



## ***State Plans for Accelerating Student Learning: A Preliminary Analysis*** **April 21, 2021**

One year after the COVID-19 pandemic forced state and school leaders across the nation and around the world to immediately close school buildings, the lasting impact on students is increasingly evident: Months of online learning and limited in-person interaction with educators, coaches and mentors have led to gaps in learning, and unknown emotional impacts on millions of K12 students and educators.

Experiences of this past year have brought deeper understanding and greater clarity on how best to organize schooling and deliver instruction in a way that minimizes health risks and maximizes learning and engagement. An extraordinary influx of federal education funding is providing ample new resources to reopen school buildings safely, create new student supports and help state leaders make both short- and long-term investments to accelerate student learning and well-being. With these factors in mind, governors and state chiefs are moving quickly to develop plans that include a range of new strategies, targeted interventions and grant programs designed to close achievement gaps and prepare all students in their states for academic success.

[Council of Chief State School Officers](#) (CCSSO) and [National Governors Association](#) (NGA) analyzed emerging state efforts to accelerate student learning this summer and during the 2021-22 school year. We reviewed available state plans, websites, media reports and gubernatorial State of the State addresses for most states.<sup>1</sup> Because each state is at different stages in their planning, in many cases, the documents reviewed were initial drafts, plan outlines (with specifics still being developed) or the first in a series of resources being developed.

**This memo provides an overview of notable strategies and trends that were identified through this analysis, and is organized around four major steps, which serve as the framing for this memo.** Along with describing the activities states are taking as part of each step, this memo includes a range of state examples and links to related resources. As state approaches continue to evolve and plans are finalized, states are encouraged to share their detailed strategies with CCSSO, NGA and the field.

**At this point in planning and implementation, the four major steps states are taking include:**

1. **[Getting organized and understanding what needs to happen.](#)** As state leaders begin their planning, they are using a variety of creative ways—despite the pandemic—to seek to **communicate proactively and engage key stakeholders about emerging plans.** When possible, state leaders are leveraging existing advisory groups or task forces or are creating new advisory committees to provide expertise

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<sup>1</sup> This sample includes AL, AK, AR, AZ, CA, CT, FL, HI, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, MI, MN, MO, MS, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NC, ND, OH, OR, RI, TN, TX, UT, VT, VA, WA, WV.

and input, reflect stakeholder perspectives and support implementation. State leaders also are providing districts with planning frameworks and tools to streamline the process and ensure critical issues are considered.

2. **Using summer 2021 to accelerate learning.** After the challenges over the past year offering consistent full-time, in-person schooling, state leaders see summer-time as a strong opportunity to offer special programs and supports that can accelerate student learning. They are working with district and community leaders to **develop a variety of summer activities designed to boost learning and enable students to reconnect with one another.** The range of activities being planned include tutoring programs, learning and enrichment camps, community service and apprenticeships, and more traditional summer schooling. State leaders are moving quickly to formalize these plans and use new federal funds to help underwrite the additional staff, preparation, materials and programming needed.
3. **Supporting more students to be successful learners.** State leaders are working to **ensure students have access to targeted help for both their academic needs and overall well-being.** Over the past months of the pandemic, states have strengthened their multi-tiered systems of support and they are now examining potential partnerships to address specific academic needs, including efforts to provide more learning time during or after school. State leaders see that new federal funding can play an important role in these plans too and they are considering how to use these resources to scale existing successful programs, launch new grant opportunities or jumpstart new efforts.
4. **Tackling other challenges: Future considerations.** As described above, state leaders are moving quickly to craft plans that begin to address immediate academic and non-academic student needs over the coming months. At the same time, they **recognize many other thorny issues still need to be addressed, as they roll out implementation details and work to address the pandemic's many harms** to students, family members and educators. Based on our review, important issues for state leaders to continue working on moving forward include (1) how to use one-time federal funds (at both state and local levels) smartly and strategically, (2) how best to target resources and programs for the students who need them most, (3) finding creative and effective ways to support educators as they are asked to continue to do more, (4) aligning state policymakers and agencies on a common plan, and (5) take stock of lessons from the pandemic—what worked and what hasn't—to re-evaluate long-standing structures and approaches in the K12 system.

