring and classroom instruction. This could range from weekly meetings between tutors and teachers if tutoring is closely aligned to classroom instruction, to monthly meetings between teachers and the tutor coordinator if tutors use a supplemental standards-aligned curriculum.
  - Districts can find time for collaboration by:
    - Providing stipends for teachers to stay after school.
    - Shifting schedules to enable collaboration during the school day.
    - Partnering with a community organization to provide release time.
Districts and schools will need to invest in **program development and management**.

Who oversees implementation of the program?

*See [Toolkit for Tutoring Programs](#) for more information on program design decisions.*

- If the program is **district-run**, hire district staff to manage the program who are responsible for:
  - Recruiting tutors.
  - Developing training for tutors.
  - Overseeing school-based predictors and other ongoing support.
  - Ensuring the tutoring program is aligned and connected to other instructional initiatives.
  - Developing partnerships with other organizations to provide tutoring in the future.
  - Ongoing progress monitoring.

- If the tutoring program is run by an **external partner**, the organization and an existing district staff member should coordinate to ensure alignment with district strategy. **Note:** Tutoring programs run by an outside provider will likely be less integrated with classroom instruction.

  - Have conversations with key stakeholders — including school leaders, teachers, families, students, and community organizations — throughout the design and implementation process to **understand students’ experiences** before, during, and after the tutoring program.
It is important for tutoring programs to use high-quality materials that are aligned with classroom instruction.

What additional materials do we need for tutoring?

• Systems can invest in tutoring materials in one of the following ways:

  • **Purchase** tutoring curriculum and instructional materials that are aligned with core curriculum.
  
  • **Pay stipends** to teachers who have deep content expertise to create tutoring materials that are aligned with core curriculum.

• **Note:** Regardless of approach, districts and schools need to first have a high-quality, culturally relevant, standards-aligned curriculum for Tier I instruction.
DistRICTS AND SCHOOLS WILL NEED SYSTEMS TO **assess and monitor progress.**

**Tutors**

**Dedicated Time for Tutoring**

**Training, Ongoing Support, and Collaboration**

**Program Development and Management**

**High-Quality, Aligned Materials**

**Assessments and Monitoring Systems**

**What data do we need to collect to inform tutoring?**

- Ensure instructional materials measure **skill-specific student learning** (See guidance from ANet, Instruction Partners.) This could include:
  - Purchasing core curriculum with formative assessments or having district staff with deep expertise develop materials.
  - Purchasing a universal screener and diagnostic assessments to identify students who need additional support and the specific skills they need to work on. *Note: Students may need to be assessed on skills from earlier grades.*
  - Purchase external interim assessments, such as MAP or STAR.

- Facilitate data collection and monitoring by integrating into **existing data management systems** to ensure both tutors and teachers can track and monitor student progress.

**What systems will we set up for continuous improvement of our tutoring program?**

- Determine whether the strategy is being implemented with fidelity and if/where adjustments need to be made.
  - Build **continuous improvement structures** at the school- and/or district-level(s) to evolve practices and identify proof points.
What does strategic scheduling and staffing look like?
Scheduling and staffing for tutoring centers around **three key decision points.**

**Decision Point #1:**
**Determine who** will provide tutoring.

**Decision Point #2:**
**Determine desired alignment** between tutoring and core instruction.

**Decision Point #3:**
**Schedule tutoring strategically** for leveraging staff or flexible groupings.
### Decision Point #1

