



# LAUNCH NEBRASKA



## Opportunity of a Lifetime: A Vision for Renewal and Acceleration

June 15, 2021



# Agenda

- Welcome and Opening Comments - Commissioner Blomstedt
- Outlining the NDE's Top Priorities (Survey & Roundtable Results)
- NDE Investments
- Admin Days Preview
- Budget Roadmap
- Instructional Materials Requirements
- Evidence-Based Interventions
- ESSER III Grant Updates



# Welcome



- Purpose and cadence of these meetings
- Administrator Days: Opportunity of a Lifetime
- The federal investment provides a **significant, transformational, one-time investment** in education
- Opportunity to renew and accelerate learning, with a particular emphasis on **marginalized student groups** (i.e. students of color, students with disabilities, English learners, and economically disadvantaged)
- Opportunity to deepen partnerships forged over this year



# Opportunity of a Lifetime

	<b>Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) March 2020</b>	<b>Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA) December 2020</b>	<b>American Rescue Plan March 2021</b>
<b>Total Allocation</b>	\$65 million	\$243 million	\$546 million
<b>Flow Through to LEAs</b>	\$59 million	\$218 million	\$492 million
<b>NDE Set-Aside</b>	\$6 million	\$24 million	\$54 million

# The NDE's Top Priorities

- Across 14 roundtable discussions with myriad stakeholders and a survey of nearly 450 respondents yielded the following top priorities:
  - Provide access to comprehensive mental health services for students, staff, and communities.
  - Reimagine family and community engagement.
  - Develop high-quality professional learning opportunities and bolster the teacher pipeline.
  - Ensure all students have equitable access to grade-level instruction to address unfinished learning and support learning acceleration.
  - Comprehensively modernize information, data, technology, and process systems
- NDE is submitting its ARP Application to USDOE this week



# Foreshadowing NDE's Technology Investments

- Digital Equity - Home based Broadband - Cyber Security Supports
- Data Modernization, Warehousing, & Visualization Supports
- Digital Teaching & Learning Supports



# Elementary COVID Testing Opportunity



Midwest  
Coordination  
Center

COVID Testing for a Safer Community

- The Midwest Coordination Center is one of four centers funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services to help K-8 schools implement a COVID testing program to keep students in school that is:
  - Easy - needing minimal time and part of the daily routine.
  - Effective - accurate and tailored to both individual and group needs.
  - Accessible - easy to access for every state in the Midwest region, including urban, rural, and underserved areas.
- The program is free for **all** K-8 schools. Personnel time will be needed at the school site to collect the samples.
- We provide testing that identifies the infected individual. Knowing the infected individual means the school can isolate the infected individual and keep uninfected kids in school.
- Screening testing in schools will help quickly identify cases and break the transmission cycle. The testing program will assist in predicting outbreaks of variants and tracking where the virus is locally.
- Testing programs help calm fears for unvaccinated populations and their families especially as mask mandates are lifted, travel resumes, and borders open.
- When cold/flu season returns, screening tests will help rule out COVID as the culprit.

Expect a call from this organization this summer!



The background image is a monochromatic blue-tinted photograph of a lunar surface. On the left, an astronaut in a full spacesuit stands with one arm raised. In the center, a lunar lander is partially visible with an American flag attached. To the right, a large satellite dish is mounted on a structure. The ground is covered in lunar dust and rocks, and the horizon shows a dark, hilly landscape under a clear sky.

# Planning for Renewal and Acceleration: Supports this Summer



# Admin Day Preview: ESSER III Strand

- Using Student Data to Inform ESSER Plans
- Putting our Money Where our Mouth Is: Equity in ESSER
- Choosing what's Right for Your Students: Selecting Evidence-Based Strategies to Address "Learning Loss"
- Beyond HVACs: Elevating Districts' Transformational Investments
- ESSER Budget Roadmap