## STEP 1: Getting Organized and Understanding What Needs to Happen

### COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

State leaders recognize that decisions about the structures, priorities and offerings for this summer and fall will be most effective if co-designed with key stakeholders, including families and educators who have been directly supporting and teaching students throughout the pandemic. During this time, state leaders have prioritized communicating broadly, and they have proactively taken steps to establish and maintain outreach with the field through multiple channels to widely publicize opportunities for engagement and to announce key decisions as they are made.

Some emerging examples of state efforts include:

- **Connecticut** formed the AccelerateCT Education task force in mid-March 2021. This task force, made up of a cross-section of stakeholders, will assist in developing a statewide education recovery and acceleration framework and creating programs for students across the state, beginning with enhanced learning and enrichment opportunities for this spring and summer.
- **Kansas** is encouraging districts to continue tapping collaborations with community partners to support students. In its recently released Navigating Next plan for the summer and 2021–22 school year, school leaders are urged to engage a collaborative team that could include district or building leadership teams, families, teachers, staff and health professionals to support implementation.
- **Missouri** created the Task Force for Learning Acceleration in May 2020, composed of education stakeholders from across the state. The members have worked collaboratively since then to develop recommendations and tools that address learning loss, acceleration of learning and strategies to reach and stay connected to all students.
- **Rhode Island** organized its stakeholder-driven Learning, Equity and Accelerated Pathways (LEAP) task force in February 2021 to assess the conditions of learning loss across the state, analyze student data, identify areas of focus and high leverage strategies, engage with and learn from national experts, and provide guidance on next steps and strategic use of stimulus funding.
- **Vermont** created a partnership between school district recovery teams that will lead local and regional learning acceleration efforts and state support teams that will serve as liaisons with other state agencies to assist local teams in implementing their plans. These efforts prioritize: social, emotional and mental health well-being; student engagement; academic achievement and success.
- **Virginia** created the VA LEARNS (Leading, Engaging, Assessing, Recovering, Nurturing and Succeeding) workgroup in February 2021 to develop recommendations and identify resources and best practices related to equity, curricula and interventions strategies, and the impact on mental health and social emotional well-being of students, families and school employees. Stakeholders involved included school and district leaders, the state’s Teacher of the Year, school psychologists, representatives of the state Board of Education, parents, and community partners.

Many observers rightly worry about how schools and educators will re-establish strong connections with parents and families after the past year. Available state resources did not include specific guidance on family engagement activities, but many states have produced resource guides with ideas for successfully involving families. Typically, districts are primarily responsible for ensuring schools and educators provide consistent, accessible communications to parents and caregivers.

## PLANNING FRAMEWORKS

States are using or modifying existing planning processes, frameworks and tools to clearly outline the challenges districts and local communities should address, and the student data to be analyzed to inform decisions. These frameworks can help local leaders define what success looks like in the short- (summer 2021), intermediate- (next school year) and long-term, and help them set goals to measure their progress. These frameworks can also be used to establish common priorities for how to leverage the new federal funding available through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER) and the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Funds (GEER). See the [ESSER Fact Sheet Summary \(Chart B\)](#) and the [GEER Fact Sheet Summary \(Chart C\)](#) in the Appendix for details about the use of these funds.

