ESSER Funding Cliff Toolkit

Data-Driven Financial Decision Making for Post-ESSER Spending

House Select Committee on
Education Reform
Monday February 12, 2024

Michael Maher, PhD
Deputy State Superintendent

North Carolina Department of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Office of
LEARNING RECOVERY & ACCELERATION
NC Department of Public Instruction

Purpose

The purpose of the ESSER Funding Cliff Toolkit is to provide PSU leaders with **relevant information and data around ESSER expenditures** and student outcomes as well as resources to understand which **ESSER investments were most effective**. The data sources, tools, and information in this toolkit alone cannot provide answers to all these questions.

However, this toolkit is designed to support a **data-driven approach to evaluating investments and budgeting post-ESSER funding beyond September 2024**. By approaching this process early, PSU leaders will be able to fully understand what worked during ESSER and develop plans for sustaining or sunsetting various programs and initiatives.

Toolkit Usage

- The toolkit is designed to systematically support PSU leaders through the process of reviewing data, determining Return on Investment (ROI) for ESSER investments, and developing a budget process to support their 2024-2025 budget planning.

- The toolkit is **explicitly** designed to support conversations and discussions between decision makers including the superintendent (or charter school leader), chief finance officer, and administrators with budgetary responsibilities.

- Reviewing data, determining ROI, and budgeting should be a collaborative effort that supports and encourages healthy, yet transparent, dialogue around which ESSER investments were most impactful to understand what should or should not be funded moving forward.

- Within each section of the toolkit are questions for discussion that will help initiate conversations amongst the leadership team. It is suggested that the toolkit be reviewed in its entirety and then dedicate specific time to review data and discuss each section.

ESSER Funding Cliff Toolkit Overview

Step 1: Determine Budget Process & Timeline
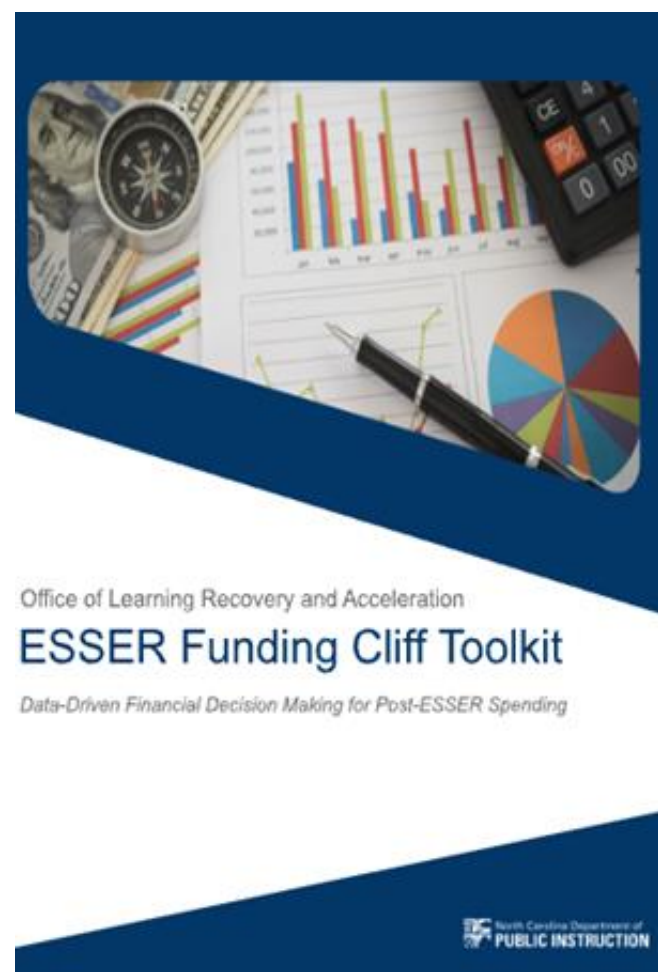
Step 2: Collect Data and Evidence

