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Best use of Poverty Funds: ESA Fund Use and Survey Results

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and the House Committee on Education
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Presentation Overview

- Brief background on Enhanced Student Achievement (ESA) funding for low-income students in Arkansas
- District survey responses regarding effective uses of ESA funds
- Examination of current district use of ESA funds
- Appendix tables

Background on ESA Funding

- The Enhanced Student Achievement (ESA) categorical fund provides additional funding to districts based upon the concentration of students that are eligible for free and reduced lunch (FRL)
 - Formerly known as National School Lunch (NSL) funding
- Funding is intended to provide additional resources to address the need of students in poverty
 - Funding must be used for allowable purposes or be used for activities approved by ADE
- Funding is tiered into three concentration categories: below 70%, 70-90%, and above 90%

ESA Funding Since FY14

% FRL Students	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21
< 70%	\$517	\$517	\$522	\$526	\$526	\$526	\$526	\$526
70% - < 90%	\$1,033	\$1,033	\$1,042	\$1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051	\$1,051
90% >	\$1,549	\$1,549	\$1,562	\$1,576	\$1,576	\$1,576	\$1,576	\$1,576
% Annual Change	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%

- ESA funding levels have not changed since FY17
 - However, the Legislature has supplemented ESA funds with a separate matching grant program to be used to help districts provide certain services (tutoring, pre-kindergarten programs and before-before/after school programs)
- There is also additional transitional and growth ESA funding to address districts with changing enrollment that shifts them between categories

Current Allowable Uses of ESA Funds

Allowable Uses		
ACT fees	Interim assessments	School health coordinator
Before/after school academic programs, including transportation	Meals	School improvement plan/ scholastic audit
Classroom teachers	Materials, supplies, and equipment	School Resource Officers (SROs)
College and career coaches	Parent education	Summer programs
Counselors, social workers, or nurses	Concurrent courses or technical education	Teacher salary supplements
Curriculum specialists, coaches, and instructional facilitators	Pre-kindergarten programs	Teachers' aides
Early intervention programs	Professional development	The Arkansas Advanced Initiative for Math & Science
Expenses related to extended day/ year	Program using arts-infused curriculum	Transfer to other categorical funds (PD, ELL, ALE)
Experience-based field trips	Remediation programs	Tutors