Some emerging examples of state efforts include:

- **Alabama** created [a series of documents](#) designed to integrate the ESSER II application into its annual Consolidated Funding Application to consolidate LEAs’ recovery plans, signed assurances and budgets into one seamless process. ALSDE also provides a list of guiding principles in developing these district plans, including use of accurate data and advice that adjustments to initial plans will be needed.
- **Illinois’** P-20 Council has released the [Learning Renewal Resource Guide](#), which includes implementation guidance and resources related to academic, social, emotional and mental health support for PreK-college aged students, teachers, faculty and staff. The guide is designed to inform decision making, inspire engagement, and quicken the pace of implementation.
- **Kansas** created [Navigating Next](#), a guidance document with specific strategies and considerations for districts to employ between March and May 2021 in preparation for summer and the 2021–22 school year. The state is also providing guidance to help districts determine how best to use their federal funding for COVID relief.
- **Washington** released the [Academic and Student Well-Being Recovery Plan Planning Guide](#) as a comprehensive resource to support districts as they develop local plans by the state’s June 1 deadline. The guide includes questions and considerations, a [condensed planning tool](#), sample survey questions and a [fillable Word template](#) that can be used for School Board approval.

### **Essential Questions Moving Forward: Planning & Engaging**

*As state leaders further develop their plans, they could consider these questions:*

- ✓ What existing committees or advisory groups could inform and improve state plans?
- ✓ How are we defining and evaluating success for this summer, this fall and beyond?
- ✓ How will we identify and elevate lessons learned?
- ✓ What additional help or resources will districts need to accurately assess where their students are academically and non-academically?
- ✓ Which student populations have been most impacted and how can they be identified? Which students should be prioritized for which supports or extra resources?
- ✓ How can educator insights about what their students need and what support they need from the state be best incorporated into state plans or school district guidance?
- ✓ Can paraprofessionals, retired, or pre-service educators be tapped to increase learning time for students?
- ✓ What partner organizations or community groups could be enlisted to support implementation?

## STEP 2: Using Summer 2021 to Accelerate Learning

State leaders are collaborating closely with school and district leaders to develop summer plans to boost learning and bridge learning gaps, including activities such as tutoring programs, summer schools and learning/enrichment camps. States will have additional funding to support their efforts: The federal government recently enacted and funded [ARP ESSER](#), which requires districts to reserve no less than 20 percent of their allocation to address learning recovery, including summer learning and enrichment. Given these new funds are just being released and have relatively few requirements, we expect to see more specific plans from state leaders about how they will use these resources over the coming weeks.

Some emerging examples of state efforts include:

- **Alaska's** governor has [directed](#) the Department of Education to establish summer camps to boost reading, math and coding skills, and to create an apprenticeship program to allow high schoolers to earn credit while working for local businesses and to explore the sciences and technical trades.
- **Connecticut** policymakers are advancing an [effort](#) to establish the Connecticut Summer Learning COVID-19 Recovering Initiative, which will award grants to support educational, enrichment and recreational activities with a focus on literacy, math and SEL skill-building for students ages 5–20.
- **Hawai'i** will offer the [Summer Start Kindergarten Transition program](#) for incoming kindergarteners who were unable to attend preschool due to the pandemic, and have had little or no classroom experience. Offered at elementary schools, the free, three-week program will focus on school routines to prepare students to successfully transition into kindergarten in the fall.
- **Kentucky** has released [guidance](#) for districts on how they can create effective accelerated summer learning programs and support for students throughout the 2021-22 school year through tutoring and vacation academies. The state recommends that districts hold 5-6 week summer programs that offer a mix of math, reading and enrichment activities. During the school year the state recommends that districts offer high-intensity individualized tutoring at least three times each week, and 25 hours of targeted instruction during vacation weeks.
- **Louisiana** has [issued guidance](#) that encourages districts to change their approach to summer learning, and to develop programs and offerings that mirror summer camp in addition to core content tutoring. Guidance provided by LDOE includes suggestions for field trips, the incorporation of the arts, visits to the library and well-being supports.
- **Minnesota's** governor [is working with legislators](#) to provide funding to [expand existing summer programs](#) for 2021 to include programming for preschool age children, field trips and hands-on learning, mental health support, summer preschool and college courses for graduating seniors. Funding will also expand neighborhood programs that bring school-based summer programs such as enrichment, social and emotional skill-building, and tutoring services to apartment buildings, parks and community centers.
- **Nebraska's** Department of Education will offer the [Zearn Math Summer Intensive Series](#), a 12-week series that prioritizes essential math content students should master before starting grades 1–7. The program is designed to be used flexibly across summer school models, tutoring programs or targeted interventions.
- **North Carolina** will require districts to offer at least 150 hours of summer instruction in addition to offering sports and enrichment activities through the [Summer Learning Choice for NC Families bill](#). Students are not required to attend summer school, but districts are expected to target programs

toward students who are performing significantly below their peers. The new effort includes funding for transportation and lunch to make it easier for families to participate.

