



Summer 2021 | Prepared for Presentation to the NSBA Equity Symposium

What the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Means for Education Equity

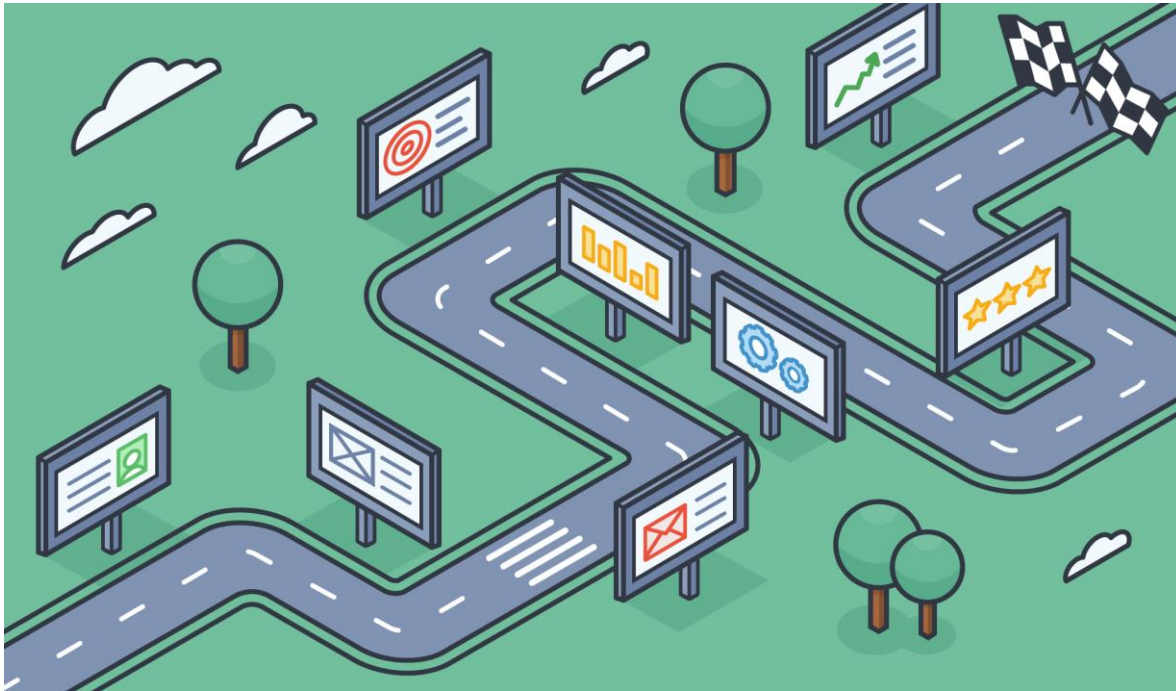
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The Education Trust

Welcome & Overview



1. What is unfinished Learning?
2. How do we fix it?
 - Summary of research on targeted, intensive tutoring, building relationships
3. How did we get here?
4. How do we pay for it? (American Rescue Plan)

Social, Emotional AND Academic Development

“THE MAJORITY OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND DISTRICTS IN THE U.S. report they are working to support the social and emotional learning of students. But in too many places, the approach is to focus narrowly on changing student behavior rather than implementing practices that build relationships and create learning environments that support positive social and emotional growth. This is especially true in schools and districts that serve large populations of students of color and students from low-income backgrounds, exposing these students to environments that could do more harm than good.”

We have a unique opportunity to meet the social, emotional and academic needs of all students

CHANGING ADULT BELIFES AND MINDSETS



FROM A DEFICIT-BASED MINDSET TO A STRENGTH-BASED MINDSET



FROM ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL TO RECOGNIZING CULTURAL AND CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES



FROM ALLOWING BIAS TO IMPACT STUDENTS TO TARGETED AND CONTINUOUS EFFORTS TO REDUCE BIAS

CHANGING SYSTEMS AND POLICIES



FOSTER STUDENT BELONGING



CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO REACH THEIR POTENTIAL



PROVIDE ACADEMIC AND HOLISTIC SUPPORTS

What is “Unfinished Learning?”