- Districts are also allowed to use funding for other activities approved by ADE

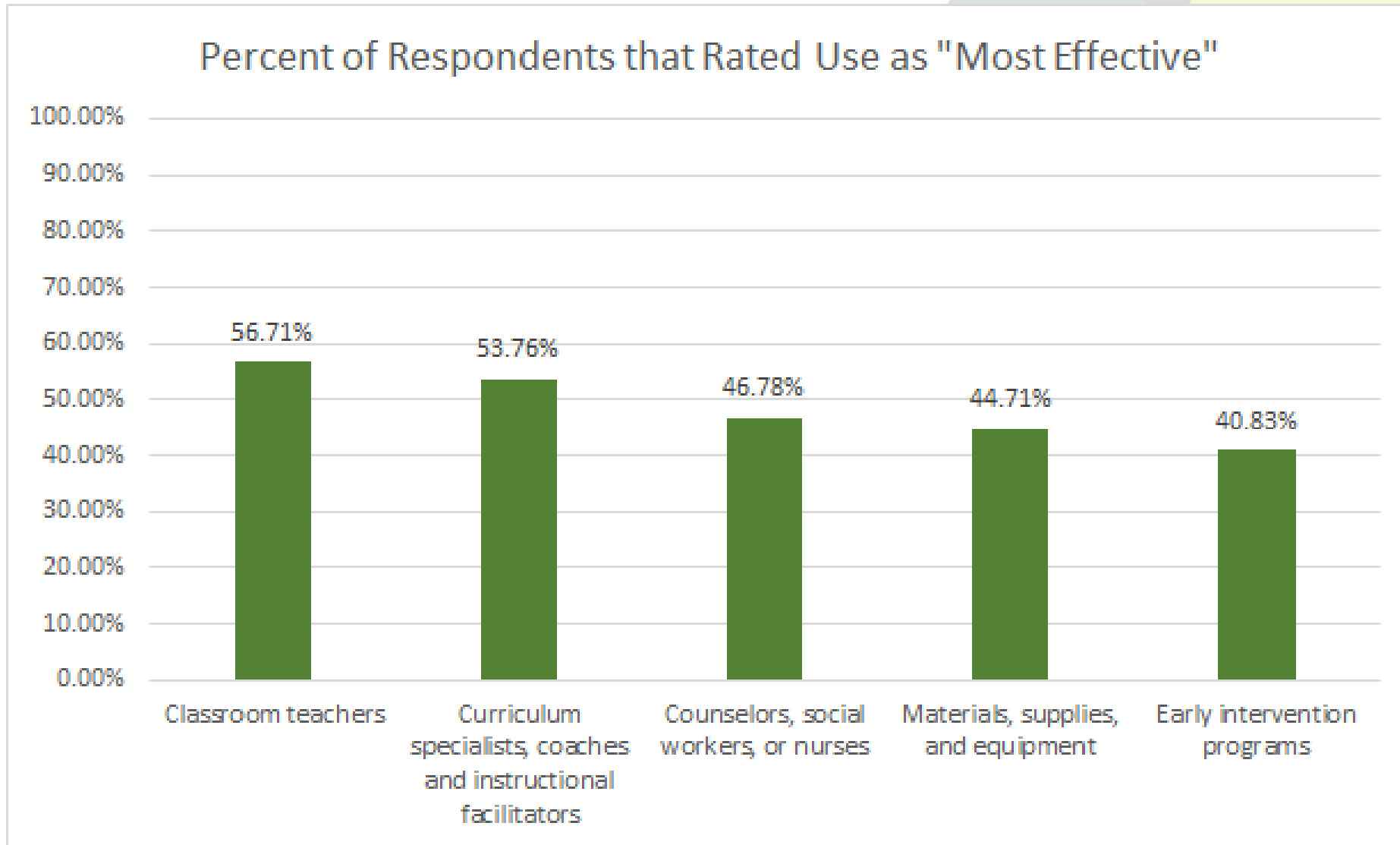


Survey Responses

Survey Responses: Effective Use of Poverty Funds

- In the survey of district and charter system administrators, respondents were asked to rank the effectiveness of each allowable use of ESA funds as either most effective, effective, somewhat effective, and not effective
 - To streamline, the survey focused on allowable uses that had reported expenditures in prior years of at least 1% of total expenditures with a write in option for “other allowable uses”
- In this presentation, the study team will first report on the use of funds identified as “most effective”, then those ranked high when cumulatively combining “most effective” and “effective”, to compare against “not effective”
 - Study team disaggregated data by FRL, size, and locale

Overall Most Effective Use of Poverty Funds



Survey Responses: Effective Use of ESA Funds

Allowable Uses	Percent Rated Use Effective or Most Effective
Materials, Supplies, and Equipment	82%
Counselors, Social Workers, or Nurses	82%
Curriculum Specialists, Coaches, and Instructional Facilitators	81%
Early Interventions	78%
Professional Development	78%
Remediation	78%
Before/After School Academic Programs	77%
Classroom Teachers	74%

Survey Responses: Least Effective Uses

Allowable Uses	Percent Rated Use is Not Effective
School Improvement Plan/ Scholastic Audit	19%
Parent Education	16%
Teacher Salary Supplements	15%
College and Career Coaches	15%
Transfers to Other Categoricals	11%
Summer Programs	10%

Survey Responses: Variation by size, FRL, and locale

Size

- Large districts found curriculum specialists/coaches and counselors to be the most effective
- Small districts found classroom teachers and early interventions to be the most effective

FRL

- Low-FRL districts found classroom teachers and curriculum specialists/coaches to be the most effective
- High-FRL districts found curriculum specialists/coaches and counselors to be the most effective

Locale

- Rural districts and urban districts both rated classroom teachers and curriculum specialists/coaches as most effective
- Rural districts also rated counselors as most effective at a similar rate

Survey Responses:

Open Response Feedback on Effective Use of ESA Funds

- Are there any specific resources, programs, or strategies that you think are the most effective use of these funds?
 - Of the 68 open responses:
 - 45% of the responses indicated that School Resource Officers were an effective use of funds
 - 35% of the responses discussed individual instruction being the most effective use of funds
 - Other respondents used the funds for mental health services, special education services, nurses, and salaries
 - Flexibility of funds was important to many of the respondents