Step 3: Determine Return on Investment
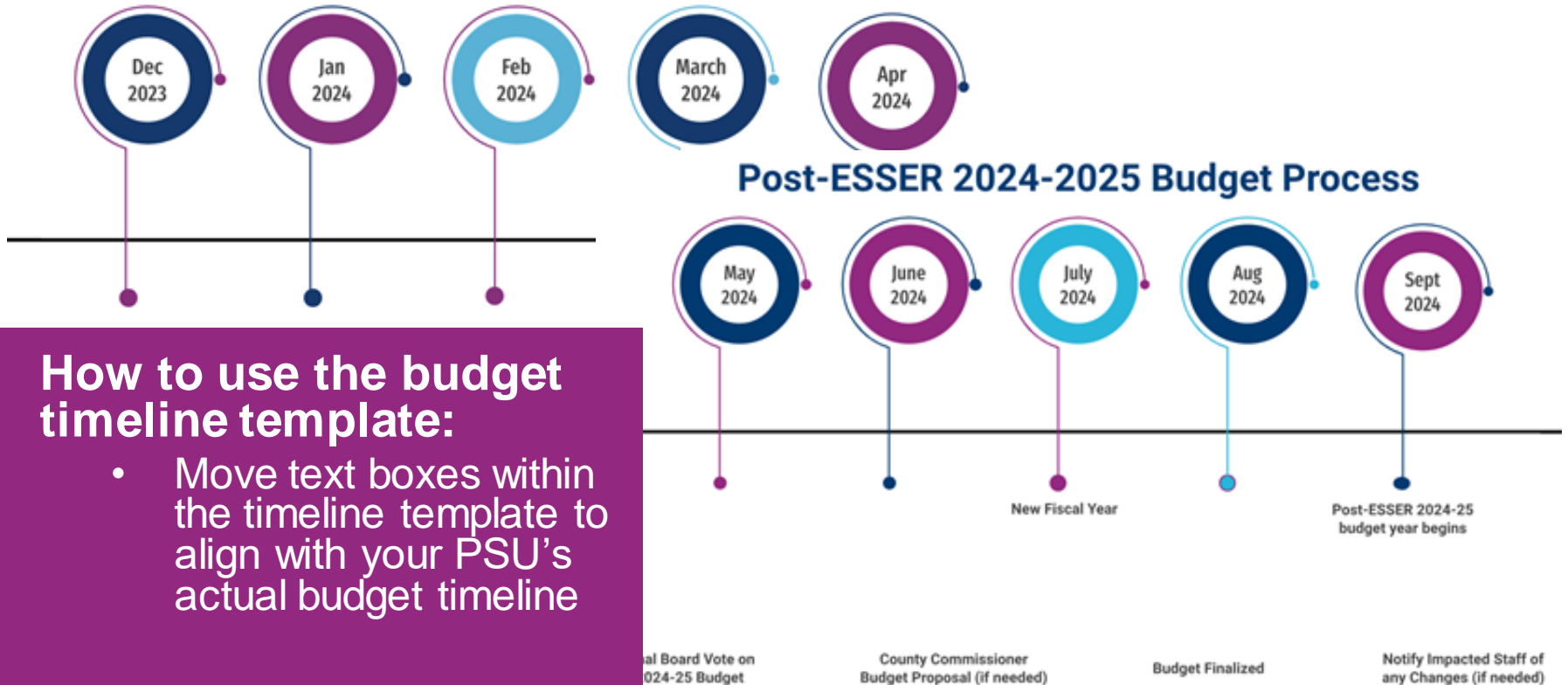
Step 4: Decision-Making

Step 5: Budgeting Process

Step 6: Communication

go.ncdpi.gov/RoIToolkit2024

Office of Learning Recovery and Acceleration

ESSER Funding Cliff Toolkit

Data-Driven Financial Decision Making for Post-ESSER Spending

North Carolina Department of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Step 1: Determine Budget Process & Timeline