# Renewal and Acceleration

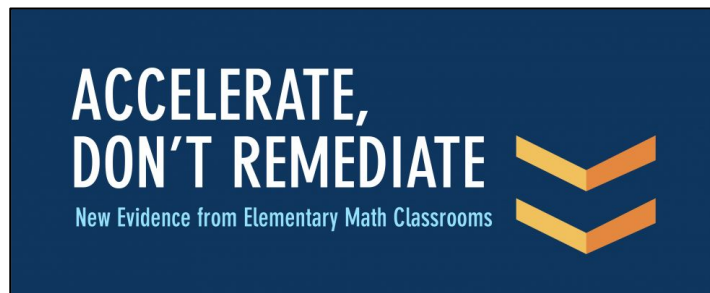


- Roadmap for summer 2021 and beyond
- Describes key shifts in language
- Highlights key considerations for:
  - Systems
  - High-quality instructional materials
  - Diagnosing unfinished teaching and learning
  - Planning for acceleration
  - Ensuring equitable instruction
  - Professional learning

# Pandemic Realities

Recently released TNTP & Zearn Math Study (05/2021) found:

- Students who experienced learning acceleration struggled less and learned more than students who started at the same level but experienced remediation instead.
- Students of color and those from low-income backgrounds were more likely than their white, wealthier peers to experience remediation—even when they had already demonstrated success on grade-level content.
- Learning acceleration was particularly effective for students of color and those from low-income families.



REMEDIATION	ACCELERATION
Covering <b>many objectives or standards from prior grades</b> or units (usually extending to a month or more of instruction)	Integrating <b>a few lessons from prior grades</b> or units
<b>Isolated from</b> grade-appropriate learning	<b>Just-in-time</b> to grade-appropriate learning (whether in core or extended time)
Usually with greater than 50% of time on <b>procedural fluency</b>	Always with an <b>appropriate balance</b> of fluency, conceptual understanding, and application work



# What do we mean by acceleration? Learning loss?



## Defining Learning Loss

The American Rescue Plan provides nearly \$490 million to Nebraska's districts through the third round of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds. ESSER III includes a new provision requiring LEAs to reserve 20% of their allocation to address student "learning loss." More information on ESSER III [here](#).

There is no doubt the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted students' experiences during the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years. Even so, teachers, school leaders, and school support staff have provided students with opportunities to learn while also caring for students' physical, social, and emotional needs. Despite a disrupted school year, the NDE does not believe that student learning has been lost. Learning loss implies the knowledge and skills students may have not acquired this past year can never be recovered.

With that in mind, Nebraska schools should leverage ESSER III funds in order to identify unfinished teaching and learning coupled with approaches to accelerate student learning. This is particularly important for those students who have been historically marginalized, including students of color, students with disabilities, the economically disadvantaged, and English learners.

Most Nebraska schools have served students through in-person learning this school year. Given that unique context, Nebraska schools should consider using ESSER III funds to support students most impacted by COVID-19 disruptions, including but not limited to:

- **Those students who attended the majority or even part of their year remotely.** While some students excelled during remote learning space, other remote learners may have found challenges. It is critical to determine the content remote learners may have not been taught in order to prepare them for learning acceleration.
- **Those students who were disengaged or did not participate when learning remotely.** While great efforts were made to serve students through any modality this year, remote learning provided its own set of challenges. The NDE is aware of and understands that some students were hard to reach, did not participate, and/or did not have the tools necessary to succeed. Determining some of the reasons why these students were disengaged and applying the most appropriate intervention will support these students upon return to school buildings and should remain an area of focus.
- **Those learners who were below grade level before the pandemic.** Disaggregate data from before the pandemic to better understand the student groups or specific students that were struggling and consider how the pandemic may have disproportionately affected them.
- **Students who have been historically marginalized,** including students of color, students with disabilities, English learners, and the economically disadvantaged. Specifically, schools that are identified for targeted support and improvement or additional targeted support and improvement for one of these groups had opportunity gaps before COVID-19 which could have been widened during the pandemic.

Learning acceleration offers the opportunity for students to receive grade-level instruction rather than focusing on what was missed in the past school year.

For example, a second-grade teacher starts with second-grade content, and the teacher intentionally embeds any content missed from the previous grade into grade-level instruction.