- **Oregon** has released its [Summer Learning Best Practice Guide](#) to help districts design and implement programs. The guide draws on research and best practice, and includes guidance on offering such as tutoring programs, peer to peer support, learning and enrichment camps, community service and apprenticeships, credit recovery opportunities, and more traditional summer school.
- **Tennessee** policymakers enacted the [Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation & Student Acceleration Act](#) in early 2021. This wide-sweeping legislation will create learning remediation camps over the course of two summers (2021 and 2022) to serve students entering grades 1–8. The camps will include instruction in English language arts and mathematics as well as after-school support for STREAM (science, technology, reading, engineering, arts and math).
- **Texas** has developed a [Summer Learning Framework](#) for districts and schools to use in developing their summer learning plans. The framework includes guidance on curriculum, budget and operations, work planning and project management tools, links to resources, and high quality instructional materials that have been tailored for use in the summer.
- **West Virginia** will award [Summer SOLE](#) (Student Opportunities for Learning & Engagement) Grants to provide funding for comprehensive in-person summer learning experiences that are interactive, engaging, and address academic and social-emotional needs of students K12.

### **Essential Questions Moving Forward: Using Summer**

*As state leaders further develop their plans, they could consider these questions:*

- ✓ How will districts and schools encourage students to participate, especially those most in need of additional time?
- ✓ How will states and districts work to ensure educator well-being during expanded summer sessions?
- ✓ How will teachers, tutors and other school staff (i.e., nurses, social workers, counselors) be recruited and supported? What additional incentives can be offered to recruit educators to work through the summer to staff these programs?
- ✓ What professional development, materials, resources and support will be provided for educators and/or tutors or other staff?
- ✓ How will food and transportation be sourced and funded?
- ✓ How will summer programming differentiate between elementary-, middle school- and high school-aged students?
- ✓ How can community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, local governments and service organizations be engaged as partners in summer learning efforts?
- ✓ How will results from summer programs be monitored and evaluated? How will lessons learned and effective practices be captured, communicated and applied moving forward?
- ✓ How will any student progress or learning over the summer be communicated to educators and schools in the fall?

### STEP 3: Supporting more students to be successful learners

As they consider what supports need to be in place and what changes will be most important to make for the next academic year, state leaders are proposing multiple ways of addressing student well-being, from new mental health services to academic interventions. As with planning for summer programs, these activities will require recruiting, supporting and retaining highly effective educators to help design, lead and implement these programs. Here too, state leaders and schools will be able to access significant new federal funding to implement specific programs.

#### STUDENT WELL-BEING

States are actively addressing student well-being in their plans as a critical part of providing a welcoming and supportive learning environment for all learners. State plans reflect this priority through efforts to embed mental and emotional health services across all grades using enhanced or new multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS). See [consolidated list](#) of proposed state strategies in Chart A of the Appendix.