Post-ESSER 2024-2025 Budget Process

Dec 2023

Jan 2024

Feb 2024

March 2024

Apr 2024

Post-ESSER 2024-2025 Budget Process

May 2024

June 2024

July 2024

Aug 2024

Sept 2024

New Fiscal Year

Post-ESSER 2024-25 budget year begins

How to use the budget timeline template:

- Move text boxes within the timeline template to align with your PSU's actual budget timeline

...al Board Vote on ...024-25 Budget

County Commissioner Budget Proposal (if needed)

Budget Finalized

Notify Impacted Staff of any Changes (if needed)

Thinking Templates to Inform Budget Decision Making

Before engaging in the budgeting process, it is important to understand priorities and needs in your PSU. These thinking templates are designed to help you articulate needs a[...] outcomes and stakeholder feedback.

ESSER Funds Remaining $[insert figure] = _____% of the budget
Use the ESSER Expenditure Dashboard and PSU financial data to calculate these numbers.

Compared to pre-pandemic, students are _____ in math and _____ in reading
Use the student outcomes section or the YoY analysis to determine this information.

[Insert PSU name]'s Priorities

★ [Priority 1]
★ [Priority 2]
★ [Priority 3]

After examining data, set your priorities above that will inform the budgeting process

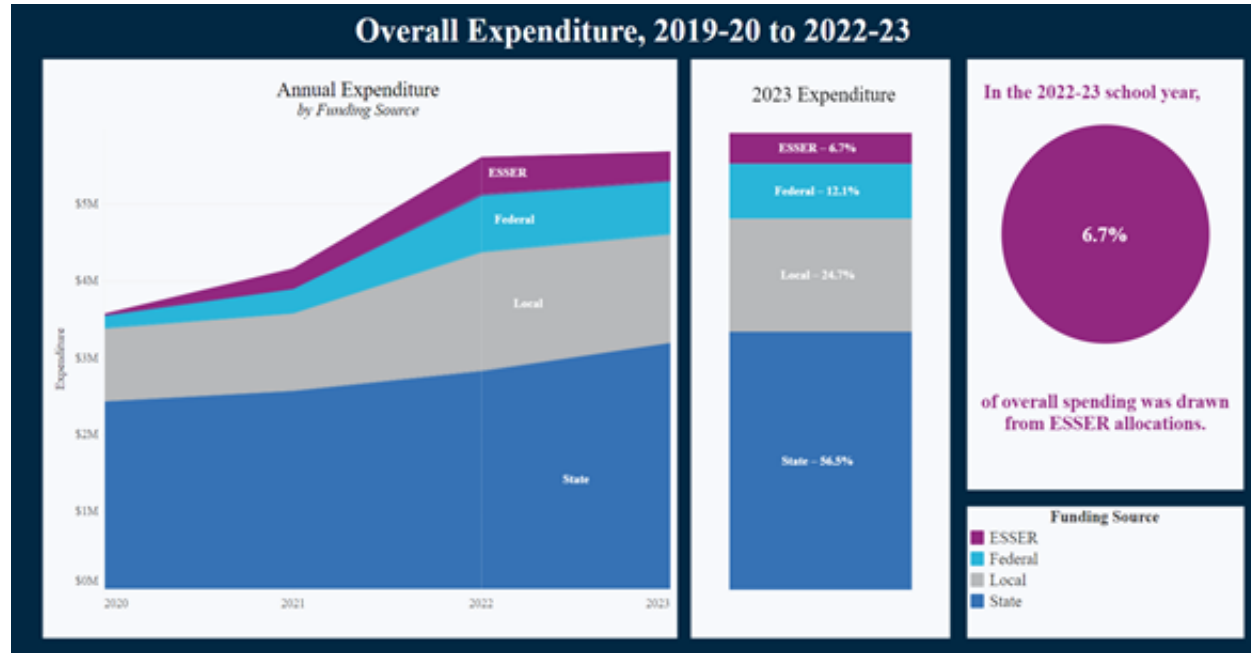Our [insert stakeholder teachers, parents, etc)] [insert concern raised b[...]