# Evidence-Based Interventions/Strategies

**NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

## ESSER III

EVIDENCE-BASED INTERVENTIONS

With the passage of [The American Rescue Plan \(ARP\) Act](#), states, districts, and schools now have significant federal resources available to implement evidence-based strategies to respond to students' social, emotional, and academic needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on marginalized student groups (each major racial and ethnic group, economically disadvantaged students, children with disabilities, English learners, gender, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and children and youth in foster care).<sup>1</sup>

To assist with planning and budgeting for the use of ESSER III funds, this document includes general information regarding USED [requirements relevant to the ESSER III funds](#) for evidence-based interventions, as well as resources to support school systems with determining interventions that would support their students.

### Use of ARP ESSER III Funds

Of the total amount allocated to a district (local education agency) from the State's ARP ESSER III award, districts must reserve at least 20 percent of funds to address "[learning loss](#)" through the implementation of evidence-based interventions for:

- Meeting students' social, emotional, mental and physical health, and academic needs, including through meeting basic student needs; reengaging students; and providing access to a safe and inclusive learning environment;
- Addressing the impact of COVID-19 on students' opportunity to learn, including closing the digital divide; implementing strategies for accelerating learning; effectively using data; and addressing resource inequities; and
- Supporting educator and staff well-being and stability, including stabilizing a diverse and qualified educator workforce.

From section [8101\(2\)\(1\)\(A\) of the SEEA](#), the term "evidence-based," when used with respect to a state, district, or school activity, means an activity, strategy, or intervention that - (i) demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on evidence, (ii) demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy, or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes and includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

In evaluating the strength of evidence within interventions, school systems should consider the four levels of evidence recognized by [the Every Student Succeeds Act](#).

Level of Evidence	Definition
Strong evidence	At least one well-designed, well-implemented experimental study (randomized group)
Moderate evidence	At least one well-designed, well-implemented quasi-experimental study (matched groups)
Promising evidence	At least one well-designed, well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias
Demonstrates a rationale	Practices that have a well-defined logic model or theory of action, are supported by research, and have some effort underway by an SEA, LEA, or outside research organization to determine their effectiveness

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education Fact Sheet: American Rescue Plan Act of 2021

- Details 4 levels of evidence
- Provides links and "how-tos" for several repositories
- Ensure investments are of high quality and high impact



# Core Instructional Materials in ESSER III

- Evidence-based instruction and high-quality instructional materials are key components in creating strong core instruction, increasing achievement, and decreasing the likelihood that some students will need targeted interventions.
  - Core instructional materials aligned to the Nebraska Standards and Key Instructional Shifts, and that are integrated within the framework of a well-designed instructional model and implemented with fidelity, support **ALL** student learning.
- ESSER III funds can be utilized to purchase **core** instructional materials and evidence-based interventions in order to address unfinished teaching and learning and support learning acceleration.
  - Interventions should not be used as core instructional materials nor should they replace core instruction for particular student groups!



# Core Instructional Materials in ESSER III

- In GMS, see the “Instructional Materials Info\_ESSER” spreadsheet.
  - The spreadsheet includes three tabs: ELA instructional materials, mathematics instructional materials, and science instructional materials and is organized by grade bands (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12).
- If ESSER III funds will be used to purchase **core** instructional materials for ELA, mathematics, or science, the district will be required to show that the instructional materials are aligned to the Nebraska State Standards and Key Instructional Shifts.
- Information about alignment is available through the [Nebraska Instructional Materials Collaborative](#) and [EdReports](#).
  - Materials with a rating of “Meets” meet the expectations for alignment and are pre-approved as an ESSER expenditure.
  - Materials with a “Does Not Meet” rating do not meet expectations for alignment and will not be approved as an ESSER expenditure.
  - Materials with a “Partially Meets” rating or not listed will be subject to additional review by NDE staff prior to approval.





