

October 28, 2021

Superintendent Reykdal,

Thank you for your response dated October 1, 2021. In your letter intended to clarify our erroneous assumptions and clarify the disposition of ESSER funds, you mentioned several areas of line item funding that the Legislature mandated allocation for. We wanted to clarify what amounts that Issaquah School District is anticipated to receive for each of those listed, as your letter implied that Issaquah would be receiving funding from that long list you provided. If you or Chief Financial Officer Mr. T.J. Kelly, would fill out this table, it would certainly clarify the exact disposition of ESSER funds for Issaquah students.

Legislature directed funding ¹	Statewide amount	Issaquah School District amount
Summer learning loss	\$18.52 million	
Afterschool learning loss	\$18.52 million	
Dual language	\$10 million	
Career and technical education/career connected learning	\$4 million	
Summer meals	\$4 million	
Teacher residency	\$60,000	
Residential outdoor school	\$10 million	
Transition services	\$7 million	
Community-based organizations supporting students	\$12.8 million	

¹Items listed in Letter from Superintendent Reykdal October 1, 2021, placed in table for ease of formatting.

We appreciate that you understand that funding of ESSER dollars using the Title 1 formula was problematic because every student in Washington was impacted by COVID-19 and the subsequent school closures, not just students in poverty. At your request, we did meet with Congressional staff. Their reply was that Washington's Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) was provided the flexibility with 10% holdback which translated to \$220 million. This makes sense in broad terms based on the spreadsheet of ESSER allocations as the average is \$3,200 per Washington student, so there would certainly be flexibility in allocation to bring up the below average districts to even half that amount. Your letter to clarify the disposition of ESSER dollars outlined the spending of only ~\$90 million of the 10% holdback, so if you would clarify how the remaining ~\$130 million is allocated that would be appreciated.

Finally, given that you/OSPI understands that ESSER dollars were distributed according to the Title 1 formula that resulted in widespread inequities across the state, it seems surprising that OSPI is "choosing to fund...services for students furthest from educational justice." This only exacerbates the inequities and gives more funding to districts who already received \$5,000 per student, when Issaquah received \$351 per student. We absolutely believe that all 1.2 million Washington students deserve the opportunity to recover from the educational and social-emotional impact of COVID-19 especially the 2,000 students in our district who qualify for free/reduced lunch and the 1,600 students who qualify for Special Education services.

Given that ESSER III is not allocated, we are asking that OSPI work with Legislative leaders to ensure that the \$220 million (10% ESSER holdback) is used to ensure that all school districts in our state have the opportunity for financial stabilization and recovery. I suspect it is but a handful of districts who will see their fund balance nearly cut in half in a single fiscal year. No solution that does not address the COVID-19 related financial crisis of King County school districts is a workable solution, given that King County educates >25% of all public school children in Washington state.

Sincerely,

Suzanne Weaver
President, Board of Directors

Harlan Gallinger
Legislative Representative, Board of Directors