Identify any concerns [...] that you have heard a[...] groups (parents, teach[...] administrato[...]

How to use thinking templates:

- Convene your team to come to a consensus around PSU priorities and needs
- The ESSER dashboard can help the team fill in information related to budget and student data

Step 2: Collect Data and Evidence

- Dashboard uses data from several sources to provide a visualization of ESSER spending for each PSU since 2020

Overall Expenditure, 2019-20 to 2022-23

Annual Expenditure *by Funding Source*

ESSER
Federal
Local
State

2023 Expenditure

ESSER – 6.7%
Federal – 12.1%
Local – 24.7%
State – 56.5%

In the 2022-23 school year,

6.7%

of overall spending was drawn from ESSER allocations.

Funding Source
- ESSER
- Federal
- Local
- State

Step 2: Collect Data and Evidence

Take 5!

05:00

Discussion Questions:

- What data surprised you the most?

- Were there areas of concern?

- How could you use this to support your decision-making process?

NC Ed-Relevant Dashboards

- Additional resource for PSU leaders to more comprehensively evaluate student outcomes

District/School/Charter Year over Year (YoY) Model

- Will be provided during February Regional Sessions

Office of
LEARNING RECOVERY & ACCELERATION
NC Department of Public Instruction

NC Ed-Relevant Dashboards

- NCDPI Accountability Dashboard *NEW*
  - Tableau Dashboard that provides NC EOG and EOC Reading, Math, and Science Assessments results from 16-17 through 22-23. View results by state, region, district, and/or school.

- NCDPI Cohort Graduation Rate
  - Tableau Dashboard that provides percentages of 9th graders graduating in 4 or 5 years.

- NCDPI Annual Public Report for Students with Disabilities
  - Tableau Dashboard that provides visualization of required performance indicators related to the IDEA for the State Performance Plan and Annual Performance Report.

- NCDPI EPP Performance Dashboard
  - Tableau Dashboard that provides a comprehensive set of interactive data displays related to educator preparation in NC.

- NCDPI FBS Allotment and Expenditure Data Visualization
  - Tableau Dashboard that provides information about ESSER expenditures and allocations at the state and local levels.

- NC School Report Cards
  - Interactive website that allows users to view student performance and growth, school characteristics, student demographics, and more at the district and school levels.

North Carolina Department of
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

OFFICE OF LEARNING
RECOVERY & ACCELERATION

- Defining ROI in Education Overview
- Using ROI as a tool for evidence-based financial decision making
- Disclaimer

Traditional ROI Formula: Profit/Investment = ROI

$$\frac{(Outcomes * IF) * (Number\ of\ Students * Special\ Populations\ Multiplier)}{Total\ Cost} \times 100 = ROI$$

ROI Tool Overview

1. Pre-Work: Determine Scope and Data Sources
   a. Determine which sets of interventions/programs will be examined. As a reminder, these should not include one-time expenditures. Once you select your interventions for analysis, gather the following information for each:

Total Expenditures	Number of Students Impacted	Intended Outcomes Fidelity to Implementation

ROI Tool Overview

2. Enter Investment Information on ROI Tool

ROI Tool Overview

2. Enter Investment Information on ROI Tool

Investment Name	Total Spent	Number of Students Served	Special Student Population
EXAMPLE: High Dosage Tutoring-Elementary	$1,000,000.00	10	Yes ▼

ROI Tool Overview

3. Determine progress toward outcomes and outcome levels.

Example Outcome Ranges:

High Outcomes = 80%-100%

Middle Outcomes = 50%-79%

Low Outcomes = 0%-49%

Special Student Population	Outcomes	Progress Towards Outcomes
No	1. Teachers report that they view the program as beneficial to students 2. Students report positive experiences with the program 3. Students improve grades in Math and ELA 4. Proficiency and CCR levels on EOG increases in Math and ELA	High

Step 3: Determine Return on Investment

ROI Tool Overview

4. Determine program/initiative implementation fidelity

Example IF Ranges:

High IF = 80%-100%

Middle IF= 50%-79%

Low IF = 0%-49%

Progress Towards Outcomes	Implementation Fidelity Details	Implementation Fidelity
High	1. Tutoring occurs three days per week 2. 30 minutes per tutoring session 3. No more than 3 students per tutoring group 4. Instruction is focused on acceleration, not remediation 5. Materials are aligned with state standards, are engaging, and are easy for tutors to use 6. Tutors are consistent and well-supported with initial training, ongoing coaching, and clear lines of accountability 7. Tutoring program is embedded in school program 8. Data is used to regularly inform instruction and program improvement	High

**Office of
LEARNING RECOVERY & ACCELERATION**
NC Department of Public Instruction

ROI Tool Overview

5. ROI Calculated + Team Discussion
   a. Larger ROIs indicate more return on investment
   b. Sort ROIs from largest to smallest
   c. Compare ROIs across investments
   d. Discuss findings with team members - "Which investments should be considered moving forward?"

Investment Name	Total Spent	Number of students served	Cost per participating student	Fidelity (H=1, M=.75, L=.5)	Progress Towards Outcomes (H=100, M=50, L=25)	Special Populations Multiplier	ROI	Decisio
EXAMPLE: High Dosage Tutoring- Elementary	$100,000.00	700	$142.86	0.75	100	1.00	52.50	
			#DIV/0!	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	#DIV/0!	
			#DIV/0!	FALSE	FALSE	FALSE	#DIV/0!	

Step 4: Decision-Making

- After reviewing the relevant finance and student outcome data and discussing the ROI of various programs, PSU leadership will need to decide which programs should be enhanced, sustained, or sunsetted. During this phase of the budgeting process, PSU leadership should also consider the alignment of the results of the ROI process and their strategic plan.

- Be sure to include stakeholder feedback and discuss any potential unintended consequences. Finally, as another tool to support decision-making, PSU leaders could consider using a SWOT analysis to support the decision making process.

Your leadership team will have a number of potential options for funding the initiatives:

(1) apply for specific grant funding,

(2) ask for an increase in local level funding from county commissioners,

(3) utilize innovative approaches to braiding federal funds, or

(4) use a budgeting process to identify funding from within the current budget.

Zero-based Budgeting Overview

- Used across many industries to support the alignment of expenditures with strategic plans and goals.

- Useful in reducing previous budgets by 4-6%.

- Budget managers are asked to critically evaluate their budgets to justify expenditures for:

  - Need

  - Efficiency

  - Alignment to Strategic Plan/Goals

- Requires consideration of multiple stakeholders and takes time.

- Can be used to support ESSER expenditures beyond ESSER funding window.

Zero-based Budgeting Process

Step 1: Pre-Planning

Step 2: Data Collection

Step 3: Analysis and Prioritization

Step 4: Budgeting

Step 5: Implementation

Step 6: Evaluation and Feedback

Step 5: Budgeting Process

Zero-based Budgeting Template Overview

Department Name:		Department Budget Detail			
Previous Year Expenditures	$0.00	Complete the budget detail for all proposed expenditures			
Program Name & Description	Perfomance Metrics	Justification for Current Expense	Alternative Approaches	Proposed Budget	Aligned with Strategic Pla
			Previous Year Expenditures	$0.00	
			Proposed Budget	$0.00	
			Difference	$0.00	
			Percent Change in Budget	#DIV/0!	

Considerations When Using ZBB

1. **Start small**. Consider using the zero-based budgeting process with departments within the central office or start only with schools.

2. Understand **funding limitations**. Oftentimes, local funding has fewer restrictions and is easier to repurpose compared to state and federal funding. Consider the funding sources as you determine ROI and how you might be able to repurpose funds.

3. Understand **your "Why".** By using the ROI Worksheet, you should be able to delineate which investments were most effective.

4. Consider the **tradeoffs**. Be sure to weigh the pros and cons of eliminating a program's funding or specific expenditure.

