Dear **[District Leader]:**

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted education for all students, but has exacerbated pre-inequities for Black, Latino, and Native students; students from low-income backgrounds; students with disabilities; English learners; and students experiencing homelessness. In recognition of the urgent need to address these gaps, Congress provided federal resources at the state and local level to accelerate students’ learning. The most recent relief effort,the [American Rescue Plan](https://edtrust.org/press-release/the-american-rescue-plan-act-gives-schools-and-students-the-relief-they-need/)(ARP), requires that states and school districts set aside a portion of these funds “to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions and ensure that such interventions respond to students’ academic, social, and emotional needs and address the disproportionate impact of the coronavirus on [students of color, students from low-income backgrounds, children with disabilities, English learners, migrant students, students experiencing homelessness, and students in foster care].” **[STATE]** [received](https://edtrust.org/strategies-to-solve-unfinished-learning/) **[ $xxx million/billion of funding] and has invited [DISTRICT]** to apply for funding to create better, safer, and more high-quality learning environments that meet the needs all students attending **[DISTRICT]** public schools.

We, **[INSERT ORG/INDIV NAME]**, want to make sure that **[SCHOOL DISTRICT]** implements a strong and sustainable plan that includes evidence-based, equity-focused strategies for accelerating learning. Strategies must meet the needs of both high-achieving students who need opportunities to engage in more rigorous curriculum as well as the many students who are experiencing unfinished learning and are now at increased risk of disengagement and falling below grade-level standards. As Ed Trust’s recent [research](https://edtrust.org/strategies-to-solve-unfinished-learning/) indicates, students who participate in [targeted intensive tutoring](https://edtrust.org/resource/targeted-intensive-tutoring/) and [expanded learning time](https://edtrust.org/resource/expanded-learning-time/) programs experience significant academic gains, and evidence shows that [strong relationships](https://edtrust.org/resource/the-importance-of-strong-relationships/) with teachers and school staff can dramatically enhance students’ motivation, academic engagement, and social skills when implemented under the right conditions.

**District leaders have a critical role to play to** [**ensure federal funds are used equitably to implement programs like these that will support student success**](https://edtrust.org/resource/5-questions-to-ask-districts-about-how-they-will-use-new-federal-funding-to-support-students/) **and that** [**funds are used for long-term sustainability**](https://www.erstrategies.org/cms/files/4817-sustainability-brief.pdf)**.** Research has helped to [estimate the costs](https://www.erstrategies.org/cms/files/4709-cost-of-covid-updated-2.pdf) of these strategies including the research compiled on [Proventutoring.org](https://proventutoring.org/) indicates, many effective tutoring programs range from $600 to $2,500 per student, indicating that the federal funds will provide districts with enough funding to implement high-quality programs**.** To that end,we urge **[SCHOOL DISTRICT]** to include the following components in its plan to use federal, as well as other state and local funding, for accelerating students’ learning**:**

* Create and sustain a regular feedback loop with students, families, educators, and community members, including advocates at the local level, to ensure that their priorities are reflected in district decisions.
* Conduct a racial equity audit using assessments to identify how different groups of students were impacted during the pandemic and where resources should be allocated to meet students’ needs and expand opportunity for all students, including offering additional supports for struggling students and expanding access to advanced coursework opportunities for historically underserved students.
* Offer opportunities for [targeted intensive tutoring](https://edtrust.org/resource/targeted-intensive-tutoring/) to students with the most need; with tutors who are well-trained certified teachers and/or paraprofessionals; in small groups; and using a skill-building curriculum.
* Ensure all students have access to high-quality and culturally relevant curriculum. If expanding the amount of learning time (e.g., double blocking, after-school programs, or summer school programs), ensure the curriculum is aligned with the regular school day, schools keep classes small, and that educators receive pre-service and ongoing training and support. Protect — and where possible, expand — district funding for whole child supports, including social, emotional, mental, and physical health and development. This must include additional funding for school counselors, psychologists, and other mental health providers, especially in high-need schools. It must also include training and ongoing support to teachers, leaders, and other school-based personnel regarding culturally responsive, anti-bias instructional practices.
* Provide training and ongoing support to school leaders to implement accelerated learning strategies in ways that will positively impact students, such as using data to identify areas of unfinished learning; training and supervising tutors and/or teachers; selecting curriculum and instructional materials that are aligned to high standards, appropriately challenging for students’ grade level, and culturally sustaining; organizing the core part and any additional time in the school day to maximize learning; and fostering positive relationships between students and adults in the school.

**[SCHOOL DISTRICT]** has an extraordinary opportunity to make a real investment in its students who have been mostly directly impacted by the pandemic and students who have been most underserved even before the pandemic. With appropriate and proven accelerated learning strategies, **[DISTRICT]**’s students can meet and exceed grade-level standards.

**[NAME OF ORG/INDIV]** stands ready to work with you.

Sincerely,