



ESSER Planning Grant Summary Report

Prepared by the Department of Research & Performance Management

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Key Findings

- MSCS received a \$200,000 ESSER Planning Grant from the TN Department of Education to support partnering with third-party vendors to add additional capacity for ESSER planning and execution.
- MSCS selected two vendors, PowerSchool and IT Temporary Staffing Services to support preparation for the spending and evaluating future ESSER programs.
- MSCS spent \$183,373.99 of the funds leaving the remaining \$16,626.01 (8%) of the funds unused.
- MSCS achieved the goals of the grant by launching the Academic Scorecard and increasing technical capacity for the Data Analytics and Information Management's (DAIM) dashboards.

ESSER Planning Grant

Memphis-Shelby County Schools received the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Planning Grant from the TN Department of Education (TNDOE). This grant was intended to support districts with engaging the community and stakeholders with “identifying student needs, plan intentionally and strategically for the use of these funds... and to launch many new programs simultaneously and successfully.”¹ TNDOE offered districts a grant based on their enrollment size to “allow districts to partner with third-party service providers to add additional capacity and assist with strategy and execution.”¹

The ESSER Planning Grant period began June 7, 2021 and ran through June 30, 2023. Due to MSCS’s enrollment, MSCS was allocated \$150,000 in the Base Planning Grant and a \$50,000 Bonus Grant for TN ALL Corps Participation, for a total grant award of \$200,000.

Goals

1. Increase technical capacity to implement data collection and monitoring through timely, comprehensive analytics and reporting, so that leaders at the school and district level can assess whether investments are on track and the extent to which they are improving student outcomes on an ongoing basis.
2. Create and maintain an online, comprehensive, real-time student profile report for parents and students that contains important student data so that stakeholders can plan an active role in ensuring their students are connected to the eight ESSER recover strategies and supports.

Vendors

Each district was allowed to select up to two vendors to support the work planning for the implementation of ESSER funding. First, MSCS selected PowerSchool a “leading provider of cloud-based software in K–12 education.”² The second vendor was IT Temporary Staffing

¹ TN Department of Education. (2021, June). [ESSER Planning Grants: Districts Overview](#).

² PowerSchool. (N.D.) [About PowerSchool](#).



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Services, a group of IT service vendors who provide contract support in IT related jobs. From that group three subcontractors were selected to provide staffing services.

Budget

ESSER Planning Grant Budget and Spending		
Vendors and Sub-contractors	Amount Budgeted	Amount Spent
PowerSchool	\$ 95,000	\$ 91,119.14
IT Temporary Staffing Services		
22nd Century Technologies, Inc.	\$ 20,000	\$13,774.85
Intellisoft Technologies, Inc.	\$ 30,000	\$28,800.00
vTech Solutions, Inc.	\$ 55,000	\$49,680.00
Total	\$ 200,000	\$183,373.99

Outcomes

PowerSchool

Due to the significant support needed to recover from the academic and socioemotional impacts of the pandemic, MSCS’s Student Information Management (SIM) team partnered with PowerSchool to launch the Academic Scorecard for parents and students inside of the PowerSchool Parent Portal. This allowed stakeholders to have real-time data monitoring that was accessible and comprehensive.

This Academic Scorecard allows parents and students to monitor their student outcomes throughout the duration of the ESSER investments and beyond. It includes multiple outcomes and trends over time for attendance, discipline, grades, formative assessments, 3rd grade commitment metrics, and more. The Academic Scorecard has been a vital link connecting parents and students to these data points, allowing MSCS’s most vital stakeholders to play an active role in connecting students to the right ESSER recovery supports, such as tutoring and the Fall and Spring Break Learning Academies.

IT Temporary Staffing Support

The Data Analytics and Information Management (DAIM) team utilized the additional Engineering and PowerBI developer capacity to support data collection and monitoring of ESSER-funded programs through PowerBI Dashboards and databases. Contractors supported building out dashboards, writing queries, and preparing files used for evaluations of ESSER programs such as tutoring, reduced class sizes (K–2 SEAs), and targeted reading advisors.

The grant-funded contracts supported numerous dashboards but worked extensively with a handful listed in the table below. These dashboards received over 175K views by MSCS schools, central office, and District-leaders over the course of the grant. These positions also integrated new data sources into a centralized data warehouse and produced queries that were utilized by the Research Department to perform end-of-year evaluations and ROI reports.



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Internal Dashboard Usage for Supported Dashboards	
Dashboard	Usage/Views
RTI-A	148,545
1:1 Devices	226
Early Literacy	607
Literacy Commitment	21,160
Student Surveys	6,541

Grant Reporting and Auditing

Memphis-Shelby County Schools submitted all required documentation to the Tennessee Department of Education (TNDOE) in May 2023. The TNDOE approved the submissions and indicated that MSCS met all reporting requirements for the grant.