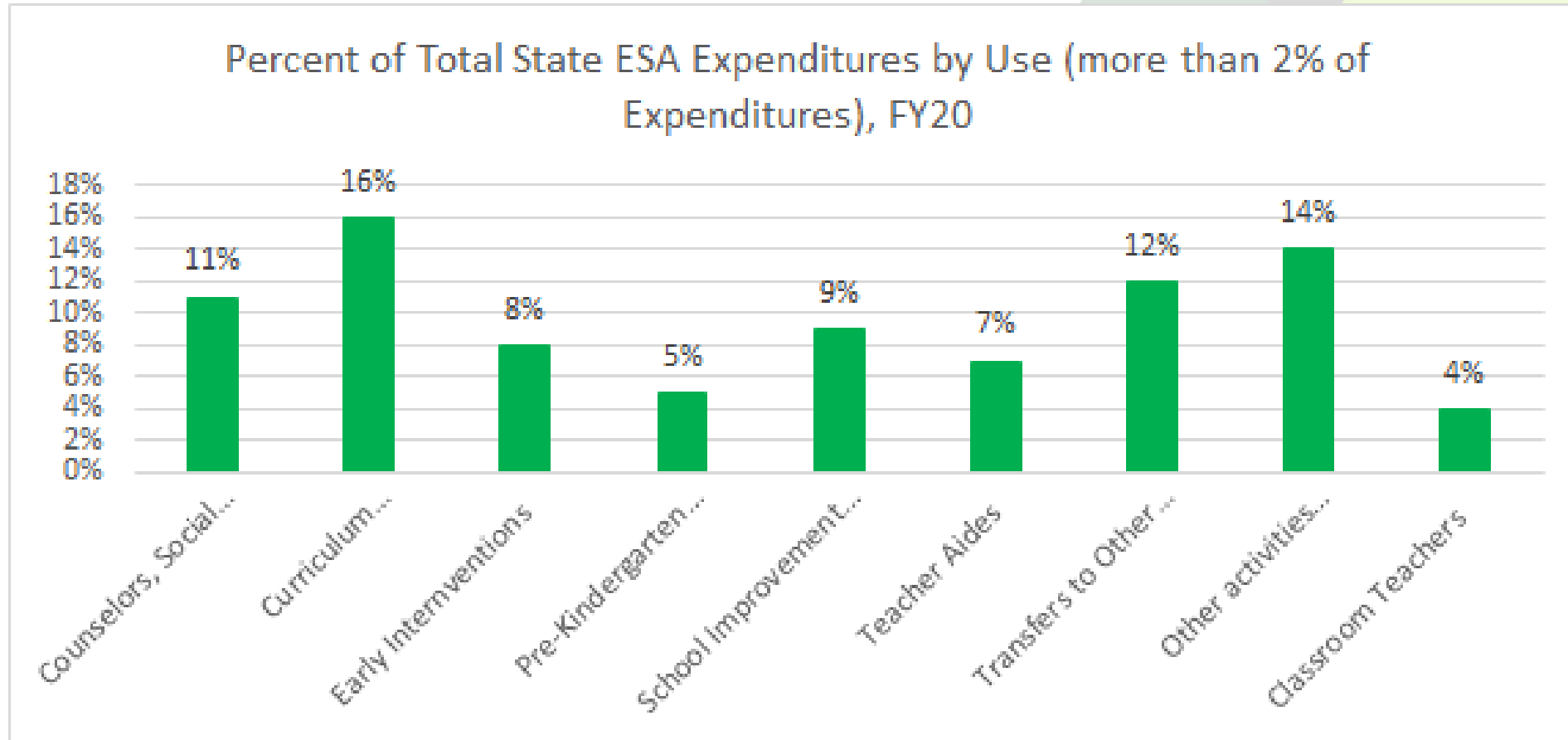


Examination of Current District Use of ESA Funds

Examination of Current District Use of ESA Funds

- Using district expenditure data and coding provided by the Bureau of Legislative Research (BLR), the study team examined 19-20 district ESA fund expenditures by allowable use category
 - Similar to the survey, the study team collapsed expenditure categories with less than 1% of expenditures into “Other Allowable Uses”
 - “Transfer to Other Categoricals” includes Professional Development, Alternative Learning Environment, and English Language Learners categoricals
 - An additional reported category is “Other Activities Approved by ADE” outside of the allowable uses
- Combined ESA Categorical Funding with ESA Grant Match Funding
- Examined the areas where districts used most of their ESA funds statewide, and then examined the differences between expenditures by wealth, FRL, and locale