# Core Instructional Materials in ESSER III



**NeMTSS**  
FRAMEWORK

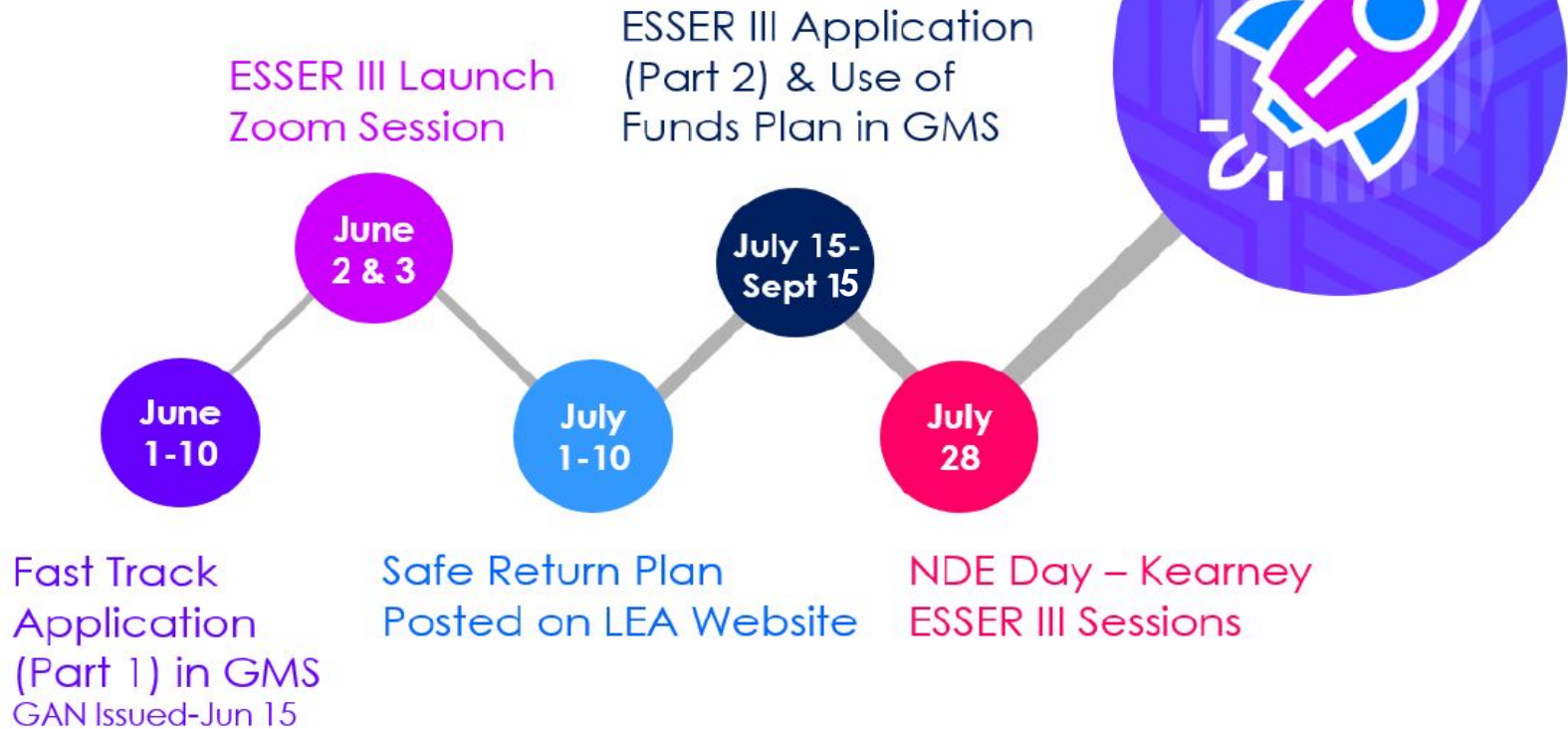


- As Districts are choosing to make High-quality material selections, you may find that you need support to compare educational programs and evaluate goodness of fit for your district. The [NeMTSS Program Comparison Tool](#) is intended to help educators make an informed decision about programs that may work well in their schools.
- The programs included in this resource are a selection of those available and not an exhaustive list. Should a program not be listed that a district would like more information on, this can be submitted through the tool.





# Timeline



# ESSER III Consultation

LEA Consultation: LEAs engage in meaningful consultation with stakeholders, including, but not limited to:

- i. students;
- ii. families;
- iii. school and district administrators (including special education administrators); and
- iv. teachers, principals, school leaders, other educators, school staff, and their unions.

