

CARES IMPACT STUDY FAQs

DISTRICTS' USE OF FEDERAL PANDEMIC-RELIEF FUNDS: A SNAPSHOT FROM THE FIELD

In fall 2021, the Georgia Partnership for Excellence in Education conducted a survey of school districts and state charter schools to gather preliminary information about how they used ESSER funds from March 2020 to September 2021. The survey represents the first phase of a multi-year study the Georgia Partnership is undertaking on the use of ESSER funds.

How are local districts and charters currently using ESSER funds?

| Fund Use | Percent of LEAs |
|---|-----------------|
| Continuity of services | 100% |
| Hiring additional staff to address academic needs | 87% |
| Cover austerity cut FY 2021 | 82% |
| Summer programs | 80% |
| Improve facility health & safety | 79% |
| Financial incentives for certified staff | 76% |
| Professional development | 74% |
| Tutoring programs | 72% |
| Financial incentives for non-certified staff | 70% |
| Hiring additional staff to address mental & physical health needs | 69% |
| Cover austerity cut FY 2022 | 64% |
| Class size reduction | 35% |

What are the challenges local leaders face?

1. Student needs
 - Lower levels of school-readiness among current kindergarteners
 - Reduced literacy and numeracy among first and second graders
 - Increasing need for mental health and wellness services for students
2. Personnel shortages
 - Teacher shortages in hard-to-staff subjects
 - Difficulty recruiting bus drivers, paraprofessionals, and school nutrition workers
3. Using federal funds to fill shortfalls created by state austerity cuts
4. Capacity constraints:
 - Compressed timeline for local leaders to develop and execute their plans
 - Finding ways to sustain activities beyond the expiration of federal pandemic relief funds (September 30, 2024)



ABOUT THE CARES IMPACT STUDY - BASELINE REPORT

What are the primary objectives of the CARES Impact Study?

1. Describe how districts and charter schools have used federal pandemic relief funds
2. Identify challenges that local leaders have encountered with implementing activities
3. Elevate promising practices that school systems could adapt
4. Inform state policymakers about local efforts

Who funded the multi-year project?

The Georgia State Board of Education approved the use of federal pandemic relief funds to launch this initiative in Fall 2021. The project will continue through 2024.

What is the first part of the project?

A baseline survey sent to school superintendents and charter school executives. These leaders or their designees completed a comprehensive survey regarding their use of relief funds and the challenges and opportunities they have encountered.

What are the next steps for this multi-year project?

The Georgia Partnership released the findings from the baseline survey in January 2022 and will publish additional reports through 2024.

Where can I find more information about the Georgia Partnership's CARES Impact Study?

For more information about the CARES Impact Study visit <https://gpee.org/programs/cares-impact-study/>

For inquiries about the survey, please email us at CARESStudy@gpee.org

