

# Investment Trends in K-12 Education: A US Perspective

## What are the current key trends in the US K-12 market?

The impact of the pandemic is still being felt in a number of ways: there are wider learning gaps within classes; there is strong evidence that student mental wellbeing suffered during the pandemic years with the effects now being felt in the classroom; and many teachers are finding these additional stresses overwhelming and are leaving the profession.

On top of this, the federal level Covid funding for education, known as ESSER, ends in September 2024 and state budgets are largely not increasing, or may even be decreasing in real terms. This means that many of the programmes and services purchased during the pandemic were terminated by school districts in 2023 and this will continue, to a lesser extent, into 2024. The ending of contracts was especially true for digital programmes that supplemented the core curriculum, both because there is now a preference for in-person teaching and because these programmes often did not deliver results when they were relied upon during the pandemic. When budgets are tight, districts consistently prioritise teacher retention, especially given the current teacher shortages.

Districts are particularly reconsidering their English Language Arts (ELA) approach and implementing 'Science of Reading' programmes, especially in K-5, and we will see growth here as the 'big three' – California, Texas and Florida – prepare for new ELA adoptions in the next few years. Districts are also looking at ways to enrich students to enhance their "career and college readiness". There is a

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