Some emerging examples of state efforts include:

- **Michigan** is [establishing a new network](#) of state stakeholders with input from national experts to help school districts address social-emotional and mental health needs of children across Michigan. The state has allocated more than \$7 million from its Education Equity Fund to support this effort.
- **New Mexico** lawmakers have allocated \$5 million in FY22 and \$20 million in future years to allow more schools to adopt the [community school strategy](#), which involves schools partnering with the local community to provide high-quality resources and other supports to help mitigate barriers to school success.
- **Ohio's** strategic plan prioritizes “whole child” approaches to learning and department leaders are now leveraging a recent large private foundation grant to strengthen local SEL efforts. To further support students’ needs during the pandemic, the department also has boosted its existing partnerships with the [Stay in the Game!](#) network to address chronic absenteeism.
- **Utah** is planning to expand mental health services and SEL resources using federal GEER funding. These funds will extend hours or contract services with school counselors, psychologists, school nurses, or social workers to support students and their families as well as to provide a social and emotional professional learning and curriculum.
- A network of states is working with support from CCSSO and the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning ([CASEL](#)) to incorporate SEL into state MTSS systems as a primary lever to support the whole child especially as it relates to extended school closures and learning loss. The states in this new network include **Alabama, Hawaii, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Rhode Island** and **Virginia**.
- NGA is supporting a bipartisan group of [six governors’ offices](#) over the next year on strategies for equitably meeting the social-emotional needs of students and families during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. The states in this project are **Arkansas, Indiana, Michigan, North Dakota, Oregon** and **Wisconsin**.

## ACADEMIC INTERVENTIONS

States are modifying or expanding existing priorities, partnerships or infrastructure to support specific academic needs, including efforts to provide more learning time during or after school. See [Chart A](#) in the Appendix for strategies for accelerating student learning that states mention in their plans.

Some emerging examples of state efforts include:

- **Alaska** is establishing a new [apprenticeship program](#) to allow high schoolers to earn credit while working for local businesses.
- **Arkansas** cooperated with the state's Education Renewal Zones and Graduation Alliance to create [ENGAGE Arkansas](#) to identify, locate and re-engage students who have grown disconnected over the past year. Through this effort they have provided services to more than 10,000 students.
- **Connecticut's** [Learner Engagement and Attendance Program](#) (LEAP) will support students who were regularly absent or disengaged from school during the past year because of the pandemic. A partnership with the state's six Regional Education Service Centers, the program will target students in 15 school districts. Funds will be used to support direct engagement with families to bring absent students back to school for the final months of the current school year, support enrollment in summer learning programs, and increase attendance for the 2021-22 school year.
- **Kansas** is encouraging school districts to take time to gain insight into the academic readiness of incoming preschool, kindergarten and first graders who will be enrolling in schools for the first time this fall. In the state's [Navigating Next](#) plan, schools are urged to create partnerships with organizations serving young children and their families to develop a snapshot of each child's development and to offer families learning activities to help their children prepare.
- **Maryland's** governor is working with the legislature to secure [FY2022 funding](#) to continue the state's successful FY2021 pilot tutoring program to assist struggling students most in need of academic support.
- **Massachusetts** has prioritized helping school districts use high-quality assessments, such as [literacy screening and math assessments](#), that can help educators diagnose student needs for no costs.
- **New Hampshire** has arranged for [free tutoring to all high school students](#) in partnership with online provider [Schoolhouse.world](#). This effort prioritizes tutoring in high school math and preparation for college-admissions exams.
- **North Dakota** modified [state law](#) to reduce the minimum hours high school students are required to be in a classroom. This change is designed to encourage students to pursue community volunteer projects, internships and other educational options that can count toward graduation requirements.
- **New Mexico** has enacted [a new law](#) to provide district and charter schools with more flexibility in implementing the state's K5 Plus and Extended Learning Time programs, and it allocates \$70 million for a pilot project on extended learning time.
- **Ohio's** online platform [RemotEDX](#) shares resources and tools including help with connectivity to educators and families during remote learning. This platform was developed in partnership with the Ohio Department of Education, regional educational services centers, higher education institutions and philanthropic organizations.
- **Tennessee's** new [Reading 360 program](#) is designed to accelerate early learning reading by using a new phonics-based approach to support K3 reading instruction. The program was funded with \$60 million



of one-time CARES/Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) funding and \$40 million in competitive federal grant funding.