The LEA must also engage in meaningful consultation with each of the following to the extent present in or served by the LEA:

- i. Tribes;
- ii. civil rights organizations (including disability rights organizations); and
- iii. stakeholders representing the interests of children with disabilities, English learners, children experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, migratory students, children who are incarcerated, and other underserved students.

# ESSER III Support: Pre-Admin Days

- Zoom Sessions led by Federal Programs Staff:
  - July 20 @ 2 p.m.
  - July 21 @ 10 a.m.
  - July 26 @ 10 a.m. (all CDT)

Email will be sent to all Superintendents with direct link to the work session on July 15th, when Part 2 opens.

- <https://zoom.us/j/4024712452>



# Additional ESSER III Resources

## Temporarily Located on Federal Programs Page



Video of Zoom Session

A worksheet titled "A Plan for Safe Return to In-Person Instruction and Continuity of Services Pursuant to the Federal American Rescue Plan Act, Section 200(2)(2) - ESSER III". It includes sections for "Introduction and Background", "Section 200(2)(2) of the ARP Act", "Plan Revisions", and "Document Retention for Programmatic Monitoring". The document is a template for schools to develop a safe return plan.

Worksheet/Template for  
"Return to In-Person Learning"

A form titled "Request Approval Form for Capital Assets Non Construction Project" from the "NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION". It includes instructions for completion, a section for "Name of School District", "School District Number", "School District Superintendent", "Superintendent Email", and "Superintendent Signature". It also has a "Date" field and a "Page 1 of 3" indicator.

Capital Asset Request Form



# ESSER III Supports: Who can help?

## **Innovative Use of Funds:**

Lane Carr & Shirley Vargas

## **Questions on the Grant Application:**

Beth Wooster, Kirk Russell, Dottie Heusman

## **Questions on Capital Assets:**

Tom Goeschel

## **Questions on Instructional Materials:**

Cory Epler

## **Questions on Reimbursements:**

Steve Bauers

## **Questions on Fund Use:**

Bryce Wilson

## **Questions on Assurances:**

Jen Utemark

## **Questions on Supporting Students with Disabilities:**

Amy Rhone

**[firstname.lastname@nebraska.gov](mailto:firstname.lastname@nebraska.gov)**



# Budget Roadmap

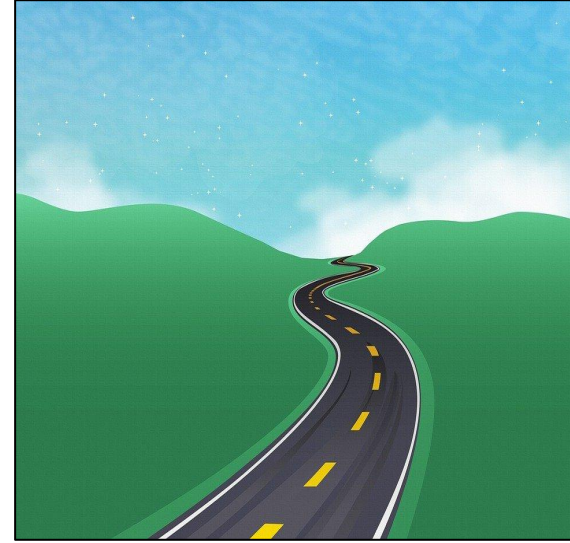
**Step 1** - Establish Renewal and Acceleration Team

**Step 2** - Eliminate Inaccurate and misunderstood info about ESSER III

**Step 3** - Consult stakeholders and build trust

**Step 4** - Develop 3-year Renewal and Acceleration Strategy and Budget

**Step 5** - Build feedback and communicate with stakeholders



# Upcoming Events

- MTSS Reading Symposium on July 19, 2021
- Admin Days - July 28-30, 2021 - **NDE Day is July 28**
- GetConnected Nebraska Afterschool Conference – September 10, 2021
- Nebraska Adult Education Conference – September 23, 2021
- Paraeducator Conference – November 9, 2021
- List of events <https://events.education.ne.gov/>





**Thank you!**