

V. FEDERAL FUND**A. 3. Unfinished Learning / ESSER Funds – information item**

The Idaho Commission for Libraries, STEM Action Center, and the Idaho Out-of-School Network (ION) recently proposed a statewide partnership to empower summer and out-of-school learning across Idaho. Each organization has a solid track record of success using networks and local partnerships to minimize the summer slide, provide support and enrichment in afterschool programming, and reach underserved students throughout the state. Students spend 80% of their time outside of school and these partners are uniquely poised to help mitigate the impacts of lost school time and unfinished learning.

The three organizations are utilizing a small portion of the \$440 million in federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds coming to Idaho. The State Board of Education passed a motion at their January 6 meeting to support the summer learning portion of the proposal. Additional funding to support after-school programming is pending approval at their February 17, 2022 meeting. If everything is approved through the State Board of Education and the legislature as a supplemental request to our budget, the ICfL could be awarded up to \$1,250,000 and would have until September 2024 to fully expend the funds. The ICfL's proposal follows:

Over 100,000 Idaho youth participate in free library summer reading programs annually helping students maintain or improve the reading skills they develop during the school year. Library summer reading programs have been part of the fabric of nearly every Idaho community for decades and research shows that children who actively participate reduce their summer learning loss. The ICfL has been a longtime supporter of these programs by providing training and support for outreach programs aimed at reaching underserved children at summer food distribution sites and through partnerships with Boys and Girls Clubs and other out-of-school learning programs.

ESSER funds in the amount of \$750,000 would allow the ICfL to build the capacity and implementation of best practices for library summer learning programs and help keep more school libraries open during the summer months. Funds would be awarded through competitive tier grants based on population size and would help fund personnel needed to expand access to serve more youth with an emphasis on underserved children and communities, provide more hands-on learning activities, and ensure that more books are available for Idaho students and families. Grants would be made available to over 700 public, school, and tribal libraries statewide. The ICfL would utilize a portion of these funds to aid training efforts and enhance turn-key programs and resources that increase participation of smaller libraries.

\$500,000 will be designated to build the capacity of library-based after school programming. Idaho's libraries offer students safe and enriching environments when school is out of session. These funds will help libraries invest in needed materials,

personnel, and operating expenses to ensure no K-12 student is charged to participate in engaging out-of-school library programs.

Grant funding will be provided to libraries with existing after school programs to improve the quality and number of students served, and funds will also help libraries new to after school programming begin to offer these services in their communities. A portion of the funds will be utilized by the ICfL to enhance turn-key programs and resources enabling smaller libraries to participate in these efforts.