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Tracking Rhode Island's COVID-19 Recovery: District Investments in Curriculum, Professional Learning, and Technology

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IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, STATES AND DISTRICTS RECEIVED THE LARGEST EVER INFUSION OF NON-RECURRING FEDERAL GRANT MONEY TO SUPPORT STUDENT RECOVERY.

In a [previous brief](#), we detailed Rhode Island school districts' use of federal recovery funds for spending on student-facing and administrative personnel.¹ While personnel spending was by far the largest category of ESSER (the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund), district spending also spiked in other key areas. This brief focuses on the ways that ESSER dollars changed district contracting and purchases—specifically how districts have shifted spending in curriculum, professional development, and technology, as a result of the flexibility provided by ESSER funding.

Districts used ESSER funds to increase spending on these key goods and services far above the pre-pandemic averages. While districts increased total expenditures by 16% in the 2021-22 school year, they increased spending in curriculum, technology, and professional development by 66% on average, with some districts more than tripling their spending.

OUR ANALYSIS HIGHLIGHTS THREE KEY FINDINGS:

- 1** Districts substantially increased curriculum spending, using the new federal funds in part to respond to state curriculum mandates passed just before the pandemic.
- 2** Districts tripled spending on external professional development providers, with the largest increases in urban core districts for services focused on early literacy and multilingual learners.
- 3** Districts across the state used ESSER funds to increase technology spending, significantly increasing the quality and availability of individual student devices.

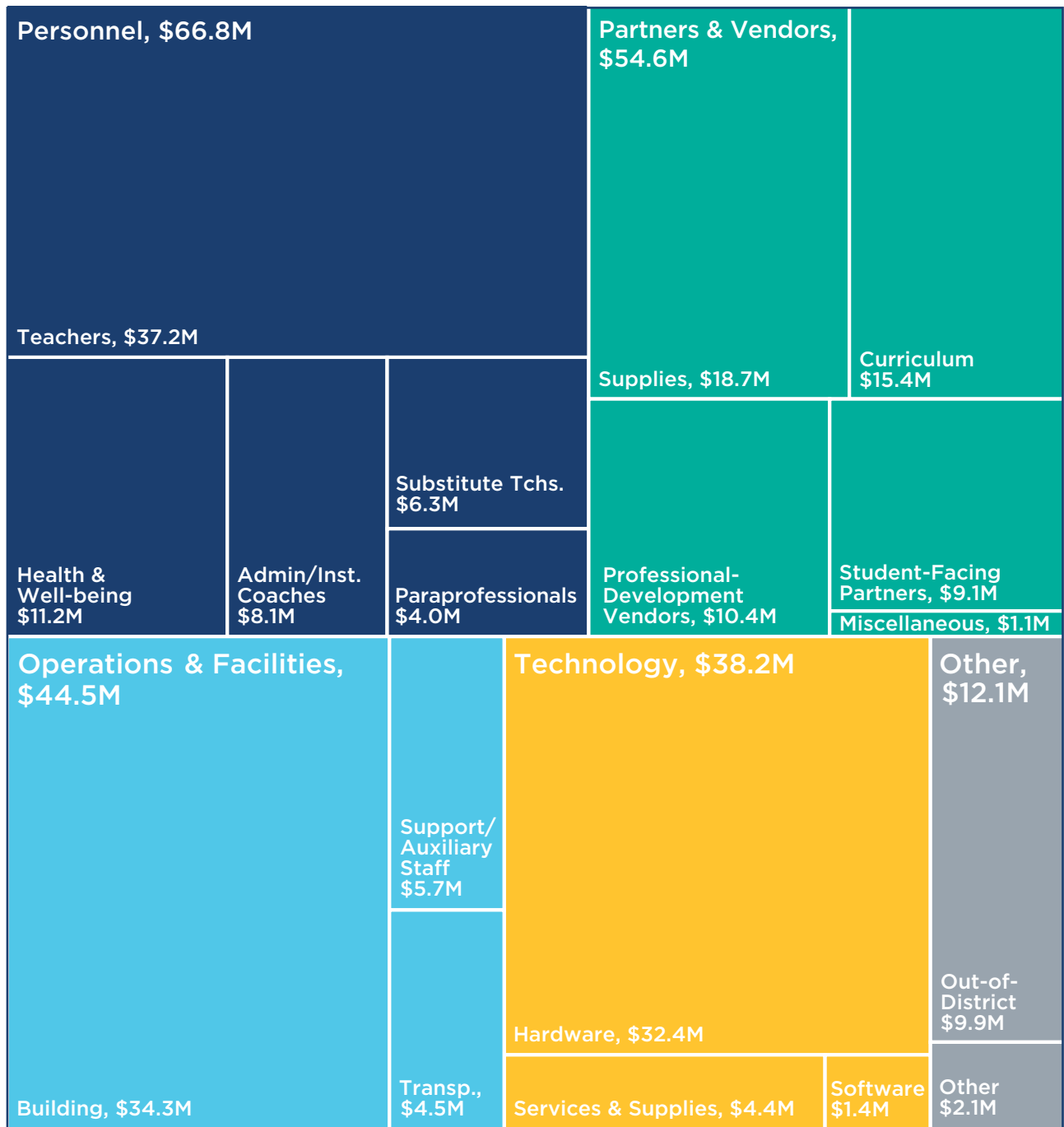
This brief adds to a broader body of work exploring the first two years of ESSER spending. It contributes to the evidence suggesting that districts in Rhode Island faced spending constraints that forced them to spend largely on existing initiatives and staff, as opposed to the new hires or programs that were proposed in initial budget submissions. Our previous brief showed that ESSER personnel funding was largely used to supplement existing staff pay rather than hire new employees. In this brief, we find that districts spent considerable sums on external trainings, coaching, and instructional materials aimed at building capability among existing staff members. These investments in materials and services have the potential to serve as long-term investments that create payoffs that endure beyond the ESSER funding cutoff in 2024; they also represent large bets and shifts in spending patterns that should be tracked and evaluated to monitor their effects over time.

