

## District Innovation Spotlight

### Spring 2023 ESSER Newsletter

What are some innovative things districts are doing with their ESSER funds? Every quarter we will highlight promising and creative activities that have the potential to impact student outcomes. We encourage all districts to share these stories using **#ESSERImpactOR** on social media.

Here are three stories from Oregon school districts regarding how they used their ESSER III funds to increase the number of high-quality learning options within their community:

#### Salem-Keizer Public Schools (submitted by Emily Reverman, Public Relations Specialist)

##### High School Mentors/Graduation Coaches

The pandemic impacted many of our high school students' ability to stay on track to graduate in four years. Likewise, our Panorama survey data indicated that many of our high school students did not have a trusted adult they connected with in school. We use ESSER resources to provide Graduation Coaches to all students in every high school. Graduation Coaches serve to provide direct support to students and families through personal relationships, home visits, and regular communication with families. These coaches get to know students and families and monitor/intervene as needed when students need support with classes, getting to school regularly, signing up for summer/after-school interventions, enrichments, etc. They serve as a trusted adult and advocate who leverage when needed the resources we have in place to support kids and families.

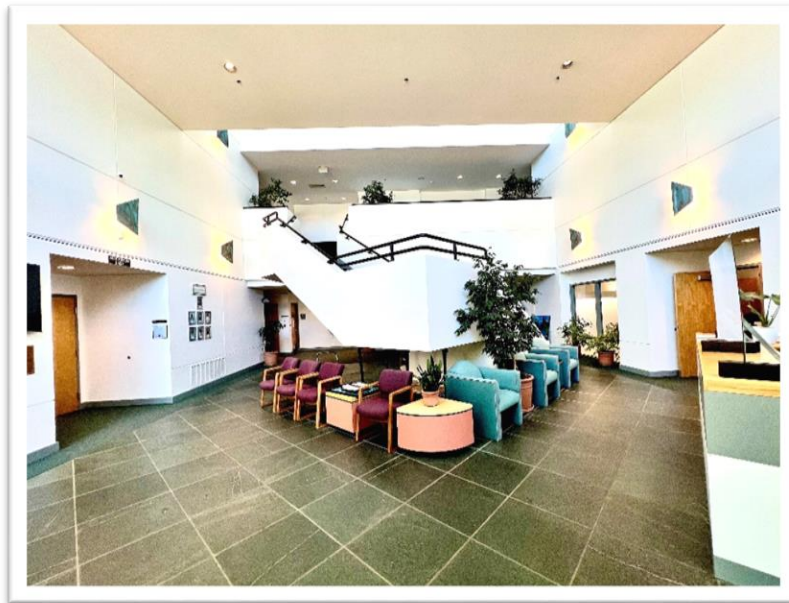
##### Social Workers

The work and impact these folks are having on students/families and the partnerships they have formed with counselors/teachers and the administrative teams are great.

Before the pandemic, a handful of our secondary schools had social workers in the building working directly with students/families. Anticipating that more students/families may need additional resources and support, we invested ESSER resources to provide each secondary school with an on-site social worker. These trained experts work closely with our school teams to provide interventions and support directly to students and families and assist in connecting students/families to services within the community.

## Multnomah Education Service District (submitted by Celine de Clercq, Senior Communications Specialist)

*Credit Recovery High School, HVAC, Permanent Substitute Teachers, Network and Technology Updates*



*Main Lobby Remodeled into Multipurpose Room to Support Hybrid Meetings Using ESSER Funds at the Multnomah ESD.*

## New Credit Recovery High School, HVAC, and Permanent Substitute Teachers, Network and Technology Updates

MESD is utilizing critical ESSER II funds to help ensure every student we serve benefits from a safe and supportive learning environment where they receive personalized, creative, equitable, and cutting-edge education, health, and technology services.

These funds have gone to help meet the needs of employees and students in their career, school, and wellness journeys. Some projects include innovative engagement services for students including [East County Bridges reconnection](#) and the beginnings of a new recovery high school. We've also used them to upgrade aging HVAC upgrades, to help provide roving "permanent subs" to mitigate teacher absences, and for network and technology updates to support hybrid work.

## David Douglas School District (submitted by Dan McCue, Communication Director)

*Purchase New Buses, Upgrade HVAC, Summer Learning K-8*

### Purchase New Buses

Purchasing new buses will ensure DDSD has enough buses in rotation to keep students safely distanced to reduce the risk of viral transmission, e.g. COVID-19. The new buses also have better air circulation/ventilation. The District needs buses to ensure students can participate in regular as well as any unfinished learning due to COVID, as well as receive meals via bus drivers if the buildings cannot be entered due to COVID. The expenditure directly impacts historically underserved students. The vast majority of students at David Douglas are students of color and those who are from lower-income families. Newer buses have cleaner fuel systems to reduce emissions for cleaner air. They have better air circulation to reduce the risk of viral transmissions such as COVID to the broader community. In addition, keeping school operations functioning normally means students are engaged in a safe, structured learning environment, ultimately leading to a safe and prosperous community.

### Upgraded HVAC at Menlo Park

We were approved to spend \$5.1M of ESSER funds to upgrade HVAC systems and replace filters to improve indoor air quality at Menlo Park Elementary. This will reduce the risk of virus transmission and exposure to environmental health hazards.

### Summer learning for K-8

We used ESSER funds to supplement, enhance and expand summer programming and complete unfinished learning for students. Over the last two years, we served more than 2,000 K-8 students through summer academic and enrichment activities. We offered a project-based and hands-on curriculum to attract student interest. We partnered in the community with organizations including but not limited to: Oregon Ballet Theatre, Grow Portland, SUN, MESD's Outdoor School program, BodyVox, Zenger Farm, Champions, Playworks, and others to provide an array of well-rounded activities.