**Determine who will provide tutoring.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutors can be...</th>
<th>Key Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Certified teachers**    | • Most **expensive** option and most **challenging** to schedule at the scale and dosage needed.  
• Enables higher **group sizes** of 3-4 students since teachers have experience teaching small groups and stronger classroom management.  
• **Minimal training needed**, and ongoing support and collaboration provided through same structures as for instruction.  
• Easiest to **integrate tutoring with core instruction**; teachers can create lesson plans for tutoring, so likely won’t need additional curriculum.  
• **Most effective option if tutoring is targeted towards English learners or students with disabilities.**                                                                                     |
| **Support staff**         | • Prioritize having lower **group sizes** of ideally 2 students.  
• Need **training and ongoing support** from district to learn effective tutoring practices.  
• Can **shift roles of existing TAs, or hire temporary or part-time staff**; need an exit strategy if intended to be temporary.  
• Integrating tutoring with core instruction requires more **collaboration time** with teachers; more likely to need a supplemental curriculum.  
• Can build TA to teacher **pipeline**.  
• Can be **temporary or part-time staff** (see Appendix for note on part-time staff in this moment).                                                                                                      |
**Continued: Decision Point #1**

**Determine who will provide tutoring.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutors can be...</th>
<th>Key Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Student teachers** | • Prioritize having lower [group sizes](#) of ideally 2 students.  
• Can [partner with a local university](#) and provide credit or make this part of existing practicum as an affordable option to the district.  
• Need [training and ongoing support](#) from university and/or district to learn effective tutoring practices.  
• Integrating tutoring with core instruction requires more [collaboration time](#) with teachers; more likely to need a supplemental curriculum.  
• Limited [hours and flexibility for scheduling](#), and more challenging to build [stable relationships](#) with students. |
| **Outside service provider** | • Prioritize having [lower group sizes](#) of ideally 2 students.  
• Best option for districts without capacity for program coordination, since organization would provide [training and ongoing support](#).  
• Integrating tutoring with core instruction requires more [collaboration time](#) with teachers; more likely to need a supplemental curriculum.  
• Can build tutor to teacher [pipeline](#). |
Decision Point #2

**Determine desired alignment** between tutoring content and core instruction.

The level of integration impacts the amount of collaboration that tutors and teachers need.

- **Tutors deliver content that is tightly aligned with core instruction in the classroom.**
- **Tutors deliver content through a separate, standards-aligned curriculum.**

More collaboration needed

Tutors and teachers should meet at least weekly to ensure that tutors are familiar with upcoming lessons and how concepts will be taught so that their own lessons are aligned.

Less collaboration needed

Tutors and teachers can meet monthly to align on important standards, concepts, and skills that tutors should focus on. A tutor supervisor, rather than individual tutors, can also coordinate with teachers.
**Decision Point #3 For Elementary**

**Schedule tutoring strategically** for leveraging staff or flexible groupings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To find time for tutoring...</th>
<th>Key Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Embed during the day by reducing time in other blocks** | - Reduce **non-instructional time** (passing time, homeroom, or time currently not well-leveraged).  
- Reduce **time in enrichment or electives** to create time for a small group instruction/tutoring block.  
- Reduce a **small amount of time from every block** to create a new block dedicated to intervention and enrichment.  

⚠️ Tier 1 ELA and math instructional time should not be reduced. |
| **Embed during the day by extending the day for all students** | - Typically **most expensive** option.  
- Could be achieved a few ways:  
  - Leverage **community partners** to provide enrichment while other students have tutoring.  
  - Increase teacher and staff **compensation**.  
  - **Stagger teachers’ schedules** (For example, teachers are present from either 8:00-3:00 or 9:00-4:00)  

**Note:** It is challenging to have sufficient staffing to do this at the elementary level without combining classrooms. |
Continued: Decision Point #3 for Elementary

Schedule tutoring strategically for leveraging staff or flexible groupings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To find time for tutoring...</th>
<th>Key Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Pull students from class for tutoring | • Students should not be pulled from core instruction for tutoring.  
• Other common options include independent reading time, recess, and specials, each of which have tradeoffs.  
  • Recess is an important break in the day that should be preserved whenever possible.  
  • Scheduling tutoring during specials can limit access to well-rounded experiences for students, and it may limit motivation. |
| Tutoring takes place before or after school for some students | • Additional costs: Could create increased transportation costs for students who receive tutoring.  
• Costs could decrease if staffed and located at a community partner (such as Boys and Girls Club).  