HOW ESSER SPENDING BREAKS DOWN ACROSS CATEGORIES

As of June 2022, the latest date with complete spending information, Rhode Island districts had spent \$216 million, or about one-third of the total ESSER allocation. To analyze how districts have made use of ESSER, we divided the \$216 million in spending across four primary categories: Personnel, Partners and Vendors, Operations and Facilities, and Technology. As seen in Figure 1, these categories include a wide range of spending.²

- Personnel is the largest category of spending and the focus of our May 2023 brief. Districts spent \$67 million from ESSER to cover compensation for a portion of existing salaries, additional staff responsibilities, and a few new hires in key roles including instructional coaches, SEL support staff, and administrators.
- Partners and Vendors captures all contracted services and materials; districts spent a total of \$55 million on these contracts using ESSER. About 16% of contracted expenditures was for student-facing support staff, like nurses or instructional support, and we describe this spending in our personnel brief. An additional one-third of total contract spending (\$19 million) was on general instructional supplies. We focus in detail on contract spending for curriculum and professional development vendors, totaling \$15.4 million and \$10.4 million, respectively.
- Operations and Facilities accounts for transportation, building upkeep, and auxiliary support, including efforts to keep schools safe during the pandemic. Districts have spent \$44 million of ESSER funds in this category, primarily on custodial staff and contracts, transportation personnel and operations, and other general maintenance. This includes \$2 million spent on repairing HVAC systems.
- Lastly, districts spent \$38 million of ESSER funds on technology. These expenditures include hardware, software, and related service costs. About 85% of this spending was on pupil devices.

FIGURE 1 — ESSER SPENDING BY CATEGORY AND SUB-CATEGORY, IN MILLIONS OF DOLLARS, THROUGH JUNE 2022



This report intentionally focuses on how funds were spent rather than the rate at which they were spent. Because the most granular data currently available covers only half of the total ESSER spending period (which continues through September 2024) and specifically does not include the now completed 2022-23 school year, inferences about rate of spending would be incomplete. Please see Appendix A for more details.

Finding 1:

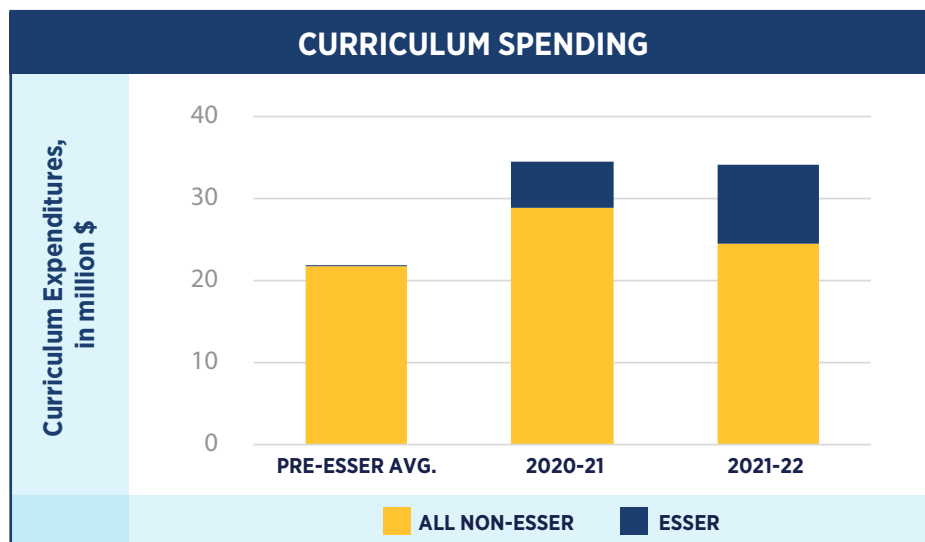
DISTRICTS SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED CURRICULUM SPENDING, USING THE NEW FEDERAL FUNDS IN PART TO RESPOND TO STATE CURRICULUM MANDATES PASSED JUST BEFORE THE PANDEMIC.

Many states, including Rhode Island, have pushed schools to adopt high-quality instructional materials (HQIM) over the past decade.³ Evidence suggests that using such materials well can be a cost-effective tool to improve student learning at scale.⁴ In 2019, Rhode Island's state legislature established an HQIM mandate for K-12 schools, requiring that districts select and implement curricula designated as high-quality. The state primarily used ratings provided by EdReports, a national nonprofit that reviews instructional materials. Districts were required to select approved curricula (or file a waiver based on local circumstances⁵) in Math and ELA by September 2023 and Science by September 2025.

Because the state mandate did not come with additional resources for curriculum adoption, districts needed to find funds in their existing budgets. As a result, many districts used ESSER funds to upgrade curricula and meet these requirements. We define curriculum spending as expenditures on all books, subscriptions, online instructional programs, and curriculum development services provided by vendors, or in a few cases, by personnel.

The injection of ESSER funds has allowed districts to significantly increase their curriculum spending, relative to past years. As shown in Figure 2, in the five years prior to the pandemic, districts across the state spent an average total of \$22 million annually on curriculum. In both the 2020-21 and 2021-22 school years, this increased by about 56%, surpassing \$34 million. Districts used other funding sources to cover the initial increase in spending in 2020-21, with less than half of it covered by ESSER. However, the increase was sustained into 2021-22 using \$9.7 million from ESSER, covering 80% of that growth. In total, in the first two years of ESSER, districts spent \$15.4 million from these funds on curriculum.

FIGURE 2



Nine out of thirty-six districts more than doubled their curriculum spending, including Providence Public Schools, the largest district in terms of enrollment and ESSER funding. PPSD averaged \$2.2 million pre-pandemic and reached \$4.7 million in 2022. ESSER dollars financed 96% of that increase (see Appendix B for district level spending changes).

As of 2023, over 90% of RI's traditional districts use state-approved, high-quality materials in all their K-5 ELA and Math curricula. In 2019, only 52% of districts used any approved materials and no districts had updated both subjects.

