Using ESSER Funds for High-Dosage Tutoring

Betting big on ESSER-funded tutoring. Many districts are positioning tutoring as a key investment in their COVID-relief plans to combat learning loss. And for good reason: Research shows that effective tutoring programs have a high ROI and can move the needle quickly on student outcomes. But like most initiatives, tutoring programs aren’t necessarily a “golden ticket” and require careful planning and implementation.

We’re offering guidance for districts looking to fund tutoring sustainably, using ESSER funds to get programs off the ground and to lay the groundwork for long-term change. We also offer concrete examples of staffing and scheduling models that you can implement today and adjust along the way to enable continuous improvement over time.

ESSER GUIDANCE
STAFFING  •  SPENDING  •  SCHEDULING

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?

See the other ESSER guides
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Research-Based Tutoring

How to Spend One-Time Funds

How to Fund Tutoring Sustainably

Tutoring in Action: Scheduling and Staffing Examples

Common Challenges with Tutoring
Research-Based Tutoring
High-dosage tutoring can increase student learning by 3-15 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research-Backed Considerations</th>
<th>Variable Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who is tutoring effective for?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Who provides tutoring?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research shows that tutoring leads to learning gains across all grades and subjects, particularly early literacy and high school math.</td>
<td>Certified teachers are the most effective tutors—particularly for larger tutoring groups of 3-4 students—and require less upfront training. Support staff, volunteers, or service network members (e.g., AmeriCorps) can tutor 1-2 students at a time effectively, are less expensive than certified teachers, and are easier to schedule during the day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you cannot serve all students, concentrate on clusters of students (e.g., single grade level, classroom, or school) to avoid stigmatizing the few students who receive tutoring.</td>
<td>Consider student-to-student tutoring operations, such as high schoolers tutoring middle or elementary school students. Incorporate pre-existing district staff creatively, including central office, food service, paraprofessionals, and student teachers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For more information on how to equitably address students’ time and attention needs, see our Resource Equity Guidebook on Instructional Time & Attention.

Sources: EdResearch for Recovery; the Annenberg Institute
Effective tutoring programs are carefully designed and implemented

**Research-Backed Considerations**
- **Timing**: Takes place during the school day to maximize student attendance and engagement.
- **Frequency**: At least 30-60 minutes each day, 3 days/week, for 10 weeks; groups of 1-4 students (elementary students may benefit from shorter, more frequent sessions).
- **Training**: Tutors receive initial training and ongoing support to develop competencies in content material, instructional techniques, SEL, and cultural contexts.
- **Curriculum**: High-quality, culturally relevant instructional materials; aligned with grade-level standards and core instruction to address gaps in skills needed to access future content (rather than remediation).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What does an effective tutoring program look like?</th>
<th>Variable Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timing: Takes place during the school day to maximize student attendance and engagement.</td>
<td>Prioritize in-person tutoring when possible—early research suggests that better results come from in-person tutoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency: At least 30-60 minutes each day, 3 days/week, for 10 weeks; groups of 1-4 students (elementary students may benefit from shorter, more frequent sessions).</td>
<td>Ensure that any after-school tutoring is operated with seamless logistics (such as transition time and transportation) and a strong culture that mirrors the school-day experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training: Tutors receive initial training and ongoing support to develop competencies in content material, instructional techniques, SEL, and cultural contexts.</td>
<td>Align tutoring to classroom pacing and content to mitigate challenges around coordinating with teaching staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum: High-quality, culturally relevant instructional materials; aligned with grade-level standards and core instruction to address gaps in skills needed to access future content (rather than remediation).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ "Tutoring in MNPS is very much a research-based model. It’s 3x per week for at least 30 minutes, for at least 10 weeks with the same tutor. We have stuck to that model, and when you talk about tutoring at MNPS, that’s what you’re talking about… Research is really important. We don’t have that many interventions or strategies in education that are as definitive on impact as high-dosage tutoring." \]

Keri Randolph, Chief Strategy Officer
Metro Nashville Public Schools

Sources:
- EdResearch for Recovery; the Annenberg Institute
How to Spend One-Time Funds
Tutoring will require investment across multiple cost components

- Tutors
- Dedicated Time for Tutoring
- Training, Ongoing Support, and Collaboration
- Program Development and Management
- High-Quality, Aligned Materials
- Assessments and Monitoring Systems

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.