Research shows tutoring within the school day is most effective, likely because after school program could result in lower attendance and engagement if perceived as "optional." Therefore, it is vital to carefully monitor if pursuing this option – especially if leveraging virtual learning innovations from COVID that have worked better for some students but are less studied.
### Decision Point #3 For Elementary

If embedding tutoring during the day, consider how to stagger or align tutoring blocks across homerooms and grades.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutoring takes place…</th>
<th>Key Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staggered block across the grade</strong>&lt;br&gt;(For example, each 2nd-grade homeroom has tutoring at a different time)</td>
<td>- Less flexible grouping within grades.&lt;br&gt;- Enables tutors to support multiple homerooms and/or grades (For example, push into homeroom 3A at 1:00 and homeroom 3B at 2:00).&lt;br&gt;- Easier for tutoring to take place in the classroom, reducing the need for additional space and supervision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grade-wide tutoring block</strong></td>
<td>- Allows for flexible grouping within a grade level.&lt;br&gt;- Compared to a schoolwide block, a tutor can support more grades (For example, push into 3rd-grade at 1:00 and 2nd-grade at 2:00).&lt;br&gt;- Consider where tutoring will take place and the number of supervisors needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School-wide tutoring block</strong></td>
<td>- Allows for flexible grouping across grades (though this is less common given small tutoring group sizes)&lt;br&gt;- Enables all instructional and non-instructional staff to push in (“all hands on deck”).&lt;br&gt;- Need more tutors at a time than with staggered blocks.&lt;br&gt;- Tutors are either part-time or have other responsibilities within the school.&lt;br&gt;- Most likely to require additional space and supervision (For example, from an administrator or tutor coordinator).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Decision Point #3 For Secondary

Schedule tutoring strategically for leveraging staff or flexible groupings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutoring takes place...</th>
<th>Key Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **During the day through push-in support** | - Works best when schools *extend a core content course* and use part of the extended time for staff to push in.  
- Enables tutors and other staff to *support multiple grade levels* and groups of students.  
- **Limited flexibility** in grouping and scheduling; groups are determined by course enrollment.  
- Easier for tutoring to *take place in the classroom*, reducing the need for additional space and supervision. |
| **During the day as a stand-alone class** | - Enables tutors to *support multiple grade levels* and groups of students; can have fewer tutors who are full-time.  
- **Limited flexibility** in grouping and scheduling; students are enrolled in tutoring for at least one semester.  
- Need to decide whether tutoring is *for credit* for not, and how this impacts graduation requirements.  
- Limits the *number of electives* students can enroll in. |
## Decision Point #3 For Secondary

**Schedule tutoring strategically** for leveraging staff or flexible groupings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutoring takes place...</th>
<th>Key Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>During the day as a school-wide block</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  - Can be scheduled by **reducing time** in other content or **extending the day** for all students.  
  - Allows for **flexible grouping across grade levels** and provides **flexibility for groups to change** during the semester.  
  - Tutors either are either **part-time or have other responsibilities** within the school; may need more tutors to support sufficient share of students.  
  - Enables all instructional and non-instructional staff to push in ("all hands on deck") but could require additional staff if reducing group size across the school.  
  - Most likely to require **additional space and supervision** (For example, from an administrator or tutor coordinator). |
| **Before or after school for some students** |  
  - **Additional costs**: Could create increased transportation costs for students who receive tutoring.  
  - Costs could decrease if staffed and located at a community partner (such as Boys and Girls Club). |

Research shows tutoring within the school day is most effective, likely because after school program could result in lower attendance and engagement if perceived as “optional.” As such, it is vital if pursuing this option to carefully monitor – especially if leveraging virtual learning innovations from COVID that have worked better for some students.
The following pages show **concrete examples** of these decision points in action.
Elementary Example #1
Gradewide tutoring block supported by full-time tutors.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE
• Reduce group size by partnering with a community organization who provides tutoring.
  • Students have 30 minutes of tutoring and/or 30 minutes of small group instruction.
• Align tutoring block so all homerooms across the grade have tutoring at the same time, allowing for flexible grouping across classrooms.

