Managing Education Resources in Response to COVID-19

May 13, 2020
NCSI provides TA that builds capacity for lasting impact through a focus on four high-impact transformation priorities and the complementary knowledge and skills needed to achieve them.

**HIGH-IMPACT TRANSFORMATION PRIORITIES**

1. **Maximize leadership** to align general and special education systems to close equity gaps
2. **Optimize general supervision**, accountability and support systems to improve results
3. **Operationalize evidence-based practices** for teaching and learning
4. **Actualize improvement** for students with disabilities in low-performing schools

**FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO ACHIEVE TRANSFORMATION PRIORITIES**

NCSI helps states to develop and deepen the foundational knowledge and skills required for sustaining impact in each priority:

- **Data Literacy**: Collecting necessary data and determining quality, understanding what the data mean, and deriving sensible data-based conclusions to guide decision-making.
- **Research-Informed Practice**: Providing effective TA&PD on using high-leverage evidence-based practices (EBPs) for students with disabilities and supporting implementation of EBP frameworks.
- **Stakeholder & Family Engagement**: Meaningfully engaging diverse stakeholders and strengthening the role of family members in shaping educational systems and decisions.
- **Systems Coherence**: Designing interconnected policies and allocating resources to enable efficiency and effectiveness in developing and implementing strategic improvement plans.
COVID-19 Webinar Series

• NCSI is OSEP’s designated COVID-19 Resources Hub for Supporting Students with Disabilities

• ncsi.wested.org

• Strategic resource management webinars:
  – Today: Managing Education Resources in Response to COVID-19
  – Next week: Resource Planning for Students with Disabilities through the COVID-19 Pandemic: Balancing Legal Obligations and Available Resources to Maintain Student Progress
  – In two weeks: Blending and Braiding Funds to Mitigate the Impact of COVID-19 on the Most Vulnerable Students
Strategic Resource Management

- Unprecedented closures
- Unpredictable future
- Unknown impact
- How will we strategically use the resources we have to continue to improve outcomes for students with disabilities?
Guest Presenters

Jason Willis
Director of Strategy & Performance
WestEd

School finance and strategy expert that previously worked as school district Assistant Superintendent and Chief Financial Officer in northern CA, Standard & Poor’s research analyst

Kelsey Krausen
Senior Engagement Manager
WestEd

School finance and continuous improvement expert that previously worked for California AG’s Office; Ph.D. in education policy
Name one way your state is improving its support for students as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
Agenda

1. Economic & Financial Implications for School Budgets
2. Federal Support for K-12 Education
3. Grounding Assumptions
4. Planning Framework
5. Closing & Next Steps
Session Objectives

• Increase understanding of the economic impact of COVID-19 and federal support for education on education budgets

• Learn more about key considerations for strategic resource management

• Consider how to prioritize resource needs in the short, mid- and longer-term
Economic and financial implications of COVID-19 on school budgets
Four Distinct Features of Economic Recession:

Rapid Movement

Note: Shaded areas reflect recessions. Data are seasonally adjusted.
Four Distinct Features of Economic Recession:

Rapid Movement

Four Distinct Features of Economic Recession: 

Broad Reaching
Four Distinct Features of Economic Recession:

**External Trigger**
Four Distinct Features of Economic Recession: **Unknown Factors**

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State Budget Implications as a Result of COVID-19

States will experience the decline differently based on their mix of revenue sources.

State Budget Implications as a Result of COVID-19

- State and local spending typically lag economic indicators by 9 months.
- States are reporting revenue declines for FY21 between 7% and 25%.