The investment in HQIM has resulted in the majority of districts now using exclusively state-approved curricula in alignment with the state mandate.⁶ All 36 traditional districts are using at least one state-approved curriculum in K-5 ELA or Math. While spending data does not detail how much curriculum spending was specific to HCQM requirements, one-quarter of curriculum related budget items referenced the mandate directly. Through interviews, we know that district leaders used ESSER funds to coordinate selection and implementation of these new materials which included textbooks, site licenses, classroom libraries, and digital tools. These new materials have also necessitated additional professional development to familiarize and train teachers on new curriculum and leaders were able to use ESSER dollars for this too.

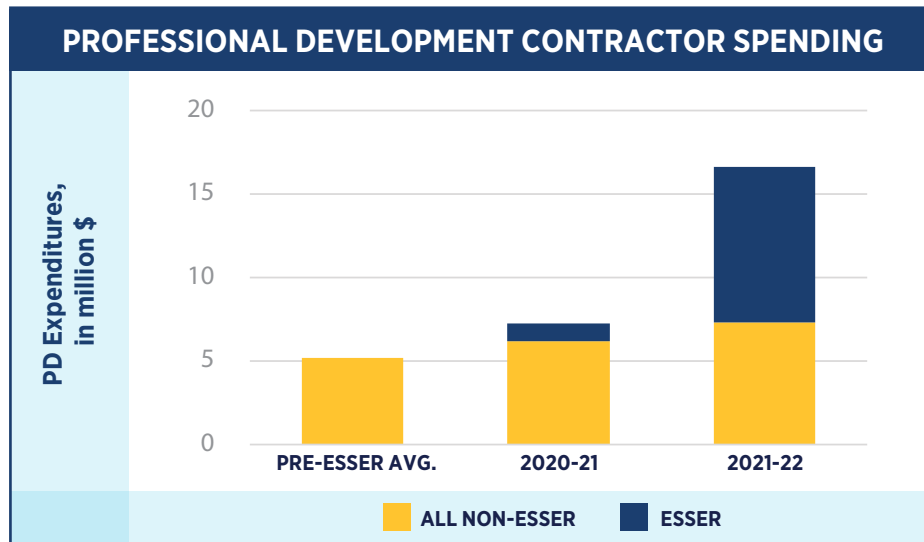
Finding 2:

DISTRICTS HAVE TRIPLED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SPENDING, WITH THE LARGEST INCREASES IN URBAN CORE DISTRICTS FOR SERVICES FOCUSED ON EARLY LITERACY AND MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS.

Districts invest in teacher learning both through staff compensation and external vendor services. Internally, districts pay staff for their time spent in professional development (PD), and they hire specialists or instructional coaches to provide in-building instructional support to educators. In our previous brief, we reported that districts spent \$4 million and \$3 million of ESSER funds on staff PD compensation and instructional coach salaries, respectively. Here, we focus on the PD services provided by external vendors. External vendors typically provide instructional services to teachers or other educators. Districts may also partner with higher education institutions to provide continued education opportunities to their educators, including credentials attainment.

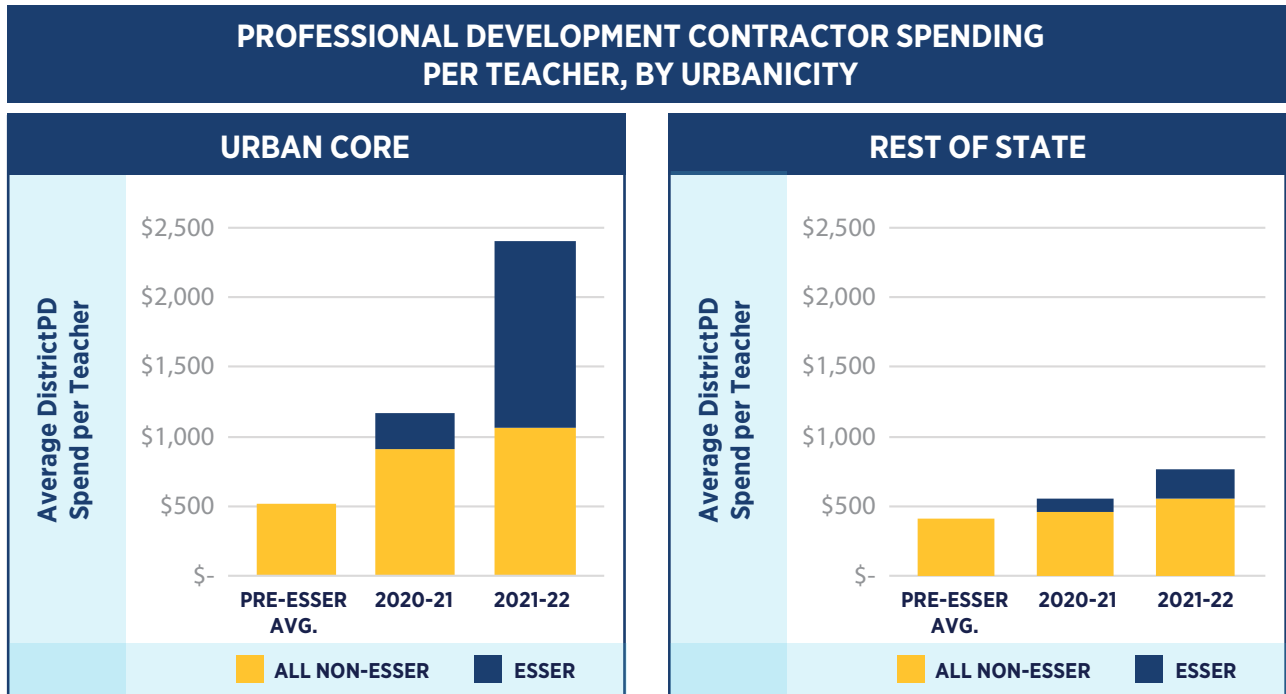
In the years leading to ESSER, districts spent an average annual total of \$5 million on these external PD services. Though there was only modest growth in 2020-21, the injection of ESSER dollars more than tripled this total to \$16.6 million in the 2021-22 school year. Specifically, 81%, or \$9.3 million, of this increase in spending was funded by ESSER. In total, districts spent more than \$10 million on these professional development services in the first two years of ESSER, already surpassing the \$9 million in ESSER funds budgeted.

