

Recovery and Renewal

California School Districts [Varily] Bounce Back

- ❑ How have districts spent federal stimulus and new state dollars – emerging from the pandemic?
- ❑ What common strategies are employed across districts to lift learning and students' broader well-being?
- ❑ How do budget priorities vary among districts, including organizational and pedagogical innovations?

A three-year study funded by the U.S. Department of Education



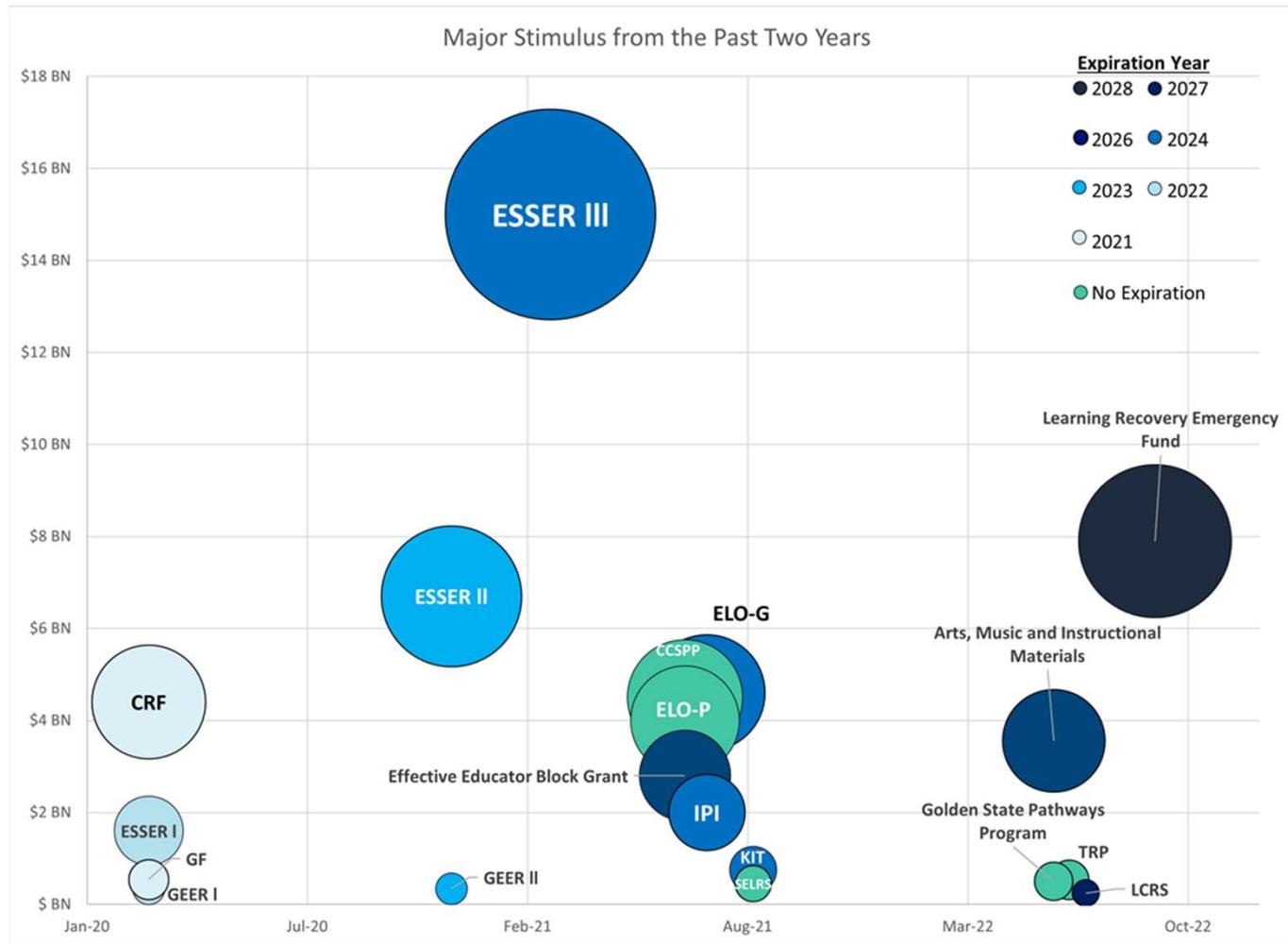
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Diminishing infusions of federal dollars, continuing state categorical aid