Forecasted Impacts to State Education Budgets

- Multiple revisions to state budgets throughout the year.
- Increased competition for state revenue.
- State reserve build-up will provide some cushion.
- CARES Act is much needed but is: (a) short-term and (b) small in impact.
Lessons from the Great Recession: What ARRA *Did* and *Did Not Do*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did</th>
<th>Did Not Do</th>
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<td>Stabilized state and local education employment</td>
<td>Sharp declines in state revenue for high-need districts exacerbated funding inequities.</td>
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<td>Generated GDP growth that was between 0.5 and 2.4x the investment</td>
<td>Did not restructure major, long-term obligations in state education budgets</td>
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<td>Accelerated common reform agenda</td>
<td>Did not prepare public education for making rapid transitions from in-person to virtual</td>
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<td>States built reserves over subsequent decade to protect against a future recession.</td>
<td>Did not spur cross-agency collaboration for child-serving agencies</td>
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Implications for School District Budgets: Focus on Special Education

Highly unlikely that school districts can capture ‘low hanging’ expenses to get through this downturn

MOE may help protect special education; however, expectations for those dollars will rise dramatically

Bifurcation in layoffs between general and special ed

• Higher reductions to classified staff and gen’l ed teachers
• Shortages will remain in special education
Federal Support for K-12 Education
CARES Act

Education Stabilization Fund: $30.75 billion

- **$13.5 billion** for Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund
- Initial reservations by USED:
  - 0.5% set-aside for outlying areas and 0.5% set-aside for BIE schools
  - 1% ($307 million) for grants to states with highest coronavirus burden
- After the reservations, USED allocates funds as follows:
  - SEAs and LEAs receive allocation based on their ESEA Title I share (FY19)
  - SEAs may reserve up to 10% for SEA activities, including 0.5% for admin
HEROES Act (initial proposal)

General Overview

- On May 12, House Democrats unveiled a $3 trillion coronavirus relief bill, the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions Act (HEROES Act).
- The bill includes:
  - $915B in relief for states, localities, territories, and tribes that could be used to support education.
  - $100.15B in direct funding for the Department of Education to give out as grants to states and specific institutions of higher education, with about $58 billion for K-12 education and $42 billion for higher education.
Title III - Fiscal Relief for States, Localities, Territories, and Tribes (page 22)

- Each state (including D.C.) will receive $2B (total of $102 billion)
  - $150B allocated proportionately by population
  - $49B allocated based on the relative prevalence of COVID-19,
  - $199B based on the number of unemployed workers.

- These dollars - and the other fiscal relief funding in this section – could be used to support public education.

- Other relief funding includes:
  - Tribal Fiscal relief ($20 billion)
  - Local Fiscal Relief Fund ($375 billion)
HEROES Act (Initial Proposal)

Department of Education

- $90B State Fiscal Stabilization Fund (SFSF)
- Funds available until September 30, 2022, to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the virus.
- After some set-asides, 65% of the remainder (about $58 billion) would be distributed for K-12 education based on the Title I formula
- K-12 funds can be used to support activities such as:
  - costs associated with making up instructional time, including personnel costs;
  - school-based supports for impacted students, families, and staff
  - costs associated with sanitation and cleaning
  - professional development for school-based staff on trauma-informed care
  - educational technology
  - And more!
Poll #1

A pop-up box will open in Zoom.

Top budget concerns and anticipated budget cuts
Grounding Assumptions for Special Education Resource Allocation
The Chinese word for “crisis” is written with two brush strokes. The meaning of which is “danger at a point of juncture.”
Grounding Assumptions

- Special education students are general education students first
- More data is needed to inform special education decisions
- This is not temporary
- Despite many unknowns, plan now
Special education students are general education students first.

- Needs cannot be met in isolation – though fiscal processes for pushing for such
- Students may also be English learners, live in poverty, and have complex needs
- Special education services are supplemental to core instruction, not a replacement
- IDEA funds: only for excess cost of special education (on top of what an LEA spends for all students)
More data is needed to inform special education decisions

- Decisions about the lack of progress and additional needs depend on data about progress and needs for all students
  - Disability v. lack of instruction v. short-term trauma
- Extended school year (ESY) decisions should not change, recoupment is unknown
- Decisions about compensatory services cannot be made without additional data and after remediation
This is not temporary

• Connecting with families and school teams and increasing virtual engagement

• Learn more about how to better support:
  • Basic access and connectivity
  • Accommodations and modifications
  • Access to core instruction and the general education environment (inclusive practices)
Despite many unknowns, plan now

