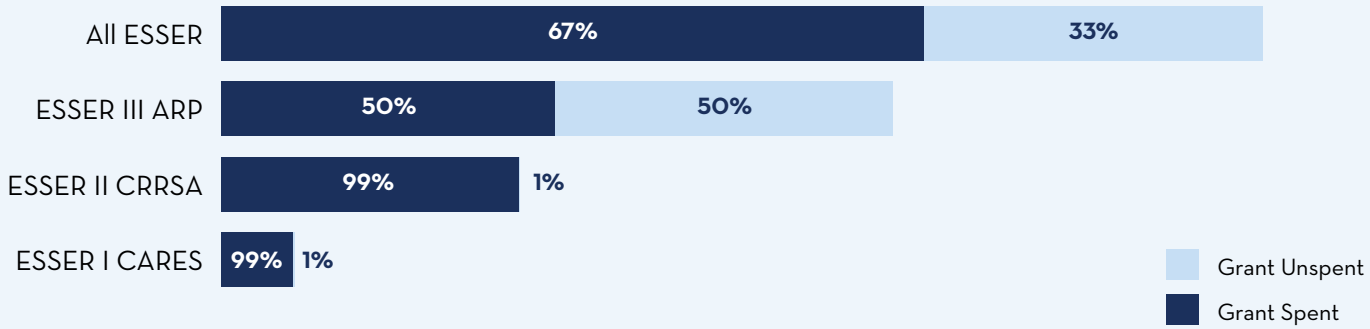
ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL EMERGENCY RELIEF (ESSER) LOCAL EDUCATION AGENCY SPENDING: FY20 - FY23 SUMMARY

A total of 48 Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in DC received a combined $540 million in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) federal stimulus grants. OSSE granted these funds to LEAs based on the Title I formula, and LEAs had autonomy to leverage funds based on their specific needs in preparing for, responding to and addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on their students and school communities.

The following summary draws on an analysis of individual LEA ESSER expenditure reimbursements submitted to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) between Fiscal Years 2020 and 2023. During that period, LEAs spent a total of $364M in ESSER funds.

LEA ESSER Spending by Grant

Through the end of Fiscal Year 2023, LEAs had spent down roughly **67% of all ESSER funds available.**



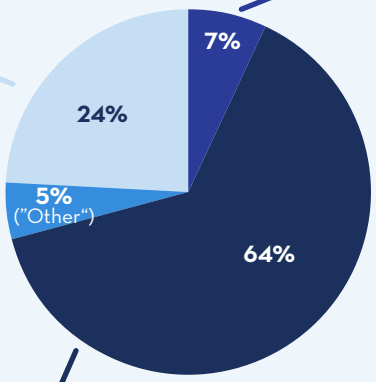
ESSER Spending by Recovery Priority

LEAs have spent the majority of their ESSER funds—over 60%—on **accelerate learning** strategies.

SAFE REOPENING

Almost 25% of LEA ESSER spending to date has been on safe reopening strategies such as hiring additional operational staff, upgrading facilities, improving air quality and campus safety.

1. **COVID-19 Mitigation:** Protective equipment (PPE), COVID-19 testing and tracing, sanitation services and air quality improvements.
2. **Operations and Facilities:** Additional operational and safety staff as well as facility upgrades and modifications.
3. **Campus and Student Safety:** Some LEAs spent significantly on campus security measures, reflecting an increased focus on school and student safety in the District in recent years.



STUDENT AND STAFF WELLBEING

7% of LEA ESSER spending has gone toward investments in student and staff wellbeing. Spending in this category was highest in Fiscal Year 2022.

1. **Mental Health Staff and Services:** Counselors, school psychologists, behavioral health specialists and nurses, and expanding social emotional and enrichment activities.
2. **Physical Wellbeing:** Food and garden programs to support healthy eating and nutrition, and increasing access to physical activity and athletic programs.