FIGURE 3



These statewide increases in PD spending were driven primarily by Rhode Island’s urban core. Pre-pandemic, urban core districts spent an average of \$521 per teacher on contracted PD services, compared to \$423 in other districts. As seen in Figure 4, by 2021-22 contracted PD spending had risen to \$781 per teacher in non-urban districts, an 85% increase. However, spending in the urban core jumped more than four-fold (+361%), to \$2,401 per teacher.

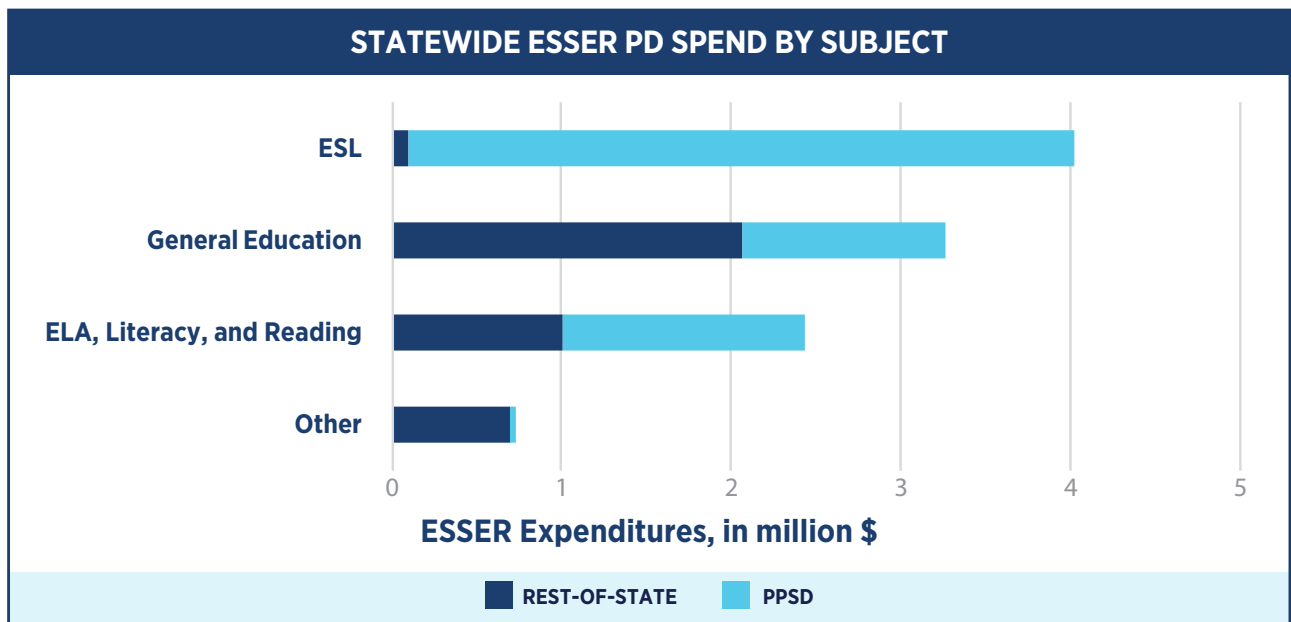
FIGURE 4



Nearly two-thirds of ESSER PD dollars went towards English as a Second Language (ESL) and English Language Arts (ELA).

While the injection of ESSER increased overall spending in PD, investments were also targeted to key subject areas. The largest share of external PD services supported by ESSER was for ESL-training, driven by \$3.9 million spent in Providence. Providence’s ESL spending makes up two-thirds of the district’s ESSER PD spend and as shown in Figure 5, 37% of total statewide PD spend. This expenditure is the largest ever investment in ESL PD in the district and across the state. The ESL investment in Providence is primarily the result of the Department of Justice investigation into multilingual student services. This federal intervention resulted in several requirements to improve resources for multilingual students, including expanding the number of ESL teachers and better supporting existing ones. In response, the district leveraged ESSER funds for ESL certification reimbursements to increase the number of ESL teachers in the district and expanded instructional coaching for ESL teachers through Engage2Learn and other vendors. PPSD leaders expressed that ESSER funds were critical in efforts to better support MLL students.

FIGURE 5



The other notable area of statewide investment was in ELA. Upwards of \$2.4 million, or 23.6% of ESSER funded PD, has been explicitly reported as supporting literacy and reading. In 2019, the Rhode Island state legislature passed the Right to Read Act, requiring that educators receive training in the science of reading and structured literacy. As in the case of the curriculum mandate, this act did not come with additional funding and was meant to be met out of existing district budgets. Districts put ESSER budgets to work to meet requirements with 24 out of 36 districts mentioning the science of reading, literacy, and/or Right to Read, and 40% of the total PD service budget including these terms. As reported in our previous brief, district leaders also used ESSER funds to hire key staff, like reading specialists or literacy coaches, to train teachers and to implement Right to Read interventions.

While not opposed to the Right to Read legislation in principle, several district leaders we interviewed did express concern that it prevented them from choosing other focus areas for PD. One leader explained, “We felt like the Right to Read Act was good legislation, that training is going to level up their reading and writing instruction for our teachers...the problem is, there’s only so much professional development teachers can get...everybody wants the SEL [socio-emotional learning] stuff but there’s only so much time in a day.”

While the greatest share of ESSER professional development spending went toward MLL and ELA initiatives, an additional one-third of the total is listed as “general education” spending. While expenditure data offers less insight into this spending category, interviews and budget narratives suggest that much of this spending went toward supporting social-emotional learning (SEL). The pandemic brought on disruptive challenges for many students. This has manifested in part in a rise in absenteeism⁷, most critically in the urban core districts. Based on narratives districts provided on proposed spending, about 25% of the total PD budget was intended for SEL-focused training. Several districts planned to provide SEL intervention training to teachers and/or establish multi-tiered support systems to respond to student needs.

“We felt like the Right to Read Act was good legislation, that training is going to level up their reading and writing instruction for our teachers... the problem is, there’s only so much professional development teachers can get...everybody wants the SEL [socio-emotional learning] stuff but there’s only so much time in a day.”

