

# Esser Fund Recommendations

## Promoting Healthy and Healing Schools during Pandemic Unfinished Learning

### Background

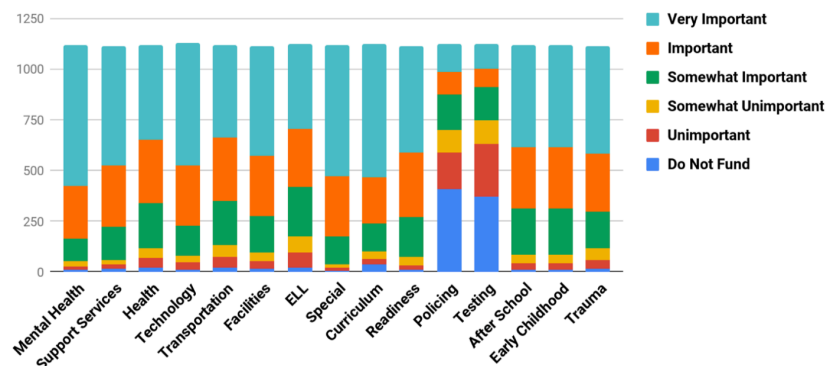
ESSER Funds (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund) were allocated by the US Congress in response to the COVID-19 to address how the pandemic continues to impact elementary and secondary learning. Michigan received over \$3.7 billion in total funds. The State of Michigan has approved ESSER funds to be spent on summer & after school programs, extended school day, addressing at-risk student behavior, educator resources & personnel, and to improve attendance and engagement. MI Education Justice Coalition (MEJC) believes ESSER funds can help to close the estimated \$4 billion funding gap and help Michigan adopt a new funding model.

#### Top 5 wants, as identified by surveyed Michiganders:

Mental Health, Special Education Early Childhood Education, Family Support, and Overcoming Technology Gaps

**Identified as Important:** Inclusive curricula, Career Readiness, Facility & Infrastructure funding, After School Programs, Trauma-responsiveness.

**All issues were ranked as important aside from policing and testing**



#### MEJC Recommendations for ESSER funds:

**Family & community Engagement:** Hire Family Engagement Coordinators to develop resources to empower families to use available resources, provide family facilities for child clothing

Implement Restorative Practices, such as training, books, and implementing restorative circles in classrooms

**Wellness Preparedness and Response:** teaching tools, air quality improvements, support virtual learning curriculum modifications, increased staffing (librarians & help desk), Improving and expanding classroom technology & infrastructure, flexible and alternative classroom environments (such as quick setup/repack outdoor learning environments)

**Mental Health Support:** Evidence-based Social & emotional learning, resilience, & sensitivity programs. Classroom designs to promote relationship building and mental wellness. Student, Family, and Staff mental health resources. Daily physical activity

**School climate:** Professional development training around Trauma, restorative practice, early warning systems, and library resources.

**Continued Staff Employment:** Substitute teacher hiring incentives and class room teacher-parity training resources, Sub sick leave to encourage staff to stay home when unwell, retention incentives including sign-on/retention bonuses & attendance incentives.