See this video on Metro Nashville’s research-based approach and this case study on Salem’s creative pipeline approach to addressing a felt need.
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 (small grouping, 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 could locally help supply tutoring? (ex. external partners, retired teachers, or ed majors)

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

**See our ESSER Strategy Planner & Funding Calculator** to estimate costs for tutors.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools has applied the research to its tutoring program by creating **this rubric** for evaluating tutoring providers.
Deciding *when* tutoring takes place will also drive key investments

- How do we find sufficient time for tutoring?
- What trade-offs are made with students’ time through tutoring instead of other instruction or socio-emotional learning?

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

- **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 relationships 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, ranging from weekly meetings if tutoring is closely aligned to classroom instruction to monthly meetings if tutors use a supplemental standards-aligned curriculum. Find time 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.

---

**ESSER Guidance:** High-Dosage Tutoring

- Introduction
- Research
- **How to Spend**
- Sustainability
- Scheduling & Staffing Examples
- Challenges
Invest in program development and management

Who oversees implementation of the program?

- For **district-run** programs, hire district staff to manage the program who are responsible for:
  - Recruiting tutors.
  - Developing training for tutors.
  - Overseeing school-based coordinators 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.
  - Maintaining 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.

See [Toolkit for Tutoring Programs](#) for more information on program design decisions
Use high-quality **tutoring** materials that align with classroom instruction

- 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.
Systems are needed to **assess and monitor tutoring progress**

### 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.*
  - Purchasing 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.

### How will we assess and monitor 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.
  - Refer to this **continuous improvement dashboard** for tutoring as an example.
How to Fund Tutoring Sustainably
Federal stimulus funds provide an opportunity to **address** students’ current needs **and** build toward lasting improvement.

To plan investments of one-time revenue infusions (such as ESSER) with **long-term sustainability** in mind…

- ✅ Size the full cost of implementing strategies over time.
- ✅ Plan out how spending and organization will shift to sustain critical investments over time.
- ✅ Pilot and evaluate new approaches that redirect resources or lower future costs.
- ✅ Define success, measure, and adjust.
Size the full cost of implementing strategies over time.

Consider all the cost components associated with implementing your strategy well.

- **Tutors**
  Who will provide tutoring?

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

- **Dedicated Time for Tutoring**
  How do we find sufficient time? What trade-offs are made with students’ time through tutoring instead of other instruction or socio-emotional learning?

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

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

- **Assessments and Monitoring Systems**
  How do we assess and monitor progress?
Plan out how spending and organization will shift to sustain critical investments over time.

Investments should balance immediate student needs with building lasting capacity, while also being mindful of start-up vs. ongoing costs.

Some of the components of a tutoring program are start-up costs that can be funded with one-time revenue. Other components are ongoing costs that need to be funded for the duration of the tutoring program.

One-time funding (e.g., ESSER) enables significantly more tutoring in the near-term to address immediate needs. Districts should monitor results and ongoing needs to plan ongoing investments.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tutors</th>
<th>Address intensified needs</th>
<th>Build system capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>➔ Ongoing cost</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Dedicated Time for Tutoring | | |
| ➔ Ongoing cost | ✓ | |

| Training, Ongoing Support, and Collaboration | | |
| ➔ Ongoing cost | ✓ | |

| Program Development and Management | | |
| ➔ Ongoing cost | ✓ | |

| High-Quality, Aligned Materials | | |
| ➔ Start-up cost | ✓ | |

| Assessments and Monitoring Systems | | |
| ➔ Start-up cost | ✓ | |

Investments in these areas increase the amount of tutoring that is possible but can also build capacity if made strategically.

Example: Tutors can become 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.

---

"Even though we have multiple years of ESSER funds to support programs, we have a pending fiscal cliff. We have to use new money or reallocate existing spending for the programs we want to sustain over time."

Matthew Stanski
Director of Financial Operations
Anne Arundel County Public Schools

ESSER Guidance: High-Dosage Tutoring
For now, districts 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 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?
- As more students are reaching grade-level achievement, how should we adjust our structures for tutoring?

Click here to see a sample continuous improvement dashboard for tracking key components and outcomes of a tutoring program.