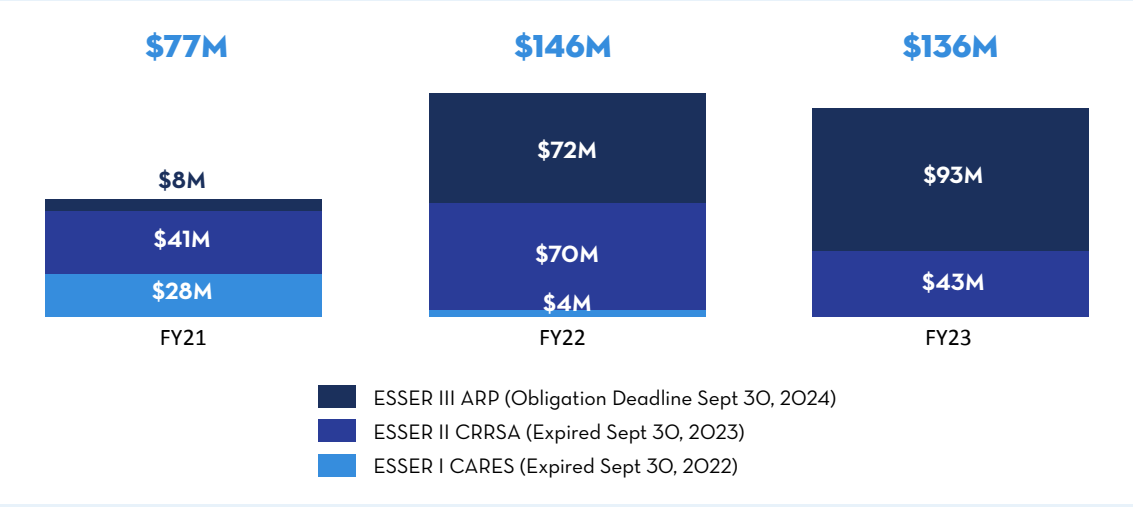
ACCELERATE LEARNING

Accelerate learning strategies have been primarily focused on additional instructional support staff, specific academic interventions and new educational technology.

1. **Instructional Support Staff**: Additional staff like reading specialists, instructional coaches, summer acceleration academy teachers, and dedicated aides.
2. **Academic Interventions**: School year and summer interventions like tutoring, small group instruction, and literacy curriculum.
3. **Educational Technology**: Especially in FY21 and FY22, LEAs purchased new educational technology to support student academic instruction such as licenses, subscriptions and digital learning platforms and programs. Spending in this category dropped significantly in FY23.

ESSER Spend Down by Fiscal Year

In FY23, LEAs spent a total of $136M in ESSER funds, leaving nearly **$175M in ESSER III-ARP funds available for FY24.**



ESSER Spending by Recovery Priority Over Time

Over time, ESSER spending has reflected a shift from focusing on **COVID-19 safety and virtual learning** to prioritizing **academic recovery**.

While the majority of ESSER funds have been spent on accelerated learning each year, we have seen shifts in how LEAs have spent their ESSER funds on accelerated learning and more broadly over time.

During FY20, FY21 and early FY22, LEA ESSER spending reflected the unique needs of the unexpected and sudden pivot to virtual school and the transition back to in-person learning. Accelerated learning investments were focused on supporting virtual learning (e.g., devices, digital learning platforms), while safe reopening spending focused on COVID-19 health and safety needs (e.g., testing, tracing, and PPE).

As FY22 progressed and in FY23, we saw increased spending on academic recovery and specific strategies to accelerate student learning. Safe reopening continued to be a significant spending category for some LEAs to support investments in student and campus safety, such as security guards.

We expect to see more ESSER funds spent on accelerating learning going forward, including into school year 2024-25 if LEAs apply for a liquidation extension for ESSER III-ARP funds. Liquidation extension is a waiver, requiring approval from the U.S. Department of Education, that would allow LEAs to continue to use their ESSER III-ARP funds past the end of the grant award period on September 30, 2024.

Evidence-Based Interventions

LEAs were required to spend 20% of their ESSER III-ARP grant awards on evidence-based interventions. In an analysis of LEA applications and reporting regarding how they spent these funds, OSSE categorized the top five intervention types. This analysis found that:

1. 32 out of 48 LEAs (67%) purchased **literacy and/or math intervention programs**, including Zearn, iReady, IXL, Touch Math, Read 180, and mClass
2. 12 out of 48 LEAs (23%) leveraged funds to partner with tutoring providers, such as Saga Education and Literacy Lab to provide **high-impact tutoring**
3. 11 out of 48 LEAs (25%) provided **extended learning time** for students, such as through summer and afterschool programming, extended school year calendars, or extended class periods
4. 10 out of 48 LEAs (21%) selected interventions to support **student mental health and wellbeing**, such as hiring behavior specialists or purchasing social emotional curriculum, interventions, or professional development
5. 9 out of 48 LEAs (19%) used ESSER funds to provide **instructional professional development** to staff, including on phonological awareness and using data to drive practice