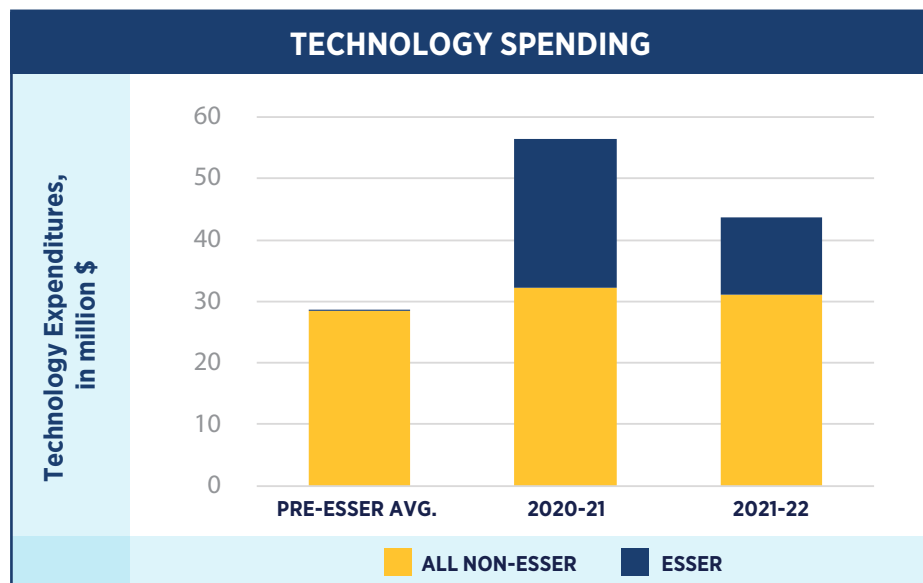
Finding 3:

DISTRICTS SPENT UP FRONT ON TECHNOLOGY, AND SPENDING HAS BEEN CONCENTRATED IN STUDENT-FACING DEVICES.

The shift to online learning necessitated large one-time investments in technology. Prior to the pandemic, districts' technology fleets varied. While most districts were at or near one device per child, not all devices were up to date. Rhode Island districts used ESSER funds to upgrade technology across the state. The upfront nature of this \$38.2 million investment in technology has meant that districts spent nearly two-thirds of their ESSER technology budget in the first two years of the grants.

We define technology as hardware, software, and related services. Prior to the pandemic, Rhode Island districts averaged a total technology spend of \$28.7 million per year. In 2020-21, districts nearly doubled their spending to \$56.5 million, before falling a bit to \$43.7 million in 2021-22. In both years, districts used ESSER funding to cover more than 80% of the increase in technology spending.

FIGURE 6



Most of the ESSER spending across both years was on hardware, accounting for \$32.4 million or 85% of technology spend. Nearly all of hardware expenditures, \$27 million, were used for pupil-use technology, including both purchasing new devices and upgrading and maintaining existing ones. 15% of ESSER technology dollars were spent on technical services (\$2.7 million), supplies (\$1.6 million), and software (\$1.4 million). Interviews with district leaders suggest that a portion of these technology expenditures went towards improving communication between schools and families. In recent years, states that have seen the largest improvements in students outcomes have been those that made long-term investments in instructional quality, particularly around early literacy.⁸

Because ESSER drove nearly all the additional spending on technology and most costs were up front, we expect that total technology spending is likely to continue returning to pre-pandemic levels. With online tools becoming more a staple in instruction and operations, local budgets will need to absorb continued costs of maintaining students' devices. As one district leader phrased it, "Is that one time investment really going to set us on track to keep up with having all the devices...Or is it going to go away once we don't have the funds to replenish it?"

CONCLUSION

As we detail in this brief, ESSER funds have substantially increased spending on key areas related to student learning: curriculum, professional development, and technology.

ESSER funds have also made it possible for districts to act on state legislation that emerged just before the pandemic in the form of unfunded mandates, specifically the Right to Read and High-Quality Curriculum Materials legislation.

The large investments that districts put into staff training and materials add to the pattern we have observed in previous briefs, where most districts chose to invest ESSER funds in ongoing initiatives rather than use the funds to launch new programs or major shifts in strategy. The Annenberg Institute recently released a report on the “new normal” in Rhode Island’s public schools, detailing large shifts in levels of student absenteeism. These circumstances suggest that investments that do not fundamentally change key structures and services within schools might not be sufficient to fully support students and families even several years after the official end of the pandemic.

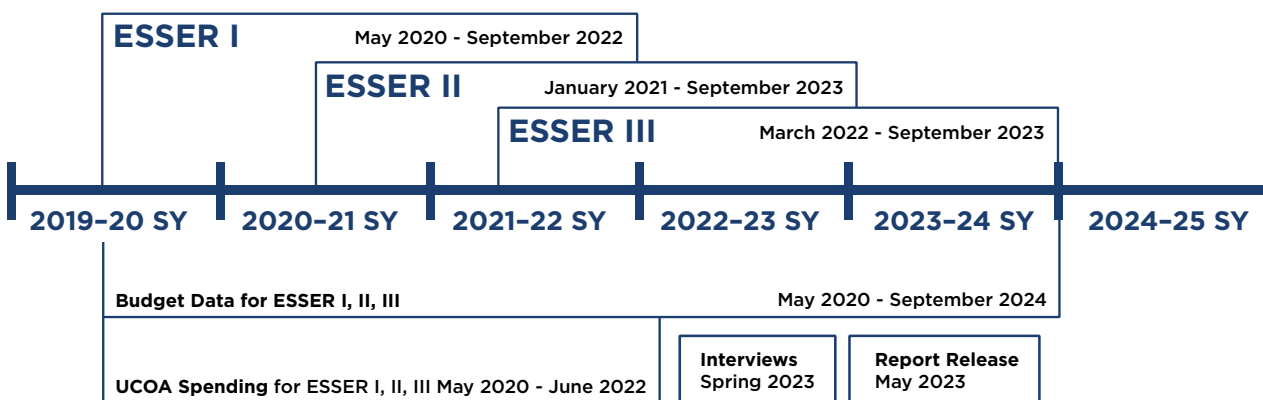
At the same time, research suggests that the interventions supported by much of this funding—improved literacy instruction centered on the science of reading, robust implementation of high-quality instructional materials, improved technology, better professional learning to help teachers support the needs of all students—can have outsized benefits for schools. In recent years, states that have seen the largest improvements in students outcomes have been those that made long-term investments in instructional quality, particularly around early literacy.