## FUNDING

States are beginning to think strategically about how to allocate federal and/or state funding to bolster existing academic programs, launch new grant opportunities to support learning acceleration, or jumpstart new programming. See the [ESSER Fact Sheet Summary \(Chart B\)](#) and the [GEER Fact Sheet Summary \(Chart C\)](#) in the Appendix for more details about the use of these funds.

Some emerging examples of state efforts include:

- **California** is combining one-time CARES funding (GEER and Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF)) and state funding to create the \$5.3 billion [Learning Loss Mitigation Block Grant](#). The allocation formula uses the number/concentration of students with disabilities, socio/economically disadvantaged, foster youths and English learner populations. The fund is to be used to improve academic achievement for students struggling due to COVID-19 school closures.
- **New Jersey** is offering a 17-month [Addressing Student Learning Loss](#) competitive grant opportunity using CARES funding to support projects that implement evidence-based interventions or quality instructional strategies to address student learning loss through additional math and/or ELA instruction; and/or social and emotional learning support. Applicants can apply for up to \$156,425. The grant is open to public schools, charter schools and Renaissance schools in New Jersey.
- **Tennessee** is funding its [Reading 360 program](#) using \$60 million from one-time federal funding for COVID-19 relief and \$40 million in competitive federal grant funding. The state's new [Learning Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act](#) is funded from a combination of TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families), LEAPS (21st Century afterschool federal funds) and state funds.

### **Essential Questions Moving Forward: Successful Learning in Fall 2021**

*As state leaders further develop their plans, they could consider these questions:*

- ✓ How will we (and LEAs) identify students who are most in need of academic acceleration activities?
- ✓ Which new supports and activities will be available during the 2021-22 school year to all students? Which will be targeted to students who have struggled the most over the past year?
- ✓ What guidance or resources do school districts need to design and implement strategies to help students who were most behind academically before the pandemic?
- ✓ What new staff (e.g., teachers, tutors, mental health, social workers) will need to be recruited for new initiatives and efforts that will be launched during the 2021-22 school year?
- ✓ What additional support will school and district leaders need to identify high quality curriculum and materials and provide targeted professional development in a timely manner?
- ✓ How will interventions or activities be monitored and evaluated during the 2021-22 school year? How will course corrections be made?
- ✓ How can community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, local governments and service organizations provide strong wraparound support for students during the 2021-22 school year?

## **STEP 4: Future Considerations**

State, district and school leaders are working rapidly to develop, refine and implement recovery plans that address significant academic and non-academic student needs. Policymakers are also using legislative sessions and state budget deliberations now underway to provide new programs with necessary guidance and resources. In the months ahead, as leaders move to roll-out activities and work to address other impacts of the pandemic, we expect state plans will evolve with more details. In Education First's review of efforts so far, we noted several topics that will be essential to address more specifically moving forward. They include:

### **1. Strategic Use of One-Time Funding**

The federal government has provided a significant but one-time influx of resources for state and local governments—a third round was approved just this month—to address the pandemic's impact on students. While a few states have articulated how they will use some of these funds (see some examples above in Step 3), more state leaders in the months ahead will be doing the same; more states also will consider recommendations for district and school leaders on how to use their share of federal funds strategically. *See the [ESSER Fact Sheet Summary](#) (Chart B) and the [GEER Fact Sheet Summary](#) (Chart C)—also summarized in the Appendix—for more details about the use of these funds.*

### **2. Supports and Resources Targeted to Struggling Students**

The most recent federal funding package for schools (ARP ESSER) specifies that funds are intended to address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student groups. Research suggests that students from low-income, non-white or English-learning families and students with special needs are especially in need of targeted interventions to accelerate their learning. States still need to determine how to identify the students who are struggling the most, and provide them with the right blend of needed resources, instructional assistance and mental health support. As state leaders hammer out details of their learning acceleration plans and programs for summer and fall, they will be considering how to prioritize these students and which strategies should be emphasized. Some states also may decide to provide either guidance and assistance to districts and schools on how best to assess students' academic and social and emotional needs to inform decisions about targeting resources.