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
Tutoring in Action: Staffing and Scheduling Examples
Three key decision points for scheduling and staffing for tutoring

Decision Point #1:
Determine who will provide tutoring.

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

Decision Point #3:
Determine how to schedule tutoring strategically.
## Decision Point #1
### Determine who will provide tutoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Considerations</th>
<th>Certified teachers</th>
<th>Support staff (e.g., TAs and paras)</th>
<th>Student teachers</th>
<th>Outside service providers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key considerations</td>
<td>• Most effective option if tutoring is targeted towards English learners or students with disabilities.</td>
<td>• Can shift roles of existing TAs, or hire temporary or part-time staff; need an exit strategy if intended to be temporary. • Can build TA to teacher pipeline. • Can be temporary or part-time staff.</td>
<td>• Can partner with a local university and provide credit or make this part of existing practicum as an affordable option to the district.</td>
<td>• Best option for districts without capacity for program coordination, since organization would provide training and ongoing support. • Can build tutor to teacher pipeline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group size</td>
<td>• 3-4 students</td>
<td>• 2 students</td>
<td>• 2 students</td>
<td>• 2 students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations in scheduling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training required</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration time needed to integrate with core instruction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Decision Point #2
Determine alignment between tutoring and core instruction

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

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.

Tutors deliver content that is tightly aligned with core instruction in the classroom.

Tutors deliver content through a separate, standards-aligned curriculum.
**Decision Point #3 For Elementary**

Determine how to schedule tutoring strategically

<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 the 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.

Pulling students from class is not ideal: students should not be pulled from core instruction. Recess is an important break in the day that should be preserved whenever possible. Specials are crucial for well-rounded experiences for students.

Tutoring before or after the school day is not ideal: 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."

**ESSER Guidance:** High-Dosage Tutoring
## Decision Point #3 For Secondary

Determine how to schedule tutoring strategically

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To find time for tutoring...</th>
<th>Key Considerations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Embed 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. |
| Embed 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. |
| Embed during the day as a school-wide block | • 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). |
| Embed 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. |
DECISION POINTS IN ACTION:
CONCRETE EXAMPLES
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

- 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).
- Allows for flexible grouping within a grade level.

TRADE-OFFS

- 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.
- Monitoring where tutoring can take place and the number of supervisors needed.
Elementary Example #2

Staggered block across the grade supported by interventionists & tutors

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.
  • Staggered blocks also allow for recommended dosage of at least 3 days per week.

BENEFITS

• Enables tutors to support multiple homerooms and/or grades (For example, push into homeroom 3A at 1:00 and homeroom 3B at 2:00).
• Easier for tutoring to take place in the classroom, reducing the need for additional space and supervision.

TRADE-OFFS

• Limited flexibility for grouping within 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 interventionist each lead groups of six students and the tutor leads one-two students at a time, while other students work independently.
Continued: 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.

TRADE-OFFS

- Interventionist has less time for direct student support due to time spent overseeing tutors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interventionist</th>
<th>Tutor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Community Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching Tutors</td>
<td>Feedback Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st-Grade HR A Small Group Instruction</td>
<td>1st-Grade HR A Tutoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd-Grade HR A Small Group Instruction</td>
<td>2nd-Grade HR A Tutoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observing Tutors</td>
<td>2nd-Grade HR B Tutoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd-Grade HR B Small Group Instruction</td>
<td>2nd-Grade Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborative Planning Time</td>
<td>3rd-Grade HR A Tutoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st-Grade HR B Small Group Instruction</td>
<td>1st-Grade HR B Tutoring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 to make time for a separate block.

TRADE-OFFS
- 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.
- Deciding whether tutoring is for credit or not, and how this impacts graduation requirements.

EXAMPLES
- Assigning tutoring as a course yielded positive results in a study of Match Education’s program in Chicago Public Schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9th-Grade Student</th>
<th>Tutor</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>World History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per. 3</td>
<td>Elective 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per. 4</td>
<td>Algebra 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per. 5</td>
<td>Algebra 1 Tutoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per. 6</td>
<td>Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per. 7</td>
<td>Elective 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning / Coaching 1x per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutoring Group 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutoring Group 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lunch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutoring Group 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutoring Group 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutoring Group 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tutoring Group 7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.
- 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).