However, the devil is in the details. A long history of education reform suggests that funding is critical to launch new initiatives, but the initiatives live or die based on the success of implementation. Furthermore, sustaining efforts requires continued work. Studies show that successful implementation of new curricula and professional learning is only possible with robust leadership support and opportunities to sustain educator learning.⁹

The startlingly large increases in spending in curriculum and professional learning over the last several years—many times typical pre-pandemic levels—also create clear opportunities for learning across districts. Given the size of the investments already seen, we should expect improved teaching and learning outcomes. Evaluating these efforts to ensure that they are yielding the intended results, and changing course if not, is critical. We are not currently aware of any work that is taking place within the state to evaluate whether this spending is shifting practice on a large scale among teachers or improving student results. Since federal ESSER funds are set to run out in fall 2024, strong plans for evaluation and statewide learning feels particularly important to ensure that the current efforts continue to pay dividends over a longer term.

APPENDIX A — ABOUT THE DATA

This report relies on three sources of data: (1) ESSER budget data, (2) Uniform Charts of Accounts (UCOA) spending data, and (3) interview data. We outline details about each source of data below and show the coverage of each data source relative to when we are releasing the report in the following timeline.



BUDGET DATA: This report draws on both narrative and budget data from districts' ESSER I, II and III spending plans, as well as ESSER Set Aside and Supplemental Impact Education Aid. Rhode Island districts responded in narrative form to a series of questions dictated by the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE). Districts also completed budget templates detailing proposed spending at the line-item level. Each item (a total of about 8,700 items across all districts) includes detailed information on exactly how the district plans to allot the funds. We rely on item descriptions and justifications to separate out individual types of personnel spending, supplies, contracts, and other costs. We read and coded districts' narratives to identify key strategies, grades and subjects served, and the target groups of students for specific interventions. For both waves, we coded budget items into a series of mutually exclusive categories including: (1) Personnel, (2) Partners and Supplies, (3) Technology, (4) Operations and facilities.

SPENDING DATA: We leverage UCOA data rather than the federal Education Stabilization Fund (ESF) data to understand spending patterns in Rhode Island. While data in ESF are updated more frequently as more reimbursements are submitted, there are two main drawbacks. The first is there can be a lag between when districts spend the funds and when they request reimbursements. Districts can submit reimbursements from the current school year, but they can also still submit reimbursements from prior school years. The second drawback is that the reimbursement data only tell us how much was reimbursed, not details of how the money was spent. Like ESF, RIDE also shares reimbursement data and does so at the district level through this public dashboard. The ESF data, RIDE dashboard, and UCOA data all slightly differ in which specific sub-grants, like the ESSER Set-Aside and Supplemental Impact Education Aid, are included which can lead to small differences in reported spend.

Ultimately, we use UCOA data which allow us to see complete years of spending through June 2022 because districts can record ESSER expenditures before requesting for reimbursement and most importantly, it allows us to see at a granular level how ESSER funds were spent. We use UCOA job, function, subject, and object codes to organize spending into understandable categories.

UPDATES TO SPENDING AREA CATEGORIES: To better capture the spending areas outlined in this brief, we recategorized certain expenditure codes that we summarized in our previous analysis. Web-based supplemental instructional programs were moved from Technology into Curriculum. To better reflect personnel function areas that we previously reported, support and auxiliary staff were moved from Personnel into Operations and Facilities. Tuition reimbursements made for district staff were moved into Professional Development. Out-of-district obligations were removed from all categories and grouped into an additional “Other” category. These changes affect about 10% of ESSER expenditures, and thus categorical aggregates may differ slightly from our May 2023 brief.

INTERVIEW DATA: Annenberg conducted ten semi-structured interviews with superintendents through the state to better understand how districts were pursuing ESSER spending strategies and what barriers they were facing in executing those strategies. Our sample spanned urbanicity, size, and geography. Districts that received more funding were over-sampled, as they were thought to be information-rich cases given the large influx of capital they received. Interviews were recorded and transcribed to identify themes and trends highlighted in this report.