### **3. Identifying, Supporting and Deploying Staff**

Successfully helping more students increase their learning in the coming months depends significantly on ensuring they have access to high performing, high quality educators—and this means state leaders will be looking for ways to provide flexibility, assistance and resources to address the well-being of teachers, administrators and other school staff. States will be considering engaging educators in the development of plans especially in recruitment and retention strategies, investing in significant recruiting and professional learning efforts to prepare educators for summer learning efforts and/or providing incentives for staff placement so that the most effective educators (in summer school and regular school) are paired with the students most in need of learning acceleration.

### **4. Coordinating Across State Agencies and Aligning Policy Initiatives, Funding Strategies, and Planning Priorities Across State Leadership**

State policymaking and resource allocation decisions work best when governors, state chiefs and legislative leaders agree on common priorities. This sort of collaboration will be particularly important as states support students, educators and communities in dramatically different ways this summer and into the next school year. As they fine-tune and begin implementing their plans, state leaders also may look

for opportunities to coordinate across state agencies—thereby tapping into a wider range of expertise, access and networks, and enabling the state to more readily tackle systemic barriers to accelerated learning, such as educator or tutor shortages or mental health services for families.

To complement actions state education agencies could take on their own, we found several states where policymakers have negotiated wide-sweeping legislation that will have a significant impact over the next several years or made short-term allocations to support immediate needs. Examples of states where leaders have developed a shared agenda to support accelerated learning include **Massachusetts** (which has enacted [legislation](#) requiring districts to develop academic recovery plans) and **Nevada's Back on Track Act** (which would establish guidelines for summer schooling across the state and use federal funding to support schooling for all students in grades K12).

## 5. Innovating to Find Better Solutions

As the nation moves through—and ultimately past—the pandemic, state leaders have a unique opportunity. They can re-examine and re-evaluate long-standing structures, approaches and strategies that have long undergirded how the K12 system operates. And the influx of new federal funding can provide necessary flexible resources to design new programs, grant opportunities and services. Future iterations of state plans and strategies can be informed by a clear-eyed evaluation of what worked well pre/post pandemic that can be continued, what did not work well either before or during the pandemic, and what evolving research suggests about innovations now being tried. For example, experiences from the past year likely suggest new ways of structuring school and district improvement strategies (school accountability) and different, potentially more effective ways of engaging students, families and school staff.

## Acknowledgements

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## APPENDIX

**Chart A: Compilation of all the various learning acceleration interventions and structures mentioned in state plans and statements**

Proposed Interventions	Proposed Structure
Tutoring: before/after school or lunchtime	Small group, 1-to-1 or peer tutoring
Tutoring: Saturday, holiday breaks	Small group, 1-to-1 or peer tutoring
Summer school (aka summer learning or bridge camps)	Recommend 5–6 week program with 3–4 hours of academics per day and enrichment activities
Extended school day	Additional 30–60 minutes of instructional time
Extend school year	Increase from 180 instructional days
Class size reduction	Under 19 for primary grades Success contingent on teacher being highly effective
Small or smaller group instruction	3–5 students
Compressed content via prioritized standards, competencies, skills	<i>Some research cautions against this approach</i>
Year round or balanced calendar	Specified time for intervention/remediation or enrichment
Science of reading training for K8 Educators	
K-G3 phonics-based reading instruction	
Supplemental content / curriculum	
Update licensure requirements	Ensuring teachers proficient in reading instruction in primary grades
Classroom assignment	Assigning most qualified teachers with students most in need
High School apprenticeship program	High schoolers earn credit while working for local businesses
High-quality assessments	Literacy screening and math assessments
High-quality instructional materials and aligned PD	