ESSER III = \$15b

ELO-G/P = \$7b

Learning Recovery = \$8b

Community Schools = \$5b

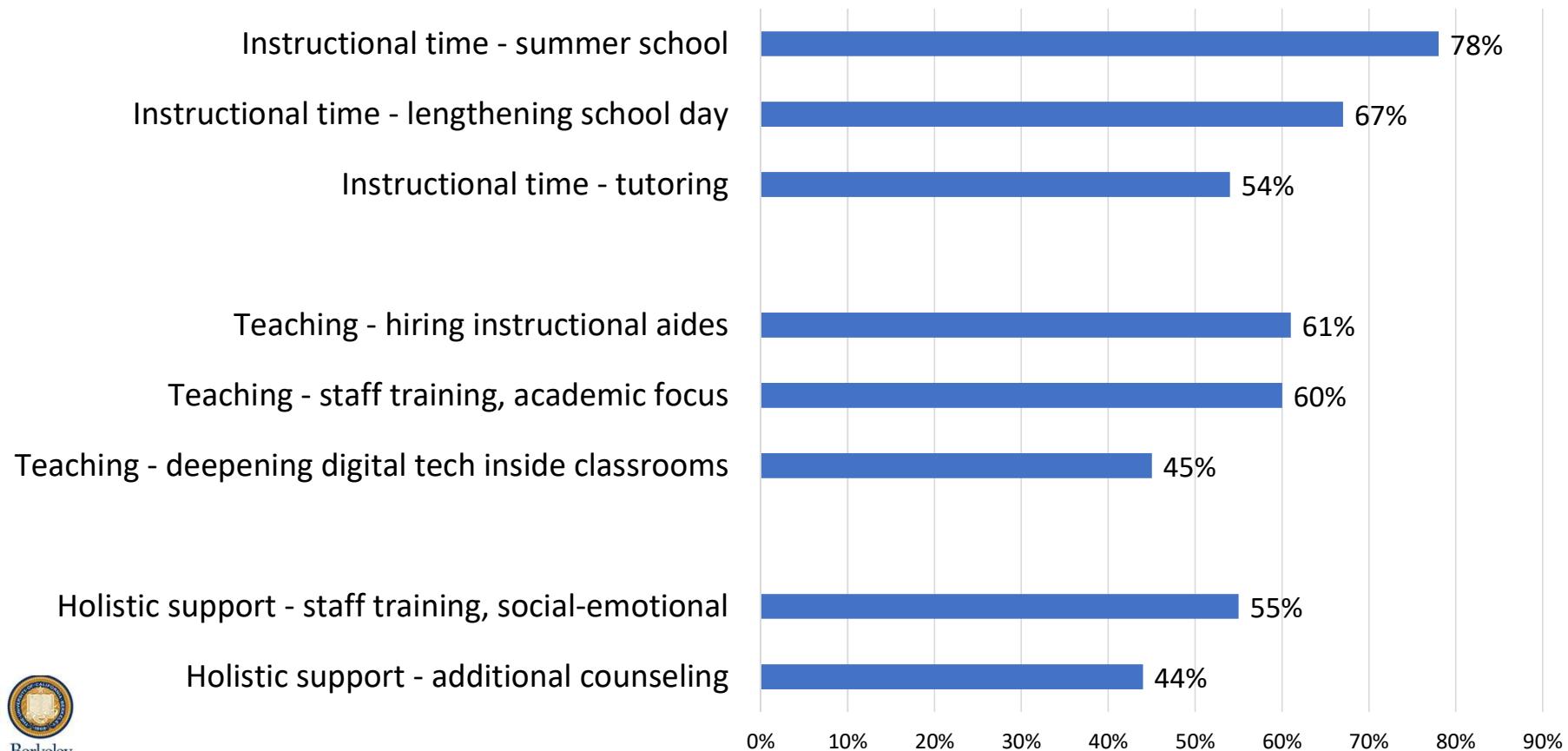
Arts-Music = \$4b

Educator Effectiveness = \$3b



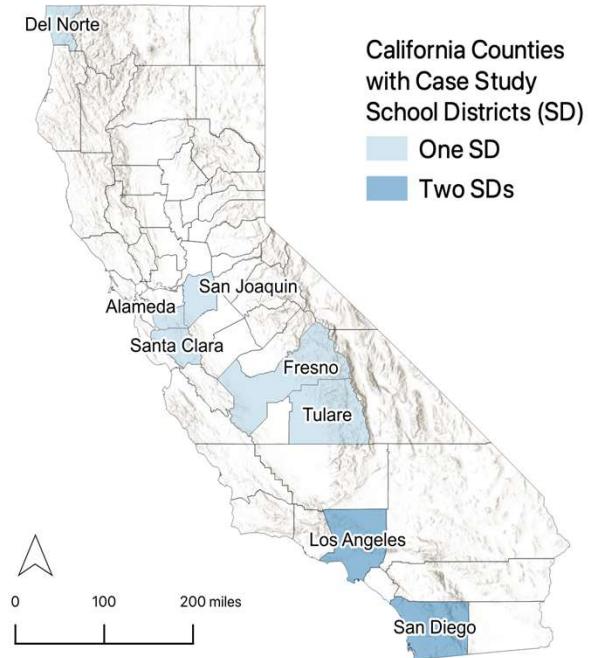
Most common budget and program strategies among 726 districts [from ELO-G plans]

Percentage of districts reporting budget or program activity



Shared challenges and strategies across nine case-study districts [field work, 2021 to 2023]

- Slipping enrollments, persisting absenteeism.
- Labor shortages, now paring back classified staff.
- New funding with a return to categorical programs [requires classroom and after-school aides].
- Program triage: State programs, contracting out, the ‘costly plan-demic’.
- A varying balance between learning recovery and building [staffing for] firm social-emotional scaffolds.

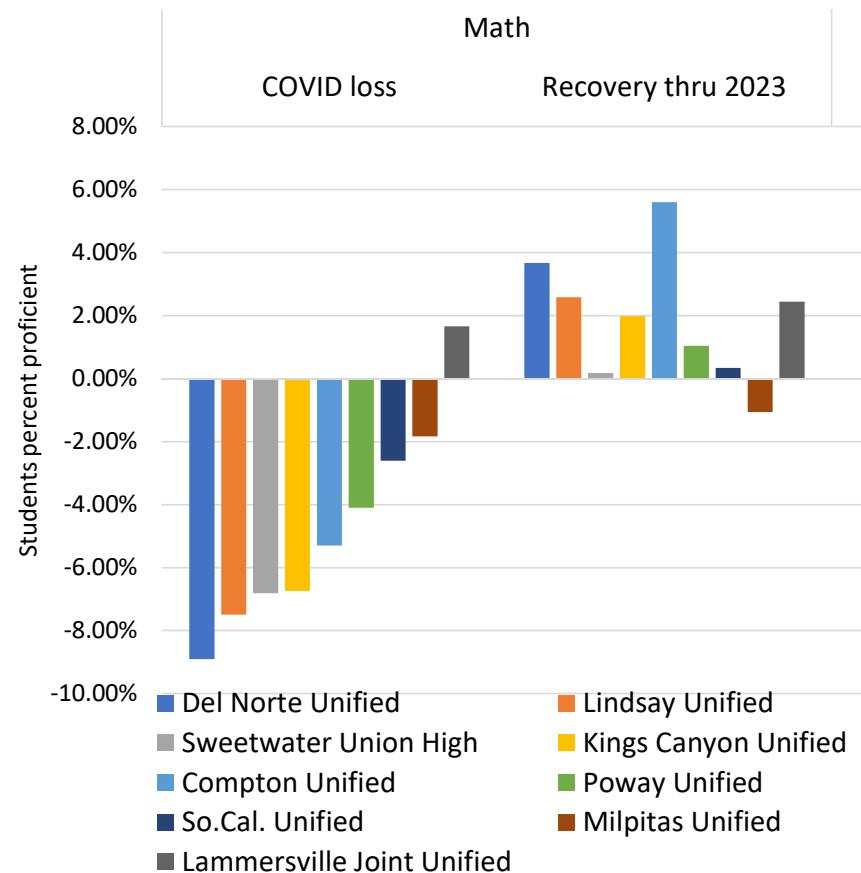


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Districts also vary in strategies deployed to renew schools, regain a collective spirit

- Strengthening district's fiscal footing.
- Adapting to a shifting funding context – new categoricals, equity multiplier, Medical funding.
- Segmented add-ons versus 'push-in' model, enriching ties between student and adults.
- Digital innovations, student engagement in classrooms.
- Preserving local budget flexibility – adapting to differing contexts, varying program innovations.



Stay tuned for detailed report this spring...

- Uneven learning recovery among differing student groups
 - implications for progressivity of LCFF.
- Which district strategies predict robust bounce-back in pupil learning and well-being.
- How district leaders deliberate and set budget priorities... central and school-level origins of promising innovations.
- Do new state categoricals constrain or enhance district priorities, and enrich student engagement? Persisting labor shortages with modest layoffs?