APPENDIX B — DISTRICT LEVEL SPENDING

CURRICULUM						
DISTRICT	TOTAL EXPENDITURES			ESSER EXPENDITURES		
	SY 2015-16 - SY 2019-20 Average	SY 2020-21	SY 2021-22	SY 2019-20	SY 2020-21	SY 2021-22
Barrington	\$847,652	\$1,110,812	\$1,327,857	\$0	\$5,760	\$0
Bristol-Warren Regional	\$571,601	\$555,563	\$655,081	\$0	\$0	\$114,645
Burrillville	\$257,225	\$401,145	\$609,711	\$0	\$3,750	\$256,238
Central Falls	\$237,853	\$775,182	\$533,150	\$0	\$204,289	\$128,983
Chariho Regional	\$1,234,934	\$1,391,213	\$1,440,570	\$0	\$0	\$186,406
Coventry	\$1,515,235	\$1,300,800	\$1,662,333	\$0	\$34,303	\$207,338
Cranston	\$660,445	\$357,832	\$388,941	\$0	\$0	\$75,653
Cumberland	\$714,910	\$768,935	\$955,485	\$0	\$49,006	\$121,417
E Providence	\$753,987	\$1,124,386	\$1,922,701	\$0	\$11,792	\$1,423,402
East Greenwich	\$494,745	\$696,123	\$848,591	\$0	\$0	\$0
Exeter-W. Greenwich Regional	\$687,805	\$820,326	\$965,897	\$0	\$0	\$180,382
Foster	\$25,409	\$45,759	\$45,850	\$0	\$9,458	\$0
Foster-Glocester Regional	\$396,241	\$571,372	\$382,740	\$0	\$0	\$47,773
Glocester	\$49,687	\$46,839	\$40,640	\$0	\$0	\$0
Jamestown	\$5,440	\$1,701	\$4,786	\$0	\$0	\$0
Johnston	\$230,923	\$363,840	\$432,595	\$0	\$51,700	\$151,392
Lincoln	\$803,775	\$1,471,894	\$1,303,442	\$0	\$533,065	\$373,227
Little Compton	\$58,513	\$23,988	\$76,666	\$0	\$0	\$29,663
Middletown	\$185,098	\$198,175	\$213,464	\$9,750	\$9,190	\$0
N Providence	\$472,492	\$592,931	\$1,216,122	\$54,133	\$0	\$388,364
Narragansett	\$290,861	\$320,948	\$381,324	\$0	\$0	\$22,791
New Shoreham	\$22,734	\$14,132	\$28,269	\$0	\$2,821	\$0
Newport	\$157,369	\$142,115	\$843,659	\$0	\$4,038	\$580,488
North Kingstown	\$933,528	\$1,397,985	\$1,157,444	\$38,798	\$0	\$7,286
North Smithfield	\$407,792	\$555,664	\$403,169	\$0	\$48,248	\$48,372
Pawtucket	\$1,127,577	\$4,698,288	\$2,321,144	\$0	\$3,053,385	\$1,438,918
Portsmouth	\$558,689	\$766,397	\$1,065,917	\$0	\$24,185	\$597,629
Providence	\$2,243,489	\$7,435,589	\$4,735,216	\$0	\$1,540,687	\$2,352,333
Scituate	\$230,307	\$275,803	\$710,039	\$0	\$0	\$277,658
Smithfield	\$390,166	\$330,686	\$443,908	\$0	\$9,281	\$14,287
South Kingstown	\$705,668	\$553,861	\$984,957	\$0	\$0	\$4,672
Tiverton	\$163,187	\$209,270	\$570,898	\$0	\$0	\$326,697
W. Warwick	\$471,493	\$692,804	\$813,866	\$0	\$0	\$0
Warwick	\$2,633,196	\$2,777,310	\$3,032,991	\$0	\$26,783	\$72,837
Westerly	\$750,863	\$866,787	\$908,664	\$0	\$0	\$0
Woonsocket	\$519,364	\$779,843	\$727,685	\$0	\$0	\$210,730

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

DISTRICT	TOTAL EXPENDITURES			ESSER EXPENDITURES		
	SY 2015-16 - SY 2019-20 Average	SY 2020-21	SY 2021-22	SY 2019-20	SY 2020-21	SY 2021-22
Barrington	\$152,466	\$162,116	\$217,943	\$0	\$0	\$0
Bristol-Warren Regional	\$104,017	\$28,913	\$106,969	\$0	\$0	\$15,000
Burrillville	\$112,511	\$172,339	\$323,964	\$0	\$0	\$62,390
Central Falls	\$205,824	\$349,846	\$638,007	\$0	\$77,675	\$97,129
Chariho Regional	\$124,627	\$129,687	\$201,666	\$0	\$0	\$75,000
Coventry	\$84,232	\$89,891	\$113,554	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cranston	\$152,349	\$21,452	\$310,899	\$0	\$0	\$249,888
Cumberland	\$134,829	\$96,662	\$165,956	\$0	\$0	\$129,600
E Providence	\$266,614	\$127,373	\$289,163	\$0	\$0	\$180,595
East Greenwich	\$71,635	\$48,891	\$54,929	\$0	\$0	\$0
Exeter-W. Greenwich Regional	\$60,688	\$90,595	\$69,366	\$0	\$0	\$12,054
Foster	\$22,577	\$21,860	\$26,862	\$0	\$1,875	\$0
Foster-Glocester Regional	\$71,679	\$29,364	\$149,793	\$0	\$0	\$0
Glocester	\$9,468	\$3,545	\$42,143	\$0	\$0	\$0
Jamestown	\$64,884	\$58,039	\$70,487	\$0	\$0	\$21,250
Johnston	\$67,196	\$78,062	\$246,237	\$0	\$0	\$40,320
Lincoln	\$120,735	\$219,173	\$171,476	\$0	\$121,000	\$24,050
Little Compton	\$20,469	\$27,594	\$23,853	\$0	\$0	\$5,000
Middletown	\$92,103	\$55,423	\$145,606	\$0	\$0	\$55,492
N Providence	\$158,361	\$191,797	\$306,015	\$0	\$0	\$34,419
Narragansett	\$70,545	\$62,742	\$99,715	\$0	\$600	\$42,500
New Shoreham	\$9,908	\$5,922	\$22,030	\$0	\$0	\$7,800
Newport	\$174,138	\$309,827	\$409,741	\$0	\$1,950	\$17,238
North Kingstown	\$123,901	\$121,151	\$233,927	\$0	\$0	\$88,319
North Smithfield	\$48,108	\$70,326	\$95,553	\$0	\$0	\$28,688
Pawtucket	\$290,965	\$470,474	\$2,008,578	\$0	\$35,800	\$1,502,968
Portsmouth	\$128,809	\$89,814	\$209,734	\$0	\$0	\$118,176
Providence	\$1,250,276	\$2,084,091	\$7,046,096	\$0	\$848,577	\$5,724,278
Scituate	\$62,697	\$194,374	\$251,819	\$0	\$0	\$126,837
Smithfield	\$95,001	\$175,248	\$214,857	\$0	\$0	\$68,400
South Kingstown	\$193,925	\$120,938	\$345,743	\$0	\$0	\$46,957
Tiverton	\$75,503	\$133,107	\$111,828	\$0	\$0	\$2,700
W Warwick	\$44,835	\$42,584	\$66,519	\$0	\$535	\$0
Warwick	\$216,439	\$362,752	\$775,451	\$0	\$0	\$276,855
Westerly	\$148,836	\$227,856	\$354,364	\$0	\$0	\$99,650
Woonsocket	\$154,460	\$763,626	\$728,020	\$0	\$0	\$195,195

