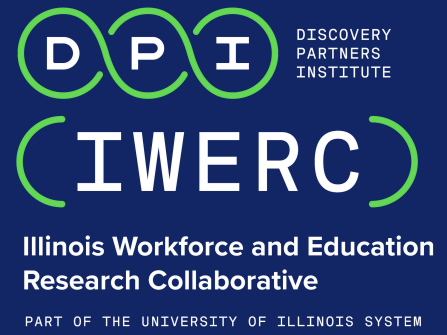


EXPLORING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ILLINOIS DISTRICTS' ESSER SPENDING AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT



This research provides a first look at how Illinois school districts' uses of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds were related to their test score outcomes in the years following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study is part of IWERC's *Learning Renewal* research series.

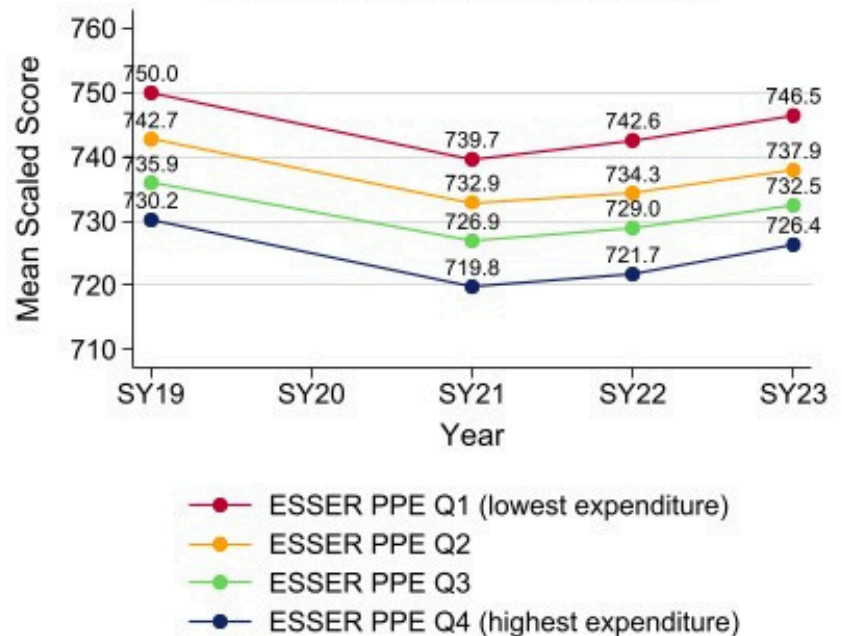
Key Takeaway

1

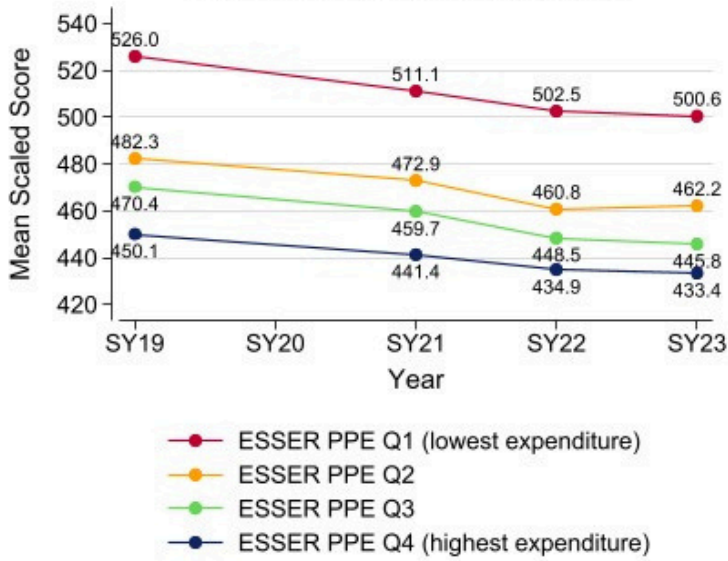
Districts with lower pre-pandemic achievement and greater pandemic-related learning loss were allocated and spent more ESSER funds. **After receiving ESSER funding, low-achieving districts recovered at a similar pace compared to high-achieving districts, on average.**

Elementary and middle grades students in districts that were allocated more ESSER funding recovered slightly more quickly than students in higher-achieving districts that were allocated less.

IAR ELA scores by quartile of district ESSER per pupil expenditure



SAT Math scores by quartile of district ESSER per pupil expenditure



High school students in districts that were allocated more ESSER funding experienced similar losses (i.e. lack of recovery) compared to higher-achieving districts that were allocated less.

Key Takeaway

2

No broad categories of expenditures districts made with ESSER funds (e.g., instructional salaries, construction services, etc.) were statistically significantly related to test score outcomes. In other words, **it is unclear whether or how district choices about what to spend on mattered.**

Read the **full report:**

ILLINOIS DISTRICTS' ESSER SPENDING AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT



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