**Chart B: U.S. Department of Education’s ESSER Fact Sheet--Summary**

Topic	ESSER I	ESSER II	ARP ESSER III
Authorizing Legislation	Section 18003 of Division B of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act	Section 313 of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act	Section 2001 of the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act
State deadline for awarding funds	Within one year of receiving funds (Apr-Jun 2021)	Within one year of receiving funds (Jan 2022)	Not later than 60 days after the state receives funds (to the extent practicable)
Period of Availability*	September 30, 2022	September 30, 2023	September 30, 2024
Use of funds #	<p>LEAs: Allowable uses of funds related to preventing, preparing for, and responding to COVID-19.</p> <p>ESSER funds may be used for the same allowable purposes as ESSER II and ARP ESSER.</p> <p>No required reservations of funds.</p>	<p>LEAs: Allowable uses of funds related to preventing, preparing for, and responding to COVID-19 including but not limited to: addressing learning recovery, preparing schools for reopening, and testing, repairing, and upgrading projects to improve air quality in school buildings.</p> <p>No required reservations of funds.</p>	<p>A school district must reserve not less than 20 percent of its total ARP ESSER allocation to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning or summer enrichment, extended day, comprehensive after school programs, or extended school year programs, and ensure that such interventions respond to students’ academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on underrepresented student subgroups.</p> <p>The remaining ARP ESSER funds may be used for the same allowable purposes as ESSER and ESSER II.</p>

\* includes Tydings amendment period.

# refer to specified sections under authorizing legislation for exhaustive list.

**Chart C: U.S. Department of Education’s GEER Fact Sheet--Summary**

Topic	GEER I	GEER II
Authorizing Legislation	Section 18002 of Division B of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act	Section 312 of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act, 2021
State deadline for awarding funds	Within one year of receiving funds (Apr-Jun 2021)	Within one year of receiving funds (Jan 2022)
Period of Availability*	September 30, 2022	September 30, 2023
Use of funds #	<p>The CARES Act includes allowable uses of funds related to preventing, preparing for, and responding to COVID-19.</p> <p>Governors may provide subgrants to districts and IHEs within their jurisdiction that have been “most significantly impacted by coronavirus” to support their ability to continue providing educational services to their students and to support the “on-going functionality” of these entities. In addition, a Governor may use these funds to provide support through a subgrant or a contract to other LEAs, IHEs, and education-related entities that the Governor “deems essential” for carrying out emergency educational services, providing child care and early childhood education, providing social and emotional support, and protecting education related jobs.</p>	<p>The CARES Act includes allowable uses of funds related to preventing, preparing for, and responding to COVID-19.</p> <p>Governors may provide subgrants to districts and IHEs within their jurisdiction that have been “most significantly impacted by coronavirus” to support their ability to continue providing educational services to their students and to support the “on-going functionality” of these entities. In addition, a Governor may use these funds to provide support through a subgrant or a contract to other LEAs, IHEs, and education-related entities that the Governor “deems essential” for carrying out emergency educational services, providing child care and early childhood education, providing social and emotional support, and protecting education related jobs.</p>

\* includes Tydings amendment period.

# refer to specified sections under authorizing legislation for exhaustive list.

## Chart D: Additional Resources for State Leaders

Organization	Document
Council of Chief State School Officers	<a href="#">Restart and Recovery: Considerations for Teaching and Learning</a> <a href="#">Restart and Recovery: ESEA and COVID-19</a> <a href="#">Restart and Recovery: Federal Funds and COVID-19</a> <a href="#">Restart and Recovery: IDEA and COVID-19</a> <a href="#">Commonly Asked Questions about Allowable ESSER and GEER Activities</a> <a href="#">CCSSO COVID-19 Relief Fact Sheet (updated with ARP ESSER)</a>
Ed Works	<a href="#">Scaling Tutoring</a>
National Education Association and American Federation of Teachers	<a href="#">Learning Beyond COVID-19</a>
National Governors Association	<a href="#">Governors' Top Education Priorities in 2021 State of the State Addresses</a> <a href="#">Strategies for Advancing Equity Through State Education Budgets During and Beyond COVID</a> <a href="#">Project to Support Governors on Meeting The Social-Emotional Needs of Students and Families During and Beyond COVID-19</a>
Rand Corporation	<a href="#">Summer Learning Recommended Practices</a>