TECHNOLOGY

DISTRICT	TOTAL EXPENDITURES			ESSER EXPENDITURES		
	SY 2015-16 - SY 2019-20 Average	SY 2020-21	SY 2021-22	SY 2019-20	SY 2020-21	SY 2021-22
Barrington	\$297,372	\$802,120	\$508,611	\$0	\$70,745	\$43,875
Bristol-Warren Regional	\$849,815	\$656,963	\$1,350,590	\$21,169	\$67,677	\$110,022
Burrillville	\$211,204	\$706,792	\$347,182	\$67,475	\$183,247	\$177,186
Central Falls	\$375,648	\$2,060,909	\$888,719	\$0	\$1,676,994	\$473,079
Chariho Regional	\$926,860	\$1,099,076	\$1,193,306	\$145	\$262,365	\$676,995
Coventry	\$649,103	\$1,794,297	\$516,247	\$0	\$1,298,600	\$19,593
Cranston	\$1,433,260	\$3,290,383	\$1,989,502	\$0	\$1,749,073	\$963,993
Cumberland	\$470,409	\$1,301,018	\$753,920	\$0	\$207,846	\$0
E Providence	\$1,370,662	\$2,506,734	\$630,132	\$0	\$1,495,354	\$295,602
East Greenwich	\$507,843	\$711,501	\$1,167,362	\$0	\$86,655	\$0
Exeter-W. Greenwich Regional	\$222,691	\$231,009	\$294,826	\$48,898	\$26,971	\$0
Foster	\$83,301	\$190,389	\$40,527	\$52,429	\$18,000	\$0
Foster-Glocester Regional	\$648,963	\$1,447,032	\$828,994	\$0	\$198,997	\$0
Glocester	\$93,813	\$251,754	\$181,625	\$0	\$104,301	\$0
Jamestown	\$100,498	\$130,506	\$87,975	\$0	\$31,627	\$0
Johnston	\$638,299	\$792,905	\$1,916,756	\$103,221	\$383,065	\$550,630
Lincoln	\$502,883	\$1,173,752	\$1,659,970	\$0	\$619,996	\$188,487
Little Compton	\$89,711	\$222,722	\$177,790	\$0	\$33,278	\$14,936
Middletown	\$740,225	\$1,050,262	\$572,574	\$38,985	\$43,918	\$0
N Providence	\$677,435	\$517,256	\$432,143	\$0	\$330,344	\$212,949
Narragansett	\$522,499	\$902,396	\$776,545	\$0	\$265,242	\$0
New Shoreham	\$115,449	\$122,707	\$150,368	\$0	\$1,555	\$0
Newport	\$617,503	\$1,026,363	\$1,498,042	\$106,498	\$615,228	\$985,591
North Kingstown	\$916,317	\$1,890,551	\$1,122,620	\$396,672	\$78,856	\$0
North Smithfield	\$478,919	\$556,926	\$514,052	\$182,153	\$65,382	\$101,676
Pawtucket	\$1,462,866	\$2,165,086	\$3,991,413	\$82,415	\$728,397	\$392,258
Portsmouth	\$839,884	\$1,146,374	\$1,052,538	\$0	\$103,222	\$37,562
Providence	\$6,336,651	\$14,654,169	\$9,261,254	\$13,672	\$7,288,122	\$3,783,623
Scituate	\$172,683	\$869,682	\$482,014	\$0	\$326,634	\$103,797
Smithfield	\$702,351	\$623,198	\$529,613	\$0	\$100,298	\$3,327
South Kingstown	\$867,065	\$577,468	\$532,809	\$0	\$138,259	\$0
Tiverton	\$361,428	\$535,961	\$519,508	\$0	\$69,149	\$9,197
W Warwick	\$728,936	\$1,567,272	\$762,049	\$247,271	\$442,194	\$293,763
Warwick	\$2,053,096	\$3,838,193	\$2,165,035	\$0	\$2,352,585	\$750,345
Westerly	\$644,175	\$1,553,694	\$1,062,469	\$0	\$402,549	\$30,652
Woonsocket	\$1,024,051	\$3,485,459	\$3,714,844	\$0	\$2,427,117	\$2,319,107

ENDNOTES

- 1 Schwartz, Nathaniel et al. "Tracking Rhode Island's COVID-19 Recovery: A First Look at Districts' Strategic Staffing and Personnel Investments." *Annenberg Institute*, May 2023, <https://annenberg.brown.edu/ri-research/briefs/ri-staffing-personnel-investments>
- 2 These values differ slightly from our May 2023 brief. Here, we have recategorized a few items including clerical and auxiliary staff, out-of-district obligations, and web-based instructional tools.
- 3 Council of Chief State School Officers. *CCSSO's High-Quality Instructional Materials Network*, 2022, <https://learning.ccsso.org/high-quality-instructional-materials>.
- 4 Steiner, David, et al. "What we teach matters." *Learning First and the Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy*, November 2018, <https://jscholarship.library.jhu.edu/bitstream/handle/1774.2/62969/what-we-teach-matters-final-for-publication-15-nov.pdf?sequence=1>
- 5 Districts experiencing financial hardship can apply for timeline extensions. Districts can opt for other curricula but require third-party quality assessments. High-achieving districts may use locally developed Math and ELA curricula if more than 75% of students are meeting proficiency standards.
- 6 Rhode Island Department of Education. Curriculum Visualization Dashboard, 2023, <https://tableau.ride.ri.gov/t/Public/views/CurriculumVisualizationsK-122018-2023/CurriculumVisualizationTool>
- 7 Papay, John, et al. "The State of Recovery: Rhode Island's Post-Pandemic Public School Landscape." *Annenberg Institute*, September 2023, <https://annenberg.brown.edu/ri-research/our-impact/state-of-recovery>
- 8 Westall, John, and Amy Cummings. "Policy Brief: The Effects of Early Literacy Policies on Student Achievement." *Education Policy Innovation Collaborative*, June 2023, https://epicedpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/StateLiteracyPolicies_PolBrief_June2023.pdf.
- 9 Hill, Heather, et al. "Dispelling the Myths: What the Research Says about Teacher Professional Learning." *Annenberg Institute*, 15 February 2022, <https://annenberg.brown.edu/sites/default/files/rppl-dispelling-myths.pdf>