*The Education Trust uses the term “unfinished learning,” as opposed to “learning loss” or “learning gaps,” to describe material that should have presented to students, but has not yet been mastered. The idea that learning is not complete better reflects the reality that **all students can learn and “gaps” can be closed with equitable opportunities, materials, assessments, and high-quality instruction.** With this phrasing, our goal is to redirect any focus on “fixing students” toward a focus on systemic changes to meet the needs of students.*



CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO
REACH THEIR POTENTIAL



PROVIDE ACADEMIC AND
HOLISTIC SUPPORTS

Accelerate V. Remediate

Accelerate

Connect and blend unfinished learning (unmastered content) to new learning to keep students progressing.

Integrating prior lessons when needed

Studies found to be effective for students of color

Remediate

Spend significant time on content already covered (below grade level) without introducing new content

Re-do content, skills, standards and objectives from prior grades

Studies found to only be effective under limited circumstances, and often has many negative effects for students of color and English Learners (drop out, disciplinary issues, long-term economic impacts)

Take a minute to imagine 8 year-old Maya:

- Maya lives with her mom (a nurse), her grandmother, her 12-year-old brother, and 3-year-old sister
- She shared a computer with her brother for the first 4 months of the pandemic
- Her school opted for 3 hours of zoom class a day
 - Her neighborhood has suffered from unstable internet so some days she couldn't log on for class
- Maya is a natural caregiver; she always wants to help her mom and siblings in any way that she can.
- She is worried about returning to school.
- Maya hasn't had contact with any school staff outside of her zoom class.



Maya, like many other students, is experiencing unfinished learning. Let's talk about what schools can do to support students like Maya.

Targeted Intensive Tutoring

- Sometimes known as “high-dosage tutoring”
- Same tutor to work over an extended period of time (e.g., all-year, every school day) on academic skills
- **KEY EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS:**
 - A **well-trained** trained, single tutor working with **less than 4 students at a time**
 - A skill-building curriculum closely aligned with the math or reading curriculum used throughout the school
 - Targeted to the student’s academic needs.



HOW EFFECTIVE IS INTENSIVE TUTORING?

We looked at the research to help leaders navigate complicated decisions.² The chart below shows how implementing various features of intensive tutoring impact its effectiveness.

Features	More Effective		Less Effective	
Tutors	Certified teachers	Paraprofessionals	Trained volunteers	Peers
Student: Tutor Ratio	1-2: 1		3-4:1	
Curriculum	Skill building curriculum		Homework help	
Training and Supervision	Pre-service & ongoing training & supervision	Pre-service training & a single additional supplemental training	Pre-service training only	No training
Location	During the school day complementing the regular class	During the school day substituting for the regular class	After school/ Out of school	
How often & How Long	All year, every school day for an hour		Partial year	
Target Population	Younger students		Older students	

Expanded Learning Time (ELT)

- Encompasses programs or strategies implemented to increase the amount of instruction and learning students experience
- Can be after-school, summer, and in-school programs.
- **KEY EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS:**
 - Aligned to in-school curriculum, targeted to student needs, well-trained educators, small class sizes



Additional time in school cannot be effective unless traditional school time is also used well including high quality curriculum and instruction.

HOW EFFECTIVE IS EXPANDED LEARNING TIME?

We looked at the research to help leaders navigate these complicated decisions. The chart below shows how implementing different features of expanded learning impacts its effectiveness.

Features	More Effective			Less Effective	
Curriculum	Aligned, individualized, & high-quality curriculum	Clear program goals but not aligned to curriculum		No clear program goals	
Training and Coaching	Pre-service & ongoing training, & coaching		Pre-service training only		No training
When and Where	During the regular school year		Mandatory summer programs		After school or weekends
Attendance	Mandatory during the school day	Mandatory other times	Voluntary with incentives	Voluntary with no incentives	
Total Annual Hours	Significant Time (45-100 hours)		Too little Time (less than 44 hours)		Too Much Time (More than 100 hours of reading)
Class Sizes	10-15 students		15-20 students		20+ students
Teachers	Certified Teachers			Non-Certified Instructors	

A Cautionary Tale:

Not all programs during the school day have shown large increases in student outcomes. Implementation decisions matter, and it is imperative that programs **center equity and high-quality instruction** in those decisions.