BENEFITS
• Spreads tutoring blocks across the day for each grade, allowing one or more full-time tutors to serve a number of students throughout the day.

TRADEOFFS
• Limited flexibility for grouping across different grade levels.

ALSO CONSIDER
• Purchasing a technology-based curriculum for independent time for students not in small group instruction or tutoring.
• Having teachers who teach English language learners and students with disabilities provide push-in services during small group instruction/tutoring.
• Having tutors provide release time for teachers to have 90 minutes of collaborative planning one day per week.
Elementary Example #2

Integrating small group instruction and tutoring.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE

- Reduce group size by having the interventionist, homeroom teacher, and tutors provide tutoring and small group instruction.
  - Students have 30 minutes of tutoring and/or 30 minutes of small group instruction.
  - Stagger small group instruction blocks across the grade level so interventionists and tutors can support all homerooms in a grade, and multiple grades if needed.

BENEFITS

- Spreads tutoring blocks across the day for each grade, allowing one or more full-time tutors to serve a number of students throughout the day.

TRADEOFFS

- Limited flexibility for grouping across the grade.

ALSO CONSIDER

- Partnering with community organizations who recruit and support tutors, so that interventionist can focus on providing small group instruction.

The homeroom teacher and the interventionist each lead rotations of instruction with groups of six students while tutors are tutoring one or two students at a time.
**Elementary Example #2**

Interventionist supervises and supports tutors.

Effective tutoring programs require supervision and coordination. In this example, an interventionist plays that role. This allows:

- Interventionist role has further reach in terms of high-quality instruction.
- Training and supervision of tutors is embedded within school systems.
- Tutors are receiving regular observations and feedback for improvement.

**WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE**

- Interventionist leads small group intervention and supports tutors.
- Homeroom teacher and interventionist both lead small groups, enabling interventionist to observe and provide feedback to tutors.
- Each tutor has a weekly coaching session with interventionist.
- Tutors cover lunch duty to provide release time for teachers and interventionist to have collaborative planning time one day per week.

**KEYS TO SUCCESS**

- Interventionist ensures alignment between small group instruction, tutoring, and core instruction, and collaborates closely with homeroom teachers.
- Interventionist attends collaborative planning time for all grades they support.
- Interventionist is experienced teacher and coach.

**TRADEOFFS**

- Interventionist has less time for direct student support due to time spent overseeing tutors.
Secondary Example #1

Tutoring assigned as a course, supported by full-time tutors.

**WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE**
- Full-time tutors, either on-staff, resident, or provided by community partner.
- Create time for tutoring by creating a stand-alone course for some students.

**BENEFITS**
- Consistent daily period, consistent with research that building into schedule is most effective.
- In contrast to a schoolwide block, course periods are not shortened, in this case to make time for a separate block.

**TRADEOFFS**
- Limits the number of electives students can take, with possible implications for credit accumulation.
- Limitations on entering, exiting and regrouping since tutoring is a scheduled course.
- Harder to avoid tracking students since students needing tutoring will have aligned schedules, especially in small schools with limited schedule flexibility.

**ALSO CONSIDER**
- Double-blocking a course and having tutors push into the extended time while other staff push in to provide small group instruction, special education, and/or ELL services.

**EXAMPLES**
- Assigning tutoring as a course yielded positive results in a study of Match Education's program in Chicago Public Schools.
**Secondary Example #2**

**Flexible small group instruction/tutoring block.**

**WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE**
- Reduce group size by hiring TAs to provide tutoring and having all instructional staff available during this time lead tutoring, small group instruction, clubs, and enrichment activities.
- Create a flexible schoolwide small group instruction/tutoring block, which enables students to be flexibly grouped across grades and throughout the school year.

