

# **NCDPI Office of Learning Recovery: Using evidence to inform and support policymaking**

**Briefing for NC House Standing Committee on Oversight and Reform**

Jeni Corn PhD, Director of Research and Evaluation, NC Department of Public Instruction

# Office of Learning Recovery (OLR)

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**Focus:** NC received an unprecedented level of federal recovery funding: \$5.5B

## OLR Purpose:



Combat the impact of lost instructional time and accelerate learning for all students



Evaluate the implementation and impact of the interventions sponsored by the OLR and support decision-making about continuation, expansion, and targeting of the programs



Use research to identify, extend, scale, and sustain programs that demonstrate impact, and build a clearinghouse of NC Promising Practices

# OLR Resources

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## **Federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER)**

ESSER II (funds expire: September 30, 2023)

- \$500K for qualitative research
- \$1M for quantitative research

ESSER III:(funds expire: September 30, 2024)

- \$1.7M for 8.0 FTE + Travel, Supplies, Equipment
- \$1M for state and local research

# OLR Accomplishments

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- Built a team of experts in the areas of educational programming, research, evaluation, and policy
- Designed summer academic and workforce-aligned programs for local school leaders
- Supported districts and charters with implementation of 2021, 2022, and 2023 Summer Extension Programming (HB82, PRC 176 & 177)
- Developed a research plan to better coordinate state- and local-level research and evaluation studies
- Hosted an ARP Summer Convening for districts and charters focused on the use of data to drive local decisions about evidence-based interventions
- Developed a clearinghouse of [Promising Practices](#)
- Leveraged external research resources at NC universities

# 2021-2023 Research Studies

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- Virtual Academy Study (SB654)
- COVID-19 Recovery Impact Analysis - EVAAS Team at SAS (ESSER II, ESSER III)
- Studying the long-run effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on student, educator, and school outcomes (Spencer Foundation Award)
- Assessing the Long-Term Impacts of School Extension Programs on Student Re-engagement and Learning Recovery (IES Award)
- Qualitative Study: Initial implementation of learning recovery programs School Extension, Summer Bridge, and/or Career Accelerator (ESSER II)

# New Partnership with NC Collaboratory

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- COVID-19 Learning Impact Program 2022-2024
- Leverage \$6.73M in ARPA funds to understand learning loss across the state
- NCDPI Research Priorities:
  - A. 10% ESSER III State Reserve (approx. \$350M); 90% Local use of Federal ESSER (approx. \$3.2B)
  - B. Longitudinal Impact of the Pandemic



# 20 Research Projects Awarded Across 14 NC Institutes of Higher Education



**WSSU**

**NC STATE UNIVERSITY**



**UNC GREENSBORO**



THE UNIVERSITY  
of NORTH CAROLINA  
at CHAPEL HILL



**CAMPBELL**  
UNIVERSITY



**ECU**



NORTH CAROLINA  
AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL  
STATE UNIVERSITY

**Duke**  
UNIVERSITY



UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
**CHARLOTTE**

**LENOIR-RHYNE**  
UNIVERSITY



**NCCentral**  
UNIVERSITY

Discover what's Central to you.



**FAYETTEVILLE**  
STATE UNIVERSITY

# NC Collaboratory Funded Studies

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**Priority Area A: The effectiveness of ESSER III funded policies and programs during the pandemic.**

State and local teacher bonuses (\$108M)

Statewide rollout of LETRS training for NC elementary school teachers and administrators (\$37M)

Supporting educators in NC's recurring low-performing schools and districts (\$18M)

Use of software to mitigate cyberbullying, monitor student internet activity and devices (\$17.9M)

School Psychologists Grant Program (\$1.4M)

Funding deployment and efficacy of local ESSER III funded programs (\$3.2B)



# NC Collaboratory Funded Studies

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## Priority Area B: The longitudinal impact of COVID-19 on student learning in North Carolina.

Impact of the pandemic on the educator workforce.

Impact of the pandemic on the postsecondary choices of high school juniors and seniors.

Identifying effective practices in virtual learning by grade band.

Understanding students and families who left and returned to the public school system during the pandemic.

Impact of the pandemic on persistently low-performing schools.

Interventions/mitigation strategies targeting academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs of student during the pandemic.

# Lessons Learned

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## **Local and state leaders benefit from a NCDPI Research Office focused on:**

- Providing the relevant and timely information needed to make evidence-based decisions.
- Coordinate internal efforts at NCDPI to implement innovative policies and pilot programs to accelerate learning for all students;
- Maintaining the highest levels of research integrity and protect student data confidentiality; and
- Leveraging external research resources and partners to evaluate local, state, and federal programs to assess their return on investment.

# Next Steps - Request

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- Current ESSER Resources to expire in September 2024.
- To continue to provide these important resources to district and charter leaders and legislators, a permanent Office of Innovation and Research is needed.

**Expansion Budget Request:** Support to establish a permanent Office of Innovation and Research at NCDPI (8.7 FTE + Outreach, Supplies, Equipment) for \$1,322,733(R) starting in FY 2024-25 once federal ESSER III funds are expended.

# Future Work, if funded

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- School Performance Grade Reform Modeling Study
  - Pathways Licensure and Compensation Pilot Study
  - Impact of High School Programs and Pathways on Postsecondary Success
  - Impact of LTRS Training and Science of Reading
  - Competency Based Education Implementation
  - Middle Grades Math Recovery Analysis
- ...and other K12 evaluations as directed by the NCGA

# Q&A