In 2012, Florida passes legislation requiring double blocks of reading. A study of the extra hour of reading found relatively small increase in outcomes in some places because many schools **were unable to place students with their certified teachers or with small groups.**





FOSTER STUDENT
BELONGING

Strong relationships and connections to schools and the caring educators who teach and work within buildings will be key to the successful implementation of any evidence-based academic intervention to address unfinished learning.

HOW EFFECTIVE IS RELATIONSHIP BUILDING?

We looked at the research to help leaders navigate these complicated decisions. The chart below shows the most effective elements of relationship building strategies in schools.

Elements	More Effective			Less Effective
Adults	Certified teachers and other staff	Other in-school adults	Trained volunteers	Outside mentors
Group size	Individual or small groups			More than 8 students
Activity	Social activity around a student's goal	Academic activity around a student's goals	Activity not structured around student's goals	No structured activity
Training and Supervision	Pre-service & ongoing training, & feedback		Pre-service training only	No Training

How can states and districts pay
for these strategies?

American Rescue Plan!

How did we get here?

- **March 2020:** The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act ([CARES](#)) Act provided \$13.2 billion for K-12 education and \$3 billion for governors to use on K-12 or higher education
- **December 2020:** The Coronavirus Response and Relief and Supplemental Appropriations and Relief ([CRRSA](#)) Act provided \$54.3 billion for K-12 education and \$4 billion for governors to use on K-12 or higher education
- **March 2021:** The American Rescue Plan Act ([ARP](#)) provides \$122.8 billion for K-12 education, as well as additional funding for education, nutrition, and childcare

ARP Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund

- Funding distributed to states and school districts (i.e., local educational agencies) based on the share of Title I funding they receive under ESSA
- States may keep up to 10% of the money they receive; **90% must go to eligible school districts**
- **What's New?** Specific set-asides **for evidence-based strategies to address unfinished instruction**, targeted to underserved students:
 - 5% minimum set aside for state educational agencies (SEAs)
 - 20% minimum set aside for school districts
- There are additional set asides for SEAs:
 - 1% set aside for evidence-based, summer programs
 - 1% set aside for comprehensive, after-school programs
- States must meet **maintenance of effort requirements**, and states and districts must meet **maintenance of equity requirements**

Key Dates & Timelines

- States have already received 2/3 of their ARP ESSER allocation
- To receive the final 1/3 of their ARP ESSER allocation, states must submit an [application](#) to the U.S Department of Education by **June 7, 2021**
- States must allocate ARP ESSER funds to school districts **within 60 days** of the state receiving the funds
- There are two relevant district plan requirements:
 - 1. Within 30 days of receiving funds**, districts must release a “return to in-person instruction” plan that includes information about returning to in-person instruction. *LEAs are not required to reopen as a condition of receiving funds.*
 - 2. Within 90 days of receiving funds**, districts must submit ARP ESSER plans to states detailing how they will use this funding.
- Funds must be used by **September 30, 2024**

How can funding be used?

- States and school districts are required to engage in **meaningful stakeholder engagement**, including engagement with students; families; Tribes; civil rights organizations; superintendents and charter school leaders (if applicable); teachers, principals, and school staff; and stakeholders representing underserved student groups
- Funds **can be used flexibly**, including to:
 - address the impact of significant interrupted instruction, including addressing students' academic, social and emotional needs;
 - prepare schools for physical reopening (e.g., sanitation, COVID testing);
 - facility repairs and improvements, including projects to improve air quality in school buildings;
 - purchase education technology;
 - provide mental health services and supports, including through the implementation of evidence-based full-service community schools and the hiring of counselors; and
 - other activities authorized by existing law.