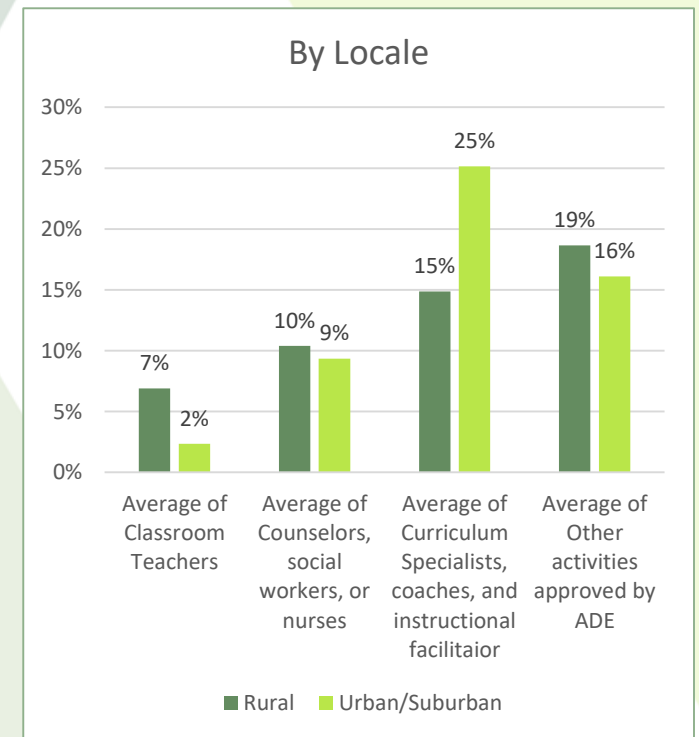
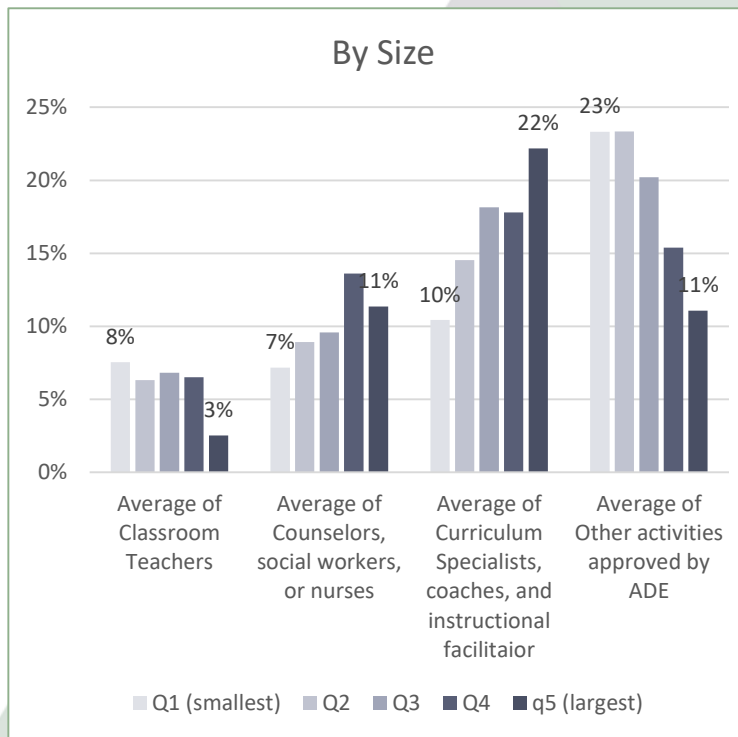
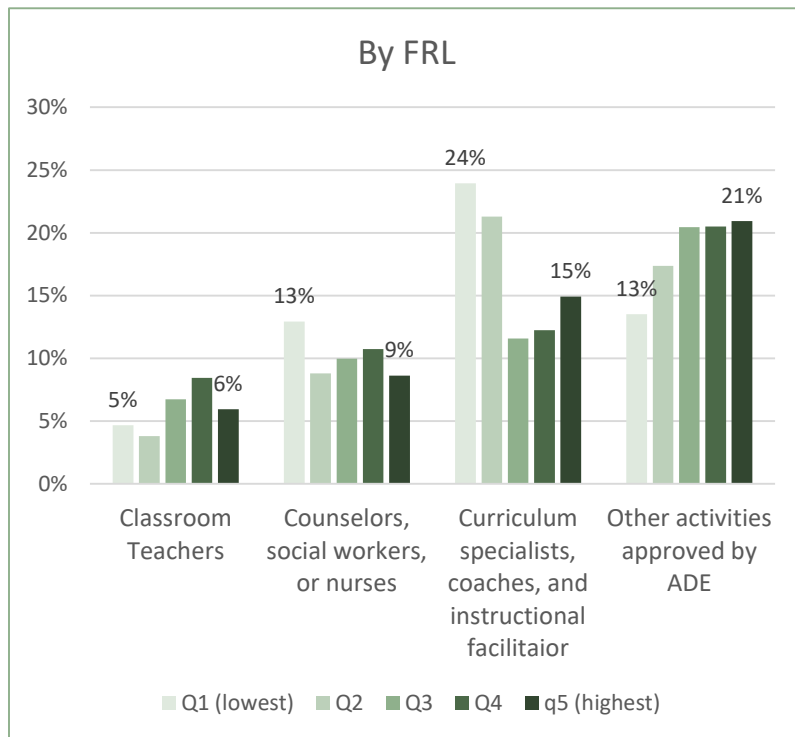
Current District Use of ESA Funds