Priorities	Title I, Part A	Title 1003	Title I, Part C Migrant Ed.	Title II, Part A	Title III	Title IV, Part A	IDEA, Part B	Perkins	McKinney-Vento
High Dosage Tutoring for ELA	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
High Dosage Tutoring for Mathematics	X	X	X		X	X	X		X
Multitiered system of support (MTSS)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Summer Career Accelerator Programs	X	X	X			X	X	X	
Summer Bridge Programs	X	X		X		X	X		
PK-5 professional development for teachers	X			X					
PK-5 early literacy supports/small group intervention	X	X			X				
Attendance improvement (additional staffing, strategies/PD, incentives)	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
SEL Supports	X	X	X	X		X			X

- NCDPI Crosswalk
- New Jersey DOE Maximizing Federal Funds Website
- Assess options for sustainability using braiding of federal entitlement grants

Office of
LEARNING RECOVERY & ACCELERATION
NC Department of Public Instruction

Step 6: Communication

It is important for PSUs to message the end of ESSER, budget decision-making, and any changes to staffing and programs.

- Communications Template Document (Edunomics Lab, 2023)
- ESSER Plan Communication (ERS, 2022)
- District ESSER Outreach Toolkit (Oregon DOE, 2023)

Image from Pixabay

Next Steps: Regional Sessions

- Each district can bring up to 6 representatives, charter schools can bring up to 3 representatives.
- Who should attend?
  - Superintendent or designee
  - Chief Finance Officer
  - Federal Programs Director or Coordinator
  - Chief Academic Officer
  - Director of Human Resources
  - Public Information Officer
- Lunch Provided
- Reach out to Richard Lewis for any issues with registration (richard.lewis@dpi.nc.gov)

2024
THE CLIFF IS COMING...
Regional Sessions for Continued Recovery

Are you prepared for the end of ESSER? Do you know which interventions, programs, and investments have worked best for your students? Will your PSU face a steep fiscal cliff? The OLR team is ready to work through these questions and more with your PSU team through a new set of tools and data sets. All sessions will begin at 10:00 AM and conclude at 3:30 PM. **Each district can bring up to 6 representatives and each charter can bring up to 3 representatives.**

AVAILABLE SESSIONS

01 NORTHEAST Tuesday, February 13th/ Williamston, NC
02 SOUTHEAST Tuesday, February 27th/ Kinston, NC
03 NORTH CENTRAL Friday, February 2nd/ Raleigh, NC
04 SANDHILLS Friday, March 1st/ Lumberton, NC
05 PIEDMONT-TRIAD Monday, February 12th/ Winston-Salem, NC
06 SOUTHWEST Wednesday, February 14th/ Cramerton, NC
07 NORTHWEST Wednesday, February 21st/ Morganton, NC
08 WESTERN Tuesday, February 20th/ Waynesville, NC
09 CHARTER (IN-PERSON) Friday, February 23rd/ Raleigh, NC
10 CHARTER (VIRTUAL) Monday, February 5th/ Virtual

Register: bit.ly/OLRWinter24

Office of LEARNING RECOVERY & ACCELERATION

Next Steps: Prep for Regional Sessions

Items to consider:

- ESSER Fiscal Cliff Dashboard
- ESSER Funded and Implemented Programs
- Student Data and Progress ([Accountability Dashboard](#))
- Staffing and Enrollment Trends
- Strategic Plan Goals and Strategies

Questions:

- What is the PSU's risk for a dramatic fiscal cliff post-ESSER? (see p. 5 of the [Funding Cliff Toolkit)](#)
- What initiatives/programs/expenditures will different groups of stakeholders be most interested in sustaining post-ESSER?
- What are the PSU's top 2-3 priorities and which expenditures most support those priorities?

Additional Questions?

If you have additional questions, please reach out to the individuals below:

Rachel Wright-Junio

Director of the Office of Learning Recovery & Acceleration

Rachel.WrightJunio@dpi.nc.gov

Dr. Andrew Smith

Assistant State Superintendent, Office of Innovation

Andrew.Smith@dpi.nc.gov