ARP: Additional Targeted Investments

- **Students Experiencing Homelessness**: Invests \$800 million for wraparound services for homeless children and youth
- **Students with Disabilities**: Invests approximately \$3B nationally into programs funded through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- **Broadband Access**: Provides \$7.1B for home broadband connectivity and devices for K-12 students through the E-Rate program - [The Emergency Broadband Benefit Program](#) is live now.
- **Emergency Funding Assistance to Non-Public Schools**: Provides \$2.75B for non-public schools
- **AmeriCorps Tutors**: Provides \$1B for the Corporation for National Community Service and the National Service Trust to support, in part, an increase in tutors trained through AmeriCorps
- **Head Start**: Provides \$1B to states to fund Head Start programs
- **Child Care**: Provides \$14.9B for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and another \$23.9B for childcare stabilization funding
- **Child Tax Credit**: Expands [eligibility](#) to 27 million children (including roughly half of all Black and Latino children); raises the maximum credit from \$2000 to \$3000 for children between the ages of 6 and 17 and up to \$3600 for children under 6; makes the credit fully-refundable
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Benefits (SNAP)**: Extends the 15% increase in benefits through September 2021
- **Pandemic EBT Program**: Authorizes the program, to operate this summer, the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, and during any school year and subsequent summer in which a public health emergency is declared

What should states do to ensure federal stimulus funds advance equity?



The COVID-19 crisis has disrupted education for all students, but has hit students from vulnerable and systemically neglected populations — students living in poverty, students with disabilities, students learning English, students experiencing homelessness, students in the foster care system, students who are incarcerated, undocumented students, Black and Brown students, Native students, and students who identify as LGBTQ+ — hardest. Beyond interruptions to instruction, many of these students face food insecurity, unreliable access to remote learning technology, reduced access to student supports and education services, and housing uncertainty. Racial inequities caused by long-standing racial violence and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic cause further stress and anxiety for students of color and expose some of the additional daily challenges they face.

In response to these crises, the federal government is providing an additional \$125 billion to states and school districts through the [American Recovery Plan Act \(ARP\)](#). ARP requires states and school districts to use at least 5% and 20% of the funding they receive, respectively, to implement evidence-based interventions to address unfinished learning and to address students' academic, social, and emotional needs. This package includes \$3 billion for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and \$800 million for [supporting students experiencing homelessness](#), which state leaders must use to support these student groups (along with other federal and state funding which can — and should — be used for this purpose as well). The U.S. Department of Education (ED) [has already begun sending](#) these resources out. In April, ED released a [state application](#) for the remaining funds.

This unprecedented investment in education provides states and school districts with a chance to close opportunity gaps that existed prior to COVID-19. For perspective, the total investment in K-12 schools through ARP, the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic](#)



For more detail, visit: <https://edtrust.org/resource/recommendations-for-state-leaders-to-advance-equity-using-funds-from-the-american-rescue-plan/>

5 Key Actions for States to Advance Equity

1. Ensure **equity in fiscal policies**.
2. **Meaningfully engage stakeholders** in decisions about how additional federal funding will be used to support students and redesign public education to work for all students.
3. Target additional resources, including federal stimulus funding, to create **safe and equitable learning environments** and provide **whole child supports**, particularly for vulnerable and systematically neglected students.
4. Prioritize federal stimulus funds and additional state funding to **evidence-based programs that address unfinished instruction and accelerate learning** (e.g., targeted intensive tutoring, high quality expanded learning time) and respond to students' academic, social, and emotional needs in high-need districts and schools.
5. Strategically allocate federal stimulus funding to **address immediate student needs and lay the groundwork for systemic changes** that can be sustained in the long term.

What should you be asking school districts about how federal stimulus funds will be used?



Questions

to Ask Districts About How They Will Use New Federal Funding to Support Students



The [American Rescue Plan](#) (ARP) Act provides almost \$125 billion for education, including at least \$109 billion that goes directly to local school districts. The amount of funding each state and school district [receives](#) is based on the share of that state or district's Title I funding, and the U.S. Department of Education (ED) [has already begun sending](#) these resources out. In April, ED released a [state application](#) for the remaining funds. States must submit this application describing how the state will use ARP funds no later than June 7, 2021. School districts must develop high-quality plans, with engagement and input from stakeholders, for how they will use the ARP education funding — and they must publicly share these plans.