TRADE-OFFS

- Since tutoring is concentrated in the lunch blocks, will need to hire more tutors and part-time staff compared to tutoring as a course 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.

For more scheduling options for schoolwide intervention/tutoring blocks, see the Targeted Academic Supports guide.

ESSER Guidance: High-Dosage Tutoring
Common Challenges with Tutoring
## Research-backed approaches to common tutoring challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Challenges</th>
<th>Pitfalls to Avoid</th>
<th>What the Research Says</th>
<th>Examples of What to do Instead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“But all students need extra support right now.”</td>
<td>Choosing solutions that enable 24/7 access to academic help</td>
<td>Create tutor-student relationship consistency (minimum of 30 minutes, 3 times per week for 9-10 weeks).</td>
<td>Embed relationship-building and whole-child supports into the curriculum for tutoring. Start smaller (with however much scale you can generate), focusing on the highest-priority students and schools and holding tight to group size maximums. Scale up (if possible) or rotate after a 9-10 week period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increasing group sizes or decreasing frequency to maximize coverage</td>
<td>Stick to group sizes of 1-2 students for non-certified staff and 3-4 students for certified staff.</td>
<td>Target one grade level or even just one classroom at a time to create a new vision for personalized instruction and to avoid stigmatizing just a few students across multiple classrooms who are chosen for extra tutoring.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| “I have so many open teaching positions I can’t fill—I’m not going to be able to find enough tutors.” | Lowering tutor reliability and quality by over-relying on volunteers               | Emphasize consistency and duration of tutoring responsibilities—and pay stipends accordingly. Ensure management capacity can organize tutoring relationships and maintain ongoing engagement. | Hire tutoring staff through a combination of multiple sources, then adapt expectations for each based on skillset. Consider using an outside partnership to manage your portfolio of tutors. Potential sources include:  
  • Americorps  
  • College students getting service credit or through federal work study  
  • Online providers that guarantee consistent relationships  
  • Students fulfilling credit or volunteer hours (e.g., JROTC, Honors Society)  
  • Retired teachers  
  • Existing staff (e.g., paraprofessionals, central office, food service)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

Sources: EdResearch for Recovery; the Annenberg Institute, and discussions with Matthew Kraft

ESSER Guidance: High-Dosage Tutoring
## Cont. Research-backed approaches to common tutoring challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Challenges</th>
<th>Pitfalls to Avoid</th>
<th>What the Research Says</th>
<th>Examples of What to do Instead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“We’re trying to do so many things right now for our students—this is just one more thing competing for their attention.”</td>
<td>Pulling students out of core instruction or other important learning to receive tutoring</td>
<td>Build tutoring into the school day or, if tutoring takes place after school, create an extended school day culture so that it is taken seriously.</td>
<td>Develop school schedules that integrate tutoring into existing Tier 2 instruction time, intervention blocks, and advisory; or extend the day to create a new dedicated tutoring block.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Setting up afterschool tutoring without buy-in from families</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Invest in program outreach and coordination between tutors and families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Our teachers, leaders, and central office staff are already stretched to capacity—they can’t take this on too.”</td>
<td>Relying on tutor curricular materials that require coordination with teachers</td>
<td>Provide dedicated time for teachers to help make tutor-teacher partnerships successful or leverage curricular materials for tutoring that don’t depend on coordination (such as Khan Academy).</td>
<td>For afterschool tutoring programs, invest in transportation and smooth transitions. Create buy-in to build a strong culture that mirrors the culture of the regular school day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Failing to design for transportation, smooth transitions, or sufficient culture-building</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: EdResearch for Recovery; the Annenberg Institute, and discussions with Matthew Kraft

---

ESSER Guidance: High-Dosage Tutoring

Introduction | Research | How to Spend | Sustainability | Scheduling & Staffing Examples | Challenges
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, April Liu, Kaitlyn Chantry, and Karen Hawley Miles. Many thanks to Professor Matthew Kraft for his thought partnership and expertise as well.

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.

To share your work or get help, contact us.

VISIT

www.erstrategies.org

SUBSCRIBE

www.erstrategies.org/signup

LIKE + FOLLOW

@ERStrategies