- Cannot rely on IDEA waivers
  - Any flexibilities should be “narrow, targeted, and temporary” (Senators Cassidy and Murphy)
- Strategically address effects of budget shortfalls on future maintenance of effort requirements
- Anticipate we will not be in buildings come August 2020 or at least not in the same way
-Trimming or redeploying resources for blended learning

Poll #2

A pop-up box will open in Zoom.
Is your agency planning to use CARES funds for special education?
COVID-19 Resource Planning Framework
WestEd COVID-19 Special Education Resource Planning Framework

Phase I: Urgent (0-3 Months)
Objective: Address essentials; maintain FAPE to the extent possible in learning environments that uphold orders to mitigate the spread of COVID-19

Phase II: Stabilization (2-8 Months)
Objective: Assess gaps and inequities; lay foundation for effective remediation and re-opening of schools, maximize coordination across programs

Phase III: Recovery (6-18 Months)
Objective: Prioritize recovery for most vulnerable student populations; continuously improve alternative delivery of instruction and FAPE
Phase I: Urgent (0 – 3 months)

Objective: Address essentials; maintain FAPE to the extent possible in learning environments that uphold orders to mitigate the spread of COVID-19

Considerations

- Provide for the basic needs of students
- Ensure staff needs are met so they can meet student needs
- Engage families to communicate about child and family needs
- Maximize access to the learning opportunities provided to all students
- Provide services and FAPE to the extent reasonable
Phase I: Urgent (0 – 3 months)

Objective: Address essentials; maintain FAPE to the extent possible in learning environments that uphold orders to mitigate the spread of COVID-19

Resource allocation strategies

• Clear guidance to school districts on use of available resources to meet emergency needs

• Utilize existing staff, including paraprofessionals, to engage with families:
  • Check in regularly to ensure families and students are safe
  • Repurpose staff whose responsibilities have changed
  • Repurpose contracts (e.g. transportation, related services)
Phase II: Stabilization (2 – 8 months)

Objective: Assess gaps and inequities; lay foundation for effective remediation and re-opening of schools, maximize coordination across programs

Considerations

• Begin to assess gaps for all students
• Ensure students with disabilities have access to supplemental services provided for all students, with accommodations and modifications
• Consider supplemental services, separate from ESY
• Ensure basic compliance (IEP meetings, evaluations, eligibility determinations, re-evaluations)
Phase II: Stabilization (2 – 8 months)

Objective: Assess gaps and inequities; lay foundation for effective remediation and re-opening of schools, maximize coordination across programs

Resource allocation strategies

• Plan for distance screening, progress monitoring, and differentiated supports for all students to avoid an influx of referrals for special education
• Implement summer instruction for high need students
• Professional development for teachers, staff, and other support services
• Prepare for coordinated services provided in new ways
• Reflect on lessons learned and improvements to bring forward
Phase III: Recovery (6 – 18 months)

Objective: Prioritize recovery for most vulnerable student populations; continuously improve alternative delivery of instruction and FAPE

Considerations

- Assess and address gaps and needs, considering all students
- Allow students opportunity to recover before making decisions about compensatory services
- Continue to improve distance delivery of FAPE
- Integrate contingency planning into the IEP process
Phase III: Recovery (6 – 18 months)

Objective: Prioritize recovery for most vulnerable student populations; continuously improve alternative delivery of instruction and FAPE

Resource allocation strategies

• Increase flexibility of funds to ensure child-centered programming rather than program-based services
• Continue to increase system capacity and flexibility.
• Consider potential efficiencies discovered during school closures.
  • Virtual IEP meetings, increased electronic communication, virtual due process meetings
Poll

A pop-up box will open in Zoom.

During what period do you anticipate needing the most support?
Final Questions?
Join us for the remainder of the series!

- Resource Planning for Students with Disabilities through the COVID-19 Pandemic: Balancing Legal Obligations and Available Resources to Maintain Student Progress
  - Wednesday, May 20th at 1 pm PT / 4 pm ET
- Blending and Braiding Funds to Mitigate the Impact of COVID-19 on the Most Vulnerable Students
  - Wednesday, May 27th at 1 pm PT / 4 pm ET
Thank you!

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