**BENEFITS**
- Consistent daily period, aligned with research that building into schedule is most effective.
- In contrast to a schoolwide block, course periods are not shortened, in this case to make time for a separate block.
- Students can be flexibly moved in and out of tutoring and across groups as needed.
- Splitting the schoolwide block across two lunch periods allows reaching more students with same number of tutors (some are tutored in first half and then have lunch, others the opposite).

**TRADEOFFS**
- Since tutoring is concentrated in the lunch blocks, will need to hire more tutors and part-time staff to sufficiently reduce group size during small group instruction/tutoring block since they can only support 1-2 students in each tutoring block.

**ALSO CONSIDER**
- Separate the school-wide block from lunch (say, for example, between periods 1 and 2). This might create a more focused block, but it also concentrates tutoring demand to a single period, meaning more tutors are needed for a short amount of time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9th-Grade A Day</th>
<th>9th-Grade B Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per. 0</td>
<td>Advisory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per. 1</td>
<td>English I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per. 2</td>
<td>Algebra I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch / Small Group Instruction / Tutoring</td>
<td>Lunch / Small Group Instruction / Tutoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per. 3</td>
<td>History I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per. 4</td>
<td>Spanish I</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more scheduling options for schoolwide intervention/tutoring blocks, see the Targeted Academic Supports guide.
Additionally, there are **district-level enabling conditions** that can affect how well schools can sustain tutoring programs, even after the ESSER funding window expires.

### Role Flexibility

- **Teacher-of-record policies** that encourage teaming and/or collaboration among experienced, rookie, and pre-service teachers.

- **Compensation policies** that enable pay to be based on differentiated roles and increased responsibilities.

- Ability to contract with **third-parties** — such as local organizations and community colleges — to provide tutoring.

### Schedule Flexibility

- The ability to develop **schedules** that take into account students’ needs, interests, and progress.

- The flexibility to schedule long **collaborative planning blocks** during the school day for shared-content and shared-student collaboration among teachers and staff.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This guide was authored by Gayatri Mehra (Principal Associate), Eddie Branchaud (Manager), and Kristen Ferris (Partner). It is the result of collaborative efforts among numerous people, both within and outside of ERS. We would like to acknowledge the following ERS team members who contributed to this work: Crystal Chu, Mark Heath, Gloria Samen, Torrie Mekos, Daven McQueen, Ray Schleck, and Karen Hawley Miles.

We owe our deep thanks to our partners at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York for supporting the creation of this set of guidebooks.

We are grateful to all those listed above who inspired, informed, contributed, and reviewed this work.
For more tools and information...

See the full “Do Now, Build Toward” toolkit

VISIT
www.erstrategies.org

SUBSCRIBE
www.erstrategies.org/signup

LIKE + FOLLOW
@ERStrategies
As your team weighs the possible tradeoffs associated with different approaches, makes decisions about how to organize resources, and plans for how to evolve and scale your approaches over time, we encourage you to adapt these guides to meet your unique needs and context.

To share your work or get help navigating your “Do Now, Build Toward” approach, contact us.
Appendix
Note: In this moment, hiring **part-time staff** may offer flexibility and options that strategies requiring additional, specialized, full-time staff may not.

- Enables **schedule flexibility** (for example, two part-time staff members can cover all elementary school blocks in the morning).
- Likely **more affordable** option, since part-time staff are working fewer hours and not specialized.
- Enables **concentrated expertise and lower caseloads** if the part-time staff is only responsible for a small number of students.
- Provides more **individualized attention and support** for each student to feel known by at least one adult given potentially lower caseloads.
- Allows for **hiring from a greater and non-traditional talent pool**, which is key in this moment given school staffing needs.
- Can be **added to existing structures or used in combination** with any of the other strategies.
- **Clear exit plan** as the need for additional professional learning and collaboration time decreases.