All other allowable uses were under 2% of total expenditures including, but not limited to, college and career coaches, materials, supplies and equipment, parent education, professional development, remediation programs, summer programs, teacher salary stipends and tutors.

Variation by FRL, Size, and Locale

- There was observable variation in a number of areas, including the average percentage of ESA funds used for classroom teachers, counselors/social workers/nurses, curriculum specialists/coaches, other activities approved by ADE



Comparison of Expenditures to Reported Effective Uses

Use	% of Expenditures	% Rated as Most Effective	% Rated as Most Effective or Effective
Curriculum Specialists, coaches, and instructional facilitators	16%	54%	81%
Other activities approved by ADE	14%	-	-
Transfers to other categorical funds	12%	24%	50%
Counselors, social workers, or nurses	11%	47%	82%
School Improvement Plan/Scholastic Audit	9%	7%	31%
Early Interventions	8%	41%	79%
Teacher Aides	7%	20%	47%
Other allowable uses	7%	-	-
Pre-Kindergarten Programs	5%	39%	28%
Classroom Teachers	4%	57%	74%
Tutors	2%	31%	68%
Teacher Salary Stipends	2%	28%	65%
Professional Development	1%	34%	69%
Before/after School Academic Programs	1%	36%	77%
Parent Education	0%	7%	80%
Summer Programs	0%	23%	51%
College and Career Coaches	0%	14%	41%
Remediation Programs	0%	40%	78%
Materials, Supplies and Equipment	0%	45%	82%

Key Takeaways

- Views on effective use of funds and expenditures varied between districts
- Two expenditure categories that a high percentage of ESA funds are used for are for other uses: either to transfer to other categoricals or for other activities approved by ADE
 - The transfers to other categoricals suggests that district expenditures in these areas are higher than current funding
- Other top categories of expenditures are aligned with uses that district administrators rated as “most effective” including counselors/social workers/nurses, curriculum specialists/coaches/instructional facilitators, and early interventions
 - Note two of these uses are existing matrix resource areas
- There are a number of areas that are rated as effective that districts are spending less than five percent of funds on: before/after school, remediation, classroom teachers and pre-k programs
 - Note, the newer ESA Match grant program is targeting before/after school and pre-k



Appendix

Survey Results:

Comparison of Most Effective Use of ESA Funds Between High FRL and Low FRL Districts

Low Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	57%
Early Intervention Programs	52%
Classroom Teachers	48%
Counselors, Social Workers, or Nurses	48%
Remediation Programs	45%
Pre-Kindergarten Programs	42%

High Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	
Other Use of Funds	62%
Classroom Teachers	59%
Before/After School Academic Programs	48%
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	47%
Remediation Programs	44%

Survey Results:

Comparison of Effective Use of ESA Funds Between High FRL and Low FRL Districts

Low Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	
Counselors, Social Workers, or Nurses	85%
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	82%
Early Intervention Programs	82%
Before/After School Academic Programs	79%
Pre-Kindergarten Programs	79%
Tutors	76%
Professional Development	76%
Classroom Teachers	76%

High Free and Reduced-Price Lunch	
Materials, Supplies and Equipment	91%
Remediation Programs	91%
Counselors, Social Workers, or Nurses	84%
Early Intervention Programs	84%
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	82%
Professional Development	79%
Before/After School Academic Programs	76%
Classroom Teachers	72%

Survey Results:

Comparison of Least Effective Use of ESA Funds Between High FRL and Low FRL Districts

Low Free and Reduced-Price Lunch

Classroom Teachers	24%
Tutors	18%
Teachers' Aides	18%
Counselors, Social Workers, or Nurses	12%
College and Career Coaches	12%

High Free and Reduced-Price Lunch

Classroom Teachers	28%
Counselors, Social Workers, or Nurses	13%
College and Career Coaches	13%
Curriculum Specialists, Coaches, and Instructional Facilitators	10%
Before/After School Academic Programs	10%
Pre-kindergarten Programs	10%

Survey Results: Comparison of Most Effective Use of ESA Funds Between Rural and Urban Districts

Rural	
Classroom Teachers	56%
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	54%
Counselors, Social Workers, or Nurses	50%
Materials, Supplies, and Equipment	40%
Remediation Programming	40%

Urban/Suburban	
Classroom Teachers	57%
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	51%
Early Intervention Programs	43%
Remediation Programming	40%

Survey Results: Comparison of Effective Use of ESA Funds Between Rural and Urban Districts

Rural	
Materials, Supplies, and Equipment	85%
Counselors, Social Workers, or Nurses	82%
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	82%
Before/After School Academic Programs	80%
Remediation Programs	79%
Early Intervention Programs	78%
Classroom Teachers	74%
Pre-Kindergarten Programs	71%
Teachers' Aides	70%

Urban	
Early Intervention Programs	83%
Counselors, Social Workers, or Nurses	79%
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	77%
Classroom Teachers	77%
Materials, Supplies, and Equipment	71%

Survey Results: Comparison of Least Effective Use of ESA Funds Between Rural and Urban Districts

Rural	
School Improvement Plan/ Scholastic Audit	19%
Parent Education	17%
Teacher Salary Supplement	15%
College and Career Coaches	14%
Summer Programs	12%
Transfer to Other Categoricals	11%

Urban	
College and Career Coaches	18%
School Improvement Plan/ Scholastic Audit	17%
Teacher Salary Supplement	14%
Parent Education	11%
Tutors	11%

Survey Results: Comparison of Most Effective Use of ESA Funds Between Small and Large Districts

Small	
Classroom Teachers	59%
Early Intervention Programs	48%
Before/After School Academic Programs	44%
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	43%

Large	
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	73%
Counselors, Social Workers, or Nurses	54%
Early Intervention Programs	53%
Remediation Programming	51%

Survey Results: Comparison of Effective Use of ESA Funds Between Small and Large Districts

Small	
Remediation Programs	93%
Materials, Supplies, and Equipment	93%
Before/After School Academic Programs	89%
Early Intervention Programs	89%
Classroom Teachers	85%
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	81%
Pre-Kindergarten Programs	81%
Professional Development	81%
Counselors, Social Workers, or Nurses	79%
Tutors	73%
Teachers' aides	68%

Large	
Curriculum Specialists, Counselors, and Instructional Facilitators	88%
Tutors	82%
Early Intervention Programs	82%
Professional Development	78%
Classroom Teachers	74%
Pre-Kindergarten Programs	74%
Materials, Supplies, and Equipment	69%
Before/After School Academic Programs	65%
Remediation Programs	65%

Survey Results: Comparison of Least Effective Use of ESA Funds Between Small and Large Districts

Small		Large	
School Improvement Plan/ Scholastic Audit	19%	School Improvement Plan/ Scholastic Audit	18%
College and Career Coaches	15%	Parent Education	18%
Tutors	12%	College and Career Coaches	15%
Before/After School Academic Programs	11%	Transfer to Other Categoricals	15%
		Teacher Salary Supplements	15%