This unprecedented investment in education provides states and school districts with a chance to close opportunity gaps that existed prior to COVID-19, especially for students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, English learners, students with disabilities, and students experiencing homelessness. For perspective, the total investment in K-12 schools through the three federal packages signed into law — ARP, the [Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security](#) (CARES) Act in April 2020, and the [Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act](#) in December 2020 — is nearly twice the \$100 billion that was invested in schools through the [2009 American Reinvestment and Recovery Act](#) to address the impacts of the Great Recession. Unlike those 2009 resources, the vast majority of funding provided over the last year will be directly awarded to school districts.

LEA leaders must target these new resources to the students who need it most, and leverage this federal investment to drive significant change in our education system. **It is critical that local stakeholders, including students, families, community members, advocates, and educators, remain vigilant to ensure these funds are not used to just do more of the same that would lead us back to a world of “pre-COVID” inequity.** Learn more here: <https://edtrust.org/resource/5-questions-to-ask-districts-about-how-they-will-use-new-federal-funding-to-support-students/>

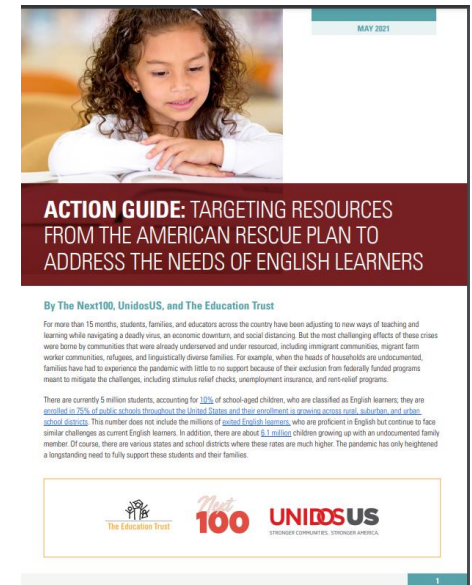
5 Key Questions to Ask School District Leaders

1. How is the LEA **meaningfully engaging a diverse and representative set of stakeholders** – including students, families, educators, and the broader community – in developing a plan to use these funds and implementing that plan?
2. What **data will the LEA use to identify student needs** – including needs that were unmet prior to the pandemic – and **monitor how students are progressing**?
3. How will the LEA **ensure funding is targeted to the students who need it the most**?
4. How will the LEA **target additional resources, including federal stimulus funding, to create safe and equitable learning environments and provide whole child supports**, particularly for vulnerable and systematically neglected students?
5. How will the LEA implement **evidence-based strategies to address unfinished instruction**?

Targeting Resources to Address the Needs of English Learners

School district leaders should:

- Meaningfully Engage Linguistically Diverse Families and Communities
- Accelerate Student Learning With Targeted Supports for English Learners
- Provide Students With Social, Emotional, Physical Health, and Mental Health Supports
- Build Infrastructure to Support English Learners in the Long Term



Additional Resources

Additional Resources

- [Targeted Intensive Tutoring](#) (Ed Trust)
- [Expanded Learning Time](#) (Ed Trust)
- [The Importance of Strong Relationships](#) (Ed Trust)
- [Social, Emotional, and Academic Development Through an Equity Lens](#) (Ed Trust)
- [Action Guide: Targeting Resources from the American Rescue Plan to Address the Needs of English Learners](#) (Ed Trust, UnidosUS, The Next100)
- [5 Questions to Ask Districts About How They Will Use New Federal Funding to Support Students](#) (Ed Trust)
- [Recommendations for State Leaders to Advance Equity Using Funds from the American Rescue Plan](#) (Ed Trust, UnidosUS, National Urban League, Teach Plus, SchoolHouse Connection, Education Reform Now, National Center for Learning Disabilities, Alliance for Excellent Education, Education Counsel)
- [Resource Equity District Diagnostic](#) (Alliance for Resource Equity)
- [U.S. Department of Education Resources on the ARP](#)
- [“And they cared”: How to Create Better, Safer Learning Environments for Girls of Color](#) (Ed Trust; National Women’s Law Center); includes district checklist
- [How to Use American Rescue Plan Act K-12 Education Funds to Identify and Support Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness](#) (SchoolHouse Connection)